

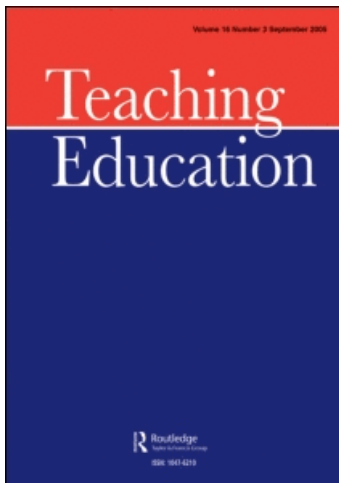
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Globalization and the preparation of quality teachers: rethinking knowledge domains for teaching

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Preparing quality teachers has become a global concern as all nations strive for excellence at all levels. Yet, there is little consensus around what constitutes quality and how quality teachers might best be attained. This article takes up the issue of quality teacher preparation by exploring several pivotal questions: What might quality teaching mean in a global context? What should globally competent teachers know and be able to do? What are some of the issues, dilemmas, barriers, or structures that seem to interfere with teacher education reform and hinder movement towards internationalization in teacher preparation? The discussion is framed by five knowledge domains for teaching and articulates how these domains could support quality teaching in a global context.

Keywords: curriculum; globalization; teacher education; teacher knowledge; teacher quality

Introduction

The dichotomous characterization of teaching as either art or science harkens to a long tradition of practice which calls for discovery of standard procedures that can be learned by all teachers. Since the early years of the twentieth century, the question of whether teaching is an art or a science has fueled numerous debates, research studies, theories, and teacher preparation models, yet has ultimately not proven useful in resolving the question of teacher quality, which has become a contemporary global concern (Buchberger, Campos, Kallos, & Stephenson, 2000; International Alliance of Leading Education Institutes, 2008; International Reading Association, 2008) as all nations strive for excellence at all levels, whether economic, social, political or, of course, educational. While there is little disagreement about the need for quality teachers and the key role they play in the socialization of citizens and the conveyance of national priorities, there remains little consensus around what constitutes “excellence” and how quality teachers might best be attained (Akiba, LeTendre, & Scribner, 2007). In tandem with many of our international colleagues, US scholars and policymakers have been engaged in difficult deliberations about what teachers should know and be able to do, the qualities and preparation teachers should have, where teacher preparation should take place (if at all), and what this preparation should include or exclude (Cochran-Smith, 2001; Cochran-Smith, Feiman-Nemser, & McIntyre, 2008). A multitude of opinions about how teacher quality should be defined have entered the national

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educational discourse, and these opinions are not only varied but often contradictory. For instance, there is the widespread perception that teaching ability is more innate than learned, which continues to fuel opinions about pedagogy as unnecessary because good teaching relies primarily on content knowledge and “verbal ability” (Ballou & Podgursky, 2000; Hess, 2004; US Department of Education, 2002). A contrasting – and equally compelling – position is that learning to teach is complex and requires the acquisition of specialized knowledge and methods through formal study and apprenticeship (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future [NCTAF], 1996, 1997).

These debates are not unique to the United States – arguments about what teachers should know and be able to do are perennially salient and become evermore perplexing as they are played out on the world stage. Additionally, globalization *introduces* new factors that demand consideration in any discussion about quality teachers, and promises to change fundamentally the very nature of teacher preparation. So, what might quality teaching mean? How might it look, in a global context? What should globally competent teachers know and be able to do? What are some of the issues, dilemmas, barriers, or structures that seem to interfere with teacher education reform and therefore hinder movement towards internationalization in teacher preparation? This article addresses each of these questions, not with an aim necessarily towards answering them, even though ideas and possibilities are offered, but for the purpose of encouraging deeper examination and analysis. In doing so, it may raise more questions than provide solutions, yet questions invariably suggest avenues for reform in teacher education and point the way towards possibilities for cross-national research. As befitting an article about the internationalization of teacher education, the discussion of the globally competent and informed teacher is not grounded solely in the United States but moves beyond local borders to consider the larger world community.

Quality teaching in a global context

As a profession and a field, it does not appear that education has come close to characterizing quality teaching in/for a global context. While the notion of global competence among teachers has entered the rhetoric of teacher preparation reform and educators have begun to conceptualize quality teaching framed by a world view, we are still far from a definition that might concretely drive the planning, design, and implementation of teacher preparation for the twenty-first century (Roberts, 2007). What is happening in the twenty-first century that will have an impact on the work of teachers?

First, human mobility now occurs on an unprecedented global scale (Haskins, Greenberg, & Fremstad, 2004; Suarez-Orozco, 2001). This mobility is complex and can be termed:

- multidirectional – with people criss-crossing the globe in all directions;
- transiently permanent – a term I use to describe sojourns that may be quite long-term, even stretching into years, but where the intention or the opportunity/possibility to permanently relocate may be absent;
- culturally inclusive – of all races, ages, economic classes and so on; and
- life-embedded – because periodic but constant movement across the world and between and among countries has become a normative and commonplace life event for an ever larger proportion of the world’s population.

Second, a phenomenon that is both a consequence of and a force behind global mobility is transnational employment and recruitment across skill sets. Unlike in the recent past, transnational job recruitment now encompasses the continuum of workers from the very highly skilled to those minimally skilled – another example of the culturally inclusive characteristic of mobility. A third aspect of twenty-first-century life also linked to global mobility is the large-scale displacement of millions of people, accompanied by forced migration. This movement of peoples across national borders is being fueled by war, natural disaster, and “development-induced migration” (Stanley, 2004). Fourth, new economies which have generated rapid income growth have resulted in even greater disparities between the poor and the rich. We now have a new class of super rich at the same time that we have growing numbers of hungry, poor, and homeless (Farmer, 2005). Fifth, new economies demand additional resources, resources for which all countries are competing. The global impact of the sudden spike in oil prices during 2008 is a sober reminder. Finally, technological advances have cemented interdependence in the twenty-first century and redefined commerce, interactions, and communication on an international level (Banks, 2008). Nations are engaged in exchange on many levels (social, cultural, intellectual and so on), and collectively feel the impact of world events, regardless of where in the world these events occur.

This characterization of today’s global context can only be partial given the complexity of our twenty-first-century world. However, it points to new norms that teachers, especially those preparing to enter the profession, will have to accept. One new norm will be classrooms that are more and more diverse, almost regardless of where they are (Rong & Preissle, 2009). Secondly, teachers can expect to work alongside colleagues who may not have been recruited locally, or they themselves may be the ones responding to regional or international searches to fill teaching shortages. Third, teachers will be instructing children who are not only diverse but may enter the classroom with very unique and challenging needs (Goodwin, 2002a; Rong & Preissle, 2009). One example is the many children from rural areas moving into large central cities in China. In Beijing, this new school population has sparked the creation of special schools in order to meet their specific needs. Another example is adolescent immigrants entering US schools, chronologically ready for the secondary grades but academically unprepared for the curriculum due to trauma and schooling interrupted by war (Goodwin, 2002a). They need a curriculum that is intellectually challenging, yet developmentally appropriate as well as socially and culturally relevant.

Given all this, how can we prepare new teachers who can respond to the needs of today’s changing communities and capably meet the imperatives presented by a shifting global milieu? How can we ensure that our graduates will not be mystified by the complexities today’s classrooms and communities represent? What should globally competent teachers know and be able to do?

In the US, current conceptions of teacher knowledge emphasize the principles or standards of practice and performance that new teachers must meet, with the majority of teacher preparation programs in the country organized around such teaching standards and performance-based assessments. One of the most widely used set of standards has been developed by INTASC (Interstate New Teacher Assessment Support Consortium, 1992). Other statements about teacher preparation/learning have also proliferated. These include those outlined by NCTAF (1996) and the National Academy of Education (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Each list of standards is undergirded by a common set of questions: “What kinds of knowledge do effective

teachers need to have about subject, learning and development? What skills do teachers need to provide productive learning experiences for diverse students? What professional commitments do teachers need to uphold for all students and for themselves?" (Bransford, Darling Hammond, & LePage, 2005, pp. 2–3). In essence, all the standards are designed to lay out the knowledge, skills, and dispositions quality teachers ought to embody and perform.

All these skills/content are important, but producing the globally competent teacher will require more than "covering" a defined set of requirements, completing a certain number of credits, or demonstrating an understanding of specific knowledge, skills, and dispositions. As teacher educators we need to conceptualize teaching knowledge in ways that transcend the practicalities (and limitations) of discrete teaching skills and tools, to develop in our students ways of thinking about and approaching teaching and learning that promote the application of a professional repertoire to a vast array of problems and dilemmas, most of which cannot possibly be anticipated beforehand.

This article suggests five knowledge domains for teaching¹ or big ideas that can support teacher learning and teaching that is integrated, inquiry-based, and holistic. In my own extensive work in pre-service teacher education, they have provided my colleagues and me with a lens for thinking about and organizing for teacher learning. They have also helped our students (and us) stretch beyond teaching as an imitative process and pushed us all to view (and enact) good teaching as the consequence of numerous decisions and reflective practice which grow out of the dialogue, competing agendas, and varied contexts surrounding teaching. Ultimately, they focus us on more than discrete behaviors and competences; they focus our attention on the kinds of teachers we need to prepare in order to achieve the quality education we say we want for all children. These knowledge domains for teaching are:

- (1) personal knowledge/autobiography and philosophy of teaching;
- (2) contextual knowledge/understanding children, schools, and society;
- (3) pedagogical knowledge/content, theories, methods of teaching, and curriculum development;
- (4) sociological knowledge/diversity, cultural relevance, and social justice; and
- (5) social knowledge/cooperative, democratic group process, and conflict resolution.

The section below first describes the meaning and application of each domain within teacher preparation curricula, and then articulates how these domains could support quality teaching in a global context.

Knowledge domains for teaching

Personal knowledge

Every student who enters a teacher preparation program has been through a laboratory in teaching and is filled with all manner of expectation, preconceived notion, implicit theory, assumption, and belief about teaching, learners, teachers, and schools (Maher & Tetreault, 1994; Martin & Van Gunten, 2002). That is, impressions about who teachers are and what they do have already been formed from years of being a student in elementary, secondary, and even university classrooms (Goodwin, 2002b, 2002c).

Actual teaching behavior is often shaped by these positive and negative images that constitute personal knowledge of teaching, rather than by a preservice program (Richardson, 1996). Thus, learning to teach is what Progoff (1975) describes as a *positioning point*. That is, teacher preparation is a *transition* between what one has been in the past and will be in the future. Thus, prospective teachers' experiences and autobiographies become the foundation upon which teaching practice is built.

Teacher preparation programs should facilitate a conscious intersection of student teachers' autobiographies and the formal curriculum. Each student teacher needs to draw on personal knowledge, prior experience, the teacher preparation curriculum, and practice teaching, and reconstruct these in such a way as to derive personal meaning. Without this meaningful reconstruction there is unlikely to be a transformation or change in behavior because the new knowledge, skills, and attitudes presented in the teacher preparation curriculum are not integrated into the student teacher's thought or action. When this is the case, the neophyte teacher will most likely base decisions and actions on past, meaningful experience, thus bypassing formal or university-based teacher preparation. The failure to see how one's accumulated life experiences bridge to one's continuing growth is to miss the opportunity to make them relevant to the future. Therefore, attention must be given to personal knowledge, building on what the student teacher already knows, on who the student teacher is, and on the preconceptions student teachers bring with them as they begin their preparation.

In countries around the world, movement to upgrade teachers and reform teaching is patently apparent (International Alliance of Leading Education Institutes, 2008). Many nations are re-thinking the concept of "learning" as well as traditionally held definitions of intelligence or achievement. In Afghanistan, for instance, there have been efforts towards a more child-centered curriculum; in Jordan, teachers are being exposed to instructional strategies that are more participatory and experiential; in Singapore, educators' practice is being reshaped by the concept "teaching less, learning more", a move away from didactic instruction; in the Netherlands, there is an emphasis on talent identification which has fueled a re-examination of traditional conceptions of "giftedness". Regardless of the country or context, every innovation depends on teachers for successful implementation, teachers whose personal and autobiographical knowledge hold the power to shape their decisions, practice, and pedagogical choices as teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Goodwin, 2002b; Richardson, 1996). And yet, in the US and internationally, most teachers share in common personal experiences with schooling that emphasized memorization over understanding and learner passivity over active participation. Unless this knowledge is consciously examined, it can block meaningful change and learning (Rios, Montecinos, & van Olphen, 2007), causing novice teachers to teach as they were taught, to replicate what they experienced as students. Engendering this interrogation of lived experiences and tacit understandings requires teacher education that focuses on "cognitions, beliefs, and the making of meaning" (Richardson, 1998, p. 145) and engages students in thinking critically about prior knowledge and practical theories in order to "[restructure] their cognitive maps with reformed and/or new understandings" (p. 147).

Contextual knowledge

A perennial dilemma in preparing teachers is the fact that no single program, no matter how extensive or comprehensive, can possibly prepare each fledgling teacher for every situation that might arise in the classroom. Classrooms are complex and

dynamic, and the children who inhabit them defy categorization, despite constant attempts to do so (Goodwin, 1997). It would be presumptuous for teacher educators to believe that we can identify *a priori* all that our student teachers will need to know in order to be successful with the wide variety of human beings with whom they will work and in the varied settings in which they will do this work. What we can do, however, is to provide our students with ways of thinking about teaching and children, with problem-solving, problem-posing, and information-gathering skills, and with strategies for naming problems and contextual variables which inform solutions (Richardson, 1996).

Contextual knowledge begins with the immediate environments in which children are located – the classroom itself, as well as their family communities. However, contextual knowledge is not simply immediate and proximate, and must include knowledge that may be political, historical, structural, cultural, and so on. For example, within the US, the educational/political landscape has been indelibly altered by the passing of the *No Child Left Behind* legislation (Sunderman, Kim, & Orfield, 2005), while history underscores the educational inequities perpetrated on children who are poor and minority (Goodwin, 2002c). Both of these contextual realities must be considered when planning for instruction or puzzling through children's academic issues. Contextual knowledge propels teachers beyond subject or instructional strategy to examine learners' needs as nested within multiple socio-cultural-economic-political locations.

A discussion about contextual knowledge on a global scale highlights the myriad changes all societies have undergone, as well as the many complexities young people face daily. Quality teachers for global communities need to develop awareness of these numerous realities. One example is the digital environment in which millions of young people comfortably navigate, as they create virtual, yet lived, worlds of which few adults are cognizant. Another is the transnational spaces which today's youth frequently traverse as they move easily across time zones (Rong & Preissle, 2009). The ease and frequency of transnational travel has completely redefined traditional notions of cultural borrowing, home, family, friendship, and relationships. A third involves the rapid expansion of world economies that has created desires, expectations, and interactional modes that were unknown only a few decades ago (Banks, 2008; Farmer, 2005). Clearly, an understanding of context involves more than a sense of position or place, and today's teacher must integrate this understanding into all that occurs in classrooms.

Still, there is the question of how teachers in preparation come to acquire depth of contextual understanding that is global as well as local. Technology, international exchanges, and studying abroad all hold promise – and have evidenced success – as avenues towards greater intercultural knowledge and internationalization (Cushner, 2007; Merryfield, 1995; Roberts, 2007). The tools of the digital age especially have grown in number and sophistication to afford synchronous conversation across continents, as well as asynchronous knowledge sharing and perspective exchange.

Pedagogical knowledge

The common dictionary definition of pedagogy is the art or science of teaching; teaching methods. Teacher educators know that methods, defined as strategies or teaching “tool kits”, provide a sense of security, particularly to beginners. This is false security, however, because there are few “tricks of the trade” that will work universally. Of far

more value than a collection of “how tos” will be the ability to study a situation, notice what students need, and invent appropriate practices (Schoonmaker, 2002). This ability comes from *habits of mind* more than from the technical implementation of specific methods. Habits of mind are developed as student teachers are challenged to thoughtfully integrate disciplinary expertise and pedagogical content knowledge with prior experience and current student teaching practice. Of course, student teachers need to learn a variety of methods so that they have a repertoire of “things to do” in the classroom. However, developing a repertoire of teaching strategies is more than the mastery of a series of steps. Rather, ways of doing should represent ways of *thinking* about what to do as subject matter knowledge, theories of learning and development, and methods of teaching are all brought to bear.

Content, theories, and methods of teaching become the building blocks for curriculum development. Too often, curriculum development is not included in teacher preparation programs. Teaching is viewed solely as an instructional or implementation problem, one which can be considered quite apart from *what* is taught (Bolin & Panaritis, 1992). Hence, the predominant model with which teachers are familiar is a school curriculum developed by external experts. The separation of curriculum and instruction has many negative consequences. First, when teachers are denied the opportunity to exercise their considerable skills and judgment in making decisions about what is taught and the instructional strategies most suited to their students, “deskilling” occurs (Apple, 1987; Hargreaves, 2003). That is, over time teachers’ knowledge atrophies and they become less capable of adapting curriculum for their specific students and more dependent on pre-packaged materials.

Another negative consequence is the ineffectiveness of curriculum reform movements dependent largely on curricula developed by experts outside the classroom. When teachers are mandated materials that are inappropriate for their setting or are inconsistent with their personal and professional beliefs, they resist. Their resistance is demonstrated in their rejection of new curricula in favor of teaching with familiar materials and through familiar ways so that the more things change, the more they, in fact, remain the same.

A much more powerful role for the teacher is as curriculum maker – one who designs a curriculum that grows out of the needs and interests and the students (Goodwin, 1997; Schoonmaker, 2002). This does not mean that curricula need to be continually created from whole cloth, or that commercial materials have no utility. But, it does mean that the teacher and his or her students have agency and are actors in the process; they are not simply acted upon.

Pedagogical knowledge is essential to quality teaching in a global context where educational innovation is a necessity because: transformation in pedagogical knowledge is what will drive transformation in education – systems, structures, teacher preparation, assessments, and so on; and teachers who are pedagogical authorities are equipped to be active partners in any educational reform effort because they can be architects of change, not passive implementers. Given expertise in curriculum development, even the novice teacher can develop the ability to critically assess and adapt assigned materials or, possibly, create new materials arising from students’ unique contextual, academic, and personal needs. Finally, pedagogical knowledge must encompass more than an understanding of the formal curriculum – that which is sanctioned by the authorities or state. It must include an understanding of the informal, cultural, or personal curricula that children embody – the curriculum of home, the curriculum of community/ies, the curriculum of lived experiences. To achieve this,

teachers as curriculum makers must embrace “several capacities of mind ... of heart ... of the physical body and the spiritual soul” – ways of seeing the world, respecting and being with others, and maintaining balance between one’s inner self and the outer world (McIntosh, 2005, p. 23).

Sociological knowledge

Our marvelously diverse world needs teachers and curricula that answer to and respect that diversity. Indeed, interdependence on a global level is brought home daily as human struggles to live in harmony and achieve equity are paraded internationally on television and in newsprint. On a global scale, we are witnessing unprecedented sociological changes that are having an impact on our schools and on what it means to teach well. Mention has been made previously of some of these powerful changes, the magnitude of which cannot be underscored emphatically enough. These changes have resulted in “transnational communities” (abu El-Haj, 2007, p. 311) of adults and children who hold “multiple national affiliations” (p. 307). Even the very definition of citizenship is evolving (Banks, 2008; McIntosh, 2005).

Clearly, no teacher, no teacher education program, no school, can be immune to these sociological transformations as society exponentially grows in complexity. In addition, world history informs us that excellent schooling has always been reserved for the privileged and schools have replicated social stratifications and inequities by grooming students for future life roles as predetermined by their class and race (Goodwin, 2002c). Undoubtedly, this knowledge domain is the most challenging for teacher educators and students alike because issues of race, class, cultural difference, and inequity are sensitive, loaded with meaning and emotion, and connect to each person’s core beliefs and values.

New teachers will need to confront their fears, prejudices, and misconceptions if they are to teach children of all races and ethnicities, children who have disabilities, children who are immigrants, migrants, refugees, (English) language learners, gay and lesbian, poor, academically apathetic, homeless, children who are different from them as well those who mirror them, and so on. Many of these children have been/are ostracized and ignored; many have been/are considered worthless, uneducable, damaged. Teacher preparation will need to become uncomfortable, a space for interrupting low expectations, deficit thinking, racism, classism, xenophobia, and all other kinds of isms, if our intention is to develop teachers who can uphold the rights of children and are equipped to interrupt schooling practices that are discriminatory and harmful (Goodwin, 2002a, 2002c).

We have always lived in a diverse world; the only difference now is that globalization has brought the world’s diversity into high definition – diversity is no longer “out there” but right here. This means that none of us can ignore any longer the too many children who do not receive what they deserve, including a quality and caring education to help them develop into informed, thinking, moral, and empowered citizens. Traditional, assimilationist notions of citizenship are fast becoming obsolete in the twenty-first century as “citizens” – particularly youth – adopt multiple, shifting, and hybridized identities (abu El-Haj, 2007; Banks, 2008). Undoubtedly, we need teachers who are diverse not just in how they look, where they come from, the language they speak, and the histories they embody, but in how they think, interact with *Other(s)*, and embrace a world where citizenship is “differentiated” and is not simply “legal” or “minimal”, but “active” and “transformative” (Banks, 2008, p. 137).

Diversity in and among teachers is not simply a noun or a state of being; diversity is a mindset, a concept, a way of thinking, perceiving, living, and teaching. It is a quality, characteristic, disposition, and perspective that all teachers, each person, must seek.

Social knowledge

In a rapidly shrinking and increasingly complex universe, where work necessarily involves others outside one's immediate environment, the ability to participate effectively in democratic, cooperative groups is essential to teachers who are going to exert leadership in the field. In the US, ongoing debates about teacher empowerment suggest that teachers can have a place in shaping the profession. If teachers are to participate in the determination of school goals and policies, and are given the right to exercise professional judgment about curricular content and instruction – as many practitioners and scholars advocate they should be – they must be equipped for these responsibilities. This requires both professional expertise and professional authority to participate meaningfully in decision-making. Teachers need to be skillful at interaction with individuals and groups, recognizing that different dynamics are at work with each. Additionally, teachers with expertise in democratic group processes will naturally create classroom settings where cooperation, fairness, mutuality, and equality are the norms. There is much evidence in the world that we do not, as a world community, live by these norms. Children can experience such democratic environments and learn to live by and advocate for these basic principles of justice only if teachers are capable of creating them.

It should be made clear that no political agenda is attached to this mention of democratic classrooms and processes. Even while it is acknowledged that all teaching is undoubtedly political, the concepts underlying this discussion of democratic classrooms are non-partisan: equity, inclusion, diversity, cooperation, full participation, peace. These ideas are equally important on a world stage, and there is much work to be done if we are to not just survive but prosper and develop as a world family. After all, we are depending on *all* our children to take hold of society and remake it with wisdom, compassion, love, and hope, to re-imagine a good life that includes rather than excludes, and to act in the interests of the common good.

Barriers, issues, and dilemmas in rethinking and redoing teacher preparation

My long experience in a teacher preparation program that enacts these knowledge domains for teaching informs me that thinking about teacher preparation in this way requires a simultaneous change in the *doing* of teacher preparation. Contrary to long-standing norms in teacher education practice, such a curriculum cannot be delivered in the usual way: through discrete units, often topic-focused courses, arranged in a sequence which generally culminates in some kind of apprenticeship or field practice. The “seat-time” conception of learning – that is, the successful completion of requirements and courses resulting automatically in certification or clearance for teaching – while commonplace in our profession, cannot support quality teacher preparation. Space does not allow a more complete description of the kind of program structures necessary to support teacher education conceptualized as holistic and integrated, and teacher knowledge as inquiry-based and focused on problem-solving. Suffice it to say that the rapid-fire changes evident in our world demand definitions and enactments of teaching that are more sophisticated, conceptual and flexible, rather than bound by

subject, instructional method, or technique. Yet, the practice of teacher preparation has remained remarkably stable over the past century, and “the culture of teacher education has shown itself to be highly resistant to new ways of conceiving knowledge” (McWilliam, 1994, cited in Ladson-Billings, 2001, p. 5). Why is this the case? What gets in the way of change?

A significant barrier to change is the structure and context of teacher education. The fragmentation of teacher preparation into single courses and experiences conforms to the structure of the academy that encourages individual expertise, ownership of knowledge, and entrepreneurship. These bedrock values of higher education shape the reward structure for academicians. Shaking up this entrenched system seems daunting if not impossible, even while such a system is completely antithetical to notions of collaborative learning and teaching across disciplinary boundaries.

It is important also to remember that teacher education is typically structured as a collective enterprise that relies on the joint efforts of several different groups (Goodwin & Oyler, 2008). Teacher educators depend on arts and science colleagues – or subject matter experts – as well as school partners such as district administrators and teachers, to maintain and implement their programs. This alliance across the three groups is, and has historically been, uneasy, typically characterized by a lack of respect in the academy for education as an intellectual – or even a *bona fide* – discipline, and mistrust of university-based educators on the part of school-based practitioners. Thus, teacher educators are placed in the unhappy position of working with reluctant or critical collaborators who may not always uphold the same goals or assume responsibility for quality teacher preparation, *even while teacher preparation cannot occur without their participation*.

A second set of barriers relates to how teacher education conceives of teaching and learning. Despite rhetorical assertions about the developmental underpinnings of learning, teacher education continues to operate according to a “banking approach” to knowledge (Freire, 1984). All student teachers are required to complete the same courses at the same time in the same sequence. Knowledge is poured into students perceived as empty vessels, with little attention to differences in students’ experiences, readiness, needs, or capacities. Seldom is instruction or curriculum differentiated to meet students where they are, and our students, in turn, implement curriculum for children that are similarly inflexible because they teach as we teach, not as we say.

Our students are also expected to “get it” at the same rate. There is little leeway for student teachers who may need extra time to meet the standards that we set, or who may need additional practice in classrooms beyond minimum certification requirements. Clearly what is absent when we examine the teacher preparation assembly-line is any notion of learning and learning to teach as developmental. Still, we are not alone in talking the talk of developmental appropriateness without walking the walk. Our graduates – those who get it and meet all the standards “on time” – also go on to teach in schools where prescribed curricula are a common reality, where they will teach discrete subjects isolated from other teachers, and where they are expected to perform the same duties on their first day as teachers who have been in the classroom for years. Apparently the structure and context of teacher education are organized to perpetuate, support, and replicate the linearity and rigidity of schools and teaching.

A final set of barriers consists of dilemmas facing teacher educators. First, teacher educators are simultaneously gatekeepers and advocates for their students preparing to be teachers.² Thus, teacher educators assume the dual role of helping students

construct their teaching identities and develop capacity as teachers, while at the same time serving as gatekeepers for state authorities and the profession. This role tension is related to the context in which teacher education operates – university-based teacher preparation programs cannot exist without government sponsorship and therefore are not always in a position to resist or question mandates, even if these mandates seem problematic.

Second, the population of student teachers has changed dramatically. Not only have there been significant demographic shifts, but students bring an increasing array of needs, capacities, and life circumstances to teacher preparation (Goodwin & Oyler, 2008). Diversity among student teachers broadly defined is relevant to a key dilemma facing teacher educators – measuring competence, deciding incompetence. Clearly teacher education programs have responsibilities to not only determine fitness and readiness to teach, but to also scaffold students' fitness and readiness and support their success. Yet, there are many students who need *extraordinary* support, resources, and accommodations because of very unique circumstances. How should student teachers' individual situations and characteristics figure into decisions about fitness to teach? What factors should come into play when teacher educators enact their gatekeeping responsibility?

Ultimately though, regardless of all these issues or dilemmas, there remains one super barrier that overpowers all others, and that is teacher educators themselves. Simply put, the internationalization of teacher education depends on the internationalization of teacher educators. Unfortunately, the reality is that the majority of teacher educators are “white, middle class, mostly male, fiftyish”, which begs the question “do today’s teacher educators have the knowledge, skills and commitments to teach for equity and diversity either locally or globally?” (Merryfield, 2000, p. 430). We cannot teach what we do not know.

Getting to there from here: small steps towards change

Given these challenges that get in the way of teacher education reform and the preparation of quality teachers, what might be some steps we could take towards re-visioning teacher preparation framed by a global context? A first step might be to consider strategies, activities, or actions that could directly counter some of the barriers and issues described earlier. For example, in order to break through the isolation and linearity of courses, student teachers and teacher educators in different countries could be linked via the internet for the purpose of shared dialogue and pedagogical exchange. This kind of inter-national connection should be an established aspect of any teacher education program if we are serious about preparing teachers who have some perspective beyond their local/national environment. Imagine the changes that would be engendered when even two teacher educators and their students co-teach and co-learn across two different contexts.

To counter the developmentally constrained nature of teacher preparation, it would make sense to engage our students in an integrated core experience that knits together fundamental ideas and skills in teaching. This core would afford students greater opportunity to bridge theory–practice gaps because connections across concepts would be rendered visible and therefore concrete. Additional coursework could then be anchored to the core, which would provide a conceptual foundation for students' ongoing pedagogical development. An integrated core would require faculty to talk together regularly and collaborate around lessons, assessments, and student issues.

Imagine the changes that would be engendered if even two professors decided to plan and teach as a team.

A last example attends to the dilemmas facing teacher educators. Dilemmas are inherent in teaching and also in teacher education; they offer the perfect opportunity for collaborative inquiry among the international community of teacher educators. Many of us are asking the same questions and struggling with the same concerns; in our separate countries we are dreaming up creative solutions to common problems and piloting innovative programs. There is much we can learn from each other and much we can discover and learn together. In today's global community, collective work and research must be the norm.

Yet, each of these small steps presupposes certain commitments, dispositions, experiences, and knowledge in terms of multiculturalism, social justice, internationalism, and educational equity on the part of teacher educators. Given the monocultural, monoracial make-up of the teacher education professoriate (Ladson-Billings, 2001; Merryfield, 2000), and teacher educators' inadequate preparation and limited experiences with *Other* (Rios et al., 2007), these understandings are often absent. Clearly, change will depend on parallel changes in the requirements – courses, field-work, research frameworks – for doctoral study for future teacher educators, and in the standards and reward structures associated with tenure. It will also require a re-conceptualization of faculty recruitment so that search efforts reach beyond national borders, as well as a re-thinking of professional development for new and continuing faculty. Finally, it suggests an expansion of the “diversification” of curricula so many institutions have undertaken, to include global and international perspectives, content, and issues.

A final word

In many ways, contemporary discussions about quality teachers have brought us back to the early days of the twentieth century – we are still trying to identify *the* definitive route to quality teaching so that we might replicate and apply it to all teachers. Undoubtedly there is much we don't know and we clearly need additional inquiries into the work of quality teachers as well as the work of the teacher educators who prepared them. Yet, calls for scientific evidence, best practices, and standardized strategies bypass the reality that learning to teach does not rest on techno-rational skills or proceed in a linear, predictable fashion. Rather, we know that learning to teach is complex, contextually specific, autobiographically grounded, and informed by sociopolitical realities. This is why quality teaching often looks different in different settings.

Perhaps then, instead of searching for the one right way, which always seems elusive, we need to embrace the probability of multiple routes to quality, to think outside our own boundaries and specialties so we can collaboratively examine and document quality teaching as enacted in a wide variety of communities and contexts. The world we have is messy and complicated; it will take more than one idea, more than singular solutions, more than one conception of excellence or quality, to prepare teachers who can help us achieve the world we all envision.

Notes

1. This discussion builds upon earlier work in Bolin and Goodwin, 1992.
2. For an in-depth discussion, see Goodwin and Oyler, 2008.

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