

【 Education Policy Studies Series 】

Lee Hysan Lecture Series in Education

Faculty of Education

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Preparing Teachers
for the World We Have
and for the World We Want:
Quality Teachers for a Global Context

A. Lin Goodwin

Faculty of Education Hong Kong Institute of Educational Research

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

About the Author

A. Lin Goodwin is Professor and Associate Dean for Teacher Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, U.S.

Acknowledgment

Modified version of lecture of the Lee Hysan Lecture Series in Education delivered by Professor A. Lin Goodwin on September 17, 2008 at the Faculty of Education of The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

© A. Lin Goodwin, 2008

All rights reserved. No parts of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without permission in writing from the author.

ISBN 978-962-8908-28-8

Education Policy Studies Series

Education embraces aspirations of individuals and society. It is a means of strengthening human resources, sustaining competitiveness of society, enhancing mobility of the underprivileged, and assimilating newcomers to the mainstream of society. It is also a means of creating a free, prosperous, and harmonious environment for the populace.

Education is an endeavor that has far-reaching influences, for it embodies development and justness. Its development needs enormous support from society as well as the guidance of policies that serve the imperatives of economic development and social justice. Policy-makers in education, as those in other public sectors, can neither rely on their own visions nor depend on the simple tabulation of financial cost and benefit to arrive at decisions that will affect the pursuit of the common good. Democratization warrants public discourse on vital matters that affect all of us. Democratization also dictates transparency in the policy-making process. Administrative orders disguised as policies have a very small audience indeed. The public expects well-informed policy decisions, which are based on in-depth analyses and careful deliberation. Like the policy-makers, the public and professionals in education require a wealth of easily accessible facts and views so that they can contribute constructively to the public discourse.

To facilitate rational discourse on important educational matters, the Hong Kong Institute of Educational Research of The Chinese University of Hong Kong organizes from time to time “Education Policy Seminars” to address critical issues in educational development of Hong Kong and other Chinese societies. These academic gatherings have been attended by

stakeholders, practitioners, researchers and parents. The bulk of this series of occasional papers are the fruit of labor of some of the speakers at the seminars. Others are written specifically as contributions to the series.

The aim of this *Education Policy Studies Series* is to present the views of selected persons who have new ideas to share and to engage all stakeholders in education in an on-going discussion on educational matters that will shape the future of our society.

Preparing Teachers for the World We Have and for the World We Want: Quality Teachers for a Global Context

Abstract

Preparing quality teachers has become a global concern as all nations strive toward excellence at all levels, be it economic, social, political, cultural, or, of course, educational. While there is little argument about the need for quality teachers and the key role they play in the socialization of citizens and the conveyance of national priorities, there is simultaneously little consensus around what constitutes quality and how quality teachers might be best attained. Indeed, most definitions of quality teaching are either extremely linear and located in teaching as primarily technical, or are so broadly conceptual as to defy any attempts at generalizability or measurement. This paper will take up the question of quality teachers 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 the preparation and professional development of quality teachers? The paper ends with possibilities for reform and collaborative research in teacher education.

Introduction

The search for the “best way” to prepare teachers harkens to a long tradition of practice which calls for discovery of standard procedures that can be learned by all teachers. In the United

States (U.S.), during the early part of the 20th century, for example, unprecedented advances were being made in science and the application of technology to the solution of human problems. Educators, eager to identify with the blossoming field of science, saw teaching as essentially an applied science. Enthusiasts sought greater efficiency and effectiveness in teaching and became convinced that it was possible to isolate the variables that differentiate effective from ineffective teachers. Through the development of educational tests and measurements, which offered potential for linking best teaching practice with student outcomes, a “science” of teaching began to develop. Learning to teach, given this view, is a process of becoming increasingly skilled in applying universally proven techniques to a wide array of situations.

A contrasting perspective on teaching, with an equally long tradition, holds that it is dangerous to apply scientific methods to human beings. Human emotions, individuality and uniqueness, feelings, wishes, and values are at the heart of teaching and cannot be systematically categorized into a routine that may be uniformly applied in all classrooms. In this view, teaching is an art — a practical art. The art of teaching departs from recipes and relies on both skills and knowledge, as well as intuition, improvisation, and creativity. Thus, the teacher needs to have knowledge as a tool for active, intelligent, *and* imaginative engagement in practice. Components of teacher preparation curricula, such as lesson planning, classroom management strategies, content knowledge *and* pedagogical content knowledge, plus a deep understanding of human development, are all necessary to complete the teacher’s

professional repertoire. These are seen as material from which one learns how to invent appropriate practice, but, not as steps to be memorized and duplicated. Those who master or mimic technique or “best practices” may appear to have an advantage in their first year or two of teaching, but they will not be as effective or powerful in the long run as teachers who learn how to think about their work, hold an experimental attitude toward teaching, and inquire into the learning process.

The dichotomous characterization of teaching as either art or science has generated numerous debates, research studies 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, Kallós, & Stephenson, 2000; International Reading Association, 2008) as all nations strive toward excellence at all levels, be it economic, social, political, cultural, or, of course, educational. While there is little argument 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” or quality and how quality teachers might be best attained. Like many of our international colleagues, scholars and policy makers in the U.S. 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). A multitude of opinions about how teacher quality should be defined have entered the national 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 arguments that pedagogy is unnecessary and that good teaching relies primarily on content knowledge and “verbal ability” (Ballou & Podgursky, 2000; Hess, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2002). A contrasting — and equally compelling — opinion is that learning to teach is complex and difficult and requires the acquisition of specialized knowledge and methods through formal study and apprenticeship (Cochran-Smith, 2004; National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 1996, 1997).

These debates are not unique to the U.S.; arguments about what teachers should know and be able to do are as salient as ever and become even more perplexing as they are played out on the world stage. Perennial questions surrounding teacher preparation that have long embroiled educators, such as teaching as nature versus teaching as nurture, or whether teaching is a legitimate profession that requires specialized training or knowledge, necessarily assume a different cast when framed by the needs of an interdependent and rapidly changing world. In addition, globalization *introduces* new factors that must be considered in any discussion about quality teachers, and promises to fundamentally change 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 the preparation

and professional development of quality teachers? I will touch upon each of these questions, not with an aim necessarily toward answering them, even though I do have ideas and possibilities to offer, but for the purpose of deeper examination and analysis. In doing so, I may raise more questions than provide answers, yet questions invariably suggest avenues for reform — in this case, reform in teacher education — and point the way toward possibilities for collaborative research.

Quality Teaching in a Global Context

As a profession and a field, I do not believe we have come close to characterizing quality teaching in a global context. I agree that the notion of global competence among teachers has entered the rhetoric of teacher preparation reform and, as a field, we have begun the task of conceptualizing quality teaching framed by a world view, but we are still far from a definition that might concretely drive the planning, design, and implementation of teacher preparation for the 21st century. What is happening in the 21st century that will have an impact on the work of teachers?

First, human mobility now occurs on a global scale. This mobility is multidirectional, transiently permanent (often long-term but not necessarily without end), culturally inclusive (of all races, ages, economic classes, etc.), and life-embedded (i.e., periodic but constant movement across the globe has become a life norm). One 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 very highly skilled to minimally skilled, and is another example of the culturally inclusive characteristic of mobility. A third aspect of life in the 21st century that is 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 caused by war, natural disaster, and development-induced migration. 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 the super rich at the same time that we have growing numbers of the hungry, poor, and homeless. Fifth, new economies demand additional resources for which all countries are competing. The recent rise in oil prices is a case in point. Finally, technological advances have cemented our interdependence in the 21st century. Nations are engaged in exchange on many levels (social, cultural, intellectual, etc.), and collectively feel the impact of world events, regardless of where on earth these events occur. In essence, what now happens in one part of the world has real — and oftentimes, immediate — consequences for the rest of the world.

My characterization of today's global context can only be partial given the complexity of our 21st-century world. However, it points to new norms that teachers, especially teachers who are 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. Second, teachers may 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 can expect to work with children who are not only diverse, but may enter the classroom with very unique and challenging needs. One local example might be 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 U.S. schools, chronologically ready for the secondary grades, but academically unprepared for the curriculum due to trauma and schooling interrupted by war. 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 context? How can we ensure that our graduates will not be mystified by the complexities today's classrooms and communities represent? What should globally competent and informed teachers know and be able to do?

In the U.S., 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 or principles has been developed by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (1992). Other statements about teacher

preparation and learning have also proliferated. Some of these include those outlined by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996, 1997) headed by Linda Darling-Hammond, and by the National Academy of Education (Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage, 2005). Each list of standards is undergirded by a common set of questions about teacher preparation: "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 et al., 2005, pp. 2–3). In essence, all the standards are designed to lay out the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that new teachers of quality ought to embody and perform.

All these skills plus content are important, but producing the globally competent teacher will require more than "covering" a defined set of requirements, completing a certain number of credit hours, or demonstrating a specific articulation of 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 student teachers ways of thinking about and approaching teaching, learning and students that promote the application of a professional repertoire to a vast array of problems and dilemmas, most of which cannot possibly be anticipated beforehand. To prepare quality teachers for all contexts, we must aim to develop student teachers into:

- teachers as curriculum developers and decision makers;

- teachers for *all* children, inclusive of race, ethnicity, gender, dis/ability, religious differences, sexual orientation, language, nationality, etc.

We need also to prepare them to understand and enact:

- teaching as learning/inquiry — with children, with the profession, with peers, and with communities;
- teaching as embedded in moral, socio-political, and cultural contexts;
- learning to teach as rooted in experience with continuous reflection and analysis.

To achieve these goals, I offer here five knowledge domains of teaching¹ or big ideas that support teacher learning and teaching that is integrated, inquiry-based, and holistic. In my own extensive work in preservice teacher education, they have provided my colleagues and me a lens for thinking about and organizing for teacher learning. They have also helped our students (and also 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 of 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. Each domain is described below, including how each supports quality teaching in a global context.

Knowledge Domains

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 (Goodwin, 2002; Maher & Thompson 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 college classrooms (Goodwin, 2002). These impressions may comprise a loose collection of ideas about what the student teacher *does not* want to do or be as a teacher. Or, impressions may be positive and expressed in terms of a favorite teacher the student hopes to emulate. Actual teaching behavior is often shaped by these positive and negative images that constitute personal knowledge of teaching, rather than by a preservice program (Lortie, 1975). Thus, learning to teach is what Proffoff (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. As such, it is not disconnected from life, but

an opportunity for personal and professional growth. Thus, prospective teachers' experiences and autobiographies become the foundation upon which teaching practice is built.

Teacher preparation programs should facilitate a conscious intersection of the student teacher's autobiography and the formal curriculum. The student teacher needs to draw on personal knowledge, prior experience, and the teacher preparation curriculum (including 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, which excludes university-based teacher preparation. To miss the opportunity to see how one's past 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.

Within the global community, movement to upgrade teachers and reform teaching is patently apparent. Many nations are re-thinking the concept of "learning" as well as traditionally held definitions of intelligence or achievement. In Afghanistan, for instance, there are efforts toward more child-centered

curriculum; in Jordan, teachers are being trained to adopt practices that are more participatory and experiential; in Singapore, educators' practice is being reshaped by the concept "Teaching less, learning more." Regardless of the country or context, every innovation depends on teachers for successful implementation, teachers who have necessarily undergone preparation designed to support educational reform. Their personal and autobiographical knowledge hold the power to shape their decisions, practice, and pedagogical choices as teachers (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Goodwin, 2002; Richardson, 1996). Unless this knowledge is consciously examined, it can block meaningful change, causing novice teachers to teach as they were taught, to duplicate their own experiences as students.

Contextual Knowledge

A perennial dilemma in preparing teachers is the fact that no single teacher education program, no matter how extensive, comprehensive or lengthy, can possibly prepare each fledgling teacher for every situation that might arise in the classroom. Classrooms are complex and dynamic places, and the children who inhabit them defy categorization, despite constant attempts to do so. As teacher educators, it would be presumptuous of us to believe that we can identify *a priori* all that our student teachers will need to know in order to be successful with the range 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 student teachers with ways of thinking about teaching and children, with problem-solving, problem-posing and information-gathering skills, with strategies for naming problems and contextual variables which inform

solutions; in essence, we need to provide students with several sets of questions as lenses to assess what occurs in classrooms.

Contextual knowledge begins with the immediate environment in which children are positioned, i.e., the classroom itself, as well as with 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 U.S., the political landscape has been indelibly altered by the passing of *No Child Left Behind Act* (2001), while history underscores the educational inequities perpetrated on children who are poor and minority. 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 on a daily basis. Quality teachers for global communities need to develop awareness of these numerous contextual 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. 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. Clearly, an understanding of context involves more than a sense of position or place, and the globally informed and competent teacher can integrate this understanding into all that occurs in classrooms.

Pedagogical Knowledge

The common dictionary definition of pedagogy is the art or science of teaching; teaching methods. Teacher educators know that methods defined as “tricks of the trade” 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, what seems important to them, and invent appropriate practices. 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 understand and thoughtfully integrate content (knowledge about human growth and development, subject matter knowledge, and pedagogical craft) with prior experience and current student teaching practice. Of course, student teachers need to learn a variety of methods and teaching strategies 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 involves 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). 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 largely dependent 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 actual fact, remain the same.

A much more powerful role for the teacher is in curriculum enactment where the curriculum of the classroom is created with students and grows out of their needs and interests. This does not mean that curricula need to be created from whole

cloth each time, or that commercial materials have no utility. But, it does mean that the teacher and 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: (1) transformation in pedagogical knowledge is what will drive transformation in education — systems, structures, teacher preparation, assessments, etc.; (2) 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 examine assigned materials and adapt them or, when necessary, create new materials arising from the unique contextual, academic, and personal needs of the students.

Sociological Knowledge

Our world is marvelously diverse and therefore needs teachers and curricula that respond 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 of some of the changes, but they are so powerful as to bear repeating in order to underscore the magnitude of change many peoples in the world are experiencing. We see, for instance, that millions of people have

been forced from their homes by war or development-induced displacement. Countless others are economic migrants who have moved within or across national borders to escape poverty and economic hardship. Another example stems from the rapid advances in technology that have redefined commerce, interactions, and communication on an international level. A final example is the ease and frequency of transnational travel that has completely revised traditional notions of cultural exchange, home, family, business, and citizenship.

Clearly, no teacher, no teacher education program, no school can be immune to these sociological transformations as society evolves and becomes more complex daily. In addition, 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. 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 as those who mirror them, and so on. Teacher preparation will need to become

uncomfortable, a space for interrupting low expectations, deficit thinking, racism, classism, xenophobia, and all other kinds of isms.

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. Undoubtedly, we need teachers who are diverse not just in how they look, where they come from, the language they speak, the histories they embody, but in how they think, interact with other(s), and embrace the world. 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 U.S., 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 means of instruction — as I believe 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, mutuality, fairness, full participation, 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.

I should make clear that when I mention democratic classrooms and processes, I attach no political agenda. Even while I acknowledge that all teaching is political, the concepts underlying this discussion of democratic classrooms are non-partisan: equity, inclusion, diversity, cooperation, and participation. These ideas are especially important on a world stage, and indeed are exemplified by our very recent memories of the 2008 Olympic Games where people came together and offered the best of themselves to the global community. 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 program that enacts these knowledge domains of teaching tells me that thinking about teacher preparation in this way requires a simultaneous change in the *doing* of teacher preparation. Contrary to longstanding 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 structure 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 complexity of our world and the rapid-fire changes we are undergoing 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 seems to have remained remarkably stable over the past century because, according to McWilliam, “the culture of teacher education has shown itself to be highly resistant to new ways of conceiving knowledge” (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 are the bedrock values of higher education and they 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 collaboration, and 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, 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 has to do with 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 to be 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 above that indicated by 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 walking. Our graduates — those who get it and meet all the standards “on time” — also go on to teach in schools where prescribed curricula are an increasing 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 knowledge and skills of teaching, 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 are seen to be problematic.

Second, the population of student teachers has changed dramatically. Not only have there been significant demographic changes (Johnson & Kardos, 2008), but diversity among students of teaching has increased (Goodwin & Oyler, 2008). This raises the question of how far teacher education programs should reach in order to remediate student teachers' deficiencies, fill in gaps, and/or provide support to ensure their success.

This issue of diversity among student teachers broadly defined is relevant to the final 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. Yet, there are many students who need extra support, resources, and accommodations because of individual circumstances. How do or should student teachers' qualities and characteristics figure into decisions about

fitness to teach? What factors should come into play when teacher educators enact their gatekeeping responsibility?

Getting to There from Here: Small Steps Toward 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 toward 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 teacher education 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 international connection should be an established component of any teacher education program if we are serious about preparing teachers who have some perspective beyond their local 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 all of student teachers in an integrated core experience that knits together fundamental ideas and skills in teaching. This core would afford student teachers 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 research. Through collaborative inquiry, we could, for example:

- document and examine the practices, interventions, and programmatic structures embedded in teacher preparation programs that serve as major assessment points and mechanisms throughout the learning-to-teach process;
- gather data on how student characteristics beyond GPA (grade point average) and test scores (including, for instance, academic difficulties, disabilities, mental health, standard English language proficiency), or dispositions (such as commitment to diversity, openness to learning and change, an ethical stance, etc.) figure into whether a teacher candidate is ready to — or can — teach;
- study assessment and accountability policies across institutions in order to understand how gatekeeping policies support the work of teacher educators, make explicit definitions of teacher quality, and keep weak teacher candidates out of the profession.

A Final Word

In many ways, current discussions about quality teachers have brought us back to the early days of the 20th 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 do not 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 socio-political understandings. This is why quality teaching often looks different in different settings.

Perhaps then, instead of searching for the one right way, which always seems to elude us, we need to embrace the probability of multiple routes to quality, to think outside our own boundaries and specialties so we can collaboratively study and document quality teaching as enacted in a wide variety of communities and circumstances. 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 about “knowledge domains of teaching” builds upon earlier work in Bolin and Goodwin (1992).
2. For an in-depth discussion of gatekeeping in teacher education, see Goodwin and Oyler (2008).

References

- Apple, M. (1987). The de-skilling of teaching. In F. S. Bolin & J. M. Falk (Eds.), *Teacher renewal: Professional issues, personal choices* (pp. 59–75). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Ballou, D., & Podgursky, M. (2000). Reforming teacher preparation and licensing: What is the evidence? *Teachers College Record*, 102(1), 5–27.
- Bolin, F. S., & Goodwin, A. L. (1992, February). *Redefining teacher education: A model for comprehensive reform*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, San Antonio, TX, U.S.
- Bolin, F. S., & Panaritis, P. (1992). Searching for a common purpose: A perspective on the history of supervision. In C. D. Glickman (Ed.), *Supervision in transition: 1992 Yearbook of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development* (pp. 30–43). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Bransford, J., Darling-Hammond, L., & LePage, P. (2005). Introduction. In L. Darling-Hammond & J. Bransford (Eds.), *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do* (pp. 1–39). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Buchberger, F., Campos, B. P., Kallós, D., & Stephenson, J. (2000). *Green paper on teacher education in Europe: High quality teacher education for high quality education and training*. Retrieved October 15, 2008, from Thematic Network on Teacher Education in Europe Web site: <http://tntee.umu.se/publications/greenpaper.html>
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2001). The outcomes question in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17(5), 527–546.

- Cochran-Smith, M. (2004). Taking stock in 2004: Teacher education in dangerous times. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 55(1), 3–7.
- Feiman-Nemser, S. (2001). From preparation to practice: Designing a continuum to strengthen and sustain teaching. *Teachers College Record*, 103(6), 1013–1055.
- Freire, P. (1984). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. B. Ramos, Trans.). New York: Continuum.
- Goodwin, A. L. (2002). The case of one child: Making the shift from personal knowledge to professionally informed practice. *Teaching Education*, 13(2), 137–154.
- Goodwin, A. L., & Oyler, C. (2008). Teacher educators as gatekeepers: Deciding who is ready to teach. In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, & D. J. McIntyre (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions in changing contexts* (3rd ed., pp. 468–490). New York: Routledge and the Association of Teacher Educators.
- Hess, F. M. (2004). *Common sense school reform*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- International Reading Association. (2008). *Status of teacher education in the Asia-Pacific region*. Newark, DE: Author.
- Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium. (1992). *Model standards for beginning teacher licensing, assessment and development: A resource for state dialogue*. Retrieved October 15, 2008, from Council of Chief State School Officers Web site: <http://www.ccsso.org/publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=81>
- Johnson, S. M., & Kardos, S. M. (2008). The next generation of teachers: Who enters, who stays, and why. In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, & D. J. McIntyre (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions in changing contexts* (3rd ed., pp. 445–467). New York: Routledge and the Association of Teacher Educators.

- Ladson-Billings, G. (2001). *Crossing over to Canaan: The journey of new teachers in diverse classrooms*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Lortie, D. C. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Maher, F. A., & Thompson Tetreault, M. K. (1994). *The feminist classroom: An inside look at how professors and students are transforming higher education for a diverse society*. New York: Basic Books.
- Martin, R. J., & Van Gunten, D. M. (2002). Reflected identities: Applying positionality and multicultural social reconstructionism in teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53(1), 44–54.
- National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (1996). *What matters most: Teaching for America's future*. New York: Author.
- National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (1997). *Doing what matters most: Investing in teacher quality*. New York: Author.
- No Child Left Behind Act*. (2001). U.S.A. Public Law 107–110.
- Proffoff, I. (1975). *At a journal workshop: The basic text and guide for using the intensive journal process*. New York: Dialogue House Library.
- Richardson, V. (1996). The role of attitudes and beliefs in learning to teach. In J. Sikula (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (2nd ed., pp. 102–119). New York: Macmillan.
- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, & Office of Policy Planning and Innovation. (2002). *Meeting the highly qualified teachers challenge: The Secretary's annual report on teacher quality*. Washington, DC: Author.