Editorial

Problematizing the Taken-For-Granted: Talking Across Differences in Teacher Education

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Teacher education, as a profession, advances when a set of "taken-for-granted" ideas that shape the field are crystallized and enacted. These ideas are communicated as truths and frame the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of effective P-12 teaching. It is important, however, we do not become too comfortable with the familiar ways of operationalizing the field, but as policymakers, practitioners, and researchers, we continue to problematize the taken-for-granted teacher education dogmas so discussions across differences (i.e., terminology, language, sensemaking, etc.) can occur. This needs to happen because " . . . education is a conversation aimed at truth . . . The object is not agreement but communication . . . " (Schwab, 1953, p. 9).

Matsko et al. (this issue) point to recurring debates on traditional versus alternative versus residency teacher preparation programs (TPPs); each program type possesses certain characteristics. However, these traits are not universal. For example, in the 337 years since Frances' first École Normale prepared teachers, teacher preparation did not involve an academic degree. Yet today, a non-degree TPP in the United States is an "alternative" program. Researchers need to be mindful of differences locally, nationally, and internationally, especially where TPP clinical experiences are concerned. The U.S. definition of a traditional TPP is an undergraduate (UG) or post-baccalaureate (PB) degree-based program. The definition is agnostic to clinical experience type (student teaching, residency, internship). UG teacher candidates cannot be teachers-of-record, so their traditional TPP must culminate in a non-teacher-of-record clinical experience (student teaching or residency). PB teacher candidates at traditional and alternative TPPs have the option of being teachers-of-record and therefore student teaching, residencies, and internships are all options (Henry et al., 2014; Matsko et al., this issue) found important differences in clinical experiences and prerequisites across program types. Rec Educationalists should be mindful of legal, practical, and lay differences in terminology.

Also, teacher residencies, which trace to America's normal school past, call for close relationships between schools and universities that largely have not existed for some time. University and school district partners must overcome what has been described as the "two-world" trap (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2007), especially when policies are top-down. Despite lack of clarity, universities and schools are joined-at-the-hip (Chu, 2021). On one hand, non-compliance could put teacher educators out of their jobs. On the other hand, teacher attrition exacerbates districts' staffing crises.

On its own, teacher attrition, a commonplace theme in the literature, continues to be a mind-boggling challenge both nationally and internationally (Craig, 2017). It is disruptive to student learning (Ronfeldt et al., 2013), expensive (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014), and varies across contexts. In Texas, new teachers prepared by UG traditional TPPs are more likely to remain in the classroom than PB teachers prepared by alternative TPPs, but the ethnicity of the new teacher and the type of initial school employment matter. Teachers of color are most likely to remain in the classroom after accounting for TPP differences (Van Overschelde & Wiggins, 2019) and teachers employed initially by public "charter" schools are less likely to remain in the profession than teachers employed in "traditional" public schools (Guthery & Bailes, 2022). Goldhaber et al. (this issue) found other factors correlated with new teacher attrition in Washington schools. For instance, the effectiveness of the cooperating teacher was not associated with teacher persistence (c.f., CAEP Standard 2.2), but matching school type (i.e., elementary) and student characteristics between the student teaching school and the initial employment school were associated with greater teacher persistence. These results offer meaningful factors for EPPs placing student teachers and principals hiring new teachers.

Another taken-for-granted idea in teacher education is what constitutes effective teaching, who is the effective teacher candidate, and how to account for both (Tatto et al., 2016; Van Overschelde, 2022). Can the word, effective, be used without conjuring up the behaviorist paradigm

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(Zeichner, 1983), the effective schools movement (D. Imig & Imig, 2006), and/or other historical events? Laughter et al. (this issue) recognize that even if the word, effective, is adopted, it cannot account for all the field's sophistication and eclecticism. Also, the term, effective, takes on added complexity when countries, languages, cultures, and educational systems are judged on their effectiveness (Schleicher, 2011). Some prefer less-loaded terms like good teaching/good teacher (Loewenberg Ball & Forzani, 2009) or better teaching/better teacher (Hill-Jackson & Stafford, 2017; Watson et al., 2006). However, regardless of signifier, the teacher candidate/teacher matters (Craig et al., 2019; Darling-Hammond, 2000). As scholars declare that critical dispositions serve as the linchpin to teacher efficacy (Hill-Jackson et al., 2019; Hill-Jackson & Lewis, 2010), Floden (2012) warns of cautious interpretation. Nevertheless, terms are gateways to understanding "fuller pictures of teacher candidates," a topic deserving additional discussion across differences.

What counts as research also continues to be a recurring idea in teacher education. Although variations in operational terms exist, the need to include an inquiry-based approach to teaching is a fundamental feature enhancing teacher education and professionalism (Flores, 2016, 2018; Menter & Flores, 2021). However, how can this be developed during teacher preparation? van Katwijk et al. (this issue) examine the purpose and value of preservice teacher inquiry in primary TPPs in the Netherlands through including both teacher educators' and preservice teachers' views. The focus of their orientation and the role preservice teachers play in it constitutes the basis for understanding levels of engagement with research and inquiry. Although both teacher educators and preservice teachers state that preservice teacher inquiry is relevant and interesting, there is less agreement with respect to preservice teachers' expectations to undertake inquiry as part of their teaching. The need to foster an inquiry-based approach remains a critical issue. As professionals, teachers require more than teaching and management skills (Zeichner, 2014). The field needs to promote a praxeological epistemology which fosters the expansion of professional knowledge and agency based on critical reflection on practice (Schön, 1987; Zeichner, 2010).

Reflection is, therefore, a core issue–with terms all its own– deserving more consideration. The same recycled discussions about the focus and modes of reflection continue. Issues of theoretical, methodological, and empirical perspectives have been identified (Korthagen, 2017; Mena et al., 2011). The content and process of reflection are dependent on how it is understood but also on the context in which they are practiced. Jung et al. (this issue) explore this topic by analyzing how prompts shape preservice teachers' reflections through drawing on an exploratory case study in the context of an online technology integration class. The authors unpack standard-based, concept-based, and task-based prompts from descriptive, rationalistic, and anticipatory dimensions. The

design and use of prompts is important in reflective thinking. Also, there is a need to develop integrated mentoring knowledge and practice to make the most of student teachers' experience of learning to teach (Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021). The complex and dynamic nature of teaching calls for comprehensive and sophisticated approaches which go beyond the "what" and "how" of teaching to include questions of "why," 'for which purpose,' and "for whom." The use of diverse research designs and the involvement of stakeholders (Beck, 2020) within a "third space" where theory, research, and experience meet and diverse rationales can be negotiated (Zeichner, 2010) are key to inquiry as stance (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009).

Finally, the issue of teaching being a "minor" profession is a frequent talking point (Schön, 1983). Reaching back to Western society's roots, the pedagogue accompanied elite males as they walked between lessons taught by masters of the disciplines.. The lowly teacher who walks alongside students segues us to more recent educational history where teachers are predominantly female, with the profession being heavily regulated by (mostly male) policy makers. The sensitive question of who took over teaching and how/when it happened is raised by Carl et al. (this issue). Also, of critical importance is the giving of authority to teachers in activist organizations to stimulate educational change, professionalize teaching and increase the agency of teachers.

To understand teaching as a profession there also is a need to look at its status and how teacher professionalism is defined, along with government interventions. Once again, language around teacher preparation is important. For example, American doctors/lawyers/massage therapists are "licensed" to practice their professions; teachers are "certified." Even the terminology (language) governments employ disadvantages teachers. Menter and Flores (2021) differentiated between "forces for convergence and forces for divergence in the ways in which teacher professionalism is shaped and reshaped" (p. 121). The former includes the influence of Organization for Economic and Co-operative Development (OECD) with its Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) testing and Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) instrument, but also transnational agreements such as the Bologna process in Europe. The latter, for example, grapples with "how elements of teaching and teacher education may be closely connected to issues of national identity" (p. 121) (i.e., language education, cultural diversity, citizenship education)– with the concept of identity being open to interpretation and needing further problematization. Overall, the professionalization of teaching remains a worthy goal in dehumanizing times (Carter Andrews et al., 2016). Democracy is the foundation on which humanizing and professionalizing happens (Zeichner et al., 2015).

Conversations about teacher education programs, teacher candidates and the place of inquiry, teacher effectiveness, reflection, and professionalization in teaching must continue.

Ideas that we hold as truths in teacher education must be open to inspection, debate, and even reconsideration. Only then will language and terms be puzzled, probed, and problematized. Only then will clarity and new life be breathed into them.

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