

■ ■ ■ 2010 Colloquium on the Internationalization of Teacher Education
NAFSA: Association of International Educators

Preparing Globally Competent Teachers: A U.S. Perspective ■ ■ ■

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Good afternoon. It is an honor to be here today to be able to talk with you about the important topic of internationalizing teacher education. This is an issue that I have thought a lot about over the last 30 + years in my role in leading teacher education programs at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and now at the University of Washington in Seattle.

I consider myself to be an advocate of internationalization efforts in both pre-service teacher education and continuing professional development for teachers, and for many years, I have been involved in learning from the teacher educators around the world who are engaged in this work, and in building international and global components into the teacher education programs with which I have been connected.

My own work in this area has included developing and directing for 25 years an international student teaching program for prospective elementary and secondary teachers that sent student teachers to a number of countries including Ecuador and Namibia, building a global perspectives option into the general

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education component of teacher education programs, infusing global content into professional education courses, and field experiences, and working with others to develop ways to assess these efforts and to see to what extent they achieve their intended goals.

My comments today will focus on two aspects of this important issue. Although I consider myself to be a supporter of this work and as a part of the community of teacher educators who have been trying to make this issue more central in national discussions about teacher quality and teacher preparation, I think that there has been too much discussion of the things that teacher educators are doing to bring a greater international and global perspective into their programs, and not nearly enough discussion about **why** it is important to internationalize teacher education programs, and what kind of teachers we are seeking to prepare through our efforts.

Beyond brief reference to the fact that we live in an interdependent world with a global economy and that we need to prepare teachers to live together peacefully and to compete successfully in the “global marketplace”, there is often not any further discussion of the purposes that we are working toward through internationalization or what globally competent teachers should be like and be able to do, and how we can assess the degree to which teachers teach in these ways.

In briefly addressing the issues of what I see as the purposes of internationalizing teacher education and what globally competent teachers should be like, know, and able to do, I will focus on these questions in relation to the preparation of teachers in the U.S. Given the different histories and cultural

traditions in different parts of the world and differences in schooling practices and in the role and place of teachers in societies (Tatto, 2007), I am aware that what I will say regarding the preparation of teachers in the U.S. may not make sense in other contexts. I do think though that the questions of why should we internationalize teacher preparation, and what is the vision of the teachers that we seek to prepare through this work are questions that need to be thought about wherever this work goes on.

Why Internationalize Teacher Education Programs?

Although it would be difficult to find a college or university anywhere in the U.S. today that is not making a substantial effort to internationalize or globalize in some way, it is clear that this work has not been as widely undertaken in teacher education as in higher education generally. Despite repeated calls for these efforts over the last two decades and in spite of the efforts of individual teacher educators and of non-profits like the Longview Foundation, the National Association of International Educators, the American Council on Education, and the Asia Society to advocate for and support efforts to do this important work, Schools and Colleges of Education are still often among the least internationalized units on U.S. campuses (Longview Foundation, 2008; Merryfield, 2000; Schneider, 2003) . Consequently, it remains the case according to a recent Longview Foundation report, that most teachers in the U.S. begin their careers with little more than superficial knowledge of the world. (Longview Foundation 2008).

Furthermore, while much work is being done in higher education generally to internationalize and globalize faculty, students, and programs, there is seldom much discussion about what it means to internationalize or globalize and the purposes toward which this work is directed. Also, though it is often assumed that efforts to globalize or internationalize programs are inherently good and inevitably lead to desirable results, there is very little empirical research available to support these claims- very little work has been done to examine the impact of these efforts even at research universities where one would expect to see this happening.

Although it is assumed that when people use the terms internationalization and globalization they are referring to the same things, it is clear from the literature that there are very different meanings of each of these terms that are sometimes in conflict with one another. Scholars such as Merry Merryfield who is here today, and Walter Parker, Joel Spring, Fazil Rivzi, and Nadine Dolby among others, have illuminated the different discourses that have been associated with calls for greater internationalization and globalization in education (eg., Dolby & Rahman, 2008; Parker, 2008; Parker & Camicia, 2008; Spring, 2008).

For example, my colleague at the University of Washington, Walter Parker has examined various meanings of the term internationalizing education and argues that several different purposes can be found to justify the push toward internationalization in education. The first, and most dominant in the present according to Parker, is **national security** which is addressed in part through efforts to enhance the nation's competitiveness in the global economy (it is estimated that 1 in 5 jobs in the U.S. is tied to international trade) by doing such things as preparing

more teachers in STEM fields and through efforts to strengthen our military intelligence capabilities by preparing more teachers to teach what are considered to be “strategic” languages such as Chinese, Arabic and Persian (Parker, 2008).

This push to advance internationalization in education for reasons of national security and economic competitiveness often implicitly accepts the goodness of furthering the spread of global capitalism in its current forms and lend support to elements of the current system such as free markets and trade agreements, economic rationalism, increased surveillance of workers, and greater privatization of public services. The negative effects of the cultural and social relations associated with these practices on many people throughout the world including with regard to education are often not discussed. (Apple, in press)

Parker argues that the economic competitiveness argument for internationalizing education is often fueled by the popular belief that our public schools are broken and are failing to properly educate students for the new, “flat world.” The unspoken assumption is often that schools and higher education institutions caused our current economic problems and that they can solve them.

Other justifications for internationalizing education and teacher education focus on the need to prepare teachers and their students to know more about and appreciate the world and its people or to see themselves as global citizens. Others focus on a concern for greater human rights and global justice addressing global power relations and the profound imbalances in power and resources that currently obstruct mutual or genuinely interdependent relations.

Walter Parker concludes his analysis by asserting that “international education today is a broad movement containing a disparate mix of meanings and motives. It is being deployed to bolster the nation’s economic and military defenses, to liberate multiculturalism from its national container, to promote world citizenship, and in some schools, to take advantage of a vibrant immigrant population.”

My point in raising this issue of the varied meanings and motives for internationalizing education is not to assert the correctness of a particular viewpoint. My point is however, that we cannot assume that we all agree on the reasons for wanting to bring a more international and global perspective in to the preparation of teachers and then into our elementary and secondary schools. I do have my own thoughts about these matters of course that guide my work as a teacher educator and citizen of the U.S. A few examples of what I hope to accomplish through this work are to:

(1) Help teacher candidates and teachers develop what has been called perspective or socio-cultural consciousness, where one learns that their ways of thinking, behaving and being are deeply influenced by their social and cultural location-race, ethnicity, gender, social class, language, nationality and so on, and that others often have views of the world that are often significantly different from one’s own, and to develop greater humility about their own point of view (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

(2) Help teacher candidates learn more about the histories and cultures of people around the world including the immigrant students who are often in their own classrooms,

(3) Help teacher candidates develop greater intercultural competence .

I also want the internationalization efforts in teacher education with which I am associated to include a component that one usually does not hear about in discussions about internationalizing teacher education, one that enables teachers to critically examine from multiple perspectives the causes and consequences of the global injustices that now exist across the globe including those within all countries. I want teacher candidates to become globally competent in a way that equips them to teach in a manner that encourages students to work in solidarity with others to transform the current system and to seriously consider the view that that is held by some that social injustice is not an error to be corrected nor a defect to overcome, but is an essential requirement of the current system itself (Apple, in press).

When and where teacher educators and teachers should address this missing element in current discourse about internationalizing education and teacher education needs to be thought through very carefully. My point is that we need to be certain that teacher candidates and their students are exposed to a range of perspectives on issues of globalization and how to achieve greater economic, political and social justice, not just the ones that emphasize national security and economic competitiveness. Internationalizing teacher education requires that there be a genuine educational process in teacher preparation where different perspectives are examined, and where teacher candidates make up their minds

about what they believe after having carefully considered a wide range of views, including those that are not currently in favor.

Globally Competent Teachers

An important question that needs to be carefully considered in efforts to internationalize teacher preparation institutions and programs is the vision of the teachers that we seek to prepare through our efforts. In this regard, recent publications on issues of global and international education by groups like the American Council on Education, the Longview Foundation, and the Asia Society as well as the academic literature on global education and international education include lists of global competencies for teachers that address the dispositions, attitudes, knowledge and skills that it is felt teachers need to have to teach in globally competent ways. These include such things as cultural awareness, knowledge of world events and global dynamics, knowledge of and ability to connect their students to the international aspects of the content areas they teach, intellectual curiosity and good thinking and problem solving skills.

I have no quarrel with the content of these lists of global competencies and think that everything that is usually spelled in them out makes good sense.² I

² Longview (2008) includes several examples of competency lists for globally competent teachers.
<http://www.longviewfdn.org/122/teacher-preparation-for-the-global-age.html>.
The articles in the special issue of *Teaching Education* edited by Quezada (2010) also discuss global competencies for teachers and are illustrative of what I am referring to in my comments.

wonder though about a few things related to the usefulness of these frameworks with regard to the goal of internationalizing teacher education.

First, there the need to set out a vision of global competence in teaching that is more realistic and achievable for teachers in the beginning of their careers rather than presenting ideal types that are probably beyond the reach of most novices. Teacher educators should set some specific goals from these lists around the issue of global competence and integrate these into their existing assessment systems. One consequence of doing this is that efforts will then need to be made to design admissions systems that bring candidates into programs who have some of the needed qualities, knowledge and skills, and to create opportunities in preparation programs for teacher candidates to learn how to do the things that are required. Both admissions and programs themselves need to be considered because there is only so much that can be accomplished with regard to personal transformation in the brief time that teacher educators have to work with teacher candidates.

I also believe that there is a need to integrate these global competencies into national standards like those developed by Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium of the Council of Chief State School Officers (or INTASC) and the state standards that are based on them that frame the establishment of assessment systems in teacher education programs rather than offering them as separate lists that only appear in publications about the need to internationalize teacher education.

Interesting as this work is, if it is going to make a difference, it needs to become part of the performance-based assessment systems that now exist in most

programs in the U.S. and count when assessments are made of the readiness of candidates to receive an initial teaching license. The INTASC standards are currently used in some form in most states in the U.S. as the basis for approving teacher education programs and are heavily infused into the NACTE national accreditation process.

Recently, I was asked by the Council of Chief State School Officers to evaluate the work that has been done so far in revising the initial set of INTASC Model Standards for Beginning Teacher Licensing and Assessment, standards that were issued in 1992. While I am not permitted to say much about what is in these new draft standards, I did notice a couple of things in my first read through them and in my rereading of the 1992 standards that relate to the issue of preparing globally competent teachers. First there are a number of competencies (knowledge, skills and dispositions in these revised standards that typically appear in discussions of the elements of culturally responsive teaching and globally competent teaching. These include such things as “ the teacher uses approaches that are sensitive to the multiple experiences and diversity of learners and that allow for different ways of demonstrating learning. “

However, although these new standards overlap with the kind of teachers and teaching that is discussed in the multicultural and international/global literature in teacher education there is very little mention of the words global or international in the document in the core principles and standards. There are two short references to global in the core principles and 5 references to a global context in the standards themselves.

For example, one of the core principles includes a statement of the need for teachers to “engage students in critical/creative thinking and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and **global** contexts.” One of the standards includes a statement under its knowledge indicators that teachers “understand how students use interactive technologies such as social networking and media and know how to use them to extend the possibilities for learning locally and **globally**.”

These efforts to expand standards for initial teacher licensing to include attention to a global context, minimal as they are, represent progress from the 1992 standards where the only reference to a global or international context was a short statement in the preamble that states that “a well educated citizenry is necessary for maintaining our democracy and enjoying a competitive position in a global economy.” While acknowledging the progress that has been achieved with regard to the INTASC standards, the consequences of the still minimal attention to global contexts and elements of globally competent teaching will be the continued marginalization of this work in U.S. teacher education.

One way to address this problem that I think deserves consideration is to work with existing state standard boards and departments of education to make sure that the international and global dimensions of the knowledge, skills and dispositions that required for an initial teaching license are explicitly addressed in the standards, and that institutions are held accountable in state program approval and national accreditation reviews for assessing teaching candidates on these competencies.

One strategy for doing this is to work to further extend standards that already overlap with the elements of global competence, but that do not explicitly show this in their language to make the international and global dimensions of the competencies more visible.

One example of an element of globally competent teaching that overlaps with aspects of existing state cultural competence standards for teachers, is the idea of sociocultural or perspective consciousness that I referred to earlier. I want to use this standard to illustrate the kind of connections that need to be made between the work on globally competent teaching and culturally responsive teaching that I believe will make it more like that the work on globally competent teaching will become a more central part of US. teacher education programs.

I will also use this example to illustrate how we can integrate elements into these multicultural and global standards that do not assume the correctness or inevitableness of current global economic structures because of their vagueness or narrowness with regard to how the basis of the need for greater global competence is defined.

Globally competent teaching according to many of the existing lists of global teaching competencies requires that teachers engage in an ongoing process of examining themselves as cultural, political, and social beings situated in various contexts. Here it is important for teachers to come to realize that how they see the world is deeply influenced by their location in relation to a number of markers such as gender, social class, ethnicity, race and religion and that others who are situated differently may have very different views. Teacher education scholars such as Ana

Maria Villegas and Tamara Lucas have used the term sociocultural consciousness to describe this important component of culturally responsive teaching. In the context of culturally responsive or relevant pedagogy, Villegas and Lucas (2002) argue that teachers cannot connect with their students across sociocultural boundaries without this situated perspective.

Globally competent teachers must not only embrace this perspective so that they may better connect with their students, but they must also extend it to include an awareness of the ways in which their modes of thinking and being are intricately connected with their *American* identities in a global society (hence the name sociocultural consciousness of the global self)³. Without this broadening of the context of their self-awareness beyond their nation's borders, teachers will not be able to cross the us/them boundary that impedes the development of a global consciousness among many Americans and prevents meaningful connections among the world's people.

Sociocultural consciousness of the global self must also include a critical awareness of the worldviews and socio-political biases that shape their interpretations and judgments of global issues. Without this critical self-awareness, teachers will be blind to the ways in which their social location and worldviews shape the manner in which they approach global education. It is important for teachers to understand that their views are not necessarily shared by others around the world and to seek out and explore viewpoints contrary to their own including subaltern perspectives that are outside of current power structures. This awareness

³ See Zeichner & O'Connor, 2009).

will help those in a global classroom to problematize the naturalness of their own perspectives.

The purpose of developing greater sociocultural consciousness of the global self cannot, however, be limited to perspective awareness. An analysis of power and privilege must be an integral part of this process of cultivating greater self-knowledge. Villegas and Lucas have correctly pointed out that “differences in social location are not neutral” and that “differences in access to power profoundly influence one’s experience in the world.” Teachers in the U.S. hold privileges and access to power that position them in a global context and it is important for them to understand how these privileges disadvantage others as well as themselves.

Conclusion

In summary, my message to you today has focused on several main points.:

1. First, There has been too much focus on **what** educators and teacher educators are doing to bring more attention to international and global perspectives in P-12 and teacher education and not enough serious discussion of **why** this work is being done or rigorous evaluations of what is being accomplished by all of these activities.
2. Second, that we should not assume that we all mean the same thing when we talk about the need to internationalize or globalize the

preparation of teachers. There are different rationales for this work and we need to critically analyze and openly discuss them.

3. Third, that we should not implicitly or intentionally exclude from these discussions views that do not uncritically privilege current forms of global capitalism that are connected to such practices as greater privatization of public services and cuts in public service budgets, free trade agreements, and an economic rationalism that results in development policies in education around the world that has frequently seen cutting teachers salaries and raising class sizes as legitimate pathways to raising the quality of public education, a system where profits are privatized and losses are socialized and where exploitation in pursuit of profit continues to widen the disparities between rich and poor in every country and put our planet at risk.
4. Fourth that it is important to have a clear vision of the globally competent teachers that we seek to prepare through this work and that this vision should guide the activities in which we engage.
5. Finally, Rather than continuing to develop separate lists of the competencies of globally competent teachers that only are discussed at meetings like this one, we need to do a better job of integrating this work into the state policy frameworks and performance assessments that guide the work in teacher education programs across the U.S.

I am looking forward later today and tomorrow morning to our discussions of the various practices that are being used to bring a more global and international perspective to teacher education, but without attention to the purposes of this work and a clear conception of the globally competent teachers that anchors them, and without better integrating the work into the standards and assessments in teacher education programs, this important work will continue to remain out of the mainstream of American teacher education.

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