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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses research on teacher preparation and teaching in diverse settings, using data from questionnaires about various courses and components of one teacher education program. Student teachers completed questionnaires before and after student teaching, and cooperating teachers completed them at the end of student teaching. All student teachers in the study began quite confidently in their beliefs about their education, training, and ability to teach, and their confidence grew as they taught. Supervisors expressed positive beliefs about undergraduate student teachers' general preparation to teach, but not graduate students' (with the difference being the undergraduates' extensive classroom experience). Immediately before student teaching, students with and without practicum experience had very similar thoughts about teaching, but after student teaching, undergraduates revealed different kinds of thoughts than graduate students. The researchers added questions about teaching diverse students to the survey. Both student and cooperating teachers reported not thinking or being uncertain about culturally responsive pedagogy. The student teaching experience did not change this. A newer study is looking at the attitudes of student teachers, cooperating teachers, and college students regarding a literacy practicum in a housing project, a methods course in an urban school, and student teaching in diverse schools. Data indicate that the experiences have changed attitudes from fear to recognition of students as individuals learning to read and resulted in improvements in teachers' attitudes and abilities regarding cultural diversity. (Contains 19 references.) (SM)

# Preparations and Reflections: Teaching in a Widening World

Paper Presented at the American Education Research Conference,

Montreal, Canada. April 19-23, 1999

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Odysseys Toward Better Teachers

Introduction

Odyssey: "A series of adventurous journeys usually marked by many changes of fortune" (Webster's Third New International Dictionary).

In *Take the A-train,* Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn told us to begin to discover a wonderful culture by taking the subway to Harlem[1] (Strayhorn, 1941). Traveling to a culture that is new to us but familiar to many of our students is vital both to our own intellectual growth and to our ability to prepare new teachers for urban schools. A major part of our odyssey began seven years ago with our research questions about novice and expert teachers' perceptions about their development in our teacher preparation program. As we pursued the research, our questions led in two directions: One was overall concern for developing expert pedagogical processes in our teachers. The other was to help teachers to appreciate and teach children of diverse backgrounds, classes, races and ethnicities. We had previously believed these two interests to be encompassed in a generally excellent teacher preparation, but our learning has led us to the knowledge that "excellent preparation" must be defined so that concerns for pedagogical excellence and sensitivity to diversity are addressed strongly and specifically.

As a consequence of studying our teachers' development, we have directed our focus toward the preparation of teachers in a far more diverse world than that from which they have come. After solving one set of problems in teacher preparation, we developed new questions about other problems. These have been journeys in one direction that have moved to other essential questions involving teaching and learning experiences in urban settings, for novice teachers, and for ourselves - with "many changes of fortune".

Throughout the studies, we used questionnaires composed of Likert-type items and

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1 New York City, United States of America

open-ended questions pertaining to the various courses and components of the teacher education programs at our liberal arts college. Each year we have progressively added more items pertaining to teaching in multicultural settings. We have also changed our program considerably because of what we have learned from our research. This paper describes the research, our decisions, and discusses the continuing odyssey.

Background Literature

I. The Development of Teachers

Experience can be an excellent teacher. That proposition forms an important part of our preparation program - having qualified experienced teachers work closely with novice teachers in their first classroom teaching. Many professions use experience to sharpen and broaden novices' understanding of their fields. In education, classroom experiences, especially for reflective individuals, can shape and accelerate the novices' growth toward expert pedagogy (Farnham-Diggory, 1994; Zeichner and Liston, 1987). It is also widely recognized that teacher education programs could be more useful and intellectually demanding if their methods courses were closely integrated with actual classroom teaching (Goodlad, 1990, 1991; Holmes Group, 1990; Meade, 1991). Increased classroom practica can provide opportunities for novices to work alongside experienced and expert teachers for extended periods. Moreover, the experience of teaching with skilled professionals can accelerate novices' learning of pedagogical skills and strategies that would not easily be acquired through insulated campus-based methods courses or the traditional semester of student teaching (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Meade, 1991). When the practica are supervised, college faculty can work more closely with classroom teachers by sharing current research and theory on curriculum and instruction, and helping both the novices and experts reflect on their curricula, teaching and children's learning.

Systematic inquiries into the thoughts of novice teachers can provide invaluable insights into the impact of teacher education programs and suggest improvements in courses and practice. Several models of teachers' professional development help explain how novice teachers mature in

their thinking about teaching (Berliner, 1986; Fuller, 1969; Kagan, 1992). A synthesis of these models of teacher thinking outlines novices' growth from thinking about themselves as teachers, to concerns about classroom procedures and routines, and then to more complex and sophisticated thoughts about relationships among their pedagogy, the learning environment and children's learning. It appears to us that much of the developmental work described should take place *before* teaching, even though these theoretical models were developed through studying teachers early in their classroom careers.

In the earliest stages of development in these models, novices self-consciously think about themselves as teachers. Typical concerns at this initial stage include whether they can imagine themselves as classroom leaders and assume the general responsibilities of classroom teachers (Fuller, 1969; Kagan, 1992). We hope that this development occurs while the student/novice teachers are in the college classroom, through inner examination and insight, reflective journals and discussion, and in the combination of such classes with their early practica experiences.

In a second stage, novice teachers' thoughts move from a focus about themselves to concerns about managing pupils, particularly around routine classroom procedures such as noise management, lining up, lunchtime, recess. At this stage they think about organizing their classrooms, planning lessons and presenting information clearly (Fuller 1969; Kagan 1992). It has been our hypothesis that supervised practica help novices to go through this stage before they actually teach. Comfort with children, a sense of oneself in relation to 25 or so young people who depend on you to nurture, structure, and maintain a comfortable learning environment -- experience goes a long way in these areas. By the third stage of teacher development, novices attend primarily to children's learning. In this stage novice teachers' procedural skills are more automatic, and they are more able to focus their thoughts on whether they are successfully helping children to learn (Berliner, 1986; Fuller, 1969; Kagan, 1992). Again, we hope that experienced classroom teachers and college faculty are nearby during these early processes of focus on learning. In fact, this latter stage is presumably where the most important work of college faculty should occur.

II. Preparing To Teach All Children

At the same time that we are concerned with teachers' development in general, we are even more concerned with the development of their pedagogy with all children. These two complex issues are interwoven as teachers work with children from diverse backgrounds and learning needs. We have used theories of culturally responsive teaching and critical pedagogy to frame the issues, both of our research and our teacher preparation program. Most research indicates that teacher education institutions do not do enough in preparing teachers for culturally heterogeneous classrooms (King, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1994). New teachers are typically trained at institutions that represent mainstream interests, taught by professors who are unaware of the language and cultures of children in contemporary classrooms (King, 1993; Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986) and often student-teach in classrooms representing cultural homogeneity instead of diversity.

Effective classroom pedagogy, however, is intricately linked to children's cultural backgrounds (Delpit, 1995; Ferdman, 1990; Heath, 1983; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Willis, 1995). Culturally responsive teachers value, respect, and include children's cultures into their curriculum and classroom lessons. Such teachers reflectively examine their personal beliefs about power, privilege and education. They acknowledge the many dimensions of power and privilege in society and the impact that societal inequities have on children's opportunities to learn. We are mindful that culturally responsive teaching is individual, respectful, and appreciative of the richness of experience that children bring to their schooling. This is not proclaiming a slogan of "multiculturalism" as a school or teacher's policy (Hoffman, 1996); it is recognition that we all have much to learn about these complex psychological and pedagogical issues.

A serious problem is that most middle-class, white teachers are strangers to urban cultures in the United States. Middle class teachers often believe mass media's negative images about low-income African American and Latino (or other minority) communities. Their "dysconscious racism" (King, 1991) is often supported through pathological stories about urban children's

families, languages and backgrounds and inevitably revealed through lower academic expectations. Classroom learning activities which are constructed from middle-class life experiences can make little sense to low-income urban children. All too often urban teachers' ignorance of urban cultures is realized in poor teaching, misinterpretations of children's classroom interactions, and failure to recognize the rich variety in culture that children bring to school (Delpit, 1992, Dyson, 1997).

The Research

I. Study of the Effects of Practica on Novice Teachers

In studies reported previously (McDermott et al, 1995; Rothenberg et al, 1993), prospective teachers and their supervisors completed a pre- and post- student teaching questionnaire concerning the perceived impact of education and training on their capabilities to teach. Extensive practica, consisting of over 400 hours in elementary school classrooms[2], had been introduced to the undergraduate teacher education program, but not to the graduate school program[3]. The course work for the two groups was similar, based on children's active and integrated learning. Course work in teaching methods, while separated into content areas (e.g. science and social studies) stressed the integration of reading, writing, and inquiry through cooperative and collaborative processes.

Results of the Practica Studies

Results of the data analyses indicated that all the student teachers in this study began quite confidently in their beliefs about their education, training and ability to teach. And their confidence grew as they taught. After the undergraduates and graduate students completed two student teaching placements they felt more positively about their ability to teach elementary subjects and to

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2 Children aged approximately 5-12

3 U.S. undergraduate education is usually four years of higher education following the basic secondary school program for students aged 14-18. Graduate education follows a degree from an undergraduate institution.

use specific teaching methods and strategies in regular classroom contexts. However, data from the supervisory teachers' ranking of the two groups of student teachers after student teaching indicated differences. The supervisors conveyed positive beliefs about undergraduate student teachers' general preparation to teach, but not the graduate students. As seen in Table II, these differences in ranking of the two groups of students were significant on the Mann-Whitney U Analysis of Covariance at the $p < .05$ level (two- tailed p). It appears that extensive experience in classrooms helped the undergraduates to teach better, since that was the only difference in the two groups' preparations.

**Table II**: Mann-Whitney U Analysis of Covariance: Supervisory Teachers' Perceptions of their Undergraduate and Graduate Student Teachers

| Teaching Capability | Mean Rank Undergrad/ Graduate | U Score | 2-tailed p * = <.05 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Language Arts | 42.6/28.73 | 379.0 | <.01* |
| Social Studies | 36.91/26.19 | 319.0 | <.02* |
| Math | 40.41/30.19 | 403.0 | <.05* |
| Science | 35.77/26.29 | 309.5 | <.0576 n.s. |
| Classroom General Function | 41.88/31.80 | 446.5 | <.05* |

(Rothenberg, et al, 1993)

Another difference was interesting in terms of the student teachers' professional development. Our results indicated that immediately prior to student teaching, the two groups, those with and without practica experience, appeared very similar in their thoughts about teaching. However, after student teaching, the undergraduates, who had extensive experience in classrooms, revealed different kinds of thoughts about teaching than the graduate students, indicating a different developmental level as teachers. When answering questionnaire items the undergraduate group frequently wrote comments directly pertaining to children's learning. The graduate students, even after student teaching, continued to reflect concerns about their basic teaching skills of lesson planning and classroom management. As a group, they appeared more oriented to their identities as

teachers and basic skills (McDermott et al, 1995; Rothenberg et al, 1993). It is possible that graduate students gain in confidence after their student-teaching experience, and are more innovative and less wedded to traditional and more conservative practices. They may also be more open to learning pedagogy as they progress. Still, it seems clear that novice teachers need to have an active conceptual and pragmatic interaction during their pedagogical education. On the basis of this research, we decided to require a ten-hour practica in schools for each of the first four graduate courses. Since most of our graduate students also work full time, it is difficult to ask more of their time.

II. Directing the Study to Teaching in Multicultural Settings

After the series of studies concerning teachers' preparation to teach, we changed the questionnaire to a 31-item Likert scale and two open ended questions concerning respondents' thoughts about teaching in classrooms with children from diverse cultural backgrounds. As in the previous study, novice teachers completed the questionnaire before and after student teaching, and the supervisory teachers completed identical questionnaires at the end of student teaching and voluntarily mailed their responses to the college. The 31 Likert items, ranked one to seven, presented general statements about teaching and learning, concerning curriculum goals and objectives in culturally diverse classrooms, teachers changing communication and management styles, and the impact of background, gender or language/dialect on children's learning. Data collections and analyses were the same as in the earlier studies.

The two open-ended items were the following:

1. *What benefits do you perceive for yourself and your students when teaching in a classroom with children from culturally diverse backgrounds?"*

2. *"What concerns do you have for yourself and your students when teaching in a classroom with children from diverse cultural backgrounds?"*

Results

We learned that teachers, whether experienced or novice, do not think or are very uncertain

about culturally responsive pedagogy. Neither student teachers nor their cooperating teachers reflected on the interaction between culture and teaching. When asked to react to statements indicating that teaching methods should never be changed or that children always learn the same way, our respondents answered that such statements are not true (disagreeing with the statement). However, when asked whether they would change their methods, management or communication strategies to fit children's cultural backgrounds the answers of both groups indicated uncertainty 75% of the time.

The experience of student teaching did not precipitate change in novice teachers' thoughts about culturally responsive pedagogy. Only one item showed a significant change ($p>.05$ from the pre-test) and that was in a direction of less certainty. It is important to note this lack of change in relation to the previous studies, where the novice teachers grew in confidence on most items on the questionnaire. On the open-ended items, both novice and experienced teachers said that lack of knowledge about other cultures was their greatest concern when teaching in multicultural classrooms. And the benefits they described appeared to be directed to broadly acceptable goals such as children getting along with each other.

During the same period of time as we were collecting this data, we also became increasingly aware, through teaching and supervision, of our students' relative isolation from the world. Many of them have come from relatively homogeneous communities with little exposure to other cultures than their own. However, as a faculty, we always thought we were preparing teachers, both explicitly and implicitly for classrooms of diversity and inclusion. As a result of our learning that teachers do not think about culturally responsive teaching, we expanded our efforts in this direction, first with a pilot course in an urban elementary school, and then with a semester of practica and course work in urban schools.

## III. The Current Research

Recently we have been developing a more directed and specific look at our pedagogy and what our students, the novice teachers, learn from it. 83 novice student teachers, 30 experienced

supervisory teachers, and 28 entering college students in an education foundations course formed the subject group of the studies reported here, conducted over a period of three years. The first portion studied and reflected upon the experiences of the novice group in a literacy practicum in a neighboring housing project. The second looked at student/novice perceptions of a pilot project methods course given in an urban school, and the third studied their perceptions and uses of diversity during student teaching in urban, rural or suburban schools. In the fourth part of the study, we looked particularly at the groups' hypothetical uses of multicultural literature with children, and in the final, most recent study, we compared our novice student teachers to incoming education students.

A. Analysis of the Housing Project Practicum

In 1994 we began a practica requirement for education students in the fall of their junior year in a public housing project near the college campus. The data gathered for this analysis was narrative in form. The students kept journals, partly with faculty-focused entries, and the professor recorded daily detailed observations.

Results

Then (and in subsequent semesters) the students' initial reactions have been fear and amazement in the brief walk from the college campus to the housing project. During the practicum, novice teachers' attitudes changed from this fear of their neighbors and a deficit concept of the children's development to the recognition of children and their parents as individuals learning to enjoy reading and writing. Changes observed in our students' attitudes and behaviors about people living in public housing were dramatic, as was the impact of the practicum on children's literacy development. This practicum also has expanded the college's sense of community and shared responsibility for life in an urban community (for example, a tutoring center for adults wishing to obtain a high school equilavency degree has recently been established and used extensively by project residents and tutors from the college).

B. An On-site Course in an Urban Elementary School

In the spring of 1995, the Advanced Reading and Language Arts professor took his class to a nearby low-income school where we had worked on several previous educational projects. College faculty had formed good working relationships with their faculty, and the school was only one mile from college campus. The course provided an opportunity for college students to test what they learn from a Methods course in an urban classroom setting, and provided opportunities for experienced classroom teachers to share their experiences and skills with prospective teachers. We also wanted to create a community of learners among experienced classroom teachers, college faculty and prospective teachers in which teaching both traditional and innovative teaching methods could be freely discussed and analyzed.

The initial intent of project was for the college faculty to present ideas for teaching one week, and then have the students present lessons containing the teaching ideas in classrooms the following week. In addition, classroom teachers might offer guidance immediately after the lesson, and the college faculty would observe and conduct discussions about the lessons immediately afterwards in class. Coordination of the teaching ideas with classroom faculty topics remained a problem throughout the semester. Class topics were placed on the course outline and distributed to the elementary faculty well before the semester began, but the topics often did not coincide with the classroom curriculum. To help solve this problem, the professor met briefly each week with each classroom teacher about what the college students would be teaching in the subsequent week. We focused on poetry writing, responding to literature through illustration, using song and movement in reading and language arts, and integrating the visual arts with literacy learning activities.

Several times during the semester classroom teachers presented language arts lessons to the college students, while the professor took the classroom teacher's class. One classroom teacher spoke about how she established a sense of community in her first grade classroom. Another spoke about inclusion of children with disabilities in regular classroom placements. A third modeled how she thought art teachers could support literacy programs through theme related art

activities. A first grade teacher brought her entire class to the upstairs room and demonstrated how she integrated music and dance with literacy. Three experienced teachers spoke about their teaching at the urban school and presented management and teaching strategies to the students.

Results

At the end of semester the students completed a questionnaire about the on-site course, containing several items about the impact of the one-hour practica, classes with cooperating teachers, and the course topics. The students revealed some surprising answers to the questionnaire. First in their preference, for example, were the visits of experienced classroom teachers to the course meetings. Second in preference were the practica experiences in elementary classrooms and last were the lectures and presentations from college faculty. Finally, when asked where they would like more emphasis if the course were taught again on-site, they overwhelmingly indicated the highest rank on the in-classroom component. Next in frequency was a near equal distribution of a variety of answers including talking with teachers, integrating the visual and performing arts with literacy, and learning about children's books.

Throughout the semester students prepared focused journal entries about the on-site course. In the second half of the semester we asked them to write about the advantages and disadvantages of participating in an on-site course. More time and experience in actual classrooms were frequently mentioned as advantages and travel, classroom accommodations for adults and placement of students with poor models of teaching were often identified as disadvantages.

C. The New Questionnaire Data

After reviewing the results of previous studies, we wanted to make more specific the teachers' responses to cultural diversity in their classrooms. We reasoned that by asking teachers what questions they would ask students to begin discussions about literature, we could glimpse, secondhand, a more actual piece of teacher's classroom work. In addition to the questionnaire that we used for two years as previously described, another section was added to the questionnaire as follows:

Assume you are teaching in a third grade elementary class[4] in an urban school system. A team of teachers is using Mary Hoffman's *Amazing Grace* (Hoffman,1991 ).

(You might remember that this illustrated book is about an African- American girl who wants to be Peter Pan in her classroom play. The text reveals some of the social issues about diversity that face many children every day. When Grace reveals her interest in becoming Peter Pan, Raj says, "you can't be Peter - that's a boy's name." Natilie whispers, "You can't be Peter Pan, he isn't black." With encouragement from her family, particularly from her grandmother who takes Grace to see the ballet *Romeo and Juliet* featuring a black ballerina, Grace succeeds in obtaining Peter Pan's role. The classroom play becomes a success and Grace was an amazing Peter Pan. The story ends with the grandmother saying, "If Grace put her mind to it, she can do anything she want.")

1. What questions would you ask to prepare your urban third graders to read this book?

2. What questions would you ask your students after reading this book to help them understand the story?

We had two overall questions for this aspect of our study concerning teachers' use of literature for teaching:

1. Are novice and experienced teachers able to hold open discussions about diversity which allow children to use their previous experiences as well as new material, to develop new understandings about people of different gender, skin color, class, ethnicity or culture?

2. Do teachers directly involve issues of gender, race, and class in their discussions with children?

The theoretical basis of our questions came from the literature about teaching differing children together. Works that are prominent in our understanding are Vivan Paley's (1979) work on her own experiences of teaching children different from herself, King's (1991) theoretical and narrative studies of dysconscious racism , and Ladson-Billings & Tates' (1995 ) theoretical work on race and education.

For the first question we simply rated teachers' use of prior knowledge with textual material. Our assumption was that the material was explicitly about race and gender, so the use of

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4 ages 8-9

children's prior knowledge would accomplish the purpose of engaging children in new understandings about others. For the second question, we rated the presence or absence of the issues of race, class or gender in the teachers' questions. We felt this was a liberal interpretation of the teacher's intent to address issues of equality, again because the book is so explicitly directed. Reliability between the raters was 85%.

Questionnaires were administered to the novice teachers at their first meeting with the college faculty, just prior to beginning teaching. The questionnaires were distributed to the experienced teachers who have been supervising these novices at the end of seven weeks. At the end of the semester, the questionnaires were again administered to the novices and experienced teachers, after student teaching.

Results

We found that experienced teachers were more willing to enter into open discussions which incorporated children's prior knowledge than the novice teachers. Eighty percent of the experienced teachers' responses included prior knowledge. Forty percent of the novice teachers' responses used prior knowledge which would lead to more open discussions among children and the teacher. Although the student/novice teachers are taught to use prior knowledge in conjunction with text, this is pedagogy which requires practice. Responses that include prior knowledge are "I would do a short game of role play and have students be one-another (different genders), then move into the book"; or "I would ask the children what they thought the title meant and ask them to predict something about the story from the cover of the book". Examples of responses which do not include prior knowledge are: "I would tell them about Peter Pan;" "Was Grace a good Peter Pan? Was it a good idea to allow Grace to play Peter Pan?."

In addressing issues of equality, both novices and experienced teachers appeared reluctant. Only thirty-nine percent of the novice teachers responded with questions concerning race, class or gender; and forty-eight percent of the experienced teachers responded with such questions. We thought these results were particularly striking because we had specifically asked them to address

ethnic and cultural diversity, and the book was explicitly about these issues. Thirteen of the thirty-five novice teachers and four of the thirteen experienced respondents (two did not complete this section) did not mention issues of diversity or prior knowledge at all. Examples which include issues of equality are: "What are the different characters' characteristics? What makes this play/book different? Do all the characters need to be the same color?"; and "How would they feel if they were Grace? Why is it wrong to not allow someone to do something because of what they look like?" Examples of not including issues of diversity are:"Who's Peter Pan? Who are Romeo and Juliet?"; and "Do you think that Raj and Natile were right to criticize Grace? How did Grace react to them?"

D. Out in the Open in Urban Schools

Currently we have taken all our "Methods" courses (reading and language arts, social studies, math and science) into five urban schools. We supervise our students, who are in the schools from 8:00 to 11:00 A.M., and teach in the schools in the afternoons, rotating from school to school every two weeks. So far, in moving into the schools with our students, we clearly are facing dilemmas and grappling with issues all the time. Modeling integrated planning with our students (the novice teachers) takes enormous time and energy, particularly as we cart our supplies and activities from campus to elementary schools. Taking over elementary classrooms ourselves while teachers interact with our students is anxiety provoking to be sure. Deciding the line between tact and rage at bad practices is a constant internal threat to our emotional equilibria and professional demeanors. The professor teaching the Science Methods course had a particularly difficult time working to promote inquiry based projects like hatching frogs' eggs and building terrariums in schools that have not been prepared for such inquiry projects.

Subjectively it seems worth it. The schools are extremely welcoming and our students/novice teachers show many things we have been hoping to see: initial uncertainty and fear and lack of knowledge about the children, developing professional attitudes and behaviors that carry into our Methods classrooms, growing connections with the children and their teachers, a

sense of collegiality with us. We hope to coordinate our course work more thematically, include classroom teachers more in the Methods courses, and address the problem of the lack of even rudimentary science equipment in the schools. In evaluating the Methods courses, the student/teachers commented on our difficulties at integrating their course work. We found this encouraging since when we taught the courses on campus, this subject never occurred to the students. Currently we are integrating the new spring semester, with one syllabus, and more integrated requirements, such as requiring a thematic unit across the courses (aspects of Africa), rather than separate assignments for each course.

The preliminary results are encouraging. We asked the students to write pre-and post questions about their semester course work in the urban schools. Again, questions before they began revolved primarily around fear and topical concerns: substance abuse in the children's homes, poverty caused diseases, violence among adults, child abuse. After the semester their questions were primarily pedagogical and oriented to children's learning, in addition to questions about resource allocation in the urban schools. The latter is a major point in this city because the range of resources in the urban schools is notable, from a new open community-based school to old and decrepit buildings.

One of the insights from this pre-post study was the small degree of change in thinking about urban teaching this group of student/teachers had made -- through the two previous practica in the housing project and neighboring school. Each time we felt the students made gains, and each time they indicated to us how much farther they needed to go - more "changes in fortune" in our odyssey.

Data from the questionnaire about culture and teaching were obtained by comparing this year's student teachers' (N=37) responses to the questionnaire items with those of first year college students (N=28) beginning their professional educational studies in an educational foundations course (McDermott, Rothenberg & Gormley, 1999). The Mann-Whitney U revealed no significant differences on the first questionnaire (pedagogical preparation) among the

undergraduate student teacher groups from 1994, 1995 and 1996. These results indicated that student teachers with extensive practica experience, before and after the urban program revisions, perceived our program to be strong in helping them learn to teach. However, on the results of the Mann Whitney U on the second questionnaire, "Culture and Teaching", five items are significantly different (2-tailed $p <= .01$ to .04). In comparing students just entering the program with students who have had experience in the housing project, practica, and methods courses in the urban schools, the latter appear more realistic, empathic, and oriented to specific teaching and learning strategies. Items of significant difference included those concerning allowing language differences within classrooms and the values of being bilingual. The questionnaire results suggest that this program, particularly the extensive practica, is influencing students thinking about teaching in urban classrooms. The results further suggest that these beginning teachers are reflecting on what it means to be white educators in low-income urban schools where the majority of children are African American and Latino.

## Discussion

Early in this paper we said that we had always thought good teacher preparation would cover the essentials of all types of teaching. While we still believe that, both theoretically and practically, our understanding of such an overly simple statement has changed radically. Particularly, we have known all along that great psychological complexity underlies teaching, but we have been reluctant to take the implications of that complexity seriously in our work. Every teacher's personality, memories, family background, life experiences figure in moment-by-moment classroom work. The research on belief systems and memories of school is compelling in this regard (Hollingsworth, 1989; Holt-Reynolds, 1992; Rothenberg, 1993). The implications of what we have observed, counted and codified, and reflected upon, lead us to think about the great degree to which supervision, attitudinal change and insight are required in addition to pedagogical skills for the development of good teachers. We feel that the results of our recent studies indicate there is much to be done in preparing novice teachers to respect, appreciate, and teach diverse

children well. Activities that have been most successful with the novice teachers have focused on aspects of children's lives within both the school and the community. We also see that focused and reflective journal entries are helpful to the novice teachers. Currently, plans are developing to spend more time with our students in reflection and concentrated thinking/talking about one's beliefs and past experiences, perhaps in periodic combined classes with several professors.

Years ago, teachers lived and participated in the communities in which they taught. Teacher education institutions often required their students to visit children's families and participate in community events. For a variety of reasons this is no longer occurring, but one of the results is that teachers lack knowledge about children's cultural backgrounds. New teachers appear to ignore the richness of culture that diverse classrooms bring to them and their students.

The results of our studies display glimmers of change in this regard -- novice teachers can appreciate the positive nature of cultural diversity. Teachers can learn the importance of participating in a community's cultural celebrations, and as they do so, they learn about family and cultural traditions.

Teachers in a multicultural society must learn to construct learning environments that reflect children's cultural backgrounds. Failure to integrate culture knowledge into the classroom pedagogy will have dire consequences for children and society. Real and significant change on these matters of culture and pedagogy are desperately needed for social betterment, equity and justice.

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