Selected Findings from the Teacher Effectiveness Project-Phase II:

THE LONGITUDINAL EFFECTS OF TEACHER PREPARATION ON THE PRACTICE, BELIEFS AND THINKING OF NEW TEACHERS AND THE LEARNING OF THEIR STUDENTS

Teaching Research Division
Western Oregon University
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SESSION OVERVIEW

- Focus of the study
- Questions, design, participants
- Contextual grounding
- Some key findings around classroom performance (practice)
- Some key findings around student learning (effectiveness)

- Questions and Answers

- Marilyn Cochran Smith: Implications for theory and research in teacher education
FOCUS OF THE STUDY

- Effects of specific characteristics within “traditional” teacher preparation programs NOT “traditional” vs. “alternative” programs.

- Degree to which specific Standards-Based teacher preparation characteristics are present or emphasized.
  - Orientation to K-12 content standards
  - Overt connections between teaching and learning
  - Developmental teacher assessment system within program

- Logical next step from TEP-I
GENERAL QUESTIONS

The Central Research Question:
- Does teacher preparation – in its design, structure and character – make a difference in the practice, beliefs and thinking of new teachers and the learning of their students?

Sub-Question Areas:
- Descriptive-comparative questions focusing on what teachers do, how they think, what they believe and the quality and quantity of the learning of their students (i.e., questions focusing on what is).
- Longitudinal-development questions focusing on change and what influences change.
- Discrepancy-comparative questions focusing on teaching and learning to accepted standards (i.e., questions focusing on how what is stacks up to what is expected).
SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- Are there differences in the practices, characteristics, and/or beliefs of teachers according to the type of preservice preparation program they have experienced?

- Are there differences in students’ learning according to the type of preservice preparation program that their teachers have experienced?
  - If differences are observed, can they be robustly explained by differences in the practices, characteristics, and/or beliefs of teachers? Can these differences be traced to programs?
  - If differences in students’ learning are observed, do these persist over time? Specifically, does the effectiveness of differently prepared teachers in fostering the learning of their students change over time?
DO BEGINNING TEACHERS PREPARED DIFFERENTLY...

DIFFER IN THEIR THINKING, BELIEFS AND PRACTICES AND IS THE LEARNING OF THEIR STUDENTS DIFFERENT?
IF DIFFERENCES ARE FOUND, DO PATTERNS EXIST THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE LEVEL OF PROGRAM EMPHASES ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF INTEREST?
DESIGN

The Project in Context – Genres of Research on Teacher Education
From the chapter by Mary Kennedy in, The Teacher Educator’s Handbook, 1996.

- Production-Function Genre
- Comparing the Haves and the Have-Nots Genre
- Ask the Teacher Genre
- Experimental Genre
- Watch Teacher Candidates Change genre

- TEP-II is a hybrid and highly exploratory

- Primarily “ex post facto causal-comparative” study employing mixed-methods with a strong longitudinal component.
Program Characteristics of Interest

- The degree to which programs clearly and consistently align with a standards-based design for schooling;
- The degree to which programs clearly, consistently, and explicitly focus on the connection between teaching and learning;
- The degree to which programs use ongoing, developmental assessment of teacher candidates against clearly articulated and publicly shared content and performance standards.
Level of Alignment with Oregon's Standards-Based Design for Schools

- High: 54%
- Moderate: 26%
- Low: 20%

Overt Connection Between Teaching and Learning (TWSM)

- High: 47%
- Moderate: 50%
- Low: 3%
Developmental Assessment of Teacher Candidates

- Low: 12%
- Moderate: 25%
- High: 63%

Overall Rating on Program Characteristics of Interest

- Low: 17%
- Moderate: 25%
- High: 22%
- Very High: 36%
DATA COLLECTION METHODS

- Structured interview
- Battery of attitudinal surveys
- Classroom demographic description form
  Open-ended questionnaire
- Classroom observations
- Teacher Portfolios (extended work samples with student learning)
- Self-assessment rating form (proficiencies for Continuing Licensure)
- Focus groups
- Artifact review
- Extant school and district context databases (state developed)
- Third-party ratings
SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION

- First Year Teachers
  - Very High Exposure = 27
  - High Exposure = 17
  - Moderate Exposure = 19
  - Low Exposure = 13

- Second Year Teachers
  - Very High Exposure = 23
  - High Exposure = 14
  - Moderate Exposure = 16
  - Low Exposure = 10

- Third Year Teachers
  - Very High Exposure = 16
  - High Exposure = 12
  - Moderate Exposure = 10
  - Low Exposure = 7
PARTICIPANTS

- 76 full-time first year teachers.
  - 62 were female – 14 were male
  Many went straight from high school through college and into teaching – some were starting a second career.
  A mix of the very young (21-22) and the mature (50’s).

- Public K-5/6 Elementary Schools.
- Prepared both within Oregon and outside of Oregon.
  - 60 from Oregon

- Prepared at both public and private institutions.
- Prepared in both 4-year and 5th year/MAT programs.

- Attrition has been an issue when working with beginning teachers.
  - Started with 87 first year teachers
  - Lost 10 during first year of teaching
  - Lost 17 between first & second year
  - Lost 8 between second & third year