COMMUNICATIONS

It is argued that the present traditional format of teacher education programs is not effecting change in student teaching behavior, or if so, the change is not compatible with teacher education program objectives. A partial solution is proposed in reordering the basic units of the curriculum and the placing of early emphasis on general classroom management skills. It is further argued that this with the very early emphasis on the learning of subject content per se, will more closely align the curriculum with student expectations, and thus make the student more amenable to accept desired teaching behavioral formats when these are introduced.

Donald B. Black*

The Re-organization of Teacher Preparation Experiences: A Modest Proposal

The suspicion that teacher preparation programs are deleterious is being more frequently voiced. The research evidence seems to suggest that they have detrimental effects on the affective perceptions of student teachers. Besides the comments in the two *Handbooks on Research in Teaching,* [1],[2] there are, for example, the findings of Day,[3] Dutton,[4] Hoy,[5] and Jacobs,[6] all of which cast serious doubts upon the positive impact of conventional teacher preparation programs on their students.

In a like vein is the intriguing, bu t unpublished, work of Browne.[7] Through the ingenious use of the critical incident technique, she examined student teacher perceptions of good and bad teaching at the start of a one-year teacher training program, at the end of that year, and, finally, one year later, after the students had been teaching in the schools. The incidents were used to classify students' perceptions as being either method-centred (authoritarian) or pupil-centred (hum-

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[1]N. L. Gage, ed., *Handbook on Research on Teaching,* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1963). See G. G. Stern, "Measuring Non-Cognitive Variables in Research on Teaching," pp. 398 *et seq.,* and pp. 429-30, in particular.

[2]R. M. W. Travers, ed., *Second Handbook of Research on Teaching.* (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company, 1973). See R. F. Peck and J. A. Tucker, "Research on Teacher Education," pp. 940 *et seq.,* and pp. 962-9, in particular.

[3]H. P. Day, "Attitude Changes of Beginning Teachers After Initial Teaching Experience," *Journal of Teacher Education,* 10 (1959), pp. 326-8.

[4]W. H. Dutton, "Attitude Change of Elementary School Student Teachers and Anxiety," *Journal of Educational Research,* 55 (1962), pp. 380-2.

[5]W. K. Hoy, "Organizational Socialization: The Student Teacher and Pupil Control Ideology," *Journal of Educational Research,* 61 (1967), pp. 153-5.

[6]E. B. Jacobs, "Attitude Change in Teacher Education: An Inquiry into the Role of Attitudes in Changing Teacher Behavior," *Journal of Teacher Education,* 19 (1968), pp. 410-15.

[7]M. P. Browne, "A Longitudinal Investigation of the Effects of Training and Experience on Beginning Teachers' Perceptions of Critical Teaching Behavior." Unpublished Master's Thesis, The University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, October, 1965.

anistic).[8] She found that the student teaching program did affect student perceptions of good and bad teaching. As a group, notwithstanding the avowed Faculty pupil-centred bias in its curriculum, the student teachers became more method-centred in their evaluations and this stance was hardened even further by the end of the first year of teaching experience. The nature of the changes within the larger group will not be pursued here, except to note that regardless of what change took place during the training year (over half the sample did not change!) or whether they remained pupil-centred, after that first year of experience, they emerged predominantly method-oriented.

The rationalized explanation of the findings, and certainly the most obvious, was that the impact of the first year of teaching left little time for the niceties of pupil-centred teaching as promoted by the Faculty. However, an examination of the reported data reveals that, even within the intervention year of teacher training, the sample was more likely to change from pupil-centred to method-centred affective considerations of good and bad teaching than vice versa.

Whatever it is that is being done in the Faculties of Education appears to be either not wanted or deemed undesirable by the student clientele or is being done in such a way as to be ineffective in changing student perceptions of good and bad teaching as intended. Therefore, it may be of some advantage to examine the nature of the intervention used in the preparation of teachers.

The form of teacher preparation intervention has two aspects, both based on modelling and reinforcement. This occurs first in the university classroom during instruction and then in the student teaching practicum. Notwithstanding one or two notable exceptions, the prevailing classroom teaching format in a university is the lecture method.[9] With the pressures of funding in an inflationary period, classroom enrollments have risen everywhere to such a degree that the lecture method is the only economical and practical way of offering large amounts of

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[8]The use of this dichotomy has been challenged on the grounds that teaching behavior is not a dichotomy. Certainly Browne, other researchers using this format, and the author have never claimed that it is. Moreover, a teacher's teaching behavior does not consistently fall in one category or the other. The use of these two categories is done within the context that the majority of the teacher's teaching behavior will fall in one category or the other. Such use of nominal measurement for what is admittedly highly complex behavior has been found useful by a number of researchers in this area. Why the author should persist in use of this categorization rather than the more elaborate formats proposed by other writers remains, in the last analysis, a matter of personal choice since this paper is not concerned with specific teaching behavior *per se*. The author would defend his choice on three points: first, such a dichotomy has been widely used by a number of other researchers; second, it has a certain face validity within the constraints of humanistic psychology; and finally, for the reason, as Whitehead (paraphrased) has put it, "we speak in specifics, but we think in generalities."

[9]The author could find no data in the literature relating to the incidence of the lecture method in the university, let alone in a given Faculty. Therefore, the credibility of this statement must be deduced apriori. First, it is noted that in the bulk of research reporting the effectiveness of new and novel methods of instruction, the comparison is most frequently made to the lecture method. (See pp. 1028 *et seq.*, in the *Second Handbook of Research on Teaching*). Second, the statement is made within the context that an instructor does not exclusively remain within one format but rather that the bulk of his instruction will be in the lecture format. Third, the statement is made recognizing that students in Education will take sizeable numbers of their classes in Faculties other than Education. Such instructors, it is argued, will and do influence students to the same degree as those in Education. Finally, with class enrollments reaching into the 50's and 60's, and with little relief in sight, it is seriously questioned how any other teaching format in the university setting will be seriously and consistently used in a significant number of classes for any given undergraduate. What is not being raised is the question of the efficiency of any given method to teach the content of a particular course.

information effectively to large groups. Moreover, it is the traditional format of university undergraduate instruction. Thus, in an aura of expectancy of lecture-method classes, those that are pupil-centred are swamped by their very scarcity. Even then, pupil-centred classes are not perceived by the students as being efficient in teaching information needed to meet the demands of the university evaluation system. If we accept a psychoanalytic view of why people elect to become and remain teachers, the power and prestige of one's standing before a large class and "holding it in the palm of his hand" is too satisfying to be ignored. Reality and the dream world come beautifully together at this point. In other words, for whatever reason, any content and philosophical bias of the curriculum towards pupil-centred theoretical constructs is negated by the immediate and dynamic realities of the example before the student.

The student teaching practicum, as the second form of intervention, has almost universal acceptance by students-in-course and by graduates as being the most significant single aspect of their teacher preparation program. Theoretically, this is a structured situation wherein the student in the classroom, under the supervision of both the classroom teacher and the Faculty supervisor, is to apply the various innovations, methods, and theories learned in the Faculty classrooms. Such an arrangement makes a number of assumptions. Firstly, it assumes that both the supervising teacher and the Faculty advisor are completely familiar with the majority of innovations which the student wishes to, or has been directed to apply. Secondly, it accepts that either or both will be present at all times to provide direct guidance and meaningful feedback. Finally, it assumes in the first instance that the supervising teacher is prepared to permit student experimentation. Both at the time of the Browne study and more dramatically since then, the above assumptions cannot be met. Supervising teachers, for the most part, are not prepared to integrate theory and practice, if for no other reason than that they are not an integral part of the Faculty. Secondly, Faculty supervisors function in an atmosphere of increasing student loads and in a reward system that does not recognize the supervision of student teaching. They seem to be selected primarily on the basis of their availability, rather than any skills they possess in this area. Possession of a teaching certificate of any vintage may not even be a requirement. Like the teachers, in a period of increasing specialization, they, too, have difficulty in keeping abreast of contemporary theory and practice in disciplines other than their own specialty. Consequently, integration of theory and practice in the practicum has become a hit and miss affair at best.

These conditions have resulted in student teaching becoming predominantly offered in an apprenticeship format wherein the student is apprenticed to the classroom teacher for the period of the practicum, with occasional visits from the Faculty supervisor. For all those sterling teachers who have done so much to make this system work, the system is not without obvious handicaps. Firstly, there is ample evidence that most teachers are predisposed to authoritarian instructional formats.[10] Supervising teachers come from this pool where pupil-centred methods are, in reality, the exception rather than the rule. Secondly, most teachers place overriding priority on the "well-being" of their class and their relationships to it. Therefore, they are not always prepared to endorse significant innovative methodological experimentation in their classrooms, least of all by

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[10]For a broad discussion of this point, see pp. 457 *et seq.*, Relationships of Authority, in "The School as a Workplace," by Robert Dreeben, in the *Second Handbook.*

student teachers. Finally, if it is accepted that the supervising teachers are master teachers in their own right, what is implicit in this recognition of excellence? Normally, it means that, in the current methodological modes of the school system, this person is recognized as being highly competent. Thus, innovation is replaced by competence in one particular aspect of excellence — which is not at all bad if one accepts that there is only one style of teaching that is good. Further, the recognition of excellence is itself based on the judgments of peers who, as noted, are themselves most likely to be method/authoritarian-oriented. Thus, viewed on a basis of modelling, it is understandable why it has been charged that, throughout the history of man, the apprenticeship format of education has never contributed directly to the advancement of that profession, but has more deeply entrenched the *status quo*. Such matters are of major significance because of the importance that neophyte and graduated teachers attach to the student teaching practicum in their professional preparation. Thus, under the existing parameters of student teaching, it would have been surprising for Browne to have reported other than she did.

Anyone who has supervised student teachers has wondered, upon seeing students teach for the first time, just what they ever learned in the Faculty classrooms. This may be because, in moments of stress (and facing a class early in one's teaching career is a stress-provoking situation), psychological theory suggests that an individual will revert back to earlier forms of behavior which have been successful, or to those which have been perceived as being successful in relieving that stress. This has been confirmed for teachers by Lortie,[11] who has argued that early models of teaching emerge later in teaching. In other words, notwithstanding all the theory and indoctrination of teacher preparation programs, initially one teaches as one was himself taught. There is likely to be a recency factor and, for those students going into the secondary schools, the recency of the model is likely to serve the student well in meeting the demands of the first exposure to teaching, inasmuch as these models may be expected to be method/content-oriented. For the elementary student teacher, time will have stylized the behavior of earlier teaching models at this level and this will conflict with the "content-drive" of the more recent secondary models. This often is manifest in those early student teaching lessons that can only be classified as "content coverage at all costs." Until the teacher, student or otherwise, can come to grips with content, only then can attention be turned to the niceties of classroom control and then to the subtleties of the various methodologies. Fuller and Bown[12] place these priorities in a different context: (a) classroom survival concerns, (b) teaching situations or methodology concerns, and (c) if growth in teaching skills continues, pupil-centred concerns. The survival concerns cited by Fuller and Bown, which first must be met before the teacher can be concerned about the classroom situation, involve simply one's survival as a teacher, class control, being liked by the pupils, supervisor and peer evaluator, and, finally, the continuing residual insecurity of the new teacher that comes from having always been a student himself.[13] The second level of concerns deals with the classroom and school situa-

[11]D. C. Lortie, "Observations on Teaching as Work," *Second Handbook of Research on Teaching,* ed., R. M. M. Travers, (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company, 1973), pp. 474-97 and pp. 487-88, in particular.

[12]F. F. Fuller and O. H. Bown, "Becoming a Teacher," *Teacher Education,* Part II, The Seventy-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, ed., Kevin Ryan. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 36-41.

[13]*Ibid.,* p. 37.

tion.   In taxonomical order, it is only when the first can be reasonably well-mastered that concentration on the second can begin.   The third stage is somewhat doubtful, for, as Ryan[14] has pointed out, methodological skill proficiency rises rapidly during the first few years and then plateaus or decreases.   Thus, the final hurdle to pupil-centred concern may be a much bigger one than the sequence would suggest.   The whole process, however, is preceded by a vocational choice on the part of the student.   According to Lortie,[15] it is this predisposition that accounts for the apparent low psychological impact of teacher preparation programs.   Regardless of what the student's personal prior construct of a model teacher might be, survival concerns in the practicum will emerge very quickly and are eased most simply by conformity (or imitation) to the prevailing pedagogical style of the supervising teacher — as the significant element in the evaluation system.   Assisting in this form of behavior pattern is the suspicion that, when innovation or other divergence is such as to evoke the censure of the supervising teacher, in most instances the Faculty supervisor is obliged to side with the teacher rather than with the student.

Thus it is that, if Faculties of Education are to evoke and sustain meaningful change in the affective as well as in the behavioral domains of their students, it would appear that the traditional pattern of curricular sequencing is inappropriate.

It is a psychological truism that for an individual to change, that individual must want to change.   Therefore, curriculum planning can profitably take into account student perceptions of their needs, at least in the early stages of their professional preparation.   Moreover, perceived high priority needs should appear earliest in that sequence.   With these constraints in mind, a revised curricular format might take the following sequence:

1. Subject Specialization to give content competencies (and which are traditionally offered extra-murally to the Faculty itself).

2. Classroom/School Management (survival) Skills.

3. The Major Student Teaching Practicum (or internship or pre-service experience).

4. Education Methodology Courses with an appended practicum.

5. Humanistic/Pupil-Centred Skill Courses with an appended practicum.

Such a configuration would provide for the interspacing of the practica to facilitate reinforcement and consolidation of theoretical concepts into practice in the classroom.   Further, while the emphasis is on the first practicum, the remaining two would build upon perceived needs arising from the experiences in the first.   Consequently, these practica would not need to be as long and as experientially broad-based as the first one.   The critical element is that the first practicum be offered *before* the students have had their methodology courses.   As Cogan[16] has noted, this concept verges on heresy, but, as suggested earlier, the present

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[14]D. G. Ryans, "Predictions of Teacher Effectiveness," *Encyclopedia of Educational Research,* ed., C. S. Harris. (New York: Mcmillan Company, 1960), pp. 1486-91.

[15]D. C. Lortie, "Structure and Teaching Performance: A Prologue to Systematic Research," *How Teachers Make a Difference.* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971), pp. 51-65.

[16]N. L. Cogan, "Current Issues in the Education of Teachers," *Teacher Education,* Part II, The Seventy-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, ed., Kevin Ryan.   (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 208-13.

traditional format is such that students will, and do, initially teach as they were taught, so nothing is lost. It is only when these "styles" break down or fail to achieve set objectives that methodology courses can have maximum meaning and impact on the teacher.

One other advantage of the major practicum being located early in the professional part of the program as proposed is its role in the self-selection of students without serious handicap for those opting either into or out of teacher preparation programs. This point will not be expanded upon.

Contrast the above to what is currently done. Subject competency is spread over all years of the degree program. Only minimum content experience is attempted before the practicum. Methodology is introduced before or concurrent with the practicum, and professional humanistic/pupil-centred theory and philosophies are introduced almost from the first day of classes. Further, methodology is not concerned with classroom survival skills but is specific to the subject specialization of the student, and is taught long before the subtleties of such techniques are apparent or capable of integration into the teaching repertoire of the student.

What is being proposed is not new in itself, yet it has emerged from a concern arising from the increasing student vocalization of their dissatisfaction with teacher education programs. While there is no intention to sell out the professional expertise and judgment of those fully qualified in such matters for popularity with the students, the fact remains that the very persistence of student dissatisfaction suggests that there is something basically wrong with the present presentation format of the skills of the profession. Further, while the Faculties are expected to show innovative leadership affecting change in the schools gradually through their graduates, their failure to convert even a captive audience serves to discredit them further with members of the working profession. As one colleague put it, "Instead of being pathfinders, we appear to be lost in the woods." What is being proposed does not negate nor discredit those things the Faculties have found by experience to be valid. Rather, it takes these and rearranges the order of their presentation in a sequence deemed by the learner to be meaningful and, subsequently, will permit capitalization on this same interest. The fundamental problems of modelling and practicum supervision noted earlier will remain, but at least the above would be a start.

RESUME

Le format traditionnel des programmes de formation d'enseignants ne réussit pas à changer le comportement des futurs maîtres en stage, ou bien, si cela se fait, le changement ne suit pas d'une manière compatible les objectifs de ces programmes. On propose de modifier la structure à la base du programme, et de mettre de l'importance sur la compétence de la maniement des cours. Ceci, et l'étude sérieuse des sujets de spécialisation, répondra aux espérances des stagires sans perdre les objectifs des programmes, et donc pourraient mener les stagires à accepter les formats de comportement souhaités par les programmes.