

What Does Highly Qualified Mean and How Do We Get There?

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Conceptions of Beginning Teacher Quality

- One of ten research syntheses available at our web site (<http://www.copsse.org>)
- Teacher Education Research Genres (Kennedy, 1996)
 - Searches for factors that affect achievement
 - Comparing licensed and unlicensed teachers
 - Follow-up surveys
 - Experiments
 - Cases studies of change over time

Five Traditions of Assessing Teacher Quality

- Process-product measures
- Checklists
- Standards
- Follow-up surveys
- Observational systems

Process-Product Measures

- Example: COKER
- Used by: Algozzine, Morsink, & Algozzine (1988) in a study of teaching in self-contained classrooms
- Low inference, theory driven measures
- Appropriate for Comparisons, Experiments, and Case Studies
- Strengths: high reliability, potentially linked to key outcomes, including achievement
- Weaknesses: cost, conceptions of teacher quality limited to overt actions

Checklists

- Example: Englert, Tarrant, & Marriage (1992)
- Low to medium inference, often highly detailed measures
- Appropriate for: Comparisons, Experiments, and Case Studies
- Strengths: Credibility and breadth; potential to go beyond observable actions
- Weaknesses: Familiarity required for detailed ratings, little evidence of technical adequacy

Standards

- Example: INTASC and CEC
- Complete and detailed representations of teacher quality (CEC: 10 standards, 54 and 72 knowledge and skill statements in core, plus knowledge and skill statements in mild/severe and categorical areas.)
- May guide observation or interview development in follow up surveys and case studies
- Strengths: Face and construct validity; rich, coherent, and complete descriptions of teacher quality
- Weaknesses: Lack rating systems, limited utility for research purposes

Surveys

- Example: Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education (SPeNSE)
- SPeNSE: parallel sets of questions about (a) initial preparation, (b) professional development, and (c) degree of competence.
- Appropriate for: Follow-up Surveys
- Strengths: Low cost, high utility
- Weaknesses: Patched together concept of teacher quality, reliance on self-report

Formal Observational Systems

- Example: Praxis III (ETS)
- Used by: Daunic & Sindelar (1997)
- Combines observations with written materials and interviews; ratings made on 19 criteria
- Appropriate for: Comparisons and case studies
- Strengths: Rich concept of teacher quality, construct validity
- Weaknesses: High cost, labor intensiveness

COPSSE: BTQ Study

- Purposes: to link initial preparation to BTQ, and BTQ to student outcomes
- First link: "Follow-up" study for which a survey is most appropriate
- Second link: Essentially a "Process-product" study, with a model of BTQ that extends beyond low inference observations of teachers' actions

Rationale for Studying Beginning Teacher Quality

Alternative paths to teaching are being used with little knowledge of their effects, including impact on students

There is no research in special education teacher education to identify features of effective programs

There is a critical need for research linking program features to teacher quality and student achievement

Why Using Student Achievement Alone is Insufficient

... Or, why the value-added models of teacher quality are problematic...

School context contributes substantially to the variance in student achievement

Group administered standardized tests are problematic assessments of student performance

Student achievement scores tell us little about the knowledge, skills, and beliefs of beginning teachers

Components of Beginning Teacher Quality

Classroom practices

Knowledge of content

Beliefs about teaching and student learning

Academic ability

Collaboration skills

Additional Considerations for Special Education Teachers

Valid and reliable measures of teacher quality will vary by:

- Characteristics of the students served
- Age of the students
- SE teacher's role and school's service delivery model
- School context
- Nature of the study

Defining and Assessing Teacher Quality: The COPSS Agenda

Beginning with reading instruction

Selecting upper elementary students with high incidence disabilities

Selecting first, second, and third year special education teachers

Selecting teachers working in resource rooms or collaborating with general education teachers

Facets of Effective Teaching: Linking Teacher Quality to Student Performance

Research questions:

What are the classroom practices and beliefs that promote growth in reading skills for 4th and 5th grade students with high incidence cognitive disabilities?

How do beginning special education teachers collaborate with general education teachers to promote growth in reading skills?

Instrumentation Used to Assess Beginning Teacher Quality

Observation instrument adapted from research on ELL students:

- General instructional practices (e.g., encourages students to give elaborate responses)
- Adaptations for individual differences (e.g., provides extra instruction, practice, review)
- Content specific to reading instruction (e.g., provides systematic, explicit instruction in comprehension skills)

Observations of Novice and Experienced Teachers

- Project SIR Classroom Case Studies
 - Math and language arts middle school teachers
 - Suburban and inner city schools
 - Pathwise observations (formal and informal)
- All Teachers Met Minimal Criteria, but there were differences and similarities between novice and experienced teachers

Some Initial Observations

- Good novices are not as competent as good experienced teachers
- Programmed curricula may help support beginning teachers
- Context has a substantial impact on the teachers we observe
- Better novices have well-practiced routines and better management skills
- Better novices have a high level of commitment to their students

Observations of Novice and Experienced Teachers

- Differences in two Pathwise domains
 - B: Creating an Environment for Student Learning
 - C: Teaching for Student Learning
- Essentially no differences in two Pathwise domains
 - A: Organizing Content Knowledge for Student Learning
 - D: Teacher Professionalism
- Conclusion: Good novices are not as competent as good experienced teachers.

Support from Curriculum

- Several of our teachers are required to use either Reading Mastery or Success for All
- We've observed
 - Reading Mastery buoy up a hapless beginner
 - Success for All foster the richness of literacy instruction

Impact of Context

- Eve
 - First year teacher
 - Working in a school serving a low SES, highly diverse urban neighborhood
 - Co-teaches with two experienced teachers (although one is an art teacher)
 - Works with a small group of four students
 - Has impressed us as a competent novice

Impact of Context

- Mona
 - First year teacher
 - Working in a school serving a low SES, largely White, rural population
 - Does some co-teaching
 - Has as many as 25 4th and 5th graders in her resource room at the same time
 - Teaches 15 5th graders from a basal series
 - Has impressed us as a struggling novice