

Chapter 12

The Role of Teacher Dispositions in a Global Teaching Context

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ABSTRACT

Dispositions are a vital aspect to teacher preparation. Dispositions provide the holistic view to teaching future teachers that is often missing in teacher preparation programs. Commonly, the focus of training in teacher preparation programs is on pedagogical and content specific instruction. However, teacher preparation programs have a greater responsibility to further prepare candidates through dispositional development. In the 21st century, it is imperative that teachers are communicatively and culturally competent. Teacher dispositions relate directly to 21st century skills. This chapter focuses on defining dispositions, explaining their significance in teacher preparation programs and establishing how dispositional training can be employed in practical settings. Including teacher dispositions as an integral aspect of teacher preparation globally could help to establish meaningful and clear connections regarding what is truly needed for successful intercultural and international education in the 21st century.

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, teachers must be communicatively and culturally competent and able to teach their students to be communicatively and culturally competent. Teacher dispositions relate directly to 21st-century skills, as defined by professional organizations and teacher preparation programs. The concept of teacher dispositions can be readily applied to the rapidly changing context of 21st-century education worldwide. Indeed, including teacher dispositions as an integral aspect of teacher preparation globally

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could help establish meaningful and clear connections regarding what is truly needed for successful intercultural and international education.

Dispositions are clearly a vital and current aspect of teacher preparation. Indeed, the accreditors of teacher preparation programs in the United States refer to teacher dispositions as necessary components in accredited programs (CAEP, 2019; AAQEP, 2020). While teacher dispositions' general idea is agreed upon as important, parties have not yet completely united on the definition, specific wording, and exact requirements for what constitutes these specific teacher dispositions. Generally, dispositions are the personal and professional qualities and attitudes of a teacher and could be viewed as what many colloquially call *soft skills*. Dispositions provide a holistic view of teaching future teachers that are often missing in teacher preparation programs. Commonly, the focus of training in teacher preparation programs is on pedagogical and content-specific instruction. However, teacher preparation programs have a greater responsibility to prepare candidates through dispositional development further. Fostering an awareness of dispositions helps teacher preparation candidates access the most fundamental aspects of who they are personally and professionally (Schussler & Knarr, 2013). Dispositions of teacher preparation candidates are assessed through accreditation procedures and therefore, must be cultivated (Cummings & Asem-papa, 2013; Jones & Jones, 2013) via the intentional introduction to and teaching of the dispositions.

While it is the responsibility of teacher preparation programs to develop dispositions within teacher preparation candidates, the lack of clarity in both the definition and the assessment of dispositions within teacher preparation programs has made the transfer of dispositional knowledge to a practical application classroom difficult. Further, dispositions are difficult to define because of their subjectivity. As a result, teacher preparation programs have struggled to find concrete ways to develop, document, and assess dispositions (Neumann, 2013). Dispositional development is especially essential in English Language Learner teacher candidates' preparation as dispositional nuisances such as tone, syllabic stress, facial movements, and hand gestures are often transferred to students without teacher awareness. This chapter will focus on defining dispositions, explaining their utmost significance in teacher preparation programs, and establish how dispositional training can be employed in practical settings. The connection between teacher dispositions and the 21st-century global world of education is important to consider. Therefore, this chapter will focus on defining dispositions, explaining their utmost significance in teacher preparation programs, and establishing how dispositional training can be employed in practical settings worldwide.

BACKGROUND

When asked about the qualities they admire most in their teachers, students most commonly state dispositional qualities instead of content knowledge or pedagogical traits. Dispositional aspects of a teacher are what set great teachers apart from those that are just mediocre. Dispositions help teachers form the relationships that are necessary for truly effective teaching. Moreover, studies that research dispositions of teacher preparation candidates show that when teacher preparation candidates experience problems in their fieldwork during their teacher preparation training, those issues are often rooted in dispositional factors (Cochran-Smith, Cannady, McEachern, Piazza, Power, & Ryan, 2011). Dispositions have played an integral role in Teacher Education for decades. Classic works (Schön & Shulman, 1983; Shulman, 1986) focused on how teachers must be reflective practitioners and must relate appropriately and professionally. Shulman (1986) specifically wrote about the link between content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and teacher dispositions concerning evaluating teachers. Paying more attention to the intentional

introduction to and understanding of dispositions during fieldwork continues to be a wise strategy. For example, teacher candidates could be asked to reflect meaningfully on their ongoing field experiences with the framework of teacher dispositions in mind.

DEFINING TEACHER DISPOSITIONS

As noted above, dispositions can be difficult to define (Strom, Margolis, & Polat, 2019). This phenomenon is most often attributed to the fact that there is no agreed-upon universal set of dispositions and that several terms are used in place of the word disposition. Perceptions, expectations, qualities, behaviors, virtues, attitudes, temperaments, traits, characteristics, and philosophies are synonymous with dispositions (Rokicki, 2018). Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice (Schussler & Knarr, 2013). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) defines dispositions as the beliefs that guide teachers' attitudes and behaviors that affect student learning (Osguthorpe, 2013). Indeed, teacher dispositions may sometimes be challenging to define and to measure. However, difficult dispositions may be to define, accrediting bodies and teacher preparation programs alike agree to the robust influence dispositions have on the effectiveness of teacher preparation candidates in the U.S.

A disposition is an evolving and cumulative part of the unique character that makes up a teacher preparation candidate. A disposition is both an accumulation of consistent behaviors and an inclination to consistently behave in the future based on a particular set of internal values. With this general idea in mind, dispositions are most commonly referred to as behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes demonstrated, both verbally and nonverbally, by humans (Cumplings & Asempapa, 2013). Dispositions are a key component for preparing future teachers as society believes teachers should be of upstanding moral behavior and attitude (Kirwan & Roumell, 2015). Teacher dispositions have currently become an integral aspect and expectation in teacher preparation.

While there is no prescribed set of dispositional qualities applied to all teacher preparation programs, research shows that most teacher preparation programs have similarly defined dispositional skill sets that they look for in their candidates (Strom, Margolis, & Polat, 2019). The ability to interact knowledgeably with colleagues, sensitivity to community and cultural norms, the ability to create a positive classroom environment, and the ability to form relationships with parents rank high in the list of desired dispositional qualities of teachers (Keller, Goetz, Becker, Morger, & Hensley, 2014). Teachers also need the dispositional qualities of fairness and professionalism as well as being a reflective practitioner.

RELEVANCE OF TEACHER DISPOSITIONS

Dispositions concern what teacher preparation candidates do and how likely they are to act in any given situation. Therefore, teacher preparation programs should be to influence values and beliefs held by teacher preparation candidates about the dispositional aspects related to the practice of teaching. Grades for coursework and scores on certification tests can only tell an evaluator limited information about a teacher preparation candidate. The transformation of a teacher preparation candidate from one who merely possesses knowledge and skills into an effective teacher requires the development of dispositional characteristics (Kirwan & Roumell, 2015). Furthermore, dispositional development is of particular importance

as teacher preparation candidates often struggle to transition from student to student teacher to certified teacher (Schussler & Knarr, 2013). The intentional teaching of and reflection on teacher dispositions may bridge the gap between teacher preparation and becoming a proficient teacher in the field.

Dispositions measure what a teacher preparation candidate can do and what each candidate is disposed to do within a classroom setting based on the past experiences, moral beliefs, and intrinsic behaviors of the individual. As dispositions guide teacher preparation candidate tendencies to think and act in particular ways, dispositions are therefore predictive of how likely teacher preparation candidates apply the knowledge and skills learned in their coursework in their classroom teaching.

Teacher preparation candidates need to be made aware of their values and moral sensibilities to understand how these aspects affect their teaching and interaction with students. When teacher preparation candidates can connect their dispositions with their perceptions and practice, their teaching effectiveness can increase. It is the evaluation of a candidate's dispositional qualities that shows how the candidate will be able to act with professional judgment in educational settings (Schussler & Knarr, 2013). Teacher preparation candidates who are not exposed to disposition development during their teacher preparation program risk lacking the dispositions necessary to be effective teachers.

Alignment of theory and practice and extensive and intensely supervised clinical experiences must be incorporated throughout the teacher preparation program to ensure that dispositions are properly assessed (Osguthorpe, 2013). Linking the teaching and reflection on dispositions with assessment is paramount to ensure that the dispositions are meaningfully incorporated.

HISTORY OF TEACHER DISPOSITIONS

Dispositions have not always been a focus of teacher preparation programs. Before the year 2000, it was assumed in teacher education that those individuals with the desire to enter the teaching field automatically possessed the dispositions necessary to be an effective educator (Keller et al., 2014). Recognizing, however, that this was not always the case, in the year 2000, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) began formally requiring teacher preparation programs to assess their teacher preparation candidates' dispositional qualities. The following ten years produced a period of concern and unrest as teacher preparation programs scrambled to define, incorporate, and assess teacher preparation candidates' dispositions as a part of their teacher preparation programs. Since 2010, teacher preparation programs in the U.S. have begun to systematically incorporate the assessment of dispositions in a purposeful and deliberate (Welch et al., 2014).

The majority of teacher preparation programs in the U.S. have chosen to align dispositional assessments to existing teacher evaluations such as the Charlotte Danielson framework (A Vision Of Excellence, n.d.), or national standards such as the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards or the specific content standards for each subject area (Keller et al., 2014). Many programs are also assigning a grade to qualities such as attendance, participation, attentiveness, and engagement to identify dispositional strengths and weaknesses earlier on in teacher preparation candidate development (Welch, Napoleon, Hill, & Roumell, 2014). Today, teacher preparation programs are using the ideas of individual virtues rooted in educational values to help create personal and societal transformation through dispositional growth in teacher preparation candidates (Rokicki, 2018).

USE OF TEACHER DISPOSITIONS IN U.S. SCHOOLS

When teachers transfer dispositions to their students, they are helping them develop in multiple ways. Students learn to be role models to others as well as how to live justly and kindly. Dispositions translate to classroom management, and students learn to respect each other and communicate cooperatively (Rokicki, 2018). Teacher preparation programs need to be able to identify the connection between dispositions taught through university coursework, and subsequently, how dispositions are displayed in the classroom (Welch et al., 2014). Understanding how dispositions are transferred from teachers in the classroom setting will help teacher preparation candidates adjust their teaching style and delivery methods to meet present-day classrooms' demands.

The significant variance among teacher preparation programs is a strong justification of why instruction in dispositions is so vital to both the student and the teacher preparation program as a whole. The more dispositional training teacher preparation candidates obtain during their teacher preparation program, the more likely they are to stay in the teaching profession. Without direct instruction in dispositions, teacher preparation candidates are unprepared to face the realities of teaching. Teacher preparation programs that incorporate dispositional curriculum are more likely to produce satisfied and committed teachers in the profession because they come to the profession equipped with the necessary skills that go beyond just content and pedagogy (Wilkins, Ashton, Maurer, & Smith, 2015).

Studies that research dispositions of teacher preparation candidates have identified the underlying problems that teacher preparation candidates experience in their fieldwork during their teacher preparation training are often rooted in dispositional factors (Osguthorpe, 2013). According to Yang (2012), the most effective way to incorporate dispositions into the teacher preparation curriculum is through an already existing curriculum model such as the Dick and Carey model (Dick & Carey, 1990) which requires reflection and feedback, both of which are essential elements to the development of dispositions in teacher preparation candidates.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES

Dispositional research indicates why the performance of a teacher preparation candidate may not reach the level of competency displayed on certification tests or in coursework grades can be attributed to their dispositions (Rokicki, 2018). As dispositions guide teacher preparation candidate tendencies to think and act in particular ways, dispositions are therefore predictive of how likely teacher preparation candidates are to apply the knowledge and skills learned in their coursework in their classroom teaching (Rokicki, 2018).

The level of preparation that a teacher receives regarding dispositional training directly influences the satisfaction they perceive in teaching. As a result, professional development in dispositional development is essential to teacher success. Overall, job satisfaction inevitably determines the commitment of a teacher to the profession. Teachers who receive professional development in the dispositional curriculum are more likely to be satisfied and committed to remaining in the profession as they feel equipped with the necessary skills that go beyond just content and pedagogy (Zhang & Zeller, 2016). Similarly, Wilkins et al. (2015) note the importance of a good match between teacher candidates and their mentor teachers and a clear supervision plan for placement for teacher candidates.

TEACHER ATTRITION AND RETENTION

Dispositions are a vital missing factor contributing to teachers leaving the profession even though they are considered highly skilled in content knowledge and pedagogy (Cummings & Asempapa, 2013). The more dispositional training teacher preparation candidates obtain during their teacher preparation program, the more likely they are to stay in the profession (Zhang & Zeller, 2016). A lack of dispositional curriculum in teacher preparation results in inadequate teacher education programs and produces candidates unprepared to face teaching realities. Teacher preparation candidates with strong dispositional skills are more valuable to their students and are more likely to stay in education longer than teachers with weak or non-existent dispositions (Wilkins et al., 2015). Attrition and retention are ongoing and crucial concerns in the teaching profession, with between 40-50% of new teachers leaving the profession within their first five years of teaching (Will, 2018). New teachers leave the profession for a wide variety of reasons, but the vast majority cite stress as a contributing factor (Ryan et al., 2017). Evidence is beginning to show that teacher attrition rates and reasons for leaving the teaching profession are consistent across various teacher preparation contexts, types of programs, and routes to certification.

The evidence also suggests that whether entering teaching through “alternate” routes, PDSs, or university-sponsored programs, teachers’ decisions to leave or stay in teaching are remarkably consistent. Teachers make decisions based on how their expectations mesh with their experiences in schools, influenced in many cases by mentoring opportunities, principal support, collaboration with colleagues, appropriateness, difficulty teaching assignments/ responsibilities, and opportunities for professional development and leadership roles. (Cochran-Smith et al., 2011, p. 28)

Teacher preparation program factors connected to higher retention rates exhibited practices aligned with real-world classroom application focusing mainly on dispositions. Zhang and Zeller (2016) found that when teacher preparation programs focus solely on content and pedagogy and ignore the significance of dispositions, graduates of these programs have a short-term commitment to teaching but a relatively low level of a long-term commitment to the profession. The ongoing intentional teaching of, reflection on, and assessment of teacher dispositions could play an important role in teacher retention rates.

It is crucial to note that including teacher dispositions in the curriculum is not the only factor in the retention and attrition of new teachers. Zhang and Zeller (2016) stress that “access to teaching resources, personal background, competency knowledge, and perceived support from school districts, teacher preparation programs, and pupils’ parents must also be considered” (p. 88). The authors elaborate that:

Teachers continue teaching if they can adopt multiple educational roles inside and outside the classroom and receive professional support during their careers. Whether pathways to credentialing are traditional or alternative, teacher preparation programs must examine various variables associated with effective teacher performance and retention” (Zhang & Zeller, 2016, p. 88)

Similarly, it is important to note that:

Across several studies, it is clear that the graduates of university-recommended programs who can act on the beliefs and practices emphasized in their programs are effective because their programs focus on the school context as a fully integrated part of preparation partner closely with schools. When teachers

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are unable to implement the practices they learned, on the other hand, it is often because of unsupportive administrators, the constraints of curriculum requirements, or the lack of like-minded colleagues. (Cochran-Smith et al., 2011, pp. 27-28)

Thus, teacher dispositions are a necessary piece of a much larger picture, including robust and ongoing support, professional development, and a certain overall level of satisfaction with teaching, especially teaching within the specific context one finds oneself. The intentional teaching of and reflection upon teacher dispositions within the broader picture of a supportive teaching environment may positively impact teacher retention, satisfaction, and ongoing success. Similarly, this ongoing reflection can aid in a mindfully mentored transition to full-time teaching.

CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN THE U.S.

Teacher dispositions are relevant in any teaching context. However, they have become even more crucial as U.S. schools' student body becomes more diverse than ever before. Understanding and relating successfully to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) students has become one of the most important aspects of 21st-century teaching in U.S. public schools. Thus, teacher preparation and ongoing professional development must keep pace with this growing trend.

There is a need to prepare teachers to work within the complexities of a diverse learning environment. Interestingly, as student populations have been changing, the American teacher workforce has not seen commensurate, representational growth. Professional development and training are needed to foster a learning environment supportive of contemporary schools' varying contexts (Vázquez-Montilla, Just, & Triscari, 2014, p. 585).

The researchers elaborate on the need to "...improve and support those attributes and characteristics that have a positive correlation with the attitudes and beliefs needed to support CLD student populations." (Vázquez-Montilla, Just, & Triscari, 2014, p. 585). The "attitudes and beliefs" mentioned by the authors connect to the overall idea of teacher dispositions and their place in the teacher preparation curriculum.

Robinson and Clardy (2011) note that while U.S. K-12 public school students are becoming more and more culturally and linguistically diverse, teachers' population is not keeping up with this trend. This disparity can affect teacher-student relationships due to a lack of cultural understanding. The authors promote the idea of explicitly teaching a type of cultural competence teacher disposition during teacher preparation programs to begin teaching with a certain degree of the necessary understanding and sensitivity to cultural and linguistic diversity.

For decades, the vast majority of teachers in U.S. public schools have been White. Racial diversity is currently increasing in the teacher pool, but not as quickly as student diversity. Most concerning is the teacher retention of today's more diverse teacher candidates and new teachers. An article in EdWeek (Will, 2018) based on a broader and more comprehensive report on the teaching profession (Merrill, Stuckey, Collins, & Ingersoll, 2018) frames this disparity as follows:

The rate at which nonwhite teachers leave the profession is much higher than that of white teachers, increasing. Ingersoll calls the problem a “leaky bucket”—the high turnover rates undermine the work to recruit racially diverse candidates into the profession (Will, 2018, para. 18).

Representation of teachers who are minorities and ethnically and culturally diverse is significant. When students can make meaningful connections with and relate personally to others in the learning environments, especially their teachers, outcomes tend to be more positive. Stout, Archie, Cross, and Carman (2018) examined teacher-student relationships in higher education (university) context, and found that “faculty that are the same ethnicity as the student can have a significant positive impact on their potential for graduation” (p. 24).

As stated above, however, teacher and student ethnic and cultural diversity is often not balanced, with more White teachers in the U.S. teaching ethnically diverse students in the 21st century. This is when teacher dispositions become especially relevant because teacher dispositions revolve around aspects such as positive interactions with students, families, and the community. Vázquez-Montilla, Just, and Triscari (2014) connect teacher dispositions and teachers’ personal beliefs about CLD Students.

A large number of pre-service and in-service teachers still find themselves ill-prepared for working with CLD. Data also reflect that CLD students and students speakers of other languages are perceived by pre-service teachers as burdensome and perceived to have limited ability to perform at the same level of monolingual speakers. (Vázquez-Montilla, Just, & Triscari, 2014, p. 579)

A greater emphasis on teacher dispositions could help teachers better relate to and affirm their CLD students’ identities. Experience and diversity training on teacher dispositions could forge stronger relationships and rapport between CLD students and their somewhat less diverse teachers. It is a wise idea to teach dispositions with this factor in mind proactively.

In further considering today’s CLD students, the notion of Cultural and Linguistic Diversity is especially relevant for English as a Second Language (ESL), English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and Bilingual Education in various contexts. ESL refers mainly to teaching English as an additional language to students whose native language or language is spoken in the home is not English. EFL refers mainly to teaching English in a place where it is not spoken as the community’s main native language, such as in context in which native English speakers are teaching English abroad. Bilingual education can occur in various settings (either in the U.S. or abroad), and generally refers to instruction occurring in more than one language.

Understanding the role of teacher dispositions can help all of these contexts, especially with today’s increasing numbers of CLD students. Nguyen, Benken, Hakim-Butt, and Zweip (2013) provide several helpful strategies for helping pre-service teachers to develop dispositions and strategies that work well for the growing ESL population. Poza (2019) also highlights specific teacher dispositions that can help teachers forming dynamic learning environments for bilingual and linguistically diverse students, especially concerning the notion of “translanguaging” (Poza, 2019, p. 408). These strategies for working with today’s CLD students connect clearly to teacher dispositions, especially the sensitivity to community and cultural norms, the ability to create a positive classroom environment, and form relationships with parents and families. Teachers in all contexts need meaningful and helpful strategies, but most of all, they need to understand how their dispositions help them relate to their students, students’ families,

and the broader community. Intentionally and mindfully structured teacher education programs should always be designed and implemented with today's diverse K-12 school students.

The ability to relate to and affirm today's CLD students also relates to equity's crucial aspect. In the U.S., minority students often face higher hurdles and obstacles regarding access to quality K-12 education. Issues such as unequal funding for public schools and the lack of ESL and bilingual programs in many areas contribute to an unbalanced system that favors the majority population. Cultural and linguistic diversity is not only relevant to U.S. schools, of course, but also to the broader, global population, especially in cross-cultural models such as international schools. Teachers must possess the proper dispositions to interact successfully with and promote the learning of their culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Globally, K-12 students face similar inequity issues as U.S. students do, with unequal access to educational materials, resources, and so forth. When mindfully applied, teacher dispositions can impact equity by helping teachers better relate to and affirm their diverse students, while also being sensitive and understanding of the inequities that their students are facing. For example, the disposition of communicating clearly and compassionately with parents and families from a wide variety of backgrounds can lead to better relationships and ongoing rapport with students and their families.

An original idea entitled "wobbling" (Guggenheim, 2019) could help reflect on the practical aspects and pragmatics involved in intercultural teaching situations, especially about CLD students and providing equitable educational programs for today's students. The author found that some university teacher education programs "wobble" back and forth from more to less equity-oriented practice, and are thus not necessarily consistent in their application of teaching a disposition related to cultural competence. Instead of this being a negative aspect, the authors frame the "wobbling" as an opportunity to move consistently forward, bit by bit, while still seeing and dealing with the less equity-oriented practices. It is the uncomfortable "wobbles" back and forth that indeed, the very notion of this "wobbling" provides ongoing scaffolding opportunities and chances for learning during the "wobbles." Guggenheim's (2019) notion of "wobbling" connects clearly to verbal communication and teacher dispositions, such as cultural sensitivity and awareness.

In addition to the role of verbal communication discussed above, nonverbal communication also connects meaningfully to teacher dispositions (Vázquez-Montilla, Just, & Triscari, 2014). For example, positive teacher/student interactions include specific types of body language, facial expression, and the use of proximity. It is important to note that just like verbal communication and language in general, nonverbal communication can vary significantly from culture to culture. Thus, the desired teacher disposition of cultural awareness and sensitivity again comes into play.

It is natural and logical to consider the important role of teacher dispositions in our 21st century, global education world. Indeed, the lessons on teacher dispositions being learned and explored in the U.S. context can be applied meaningfully to the broader international/global context. Indeed, teacher dispositions on this broader context are just as relevant, and perhaps even more so, given the unique nature of 21st-century global education.

The current state of international education can be understood as follows:

The multicentric nature of globalization drives different forms of international education and workforce mobility, and this is central to understanding teacher employment pathways, the diversity of workplaces, and the demands that they place on teaching practices. (Kostogriz & Bonar, 2019, p. 127)

It is necessary to precisely consider what is needed and what will be needed about this modern, global world of education. As defined in most of the current literature, teacher dispositions certainly would broadly apply, but there is more to consider. For example, it would be wise to reflect upon what specific teacher dispositions may be most relevant to teaching students' international/global population. The next section elaborates on how teacher dispositions relate to today's global teaching contexts, especially about a transnational teacher disposition's specific disposition.

THE IDEA OF A TRANSNATIONAL TEACHER DISPOSITION

The notion of a specific transnational teaching disposition is beginning to be explored in the current literature. Gu and Canagarajah (2018) studied migrant teachers from various Asian countries who were teaching in Hong Kong and chose to frame their study around the notion that teacher dispositions can be the proverbial glue that holds such a global teaching experience together, providing a successful route to intercultural exchange. The authors found that the disposition to communicate and function transculturality can be seen as a unique disposition that leads to more excellent reflection and enhanced teaching practice in a global context.

Similarly, within the specific context of 21st-century international schools:

International schools can mobilize the schools' idea as hybrid places in which practice traditions, languages, views of professionalism, and types of relationships disclose themselves as resources in and for becoming truly international in their practices, rather than just being named as such schools. (Kostogriz & Bonar, 2019, p. 127)

Due to their very nature of schools that serve CLD students, Interdisciplinary studies are often integral aspects. This is especially true in international schools and ESL, EFL, and Bilingual Education programs. Interdisciplinary studies tie all content areas together meaningfully. The "hybrid places" (Kostogriz & Bonar, 2019, p. 127) referred to above could be seen as interdisciplinary. Thinking about teaching and learning in a more interdisciplinary and holistic fashion can be linked to desirable teacher dispositions, such as fairness, professionalism, and being a reflective practitioner.

Similarly, teacher dispositions can be seen to play an important role in Intercultural Studies (Kostogriz & Bonar, 2019) and cultural understanding and collaboration (Gu & Canagarajah, 2018). All of these important aspects link teacher dispositions to the overall notion of Cultural Competence. Cultural Competence is applicable and important in a wide variety of teaching and learning contexts, just like teacher dispositions.

21ST CENTURY SKILLS

Like many clear connections between Cultural Competence and desired teacher dispositions, the same holds for 21st-century skills. Throughout the first two decades of the 21st century, researchers and practitioners have given much attention to the concept of 21st-century skills. Both Cultural Competence and 21st-century skills connect meaningfully with the concept of teacher dispositions, because they are at-

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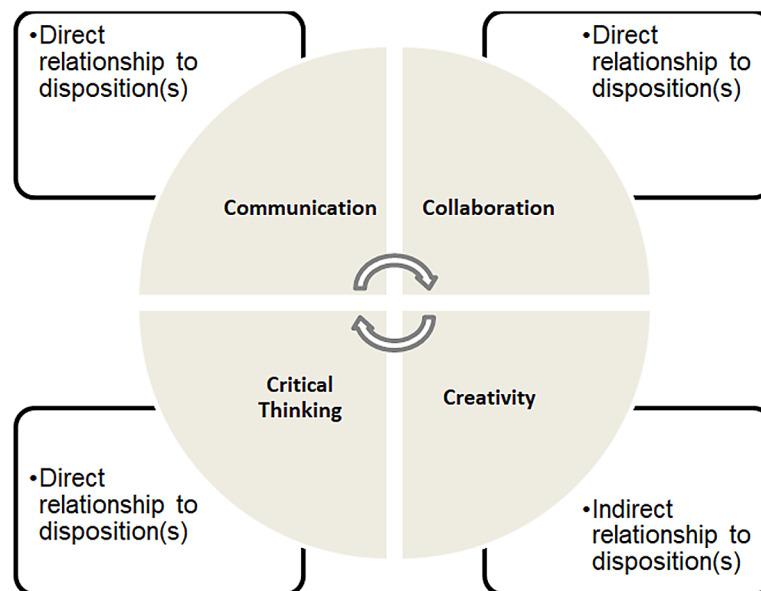
tributes that help teachers relate to their students, families, and communities and because they contribute to meaningful lesson delivery and relevance.

21st-century skills have been defined in numerous ways, but generally tend to focus on what has come to be known as the “4 Cs” (An Educator’s Guide to the “Four Cs,” n.d.). The “4 Cs” as defined in the literature and practice include:

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Critical Thinking
- Creativity

The “4 Cs” is important for both students and teachers in our modern world. Teachers model and teach the “4 Cs,” which are crucial to success in career and life in our modern world. Utilizing 21st-century tools for collaboration and communication, both synchronous and asynchronous, is necessary for 21st-century communication. This communication and collaboration notion relates to the desired teacher disposition of being willing, open, and accessible. Specific connections between teacher dispositions and the 4 Cs can be made both directly and indirectly, as is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Relationships between the 4Cs and desired teacher dispositions



The “4 Cs” illustrated at the core of Figure 1 can be connected to desired teacher dispositions, as noted in the figure’s outer sections. Regarding communication, direct connections can be made to the desired teacher dispositions of the ability to interact knowledgeably with colleagues and form relationships with parents. For the second “C” of Collaboration, the dispositions of fairness and professionalism connect. Concerning Critical Thinking, the desired disposition of being a reflective practitioner and

Neumann's (2013) notion of a teacher disposition explicitly toward critical thinking come to mind. The fourth "C" of Creativity may only connect indirectly to the concept of teacher dispositions but is still relevant. Being creative could undoubtedly help with other aspects of defined teacher dispositions. For example, ability and disposition toward creative problem solving could help teachers face novel situations, such as teaching in a new environment, most notably concerning cultural differences. Teachers play important roles in modeling both their dispositions and the "4Cs" for students. Indeed, 21st-century skills provide an additional framework for examining today's global world of education, with teacher dispositions also in mind.

21ST CENTURY COMMUNICATION IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

21st-century skills connect with teacher dispositions, as presented in figure 1 above. Examining the role of 21st-century skills further, it is important to note how these skills have become crucial to communicate globally. This connection is evident in all areas of life, including business, commerce, travel, or lifestyle, especially relevant to education. For example, social media allows global citizens to interact immediately with the content and other users, especially today's mobile devices. Critical thinking and appropriate interpersonal communication are of crucial importance in the 21st century. The need for communication and collaboration is ever-present and growing, especially about information literacy, which can find, select, and evaluate sources of information among the vast amounts of content available today. Notions of Cultural Competence, diversity, and equity figure into this equation as well, both in the U.S. and globally, as citizens of the world, correspond in real-time. The ability to communicate and think critically about the content and our interactions across languages and cultures is paramount. This type of intercultural bridging ability involves mutual understanding and affirmation, which connects to teacher dispositions such as patience and sensitivity to community and cultural norms. Thus, 21st-century communication should be a prevalent focus of teacher education programs concerning introducing and teaching desired teacher dispositions.

It is crucial to connect research and teaching practice to 21st-century communication in a global context. Indeed, what teachers do every day in their classrooms, affects their students' outcomes, regardless of the specific context. Yang (2012) explored how critical thinking skills and other dispositions emphasized during teacher preparation programs transferred to later teaching practice in the classroom and found that the middle school teachers studied successfully model and foster their students' critical thinking skills, thus impacting student achievement and success. In sum, teacher dispositions logically impact student dispositions. This sentiment was further elaborated upon by Neuman (2013), who noted the difficulty in guiding teachers' natural and developing dispositions, especially toward critical thinking (a 21st-century skill). Teachers model 21st century skills for their students, and the same likely holds for dispositions, such as developing practical communication skills. The dispositions modeled and taught in teacher preparation programs likely trickle down through the teacher to that teacher's students via the classroom culture and interactions within.

Teacher preparation programs should consider 21st-century skills/communication and the global context (communicative/cultural competence) in their work regarding teacher dispositions. It is important to connect research and practice in relation to 21st-century skills and how they relate to desired teacher dispositions. There is an ongoing need for more ideas for intentionally and mindfully introducing and

practicing desired teacher dispositions in teacher preparation programs. These ideas would benefit today's teacher candidates, and better prepare them for teaching in our diverse 21st-century world.

TEACHER DISPOSITIONS IN ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, our 21 century, global world necessitates a further understanding of how teacher dispositions increase teacher success moving toward the future. As presented in figure 1 above, 21st-century skills and teacher dispositions clearly overlap in many ways. The 21st century has brought many changes to the field of education. Not only are 21st-century skills paramount, but online teaching and learning have also exploded in popularity and use. The new global world of online education is expanding rapidly, with more and more international exchanges and global access improving daily. In its infancy only about two decades ago, the field of online education continues to expand at all levels, with new arenas to explore. Many innovative platforms for online learning are constantly evolving, especially with the advent and accessibility of mobile technology worldwide.

In the U.S., K-12 students studying in online classrooms are a small, but steadily growing minority:

In 2017-18, 501 full-time virtual schools enrolled 297,712 students, and 300 blended schools enrolled 132,960. Enrollments in virtual schools increased by more than 2,000 students between 2016-17 and 2017-18, and enrollments in blended learning schools increased by over 16,000 during this same time period. (Molnar et al., 2019, May 28, p. 8)

Globally, there is currently increased interest and participation in online teaching and learning for a vast number of different reasons, including accessibility and the desire to improve opportunities and outcomes. For example:

Current trends in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia illustrate that online education is gaining traction in these regions despite persistent technological barriers—not because it is a better form of learning, but because it is perceived as a rational, cost-effective means to widen educational opportunities. (Trines, 2018, December 18)

While innovations and new ideas in online education continue to evolve rapidly, online learning typically follows a specific, standard, and prevailing format. Most online learning currently takes place in online environments that are formatted, designed, and set up in remarkably similar and standardized ways. Even though many competing Learning Management Systems (LMS) have been utilized for online learning, the typical capabilities and features of these LMS and the teachers teaching within them have remained quite consistent when compared to each other over time (Machajewski, Steffen, Romero Fuerte, and Rivera, 2019). Online teachers, regardless of the age and level of their students, must possess certain skill-sets and qualities in order to be successful in that specific teaching modality.

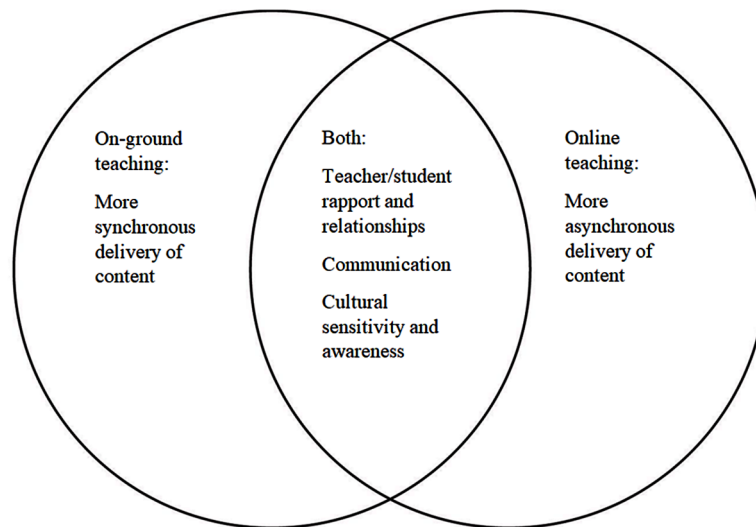
Connecting online teaching and learning to the idea of teacher dispositions is an important aspect to consider. Online teaching is certainly different from face-to-face or on-ground teaching (Kirwan & Roumell, 2015), especially with regard to asynchronous modalities, content delivery, pacing, and the need for self-direction by both teachers and students. In some ways, however, online teaching shares many basic attributes with its older sibling of face-to-face or on-ground instruction. For example, the same

basic premises of good teaching apply, such as providing helpful feedback, having positive classroom interactions, and building relationships and rapport via a positive learning community.

Welch et al. (2014) have specifically designed a scale for assessing teacher dispositions in online classrooms. The areas of overlap with more traditional, on-ground teaching, as well as the more distinct areas involved in online teaching, are notable.

Figure 2 represents some of the overlap and the distinctive elements with regard to teacher dispositions.

Figure 2. Online teaching versus on-ground teaching



While online teaching clearly looks very different from on-ground teaching, especially with regard to the mode for the delivery of content, the most important aspects remain the same. These crucial aspects align directly with teacher dispositions, especially with regard to forming and maintaining a positive classroom environment and communicating positively and mindfully with students and their families.

Of course, not all online learning occurs in the most typical setting of an online classroom with asynchronous interaction. New innovations and platforms continue to evolve and become widely accessible, most notably app-based educational programs on mobile devices.

Another popular example is the use of both synchronous and asynchronous video-based educational lessons across the globe. Many new English as a Foreign Language (EFL) video-based lessons such as VIPKID (Ko, 2019) have risen in popularity recently. VIPKID pairs native speakers in countries such as the U.S. with young students in China who are learning English online. The platform functions mostly as a private tutor with scripted lesson plans, utilizing props and other specially-designed learning materials for sequentially organized lessons in the English language. The website for VIPKID specifically recruits teachers who appear to possess desirable teacher dispositions, such as creating a positive classroom environment and communicating with students in an upbeat, clear, and patient fashion (The Quick Guide to Teaching with VIPKID, 2020, April 21). Ko (2019) further expands on how VIPKID is “revolutionizing language teaching and learning” with its innovative, dynamic, and global model. This current trend and

innovation in online learning has a clear connection to the importance of teacher dispositions and can even be seen as monetizing desirable teacher dispositions in a very unique and global fashion.

A clear argument can be made for the specific importance and relevance of teacher dispositions for online teaching and learning. Martins and Ungerer (2017) refer to the unique notion of “virtual teaching dispositions” (p. 156). Due to the ever-expanding reach of the Internet, online courses can reach an international audience. With this global audience in mind, it is crucial to consider international and cross-cultural contexts. Research in an African context (Martins & Ungerer, 2017) proposes the importance of understanding the key characteristics and competencies involved in online teaching. This notion of key characteristics and competencies clearly connects to desired teacher dispositions. Martins & Ungerer (2017) elaborate on the need for direct and intentional professional development that would help instructors with their online presence, interactions, and teaching dispositions that are involved in successful online teaching and learning. In online teaching, just as in on-ground teaching, the instructor sets the overall tone for the culture of the classroom. This notion relates directly to the disposition of creating a positive classroom environment.

Looking toward the future of online education in the 21st-century global society, it must be considered that online education is constantly growing and evolving. The integral role of teacher dispositions, especially a transnational teacher disposition, must be included in this ongoing growth. In addition, the framework of 21st-century skills and how they connect to teacher dispositions can be a helpful tool for the training and ongoing professional development of online teachers.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRACTICE IN TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

More ideas for exactly how to implement the intentional and mindful teaching of teacher dispositions within teacher preparation programs and ongoing professional development are needed. A great deal more examples, such as videos of effective teaching, especially with regard to dispositions, would be helpful. Findings by Rose (2013) regarding responses from teacher educators indicate that teacher preparation programs would benefit from more intentional and mindful teaching of dispositions. Rose suggests practical ideas from the findings as follows:

Certain teaching tools could be further developed, such as videos and case studies. One respondent mentioned the scarcity of high-quality videos that would illustrate dispositions in action. As a practicing teacher educator, I have found very little in the way of videos that demonstrate a teacher in action, with the exception of videos dealing with classroom management issues. Videos designed to illustrate issues more specific to dispositions would be very welcome. (Rose, 2013, para. 44)

Indeed, “The 21st century has seen an explosion of interest in and attention to pre-service teacher dispositions” (Rose, 2013, para. 1). This notion is rightfully so, given the clear connections between 21st-century skills and desired teacher dispositions. Putting these connections into more clearly defined practice in teacher preparation programs globally may help to move the idea forward.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

When asked to describe their favorite teacher, students more often than not describe dispositional qualities and characteristics such as kindness, patience, understanding, or being personally motivating as to why they connected with their teacher on a deeper level. NCATE, the National Council of Accreditation for Teacher Education, has recognized dispositions are essential to the development of teacher preparation candidates (Osguthorpe, 2013). Teacher preparation candidates who are not exposed to disposition development during their teacher preparation program could lack the dispositions necessary to be effective teachers, which has a direct impact on student retention and growth. It is no longer sufficient to assume dispositional development is occurring in teacher preparation programs. The instruction of dispositional knowledge must be deliberate. Knowledge and skills are not sufficient by themselves to prepare excellent teachers.

The transformation of a teacher preparation candidate from one who merely possesses knowledge and skills into a superior teacher requires the development of dispositions of character, perceptions, abilities, and temperaments (Jones & Jones, 2013). The overall construct of teacher dispositions naturally lends itself to the 21st century's global teaching context and can be an important and helpful way to guide teacher preparation programs worldwide. Teacher dispositions may sometimes be difficult to define and measure but are more relevant now than ever before.

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ADDITIONAL READING

Cobbinah, J. E., & Adjei-Boateng, E. (2019). Teaching and learning 21st century skills for life. In P. H. Bull & J. Keengwe (Eds.), *Handbook of research on innovative digital practices to engage learners* (pp. 365–378). Information Science Reference/IGI Global. doi:10.4018/978-1-5225-9438-3.ch019

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

21st Century Skills: Skills that have been newly recognized as pertinent to navigation of and communication within the 21st century, such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity.

Bilingual: A person who is proficient in two languages.

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP): Since 2013, a nonprofit and nongovernmental agency that accredits educator preparation providers.

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity: The extent to which varied groups of humans with cultural and language differences participate in, are welcome in, and contribute to the culture of a given place, scenario, culture, or situation.

Cultural Competence: The ability to relate to, communicate with, and affirm humans of cultures other than one's own.

Dick and Carey Model: An instructional systems design model taking a systems approach to formative assessment in order to improve instruction.

English as a Foreign Language: The study of English by non-native speakers in environments where English is not the dominant language.

English as a Second Language: The study of the English language by non-native speakers in an English-speaking environment.

English Language Learner: Individuals with limited English language proficiency.

Fieldwork: Clinical practice for teacher preparation candidates conducted by observing or teaching in an actual K-12 classroom.

Global Context: Consideration of something within current worldwide use and understanding.

Interdisciplinary Studies: Learning involving two or more academic content areas.

Learning Management System: A software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, and delivery of educational courses or programs.

National Council for the Accreditation of Teachers (NCATE): A professional accreditor focused on accrediting teacher education programs in U.S. colleges and universities until 2013 when NCATE became the Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation (CAEP).

Online Learning: Courses or other learning experiences specifically delivered via the internet.

Professional Development: Continuing education for in-service teachers.

Teacher Attrition: The phenomenon and rate of teachers leaving the teaching profession.

Teacher Dispositions: The perceptions, expectations, qualities, behaviors, virtues, attitudes, temperaments, traits, characteristics, and philosophies that are desired for successful K-12 teachers.

The Role of Teacher Dispositions in a Global Teaching Context

Teacher Preparation Candidate: A person preparing via schooling and/or other professional development experiences to become a K-12 teacher.

Teacher Preparation Program: The training and educational programs, usually at universities, in which teachers learn the skills required for teaching in K-12 schools.

Teacher Retention: The ability to keep teachers teaching in schools from year to year, as opposed to leaving the profession of education.

Transnational Teacher Disposition: A specific desired teacher disposition regarding the ability to relate to humans from other countries and/or cultures.

Wobbling: Moving back and forth without taking a definitive stance.