

Multicultural Teacher Education in China: Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers in a Multiethnic and Multicultural Country

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This paper examined current issues of educating culturally responsive teachers in the United States (U.S.) and in China. Focusing on constructing a culturally responsive knowledge base and model for teacher education programs, this paper summarized obstacles for developing culturally responsive teachers, proposed multicultural approaches to establish a culturally responsive teacher education model in multiethnic and multicultural China, as well as presented practical implications to enhance the knowledge construction for preparing teachers for diversity. Aiming at stimulating reconsiderations of situating teacher education programs in multicultural context, this paper brought culturally responsive perspectives to empower pre- and in- service teachers' teaching capacities to meet needs from their students with diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds in China.

Keywords: multicultural education, culturally responsive teaching, teacher education, multicultural education in China

The Changing Demographics in Chinese Student Population

China is a multiethnic, multilingual, and multicultural country, with 56 nationalities, more than 80 spoken languages, and about 30 written languages. It follows the pattern of diversity in unity of the Chinese nation (Fei, 1999; Wang, 2004). Chinese is the official language and also a must for all nationalities in China (Wang, 2004). Han remains the dominant ethnic group which account for 91.59% of the total population (National Bureau of Statistics of the People's Republic of China, 2010). The Han-culture is the mainstream of the society. Along with the globalization process, the reform, and opening policy, the number of ethnic minority students has been increasing (Wang, 2004; Zhu & Han, 2006).

The Increasing Demographic Diversity in Student Population

With the process of globalization, industrialization, and urbanization, schools in China are experiencing the large influx of ethnic minority students. The national minority population has reached over 100 million (Wang, 2004). A large number of migrant minority students who are particularly from areas inhabited by the ethnic minority groups also enter the Han-culture dominant classrooms every year. The influence of an increasingly ethnically diverse population on China's schools is and will continue to be enormous.

Culture, socio-economics, language, and geographic diversities and gaps are increasing. After the founding of People's Republic of China, the socioeconomic development is very different between the western inland and the eastern coastal, as well as the metropolitan centers and the remote provinces (National Report of Multicultural Education of China, 2010). The geographical and economic differences in China result in the

unequal distribution of educational resources. The quality of schooling and teaching resources distribution in China follows the economic development pattern: higher students' academic achievements and qualified teachers centralize in China's eastern coastal regions; and inadequacy of educational resources and underachieved students' academic performances are the outstanding characteristics of education in the multi-ethnic western inland cities. Compared to the majority of Han students, economics and geographics divided educational opportunities and resources limit Chinese ethnic minority students' accesses to educational equity and success (Hinton, 2011).

Under the influences of China's market economy and migration process, the increasing percentage of students who speak a first language other than mandarin and come from the ethnical autonomous region challenge traditional instructional ideology and strategies in China's schools. Most teachers now in Chinese classrooms and in teacher education programs are more likely to have students from diverse ethnic, language, economic, and religious groups in their classrooms, and this is particular true and challenging for metropolitan-city teachers who usually have only Han students.

The "Demographic Divide" in Schools

Demographic changes not only reveal in Chinese student population. The United States (U.S.), for another example, along with the increasing numbers of ethnic minority students, the nation needs to be prepared to make appropriate adjustments to effectively deal with the changing ethnic texture of its citizens (Banks, 2004). The increasing proportion of students of color enrollments in schools presents a major challenge which is referred by Gay and Howard (Howard, 2010) as the "demographic divide," wherein teachers face the reality that they are most likely to come into contact with students from cultural, ethnic, linguistic, racial, and social class backgrounds different from their own (p. 40).

Unlike the increasing diversity in student population, the U.S. schools and the core of American education will continue to have homogeneous teaching population with majority White, middle class, monolingual, and female teachers with Eurocentric values (Goodwin, 1997; Howard, 2010). According to the research Garcia (2005) conducted, already 31% of all U.S. public school students come from minority backgrounds, at the same time, only 13% of the teaching force comes from minority groups, and only 5% of the college students studying to become teachers are from minority backgrounds (p. 11). In all likelihood, the racial and ethnic makeup of the teaching population in China appears to be homogeneous as middle class, female, and Han dominant (Wang, 2004). The percentage of minority teachers only accounts for 4.93% (National Report of Multicultural Education in China, 2010).

Howard (2010) identified that this demographic divide would reduce most teachers' opportunities to contact with people from ethnic minority groups as part of their socialization. Consequently, a more challenging question is posed for teachers both in the U.S. and China: Are we preparing ourselves well enough to teach diverse students in diverse settings?

May and Sleeter (2010) addressed the issue that teachers still too often constructed indigenous and students from other ethnic minority groups in deficit terms. They argued that all these trends were the result of longstanding racialized institutional policies and teaching practices that consistently disadvantage minority students (p. 3). Teachers often talk about racially and linguistically minority students as a group that is lacking certain skills and backgrounds, such as motivation, critical thinking, and family support (Kubota, 2010). The stereotyped teaching attitudes toward minority students also appear in China's educational context. Researches

about China's minority education indicate that Tibetan and Uyghur students in particular suffer direct or indirect discrimination or prejudice for being labeled as disadvantaged groups by their Han teachers (Wang, 2004; Macpherson & Beckett, 2008; Hinton, 2011). For more than 50 years, Chinese central government has struggled to deal with questions of education for ethnic minority students (Wang, 2004).

Researchers have also found that many teachers or teacher candidates have negative beliefs about student who are different from their cultural and ethnic groups, despite their willingness to teach in diverse school settings (Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Howard, 2010). Consequently, one of the primary challenges for teachers in the mainstream classrooms is directly connected to the growing cultural difference gap between themselves and their minority students. Lacking of cultural awareness, cross-cultural knowledge background, and interactions with minority students, teachers can hardly assist them to achieve academic success. Thus, there is a need for teachers in the U.S. and China to carefully examine questions raised by Howard (2010): What types of attitudes, skills, and knowledge that teachers need to acquire to teach students from diverse groups (p. 42)? In response to this question, scholars have articulated the need for recognizing and incorporating the values and complexities of racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and historical differences in teaching, in order to achieve academic success for all students (Gay, 2000; Nieto, 2000; Sleeter & Grant, 2009; Howard, 2010).

Incorporating Multicultural Education Into Teacher Training

Schools as the cultural site could also become an obstacle for students who are not from the dominant culture group in their schools. Differences between the school culture and minority students' home culture could be experienced as threatening and challenging for those students, because every culture has its unique variation. Thus, developing teachers who can work with a diverse student population and value this multicultural perspective is significantly necessary.

The Emergence of Multicultural Education in China

The concept of multicultural education in China is imported from the West. Banks (1994) stated that education within a pluralistic society should affirm and help students understand their home and community cultures, help free them from their cultural boundaries, create and maintain a civic community that works for the common good, as well as afford students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they will need to participate in civic action to make society more equitable and just. As Bennett (1990) claimed that multicultural education was an approach to teaching and learning that was based upon demographic values and beliefs, and seeks to foster cultural pluralism within culturally diverse societies and an interdependent world.

The idea of creating learning communities to improve race and ethnic relations and facilitate all students acquire the knowledge, perspectives, and skills needed to effectively participate in cross-cultural society captures the major goal of education in China. Wang (2004) indicated that the important aims of China's education were to develop an identification with the Chinese Communist Party and the socialist system, fight against the breaking up of the Chinese nation, and promote the country's unity and political stability (p. 358). The Educational Law of the People's Republic of China (Ministry of Education, as cited in Wang, 2004) stipulated that the country had the responsibility to help develop educational excellence and equity in minority areas based on their features and needs. The central government puts forwards the country's macro-educational policies, aims, content, and curriculum programs through the condition determined by the ethnic and cultural diversity (Wang, 2004).

Currently, the trend of modernization, globalization, and urbanization challenges the traditional Han-cultural dominant education pattern. As the central government has managed to achieve the goal of universalizing the educational excellence and equity for both Han and ethnic minority students, how to balance national unity, the increasing ethnic, and cultural diversity becomes an urgent educational and sociopolitical issue in China. Many teachers and teacher educators struggle with how to teach today's students to live in a multiethnic and cultural society as citizens with strong sense of national unity, as well as how to educate pre- and in- service teachers to deal positively and effectively with diversity. Multicultural education, which values social justice and cultural diversity along with efforts to reduce racial conflicts, proposes a new pathway to improve teaching practice and teacher preparation for minority students in China.

Fundamental Theories and Dimensions of Multicultural Education

Since the concept of multicultural education was created, it has been placed within various educational and cultural realities of different countries to shed light on the depth and complexity of teaching for diversity. Rodriguez (1983) indicated that the prevailing educational philosophy in the U.S. had been based on the "melting pot" theory which promoted the emergence of a monocultural society in America. This theory, illustrated by Rodriguez (1983), meant that all persons should break their native cultural ties, reject their heritage and become culturally Anglo-Saxon (p. 9). Banks (1994) claimed that multiethnic educators needed to move to a reconciliation which saw a universal culture with ethnic subgroups and subcultures. This emphasis attaches an important focus of ethnic diversity and cultural understanding on the emergence of multicultural education.

The Definition of Multicultural Education

Multicultural education as a conceptual framework emerged in the 1970s in an attempt to provide teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to teach diverse learners (Howard, 2010). J. Banks and C. Banks (2004) provided the summarization of the concept: Multicultural education is a field of study and an emerging discipline whose major aim is to create equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups. It is a field of study designed to increase educational equity for all students that incorporates for this purpose content, concepts, principles, theories, and paradigms from history, the social and behavioral sciences, and ethnic studies and women's studies (pp. xi-xii).

Multicultural education emerged out of the struggle to uphold the nation's democratic ideals of freedom, justice, and equality for all people (Howard, 2010). Banks (2002) proposed that multicultural education was a reform movement which was designed to make major changes in the education of students. It assumes that race, ethnicity, culture, and social class are salient parts of U.S. society. It also assumes that ethnic and cultural diversity enriches the nation. Multicultural educators advocate for understanding about diversity and constructing a knowledge base for teachers to recognize and acknowledge the important and intertwined roles that race, culture, language, gender, and class play in U.S. society (Rodriguez, 1983; Bennett, 1990; Pang, 2001; Howard, 2010). Teachers who obtain knowledge about cultural differences and develop multicultural teaching competences can modify their teaching strategies to better afford minority students receive academic success.

The Raising of Multicultural Teacher Education

Many scholars mention that an emerging "multiculturalism" appears in teacher education, which contribute to the empowerment of teacher knowledge, teaching pedagogy, teacher-students interactions, and

classroom climate embrace cultural diversity and equity (Sleeter & Grant, 1988; Sleeter, 1996; Banks, 2002; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Bennett, 2004). Grounded in the notion that culture influences all dimensions of teaching including attitudes, practices, materials, and outcomes, multicultural education sets profound influences in teacher education. As Garcia (2005) stated, instructional efforts to achieve educational excellence for diverse students could not be excluded from cultural perspectives and contexts. Recognizing multicultural education can function as a rejection of racism and all forms of discrimination in schools and society, as well as an affirmation of ethnic, racial, cultural, and gender pluralism, many teacher education programs across the country began to include multicultural and diversity issues in the curriculum and instruction since the early 1980s (Cochran-Smith, 2004).

Over the last several years, there has been an increasing awareness and understanding that the cultural context of schooling has changed along with the increasing diversity in student groups. As a result, there is a pressing need for teaching that is designed and teachers who are trained to accommodate these new realities. Goodwin (1997) proposed a specific notion that teachers need specific preparation to teach a culturally and racially diverse student population. The belief that teachers need “fixing” previously held convictions about the disadvantaged nature of children from minority groups is addressed in the multicultural teacher education (Goodwin, 1997; Vavrus, 2002).

The new multiculturalism in teacher education, as referred by Cochran-Smith (2004), was closely akin to the notion of teacher education for social justice and cross-cultural understanding. She proposed seven key questions: the diversity, the knowledge, the teacher learning, the practice, the outcomes, the recruitment, and the coherence question, which were designed to accomplish goals of multicultural teacher education defined by Goodwin (1997) as developing affective teaching attitudes, knowing others, concerning on the individual child, and responding to social change.

As Sleeter (1996) claimed, multicultural education could benefit to prepare teachers for diversity. The implications of multicultural teacher education could help White (in the U.S. context) and Han (in China’s context) teachers to see the needs, feelings, and experiences of racial minority groups, through being taught and developed by teacher education programs that incorporate cultural awareness and racial diversity in their contents. Key features of multicultural education could greatly enrich Han teachers’ teaching capacities to minority students through following aspects:

1. Using the notion of funds of knowledge to value minority students’ culture as content for schooling which is illustrated by Lipka (1998) as situate learning within the authentic cultural community;
2. Developing a knowing for both teacher themselves and their students;
3. Differentiating teaching methods which described by Carol Grant and Christine Sleeter (2011) as the process of recognizing and working with differences in students’ background knowledge, learning preferences, interests, language abilities, and skill levels;
4. Cultivating multi-sensory towards issues of race, cultural, gender, and ethnicity diversity and differences;
5. Rejecting cultural deficit thinking to label minority students as disadvantaged, socially deprived, and culturally different who cannot success (Sleeter & Grant, 1988; Gay, 2010).

By doing so, teachers in the U.S. and in China from the dominant ethnic and cultural group can obtain the knowledge base and pedagogical skills to use strategies and cooperative learning to ensure that all their students can success.

From Theory to Action: A Call for Cultivating Culturally Responsive Teachers

Multicultural education is comprehensive, complex, and multidimensional. This presentation zooms in on one of the important concerns of multicultural education: teaching practice. Realizing cultural diversity and knowing concepts of multicultural education is important, but it may not guarantee teachers from the majority ethnic group to effectively transform theoretically constructed knowledge and training experiences into practice. Classroom instruction fails to imply multicultural education implications cannot enhance minority students' engagement, motivation, and achievement. As Au (2006) indicated, teachers needed to think carefully about how students' diverse backgrounds influence their learning, as well as how to incorporate students' diversity into instruction to improve teaching-learning connections and effectiveness.

Factors That Influence Minority Students' Learning

Howard (2010) offered important factors that impact minority students learning as: language, geography, social-class structure, cultural practices, religion, migration versus non-migrations, gender, and family history. These factors can be also translated in China's context to represent elements limit Chinese ethnic minority students' access to educational equity and excellence. In China, most of the minority groups live in border areas, where the natural environment and geographic conditions are hard, the educational resources are limited, and the economy is underdeveloped compared to eastern coastal regions (Wang, 2004).

Given these circumstances, weak academic preparation, attendance in inferior schools, inadequate educational opportunities, and a lack of financial and family supports become the background factors that affects Chinese ethnic minority students' academic preparation and performance compared with their Han counterparts. Inadequate academic preparation coupled with a lack of financial support contributes to the declines in minority students' educational access and academic success. Among those issues, Han teachers' inadequate teaching practices toward ethnic minority students greatly expand the gap between minority students and their Han peers.

Inadequate Teaching Practices as a Driving Force in the Achievement Gap

The term "achievement gap" usually refers to the disparity in academic outcomes among African American, Native American, Latino students, their White, and certain Asian American peers (Howard, 2010, p. 12). The gap is reflected most clearly in grades, standardized test scores, high school graduation rates, placement in special education, advanced placement courses, and suspension and expulsion rates (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Howard, 2010). Among various explanations for the achievement gap, inadequate teaching practices offer the compelling explanations for this gap.

Inadequate teaching practices can create and expand the academic gap among students from ethnic minority and majority groups. Common misunderstandings of beliefs of teaching and learning set barriers for creating a study environment that empowers students from all groups to achieve educational excellence and equality. Historical misassumptions of the inferiority of ethnic minorities not only accumulate educational debt overtime, but also create the "stereotype threat" which negatively influences on pedagogical practices of teachers (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

Teachers' instruction and learning beliefs can produce a chain reaction in teaching expectation and teacher-student relationship, which all attribute to the causes of students' achievement problems. The gap between low- and high- achieving students will grow wider bases on teachers and school officials differentiate ethnic minority students as low-achieving students from their peers from the majority ethnic group.

Teachers' knowledge and beliefs are crucial factors in shaping the effect of any educational endeavor, thus,

teachers' beliefs in the context of low-achieving students are cognitively less qualified than high-achieving students might become a self-fulfilling prophecy (Zohar, Degani, & Vaaknin, 2001, p. 471). This misbelief will be developed into and mirrored in institutional racism. Racism, which is system of advantage based on race (Tatum, 1997), not only creates racial advantage, namely, white privilege in the U.S. context, but also broadens socioeconomic and educational gaps among ethnic minority students, from underdeveloped ethnic minority regions and Han middle class students in China's case.

Situating Teaching in the Cultural Context

Being aware of cultures students bring into the classroom is important. Teachers, especially those are from the majority group, need a sound knowledge base in cultural diversity and multicultural education, as well as build a learning community that is cultural caring and promoting for students from minority groups. Culture is a major concept in multicultural education which is often defined in a way that includes all the material and nonmaterial aspects of group life (Banks, 1994). Cultures are also dynamic, complex, and changing. Teachers cannot construct and deliver the authentic concepts of minority students' cultures before acquiring the essence of the cultures of these groups.

In China's context, the need for Han domain teachers to formulate a knowledge base in multicultural education and receive a culturally responsive teaching practice model is urgent and important. The increasing minority student population calls for the transformation of teachers' knowledge and modifying teaching practice to embrace diversities and address needs from minority students. Before teachers can be prepared for teaching minority students, they must first have a vision of what multicultural education means, as well as have sufficient knowledge base and solid practical experiences within the frame of culturally responsive teaching.

Culturally Responsive Teaching: Key Concepts and Practical Implications

In addition to recognizing that minority students bring rich funds of knowledge to their learning environments and experiences, teachers from the majority group and in the mainstream cultural settings can do much to modify their approaches to instruction.

Educational practice, as Gay (2004) addressed, played a key role in reducing institutional racism and achievement gaps, as well as rebuilding minority students' self-esteem, identities, and learning engagements. Culturally responsive pedagogy exists when teachers use the cultural heritages and background experiences to facilitate their academic achievement (Gay, 2010; Banks, 2004). Addressing culturally responsive pedagogy also contributes to mutual understandings between minority students and teachers, valuing diverse cultural and racial heritages, and enabling diverse students to realize their potentials. Culturally responsive pedagogy in multicultural classroom also increases minority students' participation in their studies and reduce teaching and interaction barriers created by cultural conflicts and misunderstandings.

Culturally responsive teaching is multidimensional. It is more than just a pedagogical approach. It addresses importance of informing teaching content with diversity, equips dynamic instructional methods with academic rigor, develops equity awareness within the mainstream and students' cultural contexts, as well as focuses on improving academic outcomes for minority students. It functions more than a teaching pedagogy which can raise minority students' test scores. This is especially important in China's educational context, where the teaching materials and teaching practices still don't fully embody and reflect the cultural diversity and needs for minority students (Lv, 2004).

As Pang (2001) claimed, the cultural context was extremely important to students' learning process. Culturally responsive teaching provides guidelines for teachers to become skillful cultural mediators or brokers who can demonstrate respect and caring for students as well as make subject matter content more accessible and meaningful to students from minority groups (Sleeter & Cornbleth, 2011).

Culturally responsive teachers use a pedagogy that can empower students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural references to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Landson-Billings, 2009, p. 19). They acquire a knowledge base about ethnic and cultural diversity in education (Gay, 2010, p. 69), match their teaching styles to students' learning style, provide "culturally responsive caring" (Gay, 2010, p. 69), maintain positive teacher-students relationship, apply the concepts of funds of knowledge to make learning meaningful and responsive to students' cultural and social communities, encourage cooperative learning, and establish the classroom that generate warmth and foster healthy and positive interactions (Shade, 1993, p. 324). Following cases share effective roles culturally responsive teachers act in teaching ethnic minority groups in America, which provide case study samples for China's Han and minority teachers to learn and transform into practice based on the cultural and ethnic context they face.

Culturally Responsive Teachers as Cultural Brokers

Lipka (1998) provided a practical implication of how culturally responsive Yupik teachers act as cultural brokers to connect cultures between the western school system and Yupik communities. He indicated, in Alaska, teachers and students face the situation in which the relationship of the school culture and indigenous culture don not reinforce each other. In order to break the cultural barrier, Lipka offered a concept to train teachers to become cultural brokers, who were willing to face the deep social conflicts initiated by colonizing instructions and reconstruct the culture of school (p. 27).

To achieve this goal, teachers need to carefully examine cultural conflicts and opportunities in the classroom, view Yupik culture as content for schooling, apply culturally responsive teaching pedagogy, and involve Yupik community members into schooling. One of the most distinguished teaching features Lipka delivered is using the context to teach depth (p. 63). The notion of contextualizing teaching to create meaning for minority students can greatly improve Han teachers' teaching effectiveness who are in particular working in the ethnical autonomous regions, such as Xinjiang, Gansu, Xizang, Guangxi, and Ningxia provinces, where the major ethnic component of students' population is local minorities.

Culturally Responsive Teachers as Cultural Translators

Culturally responsive teachers not only obtain knowledge base and self-reflection on breaking cultural barriers and avoiding stereotypes on minority students, but can also use their multicultural knowledge backgrounds to identify students' diverse learning styles, as well as work to accommodate different models of learning. Teachers who teach culturally responsively will protect minority students from the damaging view of the cultural deficit perspectives. Culturally responsive teachers, as mentioned by Bennett (1990), were knowledgeable about their cultures, the school culture, and students' culture, along with capabilities to accurately interpret minority students' learning abilities.

Teachers who can accurate translate students' cultural influences on their academic performances can make teaching and schooling that value native cultures and use local knowledge as bridges to accomplish learning process in an atmosphere of trust and respect (Lomawaima, 2004). The significance of being able to interpret minority students' culture is also addressed by Au's (2006) research on literacy instruction to Asian

students. As Au advocated, culturally responsive teaching seeks to know minority students' learning styles and cultural heritages, as well as create a culturally compatible classroom to improve the school success for students of diverse backgrounds.

The promotion of culturally responsive teachers can do significant contributions to improve ethnic minority students' academic learning processes and outcomes in China. Having the increasing number of minority student population, Han teachers need guidelines to help them develop a cultural diversity knowledge, determine needs from minority students in their learning, design culturally responsive teaching practices, and establish pedagogical bridges between the school culture, teachers' culture and minority students' cultures to reduce cultural conflicts. Learning from what culturally responsive teachers do in the U.S., Han teachers can also become cultural translators, who are knowledgeable, sensitive, and comfortable working with ethnic minority students, and use their cultural expertise to facilitate students make appropriate adaptations for and transitions into mainstream Han culture.

Culturally Responsive Teachers as Warm Demanders

Culturally responsive teachers develop a philosophy for implying multicultural teaching in action. Teachers with culturally responsive practices believe that all students can succeed and have high expectation for students from the minority groups. Culturally responsive teachers, as Gay (2010) defined, were "warm demanding" academic task maskers, who believed every student was held "accountable for high academic efforts and performance," and who could demonstrate that the idea of caring as essential to instructional effectiveness is not merely a truism (p. 75).

The idea of teachers as warm demanders is extremely important for teachers work with ethnic minority students' in China. Be willing to embrace the belief that every student can succeed may encounter challenges from cultural capital. Cultural capital can be described as the cultural knowledge of upper status groups in society (Young, as cited in Grant & Sleeter, 2011). It also refers to what Giroux (1981) illustrated as the socially determined tastes, certain kinds of prior knowledge, language forms, abilities, and modes of knowing that were unevenly distributed throughout society (p. 77). As Grant and Sleeter (2011) stated, acquiring cultural capital, or high-status knowledge, usually required money or access to places where it was available.

In China's context, ethnic minority students, who usually live in far-remote western inland cities with underdeveloped economic condition and suffer shortage of educational resources, do not all come with the cultural capital valued by the Han group and on which most China's school knowledge is built. This situation requires China's teachers reconsider how to both affirm the cultural backgrounds minority students bring with them, and effectively build bridges between minority students and the cultural capital in schools and society without viewing them as less academically capable than Han students. Teaching as a warm demander proposes a possible solution for the call, by acknowledging that minority students' pre-existing knowledge and experience, both personal and cultural, as well as hold the belief that every student can success with teachers' pedagogical supports and encouraging expectations.

Practical Recommendations and Challenges for Developing Culturally Responsive Teachers in China

Developing Teachers With Multicultural Awareness

Raising teachers' awareness of diversity is essential for developing teachers with multicultural perspective

and teaching culturally responsively. Guidelines for developing teachers in China with multicultural perspectives and cultural awareness can also incorporate components of consideration of both Han and ethnic minority teachers' own culture and ethnic heritage, develop multicultural attitudes and knowledge base of teachers' own and students' cultures, recognize demographics and their influence on schooling, and politics and policies associated with schools and schooling for ethnic minority students.

The development of teachers' awareness of diversity could contribute to the development of teachers from the privileged groups and ethnic minority students' cultural competence, which is defined by the National Center for Cultural Competence (2008) as: valuing diversity, conducting ongoing self-assessment, obtaining the ability to manage the dynamics of differences, developing the willingness to acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge, and gaining the ability to adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of the communities that the individual serves (Howard, 2010).

Building Knowledge Base of Multicultural Education and Culturally Responsive Teaching

To become effective multicultural teachers, teachers need first obtain the following knowledge categories outlined by Banks (1994) as: (a) knowledge of the major paradigms in multicultural education; (b) knowledge of the major concepts in multicultural education; (c) historical and cultural knowledge of the major ethnic groups; and (d) pedagogical knowledge about how to adapt curriculum and instruction to the unique needs of students from diverse cultural, ethnic and social-class groups (p. 47). Bennett (1990) indicated that becoming knowledgeable about ethnic and cultural diversity starts with becoming informed and trained of concepts and theories of multicultural education. Building teachers' knowledge base of multicultural education can greatly contribute to the development of teachers' cultural competence in regard to integrate and transform knowledge about minority students into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings in order to increase the quality of teaching (Howard, 2010). Conveying the idea of individuals being able to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that allow them to effectively work in cross-cultural settings (Cross, as cited in Howard, 2010), Han teachers could affirm positive teaching attitudes as well as develop culturally suited teaching pedagogies to facilitate minority students' learning processes and outcomes.

Building knowledge is especially important for educating China's teachers to become culturally responsively. The comprehensive and complex accounts of cultural and ethnic diversity suggest that teachers need to understand that students bring diverse cultural and social capital to the classroom that is often different from mainstream norms. Accordingly, they need acquire solid knowledge base to effectively handle those multiple diversities in teacher education programs (Howard & Aleman, 2008). As Lv (2014) claimed, there was a lack of the conscious and systematic education and practice of multicultural education in China, and the gap exist in the teacher education programs at normal universities where most K-12 level teachers were educated and trained. In order to provide culturally responsive teachers for minority students, increasing multicultural education in teacher education programs is important. If pre- and in- service teachers have acquired multicultural awareness, are educated and developing their multicultural knowledge and culturally responsive skills, they could be developing their multicultural perspectives and will teach effectively with students whose cultural and ethnic background is different from their own.

Providing Experiences and Models for Training Chinese Teachers

Providing successful direct experiences and models from the U.S. context is helpful for mentoring teachers especially Han teachers in China. It is important that teachers and teacher candidates are placed in settings

where teachers are teaching from a multicultural perspective. As Ford (1991) stated, it was important to encourage teachers to learn from effective multicultural education models and have minority faculty and supervisors actively involved in their learning process of becoming multicultural teachers. Introducing what effective multicultural education models work internationally for China's teachers and teacher educators, providing teacher exchange opportunities to high-achieving countries for observing and learning, and establishing coaching and sharing programs among teacher students and experienced teachers who work with ethnic minority students effectively could contribute to support a strong preparation and professional multicultural teaching development in China.

Promoting Resources and Supports

School officials and governments' supports and involvements can greatly contribute to develop multicultural teachers for ethnic minority students. As Ford (1991) suggested, teachers who had developed multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills, and who had multicultural experiences need follow-through, continuing resource availability, and on-going support in order to grow as educators and maintain their multicultural perspective (p. 137). Financial supports, policy enforcement, and increasing opportunities for supporting teachers to observe successful multicultural education cases across the nation and overseas would contribute to the development of multicultural education and improvement of teaching effectiveness to minority students in China.

Conclusion

The goal of this presentation is to providing an overview of multicultural education theories and practices in the U.S. context, with the aim of better understanding multicultural factors that affect ethnic minority students' achievement and should be in regular part of teacher preparation in China. Traditionally, the large groups of ethnic minority students in China have been struggling to become visible and to experience equity, excellence, self-identity, cultural significance in Han-centric educational system, and Han-dominant society (Hinton, 2011). This presentation may expand one important fact of how mainstream schools, teachers from the majority Han group, and normal universities which offer teacher education programs could learn from multicultural education theories, in order to actively response to diverse student populations, by showing how minority students experience the academic learning environment in U.S. classrooms. Minority students have historically struggled against the interlocking biases of race, culture, gender, and class both in U.S. and China. This study takes a step towards creating a pathway to establishing classroom climates and academic environments of China's teacher education programs and schools in all levels where students of every cultural and racial background feel welcome and are encouraged to reach their highest potential, as well as receive academic achievements (Bennett, 2004, p. 864).

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