

# The Hidden Curriculum of Performance-Based Teacher Education

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**Purpose/Objective/Research Question/Focus of study:** *This study describes and analyzes the student and faculty experiences of a “performance-based” preservice teacher education program at a large comprehensive university in the mid-Atlantic region. The aim is to understand the “hidden” curricular messages within the program and the ways that these messages interacted with the intended learning outcomes by answering three central questions: 1) What is the hidden curriculum of this teacher education program? 2) How did faculty and preservice teachers in this program experience the hidden curriculum? and 3) How did the hidden curriculum interact with the program’s intended performance-based curriculum?*

**Background and Context:** *Despite a growing body of literature that describes the variety of ways that teacher education programs are aligning their curriculum with new performance-based standards, more research is needed to help those concerned with reforming teacher education understand the unique ways that colleges and universities are incorporating performance-based standards and, especially, the ways that these changes are experienced by both the teacher education students and their faculty in these programs. To this end, this study helps reveal the “hidden curriculum” of one performance-based teacher education program. While the use of the hidden curriculum has been used in the past as a theoretical framework to portray “competency-based” programs in the 1960s and 1970s, it has been little used to understand contemporary “performance-based” models.*

**Research Design:** *A qualitative case study focused on a cohort of thirty preservice teachers and their faculty was conducted at a large comprehensive university over the course of two academic semesters. Data consisted of transcribed interviews, document analysis, and observation field notes pertaining to the experiences of three undergraduate elementary education students and their five-member faculty throughout the final two academic years of their preparation.*

**Conclusions/Recommendations:** *The program’s central hidden curricular message for fac-*

*ulty and students was that superficial demonstrations of compliance with external mandates were more important than authentic intellectual engagement. Program participants frequently made the minimal possible effort to satisfy the requirements of what they perceived as routine, bureaucratized tasks. This study raises cautions for both practitioners and researchers of teacher education concerning the vigor of performance-based reform, and raises questions concerning the notion of coherence in teacher education. Many reformers have embraced coherence as a goal for teacher education programs, accepting the premise that the existence of a common conceptual vision that underscores the curriculum is an indicator of overall program quality. This study reveals some challenges associated with achieving coherent teacher preparation programs and broadens the concept of coherence in ways that take into account the complex intersection of the formal and hidden curriculum.*

This study describes and analyzes the student and faculty experiences of a “performance-based” preservice teacher education program at Markham University—a large comprehensive university in the mid-Atlantic region. The aim is to understand the “hidden” curricular messages within the program and the ways that these messages interacted with the intended learning outcomes by answering three central questions: 1) What is the hidden curriculum of this teacher education program? 2) How did faculty and preservice teachers in this program experience the hidden curriculum? and 3) How did the hidden curriculum interact with the program’s intended performance-based curriculum? While the use of the hidden curriculum has been used in the past as a theoretical framework to portray “competency-based” programs in the 1960s and 1970s, it has been little used to understand contemporary “performance-based” models. In this way, the study brings forward some surprising, perhaps unseen, challenges that teacher educators and policy-makers face as they seek to implement “performance-based” reform within teacher education programs.

Faculty at Markham had constructed a set of performance-based standards to articulate a common set of expectations for preservice teachers and to assess their performance. The development of performance-based standards is now commonly seen among teacher education programs nationwide. Over the last fifteen years, especially, there has been a dramatic rise in the development of standards-based reform and performance-based assessments as means to transform preservice teacher preparation. The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) has developed a set of standards around what teachers ought to know and be able to do (INTASC, 1992). These standards outline how teachers should demonstrate their knowledge of subject matter, child development and learning, classroom communication

and management, planning, instruction and assessment, and the ability to work well with parents and colleagues. The standards have been constructed in alignment with those used by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) to oversee the quality of teacher education programs and the National Board for Professionalizing Teacher Standards (NBPTS) to set standards for expert teaching practice. Reformers hope that the INTASC standards will help states and colleges and universities reform the ways that they prepare and license teachers by ensuring greater accountability and aligning the learning opportunities of preservice teachers with current knowledge about content and effective teaching that is based on current curricula reforms. These three sets of standards have been promoted as a “three-legged stool of teacher quality assurance” (NCTAF, 1996, p. 29) that will help policy-makers and teacher educators make the requirements for teacher education program accreditation, initial teacher licensing, and advanced professional certification more compatible and rigorous.

Within this national context stressing the development of performance-based standards, more and more individual teacher education programs are restructuring their programs in alignment with performance-based standards. This study is situated within a growing body of literature that describes the variety of ways that teacher education programs are aligning their curriculum with new performance-based standards (e.g. Diez, 1998). A great deal more research than currently available, however, is needed to help those concerned with reforming teacher education understand the unique ways that colleges and universities are incorporating performance-based standards and especially the ways that these changes are experienced by both the teacher education students and their faculty in these programs.

## PROGRAM CONTEXT

Driven by a recent statewide mandate that all undergraduate teacher education programs should be performance-based in design and include performance-based assessments, faculty at Markham constructed a set of performance-based standards to guide the nature of instruction and assessment used for teacher candidates. While the effort to create performance-based programs has been evident within all of the undergraduate preparation programs at Markham—including early childhood, elementary, secondary, and special education—the most obvious programmatic changes occurred within the elementary education program.

The reformulation of the elementary education program began under the leadership of a five-member committee in the Department of

Curriculum and Instruction. The committee initially worked to review a pre-existing knowledge base used within the College of Education with a set of performance-based standards developed by a national organization (INTASC, 1992). A new set of standards was constructed which was then mapped against individual courses in both the elementary and secondary teacher education programs to determine where deficiencies might exist and what standards were already being adequately addressed in courses.

The Redesign Committee then began to develop a student teaching evaluation instrument to be used as a benchmark for the type of knowledge and skill thought essential for all program graduates. The committee organized this instrument around essential questions of teaching. For example, one essential question is: "How do I plan, deliver, and evaluate (literacy, mathematics, science, or social studies) instruction?" The standards were revised several times as focus groups and individual faculty provided feedback.

The new standards and assessments within the elementary education program were organized into a five-booklet volume called the Performance Assessment Packet (PAP). The PAP is divided into performance domains: professionalism, collaboration, mathematics education, reading/language arts education, social studies education, and science education. The four subject area booklets are structured around three broad types of performance: planning, delivery, and assessment. The professionalism and collaboration booklet is also structured around three central performances framed as: 1) Can the teacher candidate create learning environments that encourage students' social interaction, active engagement in learning, and motivation? 2) Can the teacher candidate maintain productive relationships with school colleagues and members of the community? 3) Can the teacher candidate engage in inquiry that promotes self-assessment, professional development, and program development? Nested within all of the broad types of performances are indicators further specifying the types of performances required of preservice teachers.

The use of these standards had the greatest programmatic impact during the students' final two academic semesters of preparation. During the first of these semesters, students completed five methods courses and a two-day-a-week in school-based field experience. During the second semester, students completed a full-time in-school student teaching internship. The field placement during both semesters involved an initial, midterm, and final conference. During these conferences, the performance-based standards were used as guidelines to assess student progress and to provide feedback. The assessment forms consisted of a rubric identifying each expected skill and five potential levels of profi-

ciency: not evident, emerging, developing, meets expectation, or not applicable. In addition, preservice teachers were observed approximately two to four times during the first semester and four times during the second by a field supervisor. Following these observations, the performance-based standards were intended to be used to guide feedback. Throughout both field experiences, students and their cooperating teachers were expected to keep an ongoing log of their progress in regard to each of the performance-based standards. As evidence is offered in support of each standard, the preservice teacher and the cooperating teacher were also expected to initial and date the log as a way of documenting ongoing progress and revealing areas needing attention.

The performance-based standards were intended, to some extent, to guide the construction of the students' subject-specific methods courses as well. That is, the department chair asked faculty who taught within the elementary education program to use the performance-based standards in the design of their courses and to indicate in the course syllabi how the course assignments and assessments reflect these standards. In this sense, the standards were constructed not only with the intent of assessing students' field-based teaching experiences but also as a framework for all of the students' instructional and assessment experiences both at the university and in field-placements.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on the assumption that a formal and hidden curriculum exist in all academic settings, though the extent to which their messages reinforce each other vary. The essential "nuts and bolts" of a program, including course bulletins and catalogues, are important for they frequently outline the structural and conceptual core of a program as well as the intended learning experiences for students. This notion of a "formal" curriculum has been described as a plan or program for all experiences which the learner encounters under the direction of the school (Oliva, 1982). This plan, as represented by standards documents, course syllabi, textbooks, and assignments, needs to be carefully examined to understand the nature of any program.

Most of the current literature on performance-based reform concentrates exclusively at this level. Lacking in the research literature are detailed explanations of the content of the implicit messages (hidden curriculum) that stand behind these experiences and how these messages are understood and experienced by the individuals who transmit and receive them. As noted by Zeichner (1999, p. 9), the pictures that are provided of teacher education from detailed studies of practice are often

very different than what is suggested from reading course bulletins and catalogues.

In order to understand as fully as possible the experiences of individuals within a performance-based program (indeed, within any educational setting), both the formal and hidden curriculum need to be considered as potential sources of teacher development. Performance-based reform efforts provide new and fruitful contexts to examine the workings of the hidden curriculum. Used as a theoretical lens to give meaning to the experiences of participants in competency-based programs of the 1970s and 1980s, the hidden curriculum now provides an opportunity to examine a new institutional context characterized, at least within the formal curriculum, by a different view of teachers and teaching.

This study uses the concept of the “hidden curriculum” as a theoretical lens to help reveal the experiences of students and faculty within this performance-based teacher education program. The hidden curriculum stands apart from the explicit or stated curriculum; it refers to “those nonacademic but educationally significant consequences of schooling that occur systematically but are not made explicit at any level of the public rationales for education” (Vallance, 1983, p. 11). Implicit messages that are embedded in the hidden curriculum often accompany the publicly stated goals of a teacher education program but may contain stronger and more persuasive ideas about teaching as an occupation, pedagogy, curriculum, and society (Ginsberg & Clift, 1990). By recognizing and evaluating the impact of the hidden curriculum on faculty and students it may be possible to better understand the subtle, yet powerful and frequently overlooked, effects that a performance-based program has on students and faculty.

Jackson (1968) is recognized as the first to apply the term “hidden curriculum” to refer to the transmission of norms and values within school settings that define acceptable forms of knowledge and behavior. The sustained currency of Jackson’s work among educational theorists and practitioners is due in part to the familiarity all educators have with the easily recognizable instances he brings forward from daily classroom life such as the ways schools “teach” deference to authority by requiring students to stand in lines. McCaslin and Good (1996) bring forward a similar notion derived from educational psychology—the “informal curriculum”—that is “the continuous, albeit uncoordinated, stream of momentary experiences that students aggregate and internalize with varying degrees of awareness, protest, and satisfaction” (p. 622).

For neo-Marxist theorists, the hidden curriculum encompasses systems of subordination and hierarchy that are essential for future workers, managers and bureaucrats. In this way, schools function to maintain the

capitalist system because of particular social relations which occur in schools including the hierarchical division of labor between teachers and students, the fragmentation of students' work, and the competition created among students (Bowles and Gintis, 1976). The hidden curriculum operates through a "correspondence" between the structure of schooling and the larger economic system. Capitalist culture is perpetuated by the functioning of the education system; students gain little intrinsic satisfaction from, and control over, their work—a pattern that both previews and prepares students for their future work roles.

While the terminology "hidden curriculum" has emerged relatively recently in the literature, the concept itself rests on a widely diverse set of socio-cultural and sociolinguistic theoretical traditions that target, broadly speaking, the relationship between social structure and social actions. For example, Meighan (1986) notes that the interaction between the social structures (e.g., how success and failure is measured in schools) and the nature of social interaction in schools (e.g., how order and relationships are maintained) defines how societal expectations are interpreted and sustained in schools. For students to successfully negotiate the terrain that joins social structure and interaction, they may need to adopt a "elaborated linguistic code" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977) embedded in the socially constructed expectations of their classrooms, schools, and cultures in ways that enable them successfully fulfill the expectations of others. Sociolinguists (e.g. Bakhtin, 1981; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1998) remind us, however, that this negotiation is rooted in the external social world. Language, thought, and action originates in collaborative dialogue and in the social contexts where individuals are situated.

In this study, I have coined the term "bureaucratic ventriloquism" in order to conceptualize the ways the study participants used language to successfully negotiate the hidden curriculum. I've chosen to name a "linguistic code" that study participants used in order to give only the appearance of compliance with formal program expectations. The use of "ventriloquism" conveys, as will be detailed, an inauthentic response so markedly detached from the individual's own beliefs, that the utterances themselves appear to be projected from elsewhere. As will be shown, the use of "ventriloquism" to express insincere beliefs was not solely an individual decision by participants but, rather, was prompted by the social and political context in which the program was situated. That context was characterized by concerns over compliance with external forms of accountability. I argue that bureaucratic considerations undermined opportunities for the authentic intellectual engagement of program participants. My use of "bureaucratic ventriloquism," then, is derived from both the sociolinguistic roots of inquiry into a "hidden curriculum" and

the particular patterns of resistance apparent in this study.

The concept of the hidden curriculum has been used to analyze the impact and experiences of teacher education programs (e.g., Bartholomew, 1976; Dale, 1977; Ginsberg & Newman, 1985, Ginsberg, 1988; Parsons & Beauchamp, 1985). Those studies that provide empirical analyses of particular teacher education programs (e.g., Ginsberg, 1988; Parsons & Beauchamp, 1985), however, tend to focus on “competency-based” teacher education programs of the 1970s and 1980s. Given the theoretical distinctions, though, between current models of performance-based teacher education and competency-based teacher education common in the 1960s and 1970s (Valli & Rennert-Ariev, 2002), a contemporary performance-based program ought to provide a new venue to explore the nature of the hidden curriculum and ensure that debates about the hidden curriculum haven’t yet reached their theoretical limits (Giroux, 1983).

“Performance-based” teacher education models tend to reflect a view of teaching that is far more complex—that is, for example, dependant on many kinds of knowledge and understanding that is integrated and applied by teachers using analysis and judgment—than seen in “competency based models.” This study adds to a body of research literature that does not currently offer detailed empirical studies that examine the hidden curriculum in the context of current performance-based programs.

Ginsberg (1986, 1988) used an ethnographic approach to examine the development and implementation of a competency-based teacher education program at the University of Houston from the late 1960s to the early 1980s. Ginsberg’s findings center on the implicit, yet powerful, messages that students in the program received regarding conceptions of the curriculum and conceptions of the profession of teaching. The type of curricular knowledge privileged in the program tended to reflect an objectivist conception of curriculum as “truth,” as being “out there” versus a conception of knowledge as constructed, tentative, and subject to political, cultural, and social influences (Ginsberg, 1988, p. 102). Preservice teachers, Ginsberg notes, were encouraged to take curriculum knowledge as given and to look for ways to bureaucratically implement the curriculum and discouraged from taking an independent role in defining the curriculum. Ginsberg characterized this process as one of “anticipatory deskilling.”

Parsons and Beauchamp (1985) critically analyzed a student teacher evaluation form used in a competency-based teacher education program at the University of Alberta in an effort to expose its theoretical and ideological assumptions. They report that the evaluation form is largely framed by a technical view of teaching. That is, it tends to focus on the

primacy of knowledge and value transmission rather than on a broader sense of education. The underlying messages that the language of the form sends to students about teaching is that: 1) learning is isolated and the knowledge base that underscores effective teaching can be broken in discrete pieces; 2) learning is best accomplished by setting up a series of one-way experiences—from those who have them to those who do not; 3) the teacher is one who acts, the students passively receive, and the teacher does not necessarily change as a result of the action. These messages echo Ginsberg's contention that the hidden curriculum contains powerful messages about the type of knowledge that is privileged in a competency-based program and the implication for how teachers are supposed to teach. This knowledge is characterized as given (rather than problematic), public (rather than personal), and molecular (rather than holistic) (Berlak & Berlak, 1981).

Many of the early studies of the content and impact of the hidden curriculum suggest this type of functionalist orientation which holds that the socialization process for preservice teachers is unidirectional. This orientation assumes that individuals take on roles, underscored by the hidden curriculum, without resisting, rejecting, or re-creating them (Wentworth, 1980). Both the Ginsberg and the Parsons and Beauchamp studies reflect this orientation. They tend to focus on providing explanations and criticisms of the status quo and, in the process, downplay the importance of teacher agency in defining and shaping the terms of their experience. Critics of this functionalist orientation point to the neglect of the individual's personal perspectives and the interaction of these beliefs and values with the content and values of the teacher education program (Feiman-Nemser, 1983). Functionalist perspectives of the role of the hidden curriculum have also been criticized for failing to provide information and detailed descriptions of actual experiences students have in teacher education.

In response to these problems, more recent research (e.g. Crow, 1986; Britzman, 1991) has focused not on individuals as passive learners of institutional values, but as participants in the socialization process. Messages within the hidden curriculum are not necessarily consistent (Ginsberg & Clift, 1990) nor are they necessarily received in the same way by the individuals who experience them (Popkewitz, Tabachnick, & Zeichner, 1979). Incoherence of hidden curricular messages may surface for a variety of reasons. The sources of these messages, for example, are varied and complex. They include the institutional and social contexts as well as the structure and processes of teacher education programs, including pedagogical techniques, texts, and materials (Clift, 1989). Furthermore, the independence of human thought and action make it

difficult to predict the effects of the hidden curriculum on individuals. While some hidden curriculum theorists (e.g., Vallance, 1983) suggest that hidden curricular messages—as reflections of social relations and culture—are likely to support the status quo, social and cultural reproduction is not *necessarily* the result of a hidden curriculum (Giroux, 1983). Ginsberg (1988) suggests, in fact, that some elements of hidden curriculum messages are internally inconsistent and may communicate contradictory images of teaching, schooling, and society and that teacher educators often have significant control over the kinds of hidden curricular messages they send and how they enable prospective teachers to understand and act upon such messages.

This study employs methods for describing this complex interaction of the hidden curriculum and the responses of study participants. This orientation does focus still on the powerful hidden messages in teacher education curriculum but does so within a dialectical orientation to socialization theory that takes into account the dynamic relationship between the preservice teachers, the faculty, and the institutional setting. The findings reported in this study are driven by my intention to focus not on individuals as passive learners of institutional values, but as participants in the socialization process, expressing potentially varying degrees of compliance and resistance with the socializing influences of the hidden curriculum.

## METHODOLOGY

The central research questions that guided the study were: 1) What is the hidden curriculum of this teacher education program? 2) How did faculty and preservice teachers in this program experience the hidden curriculum? and 3) How did the hidden curriculum interact with the program's intended performance-based curriculum? I focused the study on the final two academic semesters of preparation for preservice teachers enrolled in a single cohort within the elementary teacher education program at Markham University, a pseudonym for a large comprehensive university in the mid-Atlantic region. The program was structured so that four cohorts of approximately thirty students were grouped together, completed their educational coursework together with the same group of faculty, and were placed in the same schools for their student teaching experience. During this time, students enrolled in the elementary education program spent the first semester enrolled in five methods courses (language arts, reading, science, mathematics, and social studies) that met weekly at the university over the course of two days each week. In addition, preservice teachers enrolled in a two-day-a-week field place-

ment in a nearby elementary school. During the second semester, students completed a fifteen-week long, five-day-a-week student teaching practicum, in most cases with the same cooperating teacher with whom they worked during the first semester.

Data consisted of transcribed interviews, document analysis, and observation field notes. I focused my data on the experiences of three undergraduate elementary education students and their five-member faculty throughout the final two academic years of their preparation. I collected documents pertaining to the development of the program and the performance-based standards that are used within the program. I focused during the first semester on the subject-specific methods courses, attending course sessions and conducting interviews with the course instructors. I also collected course materials from each of the methods courses and conducted interviews with each of the other four faculty members. I also observed monthly faculty meetings. Other, originally unanticipated, related activities provided research opportunities according to the degree to which these activities revealed relevant areas for investigation in the study. In addition, the study focuses on three preservice teachers in particular, referred to in the ensuing discussion as Holly, Nasrine, and Kim. I interviewed these students separately and as a group. I collected and analyzed completed course assignments from these students. I also followed these students during their student teaching semester. I attended evaluation conferences and conducted observations of their teaching. In addition, I conducted interviews with all field-based supervisors, including the cooperating teachers, the field-based supervisor, and the Professional Development School Director. Some contextual information for these preservice teachers and their field supervisors is provided in Table 1 below.

## CONTEXT AND ACCESS

I decided to study the experiences of faculty and students in one specific cohort primarily because, of all the cohorts in the program, this was the first to begin using the performance-based standards and the mentor teachers affiliated with the cohort were the first group to use the standards. The rationale for seeking a cohort with more, rather than less, experience with the standards is that they would have more insight and information to offer about their use and representation in interactions with preservice teachers.

My access to Hoover Valley Elementary School, a pseudonym for the elementary schools in which students completed their students teaching

**Table 1: Contextual Information on Preservice Teachers**

Name and role	Contextual information
Holly: Preservice teacher	Holly is a white 22-year old senior who had previously completed the requirements for a BA in psychology but had decided during her program to add a concentration in elementary education. Holly's GPA was 3.5. Holly grew up in a middle/working-class community in a large city. When in high school, Holly had worked part time in a day-care setting, an experience that made her interested in becoming a teacher. Holly described her decision to teach as a practical choice because she did not discern viable job opportunities with a background in psychology.
Nasrine: Preservice teacher	Nasrine is a 21-year old senior of Indian-American heritage who was born in the U.S. but whose parents grew up in India. She spoke both Hindi and English at home. She grew up in a middle-class suburban community. Nasrine's GPA was 3.8. She had completed a concentration in science and had decided to major in elementary education early in her sophomore year. Nasrine attributed her desire to teach to early experiences as a camp counselor and teacher's aide when she discovered she enjoyed working with children.
Kim: Preservice teacher	Kim is a white 21-year old senior. She also grew up in a suburban middle-class community. Kim's GPA was 3.4 and her disciplinary concentration was science. She was relatively active as an officer in her sorority and was often involved in related social and community service activities. Kim's mother, father and several siblings were all teachers in public school settings. Kim attributed her interest in education to her family's involvement in teaching. She also had, for many years, coached a community swim team and recalls enjoying helping children develop. Kim also referred frequently to her own struggles with a reading disability when she was young and how that experience sensitized her to students who experience difficulty in school.
Tara: Professional Development School Coordinator	Tara—white, late thirties—had administrative responsibilities for the entire PDS network including all schools in which the 30 students in the cohort were placed. Among her responsibilities were: coordinating preservice teachers' field placements; designing expectations for students' field-based experiences; and conducting preservice professional development such as seminars for student teachers. She also coordinated in-service professional development for experienced teachers within the network. Tara supervised a group of six field supervisors who worked individually with students during their placements.
Jim: Field Supervisor	Jim—white, late fifties—was the field supervisor for Nasrine, Kim, and Holly. He had worked, first as a teacher, then as an elementary principal before retiring. Since that time, Jim worked as an adjunct supervisor in the program, usually overseeing four to seven preservice teachers each semester.

experience) was facilitated largely by Jim, the university supervisor, with whom I developed a close rapport. Jim was particularly amenable to my shadowing him during his observations and conferences. He also made a point to introduce me to the mentor teachers in this study as well as other teachers and administrators at the school. My association with Jim eased my access into the school because he was already well known and well liked by many staff there. My association with Jim, though, proved disad-

vantageous in a different respect. Because his role was that of university supervisor, some teachers and preservice teachers, I believed, perceived me as a university supervisor as well. For example, even though Nasrine, Kim, and Holly knew that I was a student conducting a study, my association with Jim initially seemed to render them cautious about speaking to me frankly about their experiences. In fact, much of the data pertaining to preservice teachers' use of bureaucratic ventriloquism did not emerge until late in the second semester. It took that amount of time for me to develop a degree of trust with them and to be able to repeat assurances that I did not evaluate them or speak to anyone about their remarks. Only after I was able to disassociate myself as a researcher from Jim's role as a supervisor, were preservice teachers able to fully disclose their responses to the program.

During the first semester, I selected three preservice teachers and their field placement mentor teachers as study participants. At Hoover Valley, there were many mentor teachers who had a long association with Markham's elementary education program. My primary rationale for choosing Hoover Valley was that, of all the professional development schools (PDS), it was most likely to have an extensive history of cooperation with Markham University and its faculty. In addition, Jim—the field supervisor for Hoover Valley—was the most experienced field supervisor in the program and was frequently called on to train other field supervisors. I elected to study Jim and the preservice teachers whom he supervised because he had a leadership role in the program and, I thought, would be most likely of all the field supervisors to embody changes in the program's curriculum, including the use of the performance-based standards. I reasoned that if the standards had influenced the way preservice teachers were prepared in clinical settings, then these changes would more likely be seen at Hoover Valley, under Jim's guidance, than at any other school.

## INTERVIEWS

I interviewed the preservice teachers three times, once as a group during the first semester and twice during the second semester. These interviews helped to elicit data pertaining to how the hidden curriculum was understood and experienced by preservice teachers. During the second semester, I observed these students during their student teaching experience and attended the midpoint and final conferences for each conducted by the field supervisor. I also accompanied the field supervisor during approximately six observations and follow-up conferences he held with each of the preservice teachers over the course of the two semesters.

Attending to both the assessment forms used to guide the feedback and evaluation of the students, as well as to the words spoken and messages conveyed during the conferences, helped me to elicit data pertaining to both the formal and hidden curricula. Throughout the semester, I went to all workshops and meetings that the preservice teachers were required to attend.

The interviews were conducted with the seven faculty members, three preservice teachers, their cooperating teachers, the PDS Director, and the field supervisor. I chose a relatively unstructured interview approach, guided by several themes I wanted to discuss, because my purpose was not to put ideas or words into their mind, but rather to access their perspectives. The central questions I focused on are summarized in Table 2 below.

**Table 2. Interview Questions**

Program participant	Interview questions
Faculty	What were they trying to teach and why did they consider those things important for students to learn? What were the main assignments in the course and how did they relate to the overall goals of the course? What was their experience like in the elementary education program? What role did the performance-based standards have in their teaching?
Preservice teachers	What did they learn in their methods courses and field experiences? What did they think of their methods courses and their field placement? What role did the performance-based standards have in their learning experiences?
Mentor teachers	What were they trying to teach their preservice teachers and how did they go about teaching these things? What was their experience like with Markham's elementary education program? What role did the performance-based standards have in their dealings with preservice teachers?
PDS Coordinator & Field Supervisor	What were they trying to teach and why did they consider that important for students to learn? What were their main assignments for students? What was their experience like in the elementary education program?

## ANALYTIC METHODOLOGY

I used a method of data analysis referred to as the “constant comparative method” (Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This method is commonly used for case studies such as this that rely on multiple data sources. The strength of this method is that it provided me with ongoing opportunities to interrogate the relationship between theory and data as the study was in progress. The formal analysis began early in the study as I examined, coded, and analyzed the data to elicit the dimensions in the

data and the connections between these dimensions. Throughout the process, I tried to unpack these dimensions in the form of written field notes as I worked back and forth between the data, the analysis, and emerging theory.

My conceptualization of institutional fragmentation and bureaucratic ventriloquism as concepts that were helpful to describe to hidden curriculum was initially shaped by a series of questions posed by Strauss and Corbin (1998) to focus research inquiry into *both* human behavior and the contexts for those behaviors. My intention, as indicated, was to avoid analytical reductionism by focusing on the exclusion of one or another. The questions I found most helpful both to develop categorical schemes and to reflect about the data included: What is going on in this program? How are program participants acting and reacting? What conditions combine to create the context in which these actions/interactions are located?

The process I used began with open coding—an analytic process through which concepts were identified and their properties and dimensions discovered in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). I looked for certain concepts that could be grouped under more abstract concepts (categories) that might have been fewer in number but offered deeper levels of explanation. I attended to the specific characteristics and properties of each category and dimension that “represented the location of these properties along a continuum or range” (p.117). I looked for ways to link these categories according to their dimensions, a process termed “axial coding” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), around themes and assertions. For example, my use of the term “institutional fragmentation” was constructed from two subsidiary categories that included: disciplinary boundaries and separation of field and academic settings. Each of these categories was developed from smaller categories. Among the categories, for example, that disciplinary boundaries encompassed were: faculty collaboration, professional talk, interdisciplinary instruction, and common expectations. These themes and assertions were continually tested against the data sets derived from observations, interviews, and documents analysis. As these themes became better substantiated by the various sets of data, I began to construct theory to account for the data.

As I worked this way I found it useful to keep an ongoing analytical journal to chart the evolution of my thinking. I attached to each transcript and fieldnotes written reflections in which I analyzed the data and compared it to other sources of data. I tried to pay attention in these notes to the presence of disconfirming evidence that would challenge my assertions and/or suggest alternative ways of looking at the data. In addition, I kept a separate journal in which I charted my methodological

approaches and wrote questions and ideas that I felt I needed for further examination. To enhance the validity of the assertions I made, I also used “member checks” (Merriam, 2001) with preservice teachers to test my interpretations and help determine if my assertions were plausible and to help me focus on data I had not considered sufficiently.

The assertions that I made about the hidden curriculum were based on where I felt the preponderance of data pointed. For example, my focus on bureaucratic ventriloquism was developed from the apparent similarity in the ways that preservice teachers *and* faculty responded to bureaucratic mandates. In both cases, I suggested, they faced a set of bureaucratic mandates that they did not agree with, but were able to subvert without any apparent sanction. The congruence between their actions and the contexts for these actions helped support a theory about how a variety of program participants responded to the program.

## FINDINGS

This section is presented in two parts. The first part focuses on the perspectives of three preservice teachers: Nasrine, Kim, and Holly. Their responses to the program are discussed in ways that explore the intersection of the hidden curricular messages and their beliefs. Specifically, the section analyzes the ways in which the preservice teachers’ own practical orientation mediated formal and hidden curricular messages. The second part develops the concept of bureaucratic ventriloquism as a common response by a variety of program faculty and students to external mandates embedded in a hierarchical authority structure. The central assertion, developed in this section, is that the hidden curriculum functioned in ways that rendered superficial demonstrations of compliance with external mandates more important than authentic intellectual engagement. This assertion offers a partial answer to the questions: 1) What is the hidden curriculum of this teacher education program? 2) How did faculty and preservice teachers in this program experience the hidden curriculum? and 3) How did the hidden curriculum interact with the program’s intended performance-based curriculum?

## PRESERVICE TEACHER RESPONSES

Nasrine, Kim, and Holly all spoke in similar terms about their learning experiences. They frequently spoke of being extraordinarily busy in a program overloaded with work. The following remark illustrates the common feeling shared by all three students that they felt pressed to manage an unreasonable volume of work:

There were so many assignments for the two weeks we were in the schools. I can speak for almost all of us. We spent half our time just trying to get the assignments done. I liked student teaching so much better because we didn't have as many of those assignments and I could actually get experience teaching. (Nasrine, interview, February 14, 2002).

This sentiment, echoed repeatedly by all preservice teachers, suggests not that the students felt burdened strictly by the sheer volume of work, but rather by work they didn't consider useful. Students did not, however, dismiss all their assigned work as pointless or unmanageable. Instead they made distinctions, throughout the program, as to what they considered to be more or less worthwhile learning experiences. Holly stated her test for usefulness succinctly: "If it's not practical, it's out the window." In various ways, all three students indicated that practical knowledge they could easily use was of the most value.

They made these distinctions in a context marked by a significant degree of conceptual fragmentation. Their professors and field supervisors emphasized different goals and types of experiences. Furthermore, these individuals did not collaborate with each other very much to formulate integrated sets of learning experiences that carried over from one setting to another. Under these conditions, students developed survival mechanisms to help them prioritize from which sets of experiences they decided to seek value.

Gore and Zeichner (1990) note that many students interpret messages of teacher education courses in ways that reinforce the beliefs that they brought with them into the program. These interpretations may involve a "distortion" (Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1986) or inversion (Ginsberg, 1988) of the formal intentions of teacher educators. I noted a similar pattern: Nasrine, Kim, and Holly accommodated institutional fragmentation by selecting as valuable those aspects of the program consistent with a particular conceptual orientation they were already predisposed to accept.

All three students developed a litmus test for what they considered valuable: Does the experience have practical use in the classroom? As Kim said, "You've got to worry just about the teaching and what'll help you get by in the classroom. All the assignments get in the way. You've got lots of things on your plate to worry about. You've got to make choices." During interviews all three spoke much more favorably about those experiences that were practical in orientation. They were especially enthusiastic about the way their social studies methods instructor had familiarized them with social studies resources they could use in the classroom and

with their mathematics methods instructor whom they said had given them, in Nasrine's words, "so many specific ideas for teaching math we can use right now."

Students primarily were concerned with learning experiences, both during methods coursework and field-based placements, that would generate knowledge of how to obtain and use resources in the classroom with "real" students. Goodlad (1990) sums up these priorities:

Internalization of what it means to be a teacher generally involved absorbing "what works" with a classroom of children or youths. Being "able to do it" —as, for example, one's mentor in student teaching did it—became more important to these students than questions of why a certain way was successful or an exploration of alternative possibilities (p. 215).

Another feature that characterized preservice teachers' accommodation to the program was the value they placed on their clinical experiences, specifically their apprenticeship with an experienced mentor teacher. In the apprenticeship model, Zeichner (1996) notes, teaching expertise is thought of as residing in the heads of experienced practitioners who need only "show the novice how to do what they are able to do well" (p. 218). This view of teacher education has been associated most closely with a practical orientation because of its suggestion that the hallmark of good teaching is the assumption of independent teaching performance (Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1987) that can best be modeled by a mentor who has taught the same students as the preservice teacher.

A significant body of research has attested to teacher education as a weak intervention—sandwiched in a sense between two powerful forces: previous life history and real experience in the classroom (Richardson, 1996). The changes that some elements of preservice teacher education may help catalyze are often quite minor and short-lived. They are likely to be substantially less powerful than the lessons of life experience and teaching experience (Ball, 1989). Many researchers have concluded that teacher education has only limited impact on the values, beliefs and attitudes that preservice teachers bring to their programs (Ball, 1989; Britzman, 1991).

In the case of Nasrine, Kim, and Holly one can see, as Ross (1987) has suggested, a highly rational process of "picking and choosing" the various practices they observed as students and synthesizing them into the model they would like to become. Their model was based on a practical focus, predisposing them to favor clinical settings and the insights of those individuals seemingly most familiar with clinical settings.

As one might expect, Nasrine, Kim, and Holly perceived themselves as having gained the most value from the second semester practicum during which they worked full time in classrooms with a mentor teacher. During the two interviews I conducted with each of them during the second semester, all three spoke in enthusiastic terms of the value of their work with their mentor teachers. Their rationale had similar features. Students perceived value in the rich array of resources that each mentor had collected. Nasrine, for example, said about Jackie, her mentor teacher:

She was so helpful and gave me a lot. Anytime she had a lesson she had a box. It had my name on it and she would give me copies of everything. I got a lot of materials and resources from her. I learned so much just from watching her teach. The way she set up her classroom, where things are. I learned (about) what I would do and wouldn't do. (Nasrine, interview, February 20, 2002).

All students expressed this notion, consistent with a practical orientation, that their mentor teacher was a valuable asset who could both model teaching and provide students with materials and resources they had made and accumulated. Nasrine, Holly, and Kim appeared to dismiss those experiences that occurred in conceptual and institutional isolation. A striking example is seen in students' sharp reaction to their science methods course. The instructor for this course, Sally, was the only instructor to strongly emphasize student inquiry into scientific questions and ideas, structured at times by methodological precision of scientific research. All three students agreed that that had been by far their "most disappointing class." Among the criticisms that students had was what they considered an inordinate amount of time devoted to a single point of inquiry: the moon. Sally asked students to generate questions about the moon, individually and in groups, over the course of several weeks. The three students stressed that they had become disinterested in long-term inquiry on only one topic.

Students were inclined to disregard the experiences in Sally's course because they were presented to students in isolation without any substantial curricular reinforcement anywhere else in the program. Research on teaching struck students as an anomaly—a distraction impeding their primary goal—to acquire practical experience. Nasrine, Kim, and Holly wanted to see more science strategies they could implement in an uncomplicated way. Sally's course conflicted with their needs: Sustained inquiry was felt by students to be a wasteful and inefficient use of their

time. Instead, ideas and materials, ready for practical application, were seen as more valuable.

In later interviews, Nasrine, Kim, and Holly expressed pleasure over the provision by their school district of “science curriculum kits,” to be shared by teachers on the same grade level, containing ready-made science lessons and accompanying materials. Nasrine said about these packets:

They’re great. (They’re) all in packets and preplanned so I don’t have to worry about any of that. I was worried about all that planning stuff. I was worried I wasn’t familiar with the subject matter and the idea of teaching something I wasn’t sure of was intimidating to say the least. Now I have my green packet of information. I’m ready. (Nasrine, interview, February 20, 2002).

The science kits that the preservice teachers referred to were developed by teachers and district curriculum specialists. Many of these materials did, in fact, promote the type of inquiry-based approaches to learning science that Sally stressed. One kit, for example, provides instructions and materials for a study of cloud formations. Students are prompted to ask questions and develop hypotheses about clouds. Nasrine used this very successfully during her student teaching. Of note, though, is the fact that Nasrine, Holly, and Kim spoke enthusiastically of the convenience of the kits, not what they thought about the lessons in them or whether they agreed with the materials’ assumptions about learning science. That is, a practical framework, based on ease of use in clinical settings, led them to perceive any ready-made curriculum as a welcome and helpful resource.

It is not clear whether the influence of Sally’s course on students would have been greater if all (or even more) of their courses and field experiences had been driven by a research focus. However, the conceptual isolation of Sally’s course, tied to institutional isolation that prevented faculty from collaborating, made it possible that Sally’s course became perceived as an insignificant and intellectually idiosyncratic experience for students.

I detected in the way Nasrine, Kim, and Holly spoke of their methods coursework experiences, that many assignments had little significance for them, particularly those that had conceptual orientations unrealized in other contexts. An assignment in the language arts methods course asked students to develop an interdisciplinary unit plan within an institutional context saturated by disciplinary divisions. During our first interview, students struggled to remember all the requirements of the assignment and dismissed the usefulness of the experience:

I don't know enough to be able to do it. We were asked to do a whole year plan but what do I know about making year plans. I would not consider using this . . . why do I have to do this now, in December, when I have so many other things to do? (Nasrine, interview, December 6, 2001)

Here the programmatic isolation of the language arts assignment, characterizing the institutional context for Nasrine's practical predisposition, surfaces through her feelings of stress about workload. Preservice teachers felt overburdened by a workload that contained elements that were seemingly not of use to them. Nasrine's frustration does not stem so much from her reluctance to devote hours of work to prepare an assignment. She feels burdened, rather, by what she considered unnecessary work. Methods courses, comprising isolated and under-reinforced curricular elements, did not substantially alter student conceptions of what was necessary for their preparation to teach.

My argument is that teacher education experiences did have a powerful mediating effect on students, though not necessarily the one program designers had intended: the impact of the conceptual messages within the program was diffused by institutional and conceptual fragmentation—a context that solidified students' predisposition to value practical experiences. In the absence of any coherent set of alternatives, students had no means to interrogate their existing beliefs or to introduce new beliefs meaningfully.

## BUREAUCRATIC VENTRILOQUISM

This section explores the notion of “bureaucratic ventriloquism” as a defensive response to external mandates that are issued within a deeply hierarchical structure of authority in teacher education. All program participants—students, faculty, field-based supervisors—were required to demonstrate compliance with external regulations. Many of them found ways to resist external compliance without jeopardizing themselves by making insincere gestures that masked their true responses. The program sent messages not only to students but also to faculty and field-based supervisors, that superficial demonstrations of compliance with external mandates were more important than authentic intellectual engagement. Program participants frequently made the minimal possible effort to satisfy the requirements of what they saw as routine, bureaucratized tasks—not processing ostensible value.

Students and mentor teachers resisted their own disempowerment by detaching themselves from these bureaucratic forms of accountability

when they could. A persistent theme throughout the program was the subversion of external means of control by a variety of program participants in the form of “bureaucratic ventriloquism.” This process implies detachment between the person and his/her utterances—that what might appear to be a sincere product of intellectual engagement is, rather, an insincere gesture to signal compliance with a mandate. I also contend that bureaucratic ventriloquism is a rational response made in a social and political context that minimizes teachers and teacher educators’ control over the knowledge, jurisdiction, and quality expectations of their profession.

The elementary education faculty had, for example, not particularly used or thought about the Markham University Performance-Based Standards. Some faculty had coded particular assignments with the performance standards with which they seemed most consistent. However, there was clearly very little intentional work done by any faculty member to conceptually integrate their course with any of the standards. The standards were, in most cases, written on syllabi *as if to suggest* that the course had been conceptualized in ways consistent with the standards. Lola, a faculty member in the program, explained it to me this way: “Sure, I can look at the standards and be able to say, oh yeah, I guess I do that in my class. But do they have a real role in how the class is shaped—no. It’s just a mindless labeling process. I don’t feel any ownership of them.”

The compliant gestures like the coding of syllabi with standards that are not really used are directed, ultimately, towards the State Board of Education which, in this case, held state accrediting authority over teacher education programs. The context in which policy decisions are made that affect teacher education is multi-layered: Some have authority and influence derived from their status as legal authorities. Legislators, governors, state boards of education, and chief state school officers (and their national and regional organizations) constitute this set of participants. Although they have long-held authority to oversee or regulate teacher education, they have all tended to delegate such authority to state agency personnel responsible for teacher licensure and/or program approval (Imig & Switzer, 1996, p. 217). The State Department of Education exerted significant policy authority over teacher education programs, including Markham University.

The construction and use of Performance Assessment Plan (PAP) by the program faculty was a response to the state mandate that all teacher candidates, secondary or elementary, complete the full requirements for a major in a liberal arts area in addition to professional teacher education requirements. If, however, programs could demonstrate to the state that students were held accountable to “performance-based standards”

then the elementary education program would still be eligible for state accreditation.

During my discussion with Ted, a faculty member, he elaborated on how he perceived the flow of decision-making that led to the construction of the performance standards:

We had about a two-year time frame so we just hurriedly threw this together to satisfy the state mandate. That's all that (PAP) is. These so-called official documents are knee-jerk reactions to mandates that we get. They are not pro-active documents that we created in advance because we have a coherent philosophy about what we do. (Ted, interview, November 15, 2001)

The faculty response to an institutional climate that subverted their policy-making authority to that of the state was one of bureaucratic ventriloquism. Faculty may have made an implicit determination that State officials would not look deeply into the program to determine the ways that performance standards were used. They may have known that the appearance of compliance would suffice as the minimal degree of effort necessary to avoid penalty (loss of state accreditation). Ted commented on the appearance of the PAP and sarcastically pointed out that bureaucratic compliance produces artifacts that may look nice but obscure the meaning and value that lies beneath the presentation:

This (PAP) looks beautiful, doesn't it? It looks really nice. This is really slick. I mean if you say, "Okay, what's your program?" I can give you this. I mean when the state inspectors come to visit us, for example, give them this and they go, "Wow, you've got it together." Don't even have to read it. It just looks impressive." (Ted, interview, November 15, 2001)

#### PRESERVICE AND MENTOR TEACHERS' USE OF BUREAUCRATIC VENTRILOQUISM

How did preservice teachers and their mentor teachers make use of the PAP? Did they, as instructed, use the book to systematically chart student progress towards each of the performance standards? Did they and their mentor teachers and clinical supervisor use these standards to structure summative and formative feedback? The answer I found is that preservice teachers and their mentor teachers engaged as well in a kind of "bureaucratic ventriloquism." They, too, made defensive reactions to authoritative forms of evaluation that would enable them to achieve minimal com-

pliance with external mandates. Their use of the PAP was done only superficially and did not change their day-to-day practices as illustrated by this frank admission from Jackie, Nasrine's mentor teacher, following my question:

Peter: Do the standards themselves have a role in an ongoing way in the way you work with Nasrine? Other than the official mid-point and final evaluation conferences, do you use the booklet in other ways?

Jackie: No, because everybody hates the book. (Jackie, interview, December 14, 2001)

I did get the sense, repeatedly, that students and faculty had deemed the PAP a bureaucratic nuisance and spent little time using it. Among the reasons students and faculty mentioned were that: 1) the PAP was long, tedious, and cumbersome to fill out; 2) it was repetitive; it listed similar indicators across several content areas; and 3) it was not appropriate for all grade levels.

I collected the PAPs for Nasrine, Holly, and Kim at the end of the second semester. All three had a complete set of ratings for each indicator in every domain (e.g., professionalism & collaboration, mathematics, reading/language arts, science, and social studies). This information was contained on the "Cumulative Report" section of the PAP. Each PAP also contained a brief written summary of the teacher candidate's performance that was written by the mentor teachers at each of four evaluation conferences throughout the year.

Though Jackie and Lara (Nasrine's and Kim's mentor teachers, respectively) completed the cumulative report, most of the booklet—intended to be filled out—was left blank. These sections left blank included, for each domain, space for teachers to write comments. These sections also included space for teachers to rate students on performance indicators, specific to each domain. Tarsha's PAP did contain some more documentation in these sections. Tarsha, Holly's mentor teacher, had completed a set of checkmarks, followed by a date, on the various rating scales within the domains. Otherwise, though, she provided no written comments (other than her summative remarks). In general, the completed PAPs suggested that the PAP had not been associated with any meaningful ongoing inquiry (by preservice teachers, mentor teachers, and faculty)

## BUREACRATIC VENTRILOQUISM AS INTELLECTUAL FRAUDULENCE

Nasrine, Kim, and Holly did not complete many of their field-based assignments. Some—particularly the weekly journal assignments—were never completed. Some assignments they completed, but fraudulently, by not having done the required assignment but writing up the results as if they had. This was the case with a videotape assignment. Each student was instructed to videotape herself three times and to complete a written reflection. All had completed the written reflection but none had done any videotaping. The assignment in fact called for students to address what they considered the benefits of watching themselves on videotape. This prompted some very credible sounding, but surprisingly dishonest responses such as:

In viewing myself teaching on videotape, I have realized what things must be changed to teach first-graders. If I were ever placed in a first-grade classroom this videotape would be extremely beneficial to watch. Through videotaping myself I have been able to see how much different and how much the same first-graders are with (sic) third-graders. I believe this videotape was extremely beneficial in showing me that I do have the ability to teach children of younger ages. (March 4, 2002)

The peer coaching assignment called for students to observe a partner, hold a discussion with that partner about her teaching, and then produce a written summary of the experience. Nasrine and Kim were partners but conspired to avoid the assignment in a way that did not jeopardize the perception among program supervisors that they had complied with the requirement. Kim explained to me how this worked:

Kim: Actually I didn't even do it (peer coaching assignment).

Peter: Oh, really? So you didn't actually watch each other's class? How did that work?

Kim: Oh, I did do it but we just talked about what I wanted to see and then we both kind of wrote it up. I described the lesson and kind of had in mind what I want(ed) her to look at and then I just described it. (Kim, interview, March 1, 2002)

Ironically, the university supervisor's (Jim) comment at the bottom of the fraudulent peer coaching write-up that Nasrine produced read: "It

sounds like you found this experience to be useful. It does help to get feedback from another perspective.” Jim’s sense, though incorrect, stood to reason: Nasrine did produce—as did each of the students—credible-sounding representations that met supervisors’ requirements, sometimes even impressed them with the apparent reflection that the students had done.

Kim, Holly, and Nasrine had, throughout the program, formally claimed that they saw value in experiences that they told me they did not value, sometimes at all. The examples above illustrate that, during their field experiences students engaged in bureaucratic ventriloquism by fraudulently but skillfully faking completed assignments. They also, when asked in the course of those assignments to evaluate that assignment’s value to them, spoke insincerely, claiming to have found value when they really didn’t.

Table 3 below contains quotations from Nasrine and Kim. The first of the pair, labeled “public comment” is an excerpt from the assignment described earlier in their science methods course, taught by Sally, that asked students to spend several weeks generating their own questions, data, and theories about the moon. As part of the requirement, Sally asked students to indicate what they had thought of the activity. The second of each pair, labeled “private comment,” is an excerpt from my group interview with Nasrine, Kim, and Holly in which they discussed their science class.

**Table 3: Comparison of Preservice Teachers’ Public and Private Comments**

	Public comment	Private comment
Nasrine	Through this sun/moon observation project, we learned about inquiry-based learning and project-based learning. I also took with me meaningful information about the moon and its phases, which I never had the opportunity to learn about before.	All the class was how to teach a lesson on the sun and the moon. I think that’s all her class is. It was a whole waste of a semester.
Kim	Through this class I have experienced the positive attributes of inquiry-based teaching through the sun and moon observations. This experience with inquiry-based teaching has shown me how I can implement self-discovery and exploration within my teaching.	I was really interested in learning different ways of teaching science but the whole class was based on inquiry-based teaching. She only gave us one example. I would have like to learn many different inquiry-based questions.

The ease with which students were able to satisfy their supervisors by masking their authentic responses to their learning experiences ought to serve as a caution to all teacher educators. The validity of what these pre-

service teachers formally said to their supervisors about the value of what they did is seriously undermined by bureaucratic ventriloquism. One of the primary skills in which students seemed to demonstrate proficiency was being able to convince their superiors that they had indeed recognized value in and enthusiastically embraced all their learning experiences.

## BUREACRATIC VENTRILOQUISM AS LABELING

Another example of bureaucratic ventriloquism expressed by the students was the mechanical way that they labeled their assignments (most especially their journal assignments and lesson plans) with the performance-based standards. Students had been directed by their Professional Development School supervisors to label their assignments with standards that they addressed, or sought to address. This direction, though, in and of itself, provided little intellectual support that guided student thinking about themselves and the standards. For students, it represented another bureaucratic hurdle that was situated in between themselves and commencement day. Absent day-to-day reinforcement in using the standards as part of an intellectual process, students did exactly what they were asked: they pasted standards on top of what they had already done based on a cursory judgment of fit between the standard and the assignment they had completed. Done to signal compliance with a mandate, this act is a very similar form of bureaucratic ventriloquism that faculty used in the labeling of their syllabi. Here, especially, the hidden curriculum functions in similar ways for faculty and students.

Student responses to the journal assignments during student teaching illustrate these points vividly. Tara, the PDS Director, told students that they were to complete at least two journal entries each week (for a total of approximately 26 entries). Most completed about 10 to 15. Their entries were in fact labeled, as instructed, with a standard. In the one entry, Kim had addressed: Knowledge of the learner #1: The teacher candidate assesses individual differences through a variety of formal and informal techniques, then designs instruction appropriate to the students' stages of development, cultural backgrounds, strengths and needs. Her response, however, reveals that she never discusses how she assessed individual differences and how the knowledge gleaned from her assessment led her to particular pedagogical choices. The implication of the standard is that learning begins with assessment: the curriculum needs to be linked to the needs of individual students. In fact, Kim contends in her entry that, even after having met with students to preplan, she went ahead and used questions she already "had in her head," not the insight

gained from systematic assessment of students. She also claims that her lesson was adapted to the class' "behavior and skill" but no specific mention is made of what those behaviors and skills were. The entry does raise questions about the extent to which Kim was seeking to link assessment and instruction in her class. Did she, for example, consider her use of the preplanning sessions an adequate opportunity to assess student differences? What information had Kim gained about her students "stages of development" and "cultural backgrounds?" This journal seemed to prompt only limited thought by Kim about the standard itself, the learning theories behind it, and the connections of those ideas to her own teaching practice. She had successfully completed the requirement though, crafting a short personal statement about her teaching that was correctly labeled. In fact, the only feedback that Kim received was Jim's written "terrific" at the bottom of the page. The message for Kim and the others is that authentic intellectual engagement was less important than their success demonstrating compliance with bureaucratic mandates.

### CONCLUSION

For preservice teachers, the effect of their teacher preparation was significant. A core hidden curricular message that they received was that authentic intellectual engagement is less important than successfully complying with external forms of accountability. The intellectual basis of the program was insufficiently robust to override this central message. They were presented with a seemingly scattered array of conceptual alternatives that made it difficult for them to find a central idea that catalyzed their intellectual efforts. Instead, the program didn't really stand for anything other than, in one faculty's words, "the amalgamation of the people who happen to be teaching in it at any given moment."

Preservice teachers, therefore, navigated their way through the curriculum with a rational strategy: they defaulted to the practical, an orientation that they could trust. They believed that practical experiences in "real" settings were the most valuable aspects of their program. In the absence of a robust, integrated, and reinforced set of messages about teaching, preservice teachers constructed their own system for making meaning of their teacher education curriculum. Left, in essence, to decide for themselves what to value, students drew primarily from their own practical orientation. Those experiences that students believed gave them practical "how to" knowledge and experience were considered by them to be most worthwhile. Program elements that, while worthwhile in their own right, were under-reinforced and separated from clinical settings were not significant for them.

The process of bureaucratic ventriloquism suggests that the teacher is one who learns to resist the imposition of external mandates by making superficial, sometimes insincere, gestures of compliance. This view of the teacher has much to do with the way teachers cope with the political context of their work. The suggestion is that teachers do not operate in complete isolation. They are instead part of a larger system of social and political arrangements that pose certain restrictions on their behavior. These restrictions may be at odds with what they believe or the way they want to act. In those cases, teachers may respond defensively by preserving their own sphere of control without placing themselves in jeopardy. Their response, more passive-aggressive than proactive, is to fabricate a compliant gesture. The purpose is not only a show of resistance but a rational effort to save time. Acts of bureaucratic ventriloquism suggest that teachers need the knowledge to “pull it off.” This requires that teachers make astute judgments about the contexts in which they work, and the formal and implicit expectations of their supervisors. The educative value of assessment becomes generally devalued by bureaucratic ventriloquism because teachers need only pass the test.

These patterns may be reinforced by institutional fragmentation between university and field contexts—a situation that tells students that theory and practice are separate pursuits. It may not matter to students how much they hear faculty support a theoretical basis for teaching that links theory and practice because the program structure contains its own powerful, hidden, and contradictory curriculum. If preservice teachers at Markham had conducted a single teacher research project that was constructed among several courses and university and field contexts—instead of isolated projects in Sally’s course—they may have come to see research as valuable for them, which they did not.

It seems, then, that high quality teacher education programs would have this quality: that institutional structures and conceptual orientations are aligned in ways that challenge students’ thinking about those orientations. When this is done in ways reinforced throughout the program, students might be prompted to interrogate their own beliefs. This is not to suggest that high quality preparation is achieved when students *all* agree to the same orientation, but rather, that programs that send clear and consistent conceptual messages, congruent with their institutional structures, stand the best chance of catalyzing changes in student thinking and action.

The point was made that program participants at Markham engaged in bureaucratic ventriloquism by making inauthentic gestures of compliance to mandates with which they disagreed. In many ways, the isolation of individuals provided the climate for these actions because bureau-

cratic regulations (i.e., use of the standards) were easily hidden from supervisors. Students' supervisors were unaware, for example, that students gave as little thought as they did to how the standards affected their practice and their thinking. These actions represent problems that cannot be revealed by looking solely at the programs' formal, intended curriculum. This issue lies in the lack of authenticity of the actions of program participants. As suggested, bureaucratic ventriloquism promotes a view of assessment of teaching as only passing the test, whether or not the efforts are sincere or meaningful. The argument was made, also, that these actions take place in hierarchical power structures in teacher education that leave many program participants feeling that they, in one faculty member's words, "had not made up the rules."

It seems crucial that for teacher education programs to be successful, program faculty need to be able to elicit sincere intellectual responses from students to tasks in which they feel intellectually engaged. I described earlier bureaucratic ventriloquism as a response that successfully deflected individuals from sanction, but also left them with no particular sense of meaningful intellectual accomplishment. Teacher educators need to regularly ask: "Are students in our program really engaged in learning?" This engagement may be found, in part, in whether they buy into their learning experiences and consider them valuable enough to give them serious thought and involvement. The data in this study suggest that authenticity of student and faculty responses were undermined particularly in contexts where there were divisions of authority. A better alternative would be to create conditions where participants act and speak in ways that are honest and not corroded by hierarchical divisions.

Again, this notion should not be interpreted too literally. The most coherent program is not one in which all students appear to find equally high value in all their experiences. The range of student interpretations of the curriculum would make this impossible and even the appearance of it, highly suspicious. Instead, a successful program provides opportunities for program participants to become intellectually engaged—to want to spend a lot of time doing what they consider meaningful and important work.

The findings from this study also raise questions concerning how teacher education reformers understand and use the term "coherence." The notion of coherence is commonly used in educational research and policy documents to refer to dimensions of the formal curriculum only. It is offered, for example, as a catalyst for meaningful curriculum structuring and integration and for creating a common vision among faculty that fosters collaboration and helps to break down antiquated and isolating work roles (Howey & Zimpher, 1989). Howey and Zimpher suggest

that program coherence is a primary indicator of curricular worth, a sentiment reflected by other influential reform documents (e.g., Holmes Group, 1986).

Understanding the ways in which the hidden curriculum shapes the experiences of faculty and students should broaden notions of the hidden and formal curriculum and provide knowledge to interrogate the concept of coherence in ways that might be of use to teacher educators. That is, the degree of interconnectedness, or “coherence,” among these program elements may reveal important dimensions of a program or the way participants experience a program. If, for example, the formal and hidden curriculum send very similar messages to students about the importance of “learner-centered” instruction, students may be more likely to value this type of instruction and seek to implement it. Coherence ought to be examined, though, not only between, but within, the hidden and formal curriculum. One might ask: “Does the formal curriculum contain elements reflecting a common conception of teaching and learning?” Alternatively, one might ask about the hidden curriculum: “Do the subtle cues students receive about teaching knowledge by university faculty complement or contradict each other?” Attending to the nature of coherence among and between program elements helps to reveal the nature of a program and its potential impact on participants.

In addition, though, using coherence in this way offers an opportunity to broaden typically used connotations of the term coherence to include not only the connectedness and consistency of program elements, but also other broader kinds of connectedness that may be beneficial for pre-service teachers. These include “associations of ideas and feelings, intimations of resemblance, conflicts and tensions, and imaginative leaps” (Buchmann & Floden, 1992, p. 4). Buchmann and Floden criticize the common conceptions of coherence as a uniform and linearly minded model for creating teacher education programs. Instead they offer a conception of coherence as a web of learning experiences. Some “loose and dangled strands” (p. 8) may require the learners, they argue, to construct their own conceptions of sensibility, knowledge, and skill, even if such programs do not conform to traditional notions of “logical” consistency among all program elements.

As teacher educators look to develop and reform their programs, they will need to consider where the important conceptual threads already exist in the program, how to balance variety with consistency, how to collaborate with each other, and how to engage students, and themselves, at high levels. These conditions may enhance the chances for students to confront an engaging curriculum that contains a constellation of experiences rooted in common goals. To foster program reform, teacher edu-

cators would benefit from considering the complex characteristics of the hidden curricula of teacher education that make this a complicated task, yet one that is saturated with opportunities to improve the ways teachers are educated.

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