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## **'Placing' Teachers in Global Governance Agendas**

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## **Abstract**

This paper examines the current focus on teacher policies and practices by a range of global actors, and explores what this means for the governance of teachers in national education systems states. Through an historical and contemporary reading of the ways global actors seek to govern teachers, I argue an important shift in the locus of power to govern has taken place. I show how the mechanisms of global governance of teachers are being transformed, from 'education as (national) development' and 'norm setting', to 'learning as (individual) development' and 'competitive comparison'. Yet despite tendencies toward a convergence of agendas amongst these global actors, we can nevertheless observe important differences between them, as well as on the national settings influence. I conclude by examining the limits and possibilities of governing at a (global) distance, as well as the contradictions and cleavages inherent in neo-liberal framings of teacher policies to realise the good teacher.

## Introduction

In 2010, the well-known United States (US) commentator on education, Diane Ravitch, did an ‘about turn.’ She published a stunning critique of more than a decade of education reforms in the US that included school choice, the creation of independent charter schools, high-stakes testing, and untenured contracts for teachers (Ravitch 2010). Given Ravitch’s status as an organic intellectual of the ‘right,’ this once staunch supporter of what writers like Pasi Sahlberg (2011) have come to call the ‘global education reform movement’, caused considerable public stir.

Yet it would seem, if we look at the recent reports of the World Bank Group in 2011, Ravitch’s concerns have fallen on deaf ears. In *Making Schools Work: New Evidence on Accountability Reforms* (Bruns, Filmer and Patrinos 2011), and *Learning for All: Investing in People’s Knowledge and Skills to Promote Development* (World Bank, 2011), it is precisely this policy mix of ‘choice/accountability/private-sector participation/teacher incentives’ that Ravitch criticizes as ‘making matters worse.’ And lest we doubt ‘who’ the Bank regards as the culprit failing children and their learning, a carefully placed image on the front cover of *Making Schools Work* shows a teacher asleep at his desk, sandals off, legs outstretched. The message is clear. Teachers are failing students as learners, in turn placing limits on their capacity to contribute to national economic development.

To deal with what the Bank regards as chronic teacher incompetence it has begun work on the development of SABER-Teacher; a sub-project on teacher policies that sit within a new accountability program called System Assessment and Benchmarking for Education Results - or SABER - meaning “*to know*” in Spanish (World Bank 2011). In ambition, SABER-Teachers represents a significant intervention into shaping governing frameworks aimed at teachers in national education systems. Notable too is that neither teachers, nor their respective unions, have been consulted. Rather, a select group of economists of education have drawn up the benchmarking and data collection protocols aimed at generating an evidence base on teacher policies and student performance.

The World Bank Group is not the only international organization where teacher policy is central. In *Teachers Matter* (2005), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) drew attention to challenges facing the profession. These included difficulties in recruitment, teachers employed without pedagogical credentials, high levels of attrition, and low social status. That these were the outcomes of the neoliberal policy mix Ravitch and Sahlberg are criticizing, is not canvassed. Rather, the OECD’s findings were used to launch a major

benchmarking project on teachers, the *Teaching and Learning International Survey* (TALIS), which reported in 2009. TALIS is now in a second round of data gathering. And despite the limited nature of TALIS 2008, the findings were used to frame the first *International Summit on the Teaching Profession* in 2011 hosted by the US Department of Education, the OECD, and the global teachers' union, Education International. A feature of this event was the cast of sponsors: a mix of philanthropic foundations and corporations,<sup>1</sup> all with an interest in the governance of teachers. However, like the Bank project, classroom teachers were visibly absent from the process.

Similarly, McKinsey & Company, an influential global consulting firm, produced two reports on top performing education systems (Barber and Mourshed, 2007; Mourshed, Chijioke and Barber, 2009). Arguing “the quality of the education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers,” the reports highlighted the centrality of effective teachers and systems to support the development of teachers' pedagogical practices. Teachers are also under the microscope in a major research and reform initiative launched in 2009 and funded by the corporate philanthropic Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. *Measures of Effective Teaching* represents a huge investment from the Foundation – some US\$335million – gathering an unprecedented amount of data on teachers and students in six large school districts in the US. The goal is to create a teacher evaluation system to boost students' educational performance and the performance of the US economy.

How are we to understand this focus on teacher policies and practices? How different are they from the norm-setting guidelines for teachers' work and status developed and promoted by the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the 1960s? Further, do they represent a shift in the locus of power over teachers' work to the global scale, and if so, why, and how is this shift being orchestrated? Finally, what are the social justice implications for teachers and students located in national settings, but where power is now concentrated in spaces not open to political contestation?

In this paper I will be arguing, first, that the mechanisms of global governance of teachers are being transformed from ‘education as (national) development’ and ‘norm setting,’ to ‘learning as (individual) development’ and ‘competitive comparison.’ This shift is being

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<sup>1</sup> Metlife, National Education Association, Simons Foundation, The Ford Foundation, Pearson Foundation, American Federation of Teachers, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Google, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Adobe Foundation, Intel Corporation, Noyce Foundation, Scholastic Inc. and National Public Education Support Fund

orchestrated by key global agencies who argue there is a crisis in the teaching profession, and have sought to colonize the field of symbolic control over teacher policy. Second, despite tendencies toward a convergence of agendas amongst these global actors, and the creation of a visible epistemic community amongst global teacher policy entrepreneurs, there are important differences between these actors, as well as on the national settings they seek to influence. Third, I explore the limits and possibilities of governing at a (global) distance, as well as the contradictions inherent in neoliberal framings of teacher policies. The paper draws on the work of Basil Bernstein (1990; 2000) to trace transformations in teachers' work through the conceptual lenses of power, governing, pedagogy and production.

### **Globalization, Governance and New Forms of Social Ordering**

As David Held and Anthony McGrew (2002, 1) note: "Any discussion of global governance must start with an understanding of the changing fabric of international society." Woven into these changes are complex processes we have come to term globalization. And whilst globalization has been a highly contested term, there is broad acceptance it refers to historical processes that are transforming the spatial organization of social relations and transactions (Held et al, 1999; Mittelman, 2004).

Against this historical backdrop, the advance of neoliberalism as a political project has been highly consequential for advancing a particular form of spatial reorganization of social relations since the 1980s. David Harvey (2005, 2) argues that neoliberalism "...proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade." Neoliberal political projects have not only been advanced to make national territories more open to transnational processes, but also generated unprecedented growth in the number of transnational actors.

As a consequence, a large and distinct global governance literature has emerged to make sense of these changes. A common definition of global governance is offered by James Rosenau (1992, 5), as "governance without government." By this he means that 'big G' (national) government is not the only institution involved in the oversight of societies. Since the 1980s, there have been significant changes in the nature of governing within and beyond the government, as well as within and beyond the national scale of governing, with new centers of

gravity around policy cycles that go well beyond the formal authority of a top-down state (Newman 2001, 22-23).

Viewed in this light, *governance* can be described as the sum of the many ways in which individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their daily affairs, whilst *global governance* refers to a range of actors – from inter-governmental to non-governmental, citizens’ movements and multinational corporations, who exercise authority and engage in political action *across* state boundaries (Keohane 2004, 120). The approach to global governance I will use here is one which views world orders as polycentric and multi-level, but where different nodal scales of rule, such as the national, come to occupy a dominant position at particular points of time. In other words, in reality the world has always been “...an evolving system of formal and informal political coordination, across multiple levels, from the local to the global – among public authorities (states and IGOs) and private agencies seeking to realize common purposes or resolve collective problems” (Held and McGrew 2002, 9).

This brings us to the question of where the governing of education systems takes place, and *how* to represent shifts in education activity and its governance across scales. I draw on Dale’s (2003) argument, that the labor of education should be envisaged as distributed vertically and horizontally within and across scales – from the local to the global. The study of education policies is thus an account of the movement, concentration, materialization and reproduction of power across within and across these scales. Linking education, governing and scale in this way helps us understand how processes of rescaling are mobilized by political actors to challenge, and change, the center of gravity of governing within the education sector.

### **Governing, Power and Pedagogy**

Yet the question of *how* new governing practices produce different identities, such as the imagined ‘teacher facilitator’ at the heart of the OECD’s conception of the good teacher, is a complex sociological issue. Basil Bernstein’s (1990, 2000) work is useful here as he develops an account of the relationships between “...how power and control translate into principles of communicating, and how these principles of communication differentially regulate forms of consciousness with respect to their reproduction and their possibilities for change” (Bernstein 2000, 4).

Bernstein also views pedagogy in the widest of senses: "...as a fundamental social context through which cultural reproduction-production takes place" (2000, 3). That is, pedagogic practices include a myriad of relationships, such as the doctor and patient, the family and social worker, and so on. What makes pedagogy a distinctive practice is that it involves the selective acquisition of organizational, discursive, and transmission practices. Broadly, all governing practices are pedagogical in that they involve the selective acquisition of particular knowledge and practices. It follows that education systems are important pedagogic agencies in that they govern the activities of teachers and learners, whilst teachers are pedagogic actors because of their relationship to learners.

Yet, despite theoretical argument that pedagogy is enacted within the particular, we increasingly see global organizations involving themselves in shaping teachers' pedagogic practices in national education settings. This is because, as Xavier Bonal and Xavier Rambla (2003, 170) observe: "Like all dimensions of educational systems, both pedagogy and teachers' work are altered by changes that occur on a global scale. The development of knowledge-driven economies, the technological revolution of our times, and changes in production processes are some of the factors that may alter what is taught and how it is taught." It is precisely this question of *who* decides the *what, how, when, and to whom*, of what should be taught that is at the heart of understanding education governance as pedagogy.

I will now introduce Bernstein's (1990, 2000) concepts of 'classification,' 'framing,' 'field of symbolic control,' and 'recontextualizing fields' to trace shifts in education governance as pedagogy. Classification refers to the principles which establish the social division of labor – such as teacher, social worker, nurse – and which produce identities, voice, and consciousness (Bernstein 2000, 6). Dominant power relations establish and maintain the boundaries that give rise to these divisions. Strong classifications have strong insulation between categories; weak classification means that insulation is broken and the category is in danger of losing its identity.

'Framing' concerns *who* controls *what* - or the forms of realization of discourse. That is, the voice of the category and the projected message (Bernstein 2000, 12). "Where framing is strong, the transmitter has explicit control over selection, sequence, pacing, criteria, and the social base. Where framing is weak, the acquirer has more *apparent* control over the communication and its social base" (Bernstein 2000, 13, emphasis added). For example, weak framing of the 'good teacher' gives the acquirer more control over the discourse, its rules of realization, and therefore practices and forms of consciousness.

By 'field of symbolic control' Bernstein means "...the agencies and agents who specialize in discursive codes which they dominate. These codes of discourse, ways of relating, thinking,

and feeling, specialize and distribute consciousness, social relations and dispositions” (1990, 134 - 135). I will show that the field of symbolic control over teacher policy in the period 1960-1990 was dominated by national and sub-national actors with weak symbolic control by international organizations. However, since early 2000, a growing number of global actors have gained greater control over the rules for classifying and framing the good teacher, legitimated by arguments such as the need to create more efficient education systems, competitive knowledge economies, and to manage a crisis in the teaching profession.

Finally, the concept of ‘recontextualizing rules’ regulates what is thinkable knowledge; in other word, the *what* and *how* of pedagogic discourse. Bernstein identifies two recontextualizing fields: the Official Recontextualizing Field (ORF), created and dominated by the state for the surveillance of state pedagogic discourse, and the Pedagogic Recontextualizing Field (PRF) consisting of teachers, specialized media, teacher trainers, and so on. Both recontextualizing fields have a range of ideological pedagogic positions that struggle for the control over the field and will often be opposed to each other (Bernstein 2000, 78). However I will also introduce a third, newer Commercial Recontextualizing Field (CRF), which I argue has emerged in the education sector. What makes this a distinctive recontextualizing field is that its logic is tied to profit-making, entrepreneurship, and investment.

## **Governing Teachers Globally - 1960-1990s**

Education systems were central to the development of the post-war world order, with the state at the national scale as the actor able to mobilize sovereignty and authority in order to govern (Sassen 2006). Education systems were also governed almost exclusively at the national or sub-national scale. Yet, education was also a vehicle and arena for intergovernmental cooperation and a fundamental element of the work envisaged for the newly formed international institutions of the post World War II order.

Karen Mundy (2007) argues two mechanisms of global governance were key; ‘education as development’ as a goal for modernizing societies, and ‘standard setting.’ These two mechanisms supported the expansion of education in the newly developed states. International Organizations (IO) thus helped structure a normative understanding of what educational development should be, and along with bilateral agencies and a weak international federation of

teacher unions/associations, spurred the development of education globally modeled on the western world.

The World Bank's attitude to teachers in the early 1960s was initially framed by a skeptical approach to education. However, the new economics of education soon guided the Bank's decisions: education was an investment in 'human capital' (Jones 2007, 32-33). In contrast to the Bank, UNESCO argued cultures mattered, and that education should foster a unifying global culture. To this end UNESCO championed the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and basic education to promote increases in literacy. UNESCO thus promoted an explicit normative project in education around the idea of 'universality' (Jones and Coleman, 2005: 53).

Despite a poor resource base, UNESCO acquired considerable expertise in education development and planning. With Bank funding, it established the UNESCO Division of Statistics to provide member states with internationally comparable data to help plan and develop education and literacy programs (Cusso and D'Amico 2005, 202). As Rosa Cusso and Sabrina D'Amico (2005, 200) observe, the type of comparability it offered was largely descriptive:

Concerned by the diversity of national education systems, UNESCO did not publish rankings of countries based on statistical indicators, although technically these would have been possible. Moreover, publications rarely included complex statistical analyses; for example, the correlation between teachers' salaries and the number of graduates was never calculated despite the fact that the necessary data was available

Despite an emerging agenda for the governing of teachers' work globally, the locus of power and authority lay with sub/nationally-located states (Sassen 2006). This can be seen in the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, adopted in 1966 (ILO/UNESCO 2008, 8). The Recommendation set out the rights and responsibilities of teachers, including international standards for their initial preparation and further education, recruitment, employment, teaching and learning conditions, security of tenure, disciplinary procedures, participation in education decision-making, and so on. It argued:

...teaching should be regarded as a profession: it is a form of public service which requires of teachers, expert knowledge and specialised skills, acquired and maintained through rigorous and continuing stud...teachers should enjoy academic freedom in the discharge of professional duties" to include the choice and selection

of teaching materials... and that their salaries should reflect the importance to society of the teaching function... (2008, 8).

These guidelines were to be the basis of a ‘national’ dialogue between teachers and national educational authorities and unions, in turn shaping national laws and practice. As a global Recommendation (unlike a Declaration), it did not require national signatories. In Bernstein’s terms, it was strongly classified in that it had a distinctive voice regarding teachers as professionals, but weakly framed in that those in national settings were able to realize their own conceptions of the good teacher. Raewyn Connell (2009, 215-16), it was possible to identify diverse conceptions of the good teacher around the globe -- from the developmental state model to indirect forms of rule. A burst of other ideas which emerged in the 1960s and 1970s also gave rise to a range of other distinctive teacher ‘voices’ from within the Pedagogic Recontextualizing Field; for instance, the reflexive practitioner, the critical pedagogue, and teacher as scholar. Teachers and nationally located governments therefore had considerable autonomy in determining the *how* of their pedagogy in relation to the global scale. This was to change from 2000 onwards.

### **Crisis, New Projects and Modernization of the Teacher**

By the late 1960s economic growth had stalled, with declining profits and movement of labor-intensive industries to the less developed world. The net result was a world recession in the early 1970s (Harvey 2005), leaving the door open to the emergence of a new political project, neoliberalism, whose advocates had strong views on the role of the state and its relation to the economy. This new alternative to Keynesianism — free market liberalism—promoted three central principles: deregulation, competitiveness and privatization (Cox 1996, 31).

Neo-liberal policies have had profound effects on teachers and their work.<sup>2</sup> Teachers live in these ‘actually existing’ worlds of neo-liberalizing education systems that have been transformed by the “different vectors, movements, and oscillations” (Peck 2010, xvii) of neo-liberal projects and flanking mechanisms, including choice, vouchers, charters, devolved governance, global rankings, privatization, public-private partnerships, management-by-audit, and self-management (the list goes on). Equally as important has been the growth of

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<sup>2</sup> Smyth et al 2000; Robertson 2000; Compton and Weiner 2008; Connell 2009

accountability and standards policies aimed at driving up student performance, and ensuring teachers work more efficiently. However teachers have also been subject to a strong discourse of derision, contributing to a wider loss of confidence in teachers as professionals. Teachers have also experienced the fallout from neoliberal policies, such as significant attrition from the teaching profession, under-chosen schools leading to school closure, high stress teaching and learning environments, and learners who feel disrespected by a system that promotes constant improvement (Zeichner 2007; McBeath 2012).

By the early 2000s teachers and their work became an important agenda for the OECD, leading Antonio Novoa (2011, 199) to remark: “In recent years we have seen teachers return to the limelight, after forty years of near invisibility.” The reasons were two-fold. One was a concern that the schools continued to look like nineteenth century institutions, and that teachers’ pedagogical practices were in danger of failing to produce the new knowledge workers for the knowledge economy (Robertson 2005). The second was with the consequences of neo-liberal policies on the profession. In many parts of the world, teaching found itself to be an undesirable profession. In a report written for Education International in 2012, MacBeath details the outcomes of three decades of neoliberal policies on the teaching profession: intensification, role overload, de-professionalization, student behavior and inclusion and special needs students being placed in normal classrooms without sufficient support (ibid: 23). In Australia, for example, one in four teachers leave within the first five years of teaching, whilst the US describes a similar situation (ibid: 10). Teachers leave as they suffer from lack of autonomy and flexibility in addressing pedagogical issues creatively. And if teachers are difficult to recruit and retain, what are the implications for student learning, and a nation’s global economic competitiveness agenda? From 2000 onwards this has become a major concern. It has also opened a policy space to a small group of global actors who have come to dominate the field of symbolic control over teachers and their work through reclassifying and reframing pedagogic discourse, largely through data gathering and statistical tools, aimed at representing, comparing and ranking, the national geographical distributions of ‘the good teacher.’

## Placing Teachers in Contemporary Global Governance Agendas

UNESCO, the OECD, World Bank Group, and the ILO, all collect, manage, evaluate, and represent, statistical data on teachers' work. These newer mechanisms of global governance now sit alongside the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation on the Status of Teachers passed in 1966 – yet they encourage different kinds of conversations precisely as they are different framings of the competent teacher. As I have argued, the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation aims at teachers developing a dialogue in local and national settings around 'the good teacher' (autonomous, chooser of curriculum, involved in policy decisions) with agencies concerned with teachers and their working conditions. The ongoing work of the ILO/UNESCO statistical reporting on the teaching profession, which feeds into the work of the joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teacher Personnel (CEART), plays a monitoring role regarding the use of the standards in Member States. As mechanisms for governing, however, they continue to be limited by weak capacity to ensure implementation, and even weaker capacity to effect change when national policy concerning teachers is at odds with the Recommendations (Smyth et al 2000; Connell 2009). And despite UNESCO's hesitation regarding the comparison of countries using statistics, it has moved further in that direction. The main statistical office for UNESCO is the Institute of Statistics (UIS), established in 1999 in Montreal, Canada to provide an improved statistical program for its member states. It reports on education more generally, and from time to time reports on teachers, such as the 2006 report on teacher quality (UIS 2006) and implications for realizing of the 2015 Millennium Development Goals. Like most of UIS's data, it is reported comparatively - by region, and by country. This is a soft form of comparison intended to produce a global picture of development. There is no hierarchy of performance established, and there no evaluative judgment made as to how well a country is performing on a particular task.

It is the OECD that has emerged as a significant actor in the field of symbolic control over teacher policy and practice because of its role in generating an alignment between education and the economy. In a series of reports beginning in 2000, the OECD began to argue that education systems and teachers' work must be modernized in line with the desire to develop knowledge-based economies (cf. OECD 2000, 2001, 2005). In 2000 the OECD launched the 'Schooling for Tomorrow' Toolkit as an entrée into re-imagining future schools (Robertson 2005). A series of scenarios, including a "bureaucratic, stay-as-you-are, teacher melt-down scenario, were produced to stimulate conversations amongst influential actors in national

education systems over how schools could be modernized. Scenarios, of course, place limits on what can be imagined and materialized and can be viewed as an effort to reclassify what would count as a 'fit for purpose' twenty-first century school. However, teachers were viewed in these exercises as a major stumbling block to the realization of schooling for the knowledge economy (Robertson 2005).

In 2002 the OECD began a major project reviewing teacher policy, drawing in 25 member states who committed substantial resources (OECD 2005). A final report, *Teachers Matter*, was published in 2005, placing teachers' work and policy high on national agendas. Arguing that: "This OECD project provides probably the most comprehensive analysis ever undertaken of teacher policy issues at the international level..." (ibid, 3) and that participating countries could learn from each other through "...sharing innovative and successful initiatives, and to identify policy options for attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers..." (ibid) – the report drew attention to wider issues surrounding teacher recruitment (image and status of teachers), the composition of the workforce (growing discipline issues amongst male students, academically weaker students entering teaching), the unequal geographic distribution of good teachers, declining salaries amongst teachers, and a limited incentive structures that it argued could recognize and reward good teachers.

Most importantly, the Report provided the necessary legitimacy for the OECD to act on behalf of its member states (hence ceding to itself state authority) to significantly enter the field of symbolic control over teacher policy – especially around the classification and framing of the twenty-first century teacher. To this end, in 2008 the OECD's Indicators and Analysis Division (IAD), under the direction of Andreas Schleicher, launched the *Teaching and Learning International Survey* (TALIS); a collaboration between member-states of the OECD and other non-members. That TALIS was supported by Education International, the global teachers' union, suggests the extent to which the ORF (made up of state authority that now operates across the national and global scales) had now colonized the PRF. The first round of TALIS data collection took place in 2008 on 24 countries (17 OECD countries; 7 non-member countries). A second, more extensive round of data will be collected from more than 30 countries and reported as TALIS 2013 in 2014.

TALIS 2008 reports on data collected from 20 teachers teaching lower secondary school (level 2 of the 1997 revision of the International Classification of Education – ISCED 97) in 200 schools for each county participating in the survey. In the first design of the survey, options were presented to the participating countries which included surveying a representative sample of teachers of 15 year olds who took part in PISA 2006, the Program of International Student

Assessment (PISA) also run by the IAD (OECD 2009). According to the methodological notes reported in the TALIS 2008 report (ibid), the first round of participating countries did not want a methodology that linked TALIS and PISA. However, TALIS 2013 will now collect data which links these two learning and teaching assessment tools. This is a significant development for the OECD in increasing the range of its symbolic control, and the growing power of the OECD's Indicators and Analysis Division in the Official Recontextualizing Field. Within this field, teachers' voices are reduced to data; a mono-tonal response as a result of a tightly-framed survey aimed at orchestrating change through competitive comparison, much as PISA does with students.

In order to see more closely the *what* of classification and framing, we need to look at the TALIS survey instruments as particular kinds of pedagogic devices. Broadly, TALIS 2008 collects data on: (1) the role and functioning of the head teacher; (2) how teachers' work is appraised and the feedback they receive; (3) teacher professional development; and (4) teachers' beliefs and attitudes about teaching. First, we can see the shift to 'learning as (individual) development' through the preoccupation with various kinds of learning; ongoing professional learning, self reflection, and feedback, and so on. Here it is worth noting that, in many countries, teacher professional development has been privatized (Ball 2007, 2012).

Second, we can see from the discussion of the indices in the Annex (OECD, 2009: 268-275) the pedagogic principles that are at work. Teachers are asked to respond to a series of questions, for instance around *teachers' beliefs*, indicating how strongly (1 = strongly disagree; 4=strong agree) they agree with the statement. In relation to teacher beliefs, there are 2 opposing indices: direct transmission (bad teacher) or constructivism (good teacher). Here the OECD (2009, 269) states: "In short, constructivist beliefs are characterized by a view of the teacher as a facilitator of learning with more autonomy given to students whereas a direct transmission view sees the teacher as the instructor, providing information and demonstrating solutions." In other words, the competent teacher 'facilitates' the learning of the pupil (making knowledge), rather than 'direct transmission' to the learning (taking knowledge). That teachers are likely to need a combination of pedagogies, depending on what needs to be taught, is not thinkable in this framing.

But there is a more important point at issue which is central to the OECD's pedagogical project; that is, constructivism. A central tenet of constructivism is that reality does not exist independent of the subjects who seek it. In other words, there is no other independent, pre-existing world (Olssen 1996). The attraction of constructivism for the OECD is that it fits with the ontology of neoliberalism; of liberalism's concern for the individual. However an

individualist and highly personal epistemology of knowledge neglects the ways in which, for example, the sciences are social and historical activities, and that individuals learn concepts that *already* exist in culture (Olssen,1996). It could be argued, therefore, that constructivist teacher pedagogies – with its over-emphasis on agency -- link the wider project of neoliberalism, to the emerging social base of production - the competitive knowledge economy.

We can also observe strong framing when we see the rules for realizing teachers' beliefs around pedagogy. Teachers engaged in direct transmission are described as 'those who demonstrate the correct way to solve a problem,' and who believe 'a quiet classroom is generally needed for effective learning.' The good teacher, however, believes 'the role of the teacher is to facilitate students' own enquiry,' and 'thinking and reasoning processes are more important than specific curriculum content.' In other words, the teachers' pedagogic practices that are presumed to materialize the competent learner for a knowledge-based economy limits the acquisition of those knowledges that may not be directly useful for the economy, in favor of learning as a demeanor rather than a reservoir of resources for thinking about the world. As others have also observed, the new pedagogic identity is shaped by a permanent orientation to learning.

Despite the limited nature of the TALIS 2008 data reported in 2009, TALIS findings were fed into the first ever *International Summit on the Teaching Profession* convened in New York in 2011 by the US Department of Education, the OECD and Education International.<sup>3</sup> Significantly, the OECD Director of the Indicators and Analysis Division, Andreas Schleicher, was engaged to write the background report for the Summit, and played a leading role as framer of the agenda. The background report – *Building a High Quality Teaching Profession: Lessons from Around the World* (OECD 2011) considers evidence around issues of teacher recruitment, ongoing learning and professional development, how teachers are evaluated and compensated, and the ways teachers engage in reform. Strikingly, the “high-performing” schools profiled in this report have diverse practices, and only two factors correlate with high performing schools: well-paid teachers and the recruitment of high caliber students.

We should remind ourselves of the concerns facing the US Department of Education and the OECD and the reason for the 2011 lesson-learning Summit. In an extended entry on the Summit website posted in 2009, the conference framer (Schleicher) and the rapporteur (Stewart), noted that the US had fallen from 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> place in the proportion of young adults with a high school degree or equivalent, whilst on the OECD's PISA assessment, the US now ranked 21<sup>st</sup> of 30 OECD countries in science (well below the OECD average); 25<sup>th</sup> of 30 OECD countries in

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<sup>3</sup> A second conference was held in 2012 with a third to be held in the Netherlands in 2013.

mathematics (well below the OECD average); and 15<sup>th</sup> of 29 OECD countries in reading (OECD average). The solution? According to Schleicher and Stewart (2009), successful education systems are those “...who have abandoned the factory model, with teachers at the bottom receiving orders from on high, to move toward a professionalized model of teachers as knowledge workers. In this regard, teachers are on a par with other professionals in terms of diagnosing problems and applying evidence-based practices.” The paradox here, of course, is the OECD’s own position in the world of education as a giver of orders from on high to national systems and teachers, though this time mediated through a rather different set of technologies for governing: data and rankings. I return to this important point below.

Bonal and Rambla (2003) point to this newer relationship between the emergent pedagogic mode and the social base that regulates it, arguing that it is one that requires a generic rather than a specialized orientation to performance. They argue:

...in flexible capitalism, rapid production and circulation of knowledge becomes a crucial input for economic performance, Knowledge becomes a raw material for the production process and earns tangibility. Although knowledge changes rapidly, it becomes an instrumental input for capital accumulation. The market shapes what is considered worthy or useless knowledge and also underlines the presence of absence of its specific forms (Bonal and Rambla, 2003: 174).

Yet, there are also important contradictions facing the authority of the OECD and its claim to expert knowledge on teachers and education systems. The starkest counter-evidence is presented by Finland. In the OECD’s PISA rankings, Finland ranks number one for student performance. The key elements the OECD proposes for teacher policies and high performing schools are absent in Finland. More than this, Finland is also a high-growth economy, leading ex-World Bank staff-member, Pasi Sahlberg (2007, 2010, 2011), to argue that economies like Finland are successful precisely as they have *completely different* teacher policies to those favored by the OECD. Finnish teachers spend fewer hours in class teaching than the OECD average, have considerable personal autonomy, are not engaged in formal systems of teacher evaluation, and do not get merit pay. This has caused the OECD to alter its ‘lesson learning’ strategy through deploying the expertise of Pearson Education - the world’s largest education firm (Ball 2012) in marketing education products and services. A series of ‘successful performer’ videos (including Singapore, Poland, Ontario/Canada and Brazil) – each carry rather different stories about how to build high performing schools (Pearson Foundation 2012). This has the effect of weakening the strength of

the classification of 'high performing schools' because the rules for realization are made more open regarding which message the acquirer wants to take. This presents the OECD with a paradox in that it cannot fully control the outcomes of its own pedagogic practices. Evidence from its data gathering activities (the place of Finland on PISA/Finland does not deploy any of the tools of the global reform movement) also causes a weakening of the insulation that keeps the successful school/good teacher/high student performer in place. This may well loosen the strength of colonization by the Official Recontextualizing Field (ORF) on the Pedagogic Recontextualizing Field (PRF) unless there is a reworking of the rules as to what counts as official knowledge.

A similarly stimulated, but rather differently framed, project on teacher policies for knowledge-based economies has been advanced by the World Bank since the early 2000s. In *Lifelong Learning for the Global Knowledge Economy* (2003) it set out the challenges knowledge economies present for education and training systems, with particular emphasis on the need for a teacher pedagogy that promotes active personalized learning, teacher facilitation, and pupil assessment. The report also represents schools and teachers as problematic: teachers are unionized and resistant to change, and education systems are steeped in an organizational model of development that limits their capacity to respond to the challenges posed by globalizing knowledge economies.

The World Bank continued these narratives in their 2011 report, *Making Schools Work* (Bruns et al, 2011). There is a lengthy chapter devoted to the challenge of teacher accountability. A key argument is that education policymakers wishing to recruit, or 'groom' great teachers to raise the overall levels of learning amongst pupils confront the reality of education systems where there are weak incentives to alter performance. The Report states: "The vast majority of education systems are characterized by fixed salary schedules, lifetime job tenure, and flat labor hierarchies, which create rigid labor environments where extra effort, innovation, and good results are not rewarded" (142).

Criticising the years of service/credential basis or teacher salaries and promotion they argue: "The clear implication of available research is that most schools are recruiting and rewarding teachers for the wrong things, failing to encourage the capacities and behaviors that contribute most directly to student learning results, and unable to sanction ineffective performance" (143). A further issue emerges: the levels of expenditure on education, and the percentage of this allocated to teacher salaries.

Developing countries today spend an average of 5% of GDP on education, and many countries are on track to increase this. The impact of this investment on their subsequent economic growth hangs largely on how they use the 4 percent of GDP (80 percent of total education spending) that goes to pay teachers. In a growing number of countries, the drive to improve student learning outcomes is translated into creative and sometimes radical policy reforms aimed at changing the incentives for teachers (143).

Their solution is to argue that teachers ought to be paid, not by formal recognition of qualifications, or type of service, or geographic location. Rather they should be on contracts for specified periods of employment, with pay tied to student performance, thus establishing a link between teachers' employment conditions and accountability. Despite the World Bank's promotion of performance pay, the OECD acknowledges that there is considerable variation amongst teachers in their ability to influence learning, ranging from teacher style to organizational issues, class size, and wider social and economic factors (OECD, 2005). Pinning teacher pay to student performance seeks to establish a link suggesting it is possible to distil that dimension of teacher performance which makes a difference, and that teachers are in control of this.

The question of teachers' pay structures and incentives linked to teacher quality and student outcomes has resulted in sharp differences of view between commentators. Charter schools in the US provide an interesting 'laboratory' for evidence, as teachers employed by charter schools typically work on different contracts than those in the public sector. A longitudinal study of pupil performance in charter schools released in 2010 (CREDO 2010) suggests student outcomes are not necessarily likely to be better. The CREDO study shows wide variation in performance - with 17 percent of charter schools nationwide providing superior education opportunities for their students; 50 percent had results no different from the local public school options; and 37 percent deliver results that are significantly worse than had these students remained in traditional public schools.

Nevertheless the World Bank has pressed ahead with the launch of a large benchmarking and accountability initiative – System Assessment and Benchmarking Education for Results (SABER). In 2011, *SABER-Teachers* was launched within the wider SABER program. It was joined by a second SABER initiative – *Engaging the Private Sector in Education*. Citing Schleicher and Stewart (2009), that a focus on outcomes, accountability and autonomy, teacher professionalism, and personalized learning leads to better education performance (Lewis and Patrinos 2011), the

Bank then links this to its own (selective use of) evidence (Patrinos et al, 2009); that private sector participation in education (competition for students, flexibility in the hiring and wages for teachers, public bidding for contracts that include private sector providers, and partnerships between the public and the private sector) will lead to high performing teachers and schools.

In a paper that details the objectives, rationale, methodological approach and products of SABER-Teachers (2011), the Bank observes that whilst recognizing teacher policies are central to the delivery of primary and secondary education, “research has been unable to establish a relationship between easily measurable teacher characteristics, such as years of education and experience, and teacher performance as measured by student learning outcomes” (World Bank 2011). The objective of SABER-Teachers is therefore to collect quantitative data on teacher policies, synthesize the results, and to use this for decision-making in improving education.

In Bernstein’s terms, we can see SABER-Teachers (World Bank 2011) strongly classifies the ‘good teacher’ (defined by 10 core policy goals), and uses strong framing rules by specifying 10 core teacher policy areas, the specific questions to be asked in each of these areas, and evaluative/moral developmental trajectory – ‘latent,’ ‘emerging,’ ‘established,’ ‘mature’ – to determine the extent to which the rules for realization of the competent teacher are in place. Detailed questions include: “Is participation in professional development compulsory? What is the burden of teacher compensation? What labor rights do teachers enjoy?” and “Are there monetary sanctions for teacher absenteeism?” Countries will be compared with each other and will be able to learn from each other, whilst the evaluative/moral developmental trajectory provides both direction and levers for change. The focus is argued to be on the ‘facts’ of policy rather than teachers’ ‘experience’ of policy. The Bank will also use its own organizational structures and consultants to gather data (World Bank 2011) giving it significant control over the ongoing use and refinement of the system.

Thirteen disparate countries are participating in the first round of data collection for SABER-Teachers, ranging from Chile and Djibouti to Egypt, Guatemala and New Zealand. Whilst some of these countries are recipients of Bank aid, a country like New Zealand is not, though in the 1990s it acquired the status of a laboratory for World Bank structural adjustment policies (Kelsey 1996). The Bank will need a range of countries signing up as participants if it is to be successful in this venture; yet it is difficult to see what the incentives might be for this unless a country’s own internal strategies might be boosted by other – external – evidence.

To leave our account there, with the OECD and World Bank as the two main actors in the field of symbolic control over teacher policies, would be to suggest a limited understanding of transformations in the global governance of education system. As Ball (2007, 2012) amongst

others has documented, the education landscape is now populated with a rapidly growing array of small and large businesses, social enterprises, and philanthropies in education service delivery and education policy. The most prominent example of corporate philanthropic activity in shaping of teacher policies is found in the US. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is the largest philanthropic organization in public education.

In 2009, it began work on a large project called *Measures of Effective Teaching* (MET), investing US\$335million in the collection of data from 3,000 teachers in six large districts in the US, aimed at measuring teacher quality (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation 2009). The goal is to create a more effective teacher evaluation system that has the capacity to influence other school districts. Teacher data will include video capture of lessons that are uploaded and scored by trained raters (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation 2009, 2010). With twenty states of the US overhauling their teacher evaluation systems, to fulfill plans set in motion by a US\$4billion federal grant competition, and awaiting the results of MET, the Gates Foundation has the capacity to generate significant changes in the sector (Dillon 2010). This project represents the horizontal re-division of the labor of education within a national setting, in this case with a powerful global actor, the Gates Foundation, as its main architect. Yet it is the overall approach to teacher assessment that warrants comment, as it is based on the value-added approach to school effectiveness that has attracted heavy criticism in the UK and US where it is widely used. Critics like Stephen Gorard (2007, 2010) argue value-added approaches ignore the extent to which pupil improvement can be predicted from prior attainment and/or student background rather than the differences that the school makes. One of his major concerns is that not only have many policymakers bought into a technical solution because statistical techniques appear to be devoid of politics; but also they have literally bought into it as it is a huge industry employing large numbers of companies and consultants (Gorard, 2010). Similarly in the US, respected economist Jesse Rothstein has reviewed the early findings of the MET project and argued their conclusions are not supported by the data (Rothstein 2011).

Education consultants, such as McKinsey & Company, have also emerged as influential teacher policy entrepreneurs of system solutions. In two influential reports on top performing schools, McKinsey & Company point to teacher policies (Barber and Mourshed 2007; Mourshed, Chijioke and Barber 2009). Concerned with what they describe as the deterioration of student performance results, the 2007 McKinsey report argues those systems that perform best have three key ingredients in place: they (1) recruit better quality teachers, (2) help teachers become better instructors, and (3) ensure every student benefits from excellent instruction (Barber and Mourshed 2007). That the paradox of slowed student results in the face of major

efforts to boost standards and accountability can be resolved through one of three policy options is no doubt tempting to politicians, and goes some way to explaining the impacts these reports have had around the globe (Coffield 2012). In their efforts to sell solutions to education systems the reports have reduced highly complex relations to a single factor: "the quality of the teachers" (Coffield, 2012: 132). McKinsey & Company partner and head of global education practice, Michael Barber, gained his credibility following significant appointments in the UK Blair administration (1998-2005). Barber's move in September 2011 to Pearson Education means he will likely play a role in the emerging collaboration between the OECD and Pearson Education in the development of the 2015 PISA framework. In drawing attention to Barber, I am also highlighting the emergence of a visible epistemic community of global teacher policy entrepreneurs whose ideas have had significant reach into national settings. But the presence of firms like McKinsey & Company and Pearson Education in shaping teacher policies also suggests a great deal has changed in the area of education governance since Bernstein wrote his extraordinarily influential works in the 1980s and 1990s. These changes in the education governance landscape reveal new interests with rather different logics at work to those that characterized either the 'official knowledge' of the state, or teachers' pedagogic knowledge. This points to the emergence of a new 'Commercial Recontextualizing Field' (CRF) which now operates in the field of symbolic control, and the promotion of policies on ongoing learning, creates a link between the economic base of the new economy, services, and the new modes of consumption that it is dependent upon.

### **New Global Technologies of Governing – Concluding Remarks**

The implications of the shift in mechanisms of global governing of teachers rotate around three issues: the new mechanisms of global governing; the stripping out of teacher voice in these new accountability systems; and the emerging politics representation entailed in a shift in policy cycles and reorganised field of symbolic control.

The first issue, advancing new mechanisms of global governing of teachers, is not straightforward because of political and spatial problems to be solved, not only in the sense of *what* to change in teachers' work, but by *whom* this is to be addressed and through *which* arts of governing to mitigate 'frictions' (Tsing 2000) when moving over/into national territorial borders. The majority of teachers continue to work inside national and sub-national systems. So when

global organizations, such as the OECD and World Bank, enter the field of symbolic control, and become part of the Official Recontextualizing Field, they confront questions around their own authority in relation to national sovereignty; the nature of their expertise and evidence; the availability of, and access to, data on teachers, students and wider contextual information; and the incommensurability of data within and across national boundaries.

We can also see from my account that the key global actors' broad approaches to mechanisms of governing teacher policies are similar, though they differ also in important ways. There is a clear convergence of agendas shaped, on the one hand, by the link between education and economic development, and the way in which transformations in education are to deliver the social base for knowledge-based economies, and on the other hand, the continuing centrality of neoliberalism and New Public Management as the organizing ideology for competitive societies. 'Learning as (individual) development' thus displaces 'education as development.' In other words, 'learning as development' takes its logic, development trajectory, and forward momentum, not from the post-war modernization/ developmental state/ education *telos*, and its assumption of a time-line of development, but neo-liberalism's rawer market/ competition/ learning *telos* and its assumption of development as driven by competition. This strategy is highly contradictory, for as we have seen with neo-liberal education policies more generally, they have had damaging effects on teachers whose work is collectively and socially organized (MacBeath 2012). The Bank's SABER-Teacher policies in particular, with their hard-edged economic emphasis on individualism, flexibility, competition and incentives, will undermine the basis of learning as a structured social encounter between the teacher and the student. As Sennett remarks in his book *The Corrosion of Character*: "The system [contemporary modern capitalism] radiates indifference. It does so in terms of the outcomes of human striving as in winner-take-all markets, where there is little connection between risk and reward. It radiates indifference in the organization of the absence of trust, where there is no reason to be needed. And it does so through re-engineering of institutions in which people are treated as disposable" (Sennett 1998, 149).

A second mechanism, 'competitive comparison' now replaces norm setting as the dominant mechanism of governing (see also Martens 2007; Grek 2009). Competitive comparison's reach as a global tool is enabled by the ways hierarchical space, temporal rhythms, evaluative trajectories and scale are mobilized as complex modalities of power: first, as a powerful *spatial* framer and lever for allocating status it pitches one country and its teachers against another in terms of a global hierarchical ordering of performers and underperformers; second, through ratcheting up the *temporal* dimension to comparison, such as regular cycles of

data collection. This provides space for learning to improve, to do better the next time, and the time after, whilst keeping sufficient tension within the system. Third, an evaluative/moral dynamic provides the basis of judging where a country lies on each teacher policy area—from ‘not present,’ to ‘fully developed,’ as we can see in the World Bank’s project. Countries and teachers are to learn from this evaluative element about how to act in ways specified by this framing of the good teacher. Fourth, embedding the governing strategy in national, regional, and global projects, in turn amplifies its effects, and therefore power. These global governing technologies are manifestations of a transformation in the field of symbolic control, in turn shifting sovereignty and authority away from the national and the teacher, to the global and global actors. Yet these projects are not uniform in their classification and framing.

The second issue relates to the paradoxical visibility and invisibility of teachers in the new global governance regime. To be sure, teachers are now visible in the form of attention being paid to teacher policies. But they are notably invisible as individuals with desires and passions to make a difference to the lives of students. Despite familiar words, like ‘teacher professionalism’ and ‘teacher learning,’ the teachers who stand in front of classes are absent from the ranks of conference goers, Summit attendees, and video scorers of classroom teaching, materializing global teacher governance. The Pedagogical Recontextualizing Field has been colonized by the Official Recontextualizing Field, and it is the distant global actors within the ORF, and the emergence of a Commercial Recontextualizing Field (CRF) who now broker, classify, and frame teachers’ pedagogical practice, as the social base of the new knowledge economy. When present, teachers’ voices – as data – are mono-tonal: a stripped-down version of possibilities for knowing the world. The student, too, exists in this stripped-down world; one which privileges individuals’ own social knowledge above scientific knowledge. Teacher professionalism is given new meaning; not as those with claims to expert knowledge, but as creators of ‘character’ (Alexander 2004, 4). Yet, in Sennett’s (1998) account, the pedagogical identity at the heart of a globally-competitive knowledge economy is a corroded character.

The third issue concerns the spatial politics of reordering and representation. Global teacher technologies have many of the features of the unmanned ‘military drones’ increasingly favored in difficult spaces of military engagement. Like drones, rankings and benchmarks *are powerful* when they are able to reach deep inside national territorial borders, not only as data collectors, but as agents at a distance, able to frame, direct, act, and redirect without being physically present. Like drones, these global technologies have the capacity to collect accounts of a terrain and its topography, over time, and use this information to inform action. However, like any global positioning system (GPS) which guides the drone’s actions, it cannot sufficiently see,

or understand, the details that make the difference. And as Goldstein (2004) observes in relation to PISA, those complexities that do complicate the picture are stripped out because of the one-size fits all solution that guides the logic of the intervention. More than this, those who stand behind the technology are far removed from the consequences of their actions; collateral damage and political backwash are useful reminders of the need for caution. And we have all seen the changes that can occur in national systems, not because they did not have a good system, but they did not have the right one. Will this be the fate of teachers? Good, but not right? Or, will unruly and irritated subjects, like the Ravitches of this world, cause the global agencies to take a series of U-turns, and place teachers in the frame, not as objects for governing, but as important actors in a global conversation about why, and how, teachers really matter.

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