

# Reform as hybrid model of teaching and teacher development in China<sup>☆</sup>

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## Abstract

Efforts beginning in the 1990s to raise the qualifications and quality of China's teachers have brought about new regulations, standards and systems of accountability. Reflecting broader economic, social and political changes, new policies have moved to create more standard definitions of teacher quality and common forms of accountability. Yet what seems like a process of global convergence occurs in interaction with the persistence of more organic structures that have long been part of China's teaching cultures. Chinese educators appear to be constructing hybrid models that rely on insider and outsider expertise.

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## 1. Introduction

World culture theorists have argued that over time there is growing convergence in the ideas about education, the notions of school and assumptions about and definitions of curriculum (Baker & LeTendre, 2005). Recent international and comparative efforts of OECD, IEA and others to characterize teachers, their education and status appears to be offer evidence of

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<sup>☆</sup>Our inquiry draws from documents, interview and observation data initially collected from 1998 to 2001 as part of a larger study of policies and practices of new teacher induction in Shanghai. These data have been supplemented by repeated interviews and observations in Shanghai and elsewhere in China in the intervening years, particularly Fang's 7 weeks of intensive field observations for her dissertation data collection in 2003 and many phone interviews that followed. After joining the National Institute of Education, Singapore, she has maintained regular contact with Chinese educators through regional conferences as well as intensive weeks of observations and project collaboration in Shanghai in June 2006 and in Beijing in July 2006.

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convergence—that not only is there a growing, shared sense of the place of schooling in society, but that there is an assumption that schools require teachers who are professionally trained. One might read these international efforts as indication of a desire to explore, make comparable, and, in effect, set standards, for what should be entailed in such training.

Considering the situation of teacher and teacher development in China with a long tradition of its own cultures of teaching and learning (Paine, Fang, & Wilson, 2003), one finds a picture that both supports and complicates these arguments about global convergence. In this article, we focus primarily on inservice teachers and teacher development. We argue that the nature of Chinese teachers' work is changing, responding to curriculum reform and its embedded notions of the good student and good teacher. Teacher reforms represent a growing site of policy action. One key focus of reform involves the subjects, processes, and responsibility for professional development. The methods of professional development, as well as the standards, reflect both the tremendous diversity of educational condition in China and some increasing pulls to regulate, set standards, and monitor outcomes. These reforms reflect broader economic, social and political changes, and they connect China to a globalized and interconnected world. "Modern" approaches—such as the use of technology—connect the hinterland to the center in China, and in so doing also connect China more to the rest of the world. At the same time, some teacher reforms involve institutionalization of traditional, local practices of teacher development. Therefore, we argue that the "case" of teacher accountability in China is one of hybrid forms, where we see both global and local practices and images in play (Anderson-Levitt, 2003). Below we first provide a brief sketch of key reforms, then consider them in terms of processes of institutionalization, accountability, and globalization. In the end we highlight one example of a professional development effort, a Shanghai-developed "action education" approach, which encapsulates many of these themes.

Chinese education has been undergoing reform in many sectors as wider economic and social transformations of the country have taken hold in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Since the 1980s, there has been an active and ongoing development of policies related to teachers. Zhou and Reed (2005) suggest that policies of the 1980s focused on repairing teacher education, while a second and third wave (in the 1990s and later, respectively) targeted issues of quality assurance and improving teacher quality. With the creation of the 1993 Teacher Law (Ministry of Education of China, 1993a),<sup>1</sup> for the first time teaching was formally identified as a profession and teachers' qualifications for different levels of education were specified (<http://www.moe.edu.cn/edoas/website18/info1428.htm>). In the same year, another key central policy document, "Outline for Education Reform and Development in China," (Ministry of Education of China, 1993b) specified new standards for teachers. Reviewing some 40 years of national development and looking ahead, it argued, "he who holds 21st century education in the palm of his hand will take an advantageous position in the 21st century international competition" (p. 1). It placed teachers at the center of this strategic mission: "A strong nation lies in its education; and a strong education system lies in its teachers" (p. 8). It suggested that building a qualified, balanced and stable teaching force is fundamental and

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<sup>1</sup>Teacher Law is the primary document that specified the teachers' qualification standards: preschool and kindergarten teachers have to obtain at least the equivalent of a diploma from normal schools for early childhood education; elementary school teachers must have diplomas from secondary normal schools or higher level institutions; junior secondary school teachers must have diplomas from 3-year teacher training colleges and other colleges; and senior high school teachers must have an undergraduate diploma or degree from a 4-year normal university or other 4-year universities or higher.

aimed at forceful measures to raise teachers' social status by improving the conditions of teachers' work, study, and living so that teaching becomes the "most respected profession." It made it a goal that, by the end of the century, the great majority of elementary and secondary teachers would have attained national academic qualification standards. Two years later, the system of certification and teacher licensure was proposed in Stipulations of Teacher Qualification Certification (*Jiaoshi Zige Tiaoli*) (Ministry of Education of China, 1995) and in 2000, more forceful guidelines with detailed procedures were issued to guide different levels of education administrations to implement the certification system. Since then, qualifications and standards for teachers have continued to rise, a system of certification has been developed,<sup>2</sup> and most recently licensure has been proposed.

These policy efforts represent increased specification and reinforcement of the standards for entry to teaching, even at the same time that the routes into teaching have grown more diverse in recent years. A previously monopolistic system of teacher education, relying on single-purpose teacher education institutions, now has opened up to include multi-purpose, comprehensive universities as well. Despite the institutional diversity and an apparent break from a highly centralized system of teacher education, the new era nevertheless involves attempts at control through regulation of policies related to the conduct of teacher education: "In 2004 the Ministry of Education launched 2003–2007 New Action Plan to Revitalize Education in which drafting standards for accreditation of teacher education institutions, curriculum of teacher education and quality of teacher education were outlined." (Zhu & Han, 2006, p. 70)

Central policies have not restricted their focus only to governing entry to teaching, however. The policy emphasis for professional development in the 1980s, which concentrated on upgrading inservice teachers' qualifications through further training, shifted as the teaching force generally met those targets, and by the 1990s the focus was on continuing education (Paine & Fang, forthcoming, 2007). There have been increasing efforts to specify and create mechanisms to assure quality in continuing education. Shanghai, for example, instituted a new policy that required all teachers to complete a cycle of continuing education, accounted for in credits, for implementing the second cycle of curriculum reform (*erqi kegai*), and this policy has served as a model for the rest of the country.

The tradition of permanent employment, what was known conventionally as the "iron rice bowl," has been challenged with the introduction of teacher contracts (Zhou & Reed, 2005, p. 209). Now teachers must, according to their terms of employment, satisfactorily meet regular inspection and evaluation. This represents a marked shift in control of teachers and their work; teachers actually can be fired. These policies aimed at regulating teaching and teachers do not exist in a vacuum. Other developments within Chinese education and society have helped produce the impetus for these reforms. In fact, a common justification found in each policy argument for the reform of teachers and teaching is a modernist one, reflecting visions of a modern, technologically driven society, where investments in human capital are considered crucial to economic development. Teachers and teacher education become the "machine tool" (*muji*) for the nation.

Arguments for the reform of teaching are not only couched in terms of development rhetoric about economic and social transformation, however. They also are tightly linked

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<sup>2</sup>The Teacher Certification Guidance Center of the Ministry of Education is centrally located in the School of Continuing Education and Teacher Training, Beijing Normal University.

to other reforms in the education system. Among the most important is the reform of the primary and secondary school curriculum.

For many years, China's researchers, educators, and eventually policymakers criticized the dominant traditions of schooling. Many argued that schools emphasized academic achievement and promotion for the most talented. By "cramming" students with lots of knowledge, they made learning a heavy burden and killed a love for learning for learning's sake. Successful studies were, in effect, narrowly defined as the passive, speedy, and extensive accumulation of prescribed content. The new curriculum, begun experimentally in 2001 and gradually expanded to reach all grade levels by 2007, reflects those critiques and is a reaction against these traditions of schooling. The new curriculum aims at developing a new kind of ideal learner, one who loves learning, is able to solve problems in real-life situations through inquiry and creativity, and has the capacity to be a lifelong learner. This vision of a re-defined ideal student necessitates new expectations for what a qualified teacher does and what good teaching entails. The reformed vision of teaching requires a teacher to teach "students to be independent and self-initiated learners," respect the student as a person, pay attention to individual learner differences, and meet different learning needs (*China Education Daily*, July 27, 2001, p. 2).

Professional development policy, in response to the curriculum reform, has made it a rule for teachers to "receive training before teaching the new curriculum" (Ministry of Education of China, 2001a, b). Efforts to institutionalize these new ideas have been organized chiefly through using a cascade model. This started with "seeding" reform-minded ideas through the training of "backbone" (*gugan*) teacher trainers. Through an investment of 17 million yuan, 10,000 backbone trainers were trained in 2003 with the goal of their leading full-scale training across the country (Su, 2003, p. 1).

The demand for new kinds of teachers, and new professional development, is particularly challenging given the unevenness of China's enormous teaching force.<sup>3</sup> Given the growing disparities in wealth within the country, the State Council's Action Plan for Rejuvenating Education identified rural education as a priority area. To support teacher training targeted to the curriculum reform, the country appropriated 500 million yuan for teacher development in 372 poor counties in 15 provinces and autonomous regions (*China Education Daily*, December 25, 2003, p. 1). In addition, rural education development makes expanding vocational and technical education a key strategy (Ministry of Education of China, 2005b).

## 2. Institutionalization of practices related to teacher development

A legacy of China's vigorous policy activity of the past 20 years is greater institutionalization of practices and norms related to teaching. Whether it be about the places one can become a teacher, the curriculum one must follow, the passage from student to teacher, or the continuing development of the teacher, there is now a more codified body of regulations and more specification of norms than in previous decades.

### 2.1. Systematizing, regularizing and institutionalizing teacher professional development

Shanghai offers one case within the complex case of China's effort to reform and institutionalize new approaches to teacher development. Our interviews with policymakers and

<sup>3</sup>In 2004, there were over 9 million full-time teachers in the 9-year compulsory education system (elementary and junior secondary schools) alone (Ministry of Education of China, 2005a).

analysis of policy materials revealed two themes for Shanghai's reform. First, the professional knowledge base for teaching was changing. Information change, expanding technology, rapid developments in subject matters, and a growing body of knowledge concerning teaching demanded new content for and approaches to professional development. Second, there was a reform to shift from teaching to the test to a kind of teaching more responsive to the learners. With school children more often being the only child in a family, and other social change having impact on their psychological health, there are more expectations of teachers and schools to consider children as active learners rather than as passive receivers of knowledge.

The result of the revised view of professional development was [Shanghai Education Commission's \(1989\) Regulations for Further Training of Elementary and Secondary Teachers in Shanghai](#) (*Shanghai zhongxiaoxue jiaoshi jinxiu guiding*). An important document, it was first drafted in 1985, revised 16 times after extensive piloting and research, and officially promulgated at the end of 1989. A "240" requirement was enacted, mandating 240 course hours of professional development—taken from a menu of options—for all practicing teachers (with the exception of first year, probationary teachers) over a 5-year period. A parallel program, called "540," was established at the same time. Aimed at high-ranking teachers or those aspiring to that rank, it requires teachers engage in 540 credit hours of professional development, with 300 of these hours involving the teacher in research and publication. Teachers seeking promotion must complete these credits.

This policy of professional development defines who should and can be involved in professional development—either as the receiver or provider. The major providers of 240 and 540 training have been the Shanghai College of Education (formerly autonomous and now part of East China Normal University), district-level Colleges of Education and county Teacher Refresher Schools. The policy carries force through its connection to evaluation. As part of their contractual obligations influencing their evaluation, salary raises, and promotion, all teachers have to provide yearly reports of their participation in this professional development system. This model—one that has external authorities defining the terms, contexts, and participants of professional development—is now widely employed elsewhere in China. The training is intended to encourage "bold innovation and continuing exploration," and includes case method, discussion and interaction, collaborative learning, expert seminars and demonstration by exemplary teachers.

This official document also made clear the responsibility system for running teacher professional development: the planning and coordination lies with the Education Commission, Municipal Teaching Research Office; the Shanghai Teacher Training Center is responsible for the specific implementation. Every district and county is responsible for organizing the training activities, timetable and management and evaluation. Schools have been ordered to re-invigorate the school-based research system (*keyanshi*, or school-based office responsible for research projects) and strengthen the teaching research group and lesson planning group, both longstanding school-based organizational arrangements for teacher collaboration, planning and work.

## 2.2. *The question of impact*

Despite all the attention devoted to developing new programs of continuing education, this mandated professional development, organized through government administrative channels, is not universally well received by teachers. In Shanghai, where conditions could be seen as the most favorable to support new approaches to professional development, we found teachers

rather dismissive of the 240 requirement and in some cases chafing under its restrictiveness. On the other hand, teachers repeatedly testified to the value of the informal learning opportunities they have as part of the culture of teaching. Yet, talking about the new versions of professional development, teachers and principals surveyed by East China Normal University researchers in 1999 criticized the training as superficial; focused on form rather than content; not closely related to practice; and, in needing to attend weekly training, conflicting with school work schedules. Teachers appeared to resent the requirements, especially given the time it added to their already considerable workloads. Their criticisms echo those of others who have detailed the disadvantages of a course-based model of professional development for its sometimes being too theoretical, not having practical applications, reflecting the choices of providers and not participants, and ignoring teacher expertise (see, for example, Bell & Day, 1991).

Historically, formal professional development was only required of teachers missing the necessary education degrees; now it is required of all teachers. The motives for institutionalizing new approaches to professional development are tightly linked to new images of teaching. Yet resource limitations and cultural practices constrain or challenge the smooth implementation of this design.

### 2.3. *Accountability: locus and character of control over teacher quality*

Tatto (this volume) suggests that accountability can be used to define actions “directed at identifying and enforcing ‘best practices’ in teacher education, development and teaching.” In examining the experience of China’s reforms in professional development, we need to explore not just what actions are used, but where they are located, who controls the definition of good teaching (or “best practice”) and how teachers are held responsible to meet that standard. The description of the institutionalization of teacher development reforms given above portrays top down controls on teachers increasing, as nationally there is more attention to licensing and setting standards for teachers. The “quality controls” of teachers and teachers’ work is top down in both requiring training to teach new curriculum and teachers’ qualification upgrading training. In addition, the new approaches to teacher development shift accountability for being a good teacher from the long tradition of accountability measured in terms of student outcomes to now holding teachers responsible for their own continued learning. That is, teachers are not only formally, publicly accountable for the quality of their teaching (as understood in the publicly released student test scores). They are also accountable for their engagement in professional development.

Yet to leave the story there seems to miss part of the institutional character of teaching in Chinese schools that, using Cummings’ (2003) perspective, may be part of what is distinctive about China’s experience. Yes, there is greater external setting of standards for teaching and teachers, more top down control, and more aspects of their work life for which teachers now are held accountable, and in more diverse ways. But the relative increase in external standards, outside measures, and out of school forms of professional development exist at the same time that organic forms of teacher accountability remain as part of the work life of teachers.

Chinese traditional approaches to professional development are closely tied to classroom teaching itself. In our interviews, teachers reported most valuing professional development where its links to practice are close and visible. Two features of longstanding approaches to teacher learning in China stand out in this regard: the role of curriculum



materials to frame teacher attention and hence their learning, and the importance of collegial interaction. Both still play an important part in the work of teachers today.

The example of induction in Shanghai is particularly telling. Examination of our data reveals that much of professional development and the induction work in Shanghai directly involved the curriculum and public conversation of teaching; both aspects of the culture of teaching that have long been part of Chinese teachers' work lives (Paine et al., 2003; Fang, 2005).

#### 2.4. *Curriculum as organizer of grassroots teacher learning*

The textbook and teaching reference materials represent key tools in the process of learning (Ma, 1999) on which new teachers in Shanghai unavoidably rely. They also serve as key instruments of accountability and compliance. Using these tools involves certain analytic frames, ones that novice teachers are initially encouraged to develop as preservice students. Novice and experienced teachers alike study the curriculum reference materials to analyze and think pedagogically about the content to be taught. "Points" of content are explicitly identified in the reference guide (or teacher's manual) as "important" (related to the structure of knowledge), "difficult" (based on what students have trouble learning), and "hinge" (related to key steps or approaches in teaching that help students overcome difficulties and understand the important points). Our interviews with teachers and observations of their work revealed that these points are picked up, reiterated and elaborated through the daily study of teachers, informal conversations among teachers, and formal meetings in lesson preparation groups.

Curriculum analysis becomes a key induction activity, one carried out across different settings, and is in fact a cornerstone of professional development activities more generally. Certainly, in less developed parts of China, where teachers come with less academic preparation, the literal reliance on the textbook and curriculum guides is common. Much of professional development in these under-resourced educational communities concentrates on studying curriculum materials.

#### 2.5. *Teacher collaboration as professional development practice*

Public conversation about teaching is a vehicle to support and implement professional development. For the beginner, as well as the experienced teacher, there are many opportunities in the regular week of any Shanghai teacher to engage in public conversation about teaching. In weekly meetings of the lesson preparation groups,<sup>4</sup> the teaching research groups,<sup>5</sup> the class head groups,<sup>6</sup> in frequent conversations with the mentor, and in the office, the beginning teacher has multiple opportunities to listen to more experienced others talk about teaching and gradually to join in.

Based on our observation and analysis of public critiques of lessons,<sup>7</sup> these conversations offer occasions for developing fundamental professional knowledge and skills. They represent one more way that teachers can know and be held responsible for an image of good teaching.

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<sup>4</sup>These are groups of teachers who teach the same subject to the same grade of students, and they meet regularly (typically weekly) to plan and discuss their teaching.

<sup>5</sup>These are organized by school subject; all teachers participate in one on a regular basis.

<sup>6</sup>These are meetings for subject teachers who also serve as advisors or supervisors to a class or cohort of students.

<sup>7</sup>A common feature of Chinese school life and teacher professional development is the public or open lesson (*gongkaike*). These involve a teacher giving a lesson while an audience of peers—from inside and sometimes

These accounts of grassroots professional development—whether driven by study of curriculum materials in the school or by other forms of teacher conversation and interaction—have for some time been ways that Chinese schools have worked to define and hold a standard of good teaching. In effect, it was the community of teachers that held colleagues accountable—whether in some shared commitment to support their students' learning, as one teacher explained to us, or in some individual desire to gain the material rewards of added bonuses or other benefits that come from having their shared students perform well. With external systems for keeping teachers to a standard coupled with these longstanding organic means of professional responsibility, there is a sort of mixed or hybrid model of accountability in play. While the organic version remains, competing or additional approaches to professional development bring different accountability and different images, possibly, of good teaching.

The grassroots accountability mechanism in schools is also becoming more formalized with clearer roles, responsibility and tasks to be formulated in the new round of curriculum reform. The backbone teachers who are trained to lead these groups have been receiving more training on learning theories, including work by Bransford and other foreign scholars. These groups are expected to shift from the tradition of “practice to practice” (peer exchange, sharing practices) conversation and research on teaching to theory-guided cases and lesson studies (Wang, Zhou, & Gu, 2005). We explore this particular case—as another instance of reform in teacher development—in the following section. In addition to helping us examine the institutionalizing of notions of good teaching and forms for holding teachers accountable that involve external and internal or grassroots communities of practice, this case illustrates the interweaving of local, national and international that makes simple arguments about global convergence or local autonomy seem inadequate to capture processes at work in Chinese teaching.

### **3. Global and local approaches: teacher development through hybridized models of reform**

The focus and forms of accountability noted above need to be understood as connected to larger global processes. Clearly, China's reform of teaching and teacher development is very much occurring as part of and affected by processes of globalization. As Tatto (this volume) and others remind us, globalization makes possible exchange of ideas and increasing speed in the flow of these. Stromquist argues that this can create “new and hybrid forms of culture that articulate the local with the global” (Stromquist, 2002, p. 2), something we think characterizes reform in Chinese teacher development. She also suggests that much of the discussion of globalization has focused on the economic or technological, with the result being that we may tend to miss how globalization reconstructs and repositions social relations. As we look at the hybrid models being developed in Chinese teacher education, we note a pattern that connects Chinese educators to foreign ones. Here, we find the construct of “externalization,” as used by Schriewer and Martinez (2004), helpful, as it points us to considering the referential aspects of educational reform. Schriewer and Martinez suggest that educational reasoning can be justified through reference to “tradition” (or national history) or reference to “world situations”.

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*(footnote continued)*

outside the school—observe. The lesson is followed by a debriefing seminar in which the teacher and observers provide critical commentary. In our Shanghai research, we observed many such events and interviewed teachers about others they had participated in.



The rhetoric of the market, one touchstone of global discourse, permeates much of the reform of teacher education. The use of performance assessment, another increasingly internationally used approach to teacher accountability, illustrates the international circulation of forms, as well as language and terminology.

Technology has become increasingly important in the actual delivery of professional training. In the case of the K-12 Teachers' Continuing Education Program, which was created to provide professional development to 10 million K-12 teachers from 1999 to 2002, for example, "about 70% of the training courses were delivered by satellite TV" (Zhu 2004, p. 1). According to the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO (2004), school networks of different scales and remote satellite signals have been established in over 10,000 rural elementary and secondary schools (p. 17). While we do not suggest that all technology is directly connected to international influence and agency, we do want to note the increasing role of technology in professional development. We see how this allows easier links with communities and ideas outside China and it can be supported by international efforts—such as the UNICEF-funded professional development program in Inner Mongolia, where we observed video of "best practices" being transported by donkey from one training site to another for teachers in remote schools to view, discuss, and emulate. Such linkages not only connect China more tightly to images of teaching internationally, but they also allow, notions of teaching approved in China's center to be more intensively communicated to the hinterland (Paine & Fang, forthcoming, 2007). Thus, links within China become more tightly connected.

### 3.1. *The case of Action Education as hybrid model of teacher development*

We explore below the case of one reform in teacher development that brings together several of the themes we have examined here—institutionalizing evolving definitions of good teaching instantiated through standards, policies and practices of teacher development, with a process of institutionalization that relies prominently on the cascade model for dissemination and going to scale; drawing on and combining traditional forms of accountability—which hold teachers mutually responsible for producing a particular version of teaching—with the selective borrowing and adapting of outside expertise.

The reform, called Action Education model, is the outgrowth of many years of work in professional development of a key figure in Shanghai education, Professor Gu Lingyuan. For years, Gu has been promoting local practices by drawing on both Chinese classic philosophy of teaching and learning and international experiences. Gu first gained regional and then national prominence through his work over 20 years (1977–1992) as a staff developer and researcher in Qingpu, a poor county in Shanghai. His work (Gu, 1994) builds on Chinese traditional philosophy's views of learning and cognition (*zhi*) originating from action and practice (*xing*) in the real world, the so-called "unity of learning and action or acting" (*zhi xing tongyi*). He combined this indigenous concept with scholarship from several countries such as former Soviet Union and the US (Ausubel, 1963; Bruner, 1960/1977; Babiensky, 1985; Kahrov, 1951; Zakhov, 1980). Informed by these wide-ranging sources of research, he and colleagues developed a Chinese model which is called Action Education building on the widespread Chinese practice of teachers rehearsing their plans and teaching to perfect lessons, one aspect of "teaching as virtuoso performance" (Paine, 1990).

Action Education asks a teacher to plan a lesson in this way and teach it to find the gap between the vision of teaching and learning in the new curriculum reform and actual teaching and student learning. This first lesson is aimed to create “a thirst” in the teacher to search for new visions and theories of teaching and learning to ground the lesson redesign effort. The teaching of this improved lesson is intended to bring about improved teaching and help teachers collect evidence of the gap between theoretical vision and actual teaching and student learning. A third lesson is taught for the teacher to apply the improved practice to focus on the evidence of student learning and its result (Gu & Wang, 2003; Wang et al., 2005, p. 4). Gu and his team piloted this model in Qingpu in 2002, expanded it to eight districts in Shanghai in 2003, and held a national conference in Beijing to spread the model in the same year. By mid-2005, the national Training Workshop Series for Backbone Teachers was organized. When Fang observed research lessons using this model in Shanghai in 2006, teachers of the lessons articulated the learning processes in relation to the new reform visions and research on effective learning in terms of the three points—important points, difficult points of learning and hinge points of teaching. Again, the new model absorbs and builds on the accumulated wisdom of practice.

#### 4. Concluding thoughts

China’s teachers have long been the subject of much policy activity. As new notions of good teaching are introduced, the challenge to reform China’s enormous teaching force has led to changes in teacher professional development. What has come to exist reflects efforts to standardize forms, content, and locations for teacher development. In many ways, these reflect processes of institutionalization and notions of accountability found outside of China. Yet the case we close with reminds us that China’s experience of regulating teachers’ work and learning represents neither a resounding example of convergence to some global model nor an entirely idiosyncratic approach. Instead, Chinese educators appear to be constructing hybrid models that rely on both inside and outside expertise. We need to recognize that in this story, the notion of insider and outsider has more than one meaning. That is, we see accountability occurring through the work of insiders to a school and outsiders to it, insiders to classroom teaching and outsiders to it (researchers, university professors, education bureaucrats, etc.). And in this period of intensified linkages of China to countries and organizations outside it, new approaches to teaching and teacher learning draw on the experience of Chinese (insiders) and foreigners (outsiders). Whose voice is dominant, and how this process works out over time is not something we answer here, even though they are important, since the current process of hybridization, when considered with any historical distance, is relatively new. Yet it is important to consider how China’s teachers will continue to change, as well as how their practices are now, already, influencing reforms of teaching elsewhere.

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