Cultivating 'good' practice or 'best' practice? Moralities for teacher education

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Abstract
This paper engages with the double meaning of 'good' in English. 'Good' can refer to the morally correct choice, and it can also refer to high quality. The question then becomes whether these types of 'good-ness' refer to the same thing in teacher education. Theoretical treatments of moral goodness in education highlight morality as a social fact that changes with the times. In contrast, goodness as quality is tested and measured through international comparisons which increasingly define what counts as 'quality'. In available research accounts of Russian education and Scottish education, different kinds of 'good-ness' emerge, with the risk that they conflict. The conclusion reflects on how we might and should prepare teachers for different versions of goodness and their contradictions.
Keywords: teacher education, morality, quality, vospitanie, testing.

На пути к «хорошей» или «лучшей» практике? Моральная сторона педагогического образования

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Аннотация
Эта статья строится на игре слов, возникающей из-за многозначности слова «хороший» в английском языке. С одной стороны «хороший» означает что-то правильное с точки зрения морали, с другой стороны слово используется для обозначения высокого качества. Возникает вопрос, можно ли описывать одно и то же явление разными видами «хорошести». Первая часть статьи посвящена осмыслению теории морали в образовании и подчеркивает значение морали как социального фактора, меняющегося с течением времени. Затем статья обращается к понятию «хорошесть» в значении качества и к тому, как международные сравнения сказываются на том, что считается «качеством». Заключительная часть статьи посвящена обзору доступной научной литературы в области российского и шотландского образования и представляет анализ того, как отличается понимание «хорошести» в разных контекстах. Выводы отражают идеи того, как разные понятия «хорошести» можно учитывать в педагогическом образовании.
Ключевые слова: педагогическое образование, моральность, качество, воспитание, тестирование.

Introduction

> The teleological character of education provides us with one important reason for suggesting that questions about 'what works' – that is questions about the effectiveness of educational actions – are always secondary to questions of purposes … in education, values come first. (Biesta, 2010, p. 500) educational questions are, at least partly, moral questions ... oughtness or goodness … the very fact that school people influence students, their acts cannot be interpreted fully without the use of an ethical rubric. (Apple, 2004, p. 118)

In English the word 'good' has multiple meanings. 'Good' can refer to the morally correct choice, in the sense of what should be done. The opening quotes suggest that this moral good-ness is central to educational processes. 'Good' can also refer to a judgement of high quality in the sense of 'good', 'better' and 'best'. The question for teacher educators then becomes whether these types of 'good-ness' refer to the same thing – do these 'goods' address the same goal? This paper will first review theoretical approaches to morality in education to highlight the 'good-ness' of morality as an essential element in schooling, but also a social fact that changes with the times. The next section considers 'good-ness' as quality and how international comparisons now play a pivotal role in deciding what counts as 'quality'. The final section explores available research accounts of Russian education and Scottish education to ask what kinds of 'goodness' are invoked, and how they might cohere or conflict. The conclusion reflects on how teacher educators might prepare teachers for different versions of goodness and their conflicting agendas.

Moral 'good-ness' in pedagogy

With regard to the first sense of moral 'good-ness', teaching has always been a highly moralised profession often associated with religious institutions. Teachers' private and professional behaviours are held to higher moral standards than the rest of the population (Althof & Oser, 1993), because we entrust them with the care of our children. Teachers' employers use police record checks to ensure that teachers measure up to these higher moral standards. In addition, education as a social institution has always done moral work to shape the future citizen into the 'good' compliant subject or the 'good' active citizen of more critical approaches.

Durkheim's (1925/1973) early lectures on morality in education argued that, as society's division of labour became more complex and intricate, there was greater risk of individualisation, and therefore greater need for common moral constraints to counterbalance individual interests. He argued that the institution of mass schooling was where a common 'secular' morality could be instilled in future citizens. Schools were thus essential in the social architecture of complex societies because they cultivated 'the spirit of discipline … the moderation of desires and self-mastery' (Durkheim, 1925/1973, p. 133).

Durkheim further argued the need to understand morality as a sociological object of study. He was not interested in a universalised philosophy of ethics and morality, but rather in the social fact of what morality emerged in particular times. A social fact is 'any way of acting, whether fixed or not, capable of exerting over the individual an external constraint ... general over the whole of a given society whilst having an existence of its own, independent of its individual manifestations' (Durkheim, 1982, p. 59). Durkheim was interested in the social facts and currents of thought 'moral norms, moral ideals and moral motives' (Hall, 1993, p. 18) that exercised coercive force, and how these could change with the times.

Bernstein, a British sociologist of education, built on Durkheim's approach to understand morality as a constant element underpinning educational settings. Bernstein (2000) distinguished between the instructional and regulative discourses that together construct pedagogic discourse. The instructional discourse reflects the 'what' of the curriculum – the knowledge or skills offered to the students. The regulative discourse sets the expectations for 'how' students should act, and what 'conduct, character and manner' (p. 13) is expected of the student (and teacher) in the pedagogic setting. The underpinning moral order established by the regulative discourse conveys a model for both teacher and student, and scripts for how 'good' teachers and 'good' pupils should interact. In this way, different pedagogies stem from and enact different moral orders.

Bernstein then uses the concept of 'framing' to describe how tightly controlled or regulated relations between teacher and student are:

> Where the framing is strong, the candidates for labelling will be terms such as conscientious, attentive, industrious, careful, receptive. Where the framing is apparently weak, then conditions for candidature for labels will become equally trying for the acquirer as he or she struggles to be creative, to be interactive, to attempt to make his or her own mark. (p. 13)

Strong framing characterises stricter, tightly controlled classrooms. Bernstein calls these conditions a 'visible' pedagogy. Weak framing reflects more constructivist, permissive or 'progressive' settings, conditions which Bernstein terms 'invisible' pedagogy. With this conceptual vocabulary, we can describe how 'good' pedagogies – what pedagogy should look like - can differ over time and place. Pedagogic work in teacher education will equally involve moralised scripts of how teachers and students should interact, both in what we say (our instructional discourse), and how we do it (our regulative discourse).

Pedagogic moralities can change over time in response to new waves of theory and public opinion. For example, constructivism informed by Vygotskian theory has promoted student-centred learning, group work pedagogies and active knowledge-construction. This version of 'good-ness' demands weaker framing so a 'good' teacher will relinquish control. New social moralities such as the civil rights and feminist movements have promoted greater recognition of minority groups. This new morality changed the value, rights and protection given to difference in the classroom, so a 'good' teacher should now be mindful of different needs. Contemporary policies of inclusion and differentiation have institutionalised this new pedagogic morality. Resurgent neo-conservatives have pushed back against such progressive movements to demand stronger framing of curriculum and pedagogy, turning 'back to basics' and conservative standards. The 'good' teacher under this code will reinstate visible pedagogies, and take control back.

Such shifts in the moral order keep both teachers and teacher educators on their toes. Both fields have become increasingly exposed to moral panics and media debates (Lingard, Rawolle, & Taylor, 2005) about what they 'should' be doing. This raises the question of what conditions we should prepare 'good' teachers for. If there is no universal decontextualized 'good-ness' to cultivate in our teacher education students, should we instead cultivate the capacity to respond to whatever contemporary morality emerges?

In a different treatment of morality in education, Foucault's (1977) concepts of disciplinary society, surveillance and governmentality construct the school as a major disciplinary institution that instils the social 'hold over the body' (p. 177) and internalises self-regulation in the future citizen. These processes are understood to manage the conduct of teachers as well as the conduct of students. There are important premises shared between the approaches of Foucault, Durkheim and Bernstein. However, Foucault's approach to discipline highlights the harsher aspect with punishment at its heart, and the pivotal role of comparative measurement of the individual against the collective norm. He argues that, in disciplinary institutions, a regime of individualised measurement 'measures in quantitative terms and hierarchizes in terms of value the abilities, the level, the "nature" of individuals. It introduces, through this "value-giving" measure, the *constraint of a conformity* that must be achieved' (p.183, emphasis added).

Such assessment against a statistical norm points to the second meaning of 'good' as judgement of quality, and the flourishing practice of international comparisons through which national education systems are weighed, measured and frequently found wanting.

Quality 'good-ness' of pedagogy

Good-ness as high quality has come to be associated with the popular idea of 'best' practice. This policy logic aims to isolate then reproduce the most effective, 'best' pedagogy. Such logic is celebrated in 'what works' research and international benchmarking (Biesta, 2010). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and similar supra-national organisations now dominate conversations about what makes high 'quality' education.

Tests such as OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) of 15 year olds and IEA's Trends in international Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) offer authoritative 'objective' assessments of how well different education systems perform. The tests have gradually extended both their reach and their influence over time. To allow these ideas and measures to travel, their logic chooses to ignore the fact that national jurisdictions design different curricula, construct different pathways, cultivate different orthographies, and carry different normative agendas that have emerged from different histories. Such contextual details are stripped away in the search for universal truth. In other words, a logic of 'best' overlooks how education systems are inherently social facts – seemingly solid but capable of change according to the times.

'Best' practice projects seek certain knowledge with the explanatory power of a DNA model, as a way to prescribe exact pedagogical treatments that we can then lock in and 'know' as professionals. Such bullet proof certainty would make our jobs easier, but the goal ignores the ontological status of education as a social fact, 'fixed or not' (Durkheim, 1982, p. 59), and the moral filters that shape its practices. This search for certainty fails to acknowledge the normative framing around what counts as evidence and what counts as success.

The testing imaginary is fuelled by naïve confidence that careful empiricism will reveal the causal mechanism behind 'good' systems. This is a science of the social stripped of social science. In this process, certain values are elevated over others, but presented as natural, neutral, self-evident and inarguably 'good'. In this way, desirable economic values of efficiency and effectiveness are measured to rank incommensurable systems, identify characteristics of the most effective systems, and monitor systemic improvement over time. The rankings produced are typically expressed as above or below the 'OECD' average. This becomes the collective norm against which the 'quality' of systems is judged, creating Foucault's coercive 'constraint of a conformity'. The failure to question these benchmarks of good-ness creates an orthodoxy that erases differences in context, and quashes any such challenge.

The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) is the latest OECD test. It 'asks teachers and school leaders about working conditions and learning environments at their schools to help countries face diverse challenges.'[1] The results then highlight areas in some countries 'that could benefit from reform'[2]. So what shape should those reforms take? If reputable 'objective' research showed that corporal punishment helped children learn faster, would we promote this practice for its efficiency in our teacher education curriculum as 'what works'? This practice was once common with its own rationale, but has become morally unthinkable for our times and places. There will be no research program to find out exactly how much beating, with what kind of stick, at what time of the day, should be recommended as 'best' practice[3]. The contemporary moral filter

[1] http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/, accessed 25 April 2018.

[2] http://oecdeducationtoday.blogspot.co.uk/2014/07/what-did-we-learn-from-talis.html, accessed 25 April 2018.

[3] More radically Biesta (2010) poses the unpalatable option of removing children from homes that research indicates will not support educational achievement

will ultimately rule what can and cannot be considered as professional action, but these attitudes change. So what good-ness are we reproducing in the name of 'best' practice?

The TALIS survey conducted in 2013, and again in 2018. The 2013 summary reports on survey responses from 'more than 100,000 teachers and school leaders at lower secondary level (for students aged 11-16) in 34 countries and economies'[4]. The report of survey results (OECD, 2014) reveals a strong normative agenda around what constitutes the problem with teachers, and the necessary solutions. In Table 1, the first column presents statements from the web summary that carry a judgemental morality in their wordings, highlighted in bold. In the second column, I paraphrase the moral stance that underpins such judgements. In the third column, I distil these claims into a tacit theme that shapes the common sense in the report's approach.

Table 1. Unpacking underpinning ideology in TALIS Report

	Report*	Normative truth	Tacit theme
1	***too many*** *teachers still work in isolation*	Teachers shouldn't work in isolation	Surveillance
2	***only*** *one third observe their colleagues teach.*	Teachers should watch each other teach	
3	***less than*** *a third (31%) believe that a consistently underperforming colleague would be dismissed.*	Underperforming teachers should be dismissed	Punitive performativity and selection
4	*We* ***need to*** *attract the best and brightest to join the profession*	Teachers are not smart enough	
5	*they* ***need to*** *take more initiative to work with colleagues and school leaders, and take advantage of every opportunity for professional development*	Teachers should be more enterprising	Profit motive
6	*… but formal appraisals have* ***little impact*** *on career advancement or financial recognition, according to most teachers.*	Performance should be rewarded	

*Sourced 13 November 2017 from http://www.oecd.org/newsroom/teachers-love-their-job-but-feel-undervalued-unsupported-and-unrecognised.htm

The first two statements from the report imply that a mode of peer surveillance should be mandatory. The third and fourth statements find teachers wanting – too soft to fire the incompetent and not smart enough in general. These statements naturalise a punitive performativity and harsher selectivity. The fifth and sixth statements celebrate ambitious, entrepreneurial and financial motives. These are very basic capitalist values and presumptions, here reimagined as the individualised neoliberal subject always on the make.

Where was the moral work done in this survey? Was it in the survey question that created and assumed these normative expectations? Or was it in the report's voice that colours the results as either disappointing or encouraging? I would argue that this report is not objective research; rather, it is highly invested in a particular paradigm for what counts as 'quality', and ideologically skewed to neoliberal principles. The good-ness that is enshrined in this survey celebrates the brave new world of edu-preneurs, management by performativity regimes, and teacher-blaming. If it were a nation's survey, undertaken within a particular political moment and mandate, the ideological loading would be less

[4] http://www.oecd.org/newsroom/teachers-love-their-job-but-feel-undervalued-unsupported-and-unrecognised.htm, accessed 10 December 2018.

problematic. However, when a supranational organisation applies this lens to diverse 'societies and economies', it is both problematic and presumptuous.

For the good news, the report[5] claims that 'teachers who engage in collaborative learning have higher job satisfaction and confidence in their abilities. Participation in school decisions also boosts job satisfaction and makes teachers feel more valued in society'. There is considerable slippage in this statement, conflating association and causation. In this narrative, it is the individual teacher who themselves accomplishes the higher job satisfaction. It is their participation that boosts job satisfaction, not the workplace culture or consultative leadership. The teacher is the maverick individual who heroically carves their conditions and thus their performance. The system is erased - a blank canvas on which the individualised teacher writes their own destiny. Erase the complexity and complications of context, and the teacher becomes an individualised and standardised unit available for measurement and comparison.

The TALIS findings legitimate the global agenda working towards a version of quality that accords with the contemporary enthusiasm for new managerialism, performativity and economic rationalism (Sahlberg, 2011). This agenda is then foisted on a profession that was never motivated by the profit motive or by business models in the first place. There is an invisible hand that whittles education into the same managerial stuff as any other 'business' thus making it available for economic analysis. By erasing any contextual and normative circumstances that condition how teachers might work, this agenda can press on systems in an abuse of power that becomes a textbook case of responsibilisation:

> The logics and technical requirements of audit displace the internal logics of expertise ... These methods … create accountability to one set of norms - transparency, observability, standardization and the like - at the expense of accountability to other sets of norms. .. These arrangements retain the formal independence of the professional whilst utilizing new techniques to render their decisions visible and amenable to evaluation. They are entirely consonant with one key vector of the strategic diagram of advanced liberal styles of governing: autonomization plus responsibilization. (Rose, 2004, p. 154)

'What works' is itself a set of normative prescriptions:

> Whilst audits have become key fidelity techniques in new strategies of government, they generate an expanding spiral of distrust of professional competence, and one that feeds the demand for more radical measures which will hold experts to account. (Rose, 2004, p.155)

These measures of comparative quality, and the testing regimes they spawn, stem from an ideology of 'good practice' which masquerades as neutral rationality. It is read and presented as economic common sense. This ideology legitimates an implicit morality in terms of what systems 'should' be doing and naturalises one particular philosophy of what education 'should' be. These moralised frames disguised in benign survey questions are imposed across vastly different settings, regardless of their particular contextual settings and social histories. The ideology is not presented for its embedded morality to be debated, but its measures and norms are used to name and shame systems. This attempt to reduce all systems to the same measurable variables fabricates an objective science of the social that lacks the benefits of social science's nuances.

Putting moral good and quality good together

When these measures of 'good' quality come to dictate what counts, schools respond by recalibrating their priorities and values to protect themselves from the consequences of poor results. The irony of the audit culture is that the benchmarks and performative

[5] http://www.oecd.org/newsroom/teachers-love-their-job-but-feel-undervalued-unsupported-and-unrecognised.htm, paragraph 5, accessed 10 December 2018.

targets that proliferate around high stakes testing regimes can encourage distorted strategies and immoral practices that seek to game the numbers to achieve the semblance of a 'good' result. If this kind of testing becomes the game, then the schools or systems will attempt to play the game.

Lingard and Sellar (2013) report on Australian examples of the 'perverse systemic effects' (p. 634) of intensified testing. They document 'efforts to massage results in order to preserve or improve public perception' (p. 645), 'triage' strategies (p. 650) to focus effort where it will have greater effect on the test outcomes, and 'catalyst' effects that push politicians to be seen to respond to the moral panics: 'An intensification of audit and accountability within the system with perverse flow-on effects such as goal displacement, teaching to the test, and the naturalization of data …' (p. 652). Cummins and Dickson (2013) similarly report on the illegality and impact of the common tactic of excluding students with a disability from testing samples to artificially raise school averages: 'Participation in tests may not be everyone's idea of enjoyment, but the right to participate is denied. The detriment for students with disability is loss of the sense of belonging and the dignity endorsed in the ... legislation' (p. 231). In the US, Nichols and Berliner (2007) highlight 'the distortion, corruption and collateral damage' (p. xvi) of high stakes testing regimes. They cite Campbell's law: 'the more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision-making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes is was intended to monitor' (pp. 26-27). In such ways, the pursuit of quality 'good-ness' under these rules encourages the distortion of moral 'good-ness'.

To exemplify how the two senses of good-ness can conflict, I now consider two different settings and systems.

Goodness on display – Russia

Firstly, I look at two published accounts of Russian education – one from an ethnographic study of Russian primary school classes, and another from an OECD report. I don't presume to claim that these are definitive accounts – I am restricted to the English language literature and understand that there will be much more sophisticated treatment of these ideas in the Russian literature. Rather, I am interested in how they each invoke a version of what counts as 'good-ness'. I reflect on how their different moralities might inform very different teacher education programmes.

Russia was one of five national education systems investigated and compared in Robin Alexander's (2001) epic ethnographic study of primary schooling. This research was conducted in the mid 1990s. It focused on pedagogy: 'the practice of teaching and learning … and how such practice relates to the context of culture, structure and policy in which it is embedded' (p. 3). In other words, the research was designed to be context-sensitive with attention to 'how nation, school and classroom are intertwined' (p.6) and the limitations of glib policy borrowing. His analysis pays particular attention to the routines and rituals that characterised classrooms in each nation, despite geographic or material differences – thus extracting a cultural essence. He understands such resilient practices as systemic continuities that are maintained despite transformative social change in the transition to the new millennium.

Alexander (2001) described a highly centralised secular system that reaches across the vast space of Russia and displays 'powerful continuities' (p. 64) despite political turbulence and change. Alexander traces the long lasting legacy of the core principle of *vospitanie* (moral upbringing, character formation) and its cultivation of a common communist morality in primary education, 'enshrining a distinctive mix of instruction and moral training underpinned by a strong collective ethic' (p. 74) (see also Halstead,

1994). This design embedded and legitimated a curriculum for moral goodness in the early years that was enacted in both family and school. According to this account, the moral socialization of the child was then carefully and explicitly recalibrated in the transition from the Soviet system under policies of Perestroika and Glasnost, placing 'considerable emphasis on the kind of citizenship education needed to build the new civic culture and reshape national identity, with a strong compensatory thrust away from corporate values towards individual self-realization' (p. 67). Other authors such as Sidorovitch (2005) and Bogachenko and Perry (2015) describe parallel adjustments to moral education in post-Soviet countries. Despite this re-orientation, Alexander reports that more recent policy still enshrines 'the traditional Russian emphasis upon civic responsibility, morality, the partnership of family and school, and the linking of education and upbringing' (p. 81).

In his analysis of classroom practice in Russia, Alexander described strongly framed, 'rule-bound' routines with strict and explicit expectations for conduct, character and manner: 'Much of what we observed in Russia verged on the ritualistic, especially in respect of procedures such as starting and finishing lessons, arranging desk-tops, answering questions and participating in self-assessment' (p. 387). This dominance of visible pedagogy was a stark contrast to the negotiation and contestation of rules in the weakly framed US classrooms observed: 'in a teaching culture that espouses democratic values routines not only will be negotiated and contested but by definition must be' (p. 385). By this description, Russian schooling maintains a very strong agenda on moral 'good-ness' that instils values and ideals reinforced in strict classroom practices. However even this strong tradition has been adjusted according to the times as Durkheim highlighted.

More recently, Russian education has been the subject of a report by the OECD (Demmou & Wörgötter, 2015) in which its 'good-ness' in terms of quality was reported to be problematic: 'Russia is not performing as well in that respect … Improving the quality of education is therefore crucial' (p. 24). Though performing above the OECD in literacy standards, and on a par with OECD average in numbers, 'they lag behind in terms of the ability to use ICT tools … to solve the types of problems that arise in their everyday lives as workers, consumers and citizens' (p. 24). Despite good results on PIRLS and TIMMs tests and high rates of tertiary education, Russia's weaker performance in PISA with its long tail of low performing students 'suggests that the current curriculum and methods of teaching in Russia are not effective in generating the ability to apply knowledge to new situations, which is needed in a skill based economy' (p. 26). This seems to be a lot of meaning to read from aggregated test scores.

Interestingly, the solution to these perceived shortcomings proposed in the report are 'strengthening methods such as problem-based learning methods, and individual and group project work' (p. 26). In Bernstein's vocabulary, this amounts to a shift to more learner-centred, and weakly framed pedagogies – which would radically change the moral order that has been sustained in Russian schooling. The report also recommends teacher remuneration tied to performance of individuals or groups, to 'increase motivation' (p. 27). This would introduce an alien profit motive and performativity logic into the profession which has been built on collectivist principles.

By the contrast between the two frames on 'good-ness', I am hoping to illustrate their deep incompatibility, and the problem with such glib solutions. The decontextualized 'science' of OECD economic analyses impose their own ideological filters while discounting and effacing the normative ideologies that have shaped their objects of study. Teacher education will be caught between the two normative frames. Should it privilege the moral traditions embedded in the educational institutions or the capitalist common sense of the economic framing?

Goodness on display – Scotland

Scotland offers an interesting comparative foil on good-ness. As a nation, Scotland embraced public education earlier than many other nations, and has since sustained a moral commitment to poorer communities and lifelong learning as public goods. The current 'Curriculum for Excellence' (Scottish Government, 2004) scopes experiences and outcomes for a 'broad general education' as the right of 'every child and young person in Scotland', with attention to 'the varied needs of all children and young people' (p. 1). The curriculum is premised on a vision of four key capacities: 'Successful learners; Confident individuals; Responsible citizens; Effective contributors' (Education Scotland, 2018). These principles provide a moral template for the student, the kind of subjectivity to be nurtured, equivalent but different to the Russian design for *vospitanie*. These designs for the future citizen are work for the regulative discourse, shaping conduct, character and manner, as opposed to the curricular content of the instructional discourse.

The curriculum document is remarkably slim, 'less detailed and prescriptive' (Scottish Government, 2004, p. 1) than many others, evidencing a trust in teacher professionalism and local contextualised decision-making. The good teacher under this design is the judicious professional who can interpret and adapt curriculum. This demands a special kind of teacher education to prepare someone who can do more than follow and fulfil instructions.

In an ethnographic study, Biesta, Priestley and Robinson (2015) explored how teachers interpreted the professional freedom offered to them under this curriculum design. They reported that teachers were more concerned with short-term, instrumental problem-solving at the operational level, rather than with exercising deeper principals and beliefs about the purpose of education. They draw implications for teacher education, and:

> … the extent to which contemporary teacher education can be a place where student teachers are exposed to and have the opportunity to engage with a range of educational discourses and discursive repertoires ... we wish to suggest that much teacher education may have become geared towards the instrumental side of the spectrum – that is, getting the job done - and has been steered away from a more intellectual engagement with teaching, school and society. (p. 638)

This assessment argues that currently teacher education is not intellectually ambitious enough. They also draw implications for teachers' professional development: 'most opportunities … are geared towards getting up to speed with latest policy initiatives' (p. 638). The goodness implicated in teachers' professional judgement is thus eroded by the here-and-now demands.

In terms of good-ness as 'quality', the OECD (2015) was commissioned to conduct a review of the Curriculum for Excellence and its impact on the quality and equity in Scotland's school system. The report highlighted a variety of strengths such as 'levels of achievement above international averages in science and reading' (p. 9), upwards trends in attainment, and improvements in behaviour. It then identified where the data showed slippage, unevenness or a downwards trend. The report's recommendations started with the need to 'be rigorous about the gaps to be closed and pursued relentlessly "closing the gap" and "raising the bar" simultaneously' (OECD, 2015, p. 11). This recommendation combines the moral good-ness of addressing equity, and the quality good-ness of raising standards. Other recommendations set out a plan for how this was to be achieved through the development of strategic plans, metrics, evidence and evaluation strategies – the familiar managerialist orthodoxy that Salhberg (2007) described as 'the global education reform movement'.

Such management by measurement replaces teachers' professionalism with heavy handed monitoring – the classic 'steering at a distance' of neoliberalism. Biesta, Priestly and Robinson (2015) envisaged moral complexity and deliberation. Their approach stands in stark contrast to the orthodoxy of policy-by-numbers-and-targets in the OECD recommendations. So this recipe for quality good-ness erodes moral good-ness to impose a very different moral order of efficiency and effectiveness in terms of what counts in teachers' work. Recent government plans to reinstitute national testing would complete that process.

These contradictory senses of good-ness play out in teacher education, with pre-service teachers reporting a growing emphasis on literacy and numeracy at the expense of broader curriculum. We might prepare them to teach the curriculum's design, but they may be assessed by another set of criteria as professionals.

Good for the goose, good for the gander?

This paper has argued that schooling has always been, and will continue to be, a moral project. Durkheim's early work highlighted how morality was not a universal given, but rather a social fact, renegotiated over time and place as new social conditions and ideologies emerge. Russia's history offers a good example, but similar adjustments and readjustments will happen in every system in response to social change. Bernstein's concepts of the regulative discourse and framing help to understand the moral order in classrooms that underpins all pedagogy, in terms of how teachers and students should behave and what goals shape their practice.

The interesting thing about the contemporary moment is the growing appetite for international testing regimes to measure and improve the 'quality' of schooling systems. Such policy in its search of a context-free recipe for 'best' practice, would strip away the social layers of normative purpose and moral concerns that have tailored school systems to social histories. The OECD with its authoritative data and economic analyses has rapidly become the moral arbiter on what counts and what needs to be done. Is it right to outsource such decisions?

The flaw in the claim to objectivity in such international testing is the failure to understand the ideological investments, ontological slippage and moral flavour of their own data science. If we allow this kind of unchallenged moral order to determine educational futures, we are committing an ontological fallacy. The OECD's rather flat version of the universe uses the reductive vocabulary of economic analysis that does not recognise the moral stance and design that have evolved in particular settings (Biesta, 2009, 2010). Rather the notional 'good' of a high performing system is extrapolated for another system without due attention to different social context. When we buy into the OECD logic, we are also buying into its tacit morality of market growth at all costs, of competition not collaboration, and of favouring simple solutions for complex problems. If we allow education discourse to be reduced to this one voice and its measurable attributes, we lose the capacity to imagine otherwise. Orthodoxies are not innovative.

So can we have both moral good-ness and quality good-ness in education? Or is it a case of either one or the other? Teacher educators might argue that we should aim for both, but we equally need to stay alert to how these 'good-nesses' may pull educational practice in different directions. How do we prepare teachers to work mindfully between these good-nesses? If we train teachers to adhere to 'objective', measurable targets, where is the capacity to imagine other priorities when the social ground shifts? Does reducing education to measurable variables treat children immorally? Will future generations look back on our current testing practices as cruel and morally distorted? As teacher educators, we are preparing the future profession. We will cultivate and naturalise a professional

mindset resourced with 'educational theory [that] seeks to produce practical activity and what is thought to be worthwhile educational outcomes' (Ax & Ponte, 2010, p. 32). Encouraging our students to weigh and balance competing goods becomes an investment in the future capacity of education systems to respond to social change.

Conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest in this research.

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