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# Teacher Evaluation in Chinese Elementary Schools: An Historical Account

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TEACHER EVALUATION IN CHINESE ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOLS: AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

By  
Ping Zeng

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Instructional Psychology and Technology  
David O McKay School of Education

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## ABSTRACT

### TEACHER EVALUATION IN CHINESE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

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Doctor of Philosophy

This research is an historical account of the development of teacher evaluation in Chinese elementary schools. Descriptive by nature, it reviews the historical origins that have shaped the teaching profession and evaluation practice. It also describes the effort made by the government and educators in the reform to improve the elementary school teacher evaluation system in China.

The findings of this research focus on the complexity and problems in the teacher evaluation system and painful struggles teachers have experienced. Suggestions are provided in terms of possible improvement of the teacher evaluation system and establishment of national evaluation standards to facilitate real practice in the future.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although my journey back to history is close to an end, the help and expertise I have received remain a fresh experience that nourishes my spirit.

The road was not smooth but beset with twists and turns. I am especially grateful to all my committee members. After I changed my research topic, I was a little lost. In my discussion with all my committee members, they gave me full understanding and continuous support for the new topic I chose. Dr. Williams, who was instrumental in guiding the focus of my research, spent tremendous time on my work. Because of his patience and kindness, I was encouraged to explore and be better aligned in the research. Dr. Merrill, Dr. Sudweeks, and Dr. Harris not only gave me good advice on the prospectus but also offered constant support and guidance throughout the research. Dr. Honey provided me with books about Chinese history and helped me with citations of translated works. Without their efforts and enlightenment, my mission would be impossible.

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## ABBREVIATION

1. CCP (The Chinese Communist Party)
2. CIPP (Circumstance Evaluation, Input Evaluation, Process Evaluation and Product Evaluation)
3. CSE (Center for Study of Evaluation)
4. GMD, also known as KMT (Guo Min Dang, Peoples' Party led by Jiang Jieshi)
5. IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement)
6. MOE (The Ministry of Education)
7. PC (The People's Congress)
8. PLA (People's Liberation Army)
9. PRC (The Peoples' Republic of China)
10. SC (The State Council)
11. SEC ( The State Education Commission)

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Chinese education reform began with *the 1985 Decision of the CCP* (Chinese Communist Party) *on the Reform of the Educational System* (hereafter referred to as *the 1985 Decision*). Since this government directive, theoretical explorations and innovative practices have taken place in every branch of Chinese education including teacher evaluation. Compared with the long history of Chinese civilization and education, formal teacher evaluation practice is quite new, because for centuries teachers' authority and power over their students could not be challenged. Moreover, teacher evaluation in China developed slowly because of the close ties of teacher evaluation to fixed course curricula, rigid use of textbooks, and traditional teachers' responsibilities that were shaped by many factors, such as culturally inherited notions about what constitutes good teaching.

Without understanding the cultural traditions of Chinese education, the position of teachers in the past, and their changing roles in the contemporary Chinese society, one cannot understand the current evaluation system or government and scholarly efforts to reform it.

#### *Problem Identification*

With an open-door policy in practice by the end of the 1970's, significant changes have taken place in Chinese education. New ideas about education and teacher evaluation, including those borrowed from the West, have flourished and challenged Chinese educational traditions. Historically, learning was the major concern of education, but during the past two decades, teaching has become an added focus. Efforts have been made by the government and educators to improve the Chinese teacher evaluation system

both in theory and practice, so teachers can play a more effective role in teaching. The struggle between traditions and new assumptions, however, became increasingly persistent in the reform of teacher evaluation.

Teacher evaluation is a window through which most problems and conflicting ideas in the efforts of teachers in educational reform can be viewed. While the literature about the development of Chinese education is rich, the literature about the development of Chinese teacher evaluation is scanty, particularly regarding how traditional assumptions derived from cultural and social heritages and reform efforts influenced teachers. A variety of books have introduced foreign evaluation theories and many articles have contributed to the theoretical and practical improvement of the Chinese teacher evaluation system. However, there is no systematic record of the development of the teacher evaluation process through which government policies, theoretical discussions, and different opinions about teacher evaluation developed. Scholars and educators need better understanding of these historical issues as they continue to reform teacher evaluation theory. Therefore, exploration into the development of teacher evaluation, its reform, and problems becomes necessary and significant.

### *The Purpose of Research*

This dissertation provides an historical account of the development of the theories and practice of teacher evaluation in Chinese elementary schools in China. The evolving evaluation system is described and analyzed through a review of primary and secondary sources. The current situation and emerging trends are described to clarify contemporary characteristics of teacher evaluation and the efforts of government, administrators, and teachers to reconsider teacher evaluation in light of ongoing nationwide evaluation

reforms. The conflicts between traditional and current values affecting teacher evaluation are presented and analyzed to explore why evaluation is being viewed as it is in China, what problems and conflicts have arisen, where teacher evaluation may be heading in the near future, and why.

The topic of elementary school teacher evaluation was chosen because new concepts from the West such as student-centeredness, active learning, learning by doing, cooperative learning, and communication between teachers and students were accepted easily in the Chinese elementary school. Since traditional assumptions and practices are deeply rooted among teachers, students, and parents, change has come slower in secondary schools and universities. In elementary schools, experimenting with new ideas is easier since the students have not been taught as long in traditional ways. The image and roles of elementary school teachers, their teaching tasks, and their behavior can be more easily modified through new concepts from the West and monitored by teacher evaluation with correspondent criteria designed to promote improved teaching. This dissertation research attempts to contribute to the understanding and eventual improvement of the Chinese elementary school teacher evaluation system through historical analysis, thus yielding implications and suggestions about the system and further developing the theory of teacher evaluation generally.

### *Research Questions*

Four major questions guided this study of elementary school teacher evaluation in China in terms of government policies, historical-cultural influences, and the development of the teacher evaluation system:

1. What is the official system of teacher evaluation in Chinese elementary schools?

2. How has this system evolved to the present status?
3. What have been the historical-cultural influences that have shaped the development of Chinese elementary school teachers?
4. What are some of the major implications for teacher evaluation reform in China and teacher evaluation theory in general?

## Chapter 2

### Review of Literature

Although Chinese students, parents, and society have evaluated teachers in many different ways across the centuries, the origin of a formal teacher evaluation system dates back only to 1985 when Chinese education reform was under way and Chinese scholars became very active in research on educational evaluation, particularly evaluation of institutions of higher learning. Western scholars were invited to China for lectures and articles by Chinese scholars about teacher evaluation theories were published in large numbers. Overwhelmed by western theories, Chinese scholars and educators became aware of the problems in traditional Chinese school management that did not pay much attention to the link between teaching and learning and that overemphasized test results. The passion for research was obvious as scholars persistently advocated western theories in evaluation and others critically reviewed the Chinese school system. The joint efforts of the government and educators enabled the establishment of the formal evaluation system in 1990. Teacher evaluation standards and criteria for different levels of schools became the foci of research during the 1990's and continued in the new millennium. As a result, evaluation rules and regulations were extensively designed and revised, which, in turn, promoted evaluation practice in schools.

Unfortunately, while scholars expected changes in educational evaluation, few reviewed the development of teacher evaluation from social, cultural, and historical perspectives to explore their impact on the current evaluation system. Among the very few articles that explored evaluation history, teacher evaluation was inadequately discussed, compared with assessment of students and evaluation of school management.

Cai and Huang (2003) from Beijing Normal University point out that the slow development of teacher evaluation systems in many countries is due to the popular assumption that teachers' work was not clearly shown in students' learning outcomes, and that the basic job of teachers was only to impart knowledge and answer questions; students should be responsible for their own learning. Academically, it was also true of Chinese teachers until the last two decades, though Chinese teachers have always been considered to be responsible for students' moral growth and character development. For millennia, the teaching profession was comparatively autonomous and unchallenged in China until the start of Chinese education reform in the 1980's. Cai and Huang provide four reasons why evaluation research became popular nationally and internationally in the 1980's: (a) the public awareness of and attention to the importance of education quality; (b) government policies in different countries regarding improving teaching quality; (c) the shift of the teacher-student roles that challenged teachers in the second half of the twentieth century; and (d) the influence of the management of industrial organizations in the West, especially in America. Teaching came to be regarded as a productive process during which teaching effectiveness could be measured.

Cai and Huang (2003) also compare the evaluation trends in the United States and in China over the past decades. While the focus of teacher evaluation in the United States shifted from effectiveness of teaching to teachers' expertise, the focus in China changed gradually from students' political behavior to students' learning outcomes, and much later to teaching behavior. Cai and Huang note that although a variety of methods are used, little attention is paid to the systematic organization of evaluands or to the validity and reliability of the methods in use. According to Cai and Huang, the shift of evaluation



focus from outcomes to the process is both a sign of progress and a revolutionary change for Chinese educational evaluation. Cai and Huang's article approaches evaluation from a macro perspective and does not explore how the evaluation system in China evolved under the influences of traditional assumptions about education.

Liu Yao (2004), Director of the Research Institute of Zhejiang Normal University, divides the history of Chinese evaluation into three periods:

1. 606 A.D-1905, during which the historical imperial examinations influenced Chinese education evaluation in terms of rules, processes, and tasks for students;
2. 1905-1949, during which American ideas were first introduced into China, and later on Mao Zedong's ideological assumptions about evaluation became dominant; and
3. 1949 to the present, during which evaluation changed dramatically. Russian theories replaced American evaluation theories during the 1950's. During the 1960s when Russia-China relations deteriorated, both kinds of influence were criticized. Evaluation simply stopped in the 1960's and 1970's.

Liu claims that contemporary educational evaluation theories in China originated with an American scholar, R. W. Tyler in the 1930's, and resumed in the 1980's when the open-door policy was adopted. Experts from the West and Taiwan brought new ideas about the latest development of educational evaluation that laid a good foundation for the establishment of the evaluation system and practice in the 1990's. Obviously, Liu's historical account of the development of evaluation in China is useful; however, his research is basically about educational evaluation in general. Although he points out

some problems with teacher evaluation, such as the conflicting purposes that use evaluation to make summative judgments concerning the annual bonus while making formative judgments for improving teaching, he offers no explanation of why such a summative purpose has dominated since the 1980's.

Another important scholar in the field of educational evaluation is Chen Yuankun, professor in the Educational Science Institute of East China Normal University. In his article "A review of a century of development of Chinese educational evaluation and outlook for the future" (Chen & Li 2002), he divides Chinese evaluation development into three stages:

1. 1900-1977 as the initial period, with stops and starts in between;
2. 1977-1985 as the theory accumulation period; and
3. 1985 to the present as the continuous development period.

Like other scholars, he also focuses on educational evaluation in general and describes the shift in influence from America to Russia and back to America, arguing that both have impacted Chinese educational evaluation. He proposes three major reasons and contexts for the rise of Chinese educational evaluation during the 1980's: (a) the need for reflection on history and the reconstruction of social order; (b) the need for educational reform practice; and (c) the influence of foreign educational evaluation theories and practice.

Chen and Li (2000) also summarize the major achievements in the third period (after 1985) in the field of educational evaluation:

1. A series of national educational evaluation conferences that have promoted the development of Chinese evaluation theories.

2. A series of exchange and cooperation activities about theoretical research in educational evaluation that have narrowed the gap between China and advanced countries in the field.
3. A series of theoretical works and research papers published that popularized evaluation concepts.
4. The systematizing of evaluation practice.
5. The establishment of the research system and teams to guarantee an in-depth development of theories. (pp. 3-10)

Moreover, Chen and Li (2002) list five major characteristics of Chinese educational evaluation that shifted since 1985:

1. from single evaluand to multiple evaluands.
2. from appraisal of teachers' work to their teaching processes.
3. from rejection to acceptance of the idea of establishing evaluation institutes.
4. from summative to formative evaluation and their combination.
5. from appraisal of teaching to efforts for improving teaching. (p. 4)

Again, the history of teacher evaluation, especially, that of elementary school teacher evaluation, is not mentioned by Chen and Li.

The history of teacher evaluation is a mirror through which past experiences, failures and achievements, may provide useful information for reflection on the current evaluation system and practice. When traditions and new theories collide to the extent that understanding and execution of new policies are affected, a systematic review is essential for a general picture of the two forces to emerge so that they may interface with each other in the exploration of a better system. Furthermore, such a framework may help

educators and teachers to reconsider critical issues of teacher evaluation when government policies and real practice interact, and to make them aware of the importance of looking at the teacher evaluation system from different perspectives. This is the goal of the present research.

Obviously, more work can be done to fill in the gaps in the literature that have left many issues unexplained, such as the above mentioned cultural and social forces that have shaped Chinese teacher evaluation into its current form, the significant changes of teacher evaluation in the twentieth century, and the lessons to be learned from a historical review to facilitate the current implementation of government policies.

This dissertation divides the history of Chinese teacher evaluation into four periods: (a) before 1906; (b) 1906-1949; (c) 1950-1979, and (d) 1980 to the present. The first period was the era of imperial China characterized by dynasties; the second period was a transitional time when the last dynasty was put to an end and social transformation started. Since 1949, China has adopted a socialist system, and communist ideology was dominant for three decades. The last period has seen a lot of changes in education reform including evaluation reform. While my research focus is on the last period, a discussion of the first three periods provides me historical background to the development of the current teacher evaluation system and its practice in Chinese elementary schools. Through a comprehensive review of the historical development of teacher evaluation in China, a further effort is made to provide suggestions and implications in order to arouse the attention of educational evaluation theorists, government officials, and educators so that when they seek to improve evaluation theory and practice, they may thoughtfully

and practically take into consideration problems with the current evaluation system by understanding the history of evaluation in China.



## Chapter 3

### Method

For educational research, different methods can be applied to explore into the problem and searched for solution to the problem. Since this research is about the review of literature in historical events concerning teacher evaluation in China, it is qualitative and descriptive in nature.

#### *Historical Method*

Historical methods have been applied in this research. As Tuchman (2004) describes it, history is one way for social scientists to pose and answer questions about contemporary issues by comparing aspects of contemporary society with those of past societies. In fact, according to L'Estrange (2003), there are two stances in historical research: separating past from present, and continuity between past and present.

L'Estrange emphasizes the relationship between the past and the present by saying that much of the present is the product of the past and that “rather than being distant, dead, and gone, much of the past remains around us, alive, and well” (p. 142). The choice of having the past work for the present makes research easier and more significant. This research takes the second approach with an effort of linking the past to the present and reflecting on the past to benefit the present.

#### *Data Collection*

Perhaps the most critical concern about the historical method is that data are threatened by possible prejudice, subjectivity, and falsity and resulting failure to achieve validity and reliability since “even the most prestigious sources sometimes publish seriously flawed material” (Pan, 2003). Pan (2003), Galvan (1999), and Cooper (1998)

point out that reference lists should be evaluated for accuracy, currency and coverage. Cooper (2003) lists three kinds of literature sources: informal, formal, and secondary channels and suggests that to avoid threats to validity, researchers must always employ multiple channels with different entry and access restrictions so that they can minimize possible biases. Best and Kahn (2002), on the other hand, claim that to guarantee the quality and usability of collected data, it is necessary to do both external and internal criticism. The former checks the authenticity or genuineness of data and, its trustworthiness, the latter enhances the accuracy or worth of the primary data and, the objectivity of authors. This research was conducted to follow Best and Kahn's framework in data collection.

Primary and secondary sources of data are used in this dissertation in the form of three kinds of printed materials. The first kind refers to literature in English by western scholars on Chinese teacher evaluation and related topics. The second kind of printed materials consists of literature in Chinese about both historical and contemporary Chinese education theories, practices, and the development of teacher education and evaluation. Finally, government policies published in official newspapers and websites constitute the third kind of materials. Data from these materials include both primary and secondary sources. In particular, published government documents are primary sources that have influenced Chinese educators and scholars in their reform efforts. These materials were combined by the author to form a theoretical framework to interpret the development and innovations of the teacher evaluation system in Chinese elementary schools.



Methods suggested for reviewing literature by Pan (2003), Galvan (1999), Cooper (1998), and Best & Kahn (2003) have been applied to check the quality of the reviewed printed materials. A careful selection of printed materials for this research has been carried out with the emphasis on formal sources because most of the published books and articles to be used have gone through peer review. Published government documents have been approved by relevant organizations and government branches. Authors' identities and experiences were also taken into consideration in terms of authority and representativeness. Many non-Chinese authors such as Ruth Hayhoe have had rich working experience in China. Some of them, such as Thomas H.C. Lee, Suzanne Ogden and others have been engaged in extensive and in-depth study of Chinese education. Chinese scholars that have been cited range from prestigious professors and educators, to ordinary elementary school teachers as practitioners at schools.

Besides books and journal articles, additional articles were retrieved from major Chinese databases for academic research, such as Wanfang Database, the biggest public database for a variety of the most distinguished academic journals in China. The database of the Chinese Ministry of Education provides documents of government policies and decisions. It is the place where major government views are officially published about education reform and the evaluation system. The database of the newspaper *China Youth Daily* gathers the most important published educational policies, comments, and analyses about education reforms. Other websites concerning education and teacher evaluation were also used to retrieve articles, discussions, and reports about educational issues and teacher evaluation on the part of scholars and educators. Most articles retrieved have been published in a wide variety of journals.

### *Interpretation of Data*

To appropriately present the history of teacher evaluation, interpretation of the collected data attempted reproduction (historical accounts capturing accurately the essence of a specific time and place) rather than representation (political documents that purposively or inadvertently take sides in struggles for power) (Tuchman, 2004). It is important to let the reader construct his or her understanding and make judgments based on authentic information. However, discussions based on the collected data are also provided in chapter 5 in terms of implications and suggestions, insights derived from the research about the current evaluation policies and practice, convergence and divergence of the two and about possible improvement in coordination of the two. It is in this chapter that the writer's point of view has been expressed concerning the evaluation issues reviewed in earlier chapters. Therefore, the early and more objective review of the historical account should facilitate the readers' judgment of the author's interpretations.

### *Organization of the Research*

This historical account of teacher evaluation in Chinese elementary schools is organized into three views based on the data collected: historical-cultural view (exploring traditional influences), government view (official decisions, documents and policies), and developmental view (the process of teacher evaluation development with changes over time). The three views are organized into Chapter 4 under different headings following a chronological timeline organizing analyses to highlight major points. Chapter 5 provides discussions and insights concerning implications of the development of Chinese teacher evaluation system and the author's personal suggestions about future improvement.

## Chapter 4

### The Process of the Development

The history concerning teacher evaluation in China can be divided into four periods: (a) before 1906; (b) 1906 to 1949; (c) 1950 to 1979; and (d) 1980 to the present. China has a long history of social and cultural development, but a very short history of teacher evaluation. One simple explanation for this unbalanced development is that in nearly 20 major dynasties across the centuries, teachers have enjoyed a unique, prestigious social position. This enabled them to assess students, but their teaching was rarely questioned because of cultural and traditional assumptions that had shaped the images of teachers. To talk about teacher evaluation in China, it is necessary to define the teaching profession from the perspective of cultural and traditional values.

#### *Historical-Cultural View*

China has a time-honored history during which the development of the social system, cultural values, and traditional assumptions had a great impact on the image of teachers, their tasks, and their social responsibilities. These values and assumptions laid the foundation for the development of teacher evaluation in the contemporary Chinese society.

#### *Traditional Influences on Education before 1906*

Before 1906, China had experienced over thirty dynasties. Education started more than two thousand years ago from a great scholar called Confucius (551-479 B.C.). Although scriptures about learning existed before his time, it was him that made learning a lifelong practice and pursuit for personal cultivation for both knowledge and moral

behavior. Teaching, therefore, has been an old profession that was ranked as a high social position since Confucius' time.

*Teachers' roles and teaching methods.* Teacher evaluation concerns the roles of teachers and the pedagogies they use. Throughout Chinese history, the roles of teachers were twofold: the role as educator and the role as moral critic for the government. As educators they had academic duties of educating students; as critics, they had social responsibilities as advisors of the government on moral issues. Because of this combination, the teaching profession was respected.

“On Learning”, chapter 18, paragraph 16, in *The Record of Rites*, an anthology of ritual texts compiled sometime between 100 B.C.-100 A.D., describes the roles of teacher and their social position as follows:

When a man of talents and virtue knows the difficulty (on the one hand) and the Facility (on the other) in the attainment of learning, and knows (also) the good and the bad qualities (of his pupils), he can vary his methods of teaching. When he can vary his methods of teaching, he can be a master indeed. When he can be a teacher indeed, he can be the Head (of an official department). When he can be such a Head, he can be the Ruler (of a state). (Legge, 1967, p. 88)

This assumption has dual meanings about a teacher's roles: to educate those to be rulers who would become capable of governing the country and to serve as a teacher before one becomes an official or ruler. “On Learning” primarily shaped the traditional view of the dignity of teachers, meaning that in the academic field, the most important thing should be to respect teachers because of their knowledge, expertise, and moral qualities that would help govern the country:

In pursuing the course of learning, the difficulty is in securing the proper reverence for the master. When that is done, the course (which he inculcates) is regarded with honour. When that is done, the people know how to respect learning. (Legge, 1967, p. 88)

Gradually, this view became deeply rooted in the educational consciousness of academic circles and other influential citizens throughout Chinese history.

The development of teaching methods can be traced back to Confucius as well, and can be categorized in terms of both cognitive knowledge and moral education. Both the teachers' responsibilities and teaching methods were developed by ancient sages. Many throughout Chinese history contributed to the traditional values of teaching, such as Confucius (551-479 B.C.), Mencius (372-289 B.C.), Xun Zi(298-238 B.C.), Dong Zhongshu (179-104 B.C.), Han Yu (768-824 A.D.), Neo-Confucians such as Zhuxi (1130-1200 A.D.), and Zhang Zhidong (1837-1909). Buddhist thought also played a role.

Traditional social values in China originated from Confucius' teaching philosophy: the role of the teacher was to restore social order, harmony and good leadership to the people in order to alleviate their suffering (Kim, 1999). The goal of his teaching was to train students to be true gentlemen through personal development and cultivation. A gentleman was expected to possess qualities of *ren* (humaneness), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (ceremony and good manners), *zhi* (wisdom and intelligence), and *xin* (faithfulness and loyalty to parents and superiors, and trust to friends), all of which could be nurtured through education and be critical to the establishment of social harmony in communicative activities. Because of the multiple goals of education, teachers were required to obtain these qualities in order to be competent for their tasks.

Confucius specified the duty of teaching, claiming that teachers should:

1. Discipline themselves to be models for students as teachers and later for people as rulers, as he said “If the ruler himself is upright, all will go well even though he does not give orders” (*The Analects*, Chapter 13, Verse 6, Waley, 1938, p. 173).
2. “I have listened in silence and noted what was said, I have never grown tired of learning nor wearied of teaching others what I have learnt” (*The Analects*, Chapter 7, Verse 2, Wayley, 1938, p. 123).
3. Love and know their students. Confucius had great expectations for students; he said “Respect the young. How do you know that they will not one day be all that you are now” (*The Analects*, Chapter 9, Verse 22, Wayley, 1938, p. 143)? He also said “When it comes to Goodness, one need not avoid competing with his teacher” (*The Analects*, Chapter 15, Verse 35, Wayley, 1938, p. 200). Confucius put teachers and students in a position of equality in term of moral conduct; he advocated a mutual respect between teachers and students.
4. Think about students’ questions from different perspectives. Confucius said, “Do I regard myself as a possessor of wisdom? Far from it. But if even a simple peasant comes in all sincerity and asks me a question, I am ready to thrash the matter out, with all its pros and cons, to the very end”. (*The Analects*, Chapter 9, Verse 7, Waley, 1938, p. 140)

In *The Analects*, Confucius also had six principles for teaching:

1. Treat students equally without caring their social rank, therefore; he claimed

that “there is a difference in instruction but none in kind” (*The Analects*, Chapter 15, Verse 38, Wayley, 1938, p. 201).

2. Train learning and thinking simultaneously because “He who learns but does not think is lost. He who thinks but does not learn is in great danger” (*The Analects*, Chapter 2, Verse 15, Waley, 1938, p. 91).
3. Pay attention to the different levels of students; Confucius insisted that: to men who have risen at all above the middling sort, one may talk of things higher yet. But to men who are at all below the middling sort it is useless to talk of things that are above them. (*The Analects*, Chapter 6, Verse 19, Waley, 1938, p. 119)
4. Combine existing knowledge with new knowledge, as Confucius suggested that “he who by reanimating the Old can gain knowledge of the New is fit to be a teacher” (*The Analects*, Chapter 2, Verse 11, Waley, 1938, p. 90).
5. To learn is to use, as Confucius pointed out that: A man may be able to recite the three hundred *Songs*; but if when given a post in the government, he cannot turn his merits to account or when sent on a mission to far parts he cannot answer particular questions, however extensive his knowledge may be, of what use is it to him? (*The Analects*, Chapter 13, Verse 5, Waley, 1938, pp. 172-173)
6. Draw inferences about other cases from one instance. Confucius said that “only one who bursts with eagerness do I instruct. If I hold up one corner and a man cannot come back to me with the other three, I do not continue the lesson. (*The Analects*, Chapter 7, Verse 8, Waley, 1938, p. 124)

Although Confucius advocated different teaching, he did not realize the significance of creativity as he defined a teacher as a transmitter. He said “I have transmitted what was taught to me without making up anything of my own. I have been faithful to and loved the Ancients” (*The Analects*, Chapter 7, Verse 1, Waley, 1938, p. 123). This assumption has influenced Chinese education for over two thousands of years in terms of curriculum design, use of textbooks, and teaching methods. It also affected contemporary teacher evaluation concerning teachers’ roles and tasks included in evaluation criteria.

Xun Zi (298-238 B.C.), a thinker and educator in the Warring States Period, inherited Confucian educational ideas, but deviated from the Master on some assumptions. He believed that human nature was evil and that man’s goodness required conscious activity to overcome his natural inclinations in social activities. In *Xun Zi*, he said that

Man must first be transformed by the instructions of a teacher and guided by ritual principles, and only then will he be able to observe the dictates of courtesy and humility, obey the forms and rules of society, and achieve order. It is obvious from this, then, that man’s nature is evil, and that his goodness is the result of conscious activity. (Watson, 1963, p. 157)

According to Xun Zi, learning, along with strict accordance with ritual, could help regulate conscious and reasonable activities and accelerate progress. Teachers, on the other hand, should be highly qualified since they were taken as the shapers of mind. In *Xun Zi*, he advocated that teachers should meet four strict requirements in order to guarantee the quality of teaching in addition to acquiring comprehensive knowledge of their subject:



The highly dignified and prestigious can be teachers; the richly experienced with lofty beliefs can be teachers; the highly logical and coherent to lecture Confucian ideas can be teachers; and the hardworking capable of exploring and explaining the essence of materials can be teachers. (Gu, 1961, pp. 227-228)

Xun Zi strongly emphasized the dignity of teachers. He said in *Xun Zi* that “Rites have three bases. Heaven and earth are the basis of life; the ancestors are the basis of the family, and rulers and teachers are the basis of order” (Watson, 1963, p. 91). He held that teachers were the representatives of traditional rites and should be respected and obeyed absolutely. Thus, he asked students to appreciate the value of their teachers, to establish a close relationship with teachers, to respect teachers, and to obey teachers as they would their own parents.

Dong Zhongshu (179-104 B.C.), another significant Confucian scholar in the Han dynasty, expanded Confucian assumptions and enhanced the dignity of teachers. In *Han Book: collected articles of Dong Zhongshu* (n.d.), he suggested that Confucianism be made the orthodox philosophy, or official belief, and that all other schools of thought be discredited. In 136 B.C., imperial academy adopted the Five Classics as the official curriculum with the aim of training scholars as future government officials. Having been the foundation of literacy and moral cultivation in ancient China, the Five Classics are composed of The (a) *Classic of Changes*, an ancient system of cosmology and philosophy focusing on the dynamic balance of opposites and evolution of events as an inevitable process of change, (b) the *Classic of Poetry*, a collection of 305 Chinese earliest poems of different styles, (c) *the Classic of Rites*, about social forms, ancient rites, and court ceremonies, (d) *the Classic of History*, a collection of documents and

speeches to record history before the Zhou Dynasty, and (e) *the Spring and Autumn Annals*, a historical record of the state of Lu where Confucius was born. Those who mastered one of the Classics, according to the order of the primary minister Gongsun Hong, were put in important government posts. This further promoted the learning of the Five Classics and the firm establishment of Confucianism (Jiao, 1976).

Dong Zhongshu was therefore taken as the most important Confucian scholar. He developed the Confucian ethical code by classifying people into different social strata based on the theory of *Three Cardinal Guides* according to which the prince was the guide of his ministers, the father was the guide of his sons, and the husband was the guide of his wife. According to Dong's theories, a common saying developed which can be translated as "If one serves as your teacher for only one day, he will serve as your father your entire life." This literally placed teachers in the position of fathers, and the role of a teacher was further elevated into an esteemed social position.

Although scholars such as Dong Zhongshu felt differently about the role of teachers, they shared one thing in common: teachers should be masters of the classics, experts in ritual, and be imbued with profound knowledge themselves. In addition, teachers were also expected to be diligent in teaching, and to be role models for students.

In fact, pre-Buddhist type of teacher consisted of individual instruction, and master-disciple relationship, which differed from public lectures in later dynasties. In the Tang dynasty (618-907 A.D.), Buddhist ideas flourished in China. For the sake of spreading Buddhist scriptures, a sophisticated public-lecture system that followed a ritual-like procedure for dialogues and doctrinal debates was established (Lee, 2000). In order to be impressive, expressive, and coherent, a good chanter-lecturer had to be equipped with

four prerequisites: voice, eloquence, talent and profoundness. The teaching methods for the open lecture included oration, body movements, and reticence (purposeful quietness to leave room for students to think for themselves). Among the three, oration referred to a series of expository skills such as direct instruction, paradox, negative response, a repetition of disciples' questions for emphasis, questions to disciples in retort, and loud yelling to highlight the lecturer's points of view.

Several strands of thinking combined to shape the late Tang ideal of a teacher, Confucian scholars and Buddhists both focused on transmission of book knowledge as a criterion. While the former used it for judging authenticity of the knowledge taught, the latter checked it from the perspective of religious significance (Lee, 2000).

A Tang dynasty scholar by the name of Han Yu (768-824 AD) was a significant Confucian follower at the time when Buddhism was popular. He shared Confucius' assumptions about student-teacher relations. In his work *Explaining Teacher* (n.d.), he held that a student was not necessarily inferior to his teacher, neither was a teacher necessarily more virtuous and talented than his student. The real fact was that one might have learned the doctrine earlier than the other, or might be a master in his own special field. Therefore, he suggested that anyone should modestly ask one to be his teacher without feeling embarrassed if the one had an expertise in a particular field.

In terms of teachers' roles and teaching methods, however, Han Yu differed from Confucius and exerted paramount influence on contemporary education activities. Again in *Explaining Teachers* (n.d.), he defined teachers as "one who could propagate the doctrine, impart professional knowledge, and resolve doubts." Based on this philosophy, teaching was simplified into a mechanical procedure of teaching moral values, giving

instruction, and answering questions, during which teachers' authority in leading the class and their intelligence were recognized. Because of the influence of Hanyu's teaching philosophy, teachers have played an irreplaceable role in education to determine what to teach, how to teach, and how to evaluate learning (Tai, 2003). Students, in the position of subordination, have had no choice or opportunity to speak their minds but have been expected to accept whatever has been decided for them to learn, even into recent times.

Shortly after Han Yu's death, the era of Neo-Confucianism (907-1905 AD) started at the end of the Tang dynasty; it was a movement characterized by a research focus on the study of mind and a process of internal change to reach Confucius' ideal. Liu Zongyuan (773-819 AD) in the Tang dynasty, Zhu Xi (1130-1200 AD) in Southern Sung dynasty, and Wang Yangming (1472-1528) in the Ming dynasty became successors of Confucius among the most influential Neo-Confucian scholars.

Zhu Xi added two principles to those of Confucius. The first one was the approach to study: what is to be taught should be from the near to the distant, from the easy to the difficult, from the known to the unknown, and from the concrete to the abstract. The second principle was to guide extensive reading and intensive proficiency which emphasized the relationship between basic knowledge in a variety of fields and profound knowledge in a specialized area (Yu, 2001).

Liu Zongyuan, on the other hand, compared teaching to planting trees in the article "Biography of Camel Kuo, the Gardener" and held that teaching should be planned in accordance with developmental characteristics of children at different ages and should follow the natural laws of human development (Guo, 2002).

Wang Yangming also made a contribution in liberating children from the traditional learning mode. He compared learning to archery, insisting that learning occur with the mind actively engaged. Each archer follows his own way and therefore has his own skills to shoot. This is like learning. Teachers should guide students to think independently and foster personal critical thinking, so that when they grow up, they can better form their own perspectives on the world (Guo, 2002).

As the saying goes “sophisticatedly composed melodies are appreciated by the very few” (Wei, 1997, p. 1004); these Neo-Confucian pioneers in exploring new teaching methodologies struggled against the pedantic education as practice prevailing in their times and made efforts to redefine the relation between teaching and learning. Although their voices were heard, their propositions were not brought into practice on a large scale.

Zhang Zhidong (1837-1909), “a scholar renowned for his literary skills; an untiring administrative reformer, military organizer, industrial promoter, and educational innovator” (Ayers, 1971, p. 1), was the most influential education reformer in the late Qing dynasty. The Opium Wars (1840-1842), the Sino-French War (1884), and the Sino-Japanese War (1894) not only shook the reign of the Qing’s government, but also provoked Chinese scholars to think critically about their social system. They came up with ideals and strove to make reforms by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Traditional family schools and the education system were challenged because of the rigid way of training, rote memorization of ancient classics, and blockage of free thinking and creativity. Besides, the learning of classics was questioned because there was an absence of science and technology in traditional education and China was therefore militarily and economically weak during the eighteenth century.

The fact was gradually accepted that the pride in traditional classics and social development had resulted in a kind of parochial arrogance on the part of the government and ignorance about Western achievements. As Zhang pointed out, “China would perish if it remained isolated. If it were in harmony with others, it would survive” (Ayers, 1971, p. 3). Zhang Zhidong and his contemporaries believed that reforming education was one way to strengthen China. In his work *Exhortation to learning*, he emphasized a dichotomy between “Chinese fundamentals and Western utilities.” He argued that Chinese learning should be preserved as the foundation or substance of education, while Western learning should be selected for its utility and function. According to Ayers’ description, as a provincial director of education, later governor general of the Huguang region and finally minister of Education, Zhang Zhidong promoted in his lifetime general education with a Westernized school system that applied Western methods in operating schools, designing curriculum and textbooks, and conducting examinations. While Zhang Zhidong advocated Western teaching methods against the Chinese rote memorization at schools, he held that the general meanings of the classics should be obtained through learning because “knowledge of the classics would strengthen the character of the Chinese people” (p. 227).

*Sense of morality and teachers’ responsibilities.* Moral education has been the most important element in Chinese education and one of the major tasks for teachers throughout history. It was the prime purpose of Confucian and Neo-Confucian educational thought; the idea that morality makes man better has been universal and as old as human history in China. Confucians regarded morality as the sole way to transform human nature. “In *the Great Learning*, Confucius was convinced that morality

alone best serves mankind and its world” (Tran, 1991, p. 116). In *The Analects*, Confucius said: “He who can himself submit to ritual is Good. If a ruler could for one day ‘himself submit to ritual,’ everyone under Heaven would respond to his Goodness” (Waley, 1938, p. 162).

Summarizing the relation between knowledge and morality in Chinese culture, Lee (2000, p. 284) says that “it is in the realm of moral growth that one could expect changes. It is difficult, of course, to distinguish between these two conceptions: human talent vs. moral quality.” Most Confucian scholars thought that people at birth are naturally good; their natures are similar but their habits become different. This means that education functions to cultivate human minds so that humans can become *ren* (benevolent). Those who possess *ren* may become *junzi* (gentlemen) and further *sheng ren* (sages) by helping others. These ideas about moral education that entrusts a significant role to teachers still inform contemporary Chinese education as policies and practices.

He Kekang, president and professor at the Modern Educational Technology Research Institute at Beijing Normal University, identifies two striking features of Confucian moral education. The first is the fundamentals of moral education. A gentleman cares about his fundamentals based on which morality emerges. “Fundamentals” refer to four qualities of learning to be human: loving and helping others, filial obedience, respect, and faith. Confucius successor Mencius further described the image of a gentleman in *Teng Wen Gong Xia* (n.d.): “He whom riches and honors cannot corrupt nor poverty and obscurity divert, whom neither treats nor violence itself can bend—he it is that I call a great man” (Wei, 1997, p. 1282). Obviously, to be a teacher, one had to be morally cultivated in order to be the models of his students.

The second feature of Confucian moral education is the very process itself. The cultivation of morality should be realized from the near to the far, and from self to others (He, 1999), referring to a two-direction moral action (showing respect for and loving others). The first is vertical, starting from family members up to the emperor and down to a lower generation, and the second is horizontal among people of the same generation. Among the four qualities listed above, the first two are typical of vertical relations and the last two personify horizontal ones.

Confucius advocated four human qualities in *The Analects* concerning morality:

1. Persistence in aspirations with determination to obtain *ren*; this was the most significant quality for being a gentleman. Confucius said “only a Good Man knows how to like people and how to dislike them” (Waley, 1938, p. 102).
2. Self restraint and introspection by means of self criticism and leniency for others; “the demands that a gentleman makes are upon himself; those that a small man makes are upon others” (Waley, 1938, p. 197).
3. Correction of errors to clean one’s own mind because “the faults of a gentleman are like eclipses of the sun or moon. If he does wrong, everyone sees it; but when he corrects his fault, every gaze is turned up towards him” (Waley, 1938, p. 228).
4. Being a model by practicing what one advocates, as Confucius said “he does not preach what he practices till he has practiced what he preaches” (Waley, 1938, p. 91). All of the four qualities are obtained to achieve *ren* and become gentlemen.



Neo-Confucians inherited the main idea of Confucian moral education and laid more emphasis on the cultivation of human nature by constant personal reflection and the unity of knowledge and practice. Zhang Zai (1020-1077) in the Song dynasty held that morality could be fostered by gathering *Li* (mind), being modest and performing moral actions. Cheng Yi (1032-1085), a Song thinker, paid attention to the moral enlightenment of children, insisting that inappropriate behavior should be killed in the cradle.

Wang Yangming, a Ming thinker, proposed a connection between moral knowledge and moral action. He held that no one who really had knowledge failed to practice it. Knowledge without practice should be interpreted as lack of knowledge. According to Wang's assumption, knowledge initiates action, and action results out of knowledge. The process can be fulfilled by introspection, practice of morality, and self-criticism.

Lee (2000) also made a thorough study about moral issues promoted by Neo-Confucians. He comments that

The most important concern for Song thinkers, mostly Neo-Confucians, was directed against a pervasive utilitarian educational purpose that had been fostered by the practice of the examinations. In place of such a distorted view, they proposed that thinking and search for a perfect life lay in the cultivation of a moral personhood. (p. 280)

What is significant about moral education in teacher evaluation is that both Confucians and Neo-Confucians maintained that teachers, in order to teach, should follow moral standards themselves, behave as the models for students, and train students with a moral sense so that they could serve the country like gentlemen. In line with the Neo-Confucians, Zhang Zhidong also stressed the significance of moral education,

saying that “immorality would rule the masses unless morality ruled the educated classes” (Ayer, 1971, p. 48).

In fact, moral behavior of both students and teachers was one criterion, by which teachers were judged across dynasties. Morality, therefore, has been an indispensable evaluation criterion in contemporary schools. If children do not behave well morally, their teachers will be considered unsuccessful no matter how well the children may demonstrate academic ability. Society expects a dual role for teachers in morality: to be responsible for their own behavior and for their students’ behavior.

*Assessment system and teachers’ dignity.* The Chinese examination system has long been the driving force for the development of the education system. Its history dates back to the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E to 220 C.E.). The system “became fully institutionalized in the Tang dynasty (618-907 AD) and continued to operate until 1905” (Hayhoe 1984, p. 31). As a result, the Chinese government was a civil administration for almost two thousand years because government workers were recruited through imperial civil service examinations.

Talented people from across the nation and all social ranks were selected through the examinations to serve as government officials at different levels. Gui (2003), the senior assistant researcher of the Department of Internal Affairs in Taiwan, specifies the impact of imperial examinations: “Imperial examinations were designed to select those who had fine qualities of traditional Confucian gentleman, and therefore had been strongly colored by humanism” (p. 231). They functioned to select a group of talented scholars with good moral character. The primary task of the Chinese officials was to set up moral examples for civilians. The study of the classics to prepare for the examinations

was the most important tool to foster moral character and academic ability; the latter served to realize the former.

Generally, there merged four levels of examinations with corresponding levels of difficulty: (a) preliminary examinations, (b) provincial examinations, (c) metropolitan examinations, and (d) the palace examination. In the Qing dynasty (1644-1911C.E.), preliminary examinations were held locally to select those with prerequisite qualifications for higher-leveled examinations. Hayhoe (1984) describes the process as “a grueling series of examinations” (p. 31). Preliminary ones were held yearly in local cities by provincial officials in charge of educational affairs; successful candidates got the title *xiucai* (Cultivated Talent). Provincial examinations were held triennially in the various provincial capitals for the selection of *juren* (Recommended Man) out of *xiucai*. Successively, metropolitan examinations were also held triennially in Beijing, the national capital for the selection of *jinshi* (Promoted Scholar) from among *juren*. “Finally, also at the metropolitan level, came the pinnacle of the examination system, the palace examination, which was, in theory if not in practice, presided over by the Emperor himself. At this final level, candidates did not fail, but rather, were ranked in order of merit” (Hayhoe, 1984, p. 114).

The first examination, conducted at the district level, required two *eight-legged* essays, a particular kind of stylized essay form, consisting of verse and prose written on subjects from the Confucian *Four Books* (*The Great Learning*, *The Doctrine of the Mean*, *The Analects of Confucius*, and *The Mencius*) and a short poem. The wrong use of words, violation of rhyming rules, or poor calligraphy could disqualify a candidate at this level. “In the second of the three sessions at the district level the candidate was made to write

from memory one or two hundred words from a portion of the Kangxi Emperor's Sacred Edict. Exams at higher levels were similar, including composition of poetry" (Schoenhals, 1993, p. 41). Both the content and format were strictly mandated, with very little freedom left for candidates to show their talents in other areas. Precision in remembering factual knowledge rather than using imagination or critical thinking counted significantly, which influenced the learning and teaching patterns for centuries.

Guo, Peigui (2003), professor and president of the college of social development at Henan Teachers' University, summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of the imperial examination system. On the one hand, it recruited a large group of talented people into government posts and stimulated communication among different social ranks so that a so-called centripetal force toward the government would be formed. On the other hand, maladies were obvious. First, the tendency of caring about one's educational background rather than one's achievement resulted in corruption because some good scholars turned out to be incompetent officials. Second, the content of the examinations excluded science and technology which was one of the major reasons for the backwardness of the Chinese modern society. Third, the eight-legged essay format limited students' creativity and negatively shaped the traditional teaching method. Finally, the civil service system fostered a twisted assumption that the only way to self-actualization was to obtain a scholarly honor and win an official rank. People became so consumed with the process that some spent their whole life trying year after year until they managed to succeed at a very late age, after wasting their lives and energy. Unfortunately, the last two maladies continue into the present, exerting powerful, negative influences on the Chinese education system.

The imperial civil service examination system was finally officially abolished in 1905 as a result of Western ideas brought into China by Chinese scholars who studied overseas, which signaled the prelude to a social reform called the ‘New Culture Movement’ to be discussed in next section.

To sum up, after the Tang dynasty when Buddhism became more influential, the Sung dynasty marked the beginning of the revival of teaching as both a career and a calling, particularly when the imperial examination system came into power (Lee, 2000). The social position of teachers was therefore elevated in the Sung dynasty and reached its high point in Ming times. The teaching profession, therefore, became supreme in ancient society. Schoenhals (1993), in his discussion about the paradoxical roles of Chinese teachers, comments on Chinese teachers’ awe-inspiring image. He notes that the teacher was the absolute ruler, much like the emperor, and students were his subjects and that the teacher was supposed to beat his students as punishment if they disobeyed his commands. Parents also “believed that students could progress only under the guidance of a strict teacher, and they wanted the teachers to be as tyrannical as possible” (p. 114). Tai (2003) points out that during the long history the feudal society was stratified and in education such stratification was symbolized by the over-emphasis on the dignity of the teaching profession and teachers’ authority. Because they were profound in knowledge, they should be considered superior to students who should listen but not ask, and believe but not doubt.

Because of the prestige of the teaching profession, teacher evaluation was unnecessary and impossible in ancient China. Authoritative as they were, teachers had power to assess students and government officials. To question teaching was against

traditional values of *the Three Cardinal Guides*. Although Confucius and a few scholars insisted that students should be equal to teachers, this equality was very limited.

Teachers' work and behavior as a whole were not supposed to be measured. The significance about cultural traditions and assumptions, however, is that they have played decisive roles in defining criteria of current teacher evaluation.

#### *Social Turbulence and Transformation from 1906 to 1949*

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, China experienced a turbulence of wars and social transformation. After the overthrow of the reign of the last emperor Pu Yi in the Qing dynasty in 1910, China entered the period of warlords (1911-1928). From 1920 to 1949, the Republic of China was led by Guo Min Dang (GMD) during which the anti-Japanese war lasted for eight years (1937-1945) and civil war between GMD and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) for three years (1946-1949). The 1920s was a decade during which the anti-tradition elite initiated the New Culture Movement that challenged the traditional Chinese value system. Modern Chinese education underwent reforms in an unstable social situation, experiencing twists and turns during the process. By then, there were some foreign schools that challenged the traditional Chinese education system.

John Cleverley has written a comprehensive work on Chinese education. In his book *The Schooling of Chin.: Tradition and Modernity in Chinese Education* (1985) he remarked that the Chinese Ministry of Education “turned to the progressives of Europe and America for inspiration. Many innovative educators were hosted in China after World War I; some impacted the Chinese educational reform such as E.P. Cubberly, W.H. Kilpatrick, Von Driesch, Bertrand Russell, Paul Monroe, Rabindranath Tagore and John Dewey” (p. 50).

Among these Western scholars, John Dewey was the most influential figure. In 1912, he brought into China the idea that the goal of education was for “the cultivation of healthy personality and the development of the spirit of democracy” (Cleverley, 1985); the Chinese Congress of the Provincial Education Association asked that his statement replace traditional Chinese educational aims. Also, a large number of Chinese students went to study in America sponsored by the Chinese government. “Between 1921 and 1924 the pull of the United States was such that more publicly supported students were studying in that country than in all others put together” (p. 51).

Meanwhile, a group of Chinese scholars brought back from the West educational ideas and tried to adapt them to the Chinese situation. Tao Xingzhi, a graduate of Teachers’ College, Colombia, claimed that good education should connect teaching, learning, and doing. As described by Cleverley (1985), compared to the Deweyian concept of “education is life,” Tao Xingzhi’s principle that “life is education” urged the full use of society as educational sources. Tao required the students to do menial tasks: “One who cannot plant vegetables is not a student, and one who cannot cook cannot graduate” (pp. 51-52). Other well-known scholars include Tian Min, Sun Benwen, Liu Dabai, Xia Zun, Shen Zhongjiu, and Chen Qitian who explored the application of Western teaching methods in Chinese elementary and secondary schools with the emphasis shifting from teacher-centeredness to student engagement in classroom discussions and activities.

For a while, Western ideas were discussed and practiced at schools. Gong (1939), Ying (1939) and Zheng (1939) discussed elements that affected teaching and learning in terms of flexible teaching preparations such as lesson plans, materials to be used,

teaching pace and journal as well as grading policies, efficient use of time for learning, classroom environment, and use of teaching props. Zheng claimed that teachers should have in-service training and participate in academic activities, both of which were ignored by schools of the time. He thought that the prominent use of rigid lecturing should be changed. He also compared teachers to cows that eat grass but give milk, contending that teachers, though respected by the society in general, were poorly paid and thus not motivated to improve teaching and academic research.

A forum was held in 1939 about elementary school teaching. The summary of the proceedings of the forum was issued in *Elementary School Teachers Monthly* (1939), an authoritative journal of the time. In the summary suggestions against traditional approaches were put forward such as teachers' participation in students' activities in order to get to know them well and students' problem-solving abilities, which were derived from Western democratic ideas on education. In learning from the West, however, Liang Shuming, professor at Beijing University from 1917 to 1924, expressed some alternative views. He held that the Confucian concept of *ren* could reorganize China. As Cleverley (1971) comments, Liang believed that "the answer for China lay in rural reconstruction. Intellectuals should return to the countryside, mingle with the masses, and create a new culture" (p. 63).

However, even in this comparatively more active academic research period, nothing was mentioned in the literature about teacher evaluation, though new ways of teaching were given some attention in schools.

The reform in teaching methods was hard going and was blocked by traditional forces. As Cleverley (1985) comments, "In the eyes of China's scholar officials, modern



schools were a route to learning the secrets of the West which should be applied in the interest of the Confucian state” (p. 34). As summarized in Mencius’s statement: “I have heard of men using the *doctrines of* our great land to change barbarians, but I have never yet heard of any being changed by barbarians” (Gu, 1999, p. 34). This sounded arrogant on the surface, but reflected the people’s ignorance about the quick development of other countries. The resistance to new methods, therefore, continued since the majority of teachers had been trained and became used to traditional educational teaching methods. Lecturing and rote memorization were ingrained into their mind and hard to change. As Yang (2004) points out that even those, who had accepted the idea of a new style of education, were still intoxicated with traditional phrase-mongering. The inner spirits and values of traditional schools were not changed on the part of either teachers or students. Yang Dongping (2001) claims the following in an earlier article:

It is pointed out that traditional Chinese culture is twofold—what is written in the Classics is unrelated to what is applied in real life. About teaching processes and methods, we have so many well-known mottos such as “teach with skill and patience,” “gain new knowledge by reviewing old,” “teaching benefits teacher and student alike,” “teach students according to their aptitude,” and “teaching heuristically,” etc. Although these seemed to be the ideals and models of the ancient Sages, in reality for thousands of years, basic educational thought in the feudal society still honored the dignity of the teaching profession, the cramming method of teaching, rote memorization, and importance of examinations.

However, some critical changes occurred in schooling during the Republic era. (¶ paragraph 4)

Based on Zhang Zhidong's framework, some reforms in school systems took place. According to the legislation of 1922 and 1924, the school system followed the American pattern of, "a structure that allowed six years for elementary school, three for lower secondary, three for upper secondary and three to five for specialist colleges or universities" (Hayhoe, 1992, p. 55). This change was established in the following few years that provided the basic curriculum in such subjects as "Chinese language, mathematics, social studies including hygiene, nature study, industrial arts and handicrafts, physical training, and music" (Cleverley, 1985, p. 56).

Another feature of education in the Republic era was engagement in politics. Education was given the task of promoting a cohesive national state under one party government after the GMD defeated the northern warlords in 1928 and established the Guomindang government in Nanjing. Cleverley comments that in this period "educational policy was unashamedly political. The ideology of the GMD was represented in the Three People's Principles" (p. 55). He continues to describe these principles as follows:

*Min-tsu* or 'racial independence doctrine' must be taught along with history and geography and brought into relation with actual experience; the *min-quan* or 'popular rights' doctrine must be linked with the agricultural and industrial pursuits of the people; the *min-sheng* or 'people's life' doctrine must be given an ethical foundation and associated with wisdom and morals. (p. 55)

In addition to the subjects mentioned above, the Three People's Principles were compulsory for elementary school students. Teachers were also required to attend

courses in anti-communism and the Three People's Principles and those delegated to teach civics needed prior approval from the local GMD headquarters.

In summarizing education in the Republic era, Cleverley (1985) points out that under the leadership of the GMD government teaching still largely remained traditional. "Most teachers were untrained, having little grasp of modern subjects, and teaching styles continued to lay their premium on pupil passivity" (p. 68).

Education, however, was deficient at the end of the Republic era. Cleverley notes that 25 per cent of children were in class in 1949, with 30 per cent illiteracy in the total population. "China's education was more private than national, more elitist than mass, and more foreign in its higher branches than it was Chinese" (p.69).

During the social turbulence of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, education developed slowly due to the frequent wars, the struggle between traditional forces and Western ideas, and a severe shortage of teachers. Fight against illiteracy and set up more schools became the major tasks of education. It was hard to find any substantial evidence in the literature in either English or Chinese sources about teacher evaluation, though many of them contained sophisticated research about the Chinese educational system.

#### *Education and New Roles of Teachers from 1950 to 1979*

*Hierarchical social and educational structures.* Chinese society and its ancient examination system were hierarchically centralized for thousands of years. The idea of the centralized social structure originated from the concept of the "Mandate of Heaven" that legitimized the rule to later emperors. During five political unifications across the major dynasties, the central control of governments extended over all aspects of social

life including education. Appendix A is the outline of Chinese dynasties based on Reagan (2000) specifying years of partitions and unifications of Chinese governments.

The last political unification in October, 1949 resulted in the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) commonly referred to as new China after liberation by the CCP, which was significant to the formation of the contemporary educational system. The Ministry of Education as the top educational organization was set up in 1950 with corresponding provincial and municipal bodies across the nation. As a result, education was run and controlled by the government and became a top-down affair (Weiner, 1991). With the new system, elementary schools were administered by these local organizations. Educational objectives, content selection, teaching and evaluation plans, as Lewin, et al (1994) point out, have all been the subject of detailed central guidelines. The overriding characteristics of the central control range from administration to curriculum development, textbooks compilation, student placement, and classroom management (Du, 1992; Flaitz, 2003; Ogden, 1995; Weiner, 1991).

From 1950 to 1966, Chinese education was hierarchical; the educational centralization was embodied by following the Soviet educational pattern on all levels of schooling. In general, all schools strictly implemented syllabi and used unified textbooks; schools could seldom deviate from them without approval from authorities at higher levels (Lewin, et al., 1994).

*Soviet influence and new roles of teachers.* Soviet influence was overwhelming in the 1950s. Cleverley (1985) remarks that to Chinese the centralized and technically oriented modern school system of the Soviet Union presented a rational model worthy of emulation. Massive quantities of Soviet books were translated and used as textbooks in

Chinese schools. Besides, children's organizations also followed the Soviet pattern such as children's palaces where they could attend extra-curricular activities based on their hobbies, and the Young Pioneers as a national organization designed for children who behave well academically and morally at school.

As for teaching methods, Lewin, et. al (1994) point out that teacher-centeredness came from the pedagogy of Kairov, a famous Russian educator, by which "directives of teachers are the guiding rules which students have to follow strictly. Spoon-feeding by teachers remains widespread and students take on the role of 'containers' or 'warehouses', accepting knowledge passively without thinking" (p. 170). In fact, as Mok (2001) notices, a teacher's instruction involves the use of a precise and elegant language; "the entire teaching act may resemble an artistic performance. However, teaching and learning do not go beyond 'transmitting knowledge'" (p. 161).

Although teacher evaluation in this period was not mentioned in the literature, Cleverley (1985) comments on teachers' work saying that they were required to get more qualified through part-time study and improve their teaching skills. "They were to share teaching experiences, devise more materials and teaching aids, run their own research projects, and join the teacher association in their subject area" (p. 132).

In the 1950s, teachers enjoyed relatively high social prestige and respect. Teacher's roles were described by some new terms that were also shaped by Chinese tradition. From a critical point of view, Tai (2003) lists some metaphorical terms that were popular during the 1950s. From the current point of view, he provides definitive and reflective explanations. People, however, only paid attention to the positive meaning of each of them but neglected the limitations these phrases convey:

1. The engineers of human souls—this strengthens the teachers’ role to shape the students’ souls but neglects that teachers’ souls should be purified first.
2. The pedagogue—this emphasizes transmitting wisdom, imparting knowledge, and resolving doubts, but neglects students’ dynamics for free thinking and creativity.
3. The knowledge authority or the spokesman of truth—this focuses on respect for teachers required by traditional values, but ignores the exchange of ideas and cooperation with students.
4. A bucket of water—this can give students a cup of water (metaphorically providing knowledge). The traditional assumption holds that in order to give students “a cup of water,” a teacher should first have “a bucket of water” in storage. The limitation of this metaphor is that the knowledge possessed by teachers becomes outdated and needs to be renewed.
5. A spring silkworm or a candle (the former is metaphorically from a poem “the Spring silkworm spins silk to the end of its life” by Li Shangyin who lived about 813-858 C.E.; the latter burns itself to light the environment, metaphorically to devote teachers’ entire lives in enlightening students— this means teachers have a great sense of commitment and contribution. However, such a self sacrifice again suggests the exhaustion of knowledge resources because of the negligence of teachers’ renewal of knowledge and the updating of their teaching methodology.
6. The gardener—he prunes but treats students like live plants without thoughts.
7. A human ladder or a paving pebble—they pave the way for students to achieve

in examinations and gain significant social positions for socialist construction, but fails to train them to be exploratory, creative, and imaginative.

As a result, the major concern was intellectual development. Key schools were established to recruit talented students and teachers were honored by school authorities according to the percentage of students placed in schools of higher levels based on examination scores. On the part of the students, they were encouraged to study hard, as exemplified by the Marshall of the PLA (People's Liberation Army) saying that Confucius was so absorbed in reading that he forgot to eat, that Dong Zhongshu did not look at the garden for three whole years, and that Boddhidarma faced a wall for nine years. They have provided different ways of concentrating on knowledge and can serve as models for students in the process of absorbing knowledge (Cleverly, 1985).

Meanwhile, different voices continued to contend about the expectations for students and their future roles in China's social development. The argument about training between Red and White intellectuals intensified; these terminologies were "borrowed from the Russian Bolshevik Revolution to describe counterrevolutionaries" (Ogden, 1995, p. 86). Redness stood for ideological correctness that overwhelmed intellectual development and whiteness the opposite. Some scholars held that white experts could serve socialism and others claimed that intellectuals should play both roles. As Kwong (1979) comments, "the emphasis on expertise reflected the influence of the pre-liberation concept that education stood above politics" (p. 95). In fact, Mao Zedong was strongly opposed to the Soviet educational pattern, criticizing that book knowledge was too much engaged in teaching with the negligence of social practice. By the end of the 1950s when China broke with the Soviet Union, Mao termed Soviet socialism as

revisionist and seriously criticized adaptation of the Soviet pattern as mechanically transplanting without analysis.

*Mao Zedong's educational thought and the cultural revolution.* Mao Zedong (1957) commented on Chinese intellectuals, pointing out that the majority of them were born in non-working class families and educated by bourgeois values and world views. Therefore, they needed to be imbued with Marxist and Leninist ideologies in order to take on the new educational tasks and foster students from the proletarian point of view. One way to fulfill this goal was to integrate themselves with the masses of workers and peasants, take them as friends, and learn from them. Schooling was shortened to meet the needs of such the integration. According to a report (1960, *Journal of Red Teachers*), the combination of school learning and practice in real production yielded notable results in elementary school education:

Students in three classes of grade one have finished courses in one and half semesters for a three-year program. By the end of April, all students can use between 1200 and 1400 characters; some advanced students can know up to 1800 characters, even the slow students know about 900 characters. For mathematics, students can do addition and subtraction within 100,000 and multiplication and division within 100; they have the ability to solve two-step math problems. Meanwhile, students can write an essay of 300 to 400 words with maximum 624 words applied for the longest ones. They can also help farmers to record their daily work credits, fill various kinds of forms, and write letters. (p. 29)

There is a doubt about the truth of the report since the *Great Leap Forward* (1958) inflated statistics and fake reports were common for the sake of glorification. However, it



is true that teachers suffered in that period. In 1964 Mao Zedong talked to his nephew, a university student, claiming what is translated below by (Cleverley, 1985):

The problem of educational reform is primarily a problem of teachers. The teachers have so many books, and they can do nothing without their lecture notes. Why don't they distribute their lecture notes to you and study problems together with you? When the students in the senior classes ask questions, the teachers will only answer half of them, and will know nothing about the rest, so they will study and discuss the problems together with the students. This is not bad either. They must not put on arrogant airs to frighten people off. (p. 156)

Mao strongly advocated that teachers had to change their ideologies: "we have to learn while teaching, and be students while serving as teachers. To be a good teacher, one must first be a good student. Things cannot be learned from books alone; one must learn from those engaged in production, from the workers, from the poor and lower middle peasants, and in schools, from the students, and from those one teaches" (Mao, 1996).

In the literature, teachers were also criticized for their old ideology. Liu, Xiao, and Zhou (1973), held that among teachers, there was also a severe class struggle. Some teachers denied the fact that the 17 years of education before the Cultural Revolution were influenced by the Soviet revisionism. The majority of teachers had a world view that was bourgeois in orientation and some teachers disliked Worker-Peasant-Soldier students and the idea of engaging in social practice in fear that their bourgeois assumptions would be criticized.

Mao's view of "theory into practice" was implanted and became popular prior to and during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). According to his assumption, there

should be a combination of classroom teaching with real life practice. Mao argued that practice was the first source for knowledge. “If you want to know the taste of a pear, try it yourself” (Mao, 1937, p. 295); this idea was popularly used in education during this period. Mao insisted that knowledge falls into two categories: that from natural science derived in the struggle of production and that from social sciences gained in ideological struggles. He claimed that by grasping them, people could have their life improved and set their minds free from the bondage of the old society. And such knowledge to be acquired was primarily through revolutionary activities, not through book learning.

In 1965 before the Cultural Revolution was launched, Mao insisted in his speech at Hangzhou that students of liberal arts should work in factories, rural areas, and businesses. Those attending science and technology universities should also merge into the society for practical skills. . . . After a few years, they can return to schools for theories for two more years. Teachers should do the same and teach while doing manual work (Mao 1996).

During the Cultural Revolution, traditional teaching methods were totally abandoned. “Knowledge first” was severely criticized and replaced by “politics in command.” Teachers and students were mandated to participate in political activities and real production in factories and on farms. Wang (1973), a senior teacher, comments that the assumptions of “persons with knowledge being capable of working everywhere” and “schools being the major place for knowledge” actually denied the existence of class struggle, opposed the proletarian stance, and resulted in “Three Separatednesses,” a popular phrase meaning that students’ separated from class struggle, production practice, and working people such as workers, farmers, and soldiers (pp. 18-21). From 1966 to

1976, all high school graduates were assigned to work in factories and the countryside in order to follow Mao's calling to be reeducated by workers and farmers in real life practice and production. Colleges and universities, with a halt of operation from 1966 to 1971, were restructured as Du (1992) summarizes:

When most universities began to enroll students in 1972, peer recommendation on the basis of political virtue replaced unified entrance examinations; worker-peasant-soldier masses and junior or senior high school graduates who had been subjected to at least two years of reeducation in rural areas or factories became candidates in place of senior high school graduates; the length of schooling was shortened from the former four to six years to three years; and political cant, social activities, practical experience and manual labor substituted for serious academic pursuits. (pp. 14-15)

Participation in social activities was not enough according to Mao's principles. Schools adopted the method of "invited lectures and outside-school activities" policy, which means that workers, farmers, and soldiers were invited to campus to teach and students attended for the social practice. This policy was termed as "Open-door Education." According to a report in *Communication of Educational Revolution* (Zhong 1973), schools nationwide had invited a large group of workers, peasants, and soldiers as elementary and secondary school teachers that amounted up to 420,000 in addition to 280,000 local part-time instructors. Most of them were untrained and unqualified since knowledge was not the educational focus.

Reported in the *Journal of Educational Practice* (1976, pp. 9-12), one single class of students had off-campus practical sessions in more than 200 places in four years to

give students chances to combine their knowledge with real life activities. It was also reported in the same summary that in another school, three groups totaling 90 people were invited to monitor teaching on campus: retired workers, tutors of the Communist Youth, and worker lecturers. Obviously, formal teachers' roles shrank and were forcefully reshaped to follow Mao's indoctrinations.

Ironically, during the anti-traditional Cultural Revolution, Mao's educational idea about real practice echoed one of Confucius' doctrines that teaching should be based on a practical basis. The two thinkers also held that education should be made available to the common people, not targeted to the privileged few. However, the distinction between the educational aims they had in mind was overwhelming. While Confucius trained his students to be government officials and members of the ruling class, Mao, representing the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), pursued education for the proletariat, who according to Mao, were better than teachers because they had gained wisdom and experience through production and class struggle. Students, therefore, were supposed to learn more from the proletariat than from teachers, who had lost their erstwhile respect as a result of the repudiation of the dignity of the teaching profession.

A new concept was developed to the effect that teachers and students should be 'the battle companions in the same entrenchment against the traditional education system'. And teachers were expected to learn from students. Model students, such as Huang Shuai and Zhang Jun were praised by the media for their courage to defy their teachers and resist traditional examinations. The journal entry of Huang Shuai (1973) and the article by Zhang Jun (1974) were published to call for learning from the two students across the nation with the encouragement to emulate the two daring "rebels." They were taken as

models opposed to the traditional educational system which was viewed as only fostering students to get full marks while becoming “obedient lambs,” metaphorically suggesting that those who got full marks were as docile and obliging as lambs in following what teachers asked them to do without thinking freely and creatively. Huang’s teachers had to do serious and public self-criticism against the traditional way of treating students as their inferiors. Mao’s calling “Serve the people” meaning that all kind of professions should have a purpose to serve the proletarians, was considered as an ideal working attitude during the Cultural Revolution. Zhang Jun carved the phrase in his teachers’ teaching pole to encourage him to change the traditional image of teachers and serve students according to Mao’s ideology.

Meanwhile, moral education as a time-honored feature in Chinese education had been extensively revised since 1950. Mao assumed that the parallel structure of morality, knowledge, and actions of *ren* as educational goals can be replaced by today’s combined objectives in achieving morality, knowledge, and physical health (Zhao, 2002). The so-called all-round development with the emphasis on the enhancement of students’ overall qualities became Mao’s objective in education.

The ideological oriented education in the 1950’s experienced a significant change as a result of a series of political movements from late 1950’s to the end of the Cultural Revolution. In the Anti-Rightist Campaign in 1957 when the topic of being Red or White was hotly debated, Mao advocated that students should be both Red and Expert. According to Mao, politics and academic pursuits are philosophically the unity of the two opposites; politics takes the major position and functions as the soul of moral education. Mao contended that this was vital to the proletarian education foundation, principle,

viewpoint, and direction (Wu 2003). It would be dangerous for teachers to have book knowledge only but a wrong political stance.

Therefore, teachers were judged according to their ideological stands and behavior in political movements. The notion of ‘class struggle’ (the ideological struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeois) and ‘line struggle’ (people’s standpoint on the way to the proletarian revolution or on the way to the bourgeois social restoration) were the only criteria to regulate and check teaching. This was supposed to be the critical issue of right and wrong in terms of the political correctness on the part of teachers. If he took the wrong side, namely the bourgeois standpoint, a teacher would be considered as deviating from the orthodox educational thought of the CCP. It was believed that if a teacher was not armed with Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong thought and ready to serve the proletarians, he could not be qualified to bring up students who are to be Red successors of the Chinese revolutionary course. Therefore, the slogan “politics in command” was generally regarded as essential. Reflected in education, it means to love and be loyal to the Party’s educational course, to study Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong thought, and transform the bourgeois world outlook into that of the proletarian, to attend all political meetings and other political activities, and to care for the collective and be friendly to one’s peers.

The objectives of “politics in command” were not only the criteria for political behavior, but also guidelines for teaching. Evaluation, if it could be called so, included a teaching report, which was a one-page form to reflect the number of teaching hours, classes taught, strengths and weaknesses of one’s own teaching, an end-of-term conference, which was a meeting during which teachers reported on their self-reflections

about their teaching, criticism and self-criticism, formative practices popular during the Cultural Revolution to check teachers about their ideological standpoints, and inspections by higher authorities, a top-down practice that allowed school or district authorities to observe classes and judge individual teachers.

Among these forms, criticism and self-criticism became the most frequent activities to evaluate teachers for their teaching and political behavior. Self-criticism, a cultural heritage originated by Confucius with the emphasis on introspection and self-restraint for self-cultivation, found favor in Mao's eyes. He stressed that it was important to help others by pointing out his shortcomings, but more importantly to examine one's own behavior and be strict with oneself by way of self-criticism.

Mao expanded this Confucian idea and made it a regular work style for all walks of life including the teaching profession. Some of his ideas have become mottoes of the Chinese people: "Conscientious practice of self-criticism is still another hallmark distinguishing our Party from all other political parties. As we say, dust will accumulate if a room is not cleaned regularly, our faces will get dirty if they are not washed regularly. If we have shortcomings, we are not afraid to have them pointed out and criticized, because we serve the people. Anyone, no matter who, may point out our shortcomings" (Schoenhails 1993, pp. 259-265).

Mao's emphasis on criticism and self-criticism started with a good intention, but more or less led to some negative connotations for teacher evaluation. Teachers were frequently nervous and anxious during the process, because they could easily become targets for criticism and self-criticism. It is not hard to see the difficult situation teachers were in during the Cultural Revolution. Because of their teaching during "the seventeen

years” before the Cultural Revolution, they were accused of only seeking fame, gain and diplomas, and therefore failed to prepare successors to the revolution because of their bourgeois stance. They belonged to the lowest social rank and became public offenders (Cleverley, 1985).

As far as evaluation was concerned, the Cultural Revolution went beyond its expected scope: reflection on the wrong direction of education and remedies to move back on the right track; sadly, it veered far out of control. Self-criticism by teachers and criticism by students were gentle actions compared to an escalating number of physical attacks on teachers by students called “red guards” nationwide from 1966 to 1969. Chen, Zhili (1998), minister of the Chinese Education Ministry, comments that during the Cultural Revolution, teaching facilities and conditions in elementary schools were extremely poor. Large numbers of teachers were forced to do repetitive self-criticism in public; they bore incredible pressure and experienced physical persecution. Cleverley (1985) revealed:

Official statements record 142000 cadres and teachers under the Ministry of Education, and 53000 scientists and technicians associated with the Chinese Academy of Sciences and other units in seventeen provinces and municipalities, were falsely charged and persecuted. Dozens of internationally known cultural leaders were killed, or died as a result. (p. 177)

Among them, the highest officials were Liu Shaoqi, vice Chairman of the Chinese Administrative Government, second important only to Mao, Deng Xiaoping, the third in the CCP hierarchy, and Wu Han, vice Secretary of the CCP’s Beijing Municipal committee. Numerous teachers were sent back to the countryside or forced to do manual



labor under the supervision of the working class. Mao used unprofessional and irregular mass movement to reform education, and denied the key roles of teachers in the educational system. Mao's reform during the Cultural Revolution has resulted in deterioration in education qualities, a severe lack of qualified teachers, and inefficiency in education management (Yang, 2001).

#### *Government View*

The Great Cultural Revolution, termed as 'the ten-year great calamity period', ended in 1976. A new era started in the late 1970's marked by open door policies for economic, social, and education reforms. The Chinese government made a great effort to restore the social order that was out of control during the Cultural Revolution. A series of policies were issued in the 1980's and the 1990's that guided the education reform.

#### *Recovery from the Cultural Revolution in the Late 1970s*

Persecuted during the Cultural Revolution, the majority of teachers lived a poor life. In addition, as they were politically and academically suppressed, they had no passion and courage to teach the way they did before the Cultural Revolution. What the government confronted was to make teachers recover from the suffering of the calamity.

*Teachers' rehabilitation and restoration of examinations.* Teachers who were wrongly charged were rehabilitated and sent back to the schools. Deng Xiaoping, chairman of the CCP, called for respect for teachers, claiming that intellectuals were a part of the working class. He also highlighted the achievements of the 17 years of educational development before the Cultural Revolution. At different meetings, he stressed the importance of teachers and their contributions, calling on people to respect

knowledge, and respect intellectuals. As a symbol of respect, Teacher's Day on September 10<sup>th</sup> was inaugurated in 1985.

As one of the steps to reform education, national entrance examinations for universities and college were restored in 1977 after they were abolished for ten years. Over five million young people attended the examinations that year and 273,000 of them were accepted (Chen 1998). Educational condition were very critical nationwide and universities encountered a challenge because of the long term negligence of cognitive or book knowledge during the Cultural Revolution. According to Chen (1998), there was a severe shortage of a whole generation of intellectuals in all fields to teach concepts and theories in different subject matters. Deng Xiaoping made an ironical joke about Qinghua University by calling it "Qinghua elementary school or Qinghua middle school." Obviously, it was imperative for China to overhaul its educational system.

*Restoration of the school system.* In January 1978, schooling was resumed and in the same year, the State of Education Commission (SEC) was authorized by the State Council to compile unified textbooks for elementary and secondary schools. Political contents were removed from textbooks and the books were used the same year nationally. Chinese education was finally put back on a relatively normal track. In October 1983, Deng Xiaoping (1983) alerted the nation that "Education should be geared to modernization, the world, and the future" (p. 109), which became a guiding principle for educational reform.

#### *Laws and Legislation on Educational Reform in the 1980's*

The year 1985 was an important milestone in Chinese educational history because educational reform was officially announced that year and a series of important laws

guiding education were formulated and put into effect in quick succession. In May, for example, the CCP mandated the *Decision of the Central Committee of the CCP on the Reform of the Economic Structure* (the 1985 Decision) that officially declares that an educational reform should be launched together with economic reform. This initiative was aimed at eliminating the influence of ideological struggle and narrowing the big gap between China and other countries in educational development. In 1986, *The Chinese Law of Obligatory Education* was established by the Peoples' Congress (PC). In 1993, the CCP announced *The Program of Chinese Education Reform and Development*, which emphasizes improvement of educational funds and teaching, and development of elementary school education.

Item 32 in the 1993 Program deals with evaluation issues, discusses the necessity for the establishment of evaluation criteria and standards for schools at all levels and calls for the effort to constantly evaluate school education. Experimentation with different methods of evaluation is encouraged in order to set up the system.

Items 40 to 46 of the *Program* provide a comprehensive view about teaching including training programs, teacher certification, teacher salary reform, and efforts to be made to improve teachers' living conditions and welfare.

In October 1993, the PC passed *The Teacher's Law of the Peoples' Republic of China* to legally specify teachers' academic rights and obligations, training and certification requirements, welfare and award systems, etc. among which four evaluation criteria were issued regarding moral behavior, academic ability, work attitude, and teaching achievement. Local education branches were authorized to supervise and guide teacher evaluation.

In 1995, *Teacher Qualification Regulations*, and *The Education Law of the Peoples' Republic of China* by the SC enabled a legal framework for Chinese education.

*Revival of the Examination System and Its Problems*

During the last two decades of the twentieth century, numerous problems arose, with government reform intended in bringing education back from politics-oriented social practice to book knowledge. In their fervor to revive traditional education values, reformers became very keen on book knowledge. Credentials became the most critical prerequisite for career success. Schooling from elementary levels started to pave the way to universities for students by providing them with substantial knowledge using traditional teaching methods. During the 1990s in particular, it was more imperative for schools to choose from a variety of reference books to complement textbooks. Most schools therefore overloaded students with extra exercises from different books that were characterized as “difficult, complicated, rare, and obsolete” (Guan, 2003, p. 77). With pressure to advance a high proportion of students into middle schools, elementary schools focused on imparting knowledge but neglected fostering students’ practical abilities (Guan, 2003). According to Guan,

In teaching, the content did not reflect the development of modern technology and social life. Spoon-feeding and a sea of exercises were still applied as teaching strategies. In evaluation, students were much more emphasized than teachers, and students’ grasp of knowledge was more of the focus than their application of knowledge. (p. 76)

Pressures from parents and people in society generally were responsible for the situation in which students’ test scores were used as the only criterion in teacher

evaluation. Hua (2002, September 6) points out that increasing social competition has exerted great psychological pressure on parents. In contemporary society, most families have one child. The traditional cultural assumptions of “expecting a child to be a dragon” and “bringing honor to ancestors” are so much engrained that parents’ expectation for their children is to attain success. Children learn a simple formula from their parents the first day of school: standing out among others equals high test scores plus entrance to key school and later to a white collar job.

Lewin (1994) discusses this phenomenon of social pressure saying that the standard by which Chinese society judges youths’ value depends on whether they can enter university and what kind of university. Zhang (2002), a teacher in the Zhengzhou Railway Education Institute, criticizes this standard, claiming schools have exaggerated the effects and the selection function of examinations to evaluate students, teachers, and school work: “They have changed examinations into ‘a conductive system’ that overrode the school education system” (p. 69).

The advantages of this system, however, seem obvious; with high scores, reputations would be gained for different stakeholders: students could go to key schools, teachers could get promoted and rewarded, and schools could get more funding and better student and faculty resources. For many schools, this performance could kill three birds with one stone. Yang (2004), lecturer at Liaoning Normal University, points out that education was purely seeking for matriculation rate in the 1980s and “examination-oriented” in the 1990s. In about 20 years, criticism against tradition was weakened. In fact, examination-oriented education has been revived and enhanced traditional education; traditional spoon-feeding and rote memorization have been adopted again.

However, examination-oriented education, after being practiced for about two decades, finally became socially problematic and psychologically detrimental to the development of students and education reform. Because of the heavy load on students necessary to pass endless exams, students experienced psychological problems. Huang (2001) points out that many students were in dread of study. It was inevitable that those eliminated from examinations would become frustrated, defeated, self-despising, and despairing. They might step into the society feeling like losers.

Front page reports in *China Youth Daily* (1996) reveal that Yan Ling, a junior high school student, committed suicide after she had attended two final examinations and felt that she did not do well. This incident attracted wide public attention:

Yan ranked 44<sup>th</sup> in her class; she was not allowed to watch television at home and forced to study till 11:00 p.m. in the evening. Her family was poor but her parents had very high expectations for her. What does this bloody lesson tell us? In many places in China, education has deviated from the goal of enhancing the general qualities of people and dashed into the dead end of the examination-oriented education characterized as being oriented towards the minority (the top students), allowing unhealthy development, and making the majority losers. This is the real disaster of Chinese education. (Sun, 2004)

It was also reported in *China Youth Daily* (2000) that a senior high school student killed his mother because of too much stress and the pressure his mother exerted on him.

During the interview in the prison, Xu said that his mother required him to get above a score 97 out of 100 for every course he took. In his senior year, he made a great effort to move up from the 44<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> position in the class ranking. However, it

was hard to maintain that position. In the mid-term examinations of the Fall semester in 1999, he dropped to the 18<sup>th</sup> in the ranking. His mother whipped him with a belt and beat him with a firm stick. According to his mother's requirements, he should be good enough to attend Beijing University or Qinghua University, the top two universities in China. Xu was definitely a victim of examination-oriented education. (Xin, 2000)

A vicious cycle therefore formed; parents' expectations pushed schools of all levels to prepare students for examinations, and teachers pushed students and parents to make joint efforts to excel in examinations. What were left unattained included students' other abilities as persons and teachers' professional development.

#### *Whole Person Development*

Whole person development seemed to be a new concept in Chinese education. However, it formed based on the ideas of "all-around development". It took educators and teachers years to realize the significance of this new approach.

*The Rising of whole person development and its theories.* Although examinations played the main role in education in the 1980's and 1990's, alternate views are reflected in the literature as well. Several Chinese educators argued against the examination system. As early as 1988, the term "whole person development" was first used to replace "all-around development". Although these terms address similar objectives, "whole person" more strongly emphasizes students' potential for creativity, critical thinking, and cooperation, which were absent from "all-around development. Government officials and academics advocated this as a shift toward "whole person" thinking and called for acknowledgement of educators and on-site teachers.

As Yuan (2001) summarizes, whole person development, by a simple definition, means education for the all-round or whole-person development of students. The learning process is considered more important than tested outcomes. Learning materials and contents should be free from theoretical complexity and consist of fundamental knowledge and skills connected to students' everyday lives. Students' interests should guide curriculum reform, powerfully engaging students' active participation, creativity, imaginative and critical thinking abilities, and problem-solving abilities. The comprehensive development of students is the essence of whole person development which promotes active learning skills and practical capabilities. It also helps students form their value systems and aesthetic judgments. From the academic perspective, education is not just instillation of knowledge and school management; the core is to discover, explore, and strengthen students' potential abilities and creativity.

*Government guidance.* Research on whole person development was greatly encouraged and supported by the government. *The Program of Chinese Education Reform and Development* (1993) opposed traditional examination-oriented practice. A legal document *The 1995 Plan* by the PC highlighted the purpose of advocating whole person development to make the country prosperous by way of science and education. This document advocated changing from education for examinations to whole person development. This was significant because whole person development was re-emphasized and established on the lofty agenda of on-going educational reform, particularly of reform in elementary education (Liu, 2000).

The aim of whole person development was further clarified in *The 1995 Plan and the 2010 Development Program of National Education* issued in April, 1996 by the



Ministry of Education (MOE, the previous body of SEC), emphasizing that the fundamental task of education is to improve qualities of people and foster student growth from all perspectives in terms of morality, intelligence, and health.

In 1997, a national conference on secondary and elementary school whole person development was held, based on which the MOE issued a document *Suggestions about Actively Promoting Whole Person Development in Secondary and Elementary Schools* in October that year to promote whole person development in schools nationwide.

In 1998, *Promotion of Action Project for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education* was issued by the MOE and in 1999 the CCP published *Decision of the CCP and the State Council to Reinforce Educational Reform and Completely Promote Whole Person Development*. In these two documents, whole person development was reiterated as the best direction for reforming education and for conducting educational research. In both documents, the view of whole person development was further emphasized and developed to encourage educators to help students to obtain “ideals for the future, morality, knowledge, and disciplines” on all levels of schools.

In August 2000, the MOE published *Suggestions to Strengthen the Construction of Professional Moralities of Secondary and Elementary School Teachers*. This document specifies obligations of teachers and points out that to promote whole person development teachers should play the most critical role as engineers of human souls; they should possess good professional moralities themselves in order to improve teaching.

In January 2001, the MOE issued *An Urgent Circular to Reduce Study Load for Elementary School Students* that prohibits any activities that may give extra pressure and work to elementary school students including use of reference books, extra-curricular

study time, using weekends and vacations for formal classes, competitions among student in various subjects such as math or English, large amount of homework, the grading policy of 100 percentage as the full mark, and entrance examinations to enter middle schools. By putting these stipulations in practice, the government made an effort to convert traditional education into whole person development education.

Meanwhile, the State Council drafted *Decision on the Reform and Development of Elementary Education* (2001) stressing that whole person development reform should focus on renovation of curricula, teaching methods, and assessment /evaluation systems. Item 19 suggests that curricula should be renewed to provide courses with new content related to students' real life and social and scientific achievements in the contemporary society as this content is more suitable for developing students' cognitive abilities. Item 22 promotes student-centered learning with the emphasis on fostering students' abilities to participate in class activities, interact with peers, and solve problems through cooperation. Item 25 calls for the establishment of new assessment and evaluation systems to measure achievements of students and teachers. The traditional focus should be shifted from placement and selection to personal development in evaluation for both students and teachers. This item also officially specifies that in the future no students are to be ranked by their scores in tests and the scores are not to be made public.

To carry out these principles, the MOE worked out *The Program for Elementary School Curriculum* in 2001. The program specifies four shifts: from spoon-feeding to active learning, from materials characterized as "difficult, rare, and obsolete" to knowledge related to social life and students' experiences, from rote memorization to

students' engagement and participation, and from evaluation for placement to promotion of students' development and teachers' professional enhancement.

The book *Entering new curriculum—A dialogue with course implementers* (Zhu, 2002) presented new standards for elementary and secondary school courses and evaluation of learning, teaching, and school management. Major changes included updated course curriculum, course contents, new materials, and new teaching methods for the expected learning outcomes. Over a hundred experts and experienced teachers were engaged in compiling this book under the leadership of the Elementary Education Department of the MOE. The joint effort reflected the government's assumptions and determinations concerning educational reform.

*Official efforts guiding teacher evaluation.* Yang (2001) describes the early efforts the government made to reform educational evaluation:

Before 1978, we almost did not organize any systematic and comprehensive teacher evaluation. *The 1985 Decision* (by the SEC) made clear that teachers should be trained and certified for their posts. *The Chinese Law of Compulsory Education* (1986 by the SEC) reaffirm that credentials should be issued to qualified teachers. Teaching requirements were specified for secondary and elementary school teachers.

Officially, teacher evaluation began after two significant directives were mandated by the MOE at the beginning of the 1990's: *Temporary Regulations for Educational Assessment in Institutions of Higher Learning* (1990) and *Temporary Regulations for Supervision and Assessment in Secondary, Elementary Schools and Kindergartens*

(1991). Although the evaluation system was not formally instituted, evaluation experiments were piloted in selected schools across the nation.

According to *Suggestions on the Launching of Fundamental Skills of Elementary School Teachers* (1995 by the SEC), there are five requirements for elementary school teachers: (a) having oral presentations a clear expression of ideas, specific teaching contents, organizational logic and speech rhyme, as well as appropriate diction; (b) providing good blackboard writing to skillfully use chalk, pen, or brush to produce the right strokes of Chinese characters and the ability to write regular scripts with a proper speed; (c) being able to sketch to characterize and outline objects with succinct lines in order to highlight the key points being taught; (d) preparing teaching aids to make simple teaching aids with available materials and use them effectively; and (e) organization of activities—ability to organize class activities, to visit students' families, and to help individual students. Most of these requirements address effectiveness of in-class lecture presentations although they do suggest teachers have other responsibilities too.

Evaluation activities following these five requirements were questioned late in the 1990s because they resumed that the traditional way of teaching. When whole person teaching approach became prominent, related evaluation reform became imperative as well. Discussions among academics and others resulted in the production of government documents. In 1997, the SEC issued *The Revised Version of the Guiding Outline for Supervision and Assessment in Secondary and Elementary Schools*, which adopted new ideas from academics to official policy.

Criteria for evaluating teachers in traditional examination-oriented education and whole person development were clarified as different; the former were not helpful for the

social and educational development and the latter needed an imperative evaluation system that could guide the society and parents to appraise schools. Six principles were listed in *the Guiding Outline* for evaluation of teachers: (a) the guiding principle of evaluation for whole person development, (b) the comprehensive principle to encourage engagement of all schools, (c) the manageable principle to support and ease the process, (d) effectiveness principle to facilitate future work rather than have red tape, (e) the variety principle concerning school differences, and (f) the principle of combining quantitative and qualitative methods.

More recently, the MOE issued in 2002 *The Circular for the Promotion of Evaluation and Examination System of Secondary and Elementary Schools*. The circular contains more than a simple top-down official attempt to appraise school work. It first criticizes the ongoing evaluation and the examination system, claiming that it cannot meet the needs of whole person development and that emphasizes placement and test scores so that both teachers and students have become slaves of test scores. It argues that a sound evaluation system to measure effectiveness of learning, teaching, and management is necessary.

Among 23 items, seven directly relate to teacher evaluation. Item 3 requires an enhancement of teachers' academic abilities together with professional ethics so they will better foster students' potential for creativity and practical skills. Item 5 requires the combination of formative and summative evaluation with more emphasis on the evaluation process and not just results. Item 6 stresses the importance of participation of multiple stakeholders such as students, teachers, school administrators, and parents.

Four major criteria are specified in item 10, which are different from those in the *Suggestions of 1995* mentioned above: (a) professional ethics including love for students and the teaching profession, sense of responsibility, willingness to make contributions, and passion for teamwork and cooperation; (b) efforts to know and respect students suggesting a proper professional attitude to get to know students as persons and their ability differences, and encourage students' active participation in classroom interaction on the basis of mutual respect; (c) design and implementation of lesson plans with an application of all possible teaching resources to create a learning environment that matches students' interests, abilities, and life experiences in order to stimulate discussions, interactions, explorations, and further on creativity on the part of the students; and (d) communication and reflection for the exchange of ideas with students, parents, and colleagues about teaching for the purpose of improvement. Students' personal development, rather than expectations for students' learning outcomes, has become the center around which teaching should be planned and appraised.

Item 11 specifies concrete teacher evaluation methods, including teachers' self-evaluation, with the participation by colleagues, parents, school leaders, and students. Communication is highly appreciated among teachers based on case studies and reflective evaluation through which teachers can understand how others feel and also express their own views. Schools can not use student test scores as the only criterion against which to evaluate teachers. This document reiterates that no social or organizational appraisal results through comparison of teachers can be used in the promotion of and awards to teachers. And no personal exam scores or institutional

behavior may be used to rank districts, schools, and students according to test scores in different types of examinations.

More importantly, item 23 requires educational administrators to train school principals and teachers in basic methods of evaluation so their outdated views of the examination system and traditional evaluation can be replaced by those for whole person development. This document is the first comprehensive guiding principle of the reform of evaluation and examinations that can play a significant role in the promotion and implementation of whole person development (Li, 2002).

The highly centralized social and political system in China makes decrees by the national government powerful in education. In teacher evaluation, these decrees exert a great impact on the reform efforts; educators have begun research to formally establish and continuously improve the evaluation system.

#### *Developmental View*

While the Chinese government searched for ways to better the education reform, educators, scholars, and on-site teachers were also engaged in different kinds of experiments. Suggestions were put forward for the establishment of teacher evaluation.

#### *Research in Teacher Evaluation*

Research and practice in educational evaluation, including teacher evaluation, formally and systematically started during the 1980s, with greater momentum during the 1990s and the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. This shift is partly due to the open policy China has been vigorously pursuing in all aspects, education included. Scholarly and academic exchanges between China and other countries have been promoted and joint programs set up in large numbers. With the extensive outreach efforts, program theories and practices

in teacher evaluation in other countries, particularly developed countries have been introduced to and accepted in China.

In 1983, for example, the University of Victoria in Canada sent scholars to East China Normal University for a seminar about teacher evaluation with lectures and discussions on the theory and practice of teacher evaluation in Canada. In September of the same year, the chairman of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) visited China and gave a series of lectures on the current international development trends of education and evaluation. In 1984, China became a member of the IEA, and soon afterwards, the Central Educational Science Research Institution was authorized to establish the China Evaluation Center of Educational Achievements.

Meanwhile, a national conference was held in Wuhan in 1983 during which Chinese scholars evaluated key schools and sought for ways of combining western ideas with Chinese education practices (Chen & Li, 2000). Theoretical research on teacher evaluation during the 1980s was promoted by a series of national conferences and exchange or cooperation programs with foreign countries, particularly with the U.K. and the United States. Universities took the leading role in this research.

A series of influential books have been published since the late 1990s. *Contemporary Educational Evaluation* (Shen, 2002) is a review of the history of educational evaluation in the West and in China. A variety of models were introduced including (a) the Tyler model that target implementation of teaching objectives, (b) the CIPP model by D.L. Stufflebeam, circumstance evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation and product evaluation, (c) the CSE model, Center for Study of Evaluation at



the University of California in Los Angeles, was introduced as a comprehensive model to combine formative and summative evaluations, (d) adversary model by T. Owens et al. for adjusting teaching through debates of conflicting opinions, and (e) responsive model by R.E. Stake with the focus on different stakeholders and consumer-oriented evaluation specified as well. In fact, the book is like an introduction of new concepts; these models served as an eye-opener to Chinese scholars, which were referred frequently in the literature by Chinese scholars.

In Chapter 3 of *Contemporary Educational Evaluation* (Shen, 2002), Shen discusses four major points on teacher evaluation: teachers' image (moral roles), reflection of the traditional teacher evaluation (evaluation for placement) in China, current practice of contemporary teacher evaluation, and the theories on teacher evaluation applied in practice. Shen criticizes the evaluation practice that has been controlled by students' test scores and that was driven by reward and punishment. He points out that communication among stakeholders and different evaluation methods are important to make the evaluation system more effective. Also, he points out the bottom-up approach of the evaluation process so that the voices of different stakeholders can be heard.

*The Developmental Teacher Evaluation System* (Wang, 1998) also introduces teacher evaluation theories from the West. It reviews the development of the teacher evaluation system in the U.K. that involves processes, types, and methods of teacher evaluation in terms of professional development.

*Theories and Practice of Educational Management for Contemporary Secondary and Elementary Schools* (Guan, 2003) targets Chinese school management, but has a general approach. Chapter two discusses management of teachers in terms of

professional ethics, academic work, and personnel. For academic work, three points are emphasized: teachers' roles in moral education, the renewal of knowledge, and a variety of teaching methods. This chapter serves as a guide for reforming teacher evaluation; the author discusses teacher evaluation issues in a very general way.

*Entering new curriculum—A dialogue with Course Implementers* (Zhu, 2002) discusses about teacher evaluation. In Chapter five, the criteria for evaluating teachers' qualities are provided including professional ethics, knowledge of subject matters, teaching ability, personal cultivation, communicative abilities, engagement into school activities, and self-reflection and adjustment of teaching plans.

*Towards Formative Course Evaluation—On the New Course Evaluation Reform* (Zhou et al., 2002) discusses more about student assessment. The current examination-oriented evaluation system is criticized severely; western theories such as active learning and cooperative learning are introduced. The author also provides some case studies and scenarios related to real teaching. In chapter six, the author discusses developmental teacher evaluation and specifies three major categories of teachers' qualities such as professional ethics, knowledge structure, and ability structure. The last category is subdivided into teaching ability and comprehensive abilities. The former includes abilities for classroom teaching, management, use of modern equipment, and effective assessment; the latter refers to the abilities of interpersonal relationship, communication, problem-solving, creativity and practice, and critical and reflective thinking.

Finally, *An Overview of Educational Evaluation* (Hou, 1996) has a more practical purpose with specific suggestions and plans provided, which book is discussed later in this research.

Research during this period mainly followed a four-step procedure: (a) establishing educational objectives; (b) designing an evaluation plan based on the established objectives; (c) selecting and designing evaluative tools; and (d) collecting data and analyzing evaluation results based on the objectives. (Yu, 2002)

The significance of learning from the West lay in the fact that a variety of new concepts and methods of evaluation, such as quantitative/qualitative evaluation and formative/summative evaluation, were applied at schools. In the 1980s and most of the 1990s, quantitative and summative methods were more attractive to Chinese educators since they could be used to concretely interpret teaching tasks through statistical numbers for rewarding and punishing purposes. From the late 1990s to 2005, qualitative and formative methods were gradually accepted and practiced to complement quantitative and summative evaluation. The teaching process became a hot topic and was given equal attention after years of exclusive attention paid to the summative approach.

#### *Teacher Evaluation Criteria*

In the early 1980s, secondary and elementary school teachers' academic achievement was determined largely by students' test scores which served as the sole criterion in evaluation. This was due to three reasons: little requirement for teachers' theoretical academic research, severe competition among students for entrance into better schools, and the cultural tradition that "schools and teachers base their reputations on the achievements of their students" (Schoenhals 1993).

One additional manifestation of the heavier evaluative pressure on superiors is the Chinese tendency to credit superiors for the successes of their inferiors and blame them for their failures. Praise or blame for an inferior's accomplishments is awarded

less to the inferior himself than to his superiors. For example, a student who passes the college entrance examination wins glory for himself. But he wins even more glory for his school, his teachers, and his parents. (p. 84)

Social pressures in China also play a part in this (Lewin 1994, p. 171). The standard on which society would judge youth's value has depended on whether they can enter a university and what kind of university. In reality, such judgments were very significant for the reputation of schools as well as the students and teachers. Those with a good proportion of students entering schools of a higher level not only obtained credits for students, teachers, and schools, but got the opportunity to become key schools and would receive more funding from the government and recruit better students and teachers, which in turn would lead to more successes in teaching and bring more prestige to their schools. Teachers and schools, therefore, made the effort to raise students' test scores and used them to appraise teaching. "Twice each semester, after midterm and final examinations, the school would calculate the scores for each teacher's students, and all teachers for a given subject in a given grade would be ranked based on their students' scores" (Schoenhals 1993, p. 84). Consequently, many teachers were unwilling to have slow students in their classes, which deviated from the overall educational goals in China (Huang, 2002).

The ranking of test scores, however, was criticized during the 1990s for its lack of validity because it was only based on the number of students who attended examinations; ability differences among students and teachers' efforts to narrow the differences were not considered. Here is one example. Li ling, a secondary school teacher, published her article in the journal of *Education Research* (1982) describing the criteria she used to

evaluate teaching. The first one is to compare the average scores of a class on two different regional tests within one year. If the average score increases, teaching is judged to be improved. The second one is to compare the standard deviations of scores on the same tests. If the standard deviation on the second administration of the test is higher than on the first administration, this is judged as an improvement.

Both these criteria were criticized in the literature. Zhao Mingda (1983), a school teacher in Beijing, comments that the first criterion neglects the possible variation of difficulty levels of the tests and the second criterion may polarize students, which is not at all in keeping with the educational goal of schools. The standard deviation should be reduced rather than increased. To reduce these limitations, Zhao suggests that the rate of “the passing grade” (score of 60) or the rate of “excellence” (score above 90) of a class in two regional tests be compared in addition to the analysis of test difficulties. Zhu and Li (1988, p. 131) argue that a student’s own test scores within or across semesters should be compared to see his progress, and that the rate of “the passing grade” or the rate of “excellence” of a class should be compared to those of the classes of the same levels. Besides, a couple of other factors should be taken into consideration to evaluate teaching, including academic work and the progress made by born advanced students and slow students, their ability to grasp knowledge, study on their own, solve problems, their creativity, and their interest in study. According to the two scholars, this is only one part of teacher evaluation which should involve much more than students’ achievement.

Research on teacher evaluation criteria in the 1990s gradually expanded critical criteria beyond test scores to cover four major areas of teaching: (a) morality, the moral behaviors of both teachers and students, (b) ability, the abilities for teaching, academic

research, classroom management, and guiding students in study and research, (c) achievement, students' and teachers' achievement, and (d) diligence, attitudes towards teaching and students. These criteria became universal for most schools in China though they were combined or sub-categorized across districts and regions; many schools have posted their teacher evaluation forms on the internet following these criteria.

### *Teacher Evaluation Methods*

In the 1980s and most part of the 1990s, summative teacher evaluation was conducted by using the quantitative methods to rank students' test scores associated with a given teacher since they were comparatively more substantial and factual than other data about teacher performance. Evaluation practice was basically a top-down issue like the saying "you work; I inspect" and "you experiment; I comment" (Zhong, 2003).

Schoenhails (1993) explained this cultural tradition:

The right to explicitly evaluate someone's competence or performance—that is, the right to issue a public judgment, which will be widely accepted, of someone's potential or performed talent—belongs to high-status persons, who are often themselves considered superior in competence. Whether in academics, athletics, the arts, or other fields of endeavor, those of superior status are the ones charged with evaluating. (p. 81)

Yu (2002), described the specific practice of this top-down educational evaluation: the persons conducting education evaluation are mainly the authorities in administrative departments at higher levels. The relationship between these authorities and the evaluated is superior vs. subordinate. Communication flows in one direction. When to evaluate and

what to evaluate are normally decided by higher authorities; evaluation, therefore, is characteristically a top-down practice with little say for teachers by schools.

Wang (2002, p. 142) comments on the drawbacks of this approach to teacher evaluation, saying that many leaders do not have enough time to get to know well the evaluated teachers and their teaching. So their evaluations were frequently based on hearsay and personal impression. For evaluation by colleagues, teachers frequently acted in a perfunctory manner and assessed others' work according to personal relationships. In students' evaluation of teachers, reliability was also not guaranteed, as some students were ingratiated with or retaliating against teachers based on their relationship with the teachers. Evaluation without involving the evaluated teachers focused on teachers' explicit work but ignored their implicit work so that the real ability of teachers was not fully identified and judged.

In the middle of the 1990s, this situation began to change with the upgrading of evaluation criteria designed by educators in different regions and the application of formative evaluation methods. Besides, different stakeholders were engaged in the teacher evaluation process. The evaluated teachers, students, parents, and administrators all had chances to make judgments about teaching qualities and effects. Criteria catering to the multiple stakeholders were designed by local educational institutions or schools and converted into statistical ratios. Quantitative methods were used heavily.

The Beijing Secondary and Elementary School Teacher Evaluation Research Group under the leadership of Beijing Education Bureau designed a teacher evaluation plan based on the development of teacher evaluation nationwide and had it published in 1994 (Hou, 1996). Although schools were mandated to use the plan, it has served as a good

guide for many schools. One can clearly see the influence of the plan in any current evaluation forms of elementary schools available on the internet.

Appendix B provides a series of forms with a detailed description of teacher evaluation criteria in the Beijing Plan. Below is a brief description of three major criteria and thirteen sub-criteria (Hou, 1996, p. 421). For each evaluand, the total score of 100 points are divided for the following criteria according to the order of importance:

Comprehensive Criteria System——

Basic Qualities (10 points)

1. Ideological Thought (5 points)
2. Cognitive Knowledge (5 points)

Teaching (45 points)

3. Preparation for Class (5 points)
4. Classroom Teaching (17 points)
5. Homework (3 points)
6. Tutoring (3 points)
7. Evaluation of Classes (3 points)

8. Research (3 points)

9. Attendance (3 points)

10. Work Load (8 points)

Academic Achievement (45 points)

11. Teaching Effects (10 points)
12. Achievement (based on students school tests) (25 points)
13. Research Outcome (10 points)



Hou (1996) describes the guiding principles for this plan. Teaching, much more complicated than what students' test scores may display, concerns multiple elements such as teachers, students, school environment, and social expectations. Teacher evaluation, therefore, should reflect teachers' work from a comprehensive perspective.

Methods to collect data can be a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches, of self-evaluation and evaluation by others. It is suggested in the plan that a five-person evaluation group be formed to observe classes of the evaluated teachers and take notes or record the process. Students' surveys and conferences may also be organized to gather data.

Since the middle of the 1990s, the heavy use of quantitative methods was criticized in the literature. Critics noted that quantitative methods focus on commonality among teachers, but neglect personality, and pay attention to specific teaching outcomes but ignore a comprehensive perspective on teaching (Duan & Yao, 2003). Xiao (2003) points out that quantitative methods have become rigidified and have simplified the criteria for judging teaching by converting vivid, rich, and characteristic activities into abstract data. The most significant and fundamental aspects of education were therefore lost in data meant to represent complicated educational phenomena; teachers therefore became unenthusiastic about evaluation.

The criticism against this quantitative approach in evaluation became increasingly strong as assumptions for whole person development merged, and innovation in teacher evaluation methods was necessary. *The 2002 Circular for the Promotion of Evaluation and Examination System of Secondary and Elementary Schools* advocated the use of multiple methods involving all stakeholders. Formative evaluation was highly

emphasized to make professional development the first priority in teaching and learning. Also, evaluators were encouraged to involve stakeholders from different groups in order to provide a variety of perspectives.

Item 11 outlined the following guidelines:

1. Establish a teacher evaluation system that focuses self-evaluation and complement it with co-participation by school leaders, colleagues, parents and students.
2. Establish a teacher evaluation system based on teaching research such as case studies to guide teachers' reflection and analysis of their own teaching activities and those of their colleagues, so that their passion for and engagement in academic activities will be enhanced.

Teacher evaluation based on whole person development has evolved around three issues: participants, methods for data collection and analysis, and evaluation process. Zhu (2002) claims that teachers' self-evaluation can promote professional development. First, as participants, teachers play the main role in their own evaluation; they are more likely to use the opportunity constructively. Perhaps by acting like the master in the evaluation process, they may do a better job using their own initiative to discover personal strengths and weaknesses and promote their own professional development. Second, methods for data collection may include different tools such as surveys, self-administered checklists, teaching journals, and periodic work reports for self-evaluation.

Data from students, parents, colleagues, and authorities provide different perspectives about teaching to better interpret their self-evaluation. Surveys and interviews conducted during parents' visits and administrators' class observation with

reviews of lesson plans, teaching artifacts, extra-curricular activity records, and research projects are some of the data sources used. Zhu (2002) illustrates a sample self-administrated checklist in Table 1 and a sample of a parents' survey on an open class in Figure 1.

Table 1  
*Self-Administered Checklist for Teachers*

	Criteria	Strengths	Weakness
Teaching	Teaching objectives Lesson plans Classroom management Promotion of teaching Evaluation of learning		
Qualities	Professional ethics Knowledge of subject matter Teaching abilities Cultivation Teamwork Reflection for improvement		

*Note.* From *Entering new curriculum—A dialogue with course implementers* (Zhu, Muju,

2002, p. 166). Copyright 2002 by Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press.

*Figure 1. Comments on Open Class.*<sup>1</sup>

Name of a School \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parent \_\_\_\_\_

Class Observed \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Comments on the teacher and the class:

(1). The key points of the class are \_\_\_\_\_.

(2). The efforts of the teacher in reforming teaching include

A.

B.

C.

(3). What are the successful aspects of this class?

(4). What are the parts that need improvement?

## 2. Comments on students' learning:

(1). What did you observe as the learning behaviors of your child?

(2). What are the parts that need improvement?

(3). Did you get any insights from the class to help you tutor your child at home?

*Figure 1. Comments on Open Class.*<sup>1</sup>From *Entering new curriculum—A dialogue with course implementers* (Zhu, Muju,

2002, p. 172). Copyright 2002 by Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press.

These methods target improvement of teaching rather than making judgments about teaching; they are formative in nature. Formative evaluation and its potential for solving Chinese teacher evaluation problems have been discussed extensively during the 1990s. In 1998, Wang Binhua promoted formative evaluation for professional development of teachers and improvement of teaching. While Wang was a guest researcher at the University of London and The Open University, he observed and conducted research on the British educational evaluation system and its development. He concluded that development-oriented teacher evaluation emphasizes: (a) teachers' future professional development; (b) reliability and accuracy of the evaluation outcomes; (c) teachers' personal qualities, ethics, and academic abilities; (d) evaluation by colleagues; (e) matched pairs of evaluators and evaluated teachers; (f) active engagement of all teachers; (g) expanded communication channels among stakeholders; and (h) evaluation plans with objectives agreed upon by evaluators and evaluated teachers to promote professional development (Wang, 1998, p. 117). This formative evaluation approach is conducted with a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Shen, Yushun (2002, p. 30), an expert in the field of evaluation, points out that evaluation data should be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative analysis becomes meaningful through qualitative analysis; qualitative analysis becomes specific and accurate through quantitative analysis.

Finally, Zhou, (2002), provides a framework for a two-year evaluation process designed for whole person development in Figure 2:

Figure 2. Framework of Formative Teacher Evaluation Process.<sup>2</sup>

Pre-Conference

A 40-minute discussion between the evaluator and the evaluated teacher on:

1. Purposes
2. Procedure and steps
3. Key areas to be evaluated, data sources and methods
4. The timetable

Data Collection

1. Classroom observations

The evaluator completes an observation form and takes notes in class; shares and exchanges ideas with the evaluated teacher after class about his strengths and weaknesses.

2. Self-evaluation

The evaluated teacher reflects on teaching by answering these questions:

- A. What were the satisfactory and unsatisfactory parts of your teaching?
- B. What were the problems such as lack of facilities in your teaching?  
How did you overcome them?
- C. What measures did you take to enhance your academic ability?
- D. What methods will you apply in the future to improve your work?

3. Other sources

Questionnaires help to gather information from parents, students, and colleagues. Interviews can be done individually or through focus groups.

4. Teaching file

The evaluator should carefully review the following:

- A. Lesson plans, preparation notes, and reports
- B. Students' notes, assignments, test scores, projects

Periodic Checks

Periodical checks are required for the appropriateness of the designed goals, the possible adjustment, and their implementation.

Post-Conference

By the end of the first year, the evaluator and the evaluated teacher should explore:

1. Strengths and weaknesses; problems and solutions
2. The goals for future professional development
3. Possible needs for advanced or vocational studies
4. Final report

The report should be completed by both sides concerning judgment by different stakeholders as a joint effort, and plans for future professional development.

Figure 2. Framework of Formative Teacher Evaluation Process

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<sup>2</sup>From *Towards Formative Course Evaluation—On the New Course Evaluation Reform* (Zhou, Weiyong, 2002, pp. 112-116).

Obviously, the Chinese educators have been aware that the evaluation process should improve teaching because through it: (a) teachers are respected and involved actively in evaluation practice; (b) professional development is stressed to replace competition among teachers; and (c) advanced or vocational studies are identified for use in real practice to provide teachers opportunities to update their knowledge and enhance their academic abilities.

*Teacher Evaluation in the Reform for Whole Person Development*

With the rise of whole person development, teacher evaluation has been challenged in terms of teachers' new roles, teaching contents and materials, and teaching methodologies. Also, as models, teachers have to reconsider some new responsibilities.

*Academic responsibilities of teachers.* In academic circles, Western ideas, such as inquiry-based learning, learning by doing, and problem-based learning have been introduced and promoted among Chinese educators. Some Chinese thinkers believe that the combination of these theories with Chinese practices may help establish a new relationship between teachers and students through reconsideration of teachers' roles and evaluation criteria.

With the new focus on whole person development, a new concept of teachers was formed to influence contemporary teachers. Guo (2002), and Hu (2003) advocate that teachers should diversify their roles. Rather than knowledge deliverers, teachers should be organizers, guides, research participants, and self-evaluators. Shen (2002) calls for teachers to serve as both students' models and friends. Zhang, Yi (2003), a lecturer in Zhengzhou Normal College, specifies ideal types of new teachers for whole person development as: "comprehensive type"—possessing good professional ethics, teaching



methods, interpersonal relationship, and rational and reasoning; “creative type”—demonstrating creativity and flexibility; and “humanized type”—considerate and loving. Her assumption was based on the feedback from student surveys:

We have found from a large quantity of surveys we conducted in recent years that the types of teachers students like the most include (a) the type of dear ones—like mother, sister, or brother; and (b) the easygoing ones—relaxing and humorous and easy to get close to. The types that students dislike the most include (a) solemn and old-fashion type; (b) policeman type; and (c) military officer type. The most used expressions to describe an ideal teacher’s image in students’ surveys include “smile, gentle, impartial, humorous, rational, exquisite, loving, listening, faithful, and emotionally stable” (p. 78).

Zhang, Jishen (2003) concurs with Zhang, criticizing the outdated assertion that to give students’ a cup of water, teachers should first have a bucket of water. The bucket of water may have been used for too long to be full and fresh. Zhi, Zhou, and He (2002) and Zhu (2002) claim that in the education for whole person development, teachers’ qualities are most critical. Qualities are natural endowments refined through education as knowledge and ability are internalized in the mind. Abilities are the manifestations of qualities. The comprehensive qualities of teachers include professional ethics and personal cultivation such as professional commitment, sense of responsibility, and a loving character, physical and psychological qualities such as a good health, strong persistency and abilities to be flexible, adaptable, and challengeable, and profound knowledge and high professional competency such as a sound knowledge structure, creativity, and abilities to renew knowledge.

Whole person development makes it imperative for teachers to possess good qualities in different ways in order to teach and influence students, since there is a strong connection between the qualities of teachers and students. Teacher evaluation should reflect what qualities teachers have and how these qualities benefit students in the process of teaching and learning. The core of teacher evaluation is to improve teachers' professional qualities in order to stimulate students' imagination, creativity, and passion for active learning, and to morally guide students in their moral development.

The new approach that caters to whole person development makes a big change in the concepts of teachers' roles in terms of teaching philosophies, teaching methodologies and student-teacher relations. It is no doubt a revolution in the development of Chinese education and teacher evaluation.

*Roles of models in whole person development.* As one evaluation criterion, the moral behavior of teachers should embody a two-fold task: morally cultivating students and serving as models for students. On the part of students, they have been required to cultivate the qualities of "love and respect for others, distinguishing right from wrong, and building up an ethical integrity and a sense of good faith" (Shao, 2001, December 23). These qualities, however, can neither form spontaneously nor be simply taught in class; the formation of character and values, to a significant extent, is under the influence of character shapers. Li (2002) holds that "teachers are character shapers who influence the development of students' qualities with their own qualities and mould students' characters with their own characters. It is no exaggeration to stress the importance of teachers' personal cultivation" (p. 28). Li claims that teachers can positively influence students when they possess lofty qualities and a sophisticated cultivation of character.

Theoretical research and discussions in the literature are welcome and appreciated by on-site teachers. However, the current problem or the biggest challenge is how to evaluate teaching according to these well-defined criteria, since quite a few of them are hard to measure by using pure statistically measures, and little has been proposed regarding steps leading to or guiding real practice.

#### *Conclusion of the Research*

Elementary school teacher evaluation in China has a relatively short history, but has experienced twists and turns in its development because of four major reasons. First, evaluation criteria have not been firmly developed since they have been continually adjusted to reflect the changing roles of teachers, which have been shaped by social and cultural development over time. Culturally and historically, traditional Chinese teachers enjoyed high social prestige and served as symbols of knowledge. They read intensively the Four Books and the Five Classics and undertook personal cultivation in order to be ethically appropriate and academically knowledgeable. Teachers' dignity and authority therefore became universally accepted. Dominant as they were in class, they had dual roles: imparting knowledge and being moral models for students across dynasties for thousands of years. The 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, saw the critical struggle between tradition and anti-tradition in terms of teachers' roles. Since Western concepts of education were brought into China in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by scholars such as John Dewey, challenges against traditional roles of teachers continued and became extreme from 1966 to 1976 during the Cultural Revolution. Teachers fell from the prestigious status to the lowest social rank and became victims of "the class struggle" in this political movement. Generally speaking, teacher evaluation criteria have shifted between ideological Redness

and Whiteness. In the 1980s and the first half of the 1990s, however, the pendulum swung back. With traditional values of education restored, teachers' dignified position was reestablished. Teaching objectives and methods resumed accordingly, particularly in the reform aimed at whole person development, teachers have been given new titles such as facilitators and guiders to replace the traditional "gardeners", "candles", and "ladders".

Second, traditional values about morality have complicated teacher evaluation. Since ancient times, teachers were expected to be benevolent, righteous, courteous, intelligent, and faithful in order to teach students. Although there was no formal teacher evaluation at that time due to teachers' superior social rank, prerequisites to be qualified as teachers were necessary as far as morality was concerned. One of their major roles was to behave as students' models in self-cultivation. This moral ideal has been held in esteem as a virtue throughout Chinese history and is also reflected in current evaluation criteria. Although the content of moral education has varied over time to embrace different tasks, the moral modeling role of teachers remains the same. Even during the political movements when teaching was politics oriented, teachers' role as models was not shaken. This practice has exerted a positive effect on both traditional society and contemporary education. However, it has resulted in inaccuracy in current teacher evaluation, because often the influence of the ethics of teachers on students is hard to measure. In the educational reform for whole person development, the teacher's role as ethical models has not been weakened but strengthened. Implicit as the reform effort may be, problems caused thereby concerning objectivity remain unsolved. To what extent should teachers foster their students' ethical values? What specific tasks should they be involved in to reflect such influences? And what method(s) should be applied in order to

measure different efforts among teachers? These are the most critical issues being debated in the current literature.

The third cultural factor that has affected teacher evaluation across time is the change of educational goals and theories that have determined teacher evaluation criteria. Throughout history, education functioned to prepare and select government civil officials. Attaining high scores on the imperial examinations became the highest educational goal; methods such as rote memorization were adopted. Although different voices were heard in the Republican era in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the belief that “the worth of other pursuits is small, and the study of books excels all” was the motto until after 1949. During the Cultural Revolution, traditional values were overthrown, social practice replaced book learning and the political behavior of teachers overwhelmed their pursuit of knowledge. Evaluation of teaching was accordingly based on teachers’ ideological stance and engagement in manual labor because the educational goal of the time was to foster “red successors” of the revolutionary cause. With the open-door policy, all-round development and whole person development successively became the major goals of education. Teacher evaluation criteria have been enriched as the reform progressed, covering four major areas: morality, diligence, ability, and achievement. These criteria, however, were not fully implemented during the 1980s and the most of the 1990s due to the fact that traditional educational values were revived. Education to prepare students for national college entrance examinations was practiced to satisfy the needs of parents who hoped the university would provide their children with good professions in the future. Schools sought reputations based on good matriculation rates. Fortunately, this trend has slowed with the spread of the concept of whole person development and

decreased competition for college entrance as the number of universities has grown in recent years discussed in Chapter 5.

Finally, evaluation methods have also been reformed. Although a teacher evaluation system was formally established in China at the beginning of the 1990s, evaluation of teachers in different forms began in 1949. When “politics-in-command” was active and political movements successively took place, criticism, self-criticism, and class struggle became the major methods to assess teaching. When this unhappy era ended, quantification based on students’ test scores played the dominant role in the summative evaluation of teachers. Decisive as test scores were in assessing teaching, they became the most significant guide that tied up teachers and exhausted them in what was called “the sea of exercises” in order to prepare students for examinations. Only in recent years, have diversified methods begun to be employed in teacher evaluation.

Although the development of a formal teacher evaluation system has not been smooth and there still exist problems, the author is optimistic about the future of elementary school teacher evaluation in China. This is because with the emphasis on whole person development, a great effort has been made in teacher evaluation. Measures have been taken by the educational authorities, research has been conducted, and experiments have been piloted nationwide. Theories and practices concerning teacher evaluation from the West have been introduced. New teacher evaluation criteria and methods have been developed and put into practice. For teachers, evaluation means more challenges and also more opportunities for professional development. As problems and difficulties continue in the evaluation process, it is imperative to introduce evaluation theories at the grass roots level and revise the teacher evaluation system on a practical

basis to reflect cultural, traditional, and political influences that have helped improve the development of Chinese education but conversely impeded a sound development of the evaluation system.

This historical analysis of the development of elementary school teacher evaluation was necessary to help inform people about the benefits Chinese education has obtained and the costs it has paid through social and educational reforms. Based on these reforms, practical improvements in teacher evaluation and associated practices may be expected.





## Chapter 5

### Implications and Suggestions

Since Chinese educational reforms began in the 1980s, teacher evaluation has been continuously practiced and gradually improved. Strengths and weaknesses coexist. While educators have achieved much in research and practice, they are still confronted with problems and questions about the improvement of the teacher evaluation system.

Implications in terms of achievements and problems, and suggestions are provided below as the opinion and the effort of the author of this research to contribute to future improvement in teacher evaluation.

#### *Implications*

*Achievement.* There are four major achievements in teacher evaluation. First, the establishment of the formal teacher evaluation system in the early 1990s was a symbol of social reform in which people began to reconsider personal qualities, values, functions, and roles of teachers. Blind belief in teachers' dignity and authority has been gradually eliminated. Second, teacher evaluation has evolved from simple inspection by authorities to the participation of multiple stakeholders, bringing about more credible evaluation outcomes. Teachers have shifted from a passive stance to an active attitude in evaluation activities that allow them to see more clearly their strengths and weaknesses. Third, the current evaluation system, which has evolved from reliance on students' test scores as the sole criterion of success to categorized levels of criteria, has made teacher evaluation more concrete and comprehensive. Teachers' self-evaluation tasks are therefore made more specific and goal-oriented. Fourth, new views on the statistical measurement of teachers' work have provided an opportunity to include qualitative evaluation methods

such as interviews and portfolios, though they are still not used popularly in Chinese elementary schools. However, these new attempts signal alternatives to rigid quantification. Fifth, Chinese educators have shifted teacher evaluation purposes from evaluation for reward and punishment toward professional development. Although this shift is still mostly theoretical, educators and teachers have realized the drawbacks of summative evaluation that has been used for reward and punishment, as well as for teacher placement. Finally, efforts have been encouraged to introduce and study theories from other countries on the one hand, and to explore ways to make borrowed theories workable for the Chinese educational system on the other.

While practicing teacher evaluation in elementary schools, educators and external evaluators strive to diagnose problems encountered and bring them into open academic discourse in the literature, which in return should help improve the evaluation system. For a country like China with a time-honored and complex educational system, this achievement is naturally note-worthy and encouraging.

*Problems.* Problems with the current evaluation system are equally obvious. First, elementary teacher evaluation has not yet eliminated the extensive and almost exclusive use of summative evaluation for reward, punishment, and placement. This is partly because the current examination system still affects teaching and evaluation. Liu Yao (2003), professor and director of the research institute of Zhejiang Normal University, points out that some popular phrases used by educators reflect the selective and judgmental purposes of teacher evaluation, such as “survival of the fittest”, “reward the good and punish the bad”, “eliminate the worst”, and “promotion of the capable and demotion for the incapable.” Although there are regular calls for the promotion of

formative evaluation through reform, reward and punishment still prevail as the principal aims of teacher evaluation. Self-evaluation initiatives of teachers have not yet developed into a strong practice.

Second, quantitative methods still prevail over qualitative methods and students' test scores weigh too significantly in teacher evaluation. As described in Chapter Four, the last decade of the twentieth century experienced the most critical educational problems in Chinese educational reform. In a great mass fervor for the revival of traditional education values, Chinese education went to the other extreme. Education became the most important prerequisite for career success. Guan (2003) et al. points out that since 1985 elementary school education has been obsessed with imparting knowledge for exam results at the expense of fostering students' other abilities. Teaching content has not reflected the development of modern technology and social life, and spoon-feeding and overly heavy homework assignments have not made learning for whole person development more effective. Learning has been driven by students test scores that direct the teaching process and play a significant role in teacher evaluation.

Obviously, the ranking of examination scores intensifies competition among teachers. Some teachers, in the attempt to gain a strong reputation in their competition for students' high scores, have fully occupied students' time and applied unreasonable teaching methods such as assigning an overwhelming volume of drills and exercises. Currently in secondary and elementary schools, the more devoted the teachers are, the heavier the work load their students get (Wang, 2002). Given this system, the advantages to teachers seem to be obvious; with high scores, reputations will grow for certain stakeholders.

Next, teacher evaluation criteria do not match what has been proposed in the literature. Wang (2002) claims that these criteria have not fully served the purposes of teacher evaluation. For example, teachers' implicit moral influences on students are not measured; therefore, they are neglected by teachers. In real practice, teachers' qualities such as creativity, renewal of knowledge, love for students, and commitment have been ignored (Feng, 2002). Some evaluation plans may have included these qualities, but failed to measure them accurately and consistently. Besides, much teacher work is not easily or quantitatively measurable such as moral behavior and various academic endeavors. This can be reflected by what is termed as "veto on one criterion" used by schools. It roughly means that of all the evaluation criteria, one is particularly important, so much so that it is the determining factor. When that criterion is not met satisfactorily the whole evaluation concludes the teacher has failed.

Schools can determine which criterion should critically affect the whole evaluation process but there is no evidence that all schools choose the same criterion to be the decisive one. In places where the rate of matriculation is of great concern, students' test scores may be the decisive criterion to evaluate teaching. Although a teacher performs well academically, if students' test scores are not satisfactory, his teaching as a whole is labeled as a failure. With the examination system in operation, the criterion "achievement" would always be determined by students' test scores, which are considered as indispensable "hard criteria" while other criteria as minor and "soft."

More arguments about evaluation criteria have been centered round two issues: teachers' roles and qualifications of teachers. Li (2003) criticizes traditional teacher-centeredness that has changed the complicated teaching process into a simple delivery of

knowledge that ignores students' dynamic roles, creativity, and differences of ability (p. 4). Scholars also suggest that traditional teacher's roles should be abandoned in order to meet the needs of whole person development. Tai (2003) and Zhu (2002) maintain that the role of teachers should be shifted from dominator and presenter to "facilitator"—guiding the learning process and stimulating students' imagination and passion for study, "cooperator"—communicating with students for interaction, and "researcher"—detecting problems and doing theoretical research to improve teaching. Tai (2003) suggests:

To change the traditional pattern of "I talk, you listen", teachers should actively participate, on an equal basis, in the research of knowledge by students as their friends in order to get to know them well, to share with students their joy and frustration, and to explore problems together with students. The zero distance between teachers and students can only be established in a democratic, agreeable, and cooperative environment in the classroom. In this environment, students would regard the teacher as one of them and feel free to express themselves. This should be the right way to realize development of students' creativity and characteristics. (p. 54)

Chinese elementary school teachers have played multiple roles. In both ancient and contemporary societies, teachers have had to take on tasks in addition to imparting knowledge and helping students make progress academically; their personal virtues, professional ethics, and efforts to foster students' moral growth have also been taken into consideration in judging their work. In other words, they have to be responsible for their own cultivation, their own professional development, and moral behavior, as well as those of their students. This trend has continued with new tasks added at different periods

to make the requirements more complicated. This not only helps people improve themselves in the long run but is necessary to foster social ethics across the country. However, it makes evaluation more difficult with implicit and complicated sub-criteria under the heading of morality or ethics.

### *Recommendations*

The area needing most immediate attention in Chinese education and evaluation is the examination system. Severe competition among students, teachers, and schools was understandable in the past due to the elitist nature of education and the scarcity of resources. In recent years, however, dramatic changes have taken place. Since the 1990s, a large numbers of schools including elementary and secondary schools and institutions of higher learning were established and put into operation. In 2004, the enrollment of universities and colleges increased by 19 percent with 4.47 million students accepted into institutions of higher learning from among the pool of 7.23 million applicants (Jiang, 2005). According to a *China Education Daily* report, the 2005 applicants numbered 8.67million and the planned intake is 4.75 million. Among the 4.75 million students to be enrolled 2.30 million will be at four-year undergraduate institutions. The rest will be studying at three-year colleges (*China Education Daily*, 2005). This means that half of the high school graduates will be able to enjoy post-secondary education. The examination system needs to be changed to cater to the current situation on the one hand and to facilitate students' all-around development on the other hand, because the system expects elementary schools and secondary schools to prepare students with book knowledge alone. This has impeded the development of students' other abilities.

China's social and economic development makes it necessary for students to have practical skills in addition to book knowledge. This has had and will continue to have a great impact on Chinese education. If the national entrance examination for college and university is better aligned with the needs of the national socio-economic development, China's tertiary, secondary, and elementary education will all reap the benefit and be encouraged to adjust to help students prepare for the new exam. Teacher evaluation criteria will be revised accordingly to embrace new ideas discussed earlier about teachers' roles and tasks.

Second, national unified teacher evaluation standards should be established to guide the teacher evaluation process. With such general principles established, local educators and teachers would be better equipped and know more clearly how to conduct teacher evaluation to a professional standard. In a highly centralized country like China, national standards are necessary and would be beneficial to guide evaluation activities. These standards, however, should leave room for schools to make their own additional evaluation plans according to their specific circumstances.

Third, teaching objectives need to be adjusted beyond examination preparation to foster students' abilities to participate, to think, and to explore in a variety of learning activities. In fact, some schools have made constructive experiments in this area. Yang (2002) reports in *Chinese Education Daily* that in 1997 Heshun School in Hebei province experimented with a new approach to teaching termed "three shifts and five lets," suggesting they shift from using the test-cramming method to a heuristic method, from students' passive acceptance to active participation, and from imparting knowledge only to enhancing a combination of knowledge and practice, and encouraging students to

observe, think, express, experiment, and generate conclusions for themselves.

Meanwhile, more students from Heshun School have been accepted by universities in recent years (50% in the late 1980s and 98% in 1997) because of the adoption of the new approaches in teaching. This suggests that the new approach of teaching in Heshun School has fostered students' comprehensive abilities in addition to the grasp of book knowledge. The experiments show that "three shifts and five lets" fits into the reform for whole person development. The school therefore can serve as a very good model for other schools, and its experiments should be extensively adopted nationwide. Other experiments have also been made in some elementary schools, where American teachers were hired and Western teaching methods were applied, such as student-centeredness, hands-on activities, authentic learning environment, and companionship between teachers and students. This is an eye-opener for elementary school teachers because they can have the opportunities to learn from their American counterparts and practice the new methods that may make contributions to whole person development. Appendix C is a picture from *The China Student-Teacher Case—a video ethnography of American preservice teachers teaching in China* (Zeng & Harris, 2002), in which a Western teaching method is demonstrated in the Helen Snow School in Xi'an, China that has given many insights to the teachers of the school. If this ethnography together with other case studies done in China about new ways of teaching can be promoted to more schools, it would benefit the improvement of teaching objectives and methods.

Finally, evaluation criteria and methods related to new concepts of whole person development should include and specify the explicit goal of teachers' professional development. It is also necessary to further clarify the criteria and methods for teacher



evaluation so that they can be put into practice easily. While quantitative methods are extensively used to gather data for some teaching activities, other methods should also be tried out for complementation. According to a report by the Fifth Elementary School in Shanghai published in the *Journal of Shanghai Educational Science and Research* (2002), the following four new methods have been successful experimented to help improve teachers' professional development:

1. Conferences between students and teachers during which the two parties give suggestions about each other' work and identify problems in teaching and learning;
2. Written correspondence between teachers and students during which students treat teachers as their friends and teachers serve as students' sources of ideas to improve learning and enhance the student-teacher relationships;
3. Columns set up as "Students' Voices" and "Teachers' Voices" on the blackboard at the rear part of the classroom where students and teachers can write down their expectations for each other about teaching and learning; and
4. Competitions for rewards such as "the most moving teacher," "teacher with the most special teaching styles," "teacher with the latest teaching concepts," "the understanding teacher," and "the most humorous teacher," etc.

Experiments are being initiated elsewhere, such as in Shangdong and in Fujian provinces. In elementary schools in Shinan District in Qingdao city, Shangdong province (Zhao, 2003), teachers are evaluated and classified into three categories: (a) "master type," very experienced and able to guide new teachers, (b) "backbone type," active in

teaching and productive in research, and (c) “competent type,” able to teach and guide students, with specific requirements for each type. Teachers evaluate themselves by putting themselves into the category they think they belong to. They set up goals for improvement in order to move into a higher category. For those already in the “master type’ category, it is important to stay in the category and to make progress continuously so as to live up to their own and others’ expectations.

At Dongguan elementary school in Gaomi county, Shandong province (Zhao, 2003), teacher evaluation is conducted in six steps: (a) self-evaluation which is taken as the most important; (b) evaluation by colleagues; (c) students’ monthly survey ratings under the headings of “style of work,” “work attitude,” “teaching abilities,” “attitudes towards students,” “homework assignments,” “homework grading,” and “tutoring students,” which are rated as “excellent,” “good,” and “average;” (d) parents’ monthly survey and end-of-the-term conferences; each month, there are a few open days for parents’ visits to give suggestions to teachers and the school; (e) evaluation by school authorities, which is comprehensive and includes including teaching ethics, knowledge scope, and academic abilities; and (f) teachers’ portfolio in which records of teachers’ professional development are kept including lesson plans, observation records by school authorities and colleagues, publications, interactions with students, and honors received for teaching and research.

It is apparent that teacher evaluation has been piloted in different places, but what is lacking is effective communication and better coordination efforts at local and national levels. China has 456,900 public and 5,122 private elementary schools, which makes it crucial to make the evaluation system efficient and effective. It is important that local

associations and annual conferences about teacher evaluation aim at sharing nationwide the experiments with positive results, solving problems of local schools, and finding solutions based on local conditions. To balance out the influence of a long tradition of examination-dominated education system and to promote whole person development, these measures should apply.



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Appendix A:

CHINESE DYNASTIES

*From Non-Western traditions, Alternative approaches to educational thought and practice.* (Reagan, Y. 2000, p. 102).

Xia Dynasty	21 <sup>st</sup> to 16 <sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E.
Shang Dynasty	16 <sup>th</sup> to 11 <sup>th</sup> centuries E.C.E.
Western Chou Dynasty	11 <sup>th</sup> century to 771 B.C.E.
Spring and Autumn Period	770 to 476 B.C.E.
Warring States Period	475 to 221 B.C.E.

First Unification

Ch'in Dynasty	221 to 207 B.C.E.
Western Han Dynasty	206 B.C.E. to 24 C.E.
Eastern Han Dynasty	25 C.E. to 220 C.E.
First Partition	
Three Kingdoms Period	220 C.E. to 265 C.E.
Shu Dynasty	
Wei Dynasty	
Wu Dynasty	

Second Unification

Western Jin Dynasty	265 C.E. to 316 C.E.
Eastern Jin Dynasty	317 C.E. to 420 C.E.
Song Dynasty	420 C.E. to 479 C.E.
Second Partition	
Northern and Southern Dynasties	479 C.E. to 581 C.E.
Qi Dynasty	
Liang Dynasty	
Chen Dynasty	
Northern Wei Dynasty	
Western Wei Dynasty	
Eastern Wei Dynasty	
Northern Qi Dynasty	
Northern Zhou Dynasty	

Third Unification

Sui Dynasty	581 C.E. to 618 C.E.
Tang Dynasty	618 C.E. to 907 C.E.
Third Partition	
Five Dynasties Period	907 C.E. to 960 C.E.
Later Liang Dynasty	

Later Tang Dynasty

Later Qi Dynasty

Later Han Dynasty

Later Chou Dynasty

Fourth Unification

Northern Song Dynasty 960 C.E. to 1127 C.E.

Southern Song Dynasty 1127 C.E. to 1279 C.E.

Liao Dynasty 916 C.E. to 1125 C.E.

Jin Dynasty 1115 C.E. to 1234 C.E.

Yuan Dynasty 1271 C.E. to 1368 C.E.

Ming Dynasty 1368 C.E. to 1644 C.E.

Qing Dynasty 1644 C.E. to 1911 C.E.

Establishment of the Republic 1912 C.E. to 1949 C.E.

Establishment of the People's Republic of China 1949—

Appendix B  
Form 1 Evaluation Criteria for Teaching Work (45 points)  
(Hou, 1996, pp. 422-424)

Criteria	Rank Standards	Score Range	Scores			
			1	2	3	4
<i>Preparation For Class</i> (5 points)	A: (1) complete lesson plans (2) school requirements (3) appropriate goals (4) content for ideological education (5) measures to foster abilities (6) contents for academic development	5 ~ 4.1				
	B: meet with 1 ~ 5 of A C: meet with 1 ~ 4 of A D: failure to meet with C	4 ~ 3.1 3 ~ 2.1 2 ~ 0				
<i>Classroom Teaching<sup>1</sup></i> (17 points)	A: (1) obtain above 85 points for classroom teaching evaluation (14 ~ 11.3) (2) rate of students' satisfaction above 85 % (3 ~ 2.5)	Sum of the two numbers				
	B: obtain 84 ~ 75 points of A 1) (11.2 ~ 8.5), and 84 ~ 75% of A 2) (2.4 ~ 1.9) C: Obtain 74 ~ 60 points of A 1) (8.4 ~ 5.7) and 74 ~ 60% of A 2) (1.8 ~ 1.3) D: obtain below 59 points of A 1) (5.6 ~ 0) and below 59% of A 2) (1.2 ~ 0)	Sum of the two numbers Sum of the two numbers Sum of the two numbers				
<i>Homework</i> (3 points)	A: (1) timely grade 2) specific feedback (3) appropriate amount 4) well-targeted	3 ~ 2.5				
	B: meet with 1 ~ 3 of A C: meet with 1 ~ 2 of A D: cannot meet with C	2.4 ~ 1.9 1.8 ~ 1.3 1.2 ~ 0				
<i>Tutoring</i> (3 points)	A: (1) on needs basis (2) concrete help (3) patient with slow students (4) active to help advanced students	3.6 ~ 2.5				
	B: meet with 1 ~ 3 of A C: meet with 1 ~ 2 of A D: cannot meet with C	2.4 ~ 1.9 1.8 ~ 1.3 1.2 ~ 0				
<i>Evaluation Of Classes</i> (3 points)	A: (1) classroom teaching evaluation (2) a complete evaluation record (3) the standards accurately followed (4) objective outcomes	3 ~ 2.5				
	B: meet with 1 ~ 3 of A C: meet with 1 ~ 2 of A D: cannot meet with C	2.4 ~ 1.9 1.8 ~ 1.3 1.2 ~ 0				
<i>Research</i> (3 points)	A: (1) research topics (2) a research plan (3) implementation (4) methods	3 ~ 2.5				
	B: meet with 1 ~ 3 of A C: meet with 1 ~ 2 of A D: cannot meet with C	2.4 ~ 1.9 1.8 ~ 1.3 1.2 ~ 0				

Continued:

<i>Attendance</i> (3 points)	<b>A:</b> full attendance the whole semester	3 ~ 2.5
	<b>B:</b> absent below 5 times	2.4 ~ 1.9
	<b>C:</b> absent below 8 times	1.8 ~ 1.3
	<b>D:</b> absent above 9 times	1.2 ~ 0
<i>Work Load</i> (8 points)	$(\text{Hours taught} / \text{required hours}) \times 4 + (\text{hours for Other work} / 10) \times 2 + (\text{additional hours taught} / 8)$ x 2	Score obtained from the formula
<i>Summary</i> (45 points)	Sum of all scores for the criteria above	

Specifications: Hours for other work and additional hours are limited to 10 for other work and 8 for additional classes. Those that surpass the limit will not be accounted for payment.



Form 2 Evaluation Criteria for Academic Achievement (45 points)  
(Hou, 1996, p. 425)

Criteria	Rank Standards	Score Range	Scores
<i>Teaching Effects</i> (10 points)	<b>A:</b> 1) good class management 2) rapport between teacher and students 3) 95% of students highly engaged	10 ~ 8.1	
	<b>B:</b> meet with 1) and 2) of A, but 89 ~ 75% students meet with 3) of A	8 ~ 6.1	
	<b>C:</b> meet with 1) and 2) of A, but 74 ~ 60% students meet with 3) of A	6 ~ 4.1	
	<b>D:</b> cannot not meet with C	4 ~ 0	
<i>Achievement</i> (based on students school tests) (25 points)	<b>A:</b> improvement rate* $X \geq 0.05$ (students' average score: 95%)	25 ~ 20.1	
	<b>B:</b> improvement rate $0.05 > X \geq 0.02$ (students' average scores: 94 ~ 75 %)	20 ~ 15.1	
	<b>C:</b> improvement rate $0.02 > X \geq 0$ (students' average scores: 74 ~ 60%)	15 ~ 10.1	
	<b>D:</b> improvement rate $0 > X$ (students' average scores: below 59%)	10 ~ 0	
<i>Research Outcomes</i> (10 points)	<b>A:</b> outcomes contributed to the improvement of teaching and communicated among teachers within the district and city (or published in correspondent academic journals)	10 ~ 8.1	
	<b>B:</b> outcomes contributed to the improvement of teaching and communicated among teachers within school or published in school academic journal	8 ~ 6.1	
	<b>C:</b> outcomes contributed to the improvement of teaching	6 ~ 4.1	
	<b>D:</b> cannot meet with C	4 ~ 0	
Results	Sum of the scores for all the criteria above		

- Specification: 1) Improvement rate\* is obtained from the formula  $X = C/D - A/B$ .  
C: average score of the class; A, B: the average score of the previous class and of the grade (the rate of passing, the rate of excellence)
- 2) Educational effects can also be evaluated by way of gathering information during the semester or by way of surveys to students and parents.

Form 3 Evaluation Criteria System for Classroom Teaching  
(Hou, 1996, pp. 427-428)

- 
- A<sub>1</sub> Clear goals and appropriate requirements (16%)
- B<sub>1</sub> Set up feasible objectives based on the overall goals of the teaching program.
  - B<sub>2</sub> Have appropriate requirements from a practical basis.
  - B<sub>3</sub> Teach according to teaching purposes and requirements.
- A<sub>2</sub> Proper contents and balance of knowledge (16%)
- B<sub>4</sub> A balance of imparting knowledge and educating people, and soundness of teaching contents are obtained.
  - B<sub>5</sub> Appropriate amount of knowledge and thinking, as well as right difficulty level of knowledge are engaged.
  - B<sub>6</sub> Have a good layout of contents in terms of unity and coherence.
- A<sub>3</sub> Appropriate teaching methods and steps (18%)
- B<sub>7</sub> Choose appropriate and effective teaching methods on a practical basis.
  - B<sub>8</sub> Guide students to use right study methods and foster their habit for study.
  - B<sub>9</sub> Enlighten students and engage their minds for free thinking.
  - B<sub>10</sub> Provide feedback and adjust teaching timely to achieve efficiency
  - B<sub>11</sub> Choose appropriate teaching aids and props.
  - B<sub>12</sub> Lecture is clear, accurate, passionate, and logic; blackboard writing is well organized.
- A<sub>4</sub> Fundamental knowledge (18%)
- B<sub>13</sub> Reach correct concepts and rules through observation, comparison, inclusion, and deduction based on students' original knowledge level.
  - B<sub>14</sub> Help students obtain skills through training.
  - B<sub>15</sub> Help students understand and apply concepts and rules.
  - B<sub>16</sub> Help students recall timely and merge new knowledge into existing knowledge.
- A<sub>5</sub> Students' academic development and abilities. (18%)
- B<sub>17</sub> Foster students' academic abilities of the subject area.
  - B<sub>18</sub> Foster students' general abilities such as observation, thinking, recalling, and imagination, hands-on abilities, creativity, and abilities to study on their own.
- A<sub>6</sub> Environment and personal qualities (14%)
- B<sub>19</sub> Establish rapport with students to enliven the atmosphere in class.
  - B<sub>20</sub> Create situations to stimulate students' interests.
  - B<sub>21</sub> Foster sound personal qualities such as will, makings, and characters.
-

Form 4 Evaluation Form for Classroom Teaching  
(Hou, 1996, pp. 428-429)

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Subject _____	Topic _____
School _____	Class _____
Teacher _____	Date _____

	Level	Excellence	Good	Average	Poor
Criteria	Score				
A <sub>1</sub> Clear goals and appropriate requirements		16, 15, 14, 13	12, 11, 10	9, 8	7, 6
A <sub>2</sub> Proper contents and balance of knowledge		16, 15, 14, 13	12, 11, 10	9, 8	7, 6
A <sub>3</sub> Appropriate teaching methods and steps		18, 17, 16, 15	14, 13, 12	11, 10, 9	8, 7
A <sub>4</sub> Fundamental knowledge		18, 17, 16, 15	14, 13, 12	11, 10, 9	8, 7
A <sub>5</sub> Students' academic development and Abilities		18, 17, 16, 15	14, 13, 12	11, 10, 9	8, 7
A <sub>6</sub> Environment and personal qualities		14, 13, 12	11, 10, 9	8, 7	6, 5

Major strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths—

Weaknesses—

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

---

Calculation and Final Rating

Formula 1: the average score of evaluation for each criterion

$$\bar{X}_i = 1/N_{j=1}^N \sum X_j$$

( $\bar{X}_i$ : the score for criterion 'i', N: number of evaluators,

$\bar{X}_j$ : score each evaluator gives for criterion 'i'.)

$$Y = \sum_{i=1}^6 \bar{X} \quad (Y: \text{comprehensive score})$$

The comprehensive score is not final for classroom teaching since it is the score obtained by the evaluation group. The evaluated teacher may also use the same forms to do self-evaluation; the score obtained should be considered together with that from evaluation group. The relative weights of individual and group scores are not specified; schools are to make that decision. Form 5 shows final report of the ranks of teachers:

Form 5 Conclusive Form of Classroom Teaching Evaluation

(Hou, 1996, p. 430)

Topic		School		
Class		Date		
Teacher evaluated		Score		
Level	Excellence 100-83	Good 82-70	Average 69-60	Poor 59-38
Comments:				

Appendix C:

The China Student-Teacher Case—a video ethnography of American preservice teachers teaching in China (Zeng & Harris, 2002)

The screenshot shows a software interface titled "ClickMe! The China Student Teaching Problem Solving". The interface is divided into several sections:

- Left Sidebar:** A vertical menu with buttons for "Pedagogy", "Problem Solving", "Two Way Impact", "Cultural Adaptation", "Custom Studies", "Study Builder", "Text", "Internet", and "Credits".
- Center:** A video player showing a female teacher in a classroom. The video has a play button and a progress bar.
- Right Panel:** A grid of nine name boxes for student input. The names are: Brianne, Elizabeth, Jenni W (highlighted with a red border), Jenny I, Kathy, Katie, Natalie, Petra, and All Clips in Sequence.
- Bottom Section:** Three tabs: "Professional Literature", "Student Teacher's Perspective", and "Teacher Educator's Perspective". Below these is a text box containing a quote from Jenni West: "CLIP 3: Jenni West I can see we learn a great deal from them. First the teaching methods, of course, they are all English language experts. So, they can make their lessons full of fun. The children like their lessons very much. I can see English has become their favorite. The second, their teaching method is various, various. They use simple word, picture, all of them can draw pictures. They use body language, and of course they use a low-speed of the language to make the kids understand what they teach. (teacher Huang)".

The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the system clock and various application icons, including OmegaWare.