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Shifts in Knowledge Teaching: The unexpected consequences of assessment practices on secondary history

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Abstract
This article considers how and why knowledge in the discipline of history has undergone significant shifts as a result of the introduction of a standards-based form of assessment. Knowledge expectations have shifted surreptitiously, without deliberate intent and without the changes being formalised in documentation. In examining these shifts, consideration is given to the complex interplay between knowledge teaching, a ‘skills-based’ assessment system, and the political and administrative forces that have influenced these transformations. Specific decisions concerning standards development and examination processes, along with the uneasy relationship between ‘prescribed’ knowledge and assessment have, over the past decade, increasingly driven selections on the knowledge that should be taught and the knowledge that can strategically be left out of programmes, indicating an overall trend towards reduced breadth of knowledge.

Introduction
In response to the introduction and implementation of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) in New Zealand from 2002, subtle and incremental shifts of practice have altered aspects of the canon of disciplinary knowledge for the senior subject of history. There has been a move away from teaching breadth of historical knowledge in favour of learning in-depth smaller parcels of knowledge and within this shift is the focussing of learning upon selected historical events, personalities or historical arguments. While some shifts in knowledge may have been anticipated, such as a targeting of historical perspectives or of the concept of historical identity in line with the skills and concepts identified in the assessment programme, the extent of the modifications to knowledge teaching are a substantially unplanned consequence. The forces of national policy making in relation to writing standards, without parallel and simultaneous consideration given to development of curriculum, and the subsequent implementation of national assessment processes through decisions taken on examination formats, have led to unpredictable, inconsistent and changing outcomes in relation to knowledge requirements. While the history standards can be seen to reflect some of the ideas expressed in educational scholarship at that time, such as engagement in historian’s processes and developing understanding of historical perspectives, the place of knowledge in relation to assessment was not adequately addressed. Documentation from the development period of the NCEA strongly indicates that there was a belief
that the ‘curriculum’ could substantially remain unchanged and that the achievement standards were the tool to precisely assess defined historical skills and concepts. Therefore, the gradual shifts in teachers’ approaches to knowledge can be seen as an unexpected consequence of assessment practices. This article focuses particularly on knowledge that is assessed nationally in end-of-year examinations since the content for the internally assessed components of the history standards is not prescribed.

It is an opportune time to reflect back on nearly a decade of the NCEA as we begin to move into a new era with the Achievement Standards currently being revised to align with the new New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007). The implementation of the revised standards began this year with Year 11, while Year 12 and 13 are to follow in 2012 and 2013. In the future, it seems likely that changes to knowledge teaching will proceed at an even faster pace. ‘Prescribed’ knowledge will no longer be specified in the standards and teachers and history departments in schools will have the autonomy to determine their programmes in alignment with a broadly written New Zealand Curriculum.

Knowledge and Assessment

The ambiguous relationship, over the past decade, between an assessment programme and the knowledge it purports to assess, stems in part from the disconnected nature of these components during the development of the NCEA assessment programme. The primary focus of the writers for the NCEA was to develop Achievement Standards upon which to assess the skills and critical features of the historian’s discipline. This led to the development of standards that appraise students’ historical skills such as research, interpretation of historical sources, and essay writing, as well as students’ conceptual understandings such as their recognition of differing perspectives, cause and consequence, individual and group identity, and the influence of historical forces or movements (refer Appendix 1). The content knowledge that was to be used as a context for the assessments was to derive from the former prescriptions for senior history and there was little opportunity for the writers to revisit an existing framework of history topics and themes. While the prescriptions for history officially became defunct upon the introduction of the new assessment regime, the knowledge requirements, in the form of listed topics and themes, were included within the explanatory notes of the externally assessed achievement standards (see Table 1). Although the detail of the focus questions and historical content listed in the former prescriptions was absent, there was an expectation that teachers would continue to teach the same disciplinary knowledge as they had in the past. Writers across all the subjects attempted to demonstrate how existing content prescriptions aligned with the standards and throughout the process of writing the Achievement Standards and explaining the standards to teachers during professional development sessions, the NCEA was explained in terms of being a new form of assessment, not a curriculum. Teachers were assured that their programmes did not have to change substantially and that the teaching content remained the same.

Questions posed in the ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ segment of the Teacher Handbooks for history used for professional development and published by the Ministry of Education in 2001, prior to implementation of the NCEA, addressed the issue of the relationship between content knowledge and the Achievement Standards.
Will teaching programmes have to change?
Response: No, there should be no need to change programmes to accommodate the new qualifications. Achievement standards describe only what the qualifications designer expects students to get out of their learning programme and what assessors look for in assessment. (Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 13)

Why has a change in qualifications meant a change in the history curriculum?
Response: There has been no change in the history curriculum. The School Certificate prescription and the Level One Achievement and Unit Standards have all been derived from the 1989 syllabus document. (Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 16)

However, as a consequence of decisions made in implementing the standards, teachers have increasingly selected ‘appropriate’ knowledge bites and constructed them from particular angles to best fit the assessment requirements. This has created significant shifts in both history programmes and knowledge acquisition by students. It should be noted, however, that while this trend is evident through viewing students’ examination responses and engaging with teachers in discussions about their programmes, teachers across the country have interpreted the knowledge needs of their students in relation to assessment, in different ways. They have framed their programmes accordingly, resulting in considerable variability in the breadth, depth and foci of history programmes.
Table 1
Topics and Themes Listed in the Explanatory Notes for history Achievement Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NCEA LEVEL</th>
<th>THEMES</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Social Welfare</td>
<td>• New Zealand 1891–1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Year 11)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• USA 1929-1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Social Welfare in the Maori World 1918–1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Race Relations</td>
<td>• New Zealand, Maori and Pakeha 1912–1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• South Africa 1938–1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td>• New Zealand’s Search for Security 1945–1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Origins of World War II 1919–1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Maori in a Post-Colonial World 1950-1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revolutionary Leadership</td>
<td>• China 1921-1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• USSR 1924-1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Change</td>
<td>• Women’s Impact on New Zealand Society: Health 1915–1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Black Civil Rights in the USA 1954–1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The Place of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in New Zealand Society 1975–1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>• Ireland 1909–1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Palestine-Israel 1935–1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>• Industrial and Social Change</td>
<td>• Nationalism, International Relations and the Search for Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Year 12)</td>
<td>• Nationalism, International Relations and the Search for Security</td>
<td>• Government and Political Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Imperialism, Indigenous Peoples and the Emergence of Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 (Year 13)</td>
<td>England 1558-1667</td>
<td>New Zealand in the Nineteenth Century</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why were shifts in knowledge teaching unexpected?

If we look to international examples there is recognition that standards-based assessment systems, in their many different forms, can relegate knowledge to a position that sits behind skills and competencies, and that the standards or expected outcomes become the main driving force for decisions about what is taught. In writing about the educational reforms in South Africa, Stephanie Allais (2006) noted, “The idea is that learning programmes should be ‘designed down’ from these ‘standards’ – the content, learning methodologies and assignments must be selected in order to achieve the standards” (p. 25). This view has increasingly become the reality in many senior secondary subjects under the NCEA with assessment being in the educational driving seat. While in New Zealand, it has been the responses to a skills-focussed standards-based assessment system that has initiated some significant shifts in knowledge teaching, education systems internationally using “new models of national curriculum. . . [that] focus on generic skills or capacities instead of a detailed specification of knowledge/content. . . [are similarly being] criticised for stripping knowledge out of the curriculum” (Priestley, 2001, p. 221). In New Zealand however, the impacts of standards-based assessment on the teaching of historical knowledge seems to have been a largely unintentional and unanticipated outcome. The practice of developing one feature at a time (the standards, the examination formats, and recently The New Zealand Curriculum) has made it difficult to recognise the overall impact of many small changes over the decade of the NCEA’s existence.

For example, the developing realisation by both students and teachers that selective knowledge serves the assessment programme well, has been a gradual but significant shift. Students can concentrate on narrowly confined portions of knowledge to prepare material for the specific requirements of examinations. If we consider the example of the Level 2 standard AS2.6: “Examine individual or group identity in an historical setting, in an essay,” which assesses students’ understanding of ‘individual or group identity,’ such a focus would seem to be historically important in the teaching of any historical topic since political, revolutionary, and ideologically driven leaders and groups have been influential in creating the changes or continuities that comprise history. However, in practice, students only need to have a grasp of one individual or one group in an entire year’s learning to achieve at the highest level in this standard. Over time, therefore, there has been a move towards investigating a selected individual or group in some depth but relegating other significant individuals or groups to a much reduced overview, or not at all. Teachers, and students, have selected their individual or group for study well ahead of the examination leading to the unexpected outcome of limiting knowledge acquisition as students pre-prepare their responses. In striving towards “measurable learning outcomes and competencies,” this contraction in knowledge learning can perhaps be seen as symptomatic of a trend in educational reforms that leads “to a reduction or even an ‘evacuation of content’”(Young, 2010, p. 21).

The shift in content described above encompasses a complex interplay of decision making involving the writing of the standards, the writing of subsequent examination papers, and the implementation of the standards through New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) practices. While in retrospect it could be argued that the writers of
the history standards confined the learning of historical knowledge through separately assessing the critical components of the discipline, rather than assessing historical knowledge more expansively, the impact of such decisions on knowledge would have been difficult to foresee because of the interrelationship between those decisions and decisions that went beyond the writing of the standards. In the first few years after the NCEA’s introduction, teachers did not respond by targeting the learning so precisely or narrowly to the requirements of the various standards but over time the selection of content has become tuned to what is needed to succeed in assessments, at the expense of broader, more comprehensive approaches.

The potential for a piecemeal approach to knowledge was acknowledged in a review of the literature on standards-based assessment in New Zealand in 2005 when Peter Rawlings et al. (2005) noted, “holistic knowledge and understanding gives way to knowledge that is more easily measured at the expense of critical, creative and integrated thinking” (p. 109). However, teachers were given assurance by the Ministry of Education that the cohesion of a subject would not be affected by that the organisation of assessment into distinctly assessable components. The response to a ‘Frequently Asked Question’ that asked “Doesn’t the division of subjects into achievement standards destroy the holism of a subject?” was “No. Achievement standards by and large have been written for the natural and familiar parts, or ‘topics’ of the conventional school subjects…. Traditional examinations have questions, or sets of questions, on these ‘separate topics’” (Ministry of Education, Workshops 1 & 2, p. 7). While there is considerable debate, and little clarity, on the relative benefits of an assessment methodology that encourages cohesive approaches in historical learning versus an assessment regime that, through its skills and concepts framework, has the potential to lead to atomised practises, it is clear that the impact of standards-based assessment has created changes that were not fully anticipated or appreciated.

The policy decision of the NZQA to assess each Achievement Standard in separate examination papers has also impacted upon knowledge. Students are presented with three or four different examination papers, one for each of the externally assessed standards, and different marking panels assess these papers. This procedural policy was not known when the Achievement Standards were initially drafted. It was thought that there would be a single examination paper (following the practice of the former national examinations) where the examination as a whole could assess students’ understanding of historical knowledge and skills and where different aspects of knowledge could be examined, creating coverage of essential disciplinary understandings, across the paper.6

Frequently Asked Question: Will written examinations be the same as they are now?
Response: Yes. Examinations will be laid out in sections (as they are now) with different sections pertaining to different achievement standards. This will enable standard by standard marking if this is appropriate.
(Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 8)
From an assessment viewpoint both advantages and disadvantages can be discerned from this practice. One of the benefits of separate papers is that the distinction between the assessable components has been made clear and students can be taught to be selective in their response to achieve the required targeting of the achievement criteria. However, from a knowledge viewpoint students have demonstrated astute awareness that they can prepare a limited range of what they have been taught in a year in the knowledge that they can use the same ‘knowledge bite’ for each of their external examinations because of the separate marking panels. Students may, by perhaps mid-way through the school year, decide that they have sufficient knowledge to address the exam by limiting their learning to fewer topics, in the knowledge that these are sufficient to address the examination. Any further topics the teacher teaches are, therefore, redundant. This helps explain why some teachers have now shifted their practices and teach fewer topics at Years 11 and 12.

**Shifts in knowledge emphases and teaching**

The key shifts evident in the learning of historical content include a reduction in the breadth of knowledge taught in any year’s programme, an increase in depth of knowledge, but only for targeted aspects of knowledge, and altered emphases and perceptions of knowledge through a targeting of the conceptual understandings assessed in the standards. The extent to which knowledge teaching has shifted is uneven across the year levels, and across standards, largely as a result of differences in the way in which the standards have been assessed. Depending on factors such as the degree to which examination questions are aligned to the precise wording of the standards, or whether choice is given in the examination questions, or whether generic or topic specific essay questions are written, different approaches to determining essential knowledge has been adopted by teachers. Students may be best served by drawing knowledge broadly from a topic to convey key ideas, or, in other situations, by focussing more narrowly upon aspects such as actions and perspectives of an individual or group, or by reframing knowledge to give it particular emphasis in service of an historical argument. Genres that best suit a particular achievement standard have increasingly been gradually been recognised and favoured.
### Table 2
**Comparison of Essay Questions for Levels 1 and 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AS1.5 Describe an historical development, in an essay</th>
<th>Former School Certificate Essay Question 2000</th>
<th>NCEA Essay Question for AS 1.5 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement Criteria (for Achievement level)</td>
<td>Topic: Origins of World War II 1919-1941</td>
<td>Topic: Origins of World War II 1919-1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Describe the cause(s) and/or course and/or consequence(s) of an historical development</td>
<td>What attempts were made to restore and maintain peace after World War I, 1919-1920? How did people and countries react to these attempts to restore and maintain peace up to 1930?</td>
<td>What measures were taken in 1919 and 1920 to help restore and maintain peace after World War I? How did countries respond to these measures up to 1924?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Structure the historical information in a satisfactory essay format</td>
<td>What measures were taken in 1919 and 1920 to help restore and maintain peace after World War I? How did countries respond to these measures up to 1924?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AS2.6 Examine individual or group identity in an historical setting, in an essay</th>
<th>NCEA Essay Question for AS 2.6 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement Criteria (for Achievement level)</td>
<td>Describe and explain how a series of crises and events over time helped shape the characteristics/identity of a specific individual or group. Describe and explain how the specific individual or group expressed their identity though their actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify and describe some factors that have contributed to the formation of an individual or group identity, and ways the identity was expressed, in an historical setting</td>
<td>Describe and explain how a series of crises and events over time helped shape the characteristics/identity of a specific individual or group. Describe and explain how the specific individual or group expressed their identity though their actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Describe characteristics of the individual or group identity</td>
<td>Describe and explain how a series of crises and events over time helped shape the characteristics/identity of a specific individual or group. Describe and explain how the specific individual or group expressed their identity though their actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Structure and organise information and ideas in an appropriate essay format</td>
<td>Describe and explain how a series of crises and events over time helped shape the characteristics/identity of a specific individual or group. Describe and explain how the specific individual or group expressed their identity though their actions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comparison of Year 11 (Level 1) and Year 12 (Level 2) questions for the standards which assess essay writing, provides an example of how differences in implementation impact upon knowledge (see Table 2). For the Year 11 Achievement Standard 1.5: “Describe an historical development, in an essay,” a focus on broad knowledge has prevailed since examiners continued the former practice of writing essay questions that were specific to the defined topics and could be drawn from any part of that topic (see Table 2). Such questions have usually assessed a substantial portion of a topic and encouraged students to learn the breadth of the topic. In contrast, at Year 12, for Achievement Standard 2.6: “Examine individual or group identity in an historical setting, in an essay,” essay questions have been generic and able to be applied to any topic the students have studied during the year. The generic nature of the question has enabled Year 12 history students to bring a narrow selection of learned content to bear upon the question. Furthermore, the wording of the achievement criteria for Level 2 has been adhered to quite closely in framing the essay question. For example, “Describe characteristics of the individual or group identity” has reasonably close alignment with “Describe . . . how the specific individual or group expressed their identity.” This has restricted the scope of the questions and resulted in a fair degree of predictability from
year to year. Level 1, in comparison, demonstrates a freer and more limited alignment to the wording of the standard. This characterises the variance in implementation practices.

**Breadth vs Depth of knowledge**

One feature of the shift to reduced breadth of knowledge has been the reduction in the number of topics teachers address in any year’s programme. This is one of the few consequences of the ‘new’ assessment that was recognised early in the implementation phase since most standards were to be assessed using the content knowledge from one topic only. The most noticeable impact is for Level 1 history when the number of topics taught typically halved from the former six required for School Certificate to three under the NCEA (see Table 3). There has been a consequential impact in reducing the range of times, places and significant historical ideas that Year 11 students learn about. A similar reduction of breadth has been evident in other humanities subjects. For example, for Classical Studies a reduction at Level 2 from five to three topics has had the effect of limiting student’s opportunities to compare Roman and Greek situations. Prior to the introduction of the NCEA examinations it was common for teachers to teach the topic ‘Athenian Social Life’ and follow that with addressing the topic ‘Roman Social Life’ but only one topic is required to address the standard AS 2.3: “Examine in essay format an aspect of the classical world.” Similarly, in art history there has been an increasing trend in the last few years towards teaching two topics at Level 3 rather than the four topics formerly required for the Bursary examination. This has the potential to reduce students’ ability to recognise and understand the influences and commonalities of artistic endeavours between regions, nations, and time periods, or to understand recurring themes, ideas, actions, and consequences in history.

A further factor in reducing the need for students to gain a breadth of knowledge was the decision to assess students’ analysis of historical sources at Levels 1 (AS 1.3: “Interpret historical sources”) and 2 (AS 2.3: “Examine evidence in historical sources”) using historical contexts that are unrelated to the topics students have learned during the year. From a practical viewpoint, this was a suitable solution to developing separate examination resource booklets and questions for the large number of topics available for selection (16 topics at Level 1 and 30 topics at Level 2), but it highlights the difficulties that emerge when an assessment programme is developed without simultaneously reviewing and modifying the prescription or curriculum that students will be taught. While the former Sixth Form Certificate programme (Year 12), which had been fully internally assessed, could conveniently offer in its prescription 25 topics because teachers could independently examine the topics they selected, with the nationwide assessment being introduced for Year 12 such a task became unmanageable. So students can prepare for the skills assessed in the standard such as methodologies for interpreting statistical tables, or interpreting historical documents, but inevitably the lack of contextual knowledge that students bring to such interpretations is limited and can lead to fairly simplistic notions, or, more commonly, lead to the examiner making a very careful selection of resources so that contextual knowledge beyond that given in the resources is not required. Historical knowledge, as conveyed through political cartoons for example, has proved to be a problematical in examinations since interpretation of
cartoons normally requires quite extensive contextual knowledge of people, actions, viewpoints and events of the given time and place. While this genre of primary source is commonly associated with the study of history, only easily read examples have been included in the NCEA examinations, perhaps with the outcome that neither the skills nor the knowledge of students are being extended or challenged. The emphasis on skills, while exhibiting potential benefits in mastering historical procedures, relegates knowledge to a secondary position.

Table 3
Reduced Breadth of Knowledge – The number of topics normally taught in a year’s programme for Senior history, art history and Classical Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-NCEA</th>
<th>Under the NCEA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Former School Certificate, Sixth Form Certificate and Bursary Examinations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HISTORY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 (Year 11)</td>
<td>6 topics</td>
<td>Usually 3 topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 (Year 12)</td>
<td>3 topics</td>
<td>2 or 3 topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 (Year 13)</td>
<td>1 topic (all year)</td>
<td>1 topic (all year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ART HISTORY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 (Year 12)</td>
<td>2 topics</td>
<td>2 topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 (Year 13)</td>
<td>4 topics</td>
<td>3 topics (increasingly 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CLASSICAL STUDIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 (Year 12)</td>
<td>5 topics</td>
<td>3 topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 (Year 13)</td>
<td>4 topics</td>
<td>3 topics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, the examination of sources without the opportunity to reference substantial context, brings into question one of the goals of a skills-based approach for learning history – that students have an opportunity to gain meaningful learning about an historian’s discipline. Christine Counsell (2011) notes, “One cannot simply replicate historians’ processes in a classroom” (p. 202). Therefore, under examination conditions of these barely contextualised sources, the dangers of distorting historical ‘truths’ and process is increased.

Altered emphases and perceptions of knowledge
The targeting of conceptual understandings in many of the standards has led to shifts in emphasis and perceptions of knowledge. In history there was a clear intention when the standards were written, to put some degree of focus on critical conceptual understandings, or what are often referred to as ‘second order’ concepts, such as cause and consequence, historical change and continuity, and historical significance, but these were seen at the time as being within the frame of what was already being taught when teachers engaged in teaching a ‘prescribed’ topic. However, with these conceptual understandings becoming the focus for assessment, perceptions of important knowledge and their emphases shifted significantly.
Table 4
Achievement Standard Criteria for AS 2.5: Examine how a force or movement in an historical setting influenced people’s lives, in an essay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Achievement with Merit</th>
<th>Achievement with Excellence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe cause(s) and / or consequence(s) of action(s) and / or event(s) related to a force or movement in an historical setting.</td>
<td>Explain cause(s) and / or consequence(s) of action(s) and / or event(s) related to a force or movement in an historical setting.</td>
<td>Comprehensively and accurately explain cause(s) and / or consequence(s) of action(s) and / or event(s) related to a force or movement in an historical setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the influence on people’s lives of the force or movement in the historical setting.</td>
<td>Explain the influence on people’s lives of the force or movement in the historical setting.</td>
<td>Comprehensively explain the influence on people’s lives of the force or movement in the historical setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure and organise information and ideas in an appropriate essay format.</td>
<td>Structure and organise information and ideas in an appropriate essay format.</td>
<td>Structure and organise information and ideas in an appropriate and effective essay format.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5
Achievement Standard Criteria for AS 2.6: Examine individual or group identity in an historical setting, in an essay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Achievement with Merit</th>
<th>Achievement with Excellence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify and describe some factors that have contributed to the formation of an individual or group identity, and ways the identity was expressed, in an historical setting.</td>
<td>Explain a range of factors that have contributed to the formation of an individual or group identity, and ways the identity was expressed, in an historical setting.</td>
<td>Comprehensively explain a range of factors that have contributed to the formation of an individual or group identity, and ways the identity was expressed, in an historical setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe characteristics of the individual or group identity.</td>
<td>Explain characteristics of the individual or group identity.</td>
<td>Comprehensively explain characteristics of the individual or group identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure and organise information and ideas in an appropriate essay format.</td>
<td>Structure and organise information and ideas in an appropriate essay format.</td>
<td>Structure and organise information and ideas in an appropriate and effective essay format.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to address the standards the most obvious and common forces or movements for students to choose are Communism or Bolshevism, and the most obvious individual to discuss is Lenin or his communist group, the Bolsheviks. While there are other
possibilities such as the force of autocracy, or looking at an individual such as Kerensky, when one gives consideration to the criteria in the Achievement Standard such selections make it more difficult for students to address the criteria, and this particular case, to write an essay. For example, if autocracy is selected as a force, its conservatism does not fit well with the achievement criteria that ask for students to describe causes and consequences of actions. Similarly, if Kerensky is selected as an important figure in the Russian Revolution topic for his role as Prime Minister and leader of the Provisional Government between the February and October Revolutions, one is faced with the problems of trying to discuss him in terms of how he contributed to individual or group identity, and the Provisional Government was so disparate that it would be hard to argue that it had a collective identity.

Because of the focussed nature of the achievement criteria in these standards, the key result is that portions of the traditionally taught ‘Russian Revolution’ topic are non-assessable, that is, unsuitable for the questions that students will be faced within the examination. Students quickly learn what is needed for the examination and question their teachers: Why do we need to learn this? Is it going to be in the exam?

An analysis of the focus questions for this topic, in the light of the requirements for the NCEA assessment, helps explain such shifts in focus. While it is still desirable to address question 1 (How did the Tsarist government respond to the desire for political change?) in order to explain the force of Communism, there has been a shift away from giving much time to considering multiple historical arguments. For example, an argument such as ‘The success of the revolutionaries lay in the weaknesses of the Tsarist regime and the failure of the regime to respond to demands for change’, is not a particularly viable angle for addressing a standard on the impact of a force in creating change. While question 2 (What were the reasons for the revolutions in 1917 and why were the Bolsheviks able to seize power?) remains the most examinable of the focus questions, question 3 (How did the Bolshevik leaders consolidate the revolution in Russia?) is sometimes not taught, or reduced to a quick overview. The leaves an ahistorical learning situation where the Bolsheviks get into power and the significant changes and Civil War period that Russia endured in the immediate years following the Bolshevik Revolution remain largely unexplored.

Further to illustrate the potential for narrowing the focus, in ‘teaching’ the Vietnam War topic there are examples of teaching programmes that concentrate on the event of the colonising power France being ousted at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 while later and significant events of the Vietnam War involving the American forces and the South Vietnamese regime get little attention. This is convenient and undoubtedly allows for an impressive in-depth knowledge of an area of history but it is significantly far removed from what the writers of the history standards are likely to have anticipated. So while the standards are an attempt to explain the key features of the discipline of history through a competencies and concepts approach, there is the potential to simultaneously undermine it by restricting learning to a series of not fully contextualised historical fragments.

What this reveals is the complexity for teachers of balancing the tensions of assessment driven imperatives alongside the beliefs teachers may hold about
disciplinary knowledge. The relative value of teaching a broader overview versus in-depth knowledge is a difficult, and frequently debated, area but Counsell (2011) has suggested, “Perhaps the most important insight from teachers in recent years is that it is not the incidence of overview and depth but their interplay that counts” (p. 210). Young (2010) similarly comments upon the importance of connectedness when he writes, “Subjects . . . are sets of related theoretical concepts” and that subjects “consist of relatively coherent sets of concepts with distinct and explicit relationships” (p. 26). So it is the relationships between bodies of knowledge, or concepts, that matters. Perhaps in New Zealand, for these social sciences subjects, this debate needs to be had and it is critical in the light of the unexpected consequences of assessment practices.

**How much knowledge?**

While to accurately measure knowledge acquisition would be an unattainable goal given the multiple lenses that could be applied when weighing advantages and disadvantages, it is possible to indicate how many different aspects of history topics might be addressed overall through a year programme designed to enable students to achieve across the standards. For example, at Level 2 students might:

1. Research a topic and communicate their findings on the same topic, to gain both internally assessed Achievement Standards 2.1: “Plan and carry out an historical inquiry” and 2.2: “Communicate historical ideas to demonstrate understanding in an historical context.” These standards are normally done in tandem so only one content area would need to be addressed. This could comprise researching one event, a significant historical idea, a significant historical person, or a broader theme or historical period.

2. Demonstrate their understanding of the differing perspectives of people to gain internally assessed Achievement Standard 2.4: “Examine perspectives and responses of, and demonstrate empathy for, people in an historical setting” through investigating one further area of knowledge. However, potentially the response could derive from within the same historical period or topic as is studied for the other standards.

3. Use the same topic and similar content for both the externally assessed standards AS 2.5: “Examine how a force or movement in an historical setting influenced people’s lives, in an essay” and AS 2.6: “Examine individual or group identity in an historical setting, in an essay.” Through selecting an individual or group and the force or movement that relates to them, efficient use can be made of one body of content.

Because the standard assessing interpretation of sources (AS 2.3: “Examine evidence in historical sources”) is unrelated to topics learned during the year, students do not need to learn any topic knowledge. Therefore, a calculation can be made that three bites of knowledge would suffice and that these could stem from a single ‘prescribed topic’. While it is unlikely that teachers would choose to approach the discipline quite in this manner, there is the potential for students to adopt a minimalist approach.

For Level 3 history, the shifts in knowledge practices following the introduction of the NCEA have been less marked. The experience at Level 3 demonstrates the variability
that characterises the response to the implementation of the standards and is an outcome of the complexities of the interrelationships between knowledge, the standards, and the way they are examined. Several factors sheltered Level 3 from some of the more significant shifts seen at Levels 1 and 2. First, under the former Bursary examination only one topic in the year was examined. This practice was carried through to the NCEA so no reduction in the number of topics was possible, although components of the course could potentially be left out. Second, the achievement standards were written in a manner that more closely aligned with the knowledge foci of the former Bursary prescription. The two essay format achievement standards examine understanding of historical decisions and historical situations that enables a wide range of examination questions to be set across the expansive time frames of the topics (England 1558-1667, or New Zealand in the Nineteenth Century). Where the essay questions are generic at Level 2 enabling substantial pre-learning of answers, at Level 3 these questions are topic specific. For example, in the 2010 examination one of the six choices of question for AS 3.4: “Examine a significant decision made by people in history, in an essay,” was:

Explain the factors underlying James I’s decision to tolerate and Charles I’s decision to openly favour Arminianism within the English Church. Evaluate the consequences of their decisions on governing class support for the Church up to 1640.
(NZQA, 2010)

A question such as this is specific to the topic ‘England 1558-1667’ and requires considerable understanding of religion and State over an extensive period. Both breadth and depth of topic knowledge is therefore beneficial.

Third, and a powerful force for limiting change in knowledge teaching, was the decision to examine the analysis of historical sources in context. Unlike the Level 1 and 2 examinations where students are expected to interpret sources such as documents, visual imagery, and statistical data for a historical topic they have never studied, at Level 3 these sources are taken from the ‘prescribed’ topics. Furthermore, examination questions have commonly required students to not only use the source in their responses but to bring in their own knowledge (see Appendix 2). Because the sources are normally drawn from across the breadth of the topic, this has had the effect of encouraging students to learn and understand the topic as a whole, rather than target specific aspects.

Conclusion

With the implementation of an assessment programme that places high value on performance in relation to selected disciplinary skills and conceptual understandings, there has been a shift, albeit uneven across standards and school programmes, towards targeting ‘suitable’ knowledge at the expense of breadth of knowledge. The transformations were unexpected within a development framework that emphasised continuity of disciplinary learning and the intent to align assessment with existing prescriptions and curricula. Therefore, the shifts in the nature and scope of knowledge
can be recognised as an unintended rather than as a deliberate programme of change. In bringing about these changes procedural factors such as the NZQA policies on examination formats and examiner’s decisions on generic questions or specific content-based questions, have proven critical and provided an environment where a reductive and piecemeal approach to disciplinary knowledge can be adopted.

Bernstein (2000) contends that subjects or disciplines “take the form of a coherent, explicit and systematically principled structure” (p. 157). Perhaps some of that coherence has been undermined through an unplanned series of shifts in knowledge learning and there is a need to consider the strength of the social realist argument that disciplinary knowledge should be epistemologically powerful. When teachers remodel and mediate knowledge for the purposes of assessment and in response to external imperatives, there is the potential for disciplinary dislocation and destruction of the internal logic of the subject of history.

References


### Appendix 1: History Matrix of Achievement Standards, Ministry of Education, New Zealand, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL 1</th>
<th>LEVEL 2</th>
<th>ALEVEL 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AS90209</td>
<td>AS90465</td>
<td>AS90654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carry out an historical investigation</td>
<td>Plan and carry out an historical inquiry</td>
<td>Plan and carry out independent historical research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 credits</td>
<td>4 credits</td>
<td>5 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Internal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| AS90210 | AS90466 | AS90655 |
| Communicate historical ideas | Communicate historical ideas to demonstrate understanding of an historical context | Communicate and present historical ideas clearly to show understanding of an historical context |
| 4 credits | 4 credits | 4 credits |
| Internal | Internal | Internal |

| AS90211 | AS90467 | AS90656 |
| Interpret historical sources | Examine evidence in historical sources | Analyse and evaluate evidence in historical sources |
| 4 credits | 4 credits | 5 credits |
| External | External | External |

| AS90212 | AS90468 | AS90657 |
| Describe the perspectives and related actions of people in an historical setting | Examine perspectives and responses of, and demonstrate empathy for, people in an historical setting | Examine a significant decision made by people in history, in an essay |
| 4 credits | 4 credits | 5 credits |
| External | Internal | External |

| AS90213 | AS90469 | AS90658 |
| Describe an historical development, in an essay | Examine how a force or movement in an historical setting influenced people’s lives, in an essay | Examine a significant historical situation in the context of change, in an essay |
| 4 credits | 4 credits | 5 credits |
| External | External | External |

| AS90214 | AS90470 |
| Describe experiences that have been significant to the identity of New Zealanders | Examine individual or group identity in an historical setting, in an essay |
| 4 credits | 4 credits |
| External | External |
Appendix 2: Selected Questions from 2010 Examination for AS 3.3 ‘Analyse and evaluate evidence in historical sources’

Using evidence from Sources A1 and A2 and your own knowledge, explain in your own words historical ideas about witches in seventeenth-century Britain.

Using evidence from Sources B1 and B2 and your own knowledge, explain in your own words the different points of view that William Waller and Oliver Cromwell had towards fighting in the Civil War.

An important historical relationship is between cause and effect. With reference to Source C and your own knowledge, explain in your own words a cause of the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 and the effect it had on the Spanish force or its intentions.

Endnotes

1 There are six Achievement Standards for Levels 1 and 2 history and five standards at Level 3. Refer to the Appendix for the Matrix of Achievement Standards. The Achievement Standard documents identify Achievement Criteria, which form the basis for assessment, and provide ‘Explanatory Notes’ to illustrate links to curriculum, specific requirements in the standard and definitions of terms specific to the standard.

2 Specified topics and themes were included only in the externally assessed achievement standards while any historical content could be used for internally assessed standards.

3 ‘The members of the (writing) panel were asked to draft standards based on the outcomes of the New Zealand Curriculum and the content of current syllabuses and prescriptions’. Ministry of Education, (2001), Teacher Handbook, History Level 1, Workshops 1 and 2, Frequently Asked Questions, p. 13.

4 The history forms 5 to 7 Syllabus for Schools 1989 is a broad document. It outlines skills objectives, knowledge in broad terms, goals for developing student’s attitudes and values and programme planning.

5 Examples of student’s examination responses are published by the Auckland History Teacher’s Association and made available on CD.

6 Frequently Asked Question ‘Will written examinations be the same as they are now? Yes. Examinations will be laid out in sections (as they are now) with different sections pertaining to different achievement standards (Ministry of Education, 2001, Teacher Handbooks 1 & 2, 8).

7 Note that AS 1.3 (Registration No. AS90211) was replaced in 2010 with a revised version (Registration No.AS 91001). However the use of sources form any historical topic is retained.

8 When the NCEA was introduced a further five New Zealand history topics were added to the original 25 from the SFC prescription.

9 First order concepts are located within historical content such as colonialism, revolution, nationalism.
Impact of PISA on Education Policy – The Case of Japan

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Abstract
This paper describes and analyzes the impact of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) on compulsory education policy in Japan to argue that global actors influence primary and secondary education as well as higher education. The article discusses three impacts on Japanese education. These are: 1) Policies directed towards developing children’s reading skills; 2) The national achievement test initiated in 2007; and 3) the modified national curriculum (Central Educational Council Japan, 2008) that emphasizes the PISA focus on thinking, judging and expressing.

Introduction
This paper uses the case of Japan to describe and analyze the impact of PISA on compulsory education policy. With the advent of globalization in education, economic forces have greater influence on primary and secondary education as well as on higher education. In other words, global governance emerges even in compulsory educational policy. To illustrate this argument with a concrete example, our research project, discussed in this article, sought to explain the impact of the OECD as a global economic actor on compulsory education policy in terms of the effect of PISA.

Global Governance is usually understood as “the sum of many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs” (Commission on Global Governance, 1995). From political or economic viewpoints, it entails a reconstructive process of norms or systems in which global problems are to be solved by the non-governmental actors of the global market or global civic society as well as the nation state (Mouri, 2002). On the basis of this definition, the research project considered the implementation of PISA as an example of how global governance has emerged in compulsory education policy. The purpose was to examine the impact or penetration of PISA in the context of global governance.

Previous research, for example, Martens, Rusconi and Leuze (2007) and Fukuta (2008), analyzed the impact of international organizations and markets on education policy. They indicate that education has become a field of international or global governance and argue that education policy seems to have been influenced by international organizations beyond the nation state. This hypothesis was explored in our research using the case of PISA.
Our project analyzed the impact of PISA in 10 countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These countries were selected in terms of the variety of scores achieved (i.e. upper, middle or lower scores). The project also analyzed new PISA members (Singapore and China since 2009) because the reform of their education systems showed a strong interest in using PISA as a benchmark (see Table 1).

This paper focuses on the impact of PISA using Japan as a particular case to show how compulsory education in Japan has changed in the context of the influence of the PISA. That influence can be interpreted as a reaction to the problem of the deterioration of students' scholastic abilities. Given this context, the changes to compulsory education policy in Japan are discussed followed by a discussion of the impact of PISA on the policy. The article concludes with a discussion based on the analysis of the changes to education policy.
Changes in Education Policy in Japan since 1997

We begin with the year 1997 because the PISA Project was started by OECD in this year (see Table 2). The following year, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in Japan (MEXT) introduced the ‘Period for Integrated Study’ into the national curriculum. This is a class for learning beyond existing academic subjects, which aims to develop skills and abilities of students in problem-solving by encouraging students to identify issues themselves, and then learn, think, and make judgments about those issues on their own.

Table 2
Chronology of Education Policy in Japan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Start of the PISA Project (OECD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Announcement of the Revised National Curriculums: The ‘Period for Integrated Study’ was established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Publication: Okabe et al. (1999) University Students who are poor at fractional calculation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>MEXT: Program for Improving the Reading Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Start of the National Achievement Test Result: PISA 2006 (Reading: 15th, Mathematics: 10th, Science: 5th)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Announcement of the Revised National Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Result: PISA 2009 (Reading: 8th, Mathematics: 9th, Science: 5th)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some university faculties had complained about the poor ability in fractional calculation among university students (Okabe, Tose, & Nishimura, 1999). In fact, a number of university students could not perform calculations using fractions, although they should have already learned this skill at elementary and junior high school. Since these complaints surfaced, the issue of the deterioration of students’ scholastic abilities has been intensively discussed in the context of the deterioration of fundamental literacies (e.g. Ichikawa, 2002; Kariya, Shimizu, Shimizu & Morota, 2002). In response to these debates, MEXT published the Appeal 2002 for Improvement of Comprehensive Learning Ability: Encouragement of Learning. It was an attempt to improve students’ skills using the so-called ‘Foster Academic Ability (Tashika-na Gakuryoku)’.

When the results of PISA 2000 were announced in December 2001, Japan was placed 8th in reading literacy, 1st in mathematical literacy and 2nd in scientific literacy. At the same time, the 2001 results revealed a decline in reading skills. Soon after this decline was announced, a lawmaker-initiated bill ‘Fundamental Plan for Promotion of Reading’ was adopted and Cabinet published an ‘Overview of the Fundamental Plan for Promotion of Reading’ in 2002. Given the circumstantial events leading to these developments, these two measures can be identified as a response to PISA showing its immediate impact in Japan. On the basis of these measures, the so-called ‘morning reading’ was implemented widely across elementary and junior high schools all over Japan. During the ‘morning reading’, students were required read a book for ten minutes before the first class of the day.

In its aftermath, the problem about deterioration of students’ scholastic abilities was still continuously discussed. MEXT started the Action Plan for Improving the Achievements in 2003 to further develop the scholastic proficiency of students, while the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology expressed his intention to implement national achievement testing in 2004.

The results of PISA 2003 were published in December 2003 at the time of the introduction of the Action Plan. In the 2003 results, Japan had regressed to 14th place in reading literacy and had declined to 6th place in mathematical literacy, however the scientific literacy of Japanese students was found to be the top of the world. In view of these results, the MEXT continued to emphasize its focus on improving reading skills by publishing the Program for Improving the Reading Literacy (2005) and the Guidelines for Improving Reading Literacy – Analysis of PISA Results and Hints for Improvement (2006). Here the impact of PISA in Japan can be identified especially in the policy of developing reading literacy.

Since 2007, the national achievement test has been conducted annually in the 6th and 9th grade. This test investigates not only academic achievements in reading and mathematical literacy but also examines the lifestyle and learning environment of children. The test of academic achievements consists of two parts: fundamental skills (Questions A) and utilization skills (Questions B). In the same year, the results of PISA 2006 were also published and were taken to prove the declining trend of students’ scholastic abilities. Japan moved down to 15th place in reading, 10th place in mathematical and 5th place in scientific literacy.
In 2008, the national curriculum at each school level was reformed to increase the number of hours allocated for studying the main subjects. At the same time, the number of hours for the ‘Period for Integrated Study’ was reduced in order to allocate those hours to fostering academic ability in the main subjects. A renewal system of teacher licensing was introduced in 2009 to assure the quality of schoolteachers. The license is valid for ten years instead of the previous lifetime validity. The results of PISA 2009 were announced in December 2010. These showed a significant improvement in reading skills. Japan attained the 8th position for reading literacy, while the mathematical (9th position) and scientific literacy (5th position) remained almost unchanged.

**Impact of PISA on Education Policy in Japan**

Taking into account the changes in the education policy in Japan, three impacts of PISA can be identified: 1) promotion of the development of reading skills; 2) implementation of the annual national achievement test; and 3) reform of the national curriculum.

With respect to the first impact, PISA has contributed to the improvement of reading literacy. According to the early results of the PISA, Japan had lost its established leading position in reading skills. This result encouraged the MEXT to develop the reading skills of the children through the following decisions and programs: a lawmaker-initiated bill *Fundamental Plan for Promotion of Reading* (2001), the cabinet decision *Overview of the Fundamental Plan for Promotion of Reading* (2002), the *Program for Improving the Reading Literacy* (2005), and the *Guidelines for Improving the Reading Literacy* (2006). At the same time, many teachers not only motivated children to read more books but also developed learning materials to improve reading skills (Okabe, 2007).

With regard to the second impact, PISA provided strong stimulus to the MEXT to implement the national achievement test. The contents of the test show a typical feature of Japanese culture in introducing a new system. This involves including the new approach alongside the traditional Japanese approach. The annual national test examines application skills or competencies for getting high scores in PISA tests as well as fundamental knowledge for passing the entrance examination to upper schools. This is shown in the segmentation between Question A (traditional basic knowledge) and Question B (new PISA competencies) on the test as well as the answer sheets and can also be observed in the usage of Japanese Kana-Letters. We often use the Hira-kana for original Japanese objects while the Kata-kana are used for foreign objects.

Thirdly, PISA was influential in the revision of the national curriculum. The modified curriculum (2008) emphasizes that pupils and students should develop their abilities to think, judge and express, to which PISA often refers. In fact, the Central Educational Council (2008) referred to the PISA project and its frameworks to explain the importance of developing abilities to think, judge and express before modifying the national curriculum. These three abilities should be developed in the lessons of existing academic subjects as well as through field research or writing reports. In this context, educational contents in Japan can be said to have been partly influenced by global governance through PISA.
Conclusion: ‘Twisted Images’ on Achievement in Education Policy in Japan

In conclusion, it appears that the education policy in Japan has been partly but strongly influenced by PISA. In other words, the Japanese government has tried to introduce a new idea of competency through PISA as a reaction to the problem of deterioration of students’ scholastic abilities, but the existing or traditional idea of ability also remains unchanged because students are still expected to acquire traditional abilities to pass the exams to gain admission to a better school or university.

This situation in Japan can be described as a ‘twisted image’ concerning how achievement is understood. In debates and discussions about the deterioration of students’ scholastic abilities, a decline in traditional basic knowledge (for entrance exams) is often confused with a drop in PISA scores (competency). On the one hand, it becomes more difficult even for university students to perform calculations using fractions, because the ‘Period for Integrated Study’ reduced the number of hours for mathematics classes. On the other hand, a drop in PISA scores encouraged the MEXT to reduce the number of hours for the ‘Period for Integrated Study’, which develops the abilities to think, judge and express in turn for getting higher score in PISA test. In this sense, the separated structure of the national achievement test (Questions A and B) can symbolize the confusion or ‘twisted image’ of academic achievement in Japan.

Has education in Japan become a field of international or global governance? Can education policy in Japan be influenced by international organizations beyond the nation state? As an answer, it can be said that the education policy in Japan is determined by OECD through PISA, while the traditional idea and style of achievement also remains unchanged by the governance of Japan as a nation state. This answer, ambiguous as it seems, reflects a feature of Japanese culture.

Further discussion is needed to enrich the study of the impacts of global governance especially in the context of different cultural and social settings by analyzing various attitudes toward the global impacts of PISA in different countries. In this research, a direct and linear model of the impact of PISA on Japan as well as on other countries was assumed. However, there must be other models of understanding the impact of global actors such as PISA on multicultural societies such as those in the South Pacific and the South East Asian region. The impact of PISA among political leaders and the people themselves in Japan, Korea, Taiwan or China may be easily seen as they are direct and transparent, but the case may be different in other nations such as among the people from other countries in the region, as the PISA influence may not necessarily be as strong and transparent. Thus, to be able to generate a more complete understanding of impacts of PISA on global governance, cross-national analysis should be pursued in the field of comparative education. Such research may develop more diversified and culturally oriented models of the influence of PISA.
References


Considering Creativity

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Abstract
Creativity is often promoted as a guarantee of economic success by many countries in the western world, but can we assume that creativity is understood by all as the same defining habit? How might we compare the craftsperson with the creative person and what kind of thinking is required by each? Using the arts as an example, this paper considers ways in which creativity might be better understood, while also acknowledging that creativity occurs in all fields of knowledge and endeavour.

Introduction
Being creative can be seen either as a desirable strength or as a distinct weakness. ‘Creative solutions’ often amount to little more than ways around a problem and a form of short-cutting. Saying someone teaches creatively might be intended as positive feedback, but can also be taken to mean lack of planning or the ability to improvise. A primary school principal recently recounted to me how she had been instructed by her school board to review her School Charter. Where three years earlier the charter had sought to promote “creative quality teaching,” in review this simply became “quality teaching” in order to demonstrate an increased rigour as the school sought to define its performance. Thus, the term “creative” can also be construed as inconsistent, alternative or even vague. This implies that creative may not even refer to anything tangible, like a creative work of art; it might refer to an idea, a solution, or even a deviant act. Generally speaking, creativity implies innovation and within the rhetoric of the ‘knowledge-economy’ the notion of “being-creative” walks hand in hand with the performative—becoming a performance-based construct of an idealized knowledge-worker.

Bröckling (2006) suggests that “the imperative of being creative is nowadays connected to the mobilization of the entrepreneurial self. Entrepreneurial action demands permanent innovation—and consequently ceaseless creative exertion. Everybody not only has to be simply creative, but more creative than the others” (p. 513). Entrepreneurs have to keep creative innovation happening to keep their market appeal, to be more creative than others in a constant cycle of creative performativity.

Schooling takes very seriously its role of teaching its students to come to know and master the symbols of their culture, or at least of the dominant culture in which the schooling occurs. The New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) requires creative ‘skills’ to be taught, and teachers are asked to encourage students to “think creatively” as a “Value” to be encouraged and modelled (p. 10). I argue that the notion...
of “being creative” should motivate us to look for possibilities—a form of problem-solving, or a process for the developing of ideas. Rather than instructing that you must be creative, it asks how you might be creative.

When writing The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum document (Ministry of Education, 2000) the project directors were aware of the problem a term such as ‘creativity’ had caused teachers, who claimed that they were not creative and therefore could not teach their students to be creative. The curriculum writers also believed that curriculum documents and examination requirements in themselves also placed constraints on creative thinking. Instead, what was happening in classrooms was the exploration and development of ideas which were sometimes original. It was decided to name the curriculum strand in which such actions occurred Developing Ideas (in Music, Dance, Drama or Visual Art) and this has been carried over into The New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007).

A consideration of creativity raises several initial questions and the first would be: How do creating and making differ? We might then ask whether the artist creates the work or the work creates the artist. In other words, if I create something that is considered art (whether in music, dance, drama, poetry or visual art), does that mean I can then consider myself an artist? Conversely, must I consider myself an artist before I can create a work of art? These are both critical questions if we are to give any consideration to creativity, for they not only ask whether all art is creative but they also ask whether to be creative requires some division of labour so that the ‘artist’ is the only person authorized to be truly creative. This then raises the issue of whether ‘being-creative’ is a vocation, an attribute or a behaviour, an issue that might perplex the educator. In considering creativity, our considerations become a form of questioning designed to challenge the reader to think and consider what creativity might mean for them.

Is creativity a conscious or a sub-conscious act? Can we be trained to be creative or is it something innate or inherited, perhaps even a gift? Is creativity simply the result of intuition, disposition, or good tuition? These are important and critical questions yet as the term ‘creativity’ falls into everyday use, and publications focussing on ‘unlocking creativity’ fill the bookshelves, I fear that our understanding of creativity is becoming clouded and the notion of ‘creativity’ framed more as a commonplace habit, one that can be taught as some form of competency.

Being created suggests something made by humans and something factitious, not natural or made by nature. Being-creative is not an act of imagining, but “an imagination that has become action” (Negri, 2011, p. xii). The result of the creative act requires the reality of its being there to be revealed, open to possibilities for imagining the result as music, visual art, dance, or poetry, etc. We might regard the creative act as a starting point for new possibilities and thinking.

The creative can also often appear as violent or arbitrary: think of the reception given to Stravinsky’s 1913 premiere of The Rite of Spring or to Duchamp’s 1917 Dadaist ready-mades such as Fountain. The latter, a photograph of a urinal on a pedestal, signed “R. Stump,” caused outrage. Duchamp proposed that, if it is signed and you can’t urinate in it because it is stuck on a museum wall, it’s got to be Art—for what else could it be? In such cases the spectator may assume that the creative artist appears
intent on creating disorder, when, in fact, they are seeking to bring some form of order or understanding to the perceived chaos of their medium. The chaos lies not in the confronting of the ‘blank canvas’, but in creating something artistic against a backdrop of public opinion and cliche.

Theories and viewpoints on creativity

Most theories of creativity tend to reflect the influential ideas of the time, such as Darwin’s theory of evolution, theories of psychoanalysis, or scientific management theories. In the writings of William James in the 1880s, the Chance Configuration Theory proposed that creative ideas emerge from a largely uncontrollable Darwinian process of random variation and natural selection. A chance event might occur and a natural selection process then ensues, which chooses and adapts those random variations that prove most useful. This is seen as a creative process. The process is complete when the creator preserves and reproduces these ideas in concrete form.

Much of the literature about creativity examines the creative process. Wallas’s (1926) model of preparation (defining the issue, observation, and study), incubation (laying the issue aside for a time), illumination (the moment when a new idea finally emerges) and verification (confirming, checking it out) still discussed the process used by many engaged in creative acts. At a glance, the model implies a subconscious process, but giving consideration to preparation and verification suggests that more reflective and analytical methods are applied, linking the creative and analytical in interactive and complementary ways. Subsequent models all show a similar liaison between analytical and creative thinking.

There are many other theories and most are simply variations on the model proposed by Wallas. Plsek’s (1996) Directed Creativity Cycle model, for example, has four stages: preparation, imagination, development and action. He suggests that “directed creativity” means, simply, that we make purposeful mental movements at each step of the process of searching for novel and useful ideas to avoid the pitfalls associated with our cognitive mechanisms (p. 7).

In engaging with the problem of creativity, Csikszentmihalyi (1997) suggests creativity “is a process by which a symbolic domain in the culture is changed,” adding that “it takes effort to change traditions” (p. 8). Arts philosopher Elliot Eisner (2002) claims many of the most complex and subtle forms of thinking take place when students have:

an opportunity either to work meaningfully on the creation of images—whether visual, choreographic, musical, literary, or poetic—or to scrutinize them appreciatively. To be able to create a form of experience that can be regarded as aesthetic requires a mind that animates our imaginative capacities and that promotes our ability to undergo emotionally pervaded experience. (p. xii)

Freire (1972/1990) believes the educator’s efforts must coincide with those of the student to engage in critical thinking and a quest for mutual humanization. He claims the educator’s “efforts must be imbued with a profound trust in men and their creative
power” (p. 49). Creative power, for Freire, is the transforming of consciousness and a setting free. It is emancipatory. He refers to traditional forms of schooling that see the teacher as the master of knowledge and the students as mere objects of reception, as the banking concept of education—the teacher deposits knowledge into the students’ heads. The banking concept transforms students into receiving objects. Freire claims this “inhibits their creative power” (p. 51).

Vygotsky (2004) maintains “the entire future of humanity will be attained through the creative imagination” (p. 87). His analysis of the development of creativity emphasizes the inter-functional relations that permeate his work. Arguing that children are not necessarily more creative than adults, and that they just have less control and critical judgment over the products of their imagination, he believes that, as rational thought and critical judgment develop, so too does the imagination retreat. For Vygotsky, creativity is a social process that requires appropriate psychological tools and artefacts, as well as cultures in which to thrive.

Crafting and creating as dimensions of thinking

The literature suggests that creative thinking seeks to break all habits, to bring out a discontinuity through innovation. Creativity transforms. But not all art need be regarded as creative, for good craftsmanship also has an important place in the artistic, scientific, and cultural spaces that value the quality of good workmanship. It is important to realize that in this paper, when I speak of the creative person and the craftsman, I do not regard these as necessarily different human beings, nor are they in opposition to each other. It would be naïve to believe that the creative person is destined to only be creative or the craftsman obsessed only with producing quality work. What is required is a different kind of thinking for each artistic act.

When I think like a craftsman, perfection, and usually perfect replication, is generally the goal, and the outcome of my making is usually well known—this music that sounds like everyday jazz will provide the theme to this television series, that visual design will enhance these advertising promotions, or this wooden cabinet will sit in that house. While there is no doubt that our craft will be informed by our creative works and experiences, in contrast, our creativity, in the early stages, is often not subject to craft-like controls. In creating, our imagination often sits in a borderland space between pure reason and practical reason. When I become a creative thinker, I must often deal with imperfection in the conflict between concealing and revealing. For the creative artist, the outcome is usually unknown, but as a creative artist I am usually unconcerned with the eventual dissemination of my work. The craftsman is usually controlled by the function and/or purpose of their work; the output is generally defined and subject to the requirements of the context that requisitions it, whether employer, market, media or (staged) production.

Plato viewed the artist as a craftsman who replicated what he saw but knew little or nothing about the subject of the painting. The art (as a painting) identified the artist as someone with such-and-such a knowledge purely on the basis of their imitative art. Plato concluded that art relates to our world of appearances in the same way that our world of appearances relates to the world of forms, that is, by mimesis (imitation). It should be stressed that, for Plato, everything that is created must necessarily be created
by some cause, for without cause nothing would be created. He also points out that the painter is different from the carpenter, for the painter knows something about colours and drawing but not about carpentry. The carpenter has a range of woodworking knowledge and skills in his repertoire but may know little about the art of painting. Note that Plato regards both the carpenter and the cobbler as artists in their own right. For Plato, a carpenter does what he does, but:

*the imitator . . . is a long way off the truth, and can do all things because he lightly touches on a small part of them, and that part an image. For example: a painter will paint a cobbler, carpenter, or any other artist, though he knows nothing of their arts; and, if he is a good artist, he may deceive children or simple persons, when he shows them his picture of a carpenter from a distance, and they will fancy that they are looking at a real carpenter.* (Republic, Bk X, p. 663)

Sennett (2008) describes the process a good builder as craftsman should undertake in understanding the design of a house, which must take into account the valuing of contingency and constraint because personal obsessions can blind the craftsman to possibilities. A perfectionism should also be avoided, one that has the potential to degrade into a self-conscious demonstration, one where the maker is more bent on showing what they can do than on what the house is for.

Lectures given by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger in 1925 are contained in *History of the Concept of Time* (Heidegger, 1992) where he discusses being conversant with a world with which one is familiar, a “particular environing world of the individual and being able to move in [this] world” (p. 188). Our familiarity with this specific world we are concerned about enables us to recognize what belongs or what doesn’t belong. Heidegger (1992) represents this in a description of the craftsman’s workshop:

*Even in the workshop of a craftsman whose craft is totally unfamiliar to us is in no way first encountered as a mere conglomerate of things scattered in disarray. Manifest in the immediate orientation of preoccupation are hand tools, material, manufactured finished pieces, unfinished items in process. What we primarily experience is the world in which the man lives. Even though it is strange, it is still experienced as a world, as a closed totality of references.* (p. 188)

This is the world that the apprentice must enter and become familiar with; the effectiveness of the teaching and the apprentice’s preparedness to learn will ultimately determine whether they reach the status that can be called ‘craftsperson’. Knowing your tools as more than pieces of equipment is an essential part of the journey towards becoming a craftsperson and for Heidegger, “getting better at using tools comes to us, in part, when the tools challenge us, and this challenge often occurs just because the tools are not fit-for-purpose” (1992, p. 194).

How, then, are we to address the tension between ability and capability and how does having creative ability or creative capability differ from being an able craftsperson? Creativity is often viewed as a ‘gift’, while the care and skills exercised by a craftsperson are seen as a ‘vocation’. A glassblower, in his vocation, must focus on
just what the hands and mouth need to do to transform the molten liquid into a bottle (Sennett, 2008, p. 95). The creative act is often seen as that ‘eureka’ moment, while good craftspersonship means both the gradual accumulation of knowledge and skills and the ever strong conviction that one is meant to do this one particular thing in one’s life.

For the craftsperson, problem-solving also requires problem-finding—the ability to recognize a problem and the capability to solve it. The groundwork that shapes the framework for our potential to develop into craftspeople is established in childhood. Dewey (1933) relates our childhood love for playing games to our artistic development and “work which remains permeated with the play attitude is art” (pp. 241-242). Children make up rules for games (rules that permit the game to happen more than once), and this produces a repetition that can be modified, changed or improved, and lays the groundwork for experiences of practice—the going over procedures again and again (Sennett, 2008, p. 272).

Heidegger (1954/2004) refers to the way in which a cabinetmaker’s apprentice learns his craft on the way to becoming a craftsman. The extract is more about teaching and learning than about the mechanics of cabinetmaking and contains elements of the spiritual, which become an essential reference for the skilled craftsman. As the craftsman works with wood he unconceals previously hidden truths about the nature of the wood and the possibilities for what might be crafted from it. Heidegger writes:

A cabinetmaker’s apprentice, someone who is learning to build cabinets and the like, will serve as an example. His learning is not mere practice, to gain facility in the use of tools. Nor does he merely gather knowledge about the customary forms of things he is to build. If he is to become a true cabinetmaker, he makes himself answer and respond above all to the different kinds of wood and to the shapes slumbering within the wood—to wood as it enters into man’s dwelling with all the hidden riches of its nature. In fact, this relatedness to wood is what maintains the whole craft. Without that relatedness, the craft will never be anything but empty busywork; any occupation with it will be determined exclusively by business concerns. Every handicraft, all human dealings are constantly in that danger. The writing of poetry is no more exempt from it than is thinking. (pp. 14-15)

Heidegger claims the essence of something is not what is discovered simply, like a fact; on the contrary, it must be brought forth, since it is not usually there somewhere waiting to be found and represented. He tells us that “to bring forth is a kind of making” but which “must be protected against the intrusion of common opinion” (1984/1994, p. 83). The creative being sees and interprets things that others miss. Heidegger asks how creating and making differ, and how we gauge the createdness in a work—how much belongs to the work and how much to the fact that the work is regarded as art (1971/2001, p. 55).

What does it mean to create, and what guides creation in terms of the becoming and being of the work? In seeing creation as a bringing forth, we might ask: What does creation reveal? If creativity sets free the materials of the work’s construction, is this
only limited to the creativity of the artist, or does the skilled craftsperson also set their materials free? Do both set their materials free within a particular framework, brought forth in an expressively particular way?

Gardner (1982) believes the combination of native talent, appropriate pedagogy and developed skills is not enough to yield the creative person: “the competent craftsman, yes—the innovative master, no” (p. 90). If we follow Gardner’s reasoning we have a tension between the creative innovator and the competent craftsperson, even though both seek to transform materially and intellectually.

The word ‘create’ has many uses and implications and it stems from the Latin creat, meaning to make, to produce, to bring forth. The Greeks used the term poiesis, meaning a letting come forth, not only as a craftsman or creator, but as a concept of democracy. This was coupled with the word physis, or coming forth, which is a seizing of the opportunities and the revealing of creative possibilities. In contrast, techne, which the Greeks often used to define both art and craft, implies bringing forth. This might be the craftsperson responding to the needs of the community, for the making of equipment is a bringing forth, or it might be art, for many aspects of preparing the creative work of art also require methods that a craftsperson knows. Techne denotes a mode of knowing that means ‘to have seen’, in the widest sense.

Createdness reveals itself through the conflict with the raw materials and it is this tension that lets what is created be the work it is. The poetic projection is not the result of a vague flailing about in a void; possibilities must be explored that gradually disclose the truth of the work’s coming into being. Aristotle’s poetic theory, his concept of representation, compares the ways in which different media, objects, and manner achieve their effect. In Poetics I he clarifies this:

Some people use colours and forms for representations, making images of many objects (some by art, and some by practice), and others do so with sound; so too do all the arts we mentioned produce a representation using rhythm, speech and melody, but use these either separately or mixed. E.g., the art of playing the oboe or lyre, and any other arts that have the same potential (e.g., that of playing the pan pipes), use melody and rhythm alone, but the art of dancers [uses] rhythm by itself without melody; for they too can represent characters, sufferings and actions, by means of rhythm’s given form. (1987, p. 47a)

How, therefore, are we to differentiate between craft and creative? Is craftspersonship simply the application of handiness and what is at hand, and the creative-personship that of considering and selecting revealing possibilities? Practising to ingrain technical skills can become a crafted performance or creative freedom. Sennett tells us that, in music, practising:

becomes a narrative rather than mere digital repetition; hard-won moments become ever more deeply ingrained in the body; the player inches forward to greater skill . . . Diminishing the fear of making mistakes is all-important in our art, since the musician on stage cannot stop, paralyzed, if she or he makes a mistake. In performance, the confidence to recover from error is not a personality trait; it is a learned skill. Technique develops, then, by a dialectic between the correct way to do something and the willingness to experiment
through error. The two sides cannot be separated. If the young musician is simply given the correct way, he or she will suffer from a false sense of security. (2008, p. 160)

The creative artist

In creative thought we often refer to constraints, boundaries and framing, and these can stimulate creative solutions in spite of the limitations they place on possibilities. Actual picture frames, of course, often define a painting as a painting, and this in itself can be seen as a constraint. Picasso once expressed frustration over the insistence of the frame and that the picture must come to an end rather than continuing on forever. At the time, he was impressed by the sputnik satellite, which seemed to embody the freedom to simply carry on and on. He believed the abrupt end causes both the viewer and the artist to lose interest. Picasso’s frustration was born out of creative thinking, which feared that the physical boundaries imposed by the frame would conceal and bring about an emptiness descending on his art.

Colour, movement, and sound reveal themselves to the creative artist, who perceives them first and foremost as existing. Colour might be regarded as one being, sound as another, movement yet another, and all exist as something different in relation to each other—for example, the particular tone colour and amount of vibrato the saxophonist portrays as ‘their sound’. The work itself needs an element, such as colour or sound, to make it appear as a painting or music. It is the aggregate of elements, a composite of form and matter that differentiates art from equipment or decoration. In the realms of the senses things such as visual art move us bodily, they are perceptible via sensations that affect our sensibility, their unity is in our senses. What distinguishes our thing as a work of art is the conceptual schema that is used to produce it. For example, music is the thing in itself, useful only as music.

Creative thought builds and raises up; building is experienced as a dwelling that the habitual creating person inhabits. Heidegger remained connected to his retreat in the Black Forest all his academic life, revealing an indigenous-like communion with the natural world. For Heidegger, the fundamental character of dwelling is situated in its whole range to reveal who we are; it gathers together what he calls the ‘fourfold’: earth and sky, divinities and mortals. “Dwelling is what we call the native sojourning in the realms in which the human belongs” (Heidegger, 1990/2011, p. 3). Māori, the indigenous people of New Zealand, refer to a dwelling place as Te Papa, but the term also has a symbolic meaning that relates to earth and sky through the deities of Papatuanuku (earth mother) and Ranginui (sky father). Notions of separation, yearning, mourning, responsibility and nourishment are all ideas that can be embodied in the term Te Papa. The national museum of New Zealand is named Te Papa Tongarewa. When Māori artist Cliff Whiting worked on the original development of Māori exhibitions and the display and care of the taonga (treasures) for the museum, he was also asked to lead the design and construction of a contemporary marae (a meeting place with a flat space before it). For this design, he drew on the story of the Māori canoes and their voyage from the legendary Hawaikii to the shores of Aotearoa/New Zealand (Te Honoki Hawaikii). Traditionally, Māori tribal areas are defined by the geographical place where
the different canoes landed. Whiting’s blending of the original journey with the earth, sky, deities and mortals is, I believe, a tangible example of creative artistic thinking within Heidegger’s notion of the fourfold.

Creative thinking and acting builds across the space that receives its essence from the boundaries of the locale or context. The interplay of concealment and disclosure produces the emergence of an artistic truth that shows the essence of our creative thought. Creativity sets free the materials of the work’s construction, like the earth that made the statue or the Greek temple, sound that formed the music or the poem, or paint and clay the visual art. Art lies hidden within nature; the work does not just appear, ready to use. The creative artist must set the materials free within a particular framework, bringing it forth in an expressively particular way. But if the artist in their creating takes for granted the things that are revealed, then they abandon any alternatives to what presents itself as self-evident and adopt the commonplace that they take for granted in the levelling-down of their art. Mediocrity is the result.

The work of art is an exemplary disclosure of truth, initiating a new beginning and a redefinition of history. Createdness reveals itself through the conflict with the raw materials; this restraint lets what is created be the work that it is. Heidegger believes “art is by nature an origin, a distinctive way in which truth comes into being, that is, becomes historical” (1971/2001, p. 75). The possibilities Heidegger lays open for art reflect an understanding of being as “expressivist,” which in creative terms suggests letting an idea become what it is through “its concrete realization in a specific form” (Guignon, 2002, p. 48). Great creative art opens up new work (sonic or visual) and the act of creating art engages with conflicting relationships between appearance and essence, subject and object, expression and idea. In fact, we might regard the form of a work of art gaining its aesthetic validity precisely in proportion to the number of different perspectives from which it can be viewed and understood. This implies a co-creating, a collective project even, possibly enacted—for example, through the invention of more durable musical instruments, or the ways the visual is both stored and brought into presence (viewed).

The following table sums up our considerations so far and provides a suggested framework for comparing the characteristics of creative actions with those of craft:

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creative</th>
<th>Crafted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceptual</td>
<td>Conceptual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implicit</td>
<td>Explicit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothingness or chaos</td>
<td>Reduction of complexity to order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic</td>
<td>Stable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global possibility</td>
<td>Local accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks new creative possibilities</td>
<td>Desires crafted consistency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discontinuity</td>
<td>Continuity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

Both creating and crafting require forms of thinking beyond the everyday cognitions that commonly occur. These forms of thinking require thinking in and through the mode of representation; it is not enough to rely on enthusiasm and intuition alone. We might even regard this form of thinking as non-thinking simply because it transcends commonplace and systematic cognition. The poet Stephen Spender (in Ghiselin, 1952) says that, “the problem of creative writing is essentially one of concentration,” a concentration that “for the purpose of writing poetry, is different from the kind of concentration required for working out a sum. It is a focussing of the attention in a special way . . . so that the poet is aware of all the implications and possible developments of his idea” (p. 113).

Creating the original work of art is a process of selection, the sifting through of possibilities, and, as I have noted, requires constraints and processes of elimination. Decisions are required about something elusive or not mastered, and it requires the knowledge of how to discard in order to select, and an awareness of the necessity of difference in order to unite. Sometimes an element of discontinuity is introduced that disrupts the flow and sets up a new pathway for the next generation of artists, and the phenomenon of art becomes a phenomenon of speculation. The creative process requires the freedom to think and imagine. Creative artists in their making the work of art also calls on us to think. In fact, creative works make us think, not through being systematic and explicit, but through a resistance to totalization. This might be why some works endure, for they are forever works in progress.

The creative artist is a thinking and a meditative being. Meditative thinking is about something that begins with an awareness of the field within which the artist’s work will appear—an articulation of its roots—and the horizon of possibilities open to them, rather than a mere ordinary understanding or reflection. This means not clinging to the pursuit of a single track but rather engaging with what at first sight or hearing does not seem to go together at all. It requires the freedom to think, to clear one’s head of the usual baggage, to consider hearing and seeing as forms of perception that release the creative artist to the openness of ideas.

The fact that art exists at all owes much to the notion of creativity and the truth of the nature of knowing. Creativity does not suddenly become an actuality for the thinker whose creative thoughts have drawn them towards the possibility of the creative idea—self-knowing and subjective—for thinking creatively in thought-provoking ways determines who we are in the destiny of truth. A creative work of art, whether music, dance, drama, poetry or visual art, can set a new beginning for a community when what had been self-evident, yet undisclosed, is suddenly brought forth as strange and challenging as a result of the reconfiguration of the world.

Rational beings might be the creators of time in the historical sense, but the effect of the impact of creative beings in the world—past and present—allows for projections of creative possibilities in the future. The creative mind steps outside the repetitive nature of daily interactions and brings forth new ways of seeing, hearing and thinking. It rejects the mundane and the clichéd in order to reveal new possibilities. The creative being sees and imagines things that others miss and it is this engaging with potentialities and possibilities that leads to our presence in the world.
References


Quality Assurance Challenges of Transnational Higher Education in Hong Kong

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Abstract
The scale of operation and the increasing participation rate in transnational education programs in Hong Kong warranted the need to maintain program qualities and scrutinize the quality assurance status. However, literature about this issue is scarce. This paper, therefore, examines and analyzes the current quality assurance status based on the current regulatory framework and registration assessment process for transnational education in Hong Kong. Data for analyses include available government documents and websites of Education Bureau, Non-Local Course Registry, University Grants Committee, Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications, Education Commission, Legislative Council, and overseas government and quality assurance agencies. Despite having a seemingly comprehensive legal regulatory framework imposed upon the operation of transnational education in Hong Kong, the scrutiny of implementation of policies and practices of registration assessment and annual returns, as well as the eligibility of transnational education programs to participate in continuing education fund schemes, have revealed loopholes that lead to concerns about quality assurance and consumer protection. Both local and wider implications from the Hong Kong case are discussed.

Introduction
The globalization of economy and education together with the advancement of technology has enabled the rapid growth of participation in another country’s education system in the last few decades. The provision of higher education is no longer restricted to the borders of a country. Such education has been referred to as transnational education (Gu, 2009; United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2007), cross-border education (Knight, 2006), or, in the case of Hong Kong, non-local courses (Education Bureau, 2011a). For the purpose of this paper, transnational education is used. As a basis for discussion and analysis in this paper, the definition of transnational education used by the UNESCO (2007) is adopted:

All types of higher education study programs, sets of study courses, or educational services (including those of distance education) in which the learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based. Such programs may belong to the educational system of a state, different from the state in which it operates, or may operate independently of any national system.
Transnational education is, by and large, economically motivated and dominated by market principles (Gu, 2009). It is also characterized by its borderless nature and the innovation of delivery models. Though very similar to the concept of ‘trading’ in the business sector, activities of transnational education are typically described within the context of ‘exchange’ through the mobility of four aspects: (a) people (i.e., students, instructors, researchers, consultants or experts; (b) programs (through arrangements such as twinning, franchising, articulation, joint/double degrees, validation, online or distance education; (c) providers (e.g., independent institutions, branch campuses, virtual campuses); and (d) projects (through the sharing of research, curriculum, technical assistance or other educational services).

Transnational education has established a firm base in Hong Kong. To estimate the impact of transnational education, one has to realize the size of the student population. According to Wong (2005), Hong Kong had an estimated student population of around 50,000 with an annual expenditure on tuition fees in the region of US $1 billion dollars in transnational education programs in 2005. During the same period, 78,780 students enrolled at the eight local public higher education institutions for studies ranging from associate to doctoral degrees (University Grants Committee, 2011). The participation rate in these programs was substantial in that it was equivalent to over 63% of the total student enrolment in the local public higher education sector. No current figures are available for the tuition fees paid by these students.

Given the increasing participation in transnational education and the scale of its operation in Hong Kong, as well as the fact that the majority of the imported programs are at degree or postgraduate levels, we cannot afford to ignore the significance of program qualities on Hong Kong’s work force and, in turn, its economy. Poor program quality is readily translated into poorly trained manpower. Quality assurance of transnational education is, therefore, of prime importance. Despite the increasing concerns about the quality assurance mechanisms of these programs, little can be found in the existing literature about the current quality assurance status of transnational programs in Hong Kong. Thus, this paper first examines the current regulatory framework that governs the operation of transnational education in Hong Kong and the practices of relevant agencies on the assurance of program quality, followed by analyses of the current quality assurance status and wider international implications from Hong Kong experiences.

Data for this research were collected through a comprehensive examination of the available government documents and websites of the Education Bureau, Non-Local Course Registry, University Grants Committee, Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), Education Commission, Legislative Council, and overseas government and quality assurance agencies. In the process of data collection, it was found that some of the pertinent information, such as the current enrolment figures and issues encountered during program registration assessments, that may potentially provide important insight, was not readily available. This author’s insider experiences as a former assessment officer of the HKCAAVQ are thus utilized to fill some of the data gaps.

To achieve the purpose of this study, I will briefly review the development of regulations for transnational education in Hong Kong as well as Hong Kong’s current
regulatory framework and summarize the current delivery modes of transnational education as background to scrutinize and analyze the practices of registration assessment.

Transnational Education in Hong Kong

Hong Kong is considered to have always been a relatively unregulated market (McBurnie & Zucuras, 2001). As early as the 1980s, the Hong Kong Education Commission (1986) acknowledged the existence of a large number of foreign programs and expressed concerns over the lack of oversight on program quality. Some initial control over these programs was established when amendments were made to the then Education Ordinance were passed into law and enacted in 1994 (French, 1999). Recognizing that these amendments would not be sufficient in the long run, a working group set up by the Education Commission introduced the Non-local Higher and Professional Education (Regulation) Ordinance (“the Ordinance” thereafter), which was legislated in July 1996 and enacted in December 1997 (Hong Kong Legal Information Institute, 2011a).

Current Regulatory Framework for Transnational Education

The legislation-based regulatory framework is commonly referred to as Cap. 493 with the main objective of protecting Hong Kong consumers by guarding against the launching of transnational education programs that do not fulfill the registration criteria (Education Bureau, 2011a). The Ordinance provides a legislative framework to regulate the standard, advertisements, payment and refund arrangements of higher education programs conducted in Hong Kong by non-local institutions or professional bodies.

Under the Ordinance, all programs conducted in Hong Kong leading to non-local higher academic qualifications or professional qualifications must be properly registered or be exempted from registration. The Non-local Course Registry (NCR) under the Education Bureau is charged with the overall responsibility as the registration authority. As the advisor to the Non-local Courses Registrar, the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAA VQ) supports the NCR in that it assesses each application against the registration criteria stipulated in the Ordinance and makes recommendation to the Registrar who makes the final decision. The HKCAA VQ also assesses the annual returns for registered programs to advise the Registrar on their eligibility for continued registration.

Exemptions

As mentioned earlier, the registration requirement does not apply to: (a) programs conducted in collaboration with specified local higher education institutions; (b) purely distance learning programs; and (c) programs conducted entirely by local registered schools or local higher education institutions.
(a) Courses Conducted in Collaboration with Specified Local Higher Education Institutions

Courses conducted in collaboration with local higher education institutions are exempt from registration if the head of the local institution certifies that the program meets the registration criteria both in terms of the standing of the institution/professional body and the quality assurance and recognition status of the program. These local institutions include: City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong Shue Yan University, Lingnan University, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Open University of Hong Kong, and University of Hong Kong. Like that imposed on operators of registered courses, institutions that operate exempted programs are required to submit annual reports and observe other rules in respect of advertisements, refund arrangements, safety of premises, and so on.

(b) Purely Distance Learning Programs

As defined by the Ordinance, ‘purely distance learning programs’ refer to those conducted solely through the delivery of mail, transmission of information by means of telecommunication (e.g. TV, radio or computer network), or sale of materials in commercial outlets, but without the institutions, professional bodies or their agents being physically present in Hong Kong to deliver any lectures, tutorials, examinations, and so on. These programs are excluded from the registration requirement in consideration of the need to strike a balance between upholding the interests of consumer protection and the need to avoid possible restriction on the freedom of expression (including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds) guaranteed under Article 16 of the Bill of Rights Ordinance (Hong Kong Legal Information Institute, 2011b). However, institutions operating these courses are encouraged to apply for registration to demonstrate that they fulfill the registration criteria.

(c) Programs solely Conducted by Local Registered Schools or Higher Education Institutions

Programs operated by local registered schools are governed by the Education Ordinance, commonly known as Cap. 279 (Department of Justice, 2011). Programs operated by local higher education institutions are also monitored under the existing quality assurance measures for these institutions.

Registration Process and Requirements

Registration is the main quality assurance mechanism for transnational education programs in Hong Kong. The government’s rhetoric of allowing overseas programs to be offered in Hong Kong is to use them as a means to facilitate lifelong learning for those who wish to upgrade their academic qualifications and improve their career prospects (Education Bureau, 2011b). The Ordinance is the main mechanism to address quality assurance (Education Bureau, 2011b).
Registration Criteria

The Registrar of the NCR will approve the registration of a course if it meets the criteria detailed in Section 10 of the Ordinance. There are four major criteria. First, the non-local institution awarding non-local higher academic qualification for a program must be a recognized institution in its home country. Second, there must be effective measures in place to ensure that the standard of the program is maintained at a level comparable to a program leading to the same qualification conducted in its home country. This comparability in standard must also be recognized by the institution and the relevant accreditation authority of the home country. Third, the non-local professional body awarding non-local professional qualification for a program must itself recognize the program for the purpose of awarding the qualification or for the purpose of preparing students to sit the relevant professional examinations. The professional body must also be generally recognized in its home country as an authoritative and representative professional body in the relevant profession. Fourth, arrangements for payment and refund of the course fee and charges approved by the Registrar should be stated clearly in the contract with students.

Registration Procedure

The NCR is responsible for processing all applications for registration and matters concerning the exemption of program registration. Institutions operating transnational programs should submit documents for registration and exemption to the Registry and submit completed application forms to the NCR at least four months before the commencement of the course. Operating a program without securing registration or exemption status is illegal and liable on conviction to a fine and to imprisonment for 2 years. The Registrar will normally seek the independent advice of the HKCAA VQ by forwarding relevant documents and materials to HKCAA VQ to assess as to whether a program meets the registration or exemption criteria. The applicant will be charged for the expenses in obtaining HKCAA VQ’s advice in respect of an application. The HKCAA VQ is a self-financing statutory body and charges fees on a cost-recovery basis.

Other Consumer Protection Measures

Advertisements: To provide some form of consumer protection, the Ordinance also regulates the advertisement of registered or exempted programs. First, any regulated program that is not registered or exempted commits an offense by publishing advertisements that encourage enrolments. Second, any regulated program or purely distance learning program commits an offense by publishing any false or misleading materials in any advertisement. Third, the advertisement of a registered program must contain its registration number and a statement that reads “it is a matter of discretion for individual employers to recognize any qualification to which this course may lead” (Hong Kong Legal Information Institute, 2011a). Lastly, in the case of a purely distance learning program, the advertisement must state that the operator chooses not to register and is, therefore, not subject to the registration requirement.
Refund: Another form of consumer protection is to require refund of tuition fees when the relevant part of a program ceases to be conducted due to cancellation of the registration or exemption status or premature cessation of the program. Such a refund must be made within one month of such cancellation or cessation.

Premises: To ensure that programs are conducted in safe premises, operators of registered and exempted programs must furnish details of the premises, including fire and buildings safety as well as compliance with the approved planning and land uses, to the Registrar at least three months before conducting the program in the premises.

Annual Returns: To ensure the registration criteria are met continuously, institutions operating registered programs have to submit annual returns to the Registrar of the NCR for continual registration. They are also required to notify the Registrar and the students in writing of any changes that may affect the registration criteria within one month of such change.

Current Operation Status and Delivery Modes

According to the most recent figures of the NCR (Education Bureau, 2011b), a total of 1,167 transnational programs are being operated in Hong Kong with 34% (396) of them registered after an assessment process and 66% (772) of them exempted from registration. Of the five key countries that export these programs to Hong Kong, the United Kingdom operates more than half of the registered and exempted programs (see Table 1). Hong Kong’s status as a former colony may contribute a great deal to this phenomenon.

Table 1
Country Distribution of Registered and Exempted Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Registered Programs (%)</th>
<th>Exempted Programs (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainland China</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Transnational education programs are delivered in a variety of collaboration models with respect to program operation. Internationally, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2007) has identified six major collaboration models and defined them as follows:

Franchise: This refers to an arrangement whereby a provider in economy A authorizes a provider in economy B to deliver their course/program in economy B. The qualification is awarded by the provider in economy A. The arrangements for teaching and management are customized for each franchise arrangement, must meet the regulatory
requirements of economy B, and may sometimes also meet the regulations or codes of good practice of economy A.

_Twinning:_ This refers to an arrangement where a provider in economy A collaborates with a provider in economy B so that students take course credits in economy B and/or economy A. The qualification is still awarded by the provider in economy A.

_Double or joint degree:_ This kind of collaboration permits students, upon satisfactory completion of a program, to receive either a qualification from each provider in different economies or a joint award from the collaborating partners. Arrangements are customized for each initiative and programs are to meet the regulations of both economies.

_Articulation:_ As a much looser collaboration between providers than in twinning, students are allowed to gain credit for programs offered by all of the collaborating providers in the articulation arrangements.

_Validation:_ This arrangement allows a provider in economy B to award the qualification of a provider in economy A. In some cases, the provider in economy A may not even offer these programs or awards itself.

_E-learning or distance:_ These are arrangements where providers deliver courses or programs to students through distance and online modes while some face-to-face support for students through local study or support centers may be included.

**Delivery Modes in Hong Kong**

Transnational education in Hong Kong is offered in many forms, ranging from delivery of parts of the programs in the importing country, in the satellite campuses in Hong Kong, shared teaching in the local institution facilities, to entirely distance learning mode. Wong (2005) identified six delivery formats currently available in Hong Kong. The three most common modes are actually variations of twinning: (a) partnering with a local institution while the exporting institution/awarding institution maintains control over much of the course design and course delivery (teaching and assessment); (b) partnering with a local institution with the home institution controlling the course design and shared program delivery; and (c) partnering with a local institution who is mostly responsible for the course delivery. The next two formats are less common: (a) one is a form of validation, as defined by the OECD (2007), where the awarding institution validating a program designed and taught by a local institution; and (b) one is that of distance education, again defined by the OECD (2007), where the awarding institution employs purely distance learning mode of delivery through printed materials and/or electronic delivery. The sixth format, though not identified by the OECD, is gaining ground in Hong Kong as the government has been encouraging more overseas higher education institutions to set up a branch campus in Hong Kong by offering land grants. As part of the conservation efforts launched by the Hong Kong Heritage Office (2010), the North Kowloon Magistracy Building was given as a land grant to the Savannah School of Arts and Design (2011) from the USA as the campus site for its Hong Kong operation in 2009. The government is planning for land grants to attract overseas providers to set up campuses in Hong Kong.
In addition, the trend of offering double or joint degrees by overseas and local institutions seems to have gained significant momentum in recent years and is the seventh type of transnational education offered in Hong Kong. Such collaboration is primarily found at postgraduate levels between the self-accrediting universities in Hong Kong and their overseas partners. Research-based or business management and information science postgraduate degree programs are among the most common fields for this collaboration. The joint doctoral program between King’s College London and the University of Hong Kong is a good example for a research-based degree (University of Hong Kong, 2011). Other main examples include the dual degree of a master of science awarded by Stockholm University School of Business and a master of business administration by Hong Kong Baptist University School of Business (Stockholm University, 2011), a master of science in management and information systems by the University of Arizona and City University of Hong Kong (University of Arizona, 2011), and the master of business management by the University of Texas at Austin and Chinese University of Hong Kong (University of Texas at Austin, 2011).

Registration Assessment and Challenges in Quality Assurance

Nations rely on regulatory means such as approval, registration, recognition, and accreditation to maintain a degree of quality assurance of transnational education (Gu, 2009). Notwithstanding Hong Kong’s attempt to assure quality and protect consumers through regulations, many loopholes have been spotted from implementing the seemingly comprehensive framework and the discrepancy between legislative intent and actual registration assessment practices based on first-hand insider experiences. Issues related to quality assurance normally arise from the process of annual return assessment. I will first delineate the issues that have arisen from the annual return assessment process embedded in the regulatory framework for annual return assessments; then I will present issues related to provider ethics, a lack of systematic data collection, and the indirect financial subsidy from the local tax revenue with little quality control.

Issues Arisen from Annual Return Assessment

Two major aspects threaten quality assurance efforts under the Ordinance: (a) allowance for delay of submission, and (b) a document-reliant assessment process. First, the Ordinance allows providers to submit documents for annual returns within 6 months after the end of a period of 12 months counting from the date of registration of the course or from any anniversary of such date; or after an academic year of the course. If a provider does not submit the annual return application materials, a notice will be issued. Each notice again allows up to a month for a response and no deregistration warning will be given to providers until three notices have been served with no response from the provider at all. The insider experiences have revealed a fair number of incidences where overseas providers utilized the time allowance to avoid being scrutinized for practices that may undermine the program quality. Some extreme cases involved a delay of annual returns for 2 years. Meanwhile, students have been recruited and fees paid when the registration status is in question. Some other incidences I have encountered were even more serious in that the programs stopped running by the time
the annual returns were filed. Assessment for approval thus becomes meaningless and students are left with no arrangements to complete the programs and/or for a refund of paid tuition fees.

Specific quality assurance issues can be minimized if annual return delays are not permitted. Based on the first-hand insider experiences, some of the major issues include (a) whether the overseas institutions have indeed visited the Hong Kong site to conduct classroom observations or be involved in recruiting local teaching staff for quality assurance purposes; (b) whether miscommunication, inadequate communication, or even non-communication between the overseas institution and its local partner has occurred; and (c) whether the overseas provider has over-delegated responsibilities to local partners without adequate monitoring.

The document-based assessment process has further exacerbated the problems. As a matter of courtesy and common practice, assessors of annual returns give at least one week for providers to respond. Follow-up communications to ask for a reply typically allow for at least another week. Assessors generally do not refer delay cases to the NCR until at least three attempts over a period of at least one month. Providers’ requests for more time to prepare documents are typically granted as well. The wait time together with the multiple iterations between the assessor and the overseas provider for information mean gaps can easily take three months or more before an assessment is completed with a recommendation to the NCR. As mentioned earlier, in the case of non-compliance to provide requested information, the NCR may give an additional three months or more before any action is taken against the registration status of the concerned program.

Provider Ethics

Wong (2005), with insider experiences as a former executive director of the HKCAA VQ, has identified several issues arisen from less serious or unscrupulous providers with a focus on monetary gains. These issues include: (a) misleading/dishonest information relating to the delivery of the programs (e.g., course contents, teaching resources, and staffing) or false claims relating to the status or recognition of the programs (e.g., claiming that they are recognized by the government or professional bodies of the exporting country); (b) poor program quality (e.g., reduced content, fewer choices of courses/electives, lower entry/graduation requirements); (c) inadequate teaching resources (e.g., employing unqualified or inexperienced staff, use of poor quality or unsuitable learning materials for students, lack of or inadequate library resources); (d) undesirable teaching/delivery mode (e.g., intensive/block teaching, shortened program duration or fast track progression). Even though regulations for advertising described earlier are in place, incidences of purposeful false advertising have been found. For example, non-registered programs were placed in the same advertisement with a registered program to create the impression that these programs also have the same registration status as the registered. These issues hamper students’ ability to make a rational and informed choice, make good-quality local programs endure unfair competition from low-quality imported programs, and result in students receiving unrecognized qualifications and being poorly-equipped for the job market (Wong, 2005).
Lack of Systematic Data Collection

The data collection process of this study and the utilization of first-hand insider experiences to fill information gaps testify to the scarcity of data and a lack of systematic data collection to permit a fuller understanding of the operation and quality of transnational programs. Some indications on training quality can be drawn from a recent student survey conducted by the British Council (2011) that found only one-third of students enrolled in Hong Kong’s transnational programs gave positive responses on value for money in comparison with local publicly-funded programs. In addition to learning in the inferior sized campus sizes with generally poorer facilities and less student support in comparison to the local publicly funded universities, students are particularly concerned about the acceptance of their qualifications in the job market together with the ease of access into these programs in comparison with local institutions.

Indirect Financial Subsidy with Limited Quality Control

Even though transnational education should not generally cost the government of the importing country, it does in the case of Hong Kong, primarily through the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) scheme. With the purpose of encouraging lifelong learning to accompany the education reforms, the Hong Kong government set up the CEF scheme to permit all Hong Kong residents between the age of 18 and 65 who have successfully completed in and paid the tuition fee on equal monthly installments basis for a reimbursable course or program before it commences to seek reimbursement of their fees (Student Financial Assistance Agency, 2011).

Although no figures can be located due to the lack of systematic data collection and management, my first-hand insider experiences confirm that many of the courses of transnational programs, especially those that lead to professional or vocational qualifications, have separately applied and been approved as registered courses under the CEF scheme. Such registration status allows students enrolling in the individual courses to be reimbursed 80% of the tuition fee up to the sum of HK$10,000 upon satisfactory completion. Programs with courses of reimbursable fees under the CEF scheme are bound to be more attractive. As such, Hong Kong tax revenues indirectly subsidize the programs of overseas institutions with limited control over their quality. In addition, unscrupulous providers delivering poor quality programs with high tuition fees to match the maximum reimbursable amount have resulted in incidences of blaming the government for not protecting consumers adequately. These incidences have eventually led to the issue of a highlighted note of warning on the respective websites of both the Education Bureau (2011a) and the CEF office (Student Financial Assistance Agency, 2011).

Implications and Conclusion

Despite their significant number, transnational education programs around the globe continue to be perceived as lacking quality or having providers who are not interested in quality improvement (Wilkinson & Yussof, 2005). Elsewhere, evidence continues to show that transnational provision, in many cases, is driven by market opportunity and
that compromises in quality are widespread (Lieven & Martin, 2006). In 2002, UNESCO launched the ‘Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications’ as a response to the ethical challenges and dilemmas facing the globalization of higher education (Knight, 2006). In 2004, UNESCO’s desk study overview concluded that Asian Pacific nations needed more international cooperation among the national initiatives in quality assurance of higher education programs. In 2005, UNESCO and the OECD, aiming at student protection, jointly developed the Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education as an international framework of promoting international collaboration between providers and receivers of higher education (OECD, 2005). Following this framework, the toolkit produced by UNESCO and the Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) (UNESCO, 2006) emphasized that academic quality should be treated separately from consumer protection because of its singular importance.

Despite the seemingly comprehensive regulatory framework, Hong Kong has not achieved adequate consumer protection. First, the 2004 survey conducted by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) for the APQN also indicates that Hong Kong’s regulatory framework is among those mechanisms where the extent to which the quality assurance has a central role is not very clear (Stella, 2006). Second, UNESCO and the APQN (UNESCO, 2006) consider that the existing Hong Kong regulatory framework only offers a minimum level of consumer protection. Lastly, the highlighted warning note on relevant government websites further affirms the survey observations and my concern over an inadequate quality oversight based on data collected.

Assuring the quality of transnational education is challenging given the involvement of many stakeholders. Both internal and external measures may be required to achieve better consumer protection and monitoring of program quality. Internal measures refer to refinement of existing regulations as well as data collection and dissemination. External measures refer to various types of collaborations with quality assurance agencies of exporter countries.

**Internal Measures**

The need to refine the regulations and practices, especially in the areas of annual returns where time lag has permitted quality assurance and consumer protection to slip, is urgent. Unscrupulous marketing and low level of provider ethics in ensuring program operation and arrangements for paid students has reflected a great need to install effective mechanisms toward better legal protection for consumers. First, the government should refine the regulatory policies to close the loopholes in the time lag and delay of annual returns to avoid the monitoring gap of quality assurance and consumer protection. Second, the government should instigate a mechanism to more efficiently monitor unscrupulous marketing and to provide tougher penalties against low level of provider ethics so as to ascertain arrangements for paid students to complete programs.

The lack of systematic data collection and timely data dissemination contribute to the lack of consumer awareness and basis for informed choices. Under the current
framework, the NCR is the only unit to have access to important information such as the lapse of registration status of a program, tuition fee sums and trends, student enrolment figures and patterns, employment status of graduates, and whether the qualifications are recognized in Hong Kong. Therefore, the government should provide resources for the NCR to develop a mechanism or unit to consistently collect and disseminate data in a timely manner to potential/existing consumers and other relevant stakeholders. The policymakers themselves can benefit from the availability of relevant data for the development of future policies and the local higher education sector for examination and analysis that can push Hong Kong forward in the provision of diverse education opportunities.

**External Measures**

Both the NCR and HKCAA VQ need to work more closely with quality assurance agencies of the major exporter countries of transnational education to Hong Kong, such as the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) of the United Kingdom, Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) of Australia, and regional accreditation bodies of the USA. The QAA reviews the partnership arrangements that UK higher education institutions have made with organizations in other countries to deliver UK programs. The Australian Education and Training Ministers have set up a Transnational Quality Strategy (TQS) framework to protect and promote the quality of Australian education and training delivered in other countries (Australian Government International, 2011). The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) has also funded other tools and resources to assist providers, or prospective providers, of Australian transnational education (Australian Government International, 2011). All of the US regional accrediting commissions have amended and endorsed the principles of good practice in overseas international education programs developed by the Council of Postsecondary Accreditation in 1997. These principles can be easily found in many university websites and all of the regional accrediting commissions. Valuable insight into overseas providers’ credibility and operation standards may result from established agreements and exchange of information.

As is true of any form of trade, the export of education programs bring benefits to both importing and exporting countries. For the importing country, benefits include exposure to other education systems and cultures, supplementing the domestic supply of education opportunities, and an educational alternative to its own citizens (Wong, 2005). For the exporting institutions, financial gains from student fees and overseas brand building are among the key benefits. Alongside the opportunities and benefits, transnational education challenges the existing institutional arrangements for quality assurance, accreditation and qualification recognition in higher education of the importing countries (Gu, 2009). The Hong Kong case is not unique or alone but is illustrative of issues encountered by importer countries. It also reflects the complex nature of the operation of transnational education and the need for all to work together to build high quality and reliable transnational education.
References


The Real in the Reel: The need for critically reflective teachers in the media classroom.

John McKenzie
University of Canterbury

Abstract
Critically reflective teachers need to examine the paradigms and theories that inform their professional lives. This paper argues that an eco-pedagogy involving efficacious action by students requires a critique of the radical post-structural paradigm that is constantly sceptical of any truth-claims about what is ‘real’ and what it is to ‘act’. Using documentaries based on the Galapagos Islands, the paper challenges documentary film makers to consider the ethical imperatives that frame the nature of their productions and further invites educators to select resources and teaching strategies that enable both critique and efficacious actions.

Key words: media literacy, documentary, critical realism, eco-criticism, critical literacy, eco-pedagogy, Galapagos Islands

Becoming a critically reflective teacher
Teaching and learning is a complex business. Teachers need to contemplate the narratives that sit behind their decisions to become a teacher and the sorts of life experiences and world views that continue to inform their professional development. What is important is that all these life experiences produce ideas about being, knowing, and doing that together inform each teachable moment. Sometimes these narratives are explicit as we reflect on them and hold them as certainties; other times they are a hidden set of ideas and motivations but nevertheless are powerful influences on all our interactions. Such narratives begin to shape what we do as educators.

These world views based on life experiences and beliefs can begin to be articulated as specific paradigms. Paradigms are the major philosophic frameworks that shape our thinking and consequent behaviour. They are the shared ‘grand narratives’ of who we are, how we come to be, and how we know that we know. Part of being a teacher is the need for being self-reflective about these paradigms, both those that are explicit and those that are implicit, and being aware of the possible consequences.

You might believe, for example, in a Marxist/critical theory paradigm where there is no place for quirky individuals who are unique and autonomous (a liberal humanist idea). Instead, the individual is ‘constructed’ by socio-political and economic practices like state education and the media that may persuade young people to conform to the desires of the politically powerful, the bourgeoisie, and capitalism. Because of this,
you see your role as a teacher to help children and young people resist such practices, believing that such resistance and consequential social action might lead to alternative worlds where greater equality exists. You have a strong interest, then, in critical literacy as praxis. Texts can position readers to affirm the ideologies of the powerful and literacy teachers must counter this. You encourage children to debate the big questions about power and power-holders and who gains from representation and who is excluded. You ask them to critique popular texts that unquestionably support the capitalist enterprise as a form of propaganda. You encourage children to write letters to editors expressing concern about how the down-trodden, such as beneficiaries, are demonised. You support youngsters who want to participate in groups that aim to help the needy in the local community by assisting them design advertising brochures showing what can be done to help. In terms of an eco-pedagogy, you might want to focus on the effects of global capitalism on the environment and particularly explore examples of ‘green-washing’ as a marketing strategy.

There are many shades and hues of being a Marxist, or a Christian, or a liberal humanist or a feminist. Furthermore, given that we are contradictory beings, the example above tends to suggest internal consistency within a paradigm rather than complexity. One can be a Christian, a Marxist, a liberal feminist or a post-colonial liberal humanist with a passing interest in transcendental meditation. Critically reflective teachers need to be self-aware as to the nature of the paradigms they bring to the classroom, being able to articulate the strengths and weaknesses, the certainties and the uncertainties.

The intention of this paper is to focus on one contemporary paradigm in education, namely that of radical post-structuralism/postmodernism. Through examining its efficacy in the context of eco-criticism, the paper will identify some major difficulties with this paradigm and question aspects of its value in a classroom that is focused on environmental concerns. It will then focus on how teachers may instead take up a critically reflective approach to text, based on critical realism as an alternative paradigm. To illustrate this approach, documentaries about the Galapagos Islands as an environmental space/place will be examined.

This paper may well be useful for teachers who are engaged in ‘literature across the curriculum’ as a classroom practice. In this focus, literature and science come together where two systems of thought, two different ways of knowing, are blended together. Is the science teacher also, of necessity, a media teacher? What can a media teacher do to support scientific thinking? What can colleagues from different disciplines learn from each other? These issues are indeed the heart of eco-criticism as pedagogy. This pedagogy must, it is argued, result in a practicum of commitment and care for the actual environment where students have faith that they can make a difference.

**Theory**

*The issue of agency and the possibility of knowing and doing.*

Much theoretical debate has addressed the extent to which we can ever know the real, given that post-structuralists argue that any utterance is structured by language such that the real can only be a linguistic construct. Language, it is argued, is essential to
thinking, has an arbitrary relationship with the referential world, has its own rules, is inherently unstable, and is culturally determined. Therefore, the expressive individual can only be an unwitting subject of, and performer of, available discursive practices. Language and discourse speaks through the individual. Erickson’s idea of the self-actualised individual who actively constructs his/her sense of identity thus gives way to Foucauldian subjectivity (Windschuttle, 2002). Every utterance, every text is a ‘representation’ rather than a mirror to the world, a representation that forever defers meaning (as demonstrated by those literary critics who practise deconstruction). How valid is this paradigm for the teacher who wants to design a curriculum that encourages praxis of care for the ‘real’ environment if that reality is always and forever a human construct, not ever able to be fully known?

In the postmodernist paradigm (based on post-structural thinking and critical theory) the individual is ‘de-centred’ as a unique, autonomous self-in-the-world capable of agency. This is seen to be a liberal humanist paradigm. Rather the individual is a subject who is subconsciously invited to ‘perform’ the various positions that dominant discourses/ideologies offer, often unaware of their allure. Through constant repetition of the discourse (stimulus) and its performance (response), ideology is naturalised and hidden from consciousness (Nelson, 1999). Indeed, the school itself is a site where the individual is interpellated into the dominant discourses through such means as, for example, children’s literature (McKenzie, 2003).

The idea of the quirky individual who sits outside the square, passionately imaginative and creative and being able to autonomously invent new ways of thinking and doing, is denied in critical theory. Instead the idea of ‘subjectivity’ and ‘intersubjectivities’ imply being subject to the serfdom of prevailing discourses and power structures, defined in text as subject positions. As teachers, how are we to envisage the children who sit in front of us? Are they subjects determined by dominant discourses and power structures or are they capable of agency and asserting unique identities? Or is there space for both?

**Post-structuralism and postmodernism in science and literacy practices.**

Post-structuralists and postmodernists have challenged the hegemony of science as a universal grand narrative grounded in reason and as a discourse that deals with objective truth. They also have questioned positivist styles of teaching that promote the idea of science as a discourse of truth and certainty such that teaching is then based on direct, top-down transmission by the teacher to the student of such givens (Bereiter, Cassells & Hewitt, 1997). Such assertions of hegemonic truth claims (and the idea of progress) are treated with constant scepticism by post-structuralists so that other forms of knowing (as in art, myth and theology) are given equal weight. However, as Bereiter et al. note (and their article seeks to resolve):

> The reason this anti-scientific sentiment has grave implications for elementary education is that in modern societies there is not actually any alternative to science as a way of . . . [addressing] the endless flow of why and how questions that occur in any modern elementary school classroom where they are allowed to flourish. There is no alternative
to biology that explains what bruises are, how you resemble your aunt more than you do your mother, why mosquitoes do not transmit AIDS, and why your nose runs when you have a cold . . . For questions like these, the only real alternative to scientific inquiry is the suppression of inquiry; it is not some alternative form of knowing. (p. 330)

Medicine, of course, has much to do with bodies and embodiment, and is therefore a problematic discipline for the forever sceptical, postmodernist relativist. Whilst it is reasonable for postmodernists to draw attention to socio-cultural contexts and the possibility of the politics of power in discourse (even some scientific discourses where, for example, traditional herbal medicines or faith healing are seen of necessity as mythic), when it comes to ‘real’ bodies, cultural relativity and situatedness is highly problematic. Doctors do not contemplate an embodied patient lying before them as an endless chain of signifiers such that the referent ‘this body before me’ can never be truly known. The surgical knife is more than a sign signifying discourse. I would prefer an anaesthetist at my bedside than a semiotician intent on narrative therapy.

Post-structuralist and postmodernist approaches to critical literacy practices draw attention to the politics of power embedded in a literary canon that valorises white, male-dominated literary texts and silences the ‘other’. This silencing may be evident in power-holders ignoring the indigenous, the female, literature for children and particular text types (like oral stories, mass media, computer games and social networking technologies). Post-structuralist and postmodernist approaches challenge the notion of objective readings determined by the literary elite. They question the value of state-mandated curricula that defines literacy as a range of skills and competencies being universally true for all learners whilst ignoring other forms of culturally based literacies (Meacham & Buendia, 1999). However, the embodied environment and its representation (the real in the reel) is a problematic for the forever sceptical, post-structuralist relativist who is pre-occupied with the social rather than the environmental.

The embodied environment, whilst partially subject to discourse, also has its own voice, independent of the endless chain of signifiers that constitutes language. Those who have experienced earthquakes and tsunamis, tornadoes and tropical storms know that power is not simply in discourse but also in the reality of the lived-in-moment that is beyond language. When the ground shakes and you are thrown to the ground, when falling masonry kills the person next to you, you are in a reality beyond human control. Nature has its own voice, and however we represent the event, it is Nature’s voice that is still speaking on its own terms. In that moment, our representations, our metaphors, count for nothing. We are abject. Eco-criticism attempts to acknowledge this voice; eco-pedagogy is a curriculum that seeks to engage and respond to the voice of the ultimate other, Nature. As Wapner (2003) puts it (having lauded postmodernism’s positive effect on the social):

*The postmodern argument also poses challenges for anyone concerned with environmental protection . . . What happens when they claim that one understanding of ‘nature’ is at odds with another and there is no definite way to judge which one is better? How can a movement...*
dedicated to protecting nature operate if the very identity of its concern is in doubt. While postmodern critics are comfortable giving voice to other people, they stop short at the nonhuman world—the paradigmatic ‘other’. When it comes to nature, postmodernists are happy to do all the talking. They seem to see no need to heed the voice of nonhuman, no reason even to assume that, in the vast world of rivers, chimpanzees, rainstorms, and whales, anything is being said. Postmodern cultural critics look at the nonhuman world and think they are looking in the mirror. There is nothing out there with its own authentic voice because, as soon as we imagine it expressing itself, we recognise that we are speaking, and therefore making up its words. (pp. 2-4)

Critical realism as a paradigm betwixt and between modernism and postmodernism.

Though Tallis (2002) is a staunch critic of post-structuralists, he nevertheless rejects the mirror metaphor, which proposes that language (or, for our purposes, text) simply mimics Nature. He argues that there is a case for a ‘correspondence theory of truth’ based on man as an explicit animal (defined by Tallis as rational consciousness) such that statements of truth value are not grounded in the individual but in explicit, rational, public consciousness.

This is why truth is best seen as emergent—beginning with perception (it does, after all, make sense to speak of true and false perceptions) and developing through judgement and articulation to reach full flower in factual statements... it seems reasonable to conclude that it is really in the correspondence between a statement and extra-linguistic reality that we find truth at its most developed. (p. 250)

This notion of emergent and most developed is important. Factuality is never finally fixed as an absolute but it does propose a high degree of stability over time when tested by both valid and sufficient means. It is reasonable that critical literacy as pedagogy draws attention to the pervasive power of ideology. This is evident in the problem of anthropomorphism, which proposes that we see Nature primarily through the lenses of human perception. But in the public space of collective rational discourse (broadly defined) where there are opportunities for gathering data, critiquing methods and verifying generalisations, there is the possibility of a high degree of truth value emerging into what critical realists call provisional factual statements. Truth value is found in the collective efficacy of these statements to make sense of the world and our consequential engagement in caring for the world.

The critical realist accepts that knowledge claims are provisional but there is, through due process, a closing of the gap between the real and the represented, between reality and our views of that reality. To put this into a literacy context, non-fiction and documentary texts have therefore the potential of articulating both valid and sufficient statements about the real as to give a reliable basis for shared understandings about Nature and the possibility of effective agency. These understandings are not absolutes; they are provisional.
However, truth value is not a simply a rationalist proposition; there are other valid forms of truth about Nature that are inclusive of, for example, the transcendental (Goodin, 2006). If the contemplation of Nature evokes a spiritual state akin to awe and wonder that results in a commitment to the care and recuperation of Nature, then the issue of efficacy stands. For example, for traditional Maori as for many indigenous people, the binary material versus spiritual is a false binary because, for them, all material forms are imbued by spirit. A particular mountain is sacred; the forest is the domain of the gods and therefore there are strictures on what is good and true in humanity’s interaction with Nature. Critical literacy then needs to go beyond rationalism as the form of knowing (Janks, 2002) and expand its scope so that it is inclusive of, in an eco-pedagogy context, spirituality. That may be epistemologically unsettling for some scientists.

What this paper is specifically promoting is the potential agency of quirky individuals. This requires challenging a sceptical pedagogy of constant deferral of meaning; a pedagogy that insists that all knowledge about the environment is unstable, relative and fragmented; indeed, a pedagogy that insists on a totalising subjectivity that denies the possibility of quirky individuals existing, let alone being able to institute environmental change. There is the need then in an eco-pedagogic classroom for a public co-construction of the nature of Nature through the mutual scaffolding of educators, the community and learners as collectively they state ideas, inquiring as to their source and substance, testing them, exploring ideas of validity and sufficiency (ethically as well as instrumentally). In those acts we see a collective, explicit, and rational/spiritual consciousness at work facing, in the end, real substantive issues.

The media classroom in action

Can educators rely on the documentary genre as a means to provisionally know the ‘real’ and as a basis for agency? Defining what documentary is, is no easy task. The nature of the genre, of necessity, is implicated in notions of Nature, realism, representation, semiotics and pedagogy as discussed above. As Corner (2002) puts it:

> Dispute about these questions has, of course, followed documentary work since its beginnings . . . it has quite often been taken up from a position that judges the entire documentary project to be an exercise in depictive fraud. (p. 141)

Given that Big Brother as a reality television show fits within the documentary impulse, such a point of view seems reasonable. Artifice has always been a shaper of the documentary event both at the level of “intent” as well as at the level of technology. Can one then have faith in artifice? Renov (1993) argues that there are four fundamental tendencies of documentary: “to record, reveal, or preserve; to persuade or promote; to analyse or interrogate; and to express” (p. 21).

The reality, therefore, that is depicted in documentaries has to be a deliberate shaping of events for a particular purpose. Given the different camera angles, length of film shots, lighting, time-lapse photography, authorial voice, sound effects, and choices about what is excluded and included; there is plenty of work to do in an eco-critical classroom. There is a necessity then, in an educative context, for critical literacy questions about
the circumstances of production of a particular documentary that influence production values, modes of address, and subject positioning.

Audience studies, however, suggest that power is not simply grounded in the provenances of film and its modes of address (discourse) but also constituted by the audience itself (agency). Reminiscent of Rosenblatt’s theory of reading as a transactional act, Staiger (2000) argues that there is not a simple cause and effect relationship between text and spectator as proposed by much of critical theory, but it is in the context of the transaction between text and spectator that meaning is made. What Staiger (2000) emphasises is the quirkiness of audience responses to classical Hollywood cinema, tellingly identified as “the perversity of spectators” (p. 28). That is to say, identity and agency has as much to do with reception as any assertion of subjectivity and performativity. As Staiger puts it:

Now that normative expectations are fairly well described, scholarly research needs to expand that history to describe and account for the exceptional number of variations - so exceptional as perhaps even to be the norm . . . By choosing the term ‘perversity’, I wish to highlight the wilfulness of the spectator whilst also avoiding the implicit but false conjunction that doing something different is necessarily politically progressive (italics added). (pp. 31-32)

Eitzen (2005) provides a useful insight into a personal reflection on a transaction with a particular documentary he experienced, drawing attention to the “peculiar appeals” of documentary as a genre (p. 185). Utilising what he identifies as the pragmatics approach to film theory, Eitzen avoids a deterministic stance, which he identifies with semiotics (that is to say, post-structuralism). Semiotics suppresses, he argues,

Situational specifics, such intentions [read intentionality/purposefulness as a subset of agency] and referents. Today most film scholars acknowledge the fallacy in this approach (or at least pushing it to an extreme). Just the same, there seems to be a lingering bias against the pragmatics approach, against ascribing meanings to implied aims and purposes (as opposed to arbitrary, cultural conventions). (p. 185)

Eitzen (2005) then challenges the hermeneutics of suspicion that characterises the semiotician’s take on the non-referentiality of the documentary and instead draws upon evolutionary theory. He draws attention to environmental perception as an awareness of the actuality of the referent ‘out there’, which is a necessary adaptive disposition that begins and ends with the body. It is important to recognise that “impulses in the brain that registers as sensations, perceptions, or meanings of one kind or another that are used in social interactions are not merely regular and rule-governed, but that they have some reliable correspondence to reality” (p. 188). If a rock falls above me, my adaptive capacity to survive means that my body reacts, “my glands, nerves and emotional responses” (p. 186). My bodily response is to intervene actively in Nature. This bodily response is often evident in audience responses to film. Indeed, Eitzen argues that this is precisely the peculiar appeal of the documentary: a disposition to intervene.
Many documentaries take advantage of it [the disposition to intervene] by openly inviting us to take action – to write to our senators, change our minds, express our opinions, or at the very least, to pay special attention and feel special concern while watching the film . . . [This] felt inclination to intervene is a crucial difference between documentary and fiction films. (p. 195)

Whilst again rejecting a naïve view of the documentary as a mirror image to the world, Eitzen (2005) argues that documentary is ideally a discourse of consequence. He states that “there is an awful lot we have to take on faith in any discourse of consequence, be it teaching, arguing, asking for help to change a tire, or by extension, watching a documentary” (p. 192). He identifies that integral to a disposition to intervene is a disposition to trust “the honesty and serious intent of the filmmakers” (p. 193). Echoing Tallis’s (2002) notion of the destructiveness of a hermeneutic of suspicion, Eitzen concludes:

To try to flout this tendency [that realism in the documentary is of value] either with theoretical claims that documentaries are nothing more than fiction films in disguise, or with stylistic practices that thwart our efforts to tell which is which, is to undermine any power documentaries may have to really make a difference. (p. 196)

The corollary of these dispositions to intervene and to trust the filmmaker, is the integrity required of the filmmaker. I would propose (given that film is often mediated through DVD technology) that this ethic might involve production features that:

- Present a variety of viewpoints in a given issue including debates with the audience as an extra
- Support the polemic with corroborated best evidence, possibly referenced as an extra
- Avoid closure of argument when evidence suggests that it would be presumptuous
- Make explicit those elements of artifice that reasonably could be said to potentially distort the truth value of the text
- Provide supporting multi-media material for learners that invites agentive actions
- Avoid sensationalism that has an eye on the ratings when it comes to detailing issues of substance
- Evoke a sense of awe, wonder and the mystery of nature through superb cinematography making use of the unmediated long shot where appropriate
- Allow silence as much as music to engender emotion, inviting active contemplation
- Are self-reflective about critical issues of film production that impact on the environment and its representation as part of an information extra.
For example, in terms of the first bullet point, Cartwright (2008), who served on an international judging panel on documentary and science films in 2007, observed the dominance of submitted films that spoke to a planet under duress. Upon reflection, she expressed concern that the audience was already familiar with the, crises enumerated, but less clear about options with regard to the paths of action citizens might take to address these crises effectively... The agenda I want to propose, then, is to rethink the model of science as the domain of expert knowledge, and the public as a body of citizens in need of education and information. Rather, I propose that we consider the science film spectator as a potential actor with agency, and the science film as a means of generating something beyond a change in consciousness. This proposal begs the question, how would one impart agency to viewing audiences? My first suggestion is that the producers of science films drop the tired conventions of voiceover narration as the locus of authority and take up the strategy of distributing voice among a wider range of constituents, including those for whom films are intended (emphasis added). (p.4)

Cartwright draws attention to the necessity of shifting emphasis from a static form of knowledge and its representation in a transmission model of teaching to a transformative education pedagogy, inclusive of educators as much as learners.

Eco-criticism in action: A vicarious voyage to the Galapagos Islands

Let us make this real by briefly exploring four documentaries on the Galapagos Islands, an iconic place in scientific discourse. Through both a critical and creative stance, how can these documentaries be used to empower students to make a difference to the environment at the local and the global level? We will now explore different modes of address and how each can be used as a basis for both critique (thinking about) and productivity (doing something).

The BBC production of Galapagos: The islands that changed the world (Swinton, 1996) is a classic example of a blue-chip production within the public service model. The cinematography is superb where various long shots as well as montage shots (inclusive of macro-photography) and a supporting musical score evoke a sense of awe and wonder about Nature. The authoritative voiceover style that pronounces rather than enquires is the dominant rhetorical style, indicative of the “record, reveal, preserve” tendency in documentary described above (Renov, 1993, p. 21). Unlike the David Attenborough series, there is no visible narrator presence, thus presenting instead, a God-like provenance. In this context, the DVD reinforces a transmission type of pedagogy, most probably the typical use of documentary in the traditional classroom (Aitken, 1994).

In this space, there is the necessity of critique. How are we positioned to read Nature? For example, to what extent does the narrator take up an eco-centric representation of Nature where Nature is allowed to speak for itself or an anthropomorphic position where evocation of emotion (and audience dispositions) is a deliberate and overt act? It is a
hard task to avoid always reading Nature from a human perspective and to use language that avoids active positioning of the audience to take up a particular perspective. To a large extent, the script-writers do well. But there is a slippage. When the narrator refers to the frigate birds as ‘pirates,’ the native iguana as ‘dragons,’ and the unique Galapagos tortoises as ‘monsters,’ and the islands as ‘enchanting,’ there is a need for critique. One of the dominant tropes in the representation in literature and film of islands per se and their occupants (both human and animal) is the construction of the exotic other; either the island as paradise or the island as the place of the barbaric monster. Max in his wolf-suit knows what I am talking about. By using this anthropomorphic language, learners may not have an inclination to intervene positively and seek to save these pirates, monsters and dragons, but may at worst, be encouraged to have a negative disposition, and species extinction is not seen as an issue.

However, simply to critique and create persistent scepticism of any truth value is to remain stuck within a hermeneutic of suspicion associated with the radical post-structuralist paradigm. The creative educator who wants to encourage student agency could focus on the authoritative voice and seek to inspire learners to become knowledgeable about Nature. What qualifications do scriptwriters and film narrators need? What tertiary institutions enable enthusiasts for Nature to further their passion? Can we make a mind map of all the possibilities of learning about Nature at tertiary level and what is required to enter these programmes? Can we invite into our classroom people who are on this journey and explore the possibilities and the pitfalls? There are, of course, other forms of knowledge and expertise about Nature. The creative educator may invite other community members who, by their authority and reputation within a particular cultural setting, are able to inspire learners to emulate their elders. These strategies are part of a hermeneutic of hope (Tallis, 2002).

In direct contrast to the BBC production, the anthropomorphic voice is very much the mode of address of the documentary: In the wild: The Galapagos mystery (Cole, 1996). Richard Dreyfuss acts as the guide who adopts an interactive approach to the wild, very much within the frame of the American city culture from which he comes. For example, when he describes the marine iguana in situ, he imagines it must be “hell” as social etiquette demands that each bump into another deserves an apology. He further envisages that they represent old men at a bar on Miami beach “waiting for their wives to come out of manicure.” The iguana itself is a dinosaur that has “been in the bath too long.” This laconic wit is no doubt amusing, but tends to position Nature as an exotic other, laughing at rather than with. There are many scenes, for example, where Dreyfuss asserts the superiority of human perception over Nature for the sake of humour, especially when he mimics animal life. The marine iguana gets a fair share of it. Indeed, the barrenness of the Galapagos Islands is such that only “the weirdest sort of creature could make a go of it.”

It would be easy to dismiss this representation as simply idiosyncratic and potentially bio-phobic and reject it, yet Dreyfuss’s representation has a very positive aspect that makes the film useful in an educational context. Surprisingly, perhaps given the comments made thus far, he positions himself as a learner on a journey rather than an authority, constantly indicating a lack of knowledge, asking questions about the nature
of things such as why evolution as a theory has explanatory power. Having critiqued perhaps the excessive quirkiness of Dreyfuss, the creative teacher could willingly adopt the mantle of a learner (rather than the expert) and invite students, as they watch the DVD, to list what they don’t know. A collective mind-map of these gaps and spaces could then form the basis of a constructivist pedagogy (for example through inquiry-based learning), which allows the possibility of this documentary meeting the “analyse and interrogate” tendency of the documentary (Renov, 1993, p. 21).

In contrast to the measured style of the BBC production on the one hand and the overtly idiosyncratic anthropocentrism of Dreyfuss on the other, The crocodile hunter: Legends of the Galapagos (Douglas & Stainton, 2008) starring the Australian Steve Irwin and his wife Terri, is somewhere in the middle. An enthusiast for the preservation of wildlife, Steve Irwin challenges the effaced and distant observer/narrator who speaks from a fixed script, and instead, Irwin presents himself as a dramatic character as well as an enthusiastic commentator on what he discovers. There is an element of the docudrama indicative of Renov’s expressive tendency in the documentary (Renov, 1993). Turning to the camera and expressing both ideas and emotions is very much Irwin’s style, invoking the possibility of connection and identification on the part, perhaps, of the implied child viewer. His enthusiasm, coupled with the literal ‘getting down to business’ of close-up photography, is expressive of awe and wonder in the face of Nature.

An eco-critical perspective is needed here as enthusiasm can mask real issues. Though both Irwins speak about the impact of humans on the species of the islands (as for example, the loss of particular species of the giant tortoise as a result of introduced animals and plants), they tend to be at times idealistic in their enthusiasm. For example, when viewing at close quarters the wonder of the small population of the flamingos, Steve Irwin turns to the camera and speaks eloquently about the National Park operation, commending its policies and practices with regard to eco-tourism. He makes the point that, by keeping to the paths and maintaining distance, thousands of visitors will enjoy their visit to the Galapagos and make no impact. However, there is another perspective:

[T]here are unwanted by-products from tourism when it is not operated responsibly - contamination from boat paint and engines, oil spills, overused sites, a drain on the fresh water supply, and introduction of plants and animals from the mainland. (Adventure-life, n.d., para 12)

A critical pedagogy could well explore eco-tourism as a phenomenon, especially as it relates to the local as much as the global. To what extent is eco-tourism primarily a part of the capitalist consumerist economy, and extolling its virtues helps maintain environmentally abusive power structures? However, in order to avoid a persistent scepticism, students could also be asked to think about how eco-tourism could be a sustainable means through which environmentalism can become a global imperative, interpelling tourists into an environmental discourse. When we have experienced something precious that is at risk, we might have a disposition to intervene. What defines the boundaries of environmental intervention (critical thinking about productive action) is a central issue in eco-pedagogy.
**Faith, Hope and Transformation: Eco-pedagogy as a space of change.**

Here lies the challenge and rich possibilities for the creative teacher imbued with a concern for Nature, both in critiquing the representation (as found in the reel) and having a disposition to intervene in the real, believing that he/she can make a difference. To begin this collective journey, educators and learners need initially perhaps to critically think about and productively act at the local level.

For New Zealanders who care about the island as a real space, the non-fiction picture book *Save Our Seas* (Gill, 2009) is a good place to start. Inspired by one of New Zealand’s most famous sailors, Sir Peter Blake, the writer details a journey around the coastline of the islands of New Zealand, exploring the nooks and crannies of the eco-systems that constitute the coast. What makes this book superb is not only its documentary aspect, but its persistent invitation to act. On each double-page spread, where the story or ‘ship’s log’ focuses on a particular part of the coastline, there are multiple frames that provoke the reader to respond. Knowledge (“Did you know?”) is balanced by action (“What can you do?”). This includes the text informing parents as to how they can help, as well as encouraging the reader to write letters to Members of Parliament. Here eco-criticism merges into an eco-pedagogy. One of the most poignant moments of the text is where it describes the last ship log of Sir Peter Blake before he was killed by pirates in the Amazon River.

> The hardest part of any big project is to begin. We have begun. We are underway. We have a passion. We want to make a difference. We hope that you and as many of your friends as possible will join us. (Gill, 2009, p. 5)

Beginning to make changes in how we collectively respond to environmental issues is often the space for quirky individuals. If eco-tourism defines the previous documentaries, the film *Sharkwater* is about eco-warriors. The story is something of an autobiography of Rob Stewart, the film-maker and narrator. Passionate about sharks as a youngster, he became an underwater photographer during the construction of this movie, and, in the nature of his learning journey, he became a defender of sharks against what he believes to be the mythology of the monster that has defined our relationship with the species ever since the iconic film *Jaws*. The actual production of the documentary became a means of change. As he (Stewart, 2008) puts it:

> Due to us exposing the shark fin trade during filming there was a huge reaction by local people who had no idea that this practice was going on under their noses. You see their protest march in the film. The Costa Rica government took immediate action and banned the private docks that were being used to land the fins.

Here is the disposition to intervene writ large, not from a top-down model through government action but motivated by quirky individuals bottom-up, part of a collective of mainstream outsiders, believing that power resides with the people. Stewart’s adventures involved pirates, mafia gangs and international manhunts, espionage and protest, escapes and confrontations. It is like a high-seas, 19th century *Boys Own*
adventure, beginning and ending in the Galapagos. What is remarkable is that the focus is on a young person who intervenes bodily in relating to sharks (no film cages here). He puts himself at risk in the fight to protect the shark species against the consumption of their fins for shark-fin soup in the Asian market and disrupting the activities of the long-line fishermen of the Galapagos.

In this paper, I have argued that there is an urgent need to recover the idea that the real world can be reasonably known in contrast to the radical post-structuralist position that, in asserting that there is nothing outside language and discourse, largely denies learners’ belief in the efficacy of literature and film to represent the ‘real in the reel’ and also their capacity to exercise agency in this world as part of their responses to such texts. Consequently, this paper challenges documentary film makers to consider the ethical imperatives that could frame the nature of their productions and further invites educators to select resources and teaching strategies that enable both critique and efficacious actions. Eco-criticism, above all, must signify for learners the hope of being involved in the recuperation of Nature itself as part of their response to its representation.

References


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Teaching for student success: Promising practices in university teaching

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Abstract

The ability of universities to teach in ways that support the success of diverse students is a matter of focused action in many nations, especially those where demographic trends suggest an increasing prevalence of students from groups under-represented in universities. This paper describes findings from research involving three Faculties and a service centre at a university. Ninety-two interviews were undertaken with Māori and Pasifika students using the Critical Incident Technique (CIT). Teaching and other interventions in non-lecture settings based on the Phase 1 interview findings were implemented. A second set of interviews followed to evaluate the impact of the interventions. Results from the interviews are discussed, along with an analysis of more than 1900 student stories of when teaching in non-lecture settings has helped or hindered their success in degree-level studies. Promising practices for university teaching that helps Māori and Pasifika success are described.

**Keywords:** university teaching, equity, Māori students, Pasifika students, success

Introduction

The ability of universities to teach in ways that support the success of diverse students is a matter of focused action in many nations. This paper reports on equity-focused research in New Zealand to explore good university teaching. Our aim is to promote
discussion among university educators as we consider how our own teaching practices help or hinder success by Māori and Pasifika students preparing for and undertaking degree-level studies.

While evidence exists about lecture-based learning in universities, little is known about how teaching activities in smaller groups of fewer than fifty students impact on indigenous and minority student success. As an interdisciplinary group of university educators, these small group settings were our commonality. Our research focused on these ‘non-lecture’ settings. This paper presents findings from our two-year research project in four different contexts in a New Zealand university of more than 30,000 students (Airini et al., 2010). Findings examine quality university teaching based on interviews with Māori (the indigenous population of New Zealand) and Pasifika (a heterogeneous composite of Pacific ethnic minority groups living in New Zealand) using the Critical Incident Technique (CIT).

This paper describes ‘promising practices’ for university teaching with Māori and Pasifika students. Promising practices are a “kaleidoscope” of “policies, practices and programmes, faculty, spaces and budgets all coming together in new ways, in the service of students, . . . and society” (Narum, 2008, p. 13). Promising practices also refer to simple teaching practices aimed at closing the achievement gap in schooling (National Education Association, 2010) or addressing the needs of specific student population groups in higher education (Schwartz & Jenkins, 2007). Common themes in the literature on promising practices in education are that no single set of practices will be effective with every student (Schwartz & Jenkins, 2007) and that statements of promising practices are dynamic collections offering new approaches (Narum, 2008).

However, research exploring promising practices has been limited by research that has not tracked individuals long enough to evaluate the impact of enhanced teaching (Schwartz & Jenkins, 2007). This paper seeks to address these limitations by describing promising practices in non-lecture university teaching for Māori and Pasifika student success associated with four different settings within one tertiary institution (education, creative arts and industries, health foundation programme, and careers services). In this context, promising practices are teaching methods and activities that help improve student progression to, and achievement at, higher levels of university study (Ministry of Education, 2010; National Education Association, 2010).

Although the research is situated within a single institution, the four different contexts offered unique and varied teaching and learning settings. Furthermore, this research specifically explores the impact of teaching and learning interventions introduced within the study. As such, this paper builds on understandings of promising practices in school contexts (National Education Association, 2010), in higher education with students with disabilities (Vreeburg, Hertzfeld, Simmons-Reed & Aaron, 2001), and in relation to ethnic diversity in higher education (Parker, 2007).

We collated over 1900 stories of times when teaching in non-lecture settings has helped or hindered success in degree-level studies, based on interviews with almost 100 Māori and Pasifika students in a range of university teaching contexts. Categories of practice derived from the student stories were used to guide and enhance teaching practices with Māori and Pasifika students. Further interviews followed to evaluate
any changes in teaching practices. This paper provides a summary of key findings on promising university teaching practices that Māori and Pasifika students have identified, and which we have applied and analysed.

Situating this research

The long-term performance of the university system depends on its ability to teach a broad cross-section of students, adapting to dramatic demographic shifts occurring as a result of social mobility, migration and immigration. In New Zealand universities, population groups that have provided most successful students are being replaced by increasing numbers of students “from groups that are traditionally underserved by higher education” (Middleton, 2008, p. 3). Middleton has argued that the changing demographic in New Zealand is “the largest challenge for higher education” (Middleton, 2008, p. 3) as it presents issues for both universities and economic growth.

Māori and Pasifika student success in tertiary education is of national strategic relevance to New Zealand. By 2021, more than 25% of New Zealand’s population will be Māori or Pasifika (Department of Labour, 2008) and will make an increasing proportion of the eligible workforce in New Zealand at a time when the median age of the population continues to grow. National trends show there has been an increase in Māori and Pasifika participation in tertiary education since 2005, particularly in lower level programmes and some growth at all levels (Middleton, 2008). In general, however, there has been no matching increase in tertiary education outcomes, as indicated by graduation rates (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Government strategy in tertiary education has prioritised more Māori students enjoying success at higher levels and increasing the number of Pasifika students achieving at higher levels by 2015 (Ministry of Education, 2010). Accordingly, there are a number of equity-related expectations of universities, including improved learning environments for Pasifika students, taking responsibility for strengthening Māori education outcomes by improving the learning environment and teaching practices and ensuring research informs teaching (Ministry of Education, 2010). A proportion of Government funding to universities is now linked to teaching outcomes (Ministry of Education, 2010).

To date, research into university teaching has focused on the perspective of the university teacher or organisation, explored postgraduate supervision and large lecture settings, and identified some support needs of indigenous students (Buckridge & Guest, 2007; Dall’Alba, 2005; Visckovic, 2006; Wimhurst, Wortley, Bates, & Allard, 2006; Page & Asmar, 2008). The recent development of tertiary research focused on Māori student success builds on the momentum gained from secondary education research investigating Māori student perspectives on their high school teaching (Bishop, Berryman, Tiakiwai & Richardson, 2003). Similarly, a review of research into areas affecting Māori achievement in bachelor degrees endorsed the need to move away from a deficit model, which locates Māori underachievement in the shortcomings of the student, to a view that considers the ways in which university teaching can be improved to build and enhance the learning of all students (Earle, 2008).

Research into Pasifika university success factors has tended to focus on ways
in which Pasifika students influence their achievement (for example Tofi, Flett & Timutimu-Thorpe, 1996; Beaver & Tuck, 1998; Anae, Anderson, Benseman, & Coxon, 2002; Chu, 2009). Recent research has explored how wider institutional factors, including teaching, affects Pasifika student success (Benseman, Coxon, Anderson & Anae, 2006). Further research is needed, especially in-depth, larger scale research into Pasifika student perspectives on university teaching. In an analysis of research into Pasifika education issues, including at the university level, Coxon, Anae, Mara, Wendt-Samu and Finau (2002) identified the need for research that “is relatively large scale in coverage . . . [and] . . . documents the factors which contribute to educational success, including educationally successful Pacific students’ perceptions” (Coxon et al., 2002, p. 138).

When research into teaching values the voice of the minority researchers and students and is founded on critical understandings of indigenous and minority inquiry, there is a break from education research dominated by majority interests (Bishop, 2005). Listening to student voices can help university educators develop this critical understanding of their teaching – its content, effect and complexities. This is something of the honest dialogue Paulo Freire said was vital to education, even where the voices “bear witness to negativity” (Apple, Au & Gandin, 2009, p. 5). The critical lens in research means seeing educative processes and universities as connected to the larger society. Education is seen as about both social and individual economic advancement through professional education and the relations of power and inequality. Education and research into education processes in this sense are processes of “repositioning” (Apple et al., 2009, p. 3).

Through placing Māori and Pasifika student voices and the context of non-lecture university teaching at the centre of a relatively large scale research project, we sought to expand knowledge about teaching approaches that support Māori and Pasifika success in degree-level studies.

Research questions and assumptions

Two questions anchored the research: What teaching practices in non-lecture contexts help or hinder Māori and Pasifika success in degree-level study? What changes does research in this area suggest are needed to teaching and university practices in order to best support Māori and Pasifika success in degree-level studies? By describing promising practices derived from the research data, this paper reports on findings in relation to the first question.

A number of assumptions underpinned this research, including:

*Success is more than we think:* ‘Success’ includes movement towards and achievement of pass grades or higher, a sense of accomplishment and fulfilling personally important goals. The concept of success is broad, linking with individual and community notions of potential, effort, and achievement over time.

*Non-lecture teaching happens and is important:* Teaching and learning in degree-level studies happens in mass lectures and in complementary non-lecture settings that more often involve a range of formats relating to inclusive and active learning strategies. For the purposes of our research, we guided our definition of non-lecture
teaching and learning as contexts involving less than 50 students. ‘Nonlecture teaching’ does not feature frequently in the literature. The term has previously been used to describe learning situations in which teaching has been either withdrawn or minimalised in favour of textbook, handout and diagram studies undertaken largely through independent study by large numbers of students (Kent & Spivey, 1971; Rod & Levine, 1973). *Success for All* has applied ‘non lecture’ teaching in reference to smaller clusters of students (less than 50) where an educator is present to support learning.

These assumptions were accepted as basic premises and beliefs underpinning our research (Walker, 2003; Burns & Grove, 2001; Polit & Hungler, 1997). We shared the view expressed elsewhere that recognizing assumptions and making them explicit strengthens research (Walker, 2003).

**How the project was conducted**

The research comprised three phases including:

1. Phase 1 - student interviews to record incidents of helpful/hindering teaching in four university sites and initial drafting of promising practices relevant to all four research sites;
2. Phase 2 - interventions in each of the four sites were developed to enhance teaching effectiveness based on the data from the Phase 1 interviews; and
3. Phase 3 - a further set of student interviews to record incidents of helpful/hindering teaching and compare Phase 3 with the Phase 1 interviews. The promising practices were revisited and revised based on Phase 3 data.

The range within the four research sites gave a rare opportunity for in-depth teaching studies. *The Centre* provided careers guidance and learning activities in university careers education. *Faculty 1* focused on teaching and learning practices provided by specialists in Pasifika academic support within an Education faculty. *Faculty 2* focused on teaching and learning practices within a foundation education setting that includes intensive pastoral and academic support aimed at ensuring Māori and Pasifika students are successful within a pre-degree level qualification, the Certificate in Health Sciences. *Faculty 3* sought to improve academic outcomes for Māori students and Pasifika students in studio and performance core-papers within architecture and planning (studio), fine arts (studio), music (performance) and dance (performance).

**Research methodology**

This project integrated kaupapa Māori (ideology incorporating the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society) research and Pasifika research methodologies. Accordingly, the focus was not on blaming students, and identifying changes students need to make, but rather on workforce development and organisational change. Kaupapa Māori research is a well-established research methodology (see, for example, Smith, 1999) that locates Māori at the centre of inquiry. It has, of necessity, an understanding of the social, economic, political and systemic influences on expanding or limiting Māori outcomes and is able to use a wide variety of research methods as tools
Pasifika research is concerned with the well-being and empowerment of Pasifika peoples within New Zealand (Anae, Coxon, Mara, Wendt-Samu & Finau, 2001; Health Research Council, 2004). Fundamental to Pasifika research is an acknowledgement of the tangata whenua (first people of the land) status of Māori and an affirmation of the teina-tuākana (kinship with certain roles) relationship of Pasifika and Māori within the Aotearoa New Zealand context; and ancient whanaungatanga (extended family relationship) of tuākana-teina within the Pacific region (Health Research Council, 2004). Ethnic-specific differences within the grouping ‘Pasifika’ are respected, along with the central importance of principled relationships to all ethical research practice.

In total, the research team comprised 15 co-researchers (six with Māori research expertise, seven Pasifika, two Pakeha/Palagi). A number of practices in this project supported Māori and Pasifika research protocols. First, there was explicit commitment to Māori and Pasifika research methodology in all documentation. Second, our researchers with Māori and Pasifika expertise were included at every level of decision making. Third, participants were provided with the opportunity to be interviewed in te reo Māori and Pacific nation languages. The research model emphasised partnerships between educators, and research that was inclusive of Māori and Pasifika expertise.

**Research method: Critical Incident Technique**

As an established form of narrative inquiry the CIT was used in this research to reveal and chronicle the lived experience of Māori and Pasifika students preparing for or completing degree-level studies. Bishop and Glynn (1999) have shown that narrative inquiry provides a means for higher levels of authenticity and accuracy in the representation of Māori and Pasifika student experiences through being grounded in a participatory design. Stucki, Kahu, Jenkins, Bruce-Ferguson and Kane (2004) and Bishop (2005) have suggested that in this way students are able to talk openly rather than present official versions.

The CIT is a form of interview research in which participants provide descriptive accounts of events that facilitated or hindered a particular aim. As conceptualized originally, a critical incident is one that makes a significant contribution to an activity or phenomenon (Flanagan, 1954). The critical incident is a significant occurrence with outcomes. The research technique facilitates the identification of these incidents by a respondent. The resultant student ‘stories’ are collaboratively grouped by similarity into categories that encompass the events and which guide the co-construction of professional development initiatives and identification of promising practices. Participants were repeatedly asked: Can you describe a time when the teaching and learning practices at ‘Site X’ have helped your success in degree-level studies? Participants were also asked to describe times when teaching had hindered success.

As suggested by earlier studies, “reassurance” (Flanagan, 1954, p. 19) over categories is achieved through submitting tentative categories to others in the research group for review. After these categories are established, brief definitions of them are made, and additional incidents are classified into them. During this process, needs for redefinition
are noted, the tentative categories are modified and the process continued until all incidents are classified. Consistent with the CIT, feedback on the categories was not sought from the participants, however we discuss this further within the discussion section.

Participants and incidents

Ninety-two participants were interviewed. Twenty-six percent of all participants were Māori, and 74% Pasifika (Table 1). Figures for participation by ethnicity were affected by the Pasifika-only focus of Faculty 1. Even when this was taken into account and Faculty 1 participants removed from calculations, Pasifika participation remained higher (64% of participants, excluding Faculty 1) than Māori participation (36% of participants, excluding Faculty 1).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
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<th>Faculty 1</th>
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<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Key: M= Māori; P=Pasifika

The research collated 1952 incidents of times when Māori and Pasifika students perceived a teaching approach had helped or hindered their success in degree-level studies. The number of incidents matched the recommended size (1,000 to 2000 incidents for skilled jobs) of sampling to describe requirements for a complex activity (Flanagan, 1954). Twenty-four categories of helpful or hindering teaching practices were identified from the incidents. In response to our first research question, the research team developed five promising teaching to help Māori and Pasifika student success practices via combined group research meetings from evidence gathered in Phase 1. The practices were implemented in Phase 2 interventions and evaluated through Phase 3 interviews at each of the sites. Based on Phase 3 data we further refined the initial set of practices via additional group research meetings, and further promising practices were added to cover incidents and categories from Phase 3.

Findings

Through the process above, nine promising practices were identified: use effective adult teaching practices; demonstrate content knowledge; use culturally appropriate practices, content, and staff; support the confidence, mana, and empowerment of the learner; grow independent learners; nurture interdependence between peers; promote professional relationships; resource quality teaching; and create a place to belong and
thrive. Each identified practice draws on both helpful and hindering student stories to provide guidance to educators hoping to achieve effective teaching and learning outcomes for Māori and Pasifika students in non-lecture based tertiary contexts. Examples are provided below that illustrate the category. In two of the nine categories, both helpful and hindering practices are provided to illustrate dimensions of a category that comprised multiple sub-categories.³

1. **Use effective adult teaching practices**

Participants described times when educators understood them as adult learners, encouraging and scaffolding learning, supporting learning for a particular profession, being flexible, and not unnecessarily frustrating students (Shulman, 2005). Some emphasis was placed on active learning. By adopting effective, active adult teaching practices the university teacher was able to tap into the motivation (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2005) of Māori and Pasifika students to learn.

Examples:

(Helpful)

Trigger: You know, like [referring to the lecturer] class and like, you know, has all these little different ways of, instead of reading a book.

Action: He’ll like cut out little bits of pieces of paper where you have to sort of organise them together. So it sort of makes you have to read it in order to putting them there and it feels like that, those, you could do the exact same thing just by reading the book, you know, or, and little tricks like that.

Outcome: It’s like it makes it fun and it gets you up and you’re doing things.

(Hindering)

Trigger: You have to just learn about artists that have been dead for a couple of centuries.

Action: Most of the courses normally are like two hours long and two hours of sitting down watching videos is, the lights dimmed, it’s gonna help you go to sleep . . . I mean not that it’s just watching video but I always need to be up and doing things all the time. Most of the time we do it so I wouldn’t wanna say it’s really, really bad, you know . . . that’s just their teaching style.

Outcome: Just sitting there listening can be quite boring, uninteresting… I just don’t take it in sometimes and [I’m] not learning.

2. **Demonstrate content knowledge**

As a progression on earlier research, the students identified times when distinct bodies of content knowledge matter for teaching (Shulman, 1986). In this way, the incidents were developing in more detail the fundamentals of subject matter knowledge for teaching
(Shulman, 1986). The Māori and Pasifika students in this study described times when content knowledge that an educator has helps student success (if the knowledge is strong) or hinders success (if the knowledge is weak). Participants referred to the way in which the educator’s competence in demonstrating knowledge and communicating it encouraged confidence as a student, that they thereby believed it was possible to do well in a course, and that they were enabled to develop their own knowledge in the area being studied. In contrast, there is a hindering effect when the educator is perceived to not have content knowledge.

Example:

(Hindering)

Trigger: I don’t like some of the tutorials. How some of the teachers teach in tutorials.

Action: [They’re] like not talkative. [He/she] doesn’t explain that well. When I ask [them] a question [they’ll] be like ‘That’s just how it is’ or [they] won’t go in depth like most lecturers and teachers.

Outcome: And [they’ll] just tell us... explain... expect us to understand. And it sux because you’re just sitting in there knowing... wasting your time.

3. Use culturally appropriate practices, content, and staff

This research showed that Māori and Pasifika students perceived their success to be linked to experiences in which university educators facilitated learning through links between university studies and culture. Examples included using Samoan language and metaphors to explain Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development, using Pasifika humour to encourage a student to resubmit an assignment, performance of cultural items by individuals during a class held within a cultural context (e.g. marae), and integrating Māori and Pasifika experiences into explanations. Promising practices in teaching Māori and Pasifika students value diverse experiences. Similarly, ineffective links to experience, or the absence of links, were identified as barriers to success.

Examples:

(Helpful)

Trigger: The wananga (camp) that we had over a weekend, the cultural wananga.

Action: because in [the] Pacific Health [course] we learn about the determinants of health and like, the poor house status of Pacific people, but actually seeing the culture and learning about it [at the wananga], like the traditional ways.

Outcome: you can kind of connect how and why it has led to some of the inequalities that we’re facing today. So that was a good thing.
(Hindering)

Trigger: [Being taught by a particular lecturer]

Action: Without really realising it . . . I think [the lecturer] thought he/she was doing the best for us, but coming from a British educational background (which doesn’t work well necessarily), um, you know, [with] New Zealand, Māori, Pacific Island students, because it is foreign. Oh, so they are bringing all these ideas, all these ways of teaching, all these pedagogies that don’t suit well . . .

Outcome: . . . the way that [the lecturer] taught, like; it was already decided like what we were going to learn, rather than letting that happen in the moment and within the experience of the class.

4. Support the confidence, mana, and empowerment of the learner

The research indicated that students perceive their success grows where teaching practices are motivating, and respect and affirm student identity and intellect. Where this is absent the students in this study saw that the teaching directly undermined ‘success’ – both in terms of achievement and self-identity.

Example:

(Hindering)

Trigger: Cause Māori people and Pacific people are quite protective I suppose of their culture or whatever, or their way of expressing culture.

Action: The fact that I was shot down in such a brutal way [in a studio crit] so many times when I was just simply trying to illustrate these things that are normal to me, was quite difficult.

Outcome: I mean it will lead to me being unsure of myself and my beliefs. It made me question myself and what I was trying to achieve because they were all questioning me and so it just lead to this whole (unclear) confusion for me, that restricted me in more ways than just university.

5. Grow independent learners

The research showed that students saw teaching that promotes independence as learners was a success-oriented strategy. Students described times when independence was developed through specific and relevant feedback, a planned approach to their academic skill development, confidence building through progressively challenging studies and/or their involvement in goal setting, targeted and scheduled intensive academic support, opportunities for critical thinking, and self-regulation.
Example:

(Helpful)

***Trigger***: A very important thing is that like our tutors and like our lecturers within our course tend to kind of have a lot of faith in us like they actually want us to succeed.

***Action***: Like it’s not like school where they just want you to pass so they can look good you know, and like they make it clear that if you need help you can go to anyone you want.

***Outcome***: So I think I really just kind of have a balance between like supporting us and giving us our own individual sort of way of doing things.

6. **Nurture interdependence between peers**

The students described how their success was helped when university teaching practices created environments that encouraged collaborative, peer interaction that was supportive of academic success. Incidents were provided of times when group work (in pairs and larger) supported learning, success and students helping each other.

Example:

(Helpful)

***Trigger***: There was another paper that we did in the first semester that was the history of western music so that was a more writing-based paper like we did a lot of essays and that kind of stuff. And one of the assignments was a group assignment.

***Action***: You could choose a recording. They gave to you a list of recordings to choose from and it ranged from like Bach to Michael Jackson and that kind of stuff . . . We had to go on to Google docs or Google groups or something and we also had to start a forum on Cecil and like yeah, have a discussion with the members of our group and we had to each pose a question and each pose an answer to one of those questions just to get us all.

***Outcome***: I just like working with other people . . . if I’m like working on something with someone else then I just feel a bit more secure . . . confident that I’m on the right track . . . I was really happy with my mark and then cos it was group work.

7. **Promote professional relationships**

Participants described helpful teaching as maintaining clear distinction between educator and learner. They indicated that support by way of friendship from educators is not helpful for student success; being approachable and attentive though, are. In contrast to previous research that affirmed university educators’ provision of informal support to indigenous students (Page & Asmar, 2008), participants valued their educators teaching
in ways that developed their independence as students. The indigenous students in this research valued educators who enabled them to be successful through not needing support as they enter and continue their degree-level studies.

Example:

(Helper)

Trigger: Well most of the teachers are really like approachable um oh I think all of them are actually.

Action: They’re really yeah like bend over backwards for us if we want something. Oh this was last semester anyway. They really help us with like office hours they’re really helpful. They used to come down and see us instead of us going to them which is what’s happening this semester but I think it was really cool they went out of their way to help us.

Outcome: Last semester they were really, really helpful. So they’re trying to not do that so much this semester which is good to try and get us more independent and being able to do stuff by ourselves because that’s how it’ll be next year.

8. Resource quality teaching

Morosanu, Handley and O’Donovan (2010) have suggested the kind of resources students need and prefer to use to cope with academic life is insufficiently understood in current research. The data from this study did not show incidents featuring teaching enhanced by materials or technology. Rather critical incidents were associated with the nature of the teacher themselves. Addressing the gap identified by Morosanu et al. (2010) participants have identified a promising practice of investing in educators with relevant cultural and educational expertise, and an interest in supporting success in studies. Students felt increased confidence in their ability to succeed. The influence was such that simply knowing such resources were available, even when not used, was helpful.

Example:

(Helper)

Trigger: I think it also comes back to support.

Action: Cause that’s a huge level of support right there (Faculty 3 research assistant workshop), and the tutors . . . they all, you could tell they all really care about what you are going to become and who you are . . .

Outcome: I know that I would be able to seek those people out and I wouldn’t have a problem expressing any worries to them or, and I know that they’d be able to understand as well.
9. Create a place to belong and thrive

The research data suggested that Māori and Pasifika student success is associated with having a place to gather together informally and formally, to study and interact. Such spaces created havens in which minority culture, language and identity could be normal, and learning, support, and success could occur through lenses of culture, language and identity. Without space, students felt stressed, isolated, and lacking in confidence.

Examples:

(Helpful)

Trigger: Yes the CertHSc room.

Action: Well for me just having the CertHSc room is always somewhere to go like you know and be surrounded by your friends, your peers, like people you feel comfortable with, like there’s always the library but I always find I need to talk or read my work out loud, something you can’t do in the library.

Outcome: So the CertHSc room is always good like there’s tables and chairs in there to study on and there’s also computers so you’ve got nothing to worry about, you can just go in there and just do your thing.

Discussion

The identification of promising practices means helpful practices can now be described in relation to Maori and Pasifika experience in four university teaching contexts. The Success for All research provides university educators with examples of helpful and hindering practices in each of the nine areas on the toolkit, and thereby illustrate the tools-in-action. In addition, the Phase 2 interventions provide examples of actions individuals and organisations might take to improve practices, with the aim of supporting student success. Professional development can be informed by accounts of student experiences in each of those contexts. Finally, this research provides Māori and Pasifika accounts, thereby informing studies into indigenous and minority student experience, while also expanding the general body of knowledge into quality teaching in university education.

The Success for All research expands understandings of higher education teaching and learning in general and contributes to ongoing, evidence-based and evolving dialogue about how teaching can optimise Māori and Pasifika student success in New Zealand universities. A number of observations can be made about the findings and research approach.

Non-lecture teaching matters to Māori and Pasifika students: From this research we know that students perceive non-lecture teaching as influencing their success. Students can detail ways in which teaching in smaller groups has helped or hindered their success in university studies. They have distinct views of good practice in non-lecture teaching. For example, they want educators who make sure the students understand class material before moving on to further material, as well as clarity about assignments, challenging
academic work in lessons that promote learning, not ‘wasting time’, and teaching practices that develop students’ independence as learners.

It is also apparent that non-lecture teaching across the university has shared and unique features. The accounts from Māori and Pasifika students suggest that quality university teaching will reflect both unique contexts of study and shared approaches to teaching, and are worthy of further investigation.

**Teaching for Māori and Pasifika student success matters**

Good university teaching is a combination of practices that help holistic and academic success, however there is evidence that educators who focus on students achieving a pass (or higher) grade are viewed as the most helpful and most effective. This focus combines generic skills in teaching with helping learners to be both independent and interdependent, successful in university settings, and culturally strong.

This research has highlighted benefits that can come from collecting evidence of how the teaching practices used by university departments, faculties and service groups help or hinder student success. This suggests a need for resourcing to support evidence-based university teaching: for example, for workforce development programmes, and access to expertise in teaching skills relevant for Māori and Pasifika student success.

**Culture matters when teaching Māori and Pasifika students**

Findings from this project support the use of culturally appropriate, non-racist teaching approaches aimed at supporting academic success. Some university educators were reported as using practices that contribute to students internalising negativity. Students spoke of not being worthy to be at university, being reliant upon God (or others) to help them succeed, and failing to ‘represent’ (their communities) well enough as students. Alternatively, students described practices where their cultural pride and mana were included positively in classes or activities and, as a result, strengthened. Such practices were identified as helping success in university studies. University teaching practices that perpetuate ongoing colonisation/racism of indigenous and Pasifika rights and potential were rejected by students as hindering their success. If we apply Apple’s theorising about education as a critical process of “repositioning” (Apple et al., 2009, p. 3) then working effectively with Māori and Pasifika students means having a non-blame approach towards students, and focusing on changes the university (as educators and as an organisation) can make to support success.

There is evidence that Māori and Pasifika student success is helped when university educators are both proficient in generically effective practices and responsive to the unique learner dimensions of Māori and Pasifika students as distinct groups. For example, Faculty 1 (which had Pasifika participants only) highlighted the importance of nurturing the moral and spiritual dimensions, something that did not feature strongly in the other research sites. Practices for either Māori or Pasifika students (rather than combining both) may be needed if our teaching is to be most helpful.

The following three categories were major findings confirming the importance of culture in success-focused university teaching with Māori and Pasifika students: use
culturally appropriate practices, content, and staff; support the confidence, mana, and empowerment of the learner; and create a place to belong and thrive. Further research is needed to identify how these practices might be applied to support Māori and Pasifika success in specific degree-level programmes, for example in medicine, engineering, technology, law, and teaching.

**Māori and Pasifika realities at the centre of research matters**

The integration of kaupapa Māori research and Pasifika research protocols means explicitly advocating research from Māori and Pasifika realities. As a research method, the Critical Incident Technique was effective in enabling indigenous and minority group perspectives to be elicited. The method affirmed the importance to higher education research of Māori and Pasifika knowledge, Māori and Pasifika languages and cultures, and culturally responsive methodologies. Within the limited scope of the project we were able to create some changes to practice and undertake some evaluation. This is helping us to see which university teaching practices hold some promise for accelerating sustainable education gains for Māori and Pasifika.

The concept of ‘culturally responsive research’ is central to the *Success for All* methodology. This frame rejects notions of ‘normal’ or ‘culturally neutral’ research. Diversity and equity are central to the research endeavour and fundamental to the approaches taken to research in New Zealand university education. As indicated by Curtis (2007), the traditional positivist approach to research, where dispassionate objectivity is paramount, is not the only way to make sense of the world. The integration of kaupapa Māori research and Pasifika research protocols directly challenges Western notions of what does, and does not, constitute appropriate research. Māori and Pasifika are brought from the margin to the centre; centralising Māori and Pasifika concerns and approaches, so that Māori and Pasifika ways of knowing and, therefore, researching, may be validated.

A key challenge is communicating new findings that are potentially culture- and site-specific. The team is challenged to produce information that can be useful in improving teaching practices by all educators working with indigenous and minority students. At the same time, there may be findings that are particular to Māori and Pasifika realities and interventions. For the *Success for All* findings to be applied to greatest effect, ways need to be found to communicate culturally embedded findings widely and also to Māori and Pasifika specifically. This research has commented on how to research in culturally responsive and relevant ways for innovative outcomes.

**Research limitations**

Further research could address limitations in this study. First, research could introduce mixed methods: undertaking quantitative studies into student success in degree-level studies tracking measurable variables (such as training in university teaching, years teaching, student evaluation scores, student success rates) longitudinally, and exploring student experience further (such as diverse Māori and Pasifika groups by age, nation of origin; and discipline areas). Ethnic-specific and discipline-specific studies are needed.
Second, there is scope to include participants in a feedback loop. The CIT tends to be used for recording incidents rather than as a three-part intervention method as happened in this research. Feedback from participants or further students could be included in CIT research that includes intervention design and evaluation. There is also the potential for international comparative studies into student accounts of what teaching practices in non-lecture contexts help or hinder success in degree-level study, and comparative studies between non-lecture and lecture based settings. Finally, research could explore ‘signature pedagogies’ (Shulman, 2005) that successfully prepare Māori and Pasifika students for a particular profession. Signature pedagogies reveal much about the dispositions of a discipline, however an ongoing challenge is understanding how these are expressed through signature teaching abilities and how teaching competencies might be related to Māori and Pasifika student outcomes in that discipline (Poole, Taylor & Thompson, 2007).

**Conclusion**

The findings illustrate the positive influence of non-lecture based teaching and learning on student outcomes. They also indicate areas where students can see and suggest room for improvement. Each participant confirmed the importance of non-lecture based teaching for their success and can describe helpful or unhelpful features and experiences in these contexts. Change is needed both in how we teach and how we research. This paper provides a toolkit of promising practices that educators can utilise to help facilitate best practice in order to improve Māori and Pasifika educational outcomes in a tertiary context. In an increasingly diverse university environment, the quest for quality university teaching and success for all takes us away from the status quo.

**References**


**Acknowledgement**

The support of the New Zealand Teaching Learning Research Initiative for funding this research is acknowledged with sincere thanks (see http://www.tlri.org.nz/success-for-all-improving-maori-and-pasifika-student-success-in-degree-level-studies/), along with the reviewers of this article.

**Endnotes**

1 A database search of research under ‘lecturing’ surfaced 84 books, and 9,918 articles in peer-reviewed journals.

2 See http://www.apa.org/pubs/databases/psycinfo/critical.aspx for a 301-page bibliography covering more than 50 years of research on the development and use of the Critical Incidents Technique.

The Trans-acquisitional Approach: A Bridge to English in Kura Kaupapa Māori

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Abstract
This article argues for the re-thinking of current pedagogical practices for English language instruction in kaupapa Māori schools in order to include the relational trans-lingualism of the Trans-acquisitional approach. The transformative potential of this approach to develop English literacy while maintaining Māori language fluency may overcome the problems regarding English language instruction in the Maori-medium schools. It would provide new possibilities for all those involved in Maori-medium education.

Introduction
The philosophy underpinning Kura Kaupapa Māori promotes the development of bilingual capacity in learners so that they graduate proficient in te reo Māori and English and are able to walk in and between two worlds with confidence. Kura Kaupapa Māori have been the cornerstone of the movement to revitalise te reo Māori since their inception over twenty years ago, however it appears that this has come at some cost to the learners’ fluency in English, which has not received adequate attention. This article explores the tensions around English language instruction in Kura Kaupapa Māori that have resulted in this lack of attention within current kura practice and the uncertainty over how to implement change. It argues for a reconceptualization of the empirical and theoretical rationales underlying current pedagogical practices of English language instruction in kura in order to consider relational trans-lingualism known as the Trans-acquisitional Approach.

Currently the view that ‘English will happen automatically approach’ and the ‘separate language approach’ underpin teaching in kura kaupapa Māori. In contrast I present the Trans-acquisitional Approach as a pedagogical alternative to developing English literacy while maintaining Māori language fluency. The Trans-acquisitional Approach uses both Māori and English in a mutually supportive way in recognition that, in almost all cases, te reo Māori is the kura child’s stronger language at kura, while English is his/her stronger language at home (See May, Hill and Tiakiwai, 2006; Bauer, 2008). Firstly however, I outline the original philosophy behind the Kura Kaupapa Māori approaches to English language instruction.
Background

The term and concept of *Kura Kaupapa Māori* was conceived by a group of parents from the Awhireinga and Natari Kohanga Reo in 1987. It grew as a movement outside of the State system to achieve the aspirations of parents who, in the first instance, wanted their children educated totally in te reo Māori as a means to revive the language. These parent pioneers of the *Kura Kaupapa Māori* movement also wanted to halt the downward spiral of Māori educational underachievement (Smith, 1997). *Kura Kaupapa Māori* (henceforth, referred to as *kura*) were recognised as a separate school type in the 1989 Education Amendment Act (Section 155) ‘to ensure the survival and revival of te reo Māori and to redress the crisis facing Māori children in mainstream education’ (Rata, 1989, p. 31).

The *kura* was characterised by a commitment to the philosophy of the foundation document, *Te Aho Matua* (*TAM*, 2000) which emphasised the need for *kura* graduates to exit the *kura* schooling system as balanced bilinguals with the expectation of ‘full competency in Māori and English’ (MOE, 2008, p. 34). Along with the philosophical provision for English in *Te Aho Matua*, there is also a legal requirement that *kura* provide for English instruction (ERO, 2007). According to the Education Review Office (2007) the *kura* ‘are required to ensure that students acquire skills for effective communication in English’ by ‘planning for and demonstrating a number of observable behaviours’ including: providing ‘a range of learning experiences to enhance students’ understanding of the English language with practice in speaking, reading and writing in English’ (ERO, 2007, p. 19). From the outset, *kura* were not only focused on reviving te reo Māori but also states a commitment to the teaching of English. This was to enable the children to access the educational opportunities that an English speaking society offers, both here in Aotearoa/New Zealand and abroad.

The need for English language instruction was echoed in the Report by the *Kura Kaupapa Māori* Working Group, which was established in January 1989 to advise on the emergent *kura* and which included members from several *kura* communities. The Working Group’s Report (Ministry of Education, 1989) emphasised the bilingual and bicultural objectives of *Kaupapa Māori* schooling stating that, ‘Kura Kaupapa Māori will produce . . . bicultural and bilingual citizens who will be able to contribute and participate more fully in all aspects of New Zealand society’ (Ministry of Education, 1989, 40 – 41). Reedy’s report (1990, p. 5) on the original six *kura* funded by the government in the post-legislation 1990 pilot programme, reiterated the aim of *kura* to produce bicultural and bilingual children stating that ‘children who have a bicultural, bilingual upbringing will not be hampered in their educational achievements nor in their future adult life’. Similarly, Nepe (1991, p. 11) referred to the pride *kura* children will acquire as a result of being ‘successful bilingual and bicultural scholars’. The 1992 Report which proposed the system of secondary *kura* known as ‘*Whare Kura*’, continued to link Māori/English bilingualism to educational achievement, highlighting the purpose of *kura* in producing ‘bilingual children, fluent in two cultures’ (Sharples, 1992, p. 4).
The problem with the teaching of English in kura

Despite rhetoric which supported English language instruction in kura, the following decades are characterised by uncertainty about how to provide for English instruction. In my own study of twenty-five kura education Review Office (ERO) Reports written between 2005 and 2009, only three provided information on the teaching of English. The comments were minimal and did not provide information about the type of transitional Māori-to-English pedagogy nor the level of achievement reached by learners in either conversational or academic English. The ERO Report for the first of the three kura claimed that ‘there are high expectations that students, staff and whānau will be multilingual in te reo Māori, Spanish and English’ (ERO, 2007, 10). The second kura’s ERO Report stated; ‘students in years 5 to 8 are learning the skills of reading and writing in English as a separate subject (ERO, 2006a, p. 12), while the third provided only slightly more information, saying that ‘whānau and staff fully support students to achieve full competency in the English language with the provision of formal English language programmes from year six’ (ERO, 2006, p. 14).

Despite there being detailed compliance indicators for ERO reviews (ERO, 2007), the Framework for Review and Evaluation in Te Aho Matua Kura Kaupapa Māori (ERO, 2008) does not say how the Education Review Office will assess the compliance indicators. In fact the Framework (ERO, 2008) does not refer to English at all, a startling omission in light of the Office’s statutory requirement to ensure that all New Zealand children receive English language instruction. The paucity of Education Review Office reports on English language instruction within kura highlights what Berryman and Glynn (2004) described as ad hoc, inconsistent and inadequate Māori-to-English transitional practices across the kura sector. Berryman and Glynn (2004) found that the inconsistent application of Māori-to-English transitional practices was indeed the reason for the lack of evidence to identify which of those practices, if any, were effective.

In the absence of consistent Māori-to-English transitional practices across the kura sector, kura parents are transferring their children to Intermediate School Bilingual Units prior to enrolling them in English-medium secondary schools. May and Hill (2003, p. 23) provide evidence of this growing trend among kura parents who are withdrawing their children after only two or three years at kura in the belief that ‘too much’ Māori may undermine English language proficiency. Berryman and Glynn (2004) described the transfer from kura to English-medium secondary school settings as the most challenging transition for any Māori-medium learner. The actions of these kura parents, however well intentioned, only serves to make the Māori-to-English transition even more difficult for their children because their (CALP) Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (Cummins, 1984) in te reo Māori is often insufficient to support their CALP development in English (Ministry of Education, 2004). The major concern raised by May & Hill (2004) in respect to the actions of this growing number of kura parents, is that transferring from kura to English-medium too early, without any formal instruction in academic English, is likely to contribute to eventual education failure, rather than promote bilingual success.

Since the inception of kura, the issues concerning English language instruction
remain unresolved. Recent research on the key attributes of successful *kura* by Tākao et al., (2010) reports that, ‘Even amongst these *kura* there is no single agreement on when English language instruction should be introduced’ (p. 34). This indecision around when to introduce English in the *kura* is rooted in the view that biliteracy is a sequential process. Proponents of sequential biliteracy posit that literacy in the second language should not be introduced until the learner has competence in the stronger language (Wong, Fillmore and Valadez, 1986; Hakuta, 1986; Collier and Thomas, 1989). The continuing debate on the timing of English instruction in *kura* is further exasperated by the lack of agreement on which language is in fact the *kura* child’s stronger language. Is it the Māori language acquired at the *kohanga* and *kura*, or the English language that May, Hill and Tiakiwai (2006) describe as the first language in the *kura* child’s home? The uncertainty around the timing of English language instruction in *kura* has resulted in an unnerving silence towards the English language within the *kura* movement, which has prevented the development of effective Māori-to-English transitional practices and marginalised the original aspirations of the *kura* founders in producing bilingual graduates.

**Current approaches to English language instruction in *kura***

The ‘*English will happen automatically approach*’ was widely accepted throughout the *kura* movement during the 1990s when the issue of English language instruction in *kura* was met with ambivalent silence and, in some cases, even hostility. Many in the *kura* community were literally ‘in two minds’ about English, despite the fact that almost all are first language English speakers (MOE, 2004, p. 22). In acknowledging that English pervaded every aspect of society, it was strongly believed that the *kura* learner would simply soak up the English language as would water to a sponge. This analogy resulted in the commonly held view that acquiring conversational English and learning academic English was not a core function of the *kura*. In practice, this approach amounted to little or no teaching of English in *kura* which led to the widely accepted view that *kura* parents bore the responsibility of organising English language instruction for their children outside of the ordinary hours of *kura*. Even after the turn of the century, May & Hill (2003, p. 23) reported that many *kura* were reluctant to directly address the issues associated with the provision of academic English instruction because many still believed that English language acquisition would ‘happen automatically’ for the *kura* learners.

However, the ‘*English will happen automatically approach*’, especially in respect to academic English, is not supported in the literature. While it is possible for *kura* children to acquire what Cummins (1984) calls Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) in English, May et al., (2006, p. 4) point out that *kura* ‘students need to be taught how to read and write in English [as] they do not just “pick up” these skills automatically, even though English is widely spoken outside the school’. This supports Cummins’ (2000) earlier warning that if English language instruction is ignored, with the expectation that ‘it will develop anyway’, *kura* learners may experience significant gaps in their knowledge of, and access to, academic registers in English, particularly in areas related to writing. The issues raised by May & Hill (2003; May, Hill and
Tiakiwai, 2006) support Cummins’ (2000) criticism of the kura assumption that the transfer of academic skills from Māori to English happens ‘automatically’ without any need for formal instruction. To clarify the place of teaching English in kura, Cummins (2000) confirms that the transfer of academic skills across languages will only occur when learners are given opportunities to read and write extensively in English as well as in te reo Māori.

Since 2005, the ‘English will happen automatically approach’ has been replaced by the ‘separate language approach’ due to mounting concern within the kura movement at the increasing number of kura parents transferring their children to English medium settings to enable them to develop English language proficiency (May and Hill, 2003, p. 23). The kura practice of separating English and Māori to focus on developing Māori as the stronger language before adding English as another language, is justified with reference to the international literature. (See for example, Skutnabb-Kangas and Cummins, 1988; Cummins, 1993; Bernhardt, 2000). Language separation is a key principle in many international bilingual/immersion programmes and a number of writers (for example, Cloud, Genesse and Hamayan, 2000; Baker, 2001; and Lindholm-Leary, 2001) recommend the strict separation of the two languages by having different teachers assigned to each language or using time, space, and/or subject area to delineate language separation. Creese and Blackledge (2010) used the term ‘separate bilingualism’ and Swain (1983) used the phrase ‘bilingualism through monolingualism’ to describe the ascribing of boundaries to separate languages which, according to Gravelle, (1996, p. 11) depicts the language learner as “two monolinguals in one body”. This is the approach adopted by Te Aho Matua (2000) which states that, ‘Kura Kaupapa Māori accepts that there is an appropriate time for the introduction of English at which time there shall be a separate English language teacher and a separate language learning facility’ (p. 742). Recent research by Tākao et al., (2010) on the key attributes of successful kura links the ‘separate language approach’ to ‘Best Practice’ in kura by stating that, ‘Significantly, for all these kura, there are zones, often separate from the main schooling areas, where English is taught or able to be spoken’ (p. 33).

The ‘separate language approach’ works from the premise that the Māori language developed in the kura is the learner’s stronger language, both conversationally and cognitively. However, this does not appear to be the case as research by May and Hill (2003, p. 22) identifies English as the first language of most learners enrolled in kura, a finding supported by Bauer (2008). This creates the pedagogical dilemma, identified by Rau (2004, p. 63), with the kura providing initial literacy instruction in the kura learner’s weaker, second language. For advocates of the ‘language separation approach’, the issue of which language is the stronger language is problematic. If the home language is used as an indicator of stronger language, then English can be considered to be the kura child’s stronger language. However, if the kura language of instruction is used as an indicator of stronger language, then Māori is considered to be the kura child’s stronger language. Although the goal of kura is that Maori be developed as the children’s stronger language, this may not be happening. Bauer (2008, p. 41) ‘suggests that for the most part, children are developing passive skills in the reo, and if they have active reo skills, they are not taking them out of the educational domain into the home’.
Sceptical of a reported increase in te reo Māori use, Bauer (2008, p. 43) argues that ‘the overall picture is one of decline rather than increase in the younger age groups’.

There is now a growing body of literature rejecting the ‘separate language approach’. In a study of effective instructional practices for linguistically and culturally diverse students, Garcia (1991) reported that the use of the stronger language at early stages of immersion was critical to later success in transitioning to the target language. These findings are supported by Irujo (1991) who found that many immersion programmes allowed stronger language use during the initial stages of immersion. Anton and DiCamilla (1998) also reported that stronger language use enabled learners to construct effective collaborative dialogue in the completion of meaning-based target language tasks while Turnbull (2001) highlighted the effectiveness of stronger language use to explain difficult concepts. Creating space in kura for instructional strategies that incorporate simultaneous strong language and target language use to accelerate ‘other’ language acquisition will allow both teachers and learners to explore the benefits of what Cummins (2007) calls two-way cross-language transfer and what I call trans-lingualism. To create such a space in kura for the use of what I call trans-lingual metacognitive teaching strategies, I have developed as the topic of my doctoral study, the Trans-acquisitional Approach (henceforth, referred to as TA) for kura learners who have a reasonably good grasp of Māori and English.

The transformative potential of the Trans-acquisitional Approach

In an attempt to break the impasse created by the current kura approaches to English language instruction, I recommend an extension of Williams’ translanguaging model (2002) into the Trans-acquisitional Approach (from this point referred to as the TA approach). ‘Trans-acquisition’ is the term I use to acknowledge the reciprocal transfer of knowledge between languages that is intrinsic to the process of language learning. The TA approach integrates the principles of Task-Based Learning and Teaching (Ellis, 2003) to systematise simultaneous input in one language while output is occurring in another language through three conditioning phases covering six sequential stages that focus on a trans-acquisitional task as the core component of the learning experience. The TA approach rejects the three monolingual assumptions that underpin the pedagogical practices of kura that keep te reo Māori and English separate, and that allow for no recourse to the use of English as the kura learner’s ‘other’ language and give no place for translation between the two languages.

Cummins (2007) highlights the paradox of the monolingual assumptions which are inconsistent with current theory in cognitive psychology and applied linguistics and for which research provides minimal support. In the past, the monolingual assumptions were so widely accepted that research was deemed unnecessary to substantiate them as ‘absolute truths’ (Jacobson and Faltis, 1990, p. 4). These monolingual assumptions underpin the ‘direct method’ which has influenced second language acquisition pedagogical practices for more than 100 years (Cook, 2001; Howatt, 1984; Yu, 2000). The ‘direct method’ underpins the kura immersion model which replicates the way that children learn their first language (Yu, 2000, p. 176) by emphasising the instructional use of te reo Māori as the target language at the exclusion of English, the kura child’s

It is common place in Māori-medium education for learners to want to translate an English expression into Māori and vice versa. For Lewis (1997, 2000) this question is a signal that when a second language learner can’t find expression in his/her target language, reverting to his/her stronger language in search of a translation is a legitimate language learning strategy. Translation is thus an instinctive part of the way the mind approaches learning another language. This shows that the second language learner has an instinctive understanding that languages have ‘meaning equivalents’ as opposed to meaningless ‘word-for-word translations’ (Lewis, 1997, 2000). The TA approach maximises the *kura* learner’s innate tendency to revert to the stronger language for meaning and message equivalents. Developing the ability to be able to link lexis and structures of Māori to their equivalents in English is the goal of the TA approach which enhances the development of trans-literacy skills.

The TA approach can be described as language fluidity and movement, synonymous with a pedagogy that emphasises the overlapping of languages rather than the separation of languages (Williams, 2002; Garcia, 2009). As an extension of Williams’ (2002) idea of translanguaging, the TA approach engages the learner’s meta-linguistic skills to maximise reciprocal language transfer by systemising simultaneous input in one language and output in another language through three conditioning phases covering six sequential stages that focus on a trans-acquisitional task as the core component of the approach. The TA approach represents a flexible bilingual pedagogical approach to language learning and teaching that supports the findings of Creese & Blackledge (2010) who suggest that as learners engage in flexible bilingualism, the boundaries between languages become permeable. In rejecting the notion of language separation, trans-acquisition supports Hornberger’s (1989, p. 287) theory that biliteracy and bilingualism do not develop along a single directional continuum. There is mounting evidence that confirms how transfer between languages and literacies accelerates both strong language and target language development (Odlin, 1989; Dworin, 2003; Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders and Christian, 2006; Riches & Genesee, 2006; Lowman et al, 2007). Teaching for transfer where literacy in both languages is taught simultaneously (Cummins, 2007, 2008 (a), (b), (c), McCaffery, Villers & Lowman, 2008) is the major pedagogical strategy in the TA approach.

Throughout the six stages of the TA approach, the *kura* learner’s metalinguistic processes are activated to receive information in te reo Māori (or English) using the passive language skills of listening and/or reading, to be then expressed in English (or Māori) using the active language skills of talking and writing. Garcia (2009) and Williams (2002) describe this process as a natural way of simultaneously developing and reinforcing two languages, while at the same time, extending the learner’s understanding of subject matter. Not to be confused with translation, the reciprocal transfer of semantic knowledge between the two languages promotes greater understanding of the message in both languages. The TA approach reinforces the interrelationship between te reo Māori and English by maximising what Cummins (1984, 1991) calls the language learner’s **Common Underlying Proficiency** (CUP) which acts as a central, unified processing...
system where both languages are stored to access on demand (see also Bernhardt and Kamil, 1995). Trans-acquisition maximises the benefits of reciprocal language transfer by using trans-lingual strategies to teach the kura learner how to compare and contrast the Māori and English concepts, understandings, attitudes, knowledge and skills stored in his/her CUP metalinguistic processing system (Cummins, 1984).

The TA approach promotes metalinguistic awareness which Tunmer and Herriman (1984) describe as the ability to reflect upon and manipulate the structural features of language to mediate meaning and form while receiving input in one language and expressing output in another language. The approach also systemises what Hagenson (1998) labels as reflective learning, so that consideration, analysis, appraisal and synthesis become habitual behaviours within the simultaneous processing of two languages to develop trans-literacy skills as input is processed in one language to produce output in another language. As an approach, Trans-acquisition emphasises authentic communication by requiring kura learners to interpret, express and negotiate meaning in both Māori and English. By this means, the TA approach supports the linguistic outcomes of Māori-medium education where it is accepted that strength in both Māori and English, will inevitably equip learners adequately for both worlds (Nepe, 1991).

**Conclusion**

My purpose has been to address the pedagogical issues surrounding English language instruction in kura so as to create space for change and growth. From the outset, the vision of those who founded Kura Kaupapa Māori was inclusive of English alongside te reo Māori to produce balanced bilingual graduates, capable and confident in both worlds. Despite the tensions around English language instruction in kura, the English language remains pivotal to achieving the vision of the kura founders to revitalise te reo Māori and raise Māori academic achievement. While the vision in respect to English language instruction remains the same, it is obvious that the current approach of language separation to embed te reo Māori as the stronger language first must be changed to achieve the vision. This article has argued for the re-thinking of current kura pedagogical practices for English language instruction to herald in a new paradigm of relational trans-lingualism such as represented by the Trans-acquisitional (TA) approach. The transformative potential of the TA approach to develop English literacy while maintaining Māori language fluency is the key to breaking the silence on English language instruction in kura and marks the beginning of new possibilities for all kura stakeholders including the Ministry of Education.
References


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