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Non-Thematic

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JISTE is an official, refereed publication of ISTE. The goal of ISTE is to publish six to eight articles in each issue. Using the Seminar theme, articles in the first issue of each volume are based on papers presented at the previous seminar. Articles in the second issue are non-thematic. Points of view and opinions are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of ISTE. Published manuscripts are the property of JISTE. Permission to reproduce must be requested from the editor.

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From the Secretary General

The international character of ISTE has been central to the philosophy of the ISTE Seminars from the very first gathering in 1981 in England. Participants have regularly brought their papers, ideas and distinctive contributions to the seminars enriched by the cultural context in which they have practiced and researched teacher education. A glance at the list of countries in which seminars have been held shows that members have come together every year in a great variety of countries on all continents. It is not surprising that several seminars have been held in England, the Netherlands, Canada and the United States of America where many of the founders and regular participants live. It is also true that ISTE has made a great effort to reach out to other countries and rejoiced when it held seminars in Portugal, Czechoslovakia, Taiwan, Australia, Germany, Cameroon, Brazil, South Africa and Kuwait and will gather in Denmark this year and Hong Kong in 2003.

The strength ISTE gains from its international commitment is derived from the way it brings teacher educators together from different backgrounds. LeOra Cordis wrote in 2000 (JISTE 4(2), 1-7) that in “sharing concerns and dilemmas in teacher education programs has surfaced in several issues...pedagogy, program structure, curriculum development, rights of women and minorities, and technologies.”.By sharing our insights in research papers and discussions we learn more about ourselves and about others. We find that the major issues tend to be universal ones and solutions are more easily found when we have the benefit of the experience and research of other educators.

One good reason for moving the seminar regularly about the world is the opportunity this gives for teacher educators in nearby countries to participate and therefore to become members. For example, we welcomed a large contingent from the former Soviet Union at the 1989 Seminar in Czechoslovakia. Similarly in 1992 in Australia there were participants from Fiji, New Zealand, Kiribati, India, Vietnam and Papua New Guinea. In 1996 new numbers

came from Chile and Uruguay, while in South Africa in 1998 we had large numbers of teacher educators from Botswana, Namibia, Cameroon and Lesotho. At the Seminar in Kuwait in 2001 participants from Oman, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain were able to attend.

The ISTE Web Site and the e-mail network have greatly helped with communication between members. However it has become evident that many ISTE members from developing countries have limited access to the electronic media and very little opportunity to attend a second seminar because of their circumstances. Conveners have worked very hard to obtain financial support from governments and philanthropic sources to assist some participants. In addition to these efforts for the past five years a Distance Paper Group (DPG) has offered members from developing countries the opportunity to submit papers for critical review by volunteer ISTE members although they have not been able to actually attend. Such authors receive comments on their papers and after revision are able to submit them to the Editor of JISTE for publication. This special facility is deliberately confined to members from developing countries and the management of the DPG minimizes any detrimental impact on the seminars.

Another way ISTE helps members from developing countries is through the recently established LeOra Cordis Memorial Trust. The Trust was formally established in Kuwait in 2001 after some years of planning. Bob O'Brien is the Chair of the Trustees and this year a small amount has been made available to the conveners in Denmark to assist some eligible participants to attend the Seminar. Criteria to guide conveners in giving assistance are being trailed and will be reviewed by the Trustees who also hope to launch a major fund raising effort soon to increase the Fund.

I congratulate the Editorial staff and authors of articles in this issue for the continued effort they have made to make JISTE a significant international journal in teacher education. The commitment of ISTE to global participation is without reservation.

Furthermore ISTE actively seeks to give opportunities to teacher educators who, because of their isolation, are unable to enjoy the full benefits of ISTE membership.

Warren Halloway

From the Editor

The articles presented in this issue are a small sample of the wide range of research and conceptual interests of ISTE members. The articles in this issue are by Humood Al-Muqate, Jasem Al-Tammar and Salwa Al-Jassar from Kuwait; Svitlana Biletska from the Ukraine; Saleh A. Jasim and Jawaher M. Al-Dabbous from Kuwait; Wally Moroz and Leah Hansberry from Australia; Edwin G. Ralph from Canada; and Jesus Maria Sousa from Portugal.

This issue of JISTE is my last as Editor. Catherine Sinclair takes over as JISTE Editor with Volume 7. I have known and worked with Cathy for a number of years. She is well qualified to take on the responsibility of JISTE's Editor. Cathy has served as a Consulting Editor since JISTE began in 1996 and has assisted in the editing of Volume 6. Please support her as you have me during these past six years.

Joyce Castle will continue as Associate Editor of JISTE. Her assistance with the editing process during the past two years is greatly appreciated.

Editing and publishing a journal takes time and patience. It is hard work that takes enormous energies and resources. Without the assistance of Joyce Castle, Associate Editor; Cathy Sinclair, Editor-elect; and the many Consulting Editors, JISTE would not exist. I thank Joyce, Cathy, and the Consulting Editors for their help, which has made my task much easier.

I encourage you to support your journal by submitting articles for possible publication, becoming a consulting editor, and asking your colleagues to attend a seminar and become ISTE members.

George A. Churukian

The Implementation of Cooperative Learning In Elementary Schools in Kuwait: Teachers' Perspectives

Humood Al-Muqate
Jasem Al-Tammar
Salwa Al-Jassar

This paper reviews the success of implementing Cooperative Learning (CL) in elementary schools in the State in Kuwait. The study used an interview format to identify and explore the knowledge and views of 48 elementary school teachers about Cooperative Learning and its implementation in the classrooms. The results of this study show that about 85% of the teachers believed that the prior training and information they had received about CL were insufficient for its successful implementation. The majority of the teachers either never started implementing CL, or stopped implementing it soon after starting. In addition the majority of teachers reported that the Ministry of Education had neither monitored nor evaluated the program implementation effectively, thus undermining its delivery and possible success. A number of suggestions are offered here to improve the introduction of such programs in the future.

Introduction

The educational system in Kuwait has been designed to help meet the needs of the population and further the country's ambitious development plans. The Government of Kuwait provides free education for all Kuwaitis: kindergarten (two years); primary (four years); intermediate (four years), and secondary (four years). University education is also provided free of charge for appropriately qualified Kuwaiti students.

In 1994, the Ministry of Education called upon specialists to prepare a program that would serve to improve the educational environment in elementary schools. The recommendations arising from this workgroup focussed on four major domains:

1. advancing new classroom management styles including learning through groups to reinforce Cooperative Learning (CL) in the classroom.
2. improving the physical and social environment of the elementary classroom.
3. upgrading the educational services in elementary schools.
4. maximizing the utilization of elementary school facilities.

As a consequence of these recommendations, the implementation of Cooperative Learning in the elementary school system started in 1995. To date, however, there has been no concerted attempt to evaluate its effectiveness or success. This study was conducted to evaluate the implementation of Cooperative Learning in elementary schools and to investigate the reasons behind its success or failure.

Research on Cooperative Learning

In 1980, Slavin introduced the concept of Cooperative Learning. In CL, students are placed in small groups (5-7 students), where they work together, following the teacher's instructions. Each member of the group has a definite role and is responsible for its achievement. This method aims to direct students toward improved academic achievement by involving them in small group work. This idea took its roots from observations of the behavior of students in different learning environments and the interactions that occurred among them. As a method, CL came to be promoted as an educational strategy whose aim was to raise the standard of learning (Johnson, Maruyama, Johnson & Skon, 1981).

The use of Cooperative Learning methods has now been researched for more than 20 years and findings have confirmed that these are important methods for classroom learning and that they do enhance students' learning ability as well as their attitudes towards a subject. Holliday and Dwight (2001) found as an overall result of using CL that the computer skills of students improved and that there was a significant relationship between CL and the students' academic achievement. A major emphasis of Cooperative Learning is the use of this method across many subjects and grade levels in the elementary school, especially those where learning needs to be focussed on practical more than theoretical parameters (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Shelley, Ashley et al., 2000; Stevens & Slavin, 1995). According to Al-Kaood (1995), this kind of pedagogy requires experienced and well-trained teachers who know how and when to assign learning objectives to students and how to control and guide each learner within each small group (Al-Kaood, 1995).

A number of studies emphasizing the importance of Cooperative Learning on student achievement have indicated that CL is a method which makes a subject more interesting and which promotes effective learning. In addition, the use of CL has been found to have a positive impact on many variables other than achievement, including inter group relations, self-esteem, attitudes toward class and school, and the ability to work collaboratively with others (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Slavin & Slavin, 1995). As students experience CL across a range of subjects, they increase skills in learning ability and attitude that lead to success in the long term. The research of Al-Sadane (1993) demonstrated how student achievement was enhanced through the use of CL more than through other more traditional control-based methods. Additionally, Al-Sabhee (1994) added that according to his research, CL contributes to an increase in university student achievement more than traditional methods. Al-Kaood(1995) focused his study on the impact of CL methods on student achievement in Geography and found that this method assisted low ability students to work effectively with high achievement students who actively enhanced learning in terms of the group

rather than the individual student. Hopp, McGraw and others (2000) evaluated the impact of using Cooperative Learning activities in social skills instruction, and their findings indicated improvements in the students' ability to express their feelings and solve problems.

Stevens and Slavin (1995) described the most important elements of the Cooperative Elementary Model as including a) widespread use of cooperative learning in academic classes, b) mainstreaming of learning-disabled students in regular education, c) teachers' collaboration in instructional planning, and d) principal and teacher collaboration on school planning and decision making. The elementary school CL model uses cooperation as a philosophical and practical approach to changing classroom processes and learning activities in order to provide students with more active learning experiences, equal access to learning, and a more supportive environment for students and teachers (Slavin, 1987). As the research on the use of CL illustrates, the use of Cooperative Learning in the classroom tends to promote higher achievement for students than does the use of other more competitive or traditional learning methods.

Methodology

The sample in this study consisted of 48 teachers selected at random from four elementary schools in the Al-Asima and Al-Ahmadi school districts . The teachers were selected from two girls' schools and two boys' schools, with 12 teachers selected from each school.

An interview with each of these 48 teachers was used to elicit their views regarding the implementation of Cooperative Learning in their schools. The interview focused on gaining the teachers' views on the importance of Cooperative Learning, the effectiveness of Cooperative Learning on student learning, the implementation of Cooperative Learning, and the procedures used in observing and evaluating the impact of cooperative learning. Five key questions directed the interviews:

- To what extent do teachers understand the concept of CL and its benefits?
- Do teachers apply CL in their classrooms, and if so, what procedures do they use?
- How was CL introduced to the teachers?
- How was the implementation of CL monitored and evaluated?
- Was the implementation of CL in Kuwait successful? Why? Why not?

To ensure the validity of the tool, the interview questions were submitted to three faculty members at the School of Education and four experienced elementary school teachers for review and feedback. Useful comments were provided and used to modify a number of questions. In order to identify the reliability of the tool, we then interviewed a group of eight elementary teachers and asked them to answer the questions.

Findings

The following results emerged from the interview data with the 48 teachers. The results of the interview are summarized here in relation to each question directing the study.

Question One: In response to the question ‘What is CL?’ the results revealed the following: 34% of the teachers identified the dividing of students into groups as an definition of CL; 42% mentioned that the CL student groups contain four or five students who co-operate to accomplish certain tasks; and 24% mentioned that student group learning involved thinking, research and discovery.

When asked to identify the benefits of CL, the teachers identified the benefits illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. The Benefits of Cooperative Learning in Descending Order

		No. of Teachers	Percent
1	Encouraging group work and cooperation among students.	22	45%
2	Fostering students independence.	10	21%
3	Stimulating competition among students.	10	21%
4	Provoking students curiosity.	9	19%
5	Encouraging thinking and reasoning.	9	19%
6	Making class more interesting.	7	15%
7	Increasing the level of participation	6	13%
8	Allowing students to express themselves and talk more in the classroom.	5	10%
9	Students benefit from each other.	4	8%
10	Bring students closer to each other.	4	8%
11	Foster leadership in students.	3	6%
12	Increase the level of activity in the classroom.	2	4%
13	Encouraging creativity.	2	4%
14	Teaching students discipline and order.	2	4%

It is worth adding that there were seven teachers who did not mention a single benefit of CL. What these teachers offered instead were what they viewed as major disadvantages of CL:

- CL distracts students' attention from the subject matter and teacher instruction
- CL encourages talking and lack of discipline in the classroom
- CL relies on the best student in each group to do the group's work
- CL requires certain facilities and specific arrangements in the classroom environment especially small class size) that are difficult to fulfill in most elementary schools

In their answer to the question ‘what are the differences between CL and traditional teaching?’ the majority of teachers repeated the benefits of CL noted above, but also particular emphasized the increased student participation in the classroom, especially among low achievers. As well, the teachers highlighted the following aspects:

- CL decreases direct instruction and stimulates thinking and discovery
- CL enables students to gain information by themselves
- CL encourages student discussion
- CL focuses more on practical application
- CL requires greater use of teaching aids
- CL encourages problem solving
- CL increases students’ enjoyment in class and the love of subject matter
- CL requires a more knowledgeable teacher and greater effort by the teacher

When asked what kind of information and skills elementary school teachers need to implement CL, the teachers listed the requirements shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Teachers’ perspectives on the Skills and Qualifications necessary to implement CL

	No. of Teachers	Percent
1. Good understanding of CL and how it		

is implemented.	23	47%
2. The ability to prepare class worksheets and organize class activities.	18	38%
3. Excellent and updated knowledge of the subject matter	18	38%
4. The ability to make learning aids	16	33%
5. The ability to keep discipline in the classroom	15	31%
6. The ability to invite and encourage students' participation	12	25%
7. Creativity in presenting information	9	19%
8. Encouraging students to find information by themselves .	8	17%
9. Listening to students .	6	13%
10. Skilled in distributing students into groups.	2	4%
11. Patient and liked by students.	2	4%

Question Two: Teacher responses to the question ‘To what extent do elementary school teachers apply CL in their classroom?’ revealed that the teachers were divided into four groups. Among the first group were thirteen teachers (27%) who had never implemented CL except for a few times in the presence of the school principal. Among the second group were eight teachers (16%) who had implemented CL for six to eight months and then stopped. Among the third group were fourteen teachers (29%) who had implemented CL for one to two years and then stopped. Among the fourth group were the remaining thirteen teachers (27%) who were still implementing CL in their classrooms on certain occasions.

When describing what procedures they used to implement CL, these teachers outlined three main approaches. The first was to divide the students into groups and then deliver instruction conventionally to the whole class. The second was to provide instruction to the whole class first and then divide the students into groups so they could work together to apply what they had learned. The third approach was to divide the students into groups at the beginning, appoint a leader in each group, and have each group complete a certain task using worksheets provided by the teacher.

Some teachers who utilized this approach added more detail: the students cooperated to find the facts by themselves; the teacher’s role is more of a supervisor than an information provider; each group has students with diverse abilities (high and low achievers); and students groups may do the same task or different tasks, all of which usually complement each other.

Question Three: This question focussed on how CL was introduced to the teachers. Driving this question was a belief that the success of implementing a new approach is highly influenced by the way in which that approach is introduced to the teachers.

Table 3 lists the teachers’ views on the sources of information and skills necessary to implement CL. The table reveals that most teachers relied on developing the necessary skills through actual practice of using CL in their classroom and on the information they acquired from the teachers’ college. The department head and ministry guidelines scored lower as sources of information about CL. As Matthews (1993) found in her study, teachers in many schools are implementing co-operative learning with limited training and resources.

Findings from the interviews with the teachers revealed that 85% felt that their information and skills were not sufficient to implement CL well. In addition, 73% of the teachers said that ministry guidelines had not played any role in ensuring successful implementation of CL in contrast to 12% who said that they did. Regarding the role of the school administration in ensuring successful implementation, 48% of the teachers said that it played a limited role; 40% said that it did not play any role, and 12% suggested that it played an active role.

Table 3. Teachers’ views of the sources of information and skills related to CL

	No. of Teachers	Percent
1. Experience developed from actual practice.	9	19%

2. College courses.	9	19%
3. Directions of the department's head.	8	17%
4. Directions of ministry guide.	7	15%
5. Reading and TV programs. 13%	6	
6. Model Lessons (highly prepared lessons demonstrating CL implementation).	6	13%
7. Fellow teachers.	5	10%
8. School Administration	5	10%
9. Workshops	4	8%
10. Training (not specifically about CL)	4	8%
11. Video Tape.	3	6%

Question Four: This question focussed on how the implementation of CL in Kuwait elementary schools was monitored and evaluated. Teachers' responses indicated a lack of monitoring and evaluation procedures in regard to CL implementation. 70% of the teachers said that there was no monitoring and evaluation. Only 16% said that there was limited supervision through written directions and the attendance of officials in some classes.

Question Five: The fifth question addressed the extent to which the implementation of CL had been successful and what factors contributed to this. Only three teachers (6%) out of forty eight said that the implementation was successful. About 19% said that CL enjoyed limited success. The majority (65%) said that CL was not successfully implemented. The reasons offered for the failure are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Teachers' views on the reasons for the failure of CL implementation

	No. of Teachers	Percent
1. Large size classes	15	31%
2. Insufficient preparation and training of teachers	14	29%
3. Inadequate classroom facilities and environment	10	21%
4. The curriculum is not adapted to suit CL	6	13%
5. Lack of encouragement from administration and Ministry of Education	3	6%

Discussion

The aim of this study was to determine the degree to which the implementation of a cooperative learning methodology in elementary schools in Kuwait was successful. The views of 48 teachers involved in the project were explored to determine what understandings they had about CL and whether and how they had successfully implemented CL into their classrooms.

Findings from the study revealed that these teachers generally had a limited understanding of CL. Only a quarter of the sample could provide an adequate definition of CL, leading us to conclude that the majority of teachers lacked the full understanding of CL needed to ensure its successful implementation. Yet the findings also revealed that these teachers had an understanding of the benefits of cooperative learning in comparison with traditional teaching, and were aware of the positive effects to be derived from implementing cooperative learning. These teachers were also reasonably aware of the necessary skills and abilities a teacher must possess to successfully apply CL, and they rated the need to have this proper understanding and sufficient skill set as most important to ensure proper implementation.

Nevertheless, the teachers' responses revealed that they felt they lacked the proper knowledge and skills needed. About 85% of the teachers said that the information they received about CL was not enough for successful implementation. They felt there were no training programs that were specifically designed to help them implement this new approach in their classroom. As a result of their limited understanding and skills, about 70% of the teachers in the sample either never implemented CL or stopped implementing it in any form after a period of time ranging from few months to two years. In most cases, they suggested that the implementation of CL was superficial in order to satisfy the school administration.

It appears that the ineffective guidance, monitoring, and evaluation processes had a direct negative influence on implementing CL. The majority of teachers held that the ministry guidance personnel played a very weak role in ensuring the successful application of CL. This also applies, but to a lesser degree, to the school administration, which encouraged and demanded the implementation of CL but was unable to provide the necessary arrangements for its success such as small size classes and additional classroom resources.

These teachers did not view the Ministry of Education as monitoring nor formally evaluating the implementation of CL in classroom settings. Evaluation was viewed by the teachers as limited and based on the impressions of some ministry officials after attending model lessons (highly prepared lessons by excellent teachers) in which the implementation of CL was demonstrated.

Given the above, it is not surprising that the overwhelming majority of teachers in this study reported the implementation of CL to be unsuccessful. The reasons behind this failure from the teachers' perspective include: insufficient information and training, large numbers of students in the classroom, a lack of necessary facilities, and insufficient guidance and encouragement. It appears that the elementary teachers in Kuwait fully recognized the importance of co-operative learning strategies in the classroom and linked its implementation to the development of an appropriate

classroom environment that could enhance students' achievement. Yet the findings from this study have led us to conclude that this model was imposed on the teachers and hastily implemented without prudent planning and careful preparation.

Implications

The results of this study have direct implications for implementing cooperative learning or indeed any new teaching method in schools. These can be summarized as follows:

- Prudent planning and adequate preparation are necessary to implement new teaching methods. Projects should not be started without providing the necessary requirements for its success. The overly hasty implementation of new ideas will only contribute to its failure.
- Teachers are the cornerstone for the success of any new teaching method. They have to fully understand the new method, its limitations and how it is to be implemented in the classroom. They must receive sufficient orientation and appropriate in-service training in order to be able to apply the new teaching method.
- Class size, classroom facilities and curriculum content are important aspects that must be carefully considered before the implementation of new teaching methods is begun.
- School administrations have to be convinced of the benefits of any new teaching method. In addition, sufficient resources have to be available to school administrators to help them fulfill their important role as leader.
- Monitoring and periodical evaluation are vital to overcome any shortcomings while implementing a new teaching method. Such a programme also gives a clear message to teachers that there is a commitment to make the new venture succeed in order to promote more effective teaching and learning.

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Teacher's Emotional Sensitivity in the Context of its Historical Development and Contemporary Debate

Svitlana Biletska

This paper explores the concept of teacher sensitivity -- that empathic response that allows caregivers to join in and participate in a child's experience. I consider the historical aspect of this concept (Slavic tradition), its interpretation among Western contemporaries where the mechanism of empathic identification is pointed out, and the matter of teacher training in emotional sensitivity. I summarize the "Advanced Seminars in Child Centered Education" course I have developed for fourth year students at the Pedagogical University in Kharkiv, Ukraine, for the purpose of allowing student teachers to recapture their childhood in order to transfer those childhood sensibilities into their professional practice.

Introduction

Modern Ukrainian pedagogy basically continues the traditions of Soviet pedagogy, a pedagogy in which a paradoxical situation had formed. On the one hand, this pedagogy is associated with a powerful search in didactics, while on the other hand, it is noted for an absence of attention to the child. Stalin's decree of 1936, "On Pedagogic Distortions" led to the situation in which any psychological research and discussion on psychoanalysis in pedagogy were brought to an abrupt halt. The "Laborschool" paradigm, which places the emphasis on children's intellectual development only, strengthened its position in the Soviet educational system. Within this paradigm, the only evidence of successful teaching is the extent to which a child is "able to master a definite amount of knowledge necessary for the future" (Kononenko, 2000, p.4). I suggest here that everything that was

worked out in the period of the so-called "child-centered revolution" (the boundary of 19th and 20th centuries) was left unclaimed, and instead the older tradition continued. The traditional activities of Soviet teachers in the past can still be found in the present day activities of Ukrainian teachers. These include: a broadcasting and reproduction of truth; the use of techniques that border on teacher's encroachment of children's individual freedoms and rights; the use of hard regulation that deprives children of choice and sets monotony in the child's life; and the use of marks as "carrot and stick".

Given this context, one can conclude that there is a need for a new type of teacher, one who is able to create a positive and accepting atmosphere for children's cognitive and affective development, and one who is able to develop his own emotional sensitivity. This evokes a special interest in the concept of child – centered education where these notions are central. The evolution of this paradigm is a topic of my special course "Advanced Seminars in Child Centered Education" for fourth year students at the Pedagogical University in Kharkiv, Ukraine. By studying the views of representatives of the child-centered paradigm, we make the effort not only to understand and evaluate their ideas and practice, but also to utilize these practically to solve current pedagogical problems. In addition, we become familiar with modern methods that are the logical continuation of child – centered education studies. The course intentions are similar to those in the Norwegian International Child Development Program (Norwegian ICDP program) in Oslo University, where problems of caregiver sensitivity are studied.

In this article I explore the concept of teachers' emotional sensitivity in three sections: teachers' sensitivity in light of its historical context (Slavic way); contemporary debate about empathic identification; and the problems of caregiver sensitivity as a theme of a seminar for students-teachers.

Teacher sensitivity in light of its historical context

Traditionally, the idea of a "child-centered education" is connected with such names as Jean Jacques Rousseau, Maria Montessori, and John Dewey. The basis of this paradigm rests on the notion that a teacher should be able to understand the features of a child's world, the language of a child, and the deeply refined movements of a child's soul. Rousseau wrote in the 18th century, for example, that "children have their own way of seeing, thinking and feeling, and there is nothing more insane than a wish to substitute if for our own one" (Rousseau, 1762; 1989). Yet I argue here that the formation of ideas of a "child-centered education" can also be connected with such Slavic names as Lev Tolstoy, V. A. Sukhomlinskiy, S. T. Shazkiy, K. N. Ventzel, and Rerikh.

To gain a deeper insight into the Slavic supporters of child-centered education we should look especially to the educational work of a great writer and no less great educator, Count Lev Tolstoy. As a connoisseur of a child's spiritual world, Tolstoy had these words for teachers, "an educator must treat a child as a person who has serious affairs and thoughts; the teacher and child must work together for the common cause; the teacher, as well as his pupil, has the right to make a mistake, and the teacher should appreciate his pupil's experiences" (Shazkiy, 1928).

In my opinion, the works of Tolstoy are interesting in the context of my arguments about the development of a child-centered pedagogy. Worth noting is Tolstoy's story (Tolstoy, 1862), full of thoughts and reflections about young school thieves, who were uncovered and punished by the children of the school themselves, and in some time turned out to be caught again at the locus delicti. After steadfast, attentive observation of the culprits Tolstoy provides an unexpected but amazingly simple conclusion: "I became certain that there are secrets of soul closed from us... One should punish a thief with shame, somebody may tell me. What for? What is shame? And is it known that shame does away with disposition to stealing? It may encourage it" (p. 104). Tolstoy stresses that he broke the harmony of that boy's development, "I awoke something that would have otherwise always been sleeping in his soul and which should not have been called forth" (p. 104).

He also illustrates how harmony was also broken in the chastising of the peasant children. They were given the opportunity to think up the punishment for the delinquent themselves. Tolstoy with surprise mentions that "wicked gladness" with which they invented various ways of punishment. "Unnaturally and strangely cruelly, as if an evil spirit guided them against their will" the children teased the young thieves, demanding stricter punishments". Tolstoy was troubled by such a reaction by the school children: "Something told me that it was not good" (p.103). As we see, however, Tolstoy just reflects on the issues; he formulates the problem, but does not give any definite answer.

Another story, produced by Vasiliy Aleksandrovich Sukhomlinskiy (1918-1970), a prominent figure in the Slavic education tradition of 20th century, came to provide a peculiar answer to his questions (Sukhomlinskiy, 1979). This story tells how at the end of a particular school day in one Ukrainian school (Pavlish school), the happy possessor of a bright, colorful box of crayons was saddened because all the crayons were missing. Sukhomlinskiy didn't immediately begin with punitive measures. Talking to the children, he emphasized that the person who took the crayons, of course, didn't want to cause pain to their owner, but most likely, he just couldn't suppress his strong desire to draw a little bit longer than the rest of the children. Sukhomlinskiy proposed that the one who had taken the hidden box should bring it the next morning and put it on the owner's table. The crayons were returned and nobody, except the teacher, ever knew the name of the delinquent.

The analogy of this story with Tolstoy's story of the thief is obvious. But Tolstoy just reflected on the fact that ideas, principles, and patterns of relations cannot be mechanically transferred from the world of grown-ups to the world of children, while Sukhomlinskiy argued and insisted upon the necessity of the fact that the older person (teacher) should be able to understand deeply the refined movements of a child's soul. I emphasize two moments: first, Sukhomlinskiy does not drive the child into a corner, but shows him the way out of the situation; and second, he

doesn't give the child a possibility to understand that "one can live with sin" or step over the "sinful" line; instead, he "felt with" the child.

Such caregiver's capacity to observe and 'feel with' the child, to "put yourself into a child's shoes", to understand his experiences and mental states, is what is called 'empathic identification' in modern psychological and pedagogical concepts.

Contemporary debate about empathic identification

There are different descriptions for the same thing in contemporary debate about emotional sensitivity and empathic identification. A variety of terms exists: 'empathic responsiveness' (Robert Emde); 'sympathy' (Trevarthen), 'dialogic closure in felt immediacy' (Stein Braaten). Dr. Tomas Gordon, the founder and president of American Effectiveness Training Associates, a nationwide network of professionals offering training programs for parents and teachers, when speaking about grown-ups' acceptance behavior, noted: "To empathize with another is to see him as a separate person, yet be willing to join with him or be with him. It means 'becoming a companion' to him for a brief period in his journey through life. Such an act involves deep caring and love. Parents who learn empathic active listening discover a new kind of appreciation and respect, a deeper feeling of caring; in turn, the child responds to the parent with similar feelings"(Gordon, 1974,p. 58).

Empathic identification is considered in the Norwegian ICDP program as the key to responsive care. "This is probably one of the most central issues in care and psychosocial intervention in caregiver-child relationships" (Hundeide, 1996, p.5). Thus the authors of modern conceptions assume empathic identification is the underlying mechanism behind sensitive human care and companionship. More and over it can be found releasing the mechanism of empathic identification in Hundeide's articles. Pointing out conditions that need to be fulfilled for this mechanism to be released, he makes a reference to other researchers, namely

Daniel Stern, Eisenberg, and Braaten. These conditions can be stated as follows:

- We seem to identify empathetically more easily when we can recognize the feelings that the person is expressing - we do not identify with expressions that are outside of our own emotional range of recognition.
- More specifically we identify empathetically more easily when we are directly involved face-to-face and can actively participate in an imitative manner with the other person's emotional expressions.
- We identify empathetically more easily with a person who is accepting us as a partner.
- We identify empathetically with a person when this appears relevant in the situation we are in.
- We identify empathetically with persons - with whom we have a close, intimate relationship (Hundaide, 1996).

Researchers of child- centered education in the past have actively examined different aspects of these conditions. For example, in regard to the problem of the first point (a) above, Sukhomlinsky, as a true supporter of this paradigm, noted in his celebrated paper "Methods of Collective Education "(1979), that "Only the one who never forgets that he himself used to be a child will become a real teacher. Let's enter the wonderful world of childhood with warm hearts responding to the pulse of child life" (p.651). In this respect the thinker suggested an original method: a teacher should stimulate the memories of his own childhood, try to see the world with a child's eyes, reincarnate himself, and become a child to some extent. Sukhomlinsky himself had his own diary consisting of two parts: "Me seen by a teenager" and "World seen by a child".

Contemporary researchers appear to continue the way of his thoughts. Klein (1995) stated that "When a child's utterances and actions are taken as expressions of feelings, experiences, wishes and initiatives that the caregiver can recognize from her own experience in similar situations, this may open up and invite an empathic response in the caregiver so that she can join in and participate in the child's experience." Following these ideas, a special seminar on the theme "Adults and their model of their own childhood" was worked out in the Norwegian ICDP program. Unfortunately, the present day curriculum at pedagogical institutions does not seem to give enough attention to these problems.

Teacher sensitivity as the theme of a seminar for students-teachers

Given my interest in promoting a child-centered education, I have designed a questionnaire. My purpose for having students complete the questionnaire is to help students-teachers understand their individual life-experience (child feelings) and then use transfer this understanding into their interrelations with children. The questionnaire also helps to clarify the extent to which modern students are able to accept child-centered education concepts (in this aspect we should not forget that the Soviet Pedagogy was oriented at the authoritarian style of relations that strongly influenced the modern student generation). It is significant that students for the first time reflected on many questions of the questionnaire, such as "Did you try to understand the inner world of a child? Do you often remember your childhood, identical events of your childhood? Your emotions?"

During a discussion of these questions at a seminar, the students recalled events from their childhood and tried to analyze them, making, whenever possible, conclusions of a pedagogical character. Two revealing examples help us to understand the student's thinking. One student made the following observation. She had experienced unpleasant scenes in her own family when at bedtime all the relatives got involved in putting her to bed. It

seemed to this person that all the interesting stuff happened after she was sent to bed, therefore she had come to always resist going to bed. When the same situation presented itself with her own nephew, she remembered her own experiences and persuaded the child to go to bed by promising him that she would show him how to "travel on adventures". By recounting interesting stories to him, the child calmed down and gradually fell asleep in spite of him. This was an example of how a student applied the emotional experience of her own childhood to correctly solve a pedagogical situation.

Another example was connected to an incident in class. The student, on pedagogical practice at a school, gave a low mark to one of the schoolboys. The boy related to it very painfully. At the following lesson his behavior was disruptive and unacceptable. During the analysis of this situation a student recalled that she had been deeply hurt by a failing mark in her past experience in school and that she had reacted with inappropriate behavior as a result. The girl noted that the reaction of the schoolboy reminded her of her own experience but she did not pay any attention to these emotions. The conflict was not solved. During a discussion of this situation the students came to a conclusion that it was important not only that the adult have the skill to identify empathetically, but to also comprehend the importance of this approach.

As my experience and practice have shown, the interest of students to various childhood problems permanently grows during their work in the seminar. This sort of review of the child-centered paradigm and our discussion about caregivers' sensitivity leads to more serious and attentive attitudes from future teachers towards a child's individuality and undoubtedly, the teachers' basic reference-points tend to alter.

Conclusion

I have stressed in this brief look at the child-centered paradigm that Slavic writers had examined the concept of teacher empathy in the past, irrespective of their foreign colleagues. Moreover, Slavic

writers not only developed these concepts at a theoretical level, but also actively applied them in school practice. As we see, the heritage of Slavic pedagogy is multidimensional in nature. Unfortunately, however, its child-centered tradition was discontinued during the Soviet period and the pedagogical technologies in the context of a child-centered philosophy were never elaborated.

Modern educational researchers in the West have been developing the essential assumptions of caregiver sensitivity. They admit that teacher – child communication requires a sophisticated degree of caregiver empathy. In order to communicate effectively, the teacher needs to be able to understand the child's affective and cognitive states. Caregivers' ability to attune with, and respond to, children's needs and initiatives constitutes the basis for good quality interaction.

My own inclination is towards the view that it is important to show historically the development of pedagogical thought from world-wide sources, not only Western or only Slavic traditions, and then apply these concepts with an open-mind, regardless of their place of origin.

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The Information Revolution: What Has It Got to do With the Curriculum?

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*This article deals with the most prominent issues relevant to the information revolution, and whether the infomedia ushers in the end of traditional schooling systems in the world in general and the Arabic world in particular. The article outlines the rationale for **not** teaching **only for** information for knowledge is infinite, many-sided, tentative, contested and relative. The article suggests how the Arab curricula can be attuned to serve the purposes of learning and teaching in the infomedia age. A model is diagrammed, summing up the expected philosophy of learning and curriculum provisioning in a manner adaptable to our needs in the Arab World and commensurate with the aspects of the information revolution.*

Introduction and Background:

With technology and informatics dominating over every aspect of our life, even in the subtlest neurosciences, genetic engineering, and brain applications, technology is being increasingly used in the field of education. However, a more metaphysical presence of the teacher is in the making (Ali, 2001). Information technology is sure to render the teacher's role more fascinating, and yet more enriching. The teacher is changing from a charger of information into a guiding supervisor or a learner-teacher who effectively participates in the learning process. Digital stimulation would bring forth the reality into the classroom and into the student's home via his/her connected-to-the-Internet PC. Digital simulation and the

Internet have reduced spatial and time dimensions to a fraction. More ironically, it is said that one day (in the not so distant future) man would forgo his biological memory to the advantage of electronic retrieval and storage systems. In this respect, Eco (1996) notes that electronic memory is increasingly replacing our biological memories. Further, he suggests that this situation may one day drive the Pentagon to keep the remaining smidgen of humans who committed to their memories the multiplication table as a national security reserve to be used in case American main computers are cut off from electricity. However, this end is sure to come, and the only one who would survive is he who adapts to the ever-changing learning environment. Moreover, the high-tech of our information age would help teachers to link the school and curriculum to the outside reality thanks to virtual reality technology.

Koelsch (1995) notes that Computer-based Teaching (CBT) systems make learning available *online* practically in every minute of the day. This means that ongoing training is at every time available under different conditions. As, Koelsch (1995, p. 43) puts it, “computers are extremely patient teachers.” In this context, Ali (2001, p. 514) notes that “IT has opened up new and varied horizons for learning and teaching in the course of which everyone can learn everywhere at any time through distributed courseware”.

The reasons for transformation into a time-, place-, and facility-flexible education system are dependent on the transformations brought about by the information revolution; e.g. space and time boundaries of work have collapsed, so as there is distance work, co-operation in a globalising world has become a survival necessity, etc. Therefore, the efficiency and quality of work in the information age does not rely on the learner’s informational harvest in the most, but rather on the ability to adapt to diversity and the ability to communicate with others (UNESCO, 1999. p.81)

Should We Teach for Information?

Education is one of the hardest fields where reform can be evaluated. Since early human history, man has been learning virtually everything in similar fashions. The theory of education is hardly a piece of patchwork. Lashway (1999) cries out, "Despite the millions spent each year, educational research does not play a major role in the professional lives of school practitioners. Much of the work seems distant from everyday concerns, and dissemination is inefficient. Moreover, findings are often misinterpreted or used as ammunition in political battles" (p.3).

However, a teacher trained within the past few years would answer "no" to the pivotal question "Do we teach for information? For, we are hectically marching towards a knowledge economy. According to Neave (1988), "This means acquiring skill or knowledge at the time or place where it is needed, instead of learning it ahead of time and in a different place. Just-in time learning avoids unnecessary investment and minimises deterioration of knowledge and skill from non-use" (p.2). Under such conditions, the goals of education vis-à-vis the information age may be:

- knowledge acquisition;
- social adjustment;
- self-development and development of intrapersonal and interpersonal capabilities.
- to prepare people to live in the outgrowth of the information age. Therefore, the UNESCO report titled "Education: The Treasure Within" is released publicising the goals of education as (i) learning to know, (ii) to work, (iii) to be, and (iv) learning to live together. (UNESCO, 1999).

Therefore, we can sum up noting that:

- Accumulation of information does not mean incremental increase in knowledge. This explains away the mystery in the slogan that curriculum planners believe in that “Less is more”;
- Knowledge is essentially integrative. Humanities and science compliment one another. Therefore, interdisciplinary teaching, integrated curriculum and cross-disciplinary curriculum is underway; and
- Cognitive skills need more sharpening.

The Look of the Curriculum in the Information Age:

Recently, curriculum is seen not as a selection of knowledge which adds up to form “the summation and meaning of human experience” (Foshay, 2000, p. 1). Foshay (2000) writes in explication: “Because one’s school curriculum includes all school experience, there is no logical way to put boundaries around it. (And) because the life curriculum deals with one’s entire life, it, too, is boundless...as boundless as the universe of experience” (p.1). In this light, an important study of worldwide trends in the curriculum done by Meyer, et al (1992) has yielded drastically astonishing findings. John Meyer’s team at Stanford University has looked at the curricular categories used in primary education in over seventy countries since the 1920’s. The expectation is that curricular provisions in these countries should appear diversified, but they discovered “an extraordinary homogeneity across the extraordinarily variable countries of the world” (p.12).

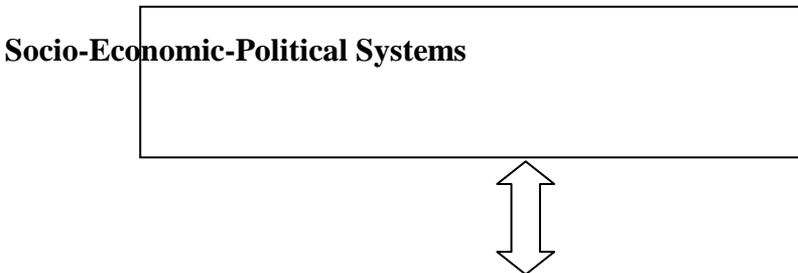
Therefore, the curriculum was conceptualised as having two essential and complementary perspectives: areas of learning and experience; and elements of learning and knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes to be developed (Ross, 2000, p.51). These perspectives could accommodate all the ways schools commonly used to organise teaching and learning. Ross (2000, p.51) further describes IT as a cross-curricular category, thought to be essential for the world of work and careers education. In the light of this new definition of the school curriculum, the ultimate purpose of

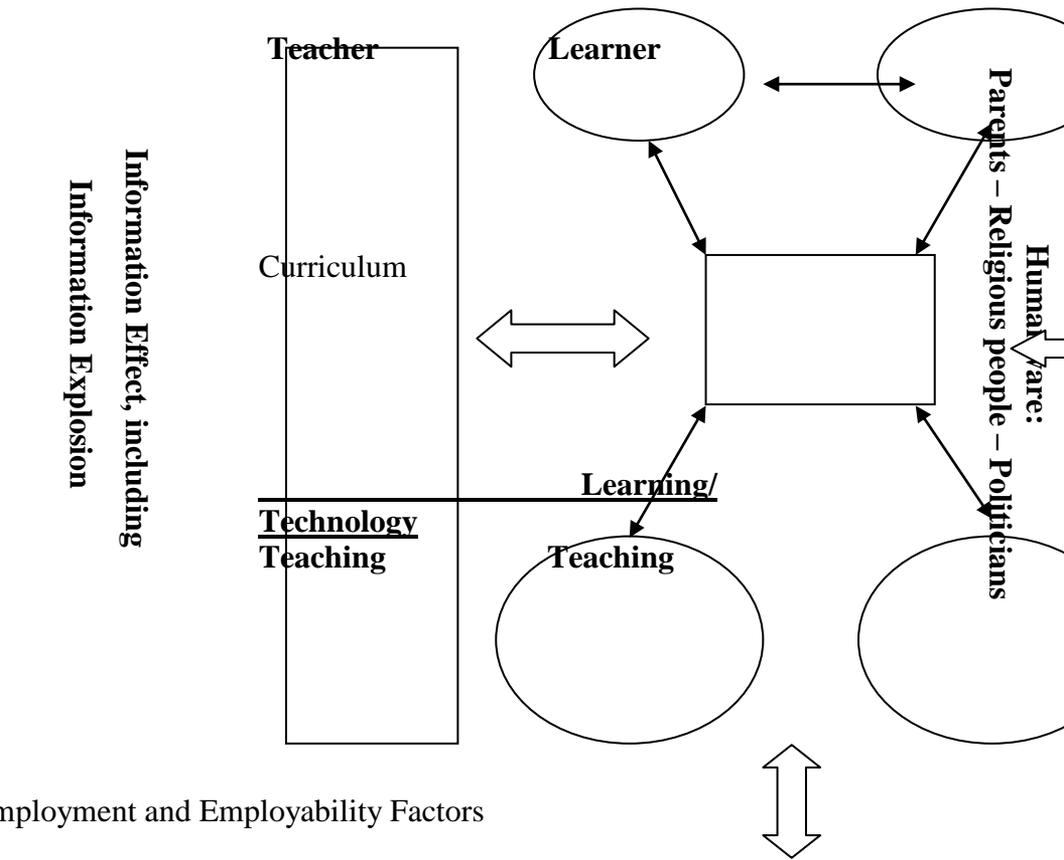
schooling is not to cover particular content or to achieve generalised patterns of behaviour or experience. It is to develop competencies of life: i.e., to acquire functional knowledge (information necessary for work), adapting to society (social understanding for living with others), and developing self and personal potentialities as well as developing the ability to live in a globalising world.

Towards a Compromise:

The need to restructure our education system in the Arab world is becoming urgent. But we should ask the question, "Around what should we restructure our education and curricula?" We need to get out of the vicious circle that traditional and pseudo modern educators are coercing us. In that circle they ask their students to be only concerned with the acquisition of information, commit it to the memory, cram up for the exam and then delete their memory files of information, and by the start of a new academic year, they have to restart all over again.

The processes of curriculum planning, implementation and the whole engineering processes require that many stakeholders share the industry. In the following configuration, the elements of the process are delineated interestingly.





Employment and Employability Factors

The model is a two-level conceptual framework of how to adapt to new curricular systems commensurate with the new information revolution. The inner level has to do with the elements of learning and teaching, i.e. the teacher, the learner, the teaching methods and the teaching learning technology. On the outer level, the social, economic and political systems are studied and analysed. These are studied together with the demands of the work market; the aspirations of parents and men of religion; and the influences of the external world, notably the IT revolution as represented in the Internet and other communication and information technologies. Then, basic ideas are outlined and set at

the top levels, leaving particulars of planning and implementation to the lesser hierarchies.

Assuming that “if knowledge is infinite, many-sided, tentative, contested, and relative and that is why it is illogical to compel our children to acquire a non-representative fraction of it ” (Foshay, 2000, p. 2). We prefer to design and engineer curricula that are specifically attuned to train students in the Arab world on the basic and advanced skills of accessing knowledge. Not only is that enough, but also it is hoped that our curricula seek to train them to the manipulation of information processing strategies. Thus, these curricula may tend to be student-centred, locally, and IT-driven. The Internet with its applications – the WWW, e-mail, e-course delivery systems, etc. are expected to be the medium of education. Courses to introduce computer and the Internet skills; study skills courses; introductions to disciplines courses; career education courses; and social skills development courses are expected to be essential components of education in the e-world. On a final note, education needs to engage learners in activities and curricula for learning to know, work, share, and are. Therefore, the curriculum expected to be engineered for the information age in the Arab world is one that relies on and is implemented through the IT available. It is one that integrates all possible ways to develop in the human being all aspects of personality, with cognitive development as being only one part of the process.

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Secondary School Students' Attitudes to Social Studies: A Case Study

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This paper describes research into high school students' attitudes to social studies. The research took the form of a case study of Year 9 students at a Western Australian government (public) high school. The aim was to obtain information about the students' attitudes to social studies and the factors that influenced these attitudes, and to determine whether gender influenced attitudes. The research design incorporated a survey questionnaire and a focus group discussion. The findings from the study indicated that social studies had low status among Year 9 students at the case study school for reasons that appeared to be associated with the teacher-centred pedagogy. As well, there were differences in attitudes to social studies among girls and boys; the former had a more positive attitude to school and to most school subjects, including social studies, than did the boys. The findings offer an informative foundation for further research.

Introduction

This study had two purposes: to ascertain the status of social studies among Year 9 students at a metropolitan government high school in Western Australia and to identify factors that influenced the attitudes of these students to social studies. Specifically, it sought to determine whether or not students' gender affected their attitudes.

While research into student attitudes to social studies has been common in the United States, few studies have been undertaken in

Australian schools before that of Moroz (1996). Moroz investigated the attitudes of government primary school students and found that, in a list of thirteen subjects, social studies ranked lower than all subjects except religious education. The low status of social studies was attributed to the way it was delivered and the “uninteresting and irrelevant topics” (p.2). Studies in the United States had reached similar conclusions in relation to students at all year levels. Social studies was frequently shown to be the least-liked subject at both elementary school and high school (Fernandez, Massey & Dornbusch, 1976; Goodlad, 1984; Pahl, 1994; Schug, Todd & Beery, 1984; Shaugnessy & Haladyna, 1985).

One concern found to be associated with the low status of social studies is gender difference in attitudes, although research findings about this are contradictory. Fraser (1981), Fouts (1989), and Moroz and Baker (1997) all found those females were more positive than males about social studies. Yet McTeer et al. (1975) reported that boys tended to like social studies more than did girls, and Haladyna and Thomas (1979) and Moroz and Washbourne (1989) reported no significant differences in attitudes based on gender.

The issue of students’ perception of social studies is important in Western Australia as a new curriculum is being implemented in all schools. Following the Commonwealth Government’s initiatives in developing a national curriculum in the early 1990s and the identification of eight key learning areas, including social studies (known as ‘Society and Environment’), the Curriculum Council of Western Australia (1998) produced a *Curriculum Framework*, which all schools in the State now follow. Unlike previous social studies documents, the *Framework* has a K-12 approach, is based on student outcomes, and emphasizes the importance of positive student attitudes to the achievement of satisfactory outcomes.

The research methodology

The theoretical basis for this research was a model proposed by Haladyna, Shaughnessy and Redsun (1982), who suggested that student attitudes to social studies were determined by three sets of interrelated variables: student, teacher, and learning environment. It was the student variable that was of greatest concern in this study. To identify and explore the attitudes of students to social studies, the research design employed quantitative and qualitative techniques, using a questionnaire survey to identify the attitudes of students, followed by a focus group discussion.

The population for the survey sample consisted of all Year 9 students from one metropolitan government (public) high school in Western Australia. A government school was chosen in preference to a Catholic or independent school since the latter often have single-gender student populations and, unlike government schools, are selective in their enrolments (Moroz, 1996). Government high schools account for about two-thirds of all full-time high school students. Year 9 was targeted because by then students are well established in their high school education. The school in this study had ten Year 9 social studies classes with 320 students aged 13 to 14 years. Six classes participated in the study and all students in class on the day of the survey were included in the group of 144 who completed the questionnaire. The six teachers of the participating classes had taught for between eight and 26 years and all taught lower high school social studies. Of the 144 students who completed the survey, 69 (47.9%) were female and 75 (52.1%) male. From this larger group a small number were selected to participate in the follow up focus group session. This group consisted of twelve students selected at random from the class enrolment lists (two from each class)

The questionnaire, *Secondary School Student Attitudes Toward Social Studies (SSATSS)*, incorporated a five-point Likert-type attitude scale with 94 items. The first three questions obtained student demographic information, while the remaining parts addressed five different aspects: classroom environment, instructional practices, social studies in comparison with other

school subjects, “liking” for social studies, and two stand-alone items.

The focus group technique was selected for use as a follow up to the survey, after consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of individual and group interviews (see Krueger, 1996). A series of predetermined questions served to guide the discussion during this focus group session:

- What do you like about social studies (and why)?
- What don't you like about social studies (and why)?
- How relevant is social studies to your anticipated future career?
- If you had any advice to offer your social studies teacher now, what would it be?

Data analysis

The computer package *Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences* (1997) was used to analyse the survey data. The statistical tests employed were the “one-way” Analysis of Variance test (ANOVA), Wilkes’s Lambda General Linear Model, descriptive statistics, and standardised alpha coefficients.

Findings

Responses to the SSATSS items were sorted according to the different sections in the survey. The key findings from each section are summarized here.

Classroom Environment

The 46 items in the “Classroom environment” section were grouped around nine constructs, each with five items. Responses were to a scale ranging from “strongly agree” (5), to “neither agree

or disagree” (3), to “strongly disagree” (10). The nine constructs were:

- Attitudes to school
- Attitudes to social studies
- Classroom environment
- Classroom management
- Parental support for social studies
- Perceived teacher attitudes to social studies
- Perceived teacher attitudes to students
- Perception of own ability
- Usefulness of social studies

As shown in Table 1, the nine constructs all reported good standard alpha coefficients, indicating they were valid (Burns, 1997). Each construct was considered positively by the respondents, with means between 3.06 and 3.52.

Students viewed “Classroom management” and “Perceived teacher attitudes to students” most positively, with means above 3.50. They were least favourable toward “Attitudes to social studies” ($m = 3.06$) and “Classroom environment” ($m = 3.08$).

TABLE 1: DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSES TO CONSTRUCTS BASED ON STUDENTS' GENDER

Constructs	All		Female		Male		Sig.
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
Attitudes to school	3.34	0.41	3.49	0.89	3.20	1.06	**
Attitudes to social studies	3.08	0.21	3.14	0.84	3.02	1.01	NS
Classroom environment	3.06	0.28	3.05	0.93	3.06	0.96	***
Classroom management	3.52	0.26	3.50	0.86	3.54	1.02	NS
Parental support for social studies	3.39	0.10	3.41	0.88	3.36	1.10	NS
Perceived teacher attitudes to social studies	3.48	0.27	3.49	0.83	3.47	0.90	NS
Perceived teacher attitudes to students	3.51	0.42	3.49	0.86	3.53	0.98	NS
Perception of own ability	3.45	0.71	3.46	0.89	3.43	1.08	NS
Usefulness of social studies	3.29	0.33	3.33	0.82	3.26	1.05	NS

n = 144 students: 69 females; 75 males
 Scale: 5 = Strongly agree, 3 = Unsure, 1 = Strongly disagree
 M = Mean SD = Standard Deviation
 Sig. = level of significance where * = 0.05, ** = 0.01, *** = 0.001.
 NS = no significant differences

Gender differences were explored across constructs and items using ANOVA and Wilkes's Lambda General Linear Model. Significant differences between gender groups were found for only two constructs: "Attitudes to school", for which females were more positive, and "Classroom environment", for which males were

more positive. Females viewed two-thirds of the constructs more positively than males.

Post-hoc testing, carried out using Wilkes’s Lambda GLM, indicated that the construct “Attitudes to school” contained three items with significant differences: “I am happy to come to this school,” “I like school,” and “We have good rules in our school,” with females viewing items more positively than males. “Classroom environment” contained two items: “In social studies lessons the students work together,” and “In social studies, I try to get a higher mark than my friends,” for which males were significantly more positive.

Instructional practices in social studies lessons

This section of the survey asked students to indicate the frequency of their participation in 28 instructional practices in social studies lessons. The scale ranged from “at least once a week” (5) to “hardly ever” (1).

As seen in Table 2, the most common activities undertaken in social studies were traditional and teacher centred: textbook work (81.1% undertook this at least every two weeks), homework (78.8%), copying from the blackboard (72.9%), whole class discussions (65.7%) and reading (62.6%).

TABLE2: FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION IN INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

Percentages of total students

At least once a week	Every two weeks	Once a month	Once a term	Hardly ever	5+4
5	4	3	2	1	5+4

How often do you have each of the following:

Text book work	51.3	30.5	11.8	2.0	4.1	81.8
Homework	63.3	15.4	9.1	4.2	7.7	78.8
Copying from the blackboard	50.0	22.9	12.5	8.3	6.2	72.9
Whole class discussions	48.9	16.7	16.7	10.4	6.9	65.7
Reading	38.0	24.6	14.7	11.9	10.5	62.6
Atlas work	8.3	38.1	25.0	22.9	5.5	46.4
Map work	12.5	32.6	37.5	13.1	4.1	45.1
Graphs	11.1	31.9	38.8	13.1	4.8	43.0
Research	13.9	23.0	27.2	27.2	8.3	36.9
Pictures and diagrams	6.9	25.1	34.2	16.0	17.4	32.0
Tables (not math tables)	4.8	20.9	37.7	23.7	12.5	25.7
Tests	2.0	20.9	62.9	12.5	1.3	22.9
Reading aloud to class	5.5	16.0	25.1	20.9	32.1	21.5
Problem solving	4.8	11.1	14.6	15.3	53.8	15.9
Social studies projects	3.4	12.5	36.8	29.1	16.6	15.9
Films	3.5	11.9	12.6	23.2	48.5	15.4
Current events (News)	2.7	12.5	20.2	25.1	39.1	15.2
Video or TV programs	2.7	9.7	20.9	30.7	35.6	12.4
Essays (a page of writing)	3.4	6.9	42.3	45.1	2.0	10.3
Library	0.6	9.1	37.0	48.2	4.8	9.7
Colouring-in	1.3	8.3	17.4	18.1	54.5	9.6
Tracing	1.3	6.2	16.7	13.2	62.2	7.5
Small group activities	2.7	4.8	24.3	36.1	31.9	7.5
Computer activities	2.1	0	2.8	4.2	90.7	2.1

Role-plays (acting)	1.4	0.7	4.9	7.0	85.9	2.1
Newspaper activities	0	2.0	1.3	51.0	46.1	2.0
Guest speakers	0.7	0.7	0.7	19.0	78.8	1.4
Excursions	1.4	0	0.7	15.4	82.3	1.4

Due to rounding, row totals may not sum to 100%.
 Note: items have been ranked on the basis of the two most frequent categories (5+4).

Status of social studies in comparison to other subjects

This section asked students how much they liked social studies by comparison with twelve other subjects on a scale ranging from “like a lot” (5) to “dislike a lot” (1).

As seen in Table 3, Social studies, with a negative mean of 2.90, was perceived much less favourably than most other learning areas, being ranked twelfth in the list, and last among the traditional core subjects of English, Mathematics, and Science. Females ranked social studies positively (mean 3.09), above Mathematics and Science but below English, while males ranked it negatively (mean 2.72), thirteenth out of fourteen subjects. Females were significantly more positive than males about most school subjects. Design and technology, science, computing and music were the only subjects considered more positively by males, reinforcing conventional gender stereotypes.

TABLE 3: DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDES TO SOCIAL STUDIES AND OTHER SUBJECTS BASED ON STUDENT GENDER

Subject	All			Female			Male			Sig.
	R	M	SD	R	M	SD	R	M	SD	
				6						
				4						
				0						

	R									
Art	4	3.86	1.46	2	4.32	1.23	6	3.48	1.53	**
Computing	8	3.32	1.33	13	2.84	1.12	4	3.62	1.37	**
Design/Technology	5	3.86	1.13	7	3.59	1.16	1	3.97	1.10	NS
Drama	6	3.72	1.40	3	4.28	1.05	9	3.16	1.48	***
English	7	3.54	1.19	6	3.78	1.06	8	3.32	1.26	**
Health	14	2.60	1.16	12	2.96	1.09	14	2.25	1.13	***
Home Economics	3	3.93	1.16	1	4.37	0.83	7	3.38	1.29	***
Mathematics	11	2.92	1.24	10	3.04	1.24	12	2.81	1.23	NS
Media Studies	10	3.11	1.34	8	3.29	1.26	10	3.00	1.39	NS
Music	13	2.73	1.42	14	2.52	1.50	11	2.90	1.35	NS
Photography	1	4.10	1.16	4	4.28	1.03	2	3.88	1.28	NS
Science	9	3.24	1.19	11	2.97	1.16	5	3.49	1.17	**
Social Studies	12	2.90	1.17	9	3.09	1.15	13	2.72	1.17	NS

R = Rank M = Mean SD = StandardDeviation
 Sig. = level of significance where * = 0.05, ** = 0.01, *** = 0.001.
 NS = no significant differences

Students’ liking for social studies

Students were asked in this section to rank how much they liked social studies according to five response options. Fifty-two percent responded that “social studies is okay,” with 31.3% indicating a more positive view. Males were more negative, with 35.1% of respondents either “not liking it” or “not liking anything about it” compared with 27.9% of females.

Students’ likes and dislikes

Two open-ended questions in the survey referred to students’ likes and dislikes in social studies. The responses were grouped

into five categories: Instructional practice; Content; Skills; Teacher; and Other.

Students identified 44 aspects of social studies that they liked. Most frequently mentioned were instructional practices such as videos/movies (26), group activities (19), and class discussions (12). Forty-five percent of students indicated that working with friends in class was important. As one student said: "*Social studies is interesting and fun sometimes, but only when we work in groups or with our friends.*"

Students also identified fifty aspects that they disliked, of which twenty related to instructional practices, including assessment and copying from the blackboard. Twenty-seven students claimed that social studies was "boring." One explained that: "Social studies is boring because all you seem to do is board work and homework, just work, work, work!"

Focus group interviews

Female students indicated that what they liked about social studies included "Group discussions," as well as "Excursions and guest speakers and role-plays...they are heaps of fun." Male students reported liking different aspects. One male stated that: "You get to...learn about the rest of the world...what's going on..." while another stated that "It's better than maths... because in maths you have to think."

What students said they disliked included:

- "...too much homework...all the same sort of thing..."
- "the way they keep giving you worksheets with articles...all the time"
- "always doing questions and answers out of a book. I really don't like my teacher either."

When asked about the relevance of social studies to their future careers, students commented more frequently on how important they thought it would be to their lives in general. As one commented: “You pick up a lot of good general knowledge.”

When asked to reflect on the teaching strategies their teachers used and to offer suggestions, students’ comments reflected their desire for specific strategies: “Teachers should allow students to work with peers more often so they can have the opportunity of learning from one another;” and “More ‘hands-on’ activities should be done to stop us from getting bored.”

Discussion and Conclusion

The key findings from this study revealed first that for the 144 students in this study, social studies was one of the least-liked subjects. This supports previous research findings about students’ attitudes in the United States (Haladyna and Thomas, 1979; Pahl, 1994; Shaughnessy and Haladyna, 1985), and in primary schools in Western Australia (Moroz, 1996; 1997). The negative attitudes in this study raise particular concerns about these students’ learning in social studies, given that the Curriculum Framework (1998) in Australia emphasises the importance of positive student attitudes to the achievement of satisfactory outcomes. What emerged from this study were insights into possible causes for the low status of social studies. Unlike the previous research by Moroz and Washbourne (1989), the present study found significant differences in attitude based on gender; female students were more positive than males about most subjects and about social studies, ranking it ninth out of fourteen subjects, compared with the males who ranked it thirteenth. The other finding from this study that is a major concern for social studies educators is the limited range of student-centred instructional practices used by teachers (Haladyna, Shaughnessy, and Redsun, 1982). This study confirmed previous research that had found teacher-centred delivery still common.

Implications from the study

The findings from this study suggest directions for further research and improved practice, involving, for example, the use of cooperative learning. The findings are most significant because of the implications they appear to have for facilitating the change to an outcomes-based approach in the new State curriculum.

While the study shows that that social studies is not well liked by students in Year 9, suggesting that negative attitudes in Year 7 continue into high school (Moroz, 1996), it also suggests a strong gender influence on attitudes. The lower mean ratings for males across almost all-learning areas highlight the need for concern about boy's schooling in general.

Students in this study indicated that they were bored with teacher-centred learning strategies. With the introduction of the Curriculum Framework, social studies instruction in Australia is directed toward becoming student centred and outcomes based. Student feedback in this study supports the need for teachers to consider the appropriateness of their current delivery strategies.

An alternate view

While findings from the school in this study suggest that the social studies learning area is not popular among students in government schools, the situation is not irretrievable, as one of the authors of this paper demonstrates in this account of student attitudes at another school in Australia.

Yule Brook College is a middle school (grade 8 to 10) in Western Australia. The approach at this school centers on strong pastoral care with a student-centred and outcomes-based pedagogy. The teaching staff is selected on merit, rather than being appointed by the central office of the Department of Education as are most high school teachers. There are four learning teams, each with four specialist teachers. The Year 8 Team caters for the special needs of its students with both a Boys Program and a Girls Program. The male teachers and aims both to give the boys a sense of self worth and develop their self-confidence run the former. Activities in 2001 included a camp, games, hiking, and self-esteem and confidence-

building activities. The girls' program is conducted by the female teachers and has involved such activities as deportment, games and self-esteem and confidence-building activities. On the school grounds each learning area had been revamped and had four sections with glass walls to break down the barriers between the classes, as well as a computer laboratory with 30 new computers. Across all the lessons, teachers incorporated many student-centred activities.

In 2001, year 10 students at Yule Brook College were asked what they liked and disliked about social studies. A selection of their responses follows:

- "We're always doing something different. One day it's a video and taking notes...then on the computers"
- "We did this really cool debate, and some people were Osaka Bin Laden and others were Bush and peacekeepers... we took our desks and chairs and went outside to do it...good for a change"
- "We made board games based on the terrorist attacks instead of just reading about it all the time"
- "The Hillside Farm visit was good/better than being stuck at school"
- "Given the choice of using the computers to research and present our work"
- "The teachers are friendly...can relate to us...they're really interested in what we say"
- "They make boring topics like government more meaningful by having guest speakers and mock elections. It was ok then"
- "We get to work in groups and pairs often and I like that"

- “The teachers are genuine in their passion...and try hard to make us like it...I like it”
- “The teachers are all young and can relate to us”
- “We use the computers too much”
- “The topics were too similar”

These sample responses stand in contrast to the responses of students in the present study. This suggests that school organisation and pedagogy are indeed critical factors in the development of positive attitudes to social studies. It appears that the content of this learning area can fail to engage students because of the way in which it is taught in schools. The strategies employed at Yule Brook College serve as a model that other schools could work to incorporate into their programs.

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Addressing Interns' Concerns During the Extended-Practicum

Edwin G. Ralph

This study examined teacher-interns' concerns about the extended-practicum, both before and after their completion of the 16-week program. All of them reported that a portion of their initial apprehensions were alleviated by the end of the internship; but nearly all of them also expressed that some anxieties remained—and that some new ones had emerged. They all reported having developed specific professional skills during the internship. Evidence supporting some of Fuller and Bown's (1975) three-stage concern theory was found.

Implications of these findings are drawn for enhancing the effectiveness of extended-practicum programs.

Introduction

A purpose of extended-practicum programs in teacher education has been to provide opportunities for neophyte teachers to experience the reality of day-to-day school life as they begin to build their professional teaching repertoire for their future career (Beynon, Geddis, & Onslow, 2001; Housego, 1992).

Educational reformers have critically appraised the effectiveness of practicum programs (Dalzell, 1997). Further, these programs have produced a variety of results (Churukian, Kissock, & Lock, 1995). However, one finding that has been substantiated, is that effective practicum programs facilitate the passage of beginning teachers through the transition-period between being a

pre-service student of teaching to being an inductee into the profession (Ralph, 1994a).

One measure of how effective an extended-practicum program meets this objective would be to ascertain to what extent it helps to alleviate the personal and professional apprehensions (and to reduce the anxieties) about the practicum that pre-service teachers experience.

The purpose of this study was to examine teacher-interns' expressed concerns about the internship, both before and after their extended-practicum experience, and to draw implications from these findings for improving supervision in extended-practicum programs.

Background

A review of the pertinent literature regarding the concerns of novice teachers, including the early work of Fuller and Bown (1975), indicates a range of results. On the one hand, some researchers have suggested that teachers pass through a linear progression of developmental stages en route to their achievement of professional expertise (Fuller & Bown, 1975; Nyquist & Wulff, 1996).

Borich and his colleagues (Borich, 2000; Rogan, Borich, & Taylor, 1992; Rutherford & Hall, 1990) extended, refined, and validated Fuller's original research and found that: (a) student teachers typically show a shift of concern from "self" to "task" and to "impact" (i.e., student-centered aims); (b) this developmental growth pattern varies with individual teachers: some move more quickly through the stages than others; and (c) teachers could exhibit concerns from multiple stages at the same time, depending on the particular teaching situation(s).

On the other hand, some researchers have shown that neophyte teachers are not necessarily characterised by a strict passage through these hierarchical stages (Housego, 1992; Sandlin, Young, & Karge, 1992-1993). Furthermore, professionals at any age or

stage may exhibit a range of attributes in a variety of developmental stages depending on the context of their unique situations (Smith & Sanche, 1992, 1993).

Thus, a more realistic perspective seems to be one that conceptualises beginning teachers' professional development as an individual path that may reflect a *general* pattern toward increased professional autonomy, but that also allows for *specific* and contextual differences according to the individual's personality, life experience, and immediate context (Valli, 1993).

In a study of the apprehensions reported by groups of teacher-interns from the University of Saskatchewan, Smith and Sanche (1992, 1993) found that these beginning teachers changed in their concerns during the 16-month internship. Initially, the interns expressed apprehension about survival and "self" concerns, but this concern gradually subsided throughout the internship. However, the researchers also noted that at any given time during the practicum some degree of all three levels of concern were evident among all the teacher-interns: overlapping of these concern stages was present.

Procedure

In the present study, I as the College Supervisor of six cohorts of teacher-interns and their Classroom Co-operating Teachers (CCT), requested the interns to report their anxieties about teaching both before and after their internship experiences.

Subjects

Six of the cohorts of teacher-interns that I supervised from 1996 to 2000 were representative of the graduates from the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan in terms of: gender, age, subject/major preparation, grade/subject/school placement, and urban/rural/school-type internship location.

Surveys

Each teacher-intern in the six cohorts completed a pre- and a post-internship survey. The first survey consisted of one open-ended question requesting them to indicate any anxieties they had about their up-coming extended-practicum. For the post-survey the interns answered the following four questions:

- Refer back to your "pre-internship" concerns. What anxieties were alleviated?
- What concerns do you still have?
- Which, if any, have arisen during the internship?
- What strengths have you developed during the past four months?

Data Interpretation

I collated the pre- and post-practicum responses and analysed the data employing both qualitative and quantitative approaches. I used the constant comparison technique of analytic induction, whereby I systematically classified and re-classified the responses into emerging categories that yielded common patterns and themes (see, for example Best & Kahn, 1998). For the quantitative aspect, I calculated simple tallies and percentages of the subjects' responses in each of the categories (Anderson & Burns, 1989).

After compiling the findings that are displayed in Tables 1 through 3, I compared the results with those found in previous related research. I also drew inferences not only for enhancing supervisory practice in the extended-practicum program investigated here, but also for informing other institutions seeking to improve their practicum initiatives (Donmoyer, 1990).

Results

Not surprisingly, a clear finding was that *all* respondents reported experiencing initial apprehension in some form about certain facets of the internship. Likewise, *all* subjects reported that

most of their early anxieties were alleviated as the practicum progressed, but that some new concerns emerged. The results are presented below.

General Findings

Although a certain degree of anxiety about one's future performance in an unknown situation is normal, and even healthy to some extent (Buskist & Gerbing, 1990), it would be unrealistic to expect pre- service teacher education, no matter how effective it is purported to be, to prevent such anxieties from arising. A critical principle is that the supervisory practices during the practicum period should not merely seek to prevent dissonance from arising among teacher-interns, but that it should assist them to deal constructively with their concerns (Housego, 1994).

A second general finding from the present study was that *all* of the interns indicated that many of their initial anxieties had been alleviated during the period of the 4-month internship. However, a majority of the interns also expressed that they had one or more lingering concerns, although they stated that most of these later anxieties did not seem as pressing as those that they reported at the beginning.

Third, all teacher-interns reported having gained positive personal results from their practicum experience. Each respondent identified two or more areas of professional strength.

Specific Findings

Initial concerns. In Table 1, I present the areas of concern identified by interns prior to the internship. In terms of the Fuller stages, five of the categories related to their concerns about "self" (i.e., #2, maintaining positive relationships, #6, adjusting to a new setting; #7, overcoming feelings of inadequacy; #8, meeting financial commitments; and #10, locating suitable accommodations).

Table 1: Teacher-interns' Reported Concerns Before Their Extended-Practicum (N=48)

Initial concerns	Percent of respondents
1. Effective implementation of instructional skills	83
2. Positive relationship with supervisor	52
3. Effective classroom management/student discipline	50
4. Appropriate management/organisation of time	48
5. Mastery of content-knowledge/subject matter	48
6. Adjusting to new situation/unfamiliar community	40
7. Overcoming feelings of inadequacy/failure	21
8. Meeting financial obligations/securing personal funds	10
9. Dealing with pupils' parents/conflicts	4
10. Finding accommodation/housing	4
11. Learning pupils' names quickly	2
12. Meeting needs of exceptional pupils	2

Note. All respondents reported two or more of these concerns one week prior to the beginning of the internship.

Five categories related to "task" concerns and interns' desire to perform well in their instructional role (i.e., #1, effective teaching skills; #3, good classroom management; #4, managing time appropriately; #5, mastering their subject-matter content; and #9, communicating well with parents).

Two of the twelve categories were related to the third stage, learner or impact concerns (i.e., #11, learning and using their names quickly; and #12, meeting the needs of exceptional students).

Thus, contrary to proponents of a strictly linear stages-of-concern theory, the teacher-interns' responses demonstrated their commitment to the entire range of considerations from all three stages. All respondents reported being anxious about two or more of the issues shown in the listed categories, and this list is not unlike those reported in previous research (Housego, 1992, 1994; Wilson, Ireton, & Wood, 1997).

All teacher-interns in the present study indicated that many of their initially identified fears had been reduced by the end of the practicum, and yet many of them reported that certain anxieties still remained at the conclusion.

Lingering concerns. In Table 2, 71% of the interns reported a lingering concern with some facet(s) of their performance or the practicum-program. The individual responses in this category were linked to "self," "task," and "learning" concerns. The existence of these "lingering anxieties" did not suggest that interns failed to develop their teaching skills, nor that the practicum program did not promote their professional growth, but rather that these novice teachers were beginning to demonstrate the marks of professional and reflective practitioners (McGown et al., 1999). Their comments suggested that they were cognisant of their strengths and limitations, and that they were attending to meeting pupils' individual needs.

A further comparison of the values in Tables 1 and 2 show that for eleven of the twelve initial categories, the respondents registered a decline in their level of anxiety by the end of the practicum. In fact, for three items (i.e., organising time, finding accommodations, and learning pupils' names) that were initially identified as concerns by many of the teacher-interns, were not even registered by interns in the post-survey.

Table 2: Teacher-interns' Lingering Concerns at the Completion of Their Extended-Practicum (N=47)

Later concerns	Percent of respondents
1. Effective implementation of instructional skills	71
2. Effective classroom management/student discipline	40
3. Mastery of content-knowledge/subject-matter	17
4. Positive relationship with supervisors	15
5. Adjusting to new situation/unfamiliar community	10
6. Meeting financial obligations/securing personal funds	6
7. Appropriate evaluation of pupils' performance	6
8. Overcoming feelings of inadequacy/failure	4
9. Ensuring pupils' self-discipline	2
10. Meeting needs of exceptional pupils	2
11. Dealing with pupils' parents	2

Note. All respondents reported the alleviation of some of their initial concerns, but that certain anxieties remained (or, that new ones arose during the extended-practicum).

"New" anxieties. With respect to respondents' *new* anxieties that they reported arising during the practicum, two additional categories emerged. For instance, 6% of the interns expressed concerns that they needed to increase their knowledge and skills in

evaluating pupils' work. Also, two percent of respondents indicated that they wanted to move beyond being "good at classroom management" to helping pupils to become personally "self-disciplined so that the teacher wouldn't have to constantly monitor their behaviour—the kids would control themselves." The latter category demonstrates the highest level in the three-stage concern model postulated by researchers (Borich, 2000; Fuller & Bown, 1975).

Strengths. In Table 3, I present respondents' self-reported teaching strengths.

Table 3: Teacher-interns' Self-Reported Teaching Strengths at the Completion of Their Extended- Practicum (N=47)

Strengths	Percent of respondents
1. Pedagogical/instructional methods	75
2. Communication/human-relations skills	75
3. Instructional planning/preparation	63
4. Classroom management	56
5. Oral-questioning/responding/discussion	19
6. Evaluating pupil progress	13
7. Working with special-needs pupils	2

Note. All respondents reported two or more of these professional competencies.

Three quarters of the interns expressed satisfaction with the development of their basic instructional and their communication skills, and in their demonstrated ability to establish and maintain a positive rapport with their CCTs, colleagues, and students.

Sixty-three percent of the interns specifically identified their growth in planning skills (lessons, or units, or both), which is a critical area of teaching competence emphasised both in their campus-based courses and in the inservice sessions of the extended-practicum program (University of Saskatchewan, 2000-2001).

Fifty-six percent of the respondents saw themselves as strong in classroom management, with fewer registering strengths in oral questioning, pupil evaluation skills, and working with special needs pupils. Interestingly, this data corroborate previous research (Housego, 1994; Kohn, 1996; McCown et al., 1999; Meadows, 1994; Ralph, 1994b. Similar to my study, previous research has found that effective classroom management is a chronic concern for many educators at all levels, as well as for parents and other taxpayers; and that it is not an easy skill for teachers to master. Research has also found that effective oral questioning is related to good classroom management and beginning teachers lack skills in effectively evaluating pupils' performance. Thus teacher-education institutions need to address more effectively these three lesser-ranked skills within their pre-service and/or practicum programs.

A Synthesis of the Findings

A synthesis of the above findings confirms the results from previous research both in the area of differences between expert and novice teachers (Berliner, 1986; Shulman, 1987), and of the stages or levels of teachers' professional development (Borich, 2000; Valli, 1993). The bulk of the interns' concerns were either at the "self" stages or at the "task" level.

Discussion and Implications

To make blanket generalisations from these specific findings to extended-practicum programs in other teacher-education institutions is not only unwise but untenable (Donmoyer, 1990; Schofield, 1990)). However, what can be done is for interested individuals to look for "transferability" and "fittingness" or similarity between two contexts, rather than for strict statistical

probabilities leading to verification of a priori hypotheses (Schofield, 1990). In the light of this type of "comparability" or "translatability," I draw three implications from the present study for the improvement of the practicum- program in which I work. However, I also invite organisers and operators of other similar programs to examine the results in order to help speak to or to inform their judgements about their own future program- and policy-decisions.

One implication emerging from this study of the concerns of novice teachers is that neophytes' professional development needs to be facilitated individually and contextually. A mentorship approach that I developed and am continuing to refine, as I apply it in my role as an extended-practicum supervisor, is Contextual Supervision (Ralph, 1993, 1996, 2000). Although Contextual Supervision (CS) permits mentors to recognise that beginning teachers may pass through *general* stages of professional and personal anxieties, it requires supervisors to accept individuals at whatever developmental level they are, and to assist them to grow in their professional confidence and competence from that point (Ralph, 2000). Thus, a key insight is not to deny or prevent protégés' concerns from arising, but to assist them to work through these difficulties. The CS model has proven useful in this task (Ralph, 1993, 1996, 1998, 2000). Space limitations do not permit a discussion of the CS model, but interested readers may consult the references, here, to study it further.

A second related implication I draw from this study is one also addressed by the CS model. This implication is that supervisors who tend to mentor using only one leadership style, rather than to adjust their supervisory style to meet the specific needs of their protégés, will often encounter frustration and resistance in the supervisory relationship. A critical aspect of the CS approach—as also born out in this study—is for those in the mentoring role to initiate and maintain positive communication with and support for the intern throughout the practicum period. The extent to which this "human" dimension is applied however, must also be variable, and needs to be reciprocally administered by the supervisor

according to the confidence level of the supervisee in performing task-specific skills (Ralph, 2000). As the supervisor adjusts in inverse amounts his/her degree of supportive response according to the level of the supervisee's confidence then the supervisor will help the protégé to reduce or eliminate the concerns that inevitably emerge during the internship. For example, low intern confidence must be met by high mentor support).

A third inference that I draw from the data in this study is that continued work needs to be done by the extended-practicum program personnel to assist teacher-interns to improve continually their skills in the areas of classroom management, instructional methodologies, evaluating pupils' progress, and anticipating future events.

Although most teachers generally move through a developmental growth pattern over their careers, and eventually reach the learner-centred level in their professional commitment, this path is unique for each individual. Some teachers may advance more quickly and with different degrees of intensity than others; they may return to lower stages of concern when encountering unfamiliar professional situations; and they may simultaneously experience multiple levels of concern for various areas of the teaching/learning process (Borich, 2000). Nevertheless, the ultimate goal for those in the mentoring role is to deal sensitively and sensibly with their protégés' needs, in order to help them " . . . to structure their own self-improvement plans . . ." (Good & Brophy, 2000, p. 506). By doing so, mentors will help novices on their way to becoming effective and exemplary professionals.

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Future scenarios in the context of global and local dynamics

Jesus Maria Sousa

Schooling nowadays experiences the dilemma between two forces: on the one hand, a trend towards a global homogenisation which brings people and countries closer than ever, and on the other hand, the affirmation of what is specific and particular. This tension obviously has implications on curriculum decision-making: are we concerned with the education of the citizen for a globally patterned culture or for a particular cultural identity? Or why aren't we concerned with both?

This paper invites teachers to be actively aware of these trends and anticipate them by using a technique called "Scenario Planning." Four different possible scenarios are drawn on which Manuel, a fourteen-year old Portuguese student, will appear.

Introduction: Global and Local Dynamics

According to some contemporary curriculum theorists (Apple, 1990, 1999; Beyer & Liston, 1996; Moreira & Silva, 1995; Pinar, 1975; Silva, 2000), the curriculum is not politically neutral. "There is an increasing accumulation of evidence that the institution of schooling itself is not a neutral enterprise in terms of its economic outcomes. ... they (schools) also seem to act as powerful agents in the economic and cultural reproduction of class relations in a stratified society like our own" (Apple, 1990, p. 8). The issues of "How to teach" and "What to teach" are strategically linked to "Teach for what," that is to say, to the political intentions of socialisation and development. How

can this overall principle be affected by two different trends we're living at the present time, each one of them pulling us towards opposite directions? This is the problem the tension between global and local dynamics presents to the education in general. Let's see how.

We are living at a time of accelerated technological change particularly at the level of information and communication. The new technologies have opened up virtual routes across the world giving a new order to the Global Village. From the point of view of someone living in Portugal, I can say I'm witnessing the welcoming of European Union to new countries and the use of a unique European currency, the Euro, since January 1, 2002. It's obvious this political and economic measure intends to make us members of a community greater than our particular country. And this feeling of belonging to a major structure doesn't only concern the European Union: foreign investment pours into our countries along with McDonald's, Hollywood movies and CNN real-time global news if we speak of American pressure on day-to-day life.

But at the same time this sort of globalisation has brought people and countries closer than ever, it has shown us, and in a very cruel way, the tremendous differences among them. (UNDP, 2000). "More than a quarter of the 4.5 billion people in developing countries still do not have some of life's most basic choices – survival beyond age 40, access to knowledge and minimum private and public services. Nearly 1.3 billion people do not have access to clean water and one in seven child of primary school age is out of school. About 840 million are malnourished. An estimated 1,3 billion people live on incomes of less than \$1 (US\$) a day" (UNDP, 1999, p. 28).

The previous well ordered East-West division, which characterised the political cold war reality, is now substituted by another sort of division, a much more complex one determined by cultural, ethnic and religious matters. That's why I think that parallel to the global dynamics, there's another contrary trend strongly affirming specific spaces where common lives,

experiences and stories are shared, giving birth to a certain identity. If it is true that migrating waves of population contributed to globalisation, it is also true that they stressed the colours of the differences on the planet's cultural mosaic.

People travel much more today than ever before. And we don't travel only for reasons of tourism. Migration in search of better living standards, flight from war and political persecution, homeward return of colonisers from new independent countries or natural disasters, mobility of students and researchers from one country to another are increasingly contributing to cultural diversity in what would previously have been more homogeneous spaces. Australia, Canada and the United States have adopted programmes, which seek to attract skilled migrants thereby contributing to a brain drain from developing countries. As many 30,000 African PhDs now live abroad (UNDP, 1999).

Geographical and cultural spaces are nowadays affirming themselves in searching for an autonomy that allows them to solve their own specific problems in a more rapid and efficient way. New countries were born by the dismemberment of others, side by side with many others that, although not independent or autonomous yet, are laying claim to the recognition of their own specificity and particularity (may be their "tribalization").

Whereas the dominant politics in the past tended to limit and suppress diversity in the interest of maintaining a supposed "commonality." in more recent years we have witnessed a certain tone of acceptance and even an encouragement of "being different."

How can this sort of analysis acknowledging the tension between the global and the local dynamics be of significance to education in general and to teaching in particular? How can the dilemma facing societies in terms of globalisation and/or identity affirmation affect the individual school? And how does this dilemma become the dilemma of the Curriculum?

Projection into the future with the scenario planning

In my opinion, dealing with the future has to be a routine for those who are educators and particularly those who make decisions on Curriculum. As a matter of fact, educational problems have to be placed in terms of next generations: which sort of citizens do we want in order to shape the society of tomorrow?

Making use of "Scenario planning" (Dutch Central Planning Bureau, 1992; GBN, 1998; Schwartz, 1991; Wilkinson, 1995), we can practise our thinking strategically about future. It's a methodology used by large organisations and industries to face great structural change which carry uncertainty in order to avoid, or at least minimise, eventual risks.

The scenarios are actually short stories about possible futures, which use creativity, insight and intuition to establish a foundation for robust and flexible strategies. A good scenario is not necessarily the one that portrays the future accurately but the one that exposes our minds to diverse and challenging ideas and perspectives and makes us explore emerging issues. "Scenario planning derives from the observation that, given the impossibility of knowing precisely how the future will play out, a good decision or strategy to adopt is one that plays out well across several possible futures." (Wilkinson, 1995, p. 2). That is why the scenarios presented are plural, each one diverging markedly from the others and modelling a distinct plausible world in which we might someday have to live and work.

Since the scenarios aim to understand the forces shaping the future, what we have to do is to make these forces tangible. So, we have to assemble our uncertainties in the quadrants created by the crossing of two or three axes, as on a matrix. That's what I propose here (Table 1): for the vertical axis, I've chosen the dynamics of Globalisation and Fragmentation; for the horizontal axis, I've adopted Competition and Solidarity as two other driving forces, which pull the future in different directions. The new information technologies are seen as being common to every quadrant, based on recent reports and studies on educational

technology (Assembleia da República, 2002; Bialo & Sivinkachala, 1997).

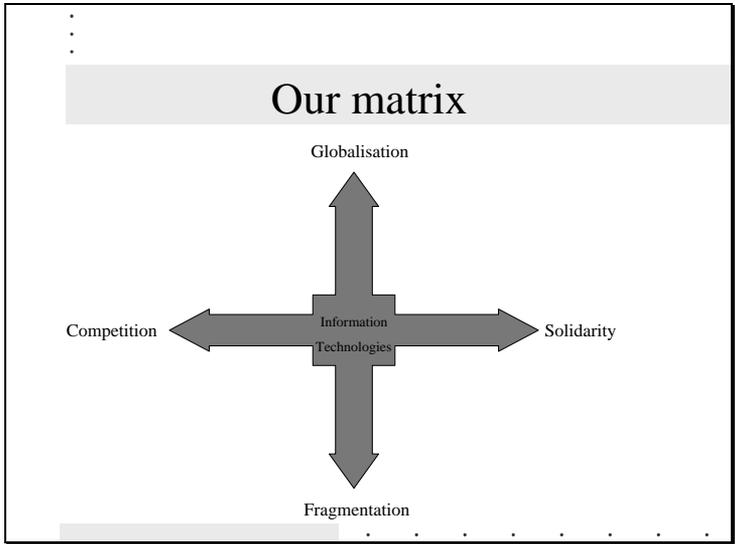


Table 1

Each scenario can be a logical possible future to be explored more (until the idea has been exhausted) or less, according to the work situation and the time available for that. Having this matrix in mind, how will Manuel, a young 14-year-old boy living in Madeira Island, Portugal, spend his days?

A first possible scenario: Globalisation and Competition

Manuel is an adolescent growing up like many others who also go to his school. From his potential learning time, he spends only some 19% of it at school in any year. The remaining 81% of his time are spent in front of a screen, either watching TV, linked to the Internet, or playing video games. His teachers are aware that the starting points for many of his learning processes at school come from the world that surrounds him. The so called "nearest", "familiar" and "concrete" of Manuel and many of his peers' world is what daily comes into their homes through television and the Internet. Contrary to his parents and grand-parents, Manuel's real

cultural roots have been forged less in the interaction with his immediate physical environment, and more in the interaction with the American, Brazilian and Japanese cultures, the languages of which he has been familiar with since the first years of his life.

At school he is expected to have a high performance in terms of creative work, and he is ranked according to the scores he receives. His teachers and his school are also ranked at a national level. It is rumoured that a European Assessment Board will introduce tests of European Competence from next year onwards.

Portuguese lessons do not allow time for the study of Madeiran poets, though Saramago has become a compulsory subject. European history and the study of classical antiquity prevail over the history of Viriato and Sertório. There is no time at all for the study of the Revolts in Madeira. Maths and English are the core disciplines in the curriculum. Students work at home or in neighbourhood centres with online services, video-conferencing, computer conferencing and advanced software.

The traditional division between 'haves' and 'have-nots' has now been transformed into a division between those who use and benefit from the information technologies and those who are technologically illiterate.

A second possible scenario: Globalisation and solidarity

The technology used at Manuel's "school" serves the ideals of an inclusive community by facilitating participatory processes in learning. The classrooms of those "learning centres" are well supplied with teaching resources, information databases, software and telecommunications services. They bear little resemblance to the traditional rooms with a large teacher's desk facing straight rows of desks. Teachers are no longer the fonts of all knowledge and no longer act as the "sage on the stage," but rather perform the functions of the "guide on the side." They are there to facilitate group intellectual work and to make sure that students ask the right questions and have the resources necessary to answer them. Teaching is focused on questions rather than on answers.

Electronic networks create new forms of communities and permit convenient ways of meeting online. Manuel has met wonderful people sharing the same interests, news and events. The concept of community has changed. It doesn't just include physically close neighbours but includes all those with whom Manuel is connected wherever they may be in the world. Manuel's electronic family is characterised by diversity. Unlike earlier communities of immigrants and ethnic enclaves, these electronic communities are diverse and the world seems to have lost all distance. Manuel looks to his electronic friends for information about exotic places, and has already asked for Mexican food recipes for his mother because he loves new tastes. He is a fan of Beethoven and Arabian music.

The curriculum allows space for the myths and histories of other countries and encourages students to understand and respect one another. School councils promote cross-cultural understanding where teachers and parents share the responsibility for setting their overall direction.

A third possible scenario: Fragmentation and competition

As someone flying over an agricultural area might see the greens and yellows and browns of cultivated fields, an aerial perspective on Manuel's town would let us see communities sharply divided by social differences. Africans are divided, as per the earlier Portuguese colonies, into enclaves from Cabo Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe, Guinea, Angola and Mozambique, which, in turn, are further divided into black and white ghettos, or into the religious groupings of Catholics, Methodists and Muslims. Madeirans and Açoreans are located with people from the North of Portugal. Asians are splintered into zones for Chinese, Macaoists, Indians (Hindus and Muslims) and Goans (all of whom are Catholic as a rule). There are residential areas for gays, environmentally concerned citizens and interracial couples. The gypsies haven't settled yet.

Within this scenario the very concept of "public" is, itself, in crisis. There is no public school. Each of the communities has its own school. More than any other institution, the schools symbolise local values and lifestyles. There are Methodist schools, Catholic schools, and Indian schools, schools for the children of ecologically conscious parents... As one would expect, children in Indian schools learn about Indian history alongside Portuguese history. They're taught in Hindi or Gujarati and only occasionally in Portuguese. Part of every day is set aside for meditation. Students learn the story of Hare Krishna and are schooled for the "Om" (perfection) and the "Atman" (knowledge). As with other ethnocentric communities, cultural learning is very important. In this cultural fragmentation, each ethnic group seeks schools and online services that serve their own need best. Everyone gets the training and the education he or she wants when and where he or she wants it. Each community tries to be better than the neighbouring community.

A fourth possible scenario: Fragmentation and solidarity

In the morning Manuel takes the bus together with Mario, Ahmed, Ling-Chung and Rosalie to go to their science school. In the afternoon he attends the music school with some neighbourhood friends: Lourdes, Joshua, Marina and Vítor. In his learning activities he values his own cultural roots without minimising his peers' customs and traditions.

From the 10th year of their education, students may choose which schools they want to attend: some offer help for students with specific learning problems, others give extra training in one or another specialised area. There are schools for foreign language training, schools for music, schools for science, for arts and for sport. Within one school, some students may attend lessons in the morning and evening while others may prefer intensive work in the afternoon. There are also schools that use increasingly sophisticated databases to deliver instruction and counselling to students in their homes, when they are ill or can't go to school for whatever reason. Learning may be provided to individual students

at multiple sites, while many can access the same online resources at the same time.

Manuel's youngest brother meets his grandfather everyday, because elementary school integrates kindergarten and lifelong programs for elderly citizens. Some interesting synergies occur. Adults are a valuable resource to the school community since they can help teachers to provide more individualised instruction to students with learning difficulties. Likewise, students can offer adults help in using new technologies.

Conclusion

I've tried to combine the dynamics of globalisation and fragmentation with those of competition and solidarity. I know I have exaggerated some traits in giving these scenarios a near-caricature quality, but this was done purposely, highlighting some trends already at work in the present. Whether globalisation, fragmentation, competition or solidarity come to dominate, it is too early to say. But my idea with this paper is to stress how important it is for the teachers to be actively aware of existing forces, even when they are not explicit, because "the curriculum is not an innocent and neutral element of uninterested transmission of social knowledge" (Moreira & Silva, 1995, p. 8). If we could add a future dimension to the reflexive attitude I consider vital to the real professional, sharing the idea of the "reflective practitioner" (Schön, 1983; Zeichner, 1983) may be our teachers could be better prepared to participate in the design of the curriculum. That's why I think we should use the technique of "Scenario Planning" demonstrated above, with all the limitations of a paper of this nature, in the initial and in-service teacher training programmes. How to implement that? Well, the answer would demand another paper.

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