

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

There is widespread interest, discussion and exploration globally, regarding school improvement in one form or another. One of the most often cited reasons for school reform is the need to prepare the young for participation in new economic and work environments, where the basis of employment is more flexible, the required skills tend to be higher order, more diverse and continually changing, and team work is more common (e.g. Atkin 1999; Australian Council of Deans of Education 2001; Beare 2001; Blackmore 1999; Board of Teacher Registration 2002; Delors 1996; Department of Education 1999a; Elliott 2000; House 2000; Queensland School Curriculum Council 1997; Seltzer & Bentley 1999; Townsend, Clarke & Ainscow 1999).

A country's economic performance is often seen to be correlated to levels of student achievement in schools and/or to school completion rates. Townsend (1999, p. 3) notes that, as various countries distributed reports that linked the quality of education provided to students with status in the global economy, 'so the focus of education moved towards one that saw education as fulfilling national goals rather than providing for either the individual student or local communities'. Education came to serve the function of ranking and selecting not only individuals, but also states and nations.

However, critics of school effectiveness research driven by such priorities argue that 'school effectiveness research "findings" not only neglects [sic] but also negates [sic]' (Elliott 1998, p. 101) the vision of education as a set of highly personal transactions addressing individually purposeful knowledge and involving complex considerations of curriculum and pedagogy. A recent UNESCO report (1998, pp. 63-64) acknowledges the tension between these educational concerns, noting that:

...global trends in teacher education can be broadly interpreted as a shifting balance between a concern mainly to prepare teachers who can implement effectively their school systems' mandated curricula and a concern mainly to prepare teachers who can respond effectively to the diversity of students' learning needs and interests generally. In practice, this distinction is not a hard and fast one, but is mainly a question of orientation; it echoes to some extent other distinctions which are often made in education, for example, between socially utilitarian and humanistic educational purposes, or between subject-centred and learner-centred approaches to teaching.

More recently, Thomas (2002) and others describe dilemmas and prospects associated with this same tension.

A 'new learning' agenda, for example, seeks to 'grasp what is rhetorically or genuinely new in our times', and to leverage contemporary public discourse about a 'new economy', a 'knowledge economy', a 'knowledge society', in order to position education and educators at the heart of things (*International Journal of Learning* n.d.). This 'heart' may be economic, argue proponents of new learning, but it 'must also surely be a place of open possibilities, for personal growth, for social transformation and for the deepening of democracy' (*International Journal of Learning* n.d.).

Elliott (2000) argues that the relationship between education and economic performance is mediated by the way in which the cultural context of schooling shapes the educational process. Fullan (2001, pp. 268, 271) suggests that, where educational change can be guided by 'a deep theoretical understanding of the first principles of learning... [and] the first principles of change', society will be stronger as education 'serves to enable people to work together to achieve higher purposes that serve both the individual and the collective good'.

Peter Drucker, a respected authority in the field of management globally, explains that, in what he refers to as the current knowledge economy, 'unless it is seen as the

task of the organisation to *lead change*, the organisation – whether business, university, hospital and so on – will not survive’ (Drucker 2002, p. 73). However, as Fullan (2001, p. 9) points out, there is a great deal of evidence that many educational change initiatives are ‘poorly thought out and unconnected to the stated purposes of education... [and the] main difficulty is how to achieve coherence’. A significant problem exists, then, in whether people perceive a need for educational change, and if so, how individuals conceptualise that need.

As Macklin (1976) points out, ‘seldom does any reality seek to transform itself’. Thompson and Zeuli (1999, pp. 345-346), for example, observe that perhaps the most striking thing about teachers’ efforts to learn and put into practice current reform ideas is that ‘it is possible – indeed, fairly common – to get a great deal right and still miss the point... of the reforms’. Similar conclusions have been drawn by other researchers (e.g. Ball & Cohen 1999, pp. 3-4; Goodlad, Klein & Associates 1974, pp. 72-73; Oakes et al. 1999, p. 242; and Stigler & Hiebert 1999, pp. 106-107). Closely related to the problem of whether and how individuals conceptualise the need for educational change, then, is a second significant problem, namely, that the history of curriculum change is a history of little change (Cuban 1984; Deal 1990; Fullan 2001, p. 10; Gerstner et al. 1994, p. 3; Glatthorn & Jailall 2000, p. 97; Hargreaves 1994a, pp. 43-44; Hood 1998, p. 3; Sarason 1990), or, as Woodrow Wilson (quoted in NCREL n.d.) put it so eloquently, ‘It is easier to change the location of a cemetery, than to change the school curriculum’. Sungaila (1992, p. 69) argues that there is ‘an urgent need to understand better the process of educational reform’, evidenced by the observation that, despite billions of dollars being spent on education reform every year around the world, the quality of teaching and learning remains largely unaffected.

Hodas (1993, p. 28) suggests that schools are technologies and that there is a close relationship between schools-as-a-technology and, ‘...the institutional and organizational values of knowing, being, and acting on which the school itself is founded: respect for hierarchy, competitive individualization, a receptivity to being

ranked and judged, and the division of the world of knowledge into discreet units and categories susceptible to mastery'. These values, along with other reductionist and mechanistic conceptual and methodological schemes employed to 'furnish an understanding of the present (and past) in order to predict and/or control the future... and control human beings' (Ryan 1988, pp. 17, 19), have long dominated the field of educational administration, and remain central (Ryan 1988). Efforts to engage with change of schools-as-a-technology must address cultural, and ultimately individual assumptions and values regarding human knowing, being and acting. As Hill (1988, p. 249) argues with regard to innovation and the social shaping of technological systems, 'the most essential project of research is to delve beneath the surface of the text that is being read and written in discourse to the grammar that lies beneath'.

These two closely related problems – whether and how individuals conceptualise a need for educational change, and the observed resistance of school cultures to change efforts – represent a most significant challenge. Recognising the significance of 'the grammar that lies beneath', Drucker (2002, pp. 3, 5) argues that,

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT REALITY are the PARADIGMS of a social science, such as management. They are usually held subconsciously by the scholars, the writers, the teachers, the practitioners in the field. Yet those assumptions largely determine what the discipline – scholars, writers, teachers, practitioners – assumes to be REALITY. ... Yet, despite their importance, the assumptions are rarely analysed, rarely studied, rarely challenged – indeed rarely even made explicit. ... [The assumptions underlying the theory and practice of management] are now so far removed from actual reality that they are becoming obstacles to the Theory and even more serious obstacles to the Practice of management. Indeed, reality is fast becoming the very opposite of what these assumptions claim it to be.

The same could certainly be said of the related field of education. In sum, then, in the field of education a significant problem exists in the apparent lack of a clear,

coherent and viable theory of learning, agency and change, capable of making explicit the need, substantive nature and means of educational change, of reconciling apparent dichotomies such as society and individual, control and autonomy, and of explicitly informing policies, planning models, professional learning, and new pedagogical practices.

1.2 THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

Practical-critical aspects of this inquiry focus mainly on the Queensland, Australia, public education context, and my participation in it, during the period from early 1999 to late 2003.

For some years, Education Queensland has been promoting a variety of reforms ranging widely across all levels of state education. From 1998, the program of reform included a shift to school based management, and began with the initiation of the *Leading Schools* program. Teachers were seen as ‘central agents’ in this ‘significant change process’, which was said to amount to ‘a cultural shift requiring new ways of thinking, behaving, teaching, learning and being’ (Department of Education 1998a, p. i).

At the ‘heart’ of this reform agenda in 1998 was Newmann’s notion of authentic pedagogy (Department of Education 1998a, p. ii), which was characterised as teaching and learning that is: ‘meaningful; valuable; significant; worthy of one’s efforts; entailing extrinsic rewards; meeting intrinsic student needs; providing students with a sense of ownership; having a connection to the real world; and fun’ (Newmann 1995, cited in Department of Education 1998a, p. ii. Note: I cannot find justification in the original reference for citing this list of characteristics *as a set*, or for items 5, 6, 7 and 9 specifically, a matter I explore in Chapters 2 & 5). Schools were encouraged to ‘begin to address challenges and construct models around which change can occur’ (Department of Education 1998a, p. ii).

During 1999, Education Queensland promoted extensive consultative processes for development of a long-term vision, which was to become the *Queensland State*

Education - 2010 (Department of Education 1999b) vision statement. In an early document defining the challenge, *Education Queensland* (Department of Education 1999a, p. 19) asserted that, 'The magnitude of the changes... calls for a new paradigm for teaching and learning'. It was suggested that elements of this 'new paradigm' may include a re-examination of the eight Key Learning Areas, a shift from content to process driven learning, strengthening of relationships between students and adults, and curriculum planning and delivery arrangements that can provide 'essential competencies... [including] communication, teamwork, information literacy, innovation, personal integrity and flexibility' (Department of Education 1999a, p. 19). It was also noted that, 'The frustration and difficulty that school teachers face today is that the new paradigm often proves elusive – and there's not too much time available to go looking for it!' (Department of Education 1999a, p. 19).

At the same time, Education Queensland was promoting the *Schooling 2001* (Department of Education 1998b) policy on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) integration, and the trial and staged implementation of the eight Key Learning Area outcome-based syllabuses being developed by the Queensland School Curriculum Council (now Queensland Studies Authority). In addition, they launched programs for discussion, promotion and trial of the *New Basics Project* (Department of Education c1999, 2000a), and the *Productive Pedagogies* (Department of Education and the Arts 2002a). A large number and variety of policies and position statements has followed, including, amongst others:

- *Education Queensland Strategic Plan 2000-2004* (Department of Education 2000b)
- *New Basics – Curriculum Organisers* (Department of Education 2000a)
- *Literate Futures: Report of the Literacy Review for Queensland State Schools* (Department of Education 2000c)
- *Draft Policy and Guidelines for Core Curriculum for Years 1-10 in Education Queensland Schools* (Department of Education 2000d)

- *Years 1-10 Curriculum Framework for Education Queensland Schools: Policy and Guidelines* (Department of Education 2001a)
- *Destination 2010: 2002-2005: The Action Plan to Implement Queensland State Education – 2010* (Department of Education 2002a)
- *Report of the Assessment and Reporting Taskforce* (Department of Education 2002b)
- *School Improvement and Accountability Framework: Helping Schools Focus on Student Achievement, Quality Improvement and Enhanced Accountability: Policy and Guidelines* (Department of Education 2002c)
- *Professional Standards for Teachers: Guidelines for Professional Practice: Pilot 2002* (Department of Education 2002d)
- *Productive Pedagogies: Classroom Reflection Manual* (Department of Education and the Arts 2002a)
- 'Newsflash: Curriculum planning, assessment and reporting one-page guide' (Department of Education and the Arts 2002b)
- *Queensland the Smart State: Education and Training Reforms for the Future* (Department of the Premier and Cabinet 2002)
- *See the Future: The Middle Phase of Learning State School Action Plan* (Department of Education and the Arts 2003).

In the latter part of 1999, and throughout 2000, I held the secondment position of Education Advisor – Learning Technology / Effective Learning and Teaching. My role involved assisting school leaders and teachers across a District of just over forty schools in North Queensland in the achievement of the Minimum Standards for Teachers – Learning Technology, and the effective integration of ICTs across the curriculum using principles of student-centred learning and teaching, in accordance with the *Schooling 2001* (Department of Education 1998b) policy.

In 2001, I was appointed to a new secondment position as Education Advisor – Curriculum Outcomes, again assisting schools and teachers across a District of just over forty schools (this time South of Brisbane). My broader brief in this position

was to assist schools in a school renewal process through the development of initiatives in pursuit of reform of curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and reporting, with an emphasis on higher order/critical thinking, approaches to integrated curriculum, New Basics/Productive Pedagogies, and ICTs.

In the latter part of 2001, and through most of 2002, I held the position of Deputy Principal at a newly established high school, and in the latter part of 2002, and throughout 2003, I held the position of Deputy Principal (Acting) at a large, established primary school. Since 2001, I have also written coursework for Queensland University of Technology, taught and conducted research for Griffith University, and taught at the University of Southern Queensland, as well as providing private consultancy services at school and system level in Queensland, New South Wales, Tasmania and the Northern Territory. In June 2004, I took up a full-time position as Lecturer (New Learning) at RMIT University in Melbourne.

During the period of my research, the above-mentioned Education Queensland policies and statements regarding school reform, amongst others, have repeatedly, if inconsistently, emphasised: exit outcomes (prospering in the real world); active learning for intellectual quality (constructivism); real life purposes, roles and contexts (integrated curriculum); individual meaning and relevance (one-size-does-NOT-fit-all); personal responsibility for learning and behaviour (genuine engagement); and extension of pedagogical repertoires (teachers becoming more often a 'guide on the side' than 'sage on the stage'). In particular, pedagogy has remained a priority change issue, as emphasised in this 1999 statement by, then, Deputy Director-General, Professor Alan Luke, referring to the *QSE-2010* long-term vision:

2010: It's about pedagogy, that's all it could and should be about... The main game is pedagogy. It's about having curriculum conversations, about authentic assessment, about expanding and sharing our professional pedagogical repertoires for improved student outcomes... As a system, we need to commit to pedagogy – to understand that our job is to read these

new communities, these new forms of poverty and disadvantage, and assess our students, their communities, their lifeworlds in light of *2010*, to assess what kinds of curriculum goals, knowledges, skills, practices will be suited for them in these brave new and old worlds – and then to jiggle, adjust, remediate, shape and build our classroom pedagogies to get quality, educationally, intellectually and socially valuable outcomes. That's our business, that's our job, that's teachers' work. We need to put it on the table, talk about it in staffrooms – not make excuses for our schools, ourselves, our systems, our bureaucracies. And we need to get worked up when people tell us that our business is anything but pedagogy. EQ, at every level, needs to be focused on this. (Luke 1999a)

The 20 Productive Pedagogies strategies being promoted in Education Queensland (Department of Education and the Arts 2002a) have strong parallels with the Principles of Effective Learning and Teaching (ELT) (Department of Education 1994), which Education Queensland had been promoting since 1994, particularly through the employment of Education Advisors – Effective Learning and Teaching, such as myself, through Effective Learning and Teaching audits of schools, and through inclusion of the Student-Centred Learning section of the Minimum Standards for Teachers – Learning Technology within the *Schooling 2001* policy (Department of Education 1998b). Despite this promotion, the Queensland 'School Reform Longitudinal Study' (SRLS) found, after 462 classroom observations, that 'most of these things [the 20 Productive Pedagogies] do not occur all that often in schools' and that 'student-centred... practices are among the MOST rare of all' (Ladwig 1999).

It became increasingly clear to me through my work roles from 1999, that teachers, schools and systems were, and are, having great difficulty understanding and resolving some of the contradictions and lack of alignment between and within policies, discourse/rhetoric, the literature, the pressures of accountability, and the inertia of traditional school culture. I saw that there was, and is, a great need for a

significant cultural change, and that teachers, schools and systems are, indeed, finding the new paradigm ‘elusive’, in terms of conceptualising it, of appreciating the need for it, and of implementing it. I saw a need for a clear and coherent articulation of a new educational paradigm that might inform an alignment of policies and school culture, and for models that might make significant change more achievable.

1.3 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This inquiry asks the following questions:

1. What is a viable way to theorise learning and change?
2. What models and guidelines could be constructed, consistent with such theory, that would breathe greater coherence into a diversity of challenges, policies and reform agendas faced by schools, and assist them to engage with change?

The inquiry aims to synthesise and articulate a coherent conceptual framework for learning and change relating to the ends and means of education, to generate critical insights from the perspective of that framework, and to generate practical models, resources and texts consistent with it that could assist academics, policy makers and education practitioners in the design and interpretation of, and response to, educational change.

1.4 METHODOLOGY & METHODS

One of the main aims of this research is to formulate a clear, coherent and viable ‘theoretical’ perspective on learning, agency and change, and this ‘theory’, detailed in Chapter 3, provides the fullest rationale for the form of research itself. Some brief comments on research methodology will be made here, along with an outline of the method used in this particular inquiry.

1.4.1 Methodology

Conventional ethnography ‘situates itself as a disinterested, scientific activity, committed to modes of inquiry that are conducted by experts... Belying its

apparently radical programme, this is an essentially conservative project, camouflaged in the very fashionable discourses of postmodernity and world-systems theory' (Jordan & Yeomans 1995, pp. 403-404). However, an emergent theme within the diverse range of methodologies influencing contemporary ethnography has been a concern with reflexivity. Reflexivity asserts that the researcher, the research act, and its product are constitutive of, and not separable from the everyday world, and it 'represents ethnography's attempt to resolve the dualisms of contemporary social theory i.e. object/subject, theory/practice, action/structure and so on' (Jordan & Yeomans 1995, p. 394). Thus, we see the emergence and exploration of new forms of research based on 'performative notions', which see ethnography as 'always caught up in the invention, not representation of cultures' (Jordan & Yeomans 1995, p. 394).

Laing (1971, p. 16) argued that, 'I cannot experience your experience. You cannot experience my experience... Experience as invisibility of man to man is at the same time more evident than anything. *Only* experience is evident. Experience is the *only* evidence'. Thus, humans are storytelling beings, and the study of narrative is 'the study of the ways humans experience the world' (Connelly & Clandinin 1990, p. 2). Eisner's (1988) review of the study of experience from the perspective of education aligns narrative with researchers working with experiential philosophy, psychology, critical theory, curriculum studies, and anthropology. For Richardson (2000, p. 931), autoethnographies are 'highly personalized, revealing texts in which authors tell stories about their own lived experiences, relating the personal to the cultural'. Such writing is not just a 'telling' about the world, but 'a way of "knowing" – a method of discovery and analysis' (Richardson 2000, p. 923), so that, 'Writing is validated as a method of knowing' (Richardson 2000, p. 929). In autoethnographic texts, 'concrete action, dialogue, emotion, embodiment, spirituality, and self-consciousness are featured, appearing as relational and institutional stories affected by history, social structure, and culture, which themselves are dialectically revealed through action, feeling, thought, and language' (Ellis & Bochner 2000, p. 739).

Formal kinds of narrative research need to have a ‘critical’ component, so that they can serve to clarify understandings of context and concepts that help us to answer questions of what we should do. Despite the fact that it does not appear to generate ‘data’, systematic philosophical inquiry is an important component in any research design, since it has the potential to ‘scrutinise and identify terms and concepts, to draw attention to assumptions, and to clarify language and logical connections’ (Nicholson 1995, pp. 20, 22).

Philosophical inquiry includes not only the analysis that has the capacity to establish ‘conceptual common ground’, but also the synthesis that can create a synoptic view, and such synthesis is ‘creative’, to the extent that ‘it promotes the exploration of innovative, theoretical relationships, leading to an entirely new (albeit synthetic) theory product’ (Nicholson 1995, pp. 23, 25). The philosophical method of research may result in ‘clarification of meaning, and the highlighting of the logical implications of concepts and theories’ (Nicholson 1995, p. 22). But herein lies a significant limitation of philosophical inquiry as a research method on its own. Its tools are linear, abstract, symbolic representations of phenomena, actions and experience, and its implications remain merely logical. I will argue in Chapter 3, that meaning is the significance or purpose underlying objects, concepts, ideas, speech or events. The meaning of these things cannot be separated from actions and contexts, and the interpretation of all these depends on the individual subject’s purposes or perception of a problem.

Jordan and Yeomans (1995, pp. 401-402) argue that,

Rather than providing expert knowledge, the role of the critical ethnographer should be oriented to facilitating the production and dissemination of really useful knowledge within the research site... making the everyday world problematic for ourselves is not enough; making it problematic for those we leave behind in the field should be the point.

Elliott (1991, p. 116) argues that in practitioner-researcher inquiry the ‘ambiguities, conflicts and tensions’ contained within teacher self-understandings make possible the emergence of a ‘self-generating, reflexive and critical pedagogy’. Whitehead (2000, p. 93) makes a similar argument, ‘placing ‘I’ as a living contradiction... [as the nucleus of] an epistemology of reflective practice’. Jordan and Yeomans (1995, p. 403) suggest that, while critical theory may have a place in developing teachers’ understandings of hegemonic processes, the methodology of action research should focus on teachers’ investigations of their own forms of really useful knowledge.

1.4.2 Method selection for this inquiry

William Powers (1990) relates a “fish scale” metaphor of scientific progress proposed by Donald Campbell, late Professor of Psychology at Lehigh University, USA. Each knowledge worker constructs one small scale that overlaps those laid down by others. Working within their specialisation, and focusing on fitting a new little scale to the ones previously laid down by others, each worker is likely to have a very narrow view of the problem at hand. The fish may eventually be completely covered, but what if the fish is a ‘red herring’? Many diligent knowledge workers will devote their lives to covering the wrong fish. It may appear that progress is being made, but it is unlikely that a single worker will notice that certain assumptions underlying the whole design are flawed. We might often have the diligent application of fish scales to a giraffe.

In the ‘theoretical’ perspective synthesised in Chapter 3, such a reductionist view of the world is seen as problematic. Consistent with my perspective too, the new science of ‘chaos’ insists that complex, non-linear, dynamical systems are ultimately ‘irreducible into parts’ and that effects can never be traced to particular causes, because ‘the parts are constantly being folded into each other by iterations and feedback’ (Briggs & Peat 1989, p. 147). This is not to suggest that more narrowly empirical research has no value, but that it is not appropriate to the context of this inquiry, or to the questions addressed in it (Fullan 2001, pp. xi, 78). Accordingly, the scope of this inquiry is broad, addressing diverse, though

intimately interrelated issues of theory, culture, policy, practice and change relating to curriculum, learning, pedagogy, assessment, reporting and school organisation. It constitutes these matters as a 'whole' situation in a particular (state) context, rather than focusing on an abstracted fragment, since the lived experience of the researcher/practitioner – as of all players practically involved in schooling who face the problems addressed in this research – involves all these facets in a complex matrix within which no meaningful separation is possible. This inquiry constitutes a form of action research, so that, recognising the complexity, the subtlety, and the interdependence of human learning, action, relationships and culture, I could, as Burns (1997, p. 353) put it, both study and achieve 'the improvement of the educational practices in which [as a practitioner-researcher I was] engaging'.

While this research addresses some of the challenges of educational change at classroom, school and system levels, it nevertheless embraces the pedagogy proposed by McLaren (1998, p. 217), which 'takes the problems and needs of the students themselves as its starting point'. The concern, then, is not just with certain processes of change, but with the substantive nature of change, particularly in relation to learning and other significant impacts of schooling on students. I have sought throughout this thesis to contextualise the research as being essentially related to 'the problems and needs of the students'.

The inquiry aims to examine, critique and synthesise a variety of significant perspectives on learning and change in order to generate a coherent conceptual framework that will constitute a reference point for the critical analysis and construction of contributions to the field of educational change. From the perspective of that framework, the inquiry generates critical insights and develops practical models, resources and texts that may assist academics, policy makers and education practitioners in the design and interpretation of, and response to, educational change.

In brief, the research involved ‘re-entering into’ culturally endowed concepts, definitions and practices by questioning them and either authenticating or reconstructing them through purposeful, practical-critical activity in the social world. The inquiry began with the perception of a situation as problematic in relation to my purposes, as well as the expressed purposes of others. The problem was then formulated in coherent terms, conditions were observed, ideas (meanings) in the literature, policies and discourse relating to solutions were critically examined and sometimes challenged. Habitual patterns of thought, feeling and behaviour were transcended as creative connections were sought and made, especially through intuitive and/or paralinguistic means, between previously unconnected matrices of thought or experience, and action schemes were reconstructed. Solutions suggested by this critical examination and creative category-shifting were subjected to evaluation and authentication, to the extent that was practical, all in a complex, dynamic, iterative, dialectical interplay producing a continual evolution of understanding, expression and action.

In seeking to address the two research questions identified above, the substantive contribution of this research consists in:

1. philosophical analysis and synthesis, and
2. the generation, discussion and evaluation of data in three main forms:
 - a. field journal extracts, autobiographical notes, discussion list contributions, and recollections
 - b. critical analysis of selected literature, policies, documents and discourse associated with:
 - i. the *Queensland State Education – 2010* vision and change agenda (Department of Education 1999b)
 - ii. the New Basics Project (Department of Education c1999, 2000a; Luke et al. 2000)
 - iii. implementation of the outcomes-based Key Learning Area Syllabuses (Queensland Studies Authority n.d.)
 - c. personally constructed models, guidelines, resources and texts.

This philosophical and practical-critical inquiry generates insights that have direct bearing on how we might conceptualise the need, substantive nature and means of learning and change in students, teachers, schools and systems.

1.4.3 Quality criteria

In the ‘theoretical’ perspective synthesised and adopted in this inquiry, the function of cognition is adaptive, serving the individual subject’s organisation of the experiential world, not the discovery of an objective ontological reality. In the context of purposeful philosophical and practical-critical activity, meanings are reconstructed and evaluated in terms of fit or viability in the material or social world and consistency with the subject’s conceptual system as a whole. Such new epistemologies require different or reformulated quality criteria. Accordingly, the quality criteria for the meanings generated by this kind of research have nothing to do with ‘truth claims’, but rather with viability and usefulness.

It should be noted that, as will be argued in Chapter 3, the first reference point for evaluating the quality, viability, or adaptive value of the meanings or ‘new knowledge’ generated in an inquiry is the experience and conceptual system of the person who engaged in the inquiry. Then, since, as Laing (1971, p. 16) was quoted above as saying, ‘you cannot experience my experience’, in a formal written thesis it is only through discursive practices that the practitioner-researcher can attempt to ‘share’ those meanings with others. As I also argue at length in Chapter 3, however, that process is by no means a mere transfer of meaning. It is one in which each ‘other’ who engages with the findings of an inquiry, articulated with the cumbersome tools of language, *constructs their own meanings from and about them* and necessarily evaluates the inquiry and its findings, as they interpret them, in terms of viability, usefulness or fit *with their own* inevitably different (to a small or larger extent) experience, interests/purposes and conceptual system. This is *not* to suggest that human learning and knowing are essentially subjective, arbitrary or relative, but that they *are* essentially individual.

Richardson (2000, p. 937) argues that ethnographic researchers 'ought not be constrained by habits of other people's minds'. The potential 'catch 22' here, of course, especially when an examiner evaluates a doctoral thesis, is that the habits of other people's minds do, in some way, need to be satisfied. And yet, it is only when some aspect of articulated research findings challenges an aspect of the current understanding of some 'other' who engages with them that the potential exists for those findings to contribute to a reconstruction or extension of understanding, that is, to new knowledge, to learning. It is appropriate, then, to have some quality criteria that move readers of this kind of research beyond simply asking (perhaps unconsciously) the question, 'Does it fit with my current view of the world?'

Kaplan (1964, pp. 311-322) identifies three norms of validation as the *correspondence*, *coherence*, and *pragmatic* norms. With regard to the *correspondence norm*, the validity of a theory is established in proportion to the heterogeneity of well established facts and evidence that the theory takes into account. Kaplan (1964, p. 313) recognises that 'how we conceptualize facts in turn depends on the theories that play a part in their cognition'. He argues, however, that while progress in understanding sometimes requires thrusting aside assumptions, complete scepticism is as sterile as uncritical acceptance of endowed meanings (Kaplan 1964, p. 313). Appeals to "the facts" rest on a 'bedrock of common sense', he argues, and 'What counts in the validation of a theory, so far as fitting the facts is concerned, is the convergence of the data brought to bear upon it, the concatenation of the evidence' (Kaplan 1964, pp. 313-314).

As facts ultimately sit within theories that give them meaning, so the need for a theory to correspond with its own set of facts is associated with a need for the theory to have some relation to other contexts, frames of reference, or well established theories. Thus, the *coherence norm* proportions validity to the 'pattern of relatedness, ...the feeling of wholeness' that can be identified, as 'widely different and separate phenomena' are integrated or synthesised, and 'the fragments have come together and form a whole body' (Kaplan 1964, p. 314).

Finally, Kaplan (1964, p. 319) argues that, because there can be a variety of intervening variables which are beyond the researcher's control, demonstration of actual successful application in a practical situation is not a necessary condition of validity. This is *not* to say that valid theory need not bear any *relation* to experience or practice. A central argument throughout this thesis is that the separation of theory and practice, even their separation *by definition*, can be deeply problematic. Kaplan (1964, p. 322) argues that a 'theory is validated, not by showing it to be invulnerable to criticism, but by putting it to good use' in solving problems. Thus, the *pragmatic norm* establishes validity to the extent that a theory has practical use, which includes contributing to meaning-making, or that it has clear implications for more effective practice (Kaplan 1964, pp. 319-322).

My own evaluation or critical analysis of theories, policies, discourse and practice within this inquiry applies these *correspondence*, *coherence*, and *pragmatic* norms, in order to establish greater or lesser degrees of validity or viability.

Another perspective on evaluation, of particular relevance to the practical-critical aspects of the current inquiry, is suggested by Richardson (2000, p. 937) in the form of five possible criteria for what she calls Creative Analytic Practice

Ethnography:

1. Substantive contribution: Does this piece contribute to our *understanding* of social life?...
2. Aesthetic merit: ...Does this piece succeed aesthetically? Does the use of creative analytic practices open up the text, invite interpretive responses? Is the text artistically shaped, satisfying, complex, and not boring?...
3. Reflexivity: ...How did the author come to write this text?... How has the author's subjectivity been both a producer and a product of this text? Is there adequate self-awareness and self-exposure for the reader to make judgements about the point of view?...

4. Impact: Does this affect me? Emotionally? Intellectually? Does it generate new questions? Move me to write? Move me to try new research practices? Move me to action?
5. Expression of reality: Does this text embody a fleshed out, embodied sense of lived experience? Does it seem “true” – a credible account of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of the “real”?

This last criterion, ‘expression of reality’, has been identified as appropriate by several writers, and variously termed ‘plausibility’ (Connelly & Clandinin 1990), ‘verisimilitude’ (Maanen 1988), and ‘naturalistic generalisation’ (Stake 1994). Richardson’s ‘impact’ criterion is also important, since criticalists’ goal is ‘not merely to spotlight inequitable societal conditions, but to change them’ (Gall, Gall & Borg 1999, p. 372).

1.5 THESIS ORGANISATION

I have sought in this chapter to describe in broad terms the issue addressed in this inquiry, suggesting that a significant educational problem consists in the apparent lack of a clear, coherent and viable theory of learning, agency and change, which would be capable of making explicit the need, substantive nature and means of educational change. I suggested also that there exists a need for models and guidelines consistent with such a theory, that might assist systems, schools, teachers and students to engage with learning and change. I identified the Queensland state education system from 1999 to 2003 as the primary context for the practical-critical components of the inquiry. Finally, I made some brief comments regarding research methodology, outlined the particular combination of methods selected for this inquiry, and discussed some issues relating to the evaluation of such research.

In Chapter 2, I relate aspects of the story of the extended, in-context, practical-critical inquiry I engaged in during the period of this inquiry, particularly from 1999 to 2003. This chapter consists substantially of public domain discourse and

extracts from my own field journal, autobiographical notes, discussion list contributions, recollections and annotations. I trace the evolution of my own thinking and action, and the development of models, guidelines and resources, in relation to supporting teachers, schools, systemic personnel and others in making sense of, and responding to a diverse set of change agendas, policies and discourses. Each of these models, guidelines, resources and discussion contributions, along with the other writings and presentations mentioned in Chapter 2, represents aspects of my engagement with the discourse, the literature, and the intellectual and practical challenges associated with my roles in support of educational change.

In Chapter 3, I review a considerable number of perspectives on human knowing and related notions of human intelligence, creativity, emotion, agency, action and learning. On the basis of this review, I synthesise and formulate a deep and coherent framework for understanding desirable ends and means of education and of change – a framework which I argue is capable of informing both design and critique of systemic curriculum and assessment policies, school organisation and planning models, professional learning and pedagogical practice, and student learning and action. This framework, or set of constructs, constitutes a different paradigm, the ‘Dynamic Paradigm of Learning and Change’, which contrasts with the assumptions reflected in the prevailing culture of institutionalised education and in some current reform efforts.

In Chapter 4, I bring into sharper relief the *need* for educational change. I review literature relating to the currently dominant paradigm, that is, to the prevailing culture of institutionalised education, to the prevailing kind of social character and society, and to the dynamic relationship between the two. From the perspective of the ‘Dynamic Paradigm of Learning and Change’ characterised in Chapter 3, I highlight the problematic nature of the mutually reinforcing cultures of schooling and broader society.

In Chapter 5, I engage in a formal critique of two major educational reform programs, Authentic Pedagogy and the New Basics Project, both of which have been very influential in Queensland and further afield. From the perspective of the 'Dynamic Paradigm of Learning and Change' formulated in Chapter 3, I identify limitations in both the conceptualisation and implementation of these reform agendas.

In Chapter 6, I identify some key conclusions emerging from this inquiry, and identify some of its limitations. I make some recommendations on the basis of these insights and outcomes, and close with some final observations regarding the significance of the inquiry.

Chapter 2

PRACTICAL-CRITICAL INQUIRY INTO CHANGE IN QUEENSLAND STATE SCHOOLING 1999-2003

2.1 THE LEAD UP TO 1999

In 1996, I participated in a major professional development program in the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) in education, called ‘Connecting Teachers to the Future’. I came to see ICTs as a valuable resource for implementing the *Principles of Effective Learning and Teaching* (Department of Education 1994) that Education Queensland had been promoting since 1994. However, I soon came to agree with then Assistant Director-General (Education Services) of Education Queensland, Brian Rout, who recognised that ‘the interconnection of all elements of the educative process – curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and organisational structures – means that to realise the potential of learning technologies to maximise student learning outcomes we need to bring about a paradigm shift’ (Rout 1997, p. 9).

I became aware, in my Master of Education studies, of Wellington’s (1990, p. 62) observation that the influence of IT on pedagogy is relatively small in primary schools, while in secondary schools, ‘the effect of IT upon the content and structure of the curriculum has been negligible’. Pea and Sheingold (1987, p. x) suggest the reason:

...we have continually found that educational technologies serve as mirrors of minds and the cultures in which they “live”. Rather than radically amplifying or transforming the processes of teaching and learning, as many predicted, they instead reflect the expectancies represented in classrooms and the knowledge and skills of individuals using them.

In 1998, I published a refereed article which I adapted from a paper I wrote as part of my Master of Education. It was titled, ‘Opening school doors to the real world: A review of literature on computer mediated communication and its role in the

creation of constructivist learning environments’ (Seaton 1998). The review covers some theoretical perspectives on constructivist learning (reflecting my reading of those perspectives, and the meaning I associated with constructivism at the time), the nature of learning environments, constructivist applications of computer mediated communication (CMC) in primary and secondary schools, and the role of CMC in curriculum and school restructuring. I observed in the conclusion of my review (Seaton 1998, p. 21) that, ‘Perhaps the issue which has come to stand out most clearly for me, as a result of conducting this literature review, concerns the need for the development, promotion and discussion of first principles of learning’.

2.2 YEAR 1999

I soon had the opportunity to begin assisting teachers to clarify principles of effective learning that might guide exploration of pedagogy change and effective use of ICTs. In 1999, the new principal of the school where I taught found the funds to take me off class to teach and support other teachers in the integration of ICTs across the curriculum. One of my main tasks was to lead a whole-staff professional development and curriculum innovation program to support student-centred integration of learning technology, consistent with the *Schooling 2001* (Department of Education 1998b) policy on ICTs.

Encouragement for curriculum innovation to accompany ICT integration was coming from the highest levels of Education Queensland. Then Director-General of Education, Terry Moran, argued, for example, that:

We cannot simply adopt the new technologies as a supplementary resource to keep doing the same things in the same ways... Within our schools we need to engender a culture of innovation and creativity which transforms outdated systems and practices *in response to the individual needs, interests and abilities of our students...* In terms of curriculum design, the capacity to recognise and generate patterns, connections and relationships from vast quantities of information is driving us towards project and issue based multidisciplinary learning... (Moran 1999, emphasis added.)

Elsewhere, Moran (1998, p. 15) characterised the challenge of ‘shifting the teaching/learning paradigm’ as a

shift to this student-centred, outcomes-based approach, coupled with the provision of the necessary technology infrastructure... [and as] an opportunity for educators today to redesign the schooling system so that is [sic] more finely tuned to the needs of individual learners... [W]e must concentrate our efforts on developing self-directed learners who understand and manage their strengths and weaknesses as learners, who take responsibility for organising their own learning experiences and display motivation and persistence... The generation of knowledge requires the application of selected, disciplined techniques... [the] “invisible technologies” [of the disciplines] to authentic issues and projects. ...[This involves] a profound challenge to the traditional ways we go about our business – a challenge to the curriculum, to the structure and organisation of the school day and to the teaching methods we use and indeed the professional role of the teacher [while we] hold tight to what we know works.

The principles of ‘student-centred learning’, which were equated with ‘principles of effective learning and teaching’ and specified within the ‘Minimum standards for teachers’ outlined in the *Schooling 2001* (Department of Education 1998b) policy, included the following:

- [A teacher] Accommodates the learner as an individual and independent learner and as a member of a group...
- [A teacher] Uses open-ended software and open-ended tasks to promote problem solving
- [A teacher] Uses the technology to extend the learning environment beyond the walls of the classroom (Department of Education 1998b, p. 26)

Within that context, I initiated and coordinated involvement of ten teachers and about 200 students in a community research project, showcased as a website (Ayr

East State School 1999), as part of the International Schools CyberFair '99. I wrote an article (Seaton 1999a) describing some of the issues associated with that project.

The organisers of the CyberFair competition provided rubrics for student use in evaluating other schools' project websites. I think this was my first exposure to rubrics as an assessment/evaluation tool, and we found them very useful for this purpose. I found, however, that they also assisted in some of the most significant *learning* by students. Later, I was to see and advocate a significant role for rubrics in teaching and learning. The rubrics worked for us in a third way, too, since our school won 5th place in the world in our category. This created a greatly improved climate regarding educational change and the use of ICTs amongst the school community (teachers, students and parents), and prompted very positive, tongue-in-cheek media coverage in the local paper (see Figure 1).

2 — The Ayr Advocate, WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 1999

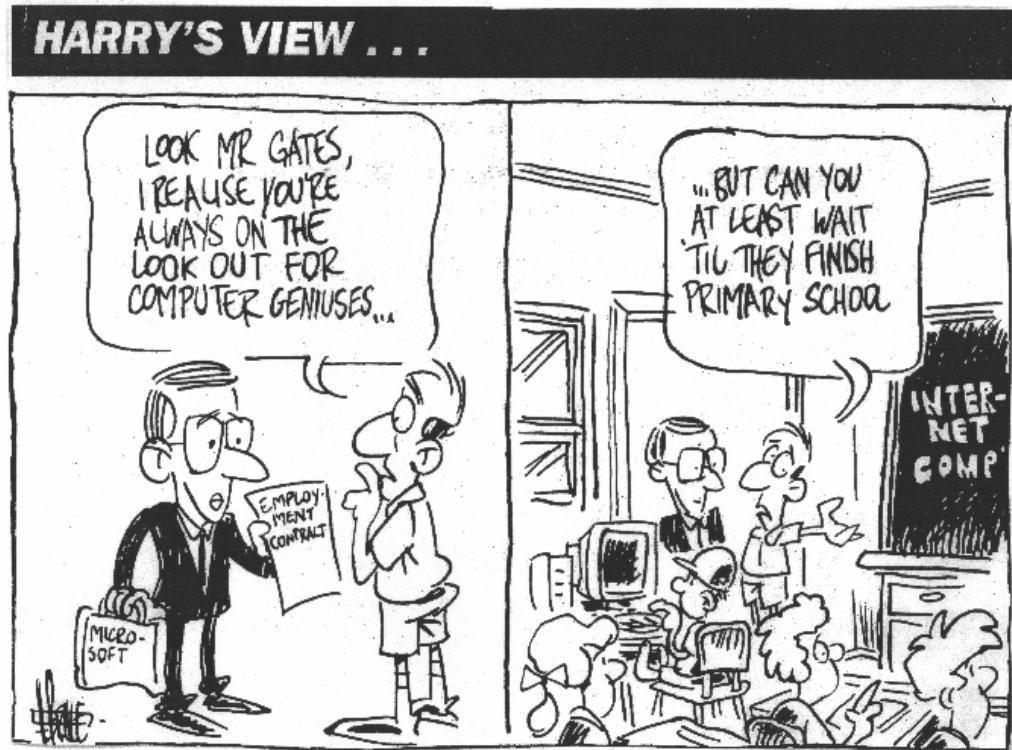


Figure 1: Press coverage of East Ayr State School's International Schools CyberFair '99 success (Harry's View 1999, p. 2)

Also during 1999, I gave thought to how I might more explicitly address the challenge of organising for student engagement in open-ended problem solving activities, and how I might meet the pedagogical challenge of moving beyond the ‘content-based instruction’ of the out-dated ‘current model of schooling... [wherein] learning is controlled and organised by teachers’ to a more ‘relevant’ model in which ‘teaching will no longer be the transfer of information, learning no longer the retention of facts and education no longer the exclusive responsibility of teachers’ (Department of Education 1999a, p. 15). I developed some guidelines and resources to support this effort, which I published on my website as ‘KidSolutions: Guidelines and resources for problem-based learning’ (Seaton n.d.[a]) . A couple of years later, I wrote a short article titled, ‘Getting off the stage’ (Seaton 2001a), about the development of those online guidelines and resources.

Following my own first experience with engaging a class with this kind of activity, I jotted down some of the difficulties I felt I would need to reflect upon and address before and during subsequent use of this pedagogy. Here they are, just as I jotted them down at the time:

1. Difficulty with too many activities.
2. Some didn’t understand process of self and peer assessment.
3. Some didn’t use genre models carefully.
4. Some got stranded on “trying to find information”.
5. Variable ability to work in groups.
6. Variable ability to put and keep self on track.
7. Some people in groups hogging computer time.

Moreover, the generally positive student responses notwithstanding, a couple of students who were used to receiving very high ‘marks’ for their school ‘projects’, expressed to me their resentment of the dynamic and intellectually challenging nature of these problem-based learning activities. Significant pedagogy change, I concluded from these observations, could not reasonably be seen simplistically, either in terms of what it demands of teachers and of students, or of the responses it might receive from both.

I had long been in sympathy with Coleman’s (1972, p. 7) concern that, at present, ‘...the student role is not a role of taking action and experiencing consequences... It is a relatively passive role, always in preparation for action, but never acting’. I had a conviction that we learn through experience, through purposeful action, and realised that this implies an epistemology that has far reaching implications for school curriculum. The important role of experience in learning was recognised, in principle, in curricula being introduced in Queensland government schools since the early 1990s, such as the English Language Arts Syllabus (Department of Education 1991a) and Further Literacy Inservice Project (Department of Education & Brisbane Catholic Education Office 1990). The different language structures which characterise different disciplines or forms of knowledge, that is, distinctive forms of purposeful, cultural activity, were thought of as distinct genres, which derive their character, meaning and purpose from their contexts. A genre was defined as, ‘Any purposeful activity that is characteristic of a cultural community; has a characteristic staged generic structure...’ (Department of Education 1991b, p. 18).

Despite the emphasis in those documents on genres as vital cross-curricular and real life forms of language-in-use, and the provision of some rather technical and complex genre deconstructions in the associated materials, I (and others) found it difficult to locate straightforward, accessible genre guides. I felt it was important to have such guides available to students for the kind of problem-based activities supported by KidSolutions, so I developed a basic range of genre guides myself (Seaton n.d.[b]), and built these into the Resources section of the KidSolutions website. Guides were initially provided for the following genres:

Email	Letter of Persuasion	Recount
Interview	Letter of Thanks	Review
Investigation Report	Letter to the Editor	Scientific Experiment
Letter of Complaint	Press Release	Survey/Questionnaire
Letter of Invitation	Proposal Submission	Written Discussion

Each genre guide includes a brief description of the purpose of the genre, its typical structure, characteristic language features and conventions, and a simple example. One example of these genre guides can be seen in the collection of resources reproduced in the Appendix.

In all, the guidelines and resources contained within KidSolutions website totalled around 45 separate web pages. The resource has attracted a great deal of interest and acclamation. An Assistant Director-General visited the school where we had won the International Schools CyberFair award. He was shown the award winning website entry, 'Fishing North Queensland' (Ayr East State School 1999), and the KidSolutions website I had developed (Seaton n.d.[a]). He asked who owned it and was told that I did. He concluded his visit with the comment that, "You are one of only a few schools across the state integrating learning technology in the way EQ wants them to".

Education Queensland's *Curriculum Exchange* contained for some years a review of the KidSolutions resource, which stated in part:

This well-organised site provides the framework and resources for a 'problem-based curriculum' designed to cater both to individual student needs and to assessable outcomes... This is a well-designed and logically developed site which provides a great deal of useful information for teachers. The suggested structure is flexible enough to be adapted to local needs, and the resources which have been developed will prove invaluable for busy teachers.

Part of the original review, some additional comments, and a link to my KidSolutions website, remain within the online resources section of the *New Basics Project* (Department of Education and the Arts 2002c).

In the latter part of 1999, and throughout 2000, I held the secondment position of Education Advisor – Learning Technology / Effective Learning and Teaching in a

North Queensland district of Education Queensland. My role involved assisting school leaders and teachers across a District of just over forty schools in achievement of the Minimum Standards for Teachers – Learning Technology, and effective integration of ICTs across the curriculum using principles of student-centred learning and teaching, in accordance with the *Schooling 2001* (Department of Education 1998b) policy.

In a discussion with my supervisor after about a month in the advisory role, I mentioned a number of issues relating to broader issues of the change agenda than just use of ICT (Field Journal: 12 October 1999). I referred to a concern that some principals lacked a clear vision of change for their schools, and effective leadership was lacking as a result (for example, Field Journal: 24 August 1999; 30 August 1999; 4 October 1999; 6 October 1999; 11 October 1999). I mentioned a concern that, amongst those teachers who were making increased use of ICT, many were teaching students ICT skills *as skills* in isolation, rather than in the context of authentic, engaging and intellectually challenging learning tasks and activities. And I noted that ‘the enemy of the best is the good’, as a way of giving expression to my concern that so many teachers were feeling good about the fact that they were making much greater use of ICT in teaching and learning, even though they were using ICT for relatively low level learning outcomes (such as having students use a wordprocessor to make a ‘presentation copy’ of their stories, for example).

During 1999, following a change of state government, Education Queensland promoted an extensive consultative process for development of a long-term vision, which was to become the *Queensland State Education - 2010* (Department of Education 1999b) vision statement. As indicated in Chapter 1, this was an ambitious initiative, which envisioned a ‘new paradigm for teaching and learning’ (Department of Education 1999a, p. 19).

When I first heard about the development of a new vision statement, I wrote to the Minister for Education to express my concern that a new vision statement would

have the effect of dispersing the momentum that had been developed around the major *Leading Schools* reforms, including their focus on authentic pedagogy. In the context of the development of ‘a new curriculum/pedagogy/assessment framework in line with the 2010 framework’, Luke (1999b) commented on his observation of related concerns in schools, noting that,

...people in the field had a real case of ‘change fatigue’ – that they had been quality assured, curriculum reformed, SPSed, LOTEd, Leading Schooled and so forth to the point where they weren’t listening. But as importantly, having visited dozens of schools and observed over 300 classroom lessons as part of the Longitudinal School Restructuring Study – Lingard and I felt strongly that there was quite literally no passion or belief in the system – that people didn’t know where the system was going... and what to believe in.

There was an irony in the fact that the new vision statement focusing on addressing misalignment between policies, was itself contributing to the derailment of a major reform agenda. Nevertheless, the Queensland State Education - 2010 vision was certainly a large scale and, to me, inspiring change agenda, and its general thrust seemed to me to have much in common with the reform agenda it replaced.

In October 1999, I made several postings to Education Queensland’s “2010” online discussion forum, and recorded these in my Field Journal. In the first, I raised issues of assessment and relationships as being central to a paradigm change in school culture.

[Field Journal Extract: 19 October 1999]

>Terry Moran said [in a paper prepared for this discussion -
>see also a reworked version, Moran 2000, p. 2]:
>...3. And yet the Year 11-12 curriculum is still dominated by
>a rigorous study program designed to facilitate tertiary
>entrance procedures.
>...4. We need to... transform the way learning occurs.
>...5. Teachers that make the best use of contemporary
>learning theory.

The "hickory stick" that does still exist, and which drives what happens (and doesn't happen) in schools, is the application of 'industrial age' assessment/evaluation/accountability demands. These demands contradict contemporary learning theory and militate against the adoption of a new student-centred learning & teaching paradigm.. Point 3 identifies this problem for Years 11 & 12, but it applies at every level from P to 12.

Beyond this, I believe we need to change school culture and the quality of relationships that exist within schools. Do kids enjoy school? Do they find it interesting and meaningful? Do they feel respected and valued as individual, autonomous people? I don't think using the jobs argument is going to keep a lot more kids at school. They need to feel it's a satisfying place to be.

[End Field Journal Extract: 19 October 1999]

[Field Journal Extract: 22 October 1999]

I was delighted that one of Education Queensland's policy development personnel made an open invitation for suggestions on how the relationship issue could be addressed. I took the opportunity to elaborate on my thinking, and sent this message to the discussion list.

[An Education Queensland curriculum policy officer said:]
"I wonder whether anyone will chance their arm and suggest how, precisely, this (improved quality of relationships in schools) might be accomplished. I agree that it is one of the great challenges for us at this time."

The most crucial factor determining the quality of relationships is the way in which power operates in them, and schools are still environments with rigid structures of power and authority. We still dictate to kids for at least ten of their formative years what they should know and what they should do (or should not do). As Alan Luke said, the "schools

are right because they embody mainstream culture, and all the kids who fail are just deficient in mainstream culture and should be fixed argument - That's got to be avoided at all costs".

The policy of student-centred learning needs to be appreciated and interpreted broadly and deeply as having implications not only for some minor learning decisions we allow kids to make or contribute to, but also for the broader decisions. As Jenny Galligan said [in this forum], "how much respect do we show for them and their creativity and understanding when we do not give them opportunities to lead us into the uncharted waters of their future? Their participation in decision making is a key and a gift." Most importantly, a student-centred approach and a concern for quality, productive relationships in schools, also has implications for the ways we speak to kids, organise them, evaluate them, and otherwise seek to influence their behaviour. In short, teachers and the department need to show kids a lot more genuine respect at every age level..

If we are looking to significant educational changes that will keep pace with and anticipate changes in society, we surely must address the issue of the megatrend toward the dissolution or restructuring of hierarchical and bureaucratic institutions, and the social justice/equity trends of increasing respect for, and empowering of, individuals and minority groups. Issues of power and control are recognised as central to current changes in society, and to unlocking the creative and productive capacities of individuals and organisations.

[End Field Journal Extract: 22 October 1999]

[Field Journal Extract: 26 October 1999]

In response to these comments, a teacher participant in the online discussion asked how we could address the abovementioned megatrends when we need a system to manage funding and numbers of people. I responded as follows:

In answer to Z's question, a big organisation like EQ needs to make a genuine shift from an emphasis on control and accountability to an allowance for autonomy and responsibility. The department needs to concern itself more with supporting schools, teachers and students, and less with controlling them... There is clearly a fundamental contradiction here, for an organisation beginning to espouse the principles of student-centred learning. The rhetoric of student-centred learning alone will not change reality.

Some of this contradiction is reflected in Bob McHugh's [Assistant Director-General Education Services] focus paper. While predicting that schools will be, for students, a "centre of peace, order and stability", he affirms the view that "once the curriculum is decided... [teachers must] be explicit in informing students about what is intended, what outcomes are being sought, the learning experiences to be engaged in and what is non negotiable".

In short, to bring about significant change from the student's point of view, we need to overcome the huge inertia of the culture of control and accountability, to make room for some significant degree of trust, of autonomy, of empowerment of schools, of teachers, and especially of students. School Based Management has been a beginning, but an extremely minimalist one.

[End Field Journal Extract: 22 October 1999]

A major reform project, or more correctly, a major school-based 'trial', coming under the umbrella of Queensland State Education – 2010 was the New Basics Project, which sought to confront 'the challenges of these dramatically changing times' by focusing on a coordinated 'triad' of New Basics curriculum organisers, 'authentic assessment' Rich Tasks, and Productive Pedagogies (Department of Education c1999, pp. 2-3). In October 1999, Education Queensland began hosting an online discussion forum to support the development of the New Basics Project.

The archives of that ‘Framework’ discussion forum are maintained online in the public domain (Department of Education and the Arts n.d.). Inspired by the potential of the Queensland State Education – 2010 vision and of the New Basics Project to facilitate the realisation of significant positive changes in the way students experience schooling, and the impacts of that experience, I participated actively in the online Framework discussions, especially during the last two months of 1999. (Quotations provided below from that online discussion are cut-and-pasted directly from the archives, so that language technicalities are as per the original postings.)

The New Basics trial came at a time when Queensland state schools were beginning to trial and implement the first (Science and Health & Physical Education) of the Outcomes Based Education syllabuses for all Key Learning Areas, being developed by the Queensland School Curriculum Council (QSCC) (now Queensland Studies Authority). The following comments by Assistant Director-General Education Services, Bob McHugh, are indicative of the philosophical and political misalignments characterising curriculum policy in Education Queensland at that time. The authoritarian tone of these comments (McHugh 1999, p. 2) about the nature of new approaches to curriculum contrasts starkly with the tone of Director-General Moran’s comments, quoted above.

The start of Semester 2 [1999] marks an important turning point in the history of curriculum for Queensland schools... Three key beliefs underpin the implementation of the new syllabuses in state schools:

- There are certain things that all our students need to know.
- We should be able, as a system, to state clearly and publicly what these things are.
- We should be accountable for ensuring our students achieve them.

Notwithstanding McHugh’s declaration of an historic turning point, the New Basics and QSE-2010 agendas arrived with such fanfare, there was widespread interest in

them, and an assumption by many that the New Basics would soon become the framework for all state schools. This perception was encouraged and/or reinforced by statements, such as Herschell's (1999), that the New Basics Project was about 'development of Education Queensland's Curriculum/Pedagogy/Assessment and reporting framework', and by *Queensland State Education – 2010* (Department of Education 1999), the guiding strategic document for state education in Queensland. With regard to 'curriculum for the future', for example, that document states that,

A framework is needed: one that coordinates curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation in providing an effective service to schools and teachers ... one that optimises students' opportunities for achievement of relevant and powerful skills and knowledge... The framework should be based on the *New Basics* required for work and social life of the future... (Department of Education 1999, p. 10)

The 'conflict' of agendas – the new OBE syllabuses, and the New Basics Project – was a source of considerable misalignment. For example, Roberts (1999), an Education Queensland District Director, commented on the Framework online discussion forum that:

Schools are keen to push at the boundaries of what is often described as an overcrowded curriculum. However in order to do so they risk "losing" the public who are only now beginning to come to terms with the language of KLA's. The challenge is to bring not only individual school communities along with [New Basic trial] project schools but also the broader communities. Schools who appear to be "tinkering" with the established KLA organisation for "new basics" risk being tagged as "dumbing down" their curriculum.

Nevertheless, within the early discussions regarding the precise 'shape' the New Basics Project might take, the issue of alignment between curriculum, assessment and pedagogy *internal* to the New Basics Project was central.

I addressed this issue in my first contribution to the online Framework discussion (mistakenly attributing a quoted statement to Deputy Director-General Professor Allan Luke, instead of its actual author, Neville Grace [1999a]):

Allan [sic] states that "If the ultimate reality is that outcomes are mandated, and pedagogy is the best response teachers can make, then assessment should reflect pedagogy." I believe there is a crucial error in causal sequence here. The "ultimate reality" is that assessment will always reflect and serve the mandated outcomes (this is what we want, let's check that it's happening), and it is well established by research and the common experience of teachers that assessment drives pedagogy, not the other way around (if they're gonna check that this specific thing is happening, we better do our darnedest to make sure we can demonstrate that it is, even if we achieve nothing else). It's not that "...if students experience poor pedagogical practices then they should logically expect these to be mirrored in inadequate assessment practices", but rather the reverse.

The bottom line is that, if "...the ultimate reality is that task outcomes are mandated, non-negotiable expectations", it makes no sense at all for us to talk about student-centred pedagogies. The only way in which it might begin to make sense is if those task outcomes are made broad, generic kinds of skills, abilities and knowledge, each of which gives genuine scope for mastery through a wide variety of activities/experiences. We can't be specific outcome-centred and student-centred at the same time. Such an attempt is just another manifestation of the prevalent one size fits all, closed-ended philosophy that de-centres the student. (Seaton 1999b)

A recurring theme in the Framework discussion focused on the tension between a perceive need for common tasks on the one hand, and ensuring student relevance and engagement, on the other. Gale (1999) made the following comment:

Medical pedagogy has for some time included a 'problem' based approach to learning, others have adopted similar things like 'situation-based learning, etc. What these enable, it seems to me, is to focus on meaningful tasks or cases from which tasks are generated.

I liked the implication in Gale's comment, that it would be important to ensure flexibility within the New Basics Project, rather than having all Rich Tasks mandatory. Hoping to give people further food for thought on this point, I responded with information about the resources for problem based learning I had put in the KidSolutions website:

Those interested in Trevor's comments might like to look at one possible approach to this kind of learning - guidelines and resources for teachers and students I've put on the web at... (Seaton 1999c)

Luke posted a response to a contribution I had made (Seaton 1999d) regarding the need to reconcile mandatory rich tasks to student-centredness. Luke (1999d) stated:

personally, andrew. I'm for 'student-centredness' in the Deweyian sense that the curriculum should be geared to the background knowledge, contexts and relevant to the lifeworlds of students. I'm not in favour of 'negotiating assessment outcomes'. I believe that teachers have or should have legitimate epistemological authority as 'knowers', as mentors, and as master of the technologies of communications and research that are required by these tasks. My sense is that we should mess around with the 'rich tasks'. They should be tough, difficult, and assessed with rigor. The student-centredness can occur by giving teachers the flexibility in pathways, pace, materials, etc. - how they might construct the varied zones of proximal development - to get there. But the judgement needs a hard edge.

The Rich Tasks did seem to me to be a rich and potentially flexible basis for learning activities. I felt that the bold attempt of the New Basics Project to move

away from the atomisation of curriculum to active engagement of students with ‘whole’, purposeful situations and ‘problems’ held great promise. Much would depend on the pedagogy adopted by individual teachers. My dominant concerns throughout the online discussions of late 1999 were twofold. The mandatory nature of the tasks was likely to render them less meaningful for many students. Secondly, despite the frequent reference to student-centredness, recognition of individual construction of meaning was consistently absent from discussion and policy statements, let alone emphasised as a ‘new’ guiding principle or theoretical underpinning. I agreed with Luke (1999c) that the Rich Tasks and New Basics materials that had been produced up to that time reflected the principles *he identified from his interpretation of Vygotsky, Dewey and Freire*. However, I felt then (and feel with greater conviction now, as I argue in Chapter 5) that it was too narrow an interpretation, and that what was left out is crucial.

In the context of the late 1999 online Framework discussion, without having thoroughly thought through a coherent theoretical framework myself until some time later, I endeavoured to grapple more with the issue of student-centredness in the following posting (Seaton 1999e), in response to the previous two from Luke.

I agree with much of what you say, Allan, but what if some/all of the non-negotiable assessment outcomes are not relevant to the background knowledge, contexts and lifeworlds of some/any students (ie. the kids don't think they are)? We can't talk of student-centredness where all "legitimate epistemological authority" remains with teachers (or those who decide, without negotiation, what assessment outcomes the student must master).

As you say Allan, teachers (and curriculum policy makers) have that epistemological authority now, but while the rhetoric of building on students' background knowledge and notions of relevance have been around for quite a while, and teachers have had some "flexibility in pathways, pace, materials, etc.", schooling has not been and is not remotely

student-centred. Ask the students. I don't see student-centredness as letting the kids do what they want. But the "tough, difficult and rigorously assessed" tasks they undertake as education must be perceived by them as purposeful. This constructivist principle was expressed well in the Years 1-10 English Language Arts Handbook [Department of Education 1991b, p. 6], "Worthwhile learning activities are purposeful in two senses. First, they involve students in using language for genuine personal and social purposes. Second, they help students learn. In both cases, it is the learners' purposes which are important. Unless they are committed to both purposes, they are unlikely to achieve either". Do we think we should decide what another person's interests and purposes should be? Do we think we could do so? We can't. And the heart of the problems in schools is lack of student engagement.

I think the idea of true respect for young people is quite foreign to our culture (both educational and social), but it is here that I think the potential for real progress lies.

Luke (1999e) responded with this:

i agree with your point about engagement and like the ELA materials you've cited, Andrew. But a question: how do we do with the problem of 'dumbing down' that occurs in 'negotiated curriculum'. need it? and how would you deal with the difficult technical problems about getting accountability around outcomes and standards?

I felt encouraged by this response. I felt that my efforts to focus some thought and discussion on the issue of engaging individual learners were bearing some fruit, particularly since I felt the 'technical problem' to which Luke referred could be resolved.

Before I had opportunity to reply, Gray (1999) commented:

Allen - I disagree with your assumption that a negotiated curriculum is necessarily a dumbed down curriculum. To

negotiate requires some self knowledge and an ability to translate intended learning outcomes into a particular context... It is not without academic rigour.

I formulated the following response, to suggest how, at the time, I felt student-centredness and accountability could best be reconciled (Seaton 1999f).

Allan, I think the problems of avoiding dumbing down in negotiated curriculum, and of getting accountability around outcomes and standards, have the one solution.

There are two elements to consider. The activity, and what's learned through it. Accountability is concerned with 'what's learned'. It doesn't need to be concerned with mandating the activity, so long as through it some mandated things are learned. The actual activity can be negotiated by teacher and student so that the student sees it as meaningful and purposeful, and the teacher is satisfied that through it some non-dumb, mandated things can be learned and demonstrated (rigorously and all the rest).

It has already been acknowledged that content is not the crucial thing. But nor is requiring every student to perform the same task. So what are the crucial things we want young people to learn (to know, to do, to be)?

Over the past decade there's been a lot of discussion of the notion of genres - not limited to the traditional, narrow idea of literary genres, but genres understood as "any purposeful activity that is characteristic of a cultural community; has a characteristic staged generic structure..." (ELA Handbook [Department of Education 1991b, p. 18]).

Just like with genres, MacIntyre (After Virtue: a study in moral theory, 1981 [p. 175]) explains that we develop skills, and qualities of mind and character by participating in 'practices' which he defines as "...any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are

realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity... (For more on this see <http://www1.tpgi.com.au/users/aseaton/services/curric.htm> [No longer available online])

Describing the same sort of idea, Morrison and Collins (1995 [p. 43]), use the term 'epistemic fluency' to describe the ability to participate in different culturally patterned ways of constructing knowledge, "...to recognise and practice a culture's epistemic games, with their associated forms" (For more on this see <http://www1.tpgi.com.au/users/aseaton/services/review.htm> [now available at <http://www.andrewseaton.com.au/review.htm>]).

The cross curricular Further Literacy Inservice Project (FLIP) [Department of Education & Brisbane Catholic Education Office 1990] materials used the term genres also, and emphasised the fact that, regardless of the curriculum area you are thinking about or working in, the genres describe the typical ways of knowing and doing.

So, it seems to me that what we think young people should master are all the key genres/practices/epistemic games of national and global culture. Our curriculum framework should identify these, and accountability demands focus on their acquisition/mastery. But most of these genres/practices/epistemic games can be used/experienced in very many different activities/contexts. For example, if the scientific experiment is an important genre for me to master, there is no need to mandate a particular task involving an experiment, simply to mandate that some activity be undertaken that the student sees as meaningful and purposeful, and that involves use of an experiment (with all the standards, etc).

In other words, the essential learnings can mostly be generic (same root as genre), allowing the student and teacher to

negotiate the specific activities/tasks. This will enable a genuinely student-centred approach to schooling, while satisfying society's legitimate expectation that the education process will assist the young person to function effectively within society, and fulfilling reasonable demands for proof that this is happening (accountability).

The first response to these comments came from an interstate teacher educator. I found them most encouraging, because they echoed my twin concerns of sufficient flexibility to address individual engagement and meaning, and lack of a clear, coherent and viable set of guiding principles or theoretical constructs.

...A final comment I would like to add to this great online discussion is that I like Andrew Seaton's comments. I particularly like the use of the concept of 'generic skills'. In NSW teachers are overwhelmed with outcomes and indicators from the 6 KLAs. What many are struggling to do now is find a common generic set that students can demonstrate in their learning. I will end my 'two bits worth'... by suggesting that unless the changes suggested by Luke and others are supported by effective professional development in the theoretical and practical underpinnings of a qualitative evaluation paradigm, teachers and others will overlay their old paradigm bell curve, right/wrong understandings of assessment and evaluation over all they do. It will be like trying to force a nut onto a bolt that has a different thread. The results - it wont work. (Turbill 1999)

I had been looking forward to a continuation of the exchange between Luke and myself – to hearing Luke take up discussion of my answer to his question regarding how to avoid dumbing down and accountability problems. However, I felt the response (Luke 1999f) was rather tangential and dismissive:

great exchange between andrew and jan. and i was about to get worked up over 'genres', having been a veteran of the genre-wars of the last decade (like jan). i take her point about the professional development needed... Remember Mike Apple's explanation: that 'deskilling', the separation of conception

from execution, of thinking from pedagogy, occurs when teachers are reduced to 'paint by numbers' technocratic curriculum (lots and lots of atomised outcomes, and standardised tests to check them)... The rich tasks require 'teaching as intellectual work' - as requiring critical 'readings' of kids and communities, effective use of diagnostic data, staffroom dialogue, engagement with new ideas, pedagogical experimentation, professional exchange, new thinking and theory...

p.s. can't stand 'generic skills' - it's the old competency language. and, after a decade, found a good definition of 'genre' from Janet Giltrow at Simon Fraser University - 'stabilised-for-now social action'

I agreed with Luke's (Apple's) comments about technocratic curriculum. However, I felt annoyed at his disengagement with our line of discussion, and in my next posting (Seaton 1999g), I allowed it to show, while hoping to remain professional. Then I introduced some discussion of issues relating to the third aspect of the New Basics 'three-message-system', pedagogy.

Allan, your response to my solution to dumbing down and accountability problems was nicely handled. How can anyone pursue reasonable debate with "a veteran of the genre-wars of the last decade" who "can't stand ("the old language of") 'generic skills'"? A few words of response came to my mind, but I didn't dwell on them. Let this suffice. Call them what you will, we will be teaching genres/epistemic games (in the senses I defined), regardless. They will be the processes students engage in to grapple with ("the Deweyan - state of the art, 1902") tasks set for them by those with "legitimate epistemological authority", and later, if they're lucky, to function effectively in society.

On a different tack, I'd like to make some comment about the Productive Pedagogies workshop held in Townsville over the weekend. I was disappointed and disturbed by it. I think the current change agenda in Queensland is potentially the most

exciting and beneficial the world has seen on a large scale. But it only has that potential, there is no inevitability about it. Historically, few educational innovations have given rise to significant, sustained changes, and there are disturbing signs that the current one might not either.

Repeated reference was made during the workshop to research by Newmann et al which, it was said, showed that authentic pedagogy with a focus on standards for intellectual quality gave rise to significant improvements in learning outcomes, especially for underachieving students. I found this puzzling. My own review of Newmann's study (Newmann, F., et al. [1996] "Authentic Pedagogy and Student Performance", American Journal of Education, Vol 104, No 4, pp.280-312) found his research to be deeply flawed (see <http://www1.tpgi.com.au/users/aseaton/services/innovate.htm> [now available at <http://www.andrewseaton.com.au/innovation.htm>]). Newmann makes quite a few loose and contradictory statements. But a significant statement is this: "Limitations in the design of the study may cast doubt on the extent to which we have established a clear causal relationship; we have not shown that interventions that deliberately set out to use these standards will boost student performance" (p.305).

Why do I raise this point if I am for authentic pedagogy and for intellectual standards, which I am? Because Newmann's research does not study authentic pedagogy as it purports to. In their preliminary discussion and review of literature, Newmann et al. identify five constructivist/student-centred principles of teaching. It is highly significant that, in defining the standards for authentic pedagogy which form the basis of their study, they include only two of the five principles. The neglected principles are the very principles that would make the pedagogy authentic or student-centred. On top of that, they neglect to gather any data from students!

Okay, what's this got to do with what's happening in Queensland? Just this. Productive Pedagogies is an attempt to encompass more than Newmann's study of authentic pedagogy, that is, more than his emphasis on intellectual quality. Fine. But I think we are in danger of being distracted from the central issue, as Newmann et al. were. I'm not convinced that what the School Reform Longitudinal Study found and studied really included authentic pedagogy or student-centred, social constructivist [I understand that term differently in 2005 than I did at the time this was written] learning and teaching. The list of twenty characteristics of productive pedagogy includes categories for the key elements of constructivist/student-centred learning and teaching. However, by being summarised in an observation checklist and applied in short, isolated lessons they have trivialised/superficialised the issues they set out to measure. In such a narrow context, trivial and insignificant manifestations would qualify for recognition. Put another way, a highly qualitative issue is described by a crude and highly quantitative instrument.

Of even greater concern than the use of such an instrument to measure manifestations of productive pedagogies in research, is that much of the workshop consisted of practice in the use of the observation sheet in ten minute microteaching segments and role plays, further reinforcing the assumption that the characteristics of student-centred/social constructivist learning and teaching can be meaningfully built in to isolated traditional lesson contexts with traditional subject content and traditional student learning outcome expectations. An invitation was made for a few participants to give a mini lesson to demonstrate what they thought productive pedagogy might look like. When I offered to describe an activity that might reflect the characteristics of productive pedagogies, I was refused. "We just want people to role play a teaching situation so workshop participants can practice using the classroom observation sheet." (If you want to check out the activity I was going to outline, see

<http://www1.tpgi.com.au/users/aseaton/kidsolutions> [now available at <http://www.andrewseaton.com.au/solution.htm>]).

If productive pedagogy continues to be promoted as something teachers can do by making some minor adjustments to what they've always been doing, then hope for significant, sustainable change is lost. Put another way, to apply Allan's paraphrasing of Michael Apple to a slightly different issue, "It's safe and easy to 'paint by numbers' [in terms of teachers' own pedagogy], but ultimately can be extremely educationally counter-productive". Moreover, with 20 characteristics of productive pedagogy on the checklist, teachers will see that they are already satisfying many of them, and the likelihood of confronting the challenge of the remaining, perhaps more fundamentally student-centred/constructivist characteristics, will be much reduced. Evidence the fact that EQ's formulation of the Principles of Effective Learning and Teaching, which include most of the principles identified in the productive pedagogies characteristics, and which have been around since 1994, have not lead to significant changes in pedagogy in the vast majority of schools.

An illustration of what I mean is provided by a discussion by a teaching staff of what could be done to reduce the incidence of bullying at school. "Let's start by listing everything we're already 'doing'", someone suggested. Twenty minutes of brainstorming produced a full whiteboard. How much serious discussion do you suppose followed, regarding what new strategies should be adopted?

I believe we need to focus on a few pedagogical fundamentals that need to be done differently, and that they should be in the areas of relevance and student direction of activities. Why? Because we can forget about intellectual quality and inclusivity benefits if students are not engaged. Which brings me back to where I started, so I'll stop.

I was aware that I was raising quite a number of issues that leaders of the New Basics Project and others might find very challenging. I was encouraged, however, by feedback that suggested people appreciated the discussion and saw it as positive. One such piece of feedback appeared as a Framework posting (Satterthwait 1999) following the above:

Andrew, I had a quick look at the Kids Solutions pages that you referenced in your thoughtful commentary. I really like it! It clearly identifies the different dimensions to tasks that need to be considered in the design of 'authentic' assessment. I use similar dimensions when teaching preservice secondary science teachers about how assessment can work-- with considerable potential to be a pivotal learning experience. It also empowers the teachers; they do not have to test in the way it was done to them. Giving license to have the audience assess the product (peer-assessment in oral presentations), opens doors to more imaginative and relevant types of tasks that can be used as part of a portfolio. Nothing teaches reflection or self-evaluation like an assignment that requires a self-appraisal questionnaire to be completed in examination conditions. Thank you for directing my attention to this website.

The discussion about issues of student-centredness, and the tension I had begun to sense it was creating in the online discussion, was making it clearer to me that the deep issues of learning and pedagogy are inextricably bound up with the issue of agency and its two polar components, autonomy and control. I had read something about this polarity in the context of QSE-2010, written by either the Queensland Minister for Education or the Director-General of Education. I had forgotten which it was, and no longer had the reference, but I decided to bring the matter to the fore in my next posting to the online forum (Seaton 1999h):

I mentioned earlier that, following their review of literature on constructivist learning, Newmann et al. [1996] described five essential components of constructivist pedagogy (1, 4 and 5 are the ones they left out of their study.) The five are: (1) "teachers must be familiar with,

respect, and actively use students' prior knowledge" (2) "teachers must emphasize opportunities for higher-order thinking and in-depth understanding" (3) "instruction must offer multiple opportunities for students to use conversation, writing, and other forms of expression to process information" (4) "rather than an authoritative dispenser of information and truth, the teacher must become a coach, facilitator, guide, or mentor" (5) "participants in the social setting for learning - students and teachers alike - must exemplify norms of collaboration, trust, and high expectations for intellectual accomplishment".

Xiaodong and his team also identify five key principles that can be used as we attempt to design and develop efficient, constructivist learning communities (1995, "Instructional design and development of learning communities: An invitation to a dialogue"). They suggest such communities would provide students opportunities to: (1) plan, organize, monitor, and revise their own research and problem solving; (2) work collaboratively and take advantage of distributed expertise from the community to allow diversity, creativity, and flexibility in learning; (3) learn self-selected topics and identify their own issues that are related to the problem-based anchors and then identify relevant resources; (4) use various technologies to build their own knowledge rather than using the technologies as "knowledge tellers"; and (5) make students' thinking visible so that they can revise their own thoughts, assumptions, and arguments.

You'll notice, not surprisingly, that Xiaodong's principles are very similar to those identified by Newmann. You'll notice also, that they constitute issues of relevance and student direction of activities.

But we have reached an impasse - the conversation has ceased. Why? Because we have come up hard against the underlying issue - who has the power? The ultimate concern for answering to the political powers and for ranking students (which is

driving the need for common tasks, and most recently, concern for defining common, assessable sub-tasks) is very telling. Who owns the young in our society? The politicians, education policy makers, teachers, parents, or young people themselves? This is a key issue raised in the 2010 consultation as reported by Dean Wells (? Terry Moran?): respect for individual autonomy Vs 'society's' demand for conformity and stratification.

For example, Hodas (1997 [should be 1993], "Technology Refusal and the Organisational Culture of Schools, 2.0") suggests that schools are technologies and that there is a close relationship between schools-as-a-technology and, "...the institutional and organizational values of knowing, being, and acting on which the school itself is founded: respect for hierarchy, competitive individualization, a receptivity to being ranked and judged, and the division of the world of knowledge into discreet units and categories susceptible to mastery". (Also see Hodas' [sic - should be Cuban 1993] article, "Computer Meets Classroom: Classroom Wins".)

The most powerful forces operationalising these values in schools are assessment and evaluation practices (see Eisner [e.g. 1991, p. 81], heaps of others, your own experience and the content of this online discussion). In the 2010 online discussion, Pat Heenan wrote about our tendency to overlay the new paradigm on the old, and how we really need to make a quantum leap to the new. Yessiree.

Now, here is a historic, make or break moment. Can we (and do we want to) make a quantum leap to find a creative new way to make respect for and empowerment of students the defining value and characteristic of schooling, instead of control and evaluation? To do so, our greatest need is for creative new ways for describing each student's learning. The assessment issue is the bottom line, and if we fail to actualise a fundamentally different philosophy of assessment and

reporting, the new framework won't be a new framework. If we are concerned with teachers exploring new ways of knowing, doing and being (Ed Views, 1998 [Department of Education 1998a, p. i]), and, as Terry Moran says we should be, with teaching students new ways of knowing, doing and being (the four pillars stuff [Delors 1996]), then we must think outside the square. Lucky you, Allan. It's in your hands.

This posting prompted a posting that included a request for assistance in 'developing an inclusive curriculum framework' at a Special Education Unit, and some words of encouragement: 'I love reading your contributions Andrew!!! I keep finding myself nodding through all your key points you make.' (Poletto 1999)

The next response to my contributions took us closer to the heart of the question about whether the vision of the New Basics Project amounted to the paradigm shift that so many of the sources cited above, both within Education Queensland and beyond, were calling for. Ladwig (1999) made a lengthy commentary on some of the points I had made in my posting regarding misgivings about the formulation of Productive Pedagogies. My response was also quite a substantial one (Seaton 1999i). (The sections beginning with an asterisk * and further indented are where I reproduce parts of Ladwig's [1999] original comment.)

...Last year EQ promoted Newmann's definition of 'authentic pedagogy' in Ed Views as "teaching and learning that is: meaningful; valuable; significant; worthy of one's efforts; entailing extrinsic rewards; meeting intrinsic student needs; providing students with a sense of ownership; having a connection to the real world; and fun." [Newmann 1995, cited in Department of Education 1998a, p. ii]

My purpose in raising the issue of Newmann et al.'s research was to point out how far removed the focus of their study was from THAT definition of 'authentic pedagogy'. (It seems many, including Newmann, now use the term to refer almost exclusively to issues of intellectual quality - a huge shift!)

Are we not talking student-centredness in a clear and direct way in the ABOVE definition of 'authentic pedagogy'? EQ promotes the principles of student-centred, constructivist learning and teaching across the state through Education Advisors - Effective Learning and Teaching. In EQ the term 'student-centred' is actually used to describe principles of effective learning and teaching in the Minimum Standards for Teachers - Learning Technology checklist, and in other curriculum documents.

* If, however, Andrew is looking for his more student-centred vision, then he is correct, that's not the central concern of either the CORS work nor the QSRLS.

It's not MY vision, James. I support the Newmann and EQ perspectives described above (and by others in many other places). It IS a shame that, as you say, they are not the central concern of QSRLS.

*...it is very important to keep it very clear that Newmann and Associates DO NOT CLAIM that AP is 'constructivist'...

Newmann's report DOES describe an intimate connection between authentic pedagogy and constructivism/student-centred learning and teaching: "Resistance to student-centred teaching may be due in part to teachers and parents who have already sensed this problem [participation in activities regardless of the intellectual quality of students' work - what Allan calls 'dumbing down']....The standards of intellectual quality for authentic pedagogy and evidence of a link between authentic pedagogy and student performance should advance research and practice on student-centred, or constructivist, teaching." ([Newmann et al. 1996] pp.281-282) So, it would seem that a student-centred vision IS (or WAS) integral to the research concerns of Newmann.

* On the question of whether or not teachers are already doing most of the things measured [on the productive pedagogies checklist]...

Whoops! My word was 'many' not 'most'. And even then, I'm suggesting that with a superficial application of a crude checklist, it would be easy for teachers to PERCEIVE that they were doing many of the things to a satisfactory degree.

* Actually, I'll simply have to disagree on this last point [that we can forget about intellectual quality and inclusivity benefits if students are not engaged]. Schools and teachers can make all the relevance and allow all the student direction in the world without actually improving what it is that students walk away with from schooling.

Of course, James. I'm saying engagement is a necessary, not a sufficient, condition of effective learning.

* Andrew is exactly correct that seeing such an agenda come to reality would mark a massive revolution in schooling (QSRLS found that student-centred practices are the MOST rare of all).

Yeeppp!!! THAT'S my point! THAT'S why I think it's so important for EQ to make issues of relevance and student direction of activities a clear priority in a new framework of pedagogy/curriculum/assessment. Anything else will be "fudging around the edges".

*I question the realism of anyone who really believes (a) schooling could ever be conducted without some imposition...

Agreed. We are not talking about students doing whatever they want. We are talking about respecting relevance and purposefulness from their perspective, and the value of

significant levels of student direction and control of learning and action (with all the intellectual quality, etc).

*(b) [I question whether] any centralised education authority that currently exists is about to end its regime...

Agreed. But substantially restructure its mode of operation in response to social changes and social pressure? I believe we WILL see that happen. Many large, centralised organisations nationally and globally are restructuring in major ways. Fundamental restructuring of education is being explored in a number of places. One example of substantial recognition of the inconsistencies between conventional school environments (including one-size-fits-all assessment) and student-centred, constructivist learning environments is California Senate Bill 1448, passed by the California House of Representatives in 1992, enabling the state to grant special charters to individual schools, waiving the requirements of the education code (especially mandated assessment requirements), in order to experiment with new methods of teaching (see, for example, San Carlos Charter Learning Center at <http://scclc.sancarlos.k12.ca.us> [San Carlos Charter Learning Center 2004]).

*(c) [I question whether] any general population born and raised in such a regime will be all that thrilled about it disappearing... really a very large philosophical, sociological and political question, and not one that will be settled in the near future.

Those who've been emailing me and approaching me (people "born and raised in such a regime"), say THEY'VE been nodding their heads. Many would agree with the need for the kind of change emphasis I've been advocating (especially the students!). When enough people do, it'll happen...

Two additional points of interest in Ladwig's (1999) posting warrant comment from my current perspective. The first relates to his comments about 'the imposition of an epistemic authority' and about 'very old, very unresolvable, binary curriculum divides'. My synthesis of a Dynamic Paradigm of Learning and Change (Chapter 3) has led me to a clearer appreciation (1) that ultimate epistemological authority *does* lie with the individual, since the individual is the ultimate agent in meaning making, (2) that perception of authentic constraints, whether external (experiential evidence of non-viability) or internal (logical inconsistency), plays a vital role in learning (revision of our action schemes or internal reference standards), (3) that some understanding of major ways in which others in our culture organise experience (interpret the world) *is* important, and (4) that the assistance and inspiration of 'educated' educators, as a secondary source of epistemological authority, is vital for people to problematise assumptions and real situations.

Secondly, it is most interesting to note Ladwig's (1999) statement that a student-centred vision of the kind I identified in specific quotations from Newmann and Education Queensland are 'not the central concern of either the CORS work nor the QSRLS', in stark contrast to Education Queensland's position in 1998 that precisely that definition of student-centred learning (authentic pedagogy) was at the 'heart' of the reform agenda (Department of Education 1998a, p. ii). In connection with this issue of desirable pedagogy, I note two other comments. Ladwig (1999) suggested the problem-based learning pedagogy I had proposed to share at the workshop could not be coded for elements of Productive Pedagogy, because nowhere within it could a 'specific lesson' be found. He went on to suggest that many of the reasons the Productive Pedagogies were observed so rarely in the QSRLS research 'relate to how school [sic] organise their work'. These comments served to clarify in my mind the need in a more viable educational paradigm to move beyond limiting assumptions/constructions/contexts such as the notion of an isolated lesson being the likely context for enabling and observing meaningful learning. It also confirmed my sense of a need to develop different curriculum

delivery models that support the kind of learning we value. It was to be some time yet before I would grapple in a focused and practical way with that challenge.

It was apparent that others participating in the online discussion forum were also concerned about issues of flexibility with the Rich Tasks. One possible solution, proposed by McKeown (1999), involved the notion of a task-o-rama, wherein students could make up a Rich Task by selecting one item from a group of processes/tasks, one from a list of topics, and one from a list of output formats. McKeown's (1999) posting received several supportive responses. I was keen to support moves in this direction, and posted the first response the same day (Seaton 1999j).

Yes, let's think along the lines Lindy suggests. Some or all of the process and presentation format items could even be mandated, and be the focus of assessment, but their order of coverage and the task context/topic could be left to negotiation between teacher and student. I wouldn't like to see topics mandated though. Hopefully, a wide variety of topic options would be offered, or preferably, the choice of topic would be left entirely open to negotiation.

Lindy's suggestion would address Allan's concern with "how we'd get flexibility but maintain intellectual engagement and depth" and "'recapture' the accountability agenda back from standardised testing", without fixing the actual tasks apriori, just some of the sub-tasks (process and presentation items).

Another challenge to the viability of the thinking guiding the New Basics framework came in the form of a posting from education consultant, Joy Schultz (1999).

...I hate to be a party-pooper, but I question the need for these four New Basics - not their intent, but their current form. I would maintain that the new QSCC curriculum covers the same ground, is similarly futures-oriented and provides a more comprehensive framework through the seven "valued

attributes of the life-long learner", which can be found in the Rationale of each of the new QSCCC syllabuses - ie knowledgeable person with deep understanding, complex thinker, creative person, active investigator, effective communicator, participant in an interdependent world, reflective and self-directed learner...

The benefits that I see of schools working with the seven attributes rather than the New Basics are: (1) The attributes would put the emphasis on the learner and on the pedagogy required for students to demonstrate the attributes and the overall outcomes, rather than what I see as four rather disparate 'things'. Along with Andrew Seaton, I believe that the revolution we need to have is a pedagogical revolution rather than yet another reorganisation of curriculum structures...

Might I suggest that a parallel trial of using the seven attributes as a framework be conducted along with the trial of the New Basics?...

Being an integrationist from way back, what really excites me is the idea of rich tasks. However, I would like to see these based around the QSCC overall learning outcomes of the attributes, rather than characteristics which come from - where?. I agree with many of the misgivings of Ray Land about the tasks, and I also wonder how adequately the KLA perspectives and skills were mapped in coming up with the tasks - considering that not all KLA syllabuses are completed. ...The KLAs exist because they have distinctive ways of looking at the world and distinctive ways of generating new knowledge. These "ways of knowing" need specific emphasis before students are capable of adequately using those different world views in an integrated task...

These comments drew a quick response in support of the New Basics framework from a member of the New Basics team (Grace 1999c).

I do not want to be seen as a "New Fanatic" who thinks that these New Basics and Rich Tasks will provide a simple answer to complex curriculum and pedagogical questions... [But] I believe that [in schools addressing the outcomes based syllabuses] the attributes [of a Life Long Learner] will rapidly be forgotten in the process of grappling with key learning area outcomes, strands, level statements and core and discretionary learning outcomes. I refer in particular to the report by Junn Kato that the seven attributes are the very things that do NOT get addressed in the professional development - and that they are the things that teachers tend not to read in coming to grips with new syllabuses. The outcomes, i.e. questions about what the clients are supposed to learn? are more likely to drive curriculum planning.

Support for this view regarding the difficulty of keeping the attributes of life long learners in the foreground and guiding pedagogy came in a posting from Grauf (1999).

Now that we have reached a point in the discussion where the 7 attributes have entered the debate I need to respond from what I believe is a fairly unique perspective. Having been a part of the very small team writing the QSCC P-10 Curriculum Framework and specifically the '7 valued attributes of a lifelong learner', I hold them dear. Their intention in my mind was always to make a difference to pedagogy. To have something stand up and shout loudly for teachers that there is a mandate to spend time/effort/planning/money on doing the big important stuff. The 'stuff' that every parent and teacher will tell you is important. Yet, the position of these attributes within the syllabus material does not necessarily facilitate, lead or even support any significant change in pedagogy.

When I then had the opportunity to work in a new school I found that the staff and community readily held these attributes as a covenant about teaching and learning. It was what they wanted to do.

However as many contributors to this discussion have pointed out, there is still much to be done to make the attributes breathe at an implementation level. ...We did a good job of implementing outcomes based syllabuses.

What did get difficult though, was holding on to the covenant (remember the 7 attributes?), whilst sliding down the slope of syllabus implementation with a focus on outcomes.

We (as a school) had to find ways of ensuring that the attributes had a life. It was only our determination and belief in these attributes which allowed them to continue to raise their heads above the detail of the core outcomes. It remains a difficult thing to do.

...To my mind it doesn't really matter whether it is new basics or the 7 attributes. What matters is that someone seriously gives teachers a serious mandate to be serious about the really serious stuff.

A fellow Education Advisor (EA) pursued this issue further (Agnew 1999).

...When the EAs of this State first began to learn of the new Queensland Curriculum Syllabi, we were led to believe that there WAS a starting point for the development of ALL of the new Syllabi.....the Overall Outcomes ie the 7 Valued Attributes of the Life-long Learner! ...Essentially, we were told that there are certain attributes we would like ALL students to have so that they have skills which enable them to continue learning OUTSIDE the school environment and into their 'life-outside-school'. This makes a lot of sense to me, and certainly has made a lot of sense to teachers that I have spoken to! They can see the value in developing these attributes in a learner...

...I agree with Ezette [Grauf] that the Valued Attributes are not directly 'teachable' things, however, this is not a bad thing if we want to move the dinosaurs of classroom pedagogy along. With the 7 Valued Attributes being the framework,

teachers are FORCED to consider what sort of learning experiences they can give a student to enable them to DEVELOP these attributes...

It was clear to me after a couple of months participating in the New Basics framework online discussion that a particular, centrally driven formulation of the New Basics framework had a great momentum of its own. However, it was also clear to me that, despite this, there was also considerable momentum to the discussion concerned with a more flexible approach. With the year nearly over, I wanted to draw my thinking around some of the critical discussion threads together. I attempted to give them some 'form', in the hope that thereby they might have greater, if still limited chance of adoption. To that end, I posted the following comments (Seaton 1999k).

We are considering a new curriculum, pedagogy and assessment framework, but I think (with Eric Wilson [1999]) much of the discussion has blurred the lines between these. I for one, have often found myself caught up thinking of the Rich Tasks as learning tasks (to which purpose they are, in many respects, well suited). Some recent comments have reminded me that the Rich Tasks are being developed for assessment purposes, "a fairly straightforward bid to put in 'teacher moderation' systems at years 3, 6, 9". If so, what exactly are we wanting to assess? And if the Rich Tasks have been developed for the purpose of assessment, why are we asking how we assess them? My understanding of authentic assessment (I hesitate to use the term 'authentic' any more, since it has clearly been shown to mean quite different things over time and to different people) is that assessment should take place within the context of a student's participation in an activity that is meaningful to them (as learning itself should). The performance of the activity itself is not necessarily being assessed, but the activity provides a non-artificial (authentic) context, "an actual doing, a social practice" within which the assessment of particular skills, knowledge and/or processes can take place.

Allan has pointed out that a constantly recurring theme in this discussion has been the need to reconcile relevance and accountability, student engagement/ownership and 'one-size-fits-all', common assessment. As some have pointed out, the Rich Tasks themselves appear to have no clear rationale as assessment tasks, and there has been wide agreement that we need some sort of assessment criteria WITHIN Rich Tasks (that is, something to assess). As I said some time ago, accountability is concerned with 'what's learned'. It doesn't need to be concerned with mandating the task, whether it be learning task or authentic assessment task, so long as through it some valued things (common criteria of assessment) are learned or demonstrated respectively. Several contributors have put forward the 7 Attributes of a Life-Long Learner, described in the new outcomes syllabuses as the overall valued outcomes of all KLAS, as worthy candidates for common assessment criteria. If these seven attributes describe our most valued educational outcomes, surely we should make them the direct focus of student assessment.

Moving the focus of assessment from the knowledge/skills acquisition appropriate to the industrial age, to an assessment focus on learner attributes for a post-modern age would seem entirely appropriate. This raises the matter of the term 'New Basics' again. We don't want to simply add new basic skills and knowledge, or new basic ways of dividing the curriculum, to the old basic skills and knowledge, or we're still really talking in the old paradigm. We need something that focuses on what's important in and for the young person who is developing, a person-centred term rather than a content-centred term. Something along the lines of 'key attributes' (of a life-long learner) would seem appropriate. The community recognises that the accelerating rate of the acquisition and availability of information makes ridiculous the idea of a content-based education. They recognise that the old basics are not adequate to the needs of the young in today's world, and they are unlikely to be enamoured of 'New Basics'. (As Ray Land [1999] points out, they are also not

likely to be enamoured of a top-down, mandated list of tasks that do not provide for their children the sort of "choice and negotiation [that are] such a feature of (post) modern (adult) life".) Surveys of parental priorities for schooling have shown that narrow academic attainment rates well below concern for the development of personal qualities, including confidence and self-efficacy, and social and general coping skills. Industry also seems more interested in personal attributes such as creativity, self-management capacity, problem-solving ability and resourcefulness than in traditional scholastic grades.

A focus on the 7 attributes would be helpful in the area of pedagogy also. As Allyson Agnew [1999] points out, such a focus would help teachers make a shift from being sage on the stage to guide on the side. In short, it would facilitate a shift to greater levels of student control, ownership and engagement, while maintaining the most valued assessment anchors for accountability purposes.

I'm not one who believes there is a 'right' formulation of curriculum. Nor, however, do I believe that all formulations are of equal merit. In summary, the advantages of making the 7 Attributes of a Life-Long Learner (or very similar formulation) the core focus of our new curriculum, pedagogy and assessment framework would seem to include:

- provides scope for critical social research and a wide variety of activities in real life social and cultural contexts
- can allow for inclusion of learning and assessment tasks that have either a specific or integrated KLA orientation, or a specific 'New Basic' orientation
- provides generic elements for 'rich' (negotiated) learning and assessment tasks which (the generic elements) can serve as reference points for learning and teaching, and for assessment

- provides linkage between traditional, KLA focused and New Basics approaches to curriculum
- provides a new paradigm "hickory stick" (assessment framework) to drive pedagogy and other aspects of school life which support rather than contradict contemporary (constructivist) learning theory (one of the four philosophical assumptions underlying the new outcomes based curricula) and the associated student-centred learning and teaching paradigm
- brings issues of pedagogy to the fore (Neville Grace's [1999c] doubts notwithstanding - as he (and Junn Kato [1999] and Ezette Grauf [1999]) points out, "the attributes will rapidly be forgotten in the process of grappling with key learning area outcomes...". Ezette [Grauf 1999] put it so beautifully: "What did get difficult though, was holding on to the covenant (remember the 7 attributes?), whilst sliding down the slope of syllabus implementation with a focus on outcomes". The 7 attributes WOULD become powerful if THEY were made the focus. Unjustifiably mandated outcomes and tasks again get in the way.
- makes feasible negotiated learning activities (around the mandated assessment anchors - 7 attributes), and so, much greater levels of student self-direction, relevance, engagement and ownership, and indirectly, much improved quality of relationships in schools
- reconciles need for significant levels of student control and direction of activities with need for intellectual quality
- compatible with portfolio assessment, self-assessment and peer-assessment methods considered by many as appropriate to 'authentic assessment'
- focusing on generic elements of learning and assessment tasks would go some way to averting the equity problem raised by Ray Land [1999] of schools in "disadvantaged contexts", and the logical/equity problem of generalizability raised by Kath Glasswell [1999] "that

'tasks' are social constructs that will be interpreted differently by different people"

- assists the professional development issue raised by Ray Land [1999] by putting forward the 7 attributes as a clear linkage that shows "their pedagogy and assessment practices are being supported - while simultaneously being enhanced and change -, via an initiative which also unequivocally assists more students"...

In signing off the discussion forum for the year, I wanted to express my appreciation for the opportunity of participation in such a stimulating discussion, and to convey some sense of what I felt might be achieved through such rigorous debate:

Thanks EQ, for the open discussion forum. I love this quote from a colleague's pinboard:

Excellence can be attained if you...

- care more than others think is wise
- risk more than others think is safe
- dream more than others think is practical
- expect more than others think is possible.

However, I was not content to leave the discussion without any tangible outcome, if I could help it. In mid December, I prepared a proposal for a school trial of a pedagogy/curriculum/assessment framework focused on generic abilities and the QSCC's Attributes of Life Long Learners, to parallel the New Basics trial. The proposal rationale contained basically the points contained in my last substantive posting to the Framework online discussion forum (Seaton 1999k). The proposal was for two interested schools within the one area to be involved in the trial, a primary school and a secondary school, with the most significant additional resource being the appointment of myself as a facilitator shared by the two schools. Project evaluation was to consist of research conducted by myself and focused on study of the school climate, pedagogical practices, curriculum guidelines,

assessment and reporting procedures, student, parent and staff perceptions of the learning environment, and student learning outcomes, and any research Education Queensland might wish to undertake or commission. I emailed the proposal to then Director-General, Terry Moran.

2.3 YEAR 2000

Early in 2000, I received a reply to my proposal from Professor Allan Luke, then Deputy Director-General of Education Queensland. It stated, in part:

I refer to your proposal dated 17 December 1999, forwarded by email to the Director-General of Education. The proposal referred to a trial in schools of a pedagogy, curriculum and assessment framework based on the seven attributes of a lifelong learner identified in Queensland School Curriculum Council syllabuses.

...I believe that such a plan could operate now within a school or cluster of schools as a way of fulfilling the requirements of schools to implement the QSCC syllabuses currently being rolled out. The framework of seven attributes appears in each of the syllabuses and could be used easily as an organising framework to promote cross-disciplinary curriculum delivery, be a basis for rich negotiated learning and assessment tasks and to drive pedagogy.

Resources are available in schools and funds are being distributed to assist in the implementation of syllabuses, including those for Science and Health and Physical Education, and for others as they become available. While extra funding is always welcome within schools, I do not see that extra systemic funds would need to be injected to make your proposal possible within the existing context of syllabus implementation.

I thank you for your significant contribution to the Framework discussion list and for the thought that you have put into your proposal. While system

funds are not available to support what you suggest, I feel sure some schools would be interested in using your ideas as a basis for syllabus implementation. I am sure there would be much to be learned from the activity and wish you well if you are able to collaborate with one or more schools and use the experience as part of doctoral action research. (Luke 2000, pers. comm. 2 March)

I was disappointed not to be given any resourcing for a facilitating role. However, I was excited that Education Queensland had at least given approval for a school based trial. I hoped I might be able to facilitate such a trial from within my role as an Education Advisor. However, at a local level I was not allowed to do so.

I pressed ahead, in the hope of being able to facilitate the trial and conduct research outside my working hours. I sent letters of invitation to principals of schools in the area, secured commitments from several principal's and their staffs to participate, and secured ethics approval from Deakin University Ethics Committee and Education Queensland for a research study, framed as *The General Abilities Framework: A Student-Centred Approach to Curriculum, Assessment & Pedagogy: A Multi-Case Study*. The research proposals read, in part:

The General Abilities Framework trial and research project focuses on the importance of grappling with the essence of a student-centred approach to teaching and learning, namely, the empowerment of, and genuine respect for, each student. The project involves the implementation of a student-centred framework for curriculum, assessment and pedagogy, relatively free of mandatory content, outcomes statements or tasks. The aims of the research are to describe and evaluate:

1. the impact of the General Abilities Framework on teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices
2. the impact of the General Abilities Framework on student attitudes to learning and the learning environment

3. the impact of the General Abilities Framework on the quality of student learning.

The hypothesis is that the framework will enable a shift in teacher beliefs and practices in the direction of learner-centredness, and that it will lead to improvements in student engagement in learning and in the quality of student learning.

I struggled for much of the year 2000 to get the trial/research project off the ground, but it was proving to be impossible without any time, funding or systemic endorsement beyond in-principle approval for the trial.

Meanwhile, though the New Basics online discussion forum continued to function, it did so with a much reduced membership and greatly reduced intensity. The New Basics school based trial was now underway, and discussion was less around the formulation of the New Basics Project and more about practicalities. Occasionally, though much less frequently now, I made a contribution to the discussion, where I felt I could address some clear need. I made one such contribution (Seaton 2000a) in response to a request for assistance regarding the Productive Pedagogies (Mostert 2000).

Willemina said:

i.e what does deep thinking (as one e.g.) [of the Productive Pedagogies] looklike in my classroom? How do I embed this in my teaching? We are also involved with the IDEAS project focussing on authentic pedagogies and want to dovetail the New Basics and OBE into this. Any feedback would be appreciated.

Here are some insights and guidelines I've found useful, from two different sources. First, brain research tells us of four levels of knowledge:

Surface Knowledge - the product of rote learning
Technical or Scholastic Knowledge - ideas, principles and procedures that

are traditionally regarded as the core content of any subject or discipline, and which 'lacks a quality that makes it available for solving real problems or for dealing with complex situations' Felt Meaning - 'an almost visceral sense of relationship, an unarticulated sense of connectedness that ultimately culminates in insight', an "aha!" Deep Meanings - 'the fundamental purposes and values that make life itself worthwhile' and 'ultimately, the forces that drive the selection and interpretation of life experience' (ASCD 1999, The Human Brain: An ASCD Professional Enquiry Kit, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, Va., f.5, a.1, pp.10-13).

So true higher order thinking and deep learning require that experiences have personal meaning for the learner. This means that learning activities must be relevant to their interests, values and purposes, and the context of their own lives. What is most essential is that students are truly engaged in the activities through which they are learning, that they have a clear sense of ownership and personal or social purpose. Xiaodong and The Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt University recognise these constructivist principles and attempt to identify their implications for what deep thinking would look like in our classrooms. We must provide students opportunities to:

- plan, organize, monitor, and revise their own research and problem solving
- work collaboratively and take advantage of distributed expertise from the community to allow diversity, creativity, and flexibility in learning
- learn self-selected topics and identify their own issues that are related to the problem-based anchors and then identify relevant resources
- use various technologies to build their own knowledge rather than using the technologies as "knowledge tellers", and

- make students' thinking visible so that they can revise their own thoughts, assumptions, and arguments. ((Xiaodong, L., Bransford, J., Hmelo, C., Kantor, R., Hickey, D., Secules, T., Petrosino, A., Goldman, S. & The Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt 1995, 'Instructional design and development of learning communities: An invitation to a dialogue', Educational Technology, September-October), p.59.)

While all the discussion about the New Basics Framework was going on, all state schools in Queensland, apart from the 38 New Basics trial schools, were obliged to be engaging with implementation of the outcomes based syllabuses being progressively developed and rolled out by the QSCC. Education Queensland was endeavouring to formulate a policy and guidelines regarding how it would require schools to respond to those OBE syllabuses. There was great confusion about the twin agendas of New Basics and OBE syllabuses. As an Education Advisor, and would-be manager of the General Abilities Framework trial, I was also grappling with how to be clear about systemic requirements and latitude. I posted the following comments (Seaton 2000c) to the New Basics online discussion forum, in the hope of prompting some clarification.

The Draft Policy and Guidelines for Core Curriculum for Years 1-10 in Education Queensland Schools [Department of Education 2000d] raises some important questions for schools trialing new frameworks. The Policy is written in such a way as to suggest it is binding on New Basics trial schools. The implication is that the New Basics cannot function as a new framework, but rather merely as a possible form of school curriculum program within the "core curriculum... based on the key learning area outcomes (and subject area outcomes for subject area syllabuses) and level statements" [Department of Education 2000d, p. 2]. Can someone confirm that this is so?

If it is, there are some difficult issues to resolve.

1. The draft Policy and Guidelines state that "The school curriculum program should ensure that learnings related to all key learning area outcomes are developed progressively over Years 1-10 [and] ...must identify the student learning outcomes [which] ...will allow students to demonstrate understandings in the level statements" [Department of Education 2000d, pp. 5, 2]. How are the New Basics and the Rich Tasks correlated with the level statements? If they are not correlated, how can schools adopt them, and satisfy the guidelines?
2. The draft Policy and Guidelines state that "Assessment [and] reporting on core curriculum must be based on the learning as described by level statements..." [Department of Education 2000d, p. 3]

I'm interested in hearing what New Basics project managers think, and what trial schools think about these questions, because in its current form, the Draft Policy and Guidelines for Core Curriculum for Years 1-10 in Education Queensland Schools [Department of Education 2000d] places severe constraints on curriculum innovation, and appears incompatible with the intent and the implementation of the New Basics Framework, and indeed of the General Abilities Framework, both approved for trial by EQ.

It was quite some time before those issues received any clarification. The following month, however, there were further official statements emphasising a student-centred focus as characterising the needed paradigm change. Education Minister, Dean Wells, stated that 'a student-centred focus to education was the way of the future' (quoted in Fitzgerald 2000, p. 1). Wells emphasised that:

School should be structured in the future so that it's never a blow to students' self-esteem... We're not going to achieve a maximum completion rate, as required by the 2010 strategy, if we still have a school system which is daunting or which students see as being of dubious relevance to their lives. ...By necessity we need a system that meets the particular needs of individual students... Less and less it will be about trying to broadcast a

single message to an undifferentiated mass of 25 students. (Quoted in Fitzgerald 2000, p. 1)

These views were endorsed by Parliamentary Secretary, Darryl Briskey:

What we need to do is provide a more flexible system that will enable students who are now leaving the system to come back to school, or to remain at school because it is relevant to their lives now and in the future.

(Quoted in Fitzgerald 2000, p. 1)

Briskey emphasised that the ‘intense pressures placed on students, as evidenced by drop-out rates and increasing levels of depression and youth suicide, needed to be addressed’ (Fitzgerald 2000, p. 1).

Meanwhile, I continued to be concerned with how schools could make sense of the complex and rapidly fluctuating policy environment and make coherent and purposeful response to educational reform. I wrote a proposal titled, “Smart State or Slave State? Curriculum for a Learning Society”, and sent it with an accompanying letter to the Federal Minister and Shadow Minister, and State Ministers for Education. Part of the argument I made in the proposal is reproduced below.

The most essential revision of curriculum policy across Australia involves removal of the requirement to assess and report on student performance levels for separate strands within eight Key Learning Areas.

The second required revision is a focus on general abilities. There are two key elements in learning - the activity, and what is learned or demonstrated through it. Accountability is concerned with what is learned. It does not need to be concerned with making a specific activity or task mandatory, whether learning or assessment activity, so long as through the activities that *are* undertaken, some valued things are learned or demonstrated respectively. It is possible to achieve a reconciliation between the need for respecting relevance and purposefulness from the individual student's perspective and the value of significant levels of student direction and control of learning and action on the one hand, and the need for intellectual quality, deep learning, and appropriate assessment and accountability mechanisms on the other. This can be achieved by making general abilities,

genres, activities and practices, including those identified from traditional subjects and Key Learning Areas, the substance of curriculum and the focus of assessment and pedagogy.

I received very positive responses from Ministers in several states, though no response from the Queensland Minister.

Towards the end of the year 2000, it became clear to me that it was impractical to implement the school-based trial of my General Abilities Framework. In fact, I came to accept that, despite periodic rhetoric at all levels regarding a shift to a more flexible and student-centred paradigm, *it was not realistic to anticipate any future circumstance where a whole set of curricular 'givens' would not be imposed 'from above'*.

Instead of promoting a different form of curriculum as an *alternative*, I began to think in terms of accepting but *limiting* the influence of mandated, atomised, closed-ended syllabus content, objectives or outcomes, and their associated pedagogies of control. I began to think in terms of four, related but distinctive *curricular forms*. (1) We could make mandated curriculum content/outcomes as relevant and meaningful as possible by integrating and contextualising them, where it seems meaningful to do so. (2) Where it makes more sense to address them directly, without contextualising them, so be it. But if we could *address all or most mandated curriculum in those two kinds of learning activities*, we could then devote some regular curriculum time to two other kinds of learning activities. (3) Students could have some time to pursue their own problem- or purpose-based investigations, and (4) we could provide them with opportunities to 'be of use' by participating in tangible, practical projects, with consequential, public outcomes.

About this time also, the Queensland School Curriculum Council made it clear to me that they did not intend the Attributes of a Life Long Learner to be used as the basis of a performance continuum, as I had proposed doing in the General Abilities Framework, and they did not want them used for that purpose. Accordingly, I

ceased using the terminology of Attributes of a Life Long Learner, both to refer to the set and to refer to individual attributes. Instead, I formulated my own cluster of attributes or general abilities that people need for productive life and living.

Wanting to keep terminology plain and simple, I called them Key Abilities, and they included Multiliteracies, Problem Solving, Creativity, Self Management and Community Participation. In addition, I wanted a category to refer to mastery of a broad range of 'subject matter'. I initially used the phrase 'Knowledge of Self, Others and the Environment'. Later, however, as I came to appreciate more clearly the nature of knowing and learning, I chose to call the sixth Key Ability 'Understanding', to distinguish it from the mere 'acquisition' or 'functional mastery' of endowed meanings.

In December 2000, I exchanged some emails with Professor Frank Crowther of the University of Southern Queensland, regarding the IDEAS Project and possible involvement in doctoral research relating to it (Field Journal Extract: 14 December/2000). I decided not to get involved in IDEAS, because I was not satisfied that it was grounded in, or concerned with promoting an explicit, coherent and adequate theory of learning.

2.4 YEAR 2001

My role as an Education Advisor specialising in curriculum integration of ICT was feeling more and more limiting. At the end of 2000, I successfully applied for a position as Education Advisor – Curriculum Outcomes, in a District immediately to the South of Brisbane. My new brief was much broader: to assist schools in a school renewal process through the development of initiatives in pursuit of reform of curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and reporting, with an emphasis on higher order/critical thinking, approaches to integrated curriculum, New Basics/Productive Pedagogies, and ICTs. This account of my practical/critical inquiry into change in the Queensland state education context will now consist largely of extracts from my Field Journal, the start and end of which will be indicated, in addition to recollections, reflections and several more extracts from the public domain archives

of the New Basics 'Framework' online discussion forum (Department of Education and the Arts n.d.).

[Field Journal Extract: 30 January 2001]

I read a special centrefold article in *Education Views* [Department of Education 2001b] which sought to clarify the relationship between the eight Key Learning Areas (KLA) and the New Basics Framework project. I found the article disturbing in a number of ways... [I have referred to some of these concerns in Chapter 5.]

Another disturbing thing was that the article stated three times that schools must plan for and assess core learning outcomes in each strand in each KLA. One such statement was in the form of a direct quote from the draft Policy on Core Curriculum.

I wanted to raise these matters on the Education Advisor Curriculum discussion list, which I have just joined, and I felt like writing to the Director General to urge him to allow more flexibility in curriculum policy. I decided (with a little gentle persuasion from my wife overnight) that discretion was the better part of valour, but still sent a 'moderated' comment to the discussion list. Some of that message is reproduced below.

The special KLA/New Basics liftout in Ed Views is interesting'. While 'The aim of this paper is to clarify...', it contains a number of puzzling statements. In three places it states that the draft policy on core curriculum requires that schools must plan for and assess core learning outcomes. One of those statements (in the paragraph under the picture on page ii) is made as a direct quote from the draft policy. I can't find the quote in the draft. On the contrary, I read in the draft that 'Schools have discretion to decide if they wish to use the core, discretionary and/or school based learning outcomes...' (There IS a statement in the article that 'The outcomes to be assessed are those deemed by the school to be appropriate...')

I think the article's emphasis on core learning outcomes is unfortunate. If we are going to have any success in balancing the traditional atomising and 'one-size-fits-all' tendencies of curriculum with sufficient flexibility to respond to the individual needs, interests and purposes of learners to ensure relevance, genuine intellectual engagement, and deep and lifelong learning, then general outcome statements that offer maximum scope for discretion and negotiation are important. I think we (EQ) could give impetus to pedagogical change and the 2010 agenda by emphasising that sort of curriculum flexibility in as many forums as possible.

My comments elicited no comments to the list, but one directly to me. It was a somewhat rambling and confused reflection on aspects of my comments. However, the author did make a very interesting comment, that the traditional approach to outcomes, that is, specifically defined, core (mandatory) outcomes, reflected in the QSCC syllabuses, came from feedback from trial schools and the expressed needs of many teachers for more support in guiding planning than general outcomes could give. And last year, I remember, the team of four AAA High School teachers involved in my aborted General Abilities Framework trial, despite having formal license to adopt open-ended and student-centred pedagogies, immediately decided that the whole cohort of students would embark on a 'unit on Antarctica'. This made the teachers feel safe and in control.

This suggests to me that in bringing about reforms of what students experience as schooling, it is most important to work first on getting teachers comfortable with new approaches to pedagogy (getting off the stage), before new curriculum policies can have any impact. The centrality of this challenge was echoed by Ross Kimber, then Acting General Manager, School Programs and Student Welfare Division, Victorian Department of Education, Employment and Training who, in a letter in reply to my proposal to the Minister ('Smart State or Slave State?'), stated that

...the intent of the Victorian Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF) is consistent with your proposal. I believe that there is sufficient flexibility in

the CSF to allow the curriculum model you propose to be implemented. The challenge for the Department is to ensure that teachers see the flexibility within the CSF and use it [to] be more creative in their endeavours to meet the learning needs and extend the skills of all students. (Kimber 2000, pers. comm. 8 December)

This notion of focusing on changing teacher practice first is further validated by the research (Gusky 1986, cited in Ingvarson 1987, p. 28) which showed that teachers change practices after they see direct evidence of benefits to kids (tapping in to teachers' sense of moral purpose).

I also received some feedback from a fellow Curriculum Education Advisor, after I phoned him on another matter. He warned me that I would definitely be ruffling the feathers of people in the Queensland School Curriculum Council (which is developing the KLA syllabuses) by suggesting that the core learning outcomes would make other educational aims difficult to achieve. I reflected again on my comments, and on the fact that similar observations had been made by quite a few people on the New Basics Framework online discussion in late 1999. I felt completely satisfied that my comments were justified, and if they ruffled some feathers, so be it...

[End Field Journal Extract: 30 January 2001]

Now that my role officially involved assisting schools to make sense of the policy environment in a coherent, whole school reform process, I set about trying to emphasise some common themes in a diversity of policy agendas. I prepared and ran a seminar for school leaders within the District, titled 'Aligning for Valued Outcomes, or, How to Make the Most of New Knowledge, Policies and Resources Without Going Crazy or Opting for Early Retirement!'

[Field Journal Extract: 8 February 2001]

...Prior to preparing my presentation for district principals and deputy principals, I read the recently released *Literate Futures: Report of the Literacy Review for*

Queensland State Schools [Department of Education 2000c] (review panel chaired by Professor Allan Luke). I found it re-affirmed many of the principles that Education Queensland's *QSE 2010* reform agenda promotes. 'A critical starting point to improve literacy education within schools is to focus in our planning, in our policies, and in our classroom approaches on life worlds and literacies *outside* of schools. The continuous development of students' literacy capabilities should be both a condition and an outcome of engagement in ...a broad repertoire of experiences with purposeful tasks... Cross disciplinary projects are required, beyond stand-alone discipline-based traditions... [along with] *Improving the integration of computer technology* into daily literacy practices.'

[End Field Journal Extract: 8 February 2001]

In my presentation, in order to identify a set of related messages that might guide coherent whole school reform, I drew upon quotes from a diverse range of Education Queensland policies, Director-General statements, and learning/pedagogy theory (e.g. ASCD 1999, Department of Education 1994, 1998b, 1999b, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2000e, c1999, n.d.; Luke 1999a; Moran 1999; Queensland Studies Authority n.d.; Xiaodong et al. 1995). That set of common messages, taken directly from my PowerPoint presentation, was as follows:

- The most valued outcomes are transformational ones (ALLL [Attributes of a Life Long Learner]), not specific KLA ones
- A shift from passive to active learning (constructivism – learning to learn – higher order thinking – computers as mind tools, not 'knowledge tellers')
- Tasks and assessment characterised by real life purposes and contexts which integrate curriculum (including computer access to the real world)
- Individual needs, interests, life-worlds and learning styles are catered for – meaning and relevance are vital for engagement and deep learning
- Students take more responsibility for their own learning and behaviour

- Teachers act more as guide on the side than sage on the stage – community of learners, characterised by trust, mutual respect, and collaboration.

This set of messages, I argued, represented a vision of the purpose and method of schooling that many would support.

I concluded the seminar with discussion about the inertia of school cultures, and the need in any effective change process to also address issues of teacher skills, resources and development of clear but flexible action plans. I spoke at some length about each of these aspects of the change process. When talking about resources, I mentioned school curriculum programs. I recorded in my PowerPoint notes, and emphasised in my presentation, that ‘The school’s curriculum program is also a resource, and it will make a big difference whether or not it provides scope for curriculum integration through collaborative real-life projects, and individual or small group problem- and purpose-based projects, as well as more directed skill and knowledge focused learning activities in KLA specific areas, or general cross-curricular areas like multiliteracies.’ I made only very brief mention, here, of my developing Key Abilities Model.

Written evaluations of the seminar reflect two main themes, both of which I was very pleased with. The first was that the information I had shared was very well received, and was seen by many as ‘valuable’, ‘useful’, ‘worthwhile’ and ‘practical’. The second theme was that many felt their whole school staff needed to hear it and that issues of ‘what we do about it’ now needed to be addressed. I emailed the PowerPoint presentation to my supervisor, and his emailed response was also extremely positive:

Your work is excellent. This presentation is the best I’ve seen in a long long time. I love your messages. I am really glad to have you on board, we are very lucky to have someone of your intellectual calibre. Hope you stay a while. (Sherry 2001, pers. comm. February)

With these two forms of validation of the value of my efforts to breathe some sort of workable and defensible coherence into reform challenges, I felt encouraged to pursue my efforts to develop and articulate viable curriculum delivery models.

[Field Journal Extract: 16 February 2001]

Wrote this email in response to a comment on the Education Advisor Curriculum list. It shows some development in my thinking regarding the need for a variety of explicit curricular forms:

I share X's concerns. I haven't yet looked in detail at all the sample units that have been shared, and I like some of the ideas in the ones I have looked at closely. But I'm not sure that they greatly change the usual pedagogical mindset of content -> outcomes -> teacher-directed activity/unit plan. I'm trying to develop models that put flexible, student-negotiated, contextualised tasks up front, and allow the mapping of outcomes to become a secondary process (one example is the KidSolutions resource that Y mentioned on this list last year - see website in my signature).

I think the old mindset of grading outcomes will also tend to "promote in its own way a return to content-driven education but under a different name". This mindset is further reinforced when our planning assumes all students in a particular class are (should be) working on the same level outcome(s). It's quite a different approach in OBE to say that the student has either achieved a particular outcome, or is still working toward it. It's from the perspective of the overall Years 1-10 profile or developmental continuum of outcomes that indications of performance level become appropriate. At what performance level (outcome level) is child X achieving in Strand Y?

It was great to see Z's 'Oil Spillage Investigation' include an attempt to profile attainment of the Attributes of a Life Long Learner. QSCC has told me they did not intend, and do not want the Attributes of LLL to be used in this way. I

think it's important though, to keep these sorts of transformational outcomes up front in planning, assessment and reporting. So I developed my own formulation, and have begun developing a model that brings consideration of what I call Key Abilities to the fore (see Key Abilities Model on my website) [Seaton n.d.[c]].

Finally, I think one solution to this on-going question of whether teachers focus on the particulars (skills, knowledge content...) or on 'rich', purposeful, contextualised activities, would be to make explicit provision in school organisation and the school curriculum program for (1) directed, skill/knowledge/outcome focused learning activities in KLA specific areas, or general cross-curricular areas like multiliteracies, (2) curriculum integration through collaborative real-life projects, and (3) individual or small group problem- and purpose-based projects. The hip-bone is connected to the thigh-bone is conn... That's why I like the idea of a whole-school renewal process as a context for implementation of new syllabuses, and have been encouraging schools in my district to consider going this way.

[End Field Journal Extract: 16 February 2001]

[Field Journal Extract: 22 February 2001]

My seminar for school leaders was attended by about twenty people representing about 14 schools. A couple of people felt they did not get anything out of it, but most feedback was very positive. A couple of people approached me immediately to arrange visits to begin working with their staffs on whole school renewal. Following the seminar I faxed out to all schools a Fax Back Service Request form, and over the past week have received about seven or eight requests. I have made preliminary visits to some of those schools already. I have been struck by the difference in situation of the schools I've talked with already, and the different kinds of needs and requests... Some need help with staff awareness and commitment to a new vision. Others... want help with extending practice to further reflect the desired 'richness' of tasks, connectedness to the real world, and cross-

curriculum integration... Some want help with translating curriculum policy into a school curriculum program and appropriate school organisation. Others want help with translating a school curriculum program into practice... Some want advice on specific teaching methods, others on authentic assessment...

Most schools so far are asking for support of a broader nature than just advice on the nature of the new outcomes based syllabuses. I doubt that most Education Advisors would have the diversity of experience, or the level of formal post-graduate studies in education to be able to respond adequately to the kinds of needs being expressed.

[End Field Journal Extract: 22 February 2001]

[Field Journal Extract: 1 March 2001]

...I attended the first meeting of a committee with responsibility for developing the curriculum and 'educational brief' for a new P-12 education program to be offered in one or more new schools from 2002. I made some comments in the discussion about the importance of flexibility in a new curriculum program to ensure differentiation for individual students and attention to the sorts of abilities that would prepare students for new social and work worlds rather than trying to decide on focusing on an 'academic or trade' focus, and was enthusiastically supported by two or three other members in particular. Moreover, I had supplied some materials (as requested by one of my supervisors) for all committee members (the Aligning for Valued Outcomes presentation printout, and copies of the main pages from my Key Abilities Model and KidSolutions websites). I was asked to talk a bit about them at the next meeting, and the documents were given a resounding recommendation by one of the committee members as worthy of close consideration.

[End Field Journal Extract: 1 March 2001]

[Field Journal Extract: 8 March 2001]

I was really happy with yesterday's teaching staff workshop.

- I was glad I didn't use a PowerPoint presentation. I am now convinced that for these sorts of meetings they only serve to disconnect presenter and audience. I was doubly glad I didn't use PowerPoint yesterday 'cos it was a small school and only a group of about a dozen teachers I was talking with.
- The principal gave a short introduction, indicating that I had been invited along to talk with staff about issues/values the school was currently focused on. I thought it was very effective and helped to give a sense of school ownership to the issues I raised and discussed.
- The small group really made interactive discussion possible, and involvement of all. I will aim to make this 'belly-to-belly' (Anita Roddick's phrase) kind of discussion the mode of workshop whenever I'm talking with teachers about issues and new approaches to curriculum and pedagogy, as distinct perhaps from highly skill focused workshops.
- Teachers again raised the issue of time. They don't have any time in which to even talk with peers about educational innovation issues.
- Teachers again raised the issue of whether they should bother grappling with a change agenda that may be yet another political bandwagon that won't last. I usually make the point that the principles underlying current reform agendas are deeper and more permanent than the latest politically motivated policy. In future I will include in the handouts a sheet with quotes reflecting the change agenda, but taken from varied periods in ancient and modern history. I'll also continue to emphasise the point that these principles embody a professional and ethical imperative much more than a political imperative.
- Feedback was all positive this time. Five of the seven feedback sheets contained a request (under suggestions for improvement) for practical examples of integrated curriculum tasks they could do in their own classrooms. I must address this, but will also continue to emphasise that responding to the interests, needs and purposes of their own students will be more important than taking an activity that some other class has done, and just 'doing' that activity. In our discussion, several people expressed

interest in visiting classes to see these sorts of activities in progress. I shall explore that too, but one way this might be practical and not incur the enormous expense of teacher release time, would be to produce and/or find video observations of such activities being implemented...

- Teachers were concerned at the very limited support and resources made available to them by Education Queensland to support their learning and acquisition of new skills. In future workshops, I'll include in the handouts a list of such resources for learning and development.
- Someone raised the issue of teachers needing to be allowed to make mistakes and to fail as they try out new approaches to teaching and learning. This needs to be made clear to principals, and they need to make it clear to teachers that they support risk taking.
- Another valid issue raised by teachers was that any internal accountability and/or teacher appraisal mechanisms that conflict with the reform agenda should be revised. The specific example raised was the allocation of a set number of hours each week for particular Key Learning Areas or subjects, leaving no room for development of cross-curricular activities. Again, this needs to be made clear to principals, and they need to make it clear to teachers that previous expectations are revised to support exploration of new approaches to curriculum organisation, assessment and reporting, and pedagogy.

[End Field Journal Extract: 8 March 2001]

[Field Journal Extract: 21 March 2001]

...I read an article about assessment rubrics [Andrade 2000], which reminded me of my long term intention of writing rubrics for the Key Activities [later, I come to refer to these as Generic Curriculum Elements] (including the genres in KidSolutions) with four performance levels, to sit within the six level performance descriptions for the Key Abilities. The article made the good point that the kids learn a lot by being involved in developing descriptions of varying levels of performance in relation to particular criteria for a task or genre.

Had a good discussion a couple of days ago with a high school principal, a deputy and two HODs. They want to restructure the school for more relevant, rich task type learning, but are wondering how to go about it, how to overcome some staff resistance, and how to satisfy curriculum and assessment policy. The principal asked for my comments on the draft policy and guidelines on curriculum. I later emailed her the comments below:

The latest draft policy and guidelines for core curriculum requires that a school curriculum program formally schedule delivery of all core learning outcomes for each strand and KLA, and that assessment address student demonstrations of the core learning outcomes scheduled. Such a cluttered and restrictive approach to curriculum (what is referred to in the literature as traditional outcomes based education) is incompatible with the guidelines for pedagogy contained in the draft document which have been borrowed from the New Basics Framework/Productive Pedagogies. The reason for the New Basics Framework and trial, is the widely acknowledged need to unclutter the atomised curriculum to provide room for the Productive Pedagogies to become practical. Most elements of the Productive Pedagogies are incompatible with traditional outcomes based education. For example, the document recognises that: "Pedagogy should be of demonstrable relevance to the immediate worlds of the students and should enable them to analyse, theorise and intellectually engage with that world. Authentic and powerful pedagogy focuses on the identification, analysis and resolution of immediate challenges in learners' worlds." This will prove a vain hope within a formally scheduled program of many compulsory core learning outcomes.

The use of software to record student demonstrations of outcomes is no solution. It may make things more 'manageable' for teachers, but it will only encourage a 'paint by numbers' approach to curriculum delivery, moving teaching further away from flexible responsiveness to "immediate challenges in

learners' worlds". Technology will not solve the problem of employing productive pedagogies within inflexible curriculum. The educational issues need to be worked out first, then tracking software may be of administrative assistance.

In my view, reporting is not the issue. We can easily enough report whatever we assess. The issue is what we are required to assess. If we must teach for and assess mastery of outcomes, then we must report that particular, described outcomes have been achieved, or possibly, have not yet been achieved. If that is not what "the system" wants to know, or what parents want to know, we should define differently the substance of curriculum and assessment. Development of the Attributes of a Life Long Learner, and flexible learning, performance and assessment of activities, genres and processes from KLAs which indicate those attributes, would be an example.

Principal X, ...I can't help feeling cross when I consider this policy proposal. It militates against what so many feel is most important for us to encourage and facilitate in students, and is incompatible with the values and principles underlying QSE 2010 and the Smart State agenda. Principals and teachers are regularly saying to me that their challenge is how to do what makes good sense, and still be able to satisfy the policy! Surely we can get a better alignment between sense and policy in this day and age!

...Today I spoke with another primary school principal and one of his staff about implementation of new outcomes based education syllabuses, in particular the Science syllabus. They showed me a model for planning, and asked for feedback as to whether they were on the right track. They had identified a few related core learning outcomes, and identified existing books and resources that might have activities that relate to those outcomes. They also included a long list of specific processes/activities from the science syllabus, as a stimulus to teachers' thinking as they plan. I asked whether there had been any discussion about productive

pedagogies, about integrated approaches to curriculum implementation, or about transformational outcomes as distinct from specific core learning outcomes. Very little. The comment was that many teachers were older, more experienced teachers who were rather set in their ways, and they didn't want to 'frighten' them. The two I was speaking to were sympathetic to the issues I raised, but it was plain to see how in most schools, the current outcomes based syllabuses are going to end up as business as usual under a different name.

[End Field Journal Extract: 21 March 2001]

For the schools required to address the OBE syllabuses and follow the *Draft Policy and Guidelines for Core Curriculum for Years 1-10 in Education Queensland Schools* [Department of Education 2000d], the task of developing a viable curriculum delivery model was a hugely complex one. My observation was that schools were finding it very hard to make sense of a complex and changing change agenda and to resolve some of the contradictions between the principles and practices of the new 'vision' on the one hand, and pressures of accountability and traditional school culture on the other. In March 2001, I attended a meeting of most of the Education Advisors Curriculum in the South East corner of the state. Below is some feedback I sent to the whole Education Advisor – Curriculum discussion list a few days later.

[Field Journal Extract: 26 March 2001]

...Over the weekend I've been reflecting on what [a senior Curriculum Branch representative] told us about the latest policy draft, realising... that it is still a draft! :-). I found that discussion frustrating in a couple of ways. I am concerned that if schools have to plan for and assess every core learning outcome, they will end up delivering a traditional OBE program, especially given the inertia of school culture. I was concerned too at the assumption that it makes little difference whether students experience this kind of curriculum or a more transformational one focused on exit outcomes and attributes - that they are simply multiple

pathways with equal merit. Largely traditional approaches will not fulfil the hopes of QSE2010.

I guess that in a nutshell my frustration was this, that in order for schools to make a really beneficial interpretation of the new policy, it will be imperative for them to undergo a whole school reform process. I think that is necessary anyway, but there is little evidence in the history of curriculum change (anywhere), or in recent developments that this will be achieved through 'innovations' that leave many aspects of school culture, organisation and practices unchanged. Anyway, that led me to begin to think through some of the implications of the latest draft policy over the weekend, and jot them down to clarify my own thinking. I've attached those brief notes, and would welcome anyone's comments. The Key Abilities Model referred to in the notes is a work-in-progress of mine...

[End Field Journal Extract: 26 March 2001]

The first section of the attachment is reproduced below, in order to briefly suggest the complexity and impracticality of the implications of particularly the assessment component of the revised draft policy, as it was at the time.

[Field Journal Extract: 26 March 2001]

Implementing the *Curriculum Framework for Years 1-10*
in Education Queensland Schools: Policy and Guidelines
Thoughts on the Draft Policy

Summary of (Draft) Policy Requirements

Schools must plan for all core learning outcomes, and must assess all core learning outcomes planned for in a particular reporting period (half-yearly semester). In each reporting period students get a 'grading' in each Key Learning Area (KLA), according to how many of the planned outcomes they have achieved at the targeted level. Only when they've achieved all core learning outcomes in a KLA at a particular level, are they

considered to be operating at that level.

Implications for School Curriculum Programming

At any age level there are likely to be students working at different performance levels. The challenge is to write a school curriculum program including all core learning outcomes, with enough flexibility that:

1. students within one age level can cover the different outcomes appropriate to different performance levels
2. students can cover outcomes at different rates, and
3. teaching and learning environments and activities can be responsive to student values, interests, purposes and life worlds.

The school curriculum program cannot, therefore, assign particular outcomes or performance levels to particular Year Levels. The school cannot have a one-size-fits-all, pre-planned, time-based curriculum program. The core learning outcomes must be written in to the program as a 'collection' of outcomes, from which selections are made for groups and/or individuals on an 'as needs' basis. Students must be able to negotiate a pathway through the collection of core learning outcomes on the basis of their individual profile of performance.

[End Field Journal Extract: 26 March 2001]

This document went on to briefly describe four curricular forms that I felt were necessary components of a school curriculum program capable of fulfilling the values and principles of QSE-2010. It also made the point that, 'The Key Abilities Model describes how indicators of performance development relating to transformational outcomes (specifically, Multi-Literacies, Problem Solving, Creativity, Community Participation, Self Management, and Knowledge of Self, Others & the Environment) can easily be identified in the four curricular/pedagogical forms described above, in such a way that such outcomes remain in the foreground of teaching, learning, assessment and reporting'.

[Field Journal Extract: 28 March 2001]

Another busy week. It has been 'deathly quiet' after my message to the Education Advisor Curriculum list. I don't think most of them are thinking on that level, and it has challenged people.

Comments on the New Basics Framework list have been expressing an interest in assessment rubrics and continua of performance level, rather than Rich Tasks being assessed with an A-E grading. Others have been lamenting the likely policy decision to mandate all core Learning outcomes in KLA schools, that it will further entrench the fragmentation of KLAs and move schools down a road of traditional OBE and away from the aims of QSE 2010. One person raised concerns that so much discussion is about the Rich Tasks, how long they should take, etc. and many people seem to have lost sight of the 2010-type futures oriented goals – the Attributes of a Life Long Learner type stuff.

[End Field Journal Extract: 28 March 2001]

Finally, a couple of people sent messages about the merits and spread of problem based learning. These issues and concerns had occurred to me also, and were part of the reason I had built four curricular forms into my curriculum delivery model. I had been resisting the temptation for some days to make a comment on the New Basics 'Framework' list, but since these issues were recognised by quite a few people involved in the online forum, I decided to make some brief comments about how my thinking about curriculum organisation and delivery had been evolving. I sent a very similar posting to the Education Advisor Curriculum list too.

Many New Basics schools are thinking about what the rest of the curriculum might consist of besides the 40% to 60% of time on Rich Tasks, and many KLA schools are wondering how to cope with outcomes without being driven down a traditional road. I, too, have been trying to think through how we can organise pedagogy, curriculum and assessment in a way consistent with current knowledge, current policy, and the creation of a learning society (QSE 2010 and the Smart State). I have designed a model (The Key Abilities Model) which can accommodate both KLA and New Basics curricula, with Four Curricular Forms and their associated pedagogies:

1. Focused Learning Activities (FLA): Focused learning and teaching relating to particular core learning outcomes and Key Activities that cannot practically be learned and mastered solely in the context of rich, purposeful, real-life activities.
2. Multi-outcome Modules (M&M): A collection of purposeful, active-learning tasks or units, incorporating a variety of particular core learning outcomes and Key Activities, which individuals and/or groups would undertake selectively and by negotiation, according to readiness.
3. Community Based Activities (CBA): Large-scale, real-life, on-going, multi-participant projects with consequential, public outcomes, which would provide contexts for a wide variety of identified core learning outcomes and Key Activities.
4. Purposeful Negotiated Activities (PNA): Purpose and problem based learning activities, in which the topic, the core learning outcomes, and the Key Activities to be incorporated in the activity are negotiated for individuals and/or groups.

(For more on the Four Curricular Forms, associated aspects of school and curriculum organisation, and their rationale, including reference to literacy, levels of knowledge/meaning, and the issue of middle schooling, see... [my website])

For KLA schools, most core learning outcomes would be covered in Forms 1 and 2. The more core learning outcomes are mandated, the less room in the curriculum for Forms 3 and 4, which are the most supportive of the aims of 2010. For New Basics schools, the Rich Tasks would constitute the Multi-outcome Modules, and not being so driven by specific outcomes, would also strongly support the aims of 2010. Of course, the distinctions between the Four Curricular Forms are strategic, not fundamental. They do indeed complement and overlap each other, and each should be addressed with an eye to the others.

My Key Abilities Model also addresses the issue raised by several people recently of a continuum of performance on practices, or what I call Key Activities (a broad spectrum of activities, genres, skills and procedures associated with traditional disciplines, subjects and Key Learning Areas, which are general enough that they might be employed in a wide variety of both directed and 'rich', negotiated activities). (See the Assessment section of the Key Abilities Model website...) I hope eventually to do more work on describing specific performance levels on particular criteria for each Key Activity so that such rubrics can be used as both learning tools by students, and assessment tools by teachers.

Hope some might find some of these ideas of use. (Seaton 2001b)

I received several very positive replies. Cameron (2001), for example, sent this posting:

Andrew, wow! As principal of a small school (not a trial school but tinkering with rich tasks) I was VERY interested to read your contribution.

In the following extract, I describe the requirements for assessment and reporting in KLA schools as outlined in another draft of a systemic policy and guidelines on curriculum.

[Field Journal Extract: 3 April 2001]

Yesterday I got an email from another Education Advisor Curriculum. She emailed me directly with about six questions about OBE rather than through the discussion list, because she felt I would respond to her questions "directly, thoroughly and objectively", and I wouldn't be offended at their "questioning the status quo". I sent her a response, and thought how significant it is that she felt she could not raise her queries in an open forum. My response, below, shows that Education Queensland's

draft policy on assessment of the OBE syllabuses had shifted, but again to a form that I felt was non-viable:

...Now to the OBE questions.

1. Bill Spady, the US OBE guru (when OBE was still around over there) described three 'types': traditional, transitional, and transformational. In brief, you are right. The LLL stuff can be thought of as transformational. The confusion is not down to you, F. LLL is still way in the background for most people, and EQ's latest draft policy will drive schools in the direction of traditional OBE despite the 2010 reform agenda which emphasises transformational outcomes.

2. Yes. The current draft policy on curriculum says that schools must plan for all core learning outcomes, and must assess all core learning outcomes planned for in a particular reporting period (half-yearly semester). In each reporting period students get an H (some outcomes higher than planned), A (all), M (most), S (some), W (working towards them), I (insufficient evidence) or N (nil 'cos they just arrived from another school, or whatever) in each Key Learning Area (KLA), according to how many of the planned outcomes they have achieved at the targeted level. Only when they've achieved all core learning outcomes in a KLA at a particular level, are they considered to be operating at that level.

There are notional year levels for attainment of performance levels (2 by end Year 3, 3 by end Year 5, 4 by end of Year 7, 6 by end of Year 10). But these are notional. They really should never have been mentioned at all, because the idea of OBE is that kids demonstrate outcomes when they are able to, and teaching and learning should move them along in their individual development. Time is not supposed to be the controlling factor. Because it is easier than changing how schools and curriculum are organised, many schools are and will plan for all students in a Year level to cover the same

outcomes, rather than teaching students, as you put it. I don't believe it IS possible to teach all outcomes within set timeframes and still plan for students' needs, interests, and local contexts. I think a student-centred approach IS possible, if outcomes are not rigidly scheduled to particular Year levels. I've begun to describe how I think this is possible at [my website].

3. ...The outcomes are not just one task at 6 different levels. Each outcome is different, so that in most cases what you describe is not possible, or intended.

4. As described above, the current draft says six monthly reporting will be in relation to each KLA (not strand as in the previous draft), and schools will not be required to identify or describe the particular outcomes that were achieved or attempted. That is optional.

5. You are correct. They are intended to be the assessment instruments. In authentic pedagogy and authentic assessment, learning and assessment should be mostly integral to each other, rather than the old teach then test model. By virtue of their size ('richness') the Rich Tasks ARE also the vehicle for a great deal of learning, but they are not intended to be the whole curriculum. In my Key Abilities Model (take Curriculum link from <http://www1.tpgi.com.au/users/aseaton/kam> [defunct version]), I have attempted to begin to describe what might be the substance of a transformational curriculum, if we did not have to address the core learning outcomes (and, though it will be much more difficult, even if we do)...

[End Field Journal Extract: 3 April 2001]

[Field Journal Extract: 4 April 2001]

I've been feeling uneasy lately, as I speak with schools about how they might respond to QSE 2010, new curricula and new approaches to pedagogy. I have a definite sense that even those who indicate some 'receptivity' to change, who

indicate some ways in which they might practically respond to change, are not really going to change in the ways that matter. They are not really going to get at the 'inner intent' of the reforms. And again I see that the issue that would make the difference, which they would strive to resist changing if they possibly can, is the issue of power. So I've been thinking that this issue needs to be raised right up front with teachers and administrators. A first thought about how I might do this was to ask teachers three questions:

1. What feelings do you think you would have if the Department of Education gave a top-down directive to operate in the classroom in particular, specific ways each day?
2. How would you describe the quality of intellectual/emotional engagement you would likely have with those activities?
3. How effectively do you think you would learn new understandings about effective teaching, in those circumstances?

I asked a colleague some of these questions today, just to test the water with the idea. In response to the first question he said he'd do as directed, but turn it to reflect and serve his own values, understandings and purposes in relation to his role. When I pointed out how I was considering using those questions, he nodded and got the point. Students have the same response when subjected to the top-down, power relationship that broadly characterises common pedagogies and school culture.

I'm also thinking of discussing the values and principles which guide my KidSolutions and Key Abilities Model Work [before the formulation of the Dynamic Paradigm of Learning and Change], *viz.*

1. **Balance** - holistic development and exercising of the four dimensions of our nature - physical, mental, social/emotional and spiritual
2. **Connectedness** - a sense of our personal, societal, and environmental inter-relatedness

3. **Context** - learning and behaviour occur differently in different contexts
4. **Empathy** - listening first, with the genuine intent to understand
5. **Empowerment** - the failure to use our power to act results in dysfunction and unhappiness
6. **Experience** - direct personal participation, or actual knowledge - ultimately the only means of apprehending truth
7. **Fun** - when it's fun, you learn
8. **Imagination** - our ability to see beyond our present experience
9. **Individuality** - recognition, tolerance, respect and valuing of each person's uniqueness
10. **Love** - our deep and genuine respect and concern for the welfare of others
11. **Meaning** - 'felt' and 'deep' meanings are distinct from 'surface' and 'scholastic' knowledge in that they are unique to each individual, are constructed on the basis of experience rather than transmitted, and are transferable to new contexts
12. **Motivation** - the impulse to actively pursue particular activities
13. **Purpose** - having a sense of purpose gives life meaning and direction, and is the most important characteristic of high wellbeing
14. **Standards** - certain kinds of purposeful activities have standards of excellence inherent in them, whose authority we readily accept and strive to meet
15. **Synergy** - social interactions characterised by creative cooperation rather than hierarchical authority, and producing an outcome of greater value than the sum of the parts.

I want to think more about how I might do this, and the order of discussion: power/values/inner intent of the current reform agenda. But the essential thing, I think, is that power is addressed *explicitly*. That's the only hope for changes in the way power operates in classrooms and schools. Teachers and administrators must deal consciously and deliberately with that issue.

[End Field Journal Extract: 4 April 2001]

The feeling I was having about the importance of addressing issues of authority patterns in teacher-student pedagogical relationships reminded me of a handout I had received in the first few weeks of my Bachelor of Education degree in 1973. It had spoken powerfully to me all those years ago, and I had kept it all that time. I found it in my files at home, and began to provide it as a handout for teachers when conducting certain professional development activities. The original source of the piece was not made known, but it is reproduced here:

AUTHENTIC TEACHERS

By Sydney J. Harris

Discussing a common school problem, a parent recently asked me, "How is it that some teachers are able to control their classes with a very light rein, and have no disciplinary troubles, while others must shout and plead and threaten and still get nowhere with the trouble-makers?"

I don't think the answer has much to do with teaching techniques or even experience, beyond a certain degree. I think it has almost everything to do with the 'authenticity' of the teacher.

Notice I do not say 'authority', but 'authenticity'. For genuine authority, which is more than a matter of official position and the ability to reward and punish, comes out of the depths of the personality. It has a realness, presence, and aura, that can impress and influence even a six-year-old.

A person is either himself or not himself; is either rooted in his existence, or is a fabrication; has either found his humanhood or is still playing with masks and roles and status symbols. And nobody is more aware of this difference (although unconsciously) than a child. Only an authentic person can evoke a good response in the core of the other person. Only person is resonant to person.

Knowledge is not enough. Technique is not enough. Mere experience is not enough. This mystery is at the heart of the teaching process; and the same mystery is at the heart of the

healing process. Each is an art, more than a science or a skill – and the art is at bottom the ability to “tune in to the other’s wave-length”.

And this ability is not possessed by those who have failed to come to terms with their own individuated person, no matter what other talents they possess. Until they have liberated themselves (not completely, but mostly) from what is artificial and unauthentic within themselves, they cannot communicate with, counsel, or control others.

The few teachers who meant the most to me in my school life were not necessarily those who knew the most, but those who gave out the fullness of themselves; who confronted me face to face, as it were, with a humanhood that awoke and lured my own small and trembling soul and called me to take hold of my own existence with my two hands.

Such persons, of course, are extremely rare, and they are worth more than we can ever pay them. It should be the prime task of a good society to recruit and develop these personalities for safeguarding our children’s futures; and our failure to do so is our most monstrous sin of omission.

Source: Issued by Professor M. Lang as a handout in the Canberra College of Advanced Education unit, ‘Alternatives in Education’, 9 April 1973.

[Field Journal Extract: 11 April 2001]

Today I had a request from a deputy principal for information about rubrics. I will send them the excellent ASCD article [Andrade 2000] that arrived a few weeks ago, as well as a brief explanation of rubrics with an example, that I found with a quick search on the web. The request spurred me on to write rubrics for each, or most, of the Key Activities in my Key Abilities Model. Time!!!...

[End Field Journal Extract: 11 April 2001]

Over the following months, I developed a number of learning and assessment rubrics for a variety of Key Activities, or what I had come to refer to as ‘generic curriculum elements’, which I emphasised in the Key Abilities Model as constituting much of the substance of a valuable curriculum. Before long, I had written those listed below. These rubrics are on my website (Seaton n.d.[d]). An example can be seen in the collection of resources reproduced in the Appendix.

Biography Rubric	Budget Rubric
Description (Narrative) Rubric	Graph Rubric
Information & Communication Technologies Rubric	Information Report / Technical Description / Written Explanation / Explanatory Diagram Rubric
Letter of Invitation Rubric	Letter of Persuasion Rubric
Letter of Thanks Rubric	Narrative (Short Story) Rubric
Oral Multimedia Presentation Rubric	Project Recount Rubric
Reading Rubric	Critical Review / Evaluation / Appraisal Rubric
Scientific Experiment Report Rubric	Social Investigation Report Rubric

[Field Journal Extract: 3 June 2001]

At our Education Advisor Conference a few days ago, we learned that a Curriculum Framework Policy has been endorsed by the Minister, but that the assessment and reporting sections were not included, pending further investigation of this matter by a special taskforce to be set up by the DDG. I emailed the DDG to thank him for ensuring that no policy on assessment and reporting was endorsed, pending formulation of a more satisfactory one. I expressed an interest in being involved with the Assessment and Reporting taskforce.

[End Field Journal Extract: 3 June 2001]

[Field Journal Extract: 15 June 2001]

There has been discussion on the Education Advisor Curriculum list in the past day or two about the value of an online lesson planning tool that has a matrix made up of Bloom's levels of thinking on one axis, and Gardner's multiple intelligences along the other. The teacher can click on every box on the matrix, and suggestions of activities of that kind are presented for selection. Someone commented that the method was 'disgusting'. Not the word I'd have chosen, but they gave good reasons, and I agree with them. I then sent a posting that included this:

I share your misgivings about the e-learning online lesson planner. Of course, there are some good ideas/activities

within it, but it is a paint-by-numbers approach to planning and 'enriching' curriculum, and one that would have Bloom and Gardner turning in their graves (if they were in them). Bloom, for example, in explaining his taxonomy of educational objectives, points out that there is no fundamental separation between cognitive and affective domains (or between the 'levels' of thinking). Unfortunately, this interpretation is often given to his work, and has contributed to the dissecting of curriculum that has made schooling an alienating experience for so many. Bloom quotes Scheerer as follows: '...behaviour may be conceptualized as being embedded in a cognitive-emotional-motivational matrix in which no true separation is possible' (Bloom 1964, p.45). Gardner [1983] expresses a similar view that multiple intelligences aren't best addressed by the slicing and dicing method. I don't think the jigsaw puzzle approach is the most productive way of integrating or enriching curriculum. Fogarty [1992] (If Minds Really Matter) describes a dozen or so approaches to integrating curriculum. This sort of method, and thematic approaches, are among the most superficial. Genuine purpose is a much more profound integrating device.

This prompted a posting in defence of this approach to lesson planning, and also of the use of themes. The author argued we should let teachers start with small steps, trying a couple of core learning outcomes in a thematic unit, rather than talking about the enormity of the task or the amount of change necessary. Another person sent a posting arguing that we should not scare teachers by talking about pedagogies, but keep strictly to things that involve outcomes.

Several people disagreed with these positions, and I couldn't restrain myself any longer, and sent this:

I need to advocate on behalf of students here.

In opening our Education Advisor Conference, Jim Varghese emphasised "an increasingly urgent need for change to operationalise 2010". Roger Slee urged us to consider the

importance of "thinking otherwise". He reminded us that (despite EQ's six-year focus (from 1994) on the Principles of Effective Learning and Teaching) [Department of Education 1994] the Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study showed good pedagogy is not common. Most of the signs are that we are NOT moving toward QSE-2010. G included in our conference handouts some comments made to him by Bill Spady. Spady points out that most outcomes based education is 'traditional OBE', and not really OBE at all, because the outcomes are curriculum-based content and skills. That's us. But the aim of creating a learning society calls for transformational OBE. Spady observed that, "Australia is caught on the horns of this dilemma, as are all other countries that try to be Outcomes-Based. MASSIVE INSTITUTIONAL INERTIA surrounds the Traditional Model. It's why CBO [Curriculum Based Outcomes] reforms are so popular: you can have "improvement" without really changing anything." The history of curriculum change IS the history of little change, and incremental 'improvements' are unlikely to operationalise QSE-2010.

While DDG, Alan Luke put it this way: "2010: It's about pedagogy, that's all it could and should be about... The main game is pedagogy... It's about having curriculum conversations, about authentic assessment, about expanding and sharing our professional pedagogical repertoires for improved student outcomes... That's our business, that's our job, that's teachers' work. We need to put it on the table, talk about it in staffrooms - not make excuses for our schools, ourselves, our systems, our bureaucracies. And we need to get worked up when people tell us that our business is anything but pedagogy. EQ, at every level, needs to be focused on this."

Let's have the discussion about what kids need to experience as schooling.

Someone in Central Office sent a message direct to me, saying simply: “Well put Andrew”. But he didn’t send it to the list!!!

Today I sent an invitation to the next Key Abilities Model workshop (the second) to principals in three other districts, through the district Managers Education Services. In it, I quoted comments from the first workshop : “Great!” “An inspiration!” “All excellent ideas.” “A model that puts outcomes based education into perspective.” “Food for thought – rich in protein and vitamins – very energizing.” “Interesting!!!” “Worthwhile.”

[End Field Journal Extract: 15 June 2001]

[Field Journal Extract: 20 July 2001]

A few day’s ago I ran the second workshop on my model. I felt it went really well, and the feedback was very positive:

Workshop Feedback:

‘The Key Abilities Model: Organising School and Curriculum for a Learning Society’

18 July 2001

“The Key Abilities Model is a constructive model for change.”

“We will now be able to formulate a school plan. A very worthwhile day. Certainly assisted in clarifying expectations and making sense of the issues. Thankyou.”

“Excellent ideas. Great resources which will definitely be used at school.”

“Resources invaluable.”

“Outstanding work. I can see a real relevance to my classroom.”

“Brilliant, well organised handouts.”

“[I would say to other school leaders] Go, listen and learn. (Discuss concerns.)”

“Bring (deliver) it to a wider audience.”

“Most impressed. All my staff who attended thought it was very good value.”

“A lot of information, but it was very valuable.”

“Very well developed. Congratulations.”

“Very thorough and thought provoking day.”

“Very detailed and thought out work – worth considering.”

“Presentation was in-depth and very logical. I enjoyed the content.”

“You should go.”

“An excellent day.”

“It was great.”

“Bring your team.”

“Provoked useful thinking – shouldn’t be forgotten – needs whole staff to hear.”

“Interesting and relevant to the issues we now face in our schools.”

“I will talk to our admin and whole staff very enthusiastically about it.”

“Resources most useful.”

“Valuable examples of tasks.”

“Great practical ideas on combining tasks, outcomes, etc.”

“Thought provoking.”

“Motivating, gave me ideas to discuss with my staff.”

“Can’t wait to share online resources with staff.”

There were some suggestions for improvement too. Several people mentioned that in the beginning of the day I should put the seminar more effectively into perspective re Outcomes Based Education. I’m beginning to find more often that I assume a level of knowledge about curriculum and school reform issues that is not justified. I must be alert to this.

...The next day I attended a one-day seminar by Bill Spady on ‘Leading Outcomes Based Change in Schools’. I was a bit worried he would present a whole lot of ideas that would lead people away from the practical ideas I’m trying to promote. I

need not have worried. Most of the day consisted of a clear exposition on the importance of moving beyond Curriculum Based Outcomes to emphasise exit/transformational outcomes. When it came to the how, Spady's suggestion consisted of brief comments about action learning... A few Curriculum Education Advisors commented on the Education Advisor discussion list on a couple of things Spady had said that they liked. Marshalling my best skills of diplomacy, I wrote a message to the list to say I had something practical that addresses the 'how to':

The Spady seminar yesterday was interesting. He certainly gave a clear rationale for schools not settling for just Curriculum Based Outcomes (CBOs). He suggested towards the end that schools could use the CBOs to fuel achievement of exit outcomes, and achieve both in one "swell foop" using an action learning pedagogy. I can't agree with him there. While one type of outcomes can certainly support the other, they do tend to pull in different directions, and there is lots of evidence that they need (constitute) different forms of assessment, and need different pedagogies and learning activities/contexts. (For more discussion on this, see [my website].)

I liked what Spady said about using a developmental continuum for tracking performance quality ("complexity and sophistication") of exit outcomes. (Some would see a developmental continuum as incompatible with the philosophy of OBE.) I have built mechanisms to achieve this into the models and resources I've been developing to help schools reconcile 2010 and KLA OBE (to get transformational). The discussion around enriching QSCC's Attributes of a Life Long Learner was interesting, but QSCC has indicated that they did not intend that the ALLLs be used as the basis of a continuum, and they do not want them used that way. That's why I formulated my 'own' set of exit outcome descriptors (the Key Abilities), so they could form the basis of a developmental continuum of exit outcomes. J, you might like to show my Performance Level Statements for the Key Abilities

to those schools you mentioned (see [my website]). I wrote mine as a continuum that would span the years of schooling, and rather than primary schools arbitrarily setting a particular level as constituting an exit outcome for students leaving primary, they might like to simply track student development on the whole continuum.

Other elements of my Key Abilities Model serve to support that process - the development and tracking of performance of exit outcomes, AS WELL AS the CBOs. On Wednesday I ran a second one day workshop on the model (for mostly school leaders, with some teachers as well), and I am encouraged by how practical and useful they find it. There is so much talk about the difficulty of finding answers, and about people packing up and going home if we talk big picture, but I am finding with presentations of my model and resources that, far from being resistant, administrators and teachers are getting excited about making practical, big picture, structural and pedagogical responses to the challenge of making curriculum meaningful, while satisfying accountabilities. In the evaluation sheet comments from Wednesday's workshop people were saying how appreciative they are of a constructive model for change that puts OBE into perspective, and makes them feel able to formulate a school plan, how inspired they feel about finding resources they regard as valuable and relevant at both school and 'classroom' level, and how motivated they are about getting back to apply and share the ideas and resources. They are saying that this information should be made available to a wider audience.

It was great to have someone with Spady's level of credibility talking some common sense about curriculum and the purposes of schooling. That sort of visioning combined with some practical 'how to' is a recipe that will make 2010 doable.

[End Field Journal Extract: 20 July 2001]

[Field Journal Extract: 31 July 2001]

I organised a third workshop a couple of days ago to be held in about three weeks. Again I sent invitations to local principals and school leaders, and to those in three neighbouring districts. Three education advisors from those districts have expressed interest. One email from one of them raised a concern I am going to have to respond to. She said she was interested in coming along so she could then do “something similar” in her own district. I said the following in my reply:

I've attached the program for the workshop day, and the 'Overview' page on the Key Abilities Model website at... gives you a quick idea of the model.

I developed it as part of my PhD research on school reform issues, and while it is copyright, I'm keen for as many kids as possible to benefit from the model.

I'm concerned about people taking aspects of my model and promoting them without the full model, and/or promoting the model without full appreciation for the thinking behind it. I'm going to have to devise some training programs for 'certified' Key Abilities Model facilitators, I think.

[End Field Journal Extract: 31 July 2001]

[End Field Journal Extract: 24 August 2001]

I was talking with a district office colleague... He said he thought that, rather than going into a school-based position to get my curriculum model happening, I perhaps ought to 'work through' the problem of getting through to teachers. He thought I should address the issue of teacher personal development and inspiring them to engage with the kind of personal change required to grapple with genuine pedagogical change. I thought there was much in what he said.

[End Field Journal Extract: 24 August 2001]

I was nominated by the Assistant Director-General (Education Services) to be a member of the *Taskforce for an Assessment and Reporting Framework for the Years 1-10 Curriculum for Education Queensland Schools*, which met for four days in October 2001. In that forum I submitted two brief documents for consideration. My hope that the Taskforce would review the policy of outcomes based education in its entirety in its search for a coherent and workable solution to the assessment and reporting issue were quickly (but temporarily, as it turned out) dashed. My first comments addressed some fairly general principles of assessment and reporting that I felt were important in the QSE-2010 climate of concern for transformational outcomes, such as the Attributes of a Life Long Learner, and for adoption of some form of learning/performance continuum.

Thoughts on a Framework for Assessment and Reporting

Concern is expressed in the literature, as well as by many teachers, regarding the tendency of criterion-referenced and competency-based assessment systems to fragment curricula into narrow checklists of skills, behaviours and knowledge, and associated mechanisms of quantification and aggregation. There is concern over whether assessment policies and practices support the nature of the learning outcomes which are most valued, in particular, whether transformational (exit) outcomes (such as problem-solving ability, self-management capacity, community participation competencies, creativity, and multiliteracy) are given adequate prominence, or are overshadowed in assessment practices (and thereby in curricular and pedagogical practices) by 'traditional', curriculum-based outcomes (discrete knowledge and skills).

Masters and Forster (2000), for example, identify key design principles for assessment programs, which satisfy all stakeholders: system managers, school managers, parents, teachers, and students. They argue that such programs should '**maintain as their primary focus the estimation of students' levels of attainment along a continuum of achievement**' (p. 8). Such a system allows different students' performance on **generic procedures and practices within open-ended, transdisciplinary tasks** to be located on a continuum. This avoids the negative consequences of both a competency-based approach like directly assessing curriculum-based outcomes (which prompts the teacher to ask, 'Has the student passed or failed the minimum requirement?'), as well as the

traditional system of assigning year-level-related grades. Importantly, it also **supports constructivist pedagogy**, as distinct from content-focused transmission model pedagogy.

Profiles of student learning and development can map a student's achievement on a continuum according to *quality criteria*, as well as providing *normative* information about that achievement in relation to age standards (average performance level). *Used with care*, this approach to reporting may combine the benefits of normative and criterion-based assessment in a way that satisfies the needs and purposes of students, as well as the needs of other stakeholders.

Rubrics are useful assessment instruments to support such a continuum profile (see, for example, Andrade 2000). Rubrics are learning and assessment tools which not only identify the criteria of performance of a task, but also describe the quality of the elements of performance for each criterion, along a continuum of levels. Consequently, students understand not only what dimensions of performance will be judged, but also what characterises performance at various levels of quality or development. Rubrics are most appropriate for use with a wide variety of genres and other relatively complex practices and tasks, rather than with highly skill and/or knowledge specific learning tasks.

Rubrics have some significant benefits as pedagogical and assessment tools. They are easy to use and understand, and they make teachers' expectations of students very clear. Compared with traditional forms of assessment, they provide students with much clearer feedback about specifically how they need to improve their performance. Most importantly, when used with relatively content-free, general tasks, genres and procedures, rubrics assist with mapping student learning on a developmental continuum spanning the years of compulsory schooling. [Reference details were provided.]

It soon became clear to me that the deliberations of the Taskforce were to be limited to the existing context of the OBE syllabuses, and Education Queensland's Policy and Guidelines (Department of Education 2001a) regarding their implementation. In view of this limited focus, I felt it important to outline in that forum concerns in schools about confusion over what kind of judgement teachers were being asked to make about student demonstration of core learning outcomes, and accordingly what kinds of approaches they might take to curriculum development and decision making. I described three problematic options, and put

forward an argument for a focus on generic curriculum elements, a focus that would allow sufficient flexibility in addressing curriculum outcomes that the *transformational outcomes* embodied in *Queensland State Education - 2010* might be more achievable. Those comments are reproduced below.

More Thoughts on a Framework for Assessment & Reporting

I've been engaged in PhD research in the area of curriculum reform for 2 years, I recently wrote QUT's unit on Student Assessment Practices, and for the past 2 years I've worked directly with 80 schools supporting their curriculum reform efforts. I preface my remarks with this information, because *critical* thinking is often perceived to be *negative* thinking, even though it is one of our espoused educational goals. In recent years I have put a great deal of effort into developing constructive models and resources for teachers and students, and being *constructive* is my only interest.

We have not yet succeeded in resolving the central question every school and teacher wants an answer to: "What *kind* of judgement are we being asked to make about student demonstration of the mandated core learning outcomes?"

Education Queensland can spend many more millions, and teachers can spend many precious hours in moderation discussions, but if we don't have an answer to that question that has workable and sustainable implications for curriculum organisation, both teachers and students will only become more alienated from the schooling experience, and more cynical about it than they are now.

I see 4 options.

The first is that we decide after a period of learning, whether or not the student has demonstrated the outcome. Main difficulties.

1. Student progression. How do schools deal with the fact that some students in a cohort will be ready to address another outcome, while some will need more time to demonstrate the one they haven't achieved? This question becomes even more complex when a period of learning covers multiple outcomes.
2. The judgement. The expression of most core learning outcomes does not enable a black and white decision to be made about whether or not the outcome has been demonstrated.

3. The stigma. The judgement that a student has not demonstrated an outcome after a planned period, cannot be separated from the notion that they have failed.
4. Constrained learning. A student cannot progress faster in their learning than the planned delivery of outcomes.
5. Serves no diagnostic purpose.
6. Emphasises teacher control of the learning process, rather than providing 'progressive' learning goals for students.

The second option is to decide after a period of learning, how well each student has demonstrated an outcome. Keeps us in the old grading paradigm. Main difficulties:

1. Classes students as bright or not so bright, rather than indicating learning progress. E.g. Some students on higher level outcomes will get lower grades than students on lower level outcomes.
2. Constrained learning. A student cannot progress faster in their learning than the planned delivery of outcomes.
3. Serves no diagnostic purpose.
4. Emphasises teacher control of the learning process, rather than providing 'progressive' learning goals for students.

A third option is to decide after a period of learning, which outcome (nested level) a student has achieved. Main difficulties:

1. Student progression. How do schools deal with the fact that some students would move through all the nested levels before others? This question becomes even more complex when periods of learning cover multiple outcomes.
2. Student boredom. Students would have to repeatedly revisit units with the same topic focus in order to move through the 'nested' levels.
3. Outcomes have a *content* focus, as well as a process focus. The nested levels are not based on differing quality of performance, but have a different focus.

A fourth option is to use the outcome levels as a sequencing device only, and to devise rubrics to describe performance levels along a continuum for the generic procedures, tasks and practices that core learning outcomes are built upon.

Benefits:

1. Such profiling is a powerfully logical way of describing student learning progress that satisfies student, parent, school and system needs.
2. This option avoids the necessity of students studying the same material to provide comparisons, but can still provide *normative* information about achievement in

relation to age standards (average performance level).

3. It provides a 'big picture' of the whole program, emphasises progress in learning, and further learning goals.
4. It emphasises the processes of learning.
5. It minimises the need for moderation, which costs so much in time, money and distraction from pedagogical discussion and exploration).

Main difficulty:

1. It necessitates more work on the syllabuses to write rubrics which identify the generic process elements and describe levels of quality for them.

These proposals were not the subject of any discussion in full meetings of the Taskforce.

2.5 YEARS 2002-2003

[Field Journal Extract: 27 February 2002]

A couple of days ago an official statement was made by EQ that schools will be free to report in a way they consider meaningful.

[End Field Journal Extract: 27 February 2002]

[Field Journal Extract: 21 March 2002]

Finally found a few moments to send a message to the new Curriculum Framework discussion list this morning. Here is the body of it:

I guess I'm never going to get a better opportunity than the few minutes I can grab right now to make a few comments about recent discussion about organisers, pedagogy and processes.

I might start by picking up on K's point that "my biggest fear is that we will put a new cover ...on old thinking". That's a valid fear. Bill Spady, international advocate and critic of outcomes based education observes that on three continents (N. America, Britain and S. Africa) outcomes based education has translated at the chalk face into what he calls 'traditional' outcomes based education, that is, largely unchanged content and skills based curriculum and pedagogy

under a new set of labels. This is already happening widely here, but is not an approach that matches what we now know about meaningful learning and development, or one that will fulfil the aspirations of 2010. New Basics schools are not immune to the tremendous inertia of traditional school culture. I've heard of NB high schools which have identified the knowledge and skills required for Rich Tasks, allocated these to different subject areas with specialist teachers, and are teaching these in a de-contextualised way in a long lead up to Rich Task performance on the assumption that the atomised content and skills will 'add up to' a complex performance. I think K is right to suggest that one of the foundation questions school communities should be asking themselves is, what are their 'goals in developing this curriculum framework'?

If we give careful thought to that question, we are likely to conclude, as L reports Jean Russell has, that some of our most valued kinds of outcomes of schooling fall outside the category of abstract, scholastic attainment. I'd be cautious about saying that they fall in the affective domain rather than the cognitive domain, because even Bloom himself recognised in his Taxonomy of Educational Objectives work that the separation of behaviour into separate domains is an entirely artificial exercise. The richest higher order thinking has the richest emotional content and connection with personal values and purposes...

...Teachers need to feel that there are professional and ethical imperatives behind reforms, not just bureaucratic and/or political ones, before they will make the inner commitment needed to achieve the intended substance of the reform. This brings us back to L's comment about new covers on old thinking. I am constantly challenged by Woodrow Wilson's observation that, "It is easier to change the location of a cemetery than to change the school curriculum". Trouble is, I can't think of a more needful endeavour.

[End Field Journal Extract: 21 March 2002]

I continued for some time to talk, plan and work on the basis of the conclusions drawn in the final session of the Taskforce forum. In May 2002, I made some comments consistent with these conclusions on Education Queensland's Curriculum Framework discussion list. I was in for a surprise.

[Field Journal Extract: 10 May 2002]

A couple of hours later I received a phone call from another senior Assessment Policy person in Central Office at the request of the more senior one whose comment had prompted my first comment above. I was told there was concern at my second comment because it was a different "interpretation" of the published policy statement. I was told that at the many Forums currently being held across the state to 'explain' the Report of the Taskforce, the message being given is that schools do not have to plan for *all* Core Learning Outcomes, that they do *not* have to keep records for each individual student that each planned outcome has been achieved, and that schools may "clump" some Core Learning Outcomes together into a unit and use an assessment task or instrument that assesses the lot, without reference to the Core Learning Outcomes incorporated in the unit. I was even told that Core Learning Outcomes are really more like objectives. One reason given for all of this is the view (which I have held 'from the beginning') that Core Learning Outcomes are not stated in specific enough terms that they clearly represent a standard. This is why I have always maintained that a moderation process across Queensland would be a farce.

Well!!! The implications of this news are huge! Firstly, from the perspective of change management it is a huge policy change by stealth. Secondly, it spells the end of Outcomes Based Education, without saying as much. While I was initially shocked at the departure this 'interpretation' (!!) makes from the recommendation of the Assessment and Reporting Taskforce, it is actually good news for common sense. Part of my great disappointment with the Assessment and Reporting Taskforce was that, in addressing the question of meaningful assessment and

reporting, it failed to question the (OBE) curriculum policy which had hugely problematic implications for assessment and reporting.

[End Field Journal Extract: 10 May 2002]

Later in 2002, Education Queensland published a policy clarification on Outcomes Based Education (Department of Education 2002b), which stated, in part:

- All schools are required to provide all students with opportunities to develop the knowledges, understandings and skills deemed to be core learnings...
- Not all of the “core learning outcomes” (CLOs) listed in the KLA syllabuses (developed by the former QSCC) are core learnings required by the *Years 1-10 Curriculum Framework*...
- Schools are able to organise, schedule and deliver learning experiences to meet the needs of their students... [including] the integration of core learnings into distinctive modules, units of work or Individual Education Plans.
- ...Teachers are not required to treat CLOs [Core Learning Outcomes] as assessment criteria or descriptors of standards.

[Field Journal Extract: 28 May 2002]

Last week I went to a Deputy Principals' Cluster meeting. Some of the speakers were very interesting. One was the person from Central Office who I spoke with on the phone a couple of weeks ago about the new interpretation of the Curriculum Framework policy on Core Learning Outcomes and of the Report of the Assessment and Reporting Taskforce. She confirmed what she had told me on the phone, that CLOs are no longer to be all mandatory, that they do not need to be assessed as having been demonstrated or not, and that they might now more appropriately be seen as objectives rather than outcome statements. She explained that a lengthy (couple of years) process of consultation and development would take place regarding “standards” that might be used in the assessment of generic

curriculum elements. She emphasised that we would not be using 'standards' as they are used in the US system...

What strikes me, though, is that on the Curriculum Framework discussion list people continue to plead for clarification of whether all outcomes need to be planned for, whether they need to be assessed, etc., etc. But no one from Central Office will respond with firm and clear answers! More and more curriculum leaders across the state must be fuming with the frustration of being left in limbo re guidelines.

[End Field Journal Extract: 28 May 2002]

The very next day I saw more powerful evidence at the lack of adequate leadership relating to the "what" and the "why" of whole school reform. It related to the IDEAS Project, and confirmed the reservations I felt about the Project a couple of years earlier, and which I identified above (Field Journal Extract: 14 December 2000).

[Field Journal Extract: 29 May 2002]

I was in a meeting recently where the IDEAS Project was discussed. I was shown some brief documents produced by other schools which have been involved in the Project. However, these documents only confirmed for me that the IDEAS process of facilitating discussions with staff to produce a "schoolwide pedagogy" is a Claytons reform process... Some people like this idea because the reform agenda can be left to staff who will then "have more ownership". My view is that no culture seeks to change itself, and that pedagogy reform must be led by input from a person with insight and commitment to certain values and to certain data (reasons for change). It is important that staff have or develop 'ownership', but this is not the same thing as having them generate the 'reform' agenda. 'They don't know what they don't know.'

[End Field Journal Extract: 29 May 2002]

In 2002, my first formal outline and rationale for the Key Abilities Model, titled 'Reforming the hidden curriculum: The Key Abilities Model and Four Curricular Forms', was published (Seaton 2002a). An extract is reproduced below.

The Key Abilities Model

The Key Abilities Model... provides guidelines for curriculum programming, assessment and reporting, learning and teaching, and school organisation, to create rich learning environments which closely reflect the known principles of effective learning and teaching, and promote meaningful and engaged learning connected to the world. The Model assists with addressing officially mandated learning outcomes, while supporting and tracking the development of six transformational or exit outcomes, six Key Abilities needed to prosper in complex and changing social, cultural, and economic worlds. The six Key Abilities are: multi-literacies; problem solving; creativity; community participation; self management; and knowledge of self, others and the environment.

The Model identifies a Spectrum of Key Activities - genres and procedures which are associated with traditional disciplines and subjects, and which are general enough that they might be employed in a wide variety of both directed and negotiated activities. Along with officially required curriculum outcomes, these Key Activities may constitute the elements of a school curriculum program, and the easily assessable indicators of the Key Abilities.

The Key Abilities Model provides a coherent structure for assessing and reporting students' learning and performance through the years of compulsory schooling. As Resnick and Resnick (1989) recognise, you get what you assess, and you do not get what you do not assess. Accordingly, in addition to the tracking of student performance on the required outcomes, the Key Abilities Model enables schools to map or profile each student's demonstration of the Key Abilities along a developmental continuum, with performance level statements for each of six levels. To provide more detailed information about the learning activities students have been engaged in, the Model enables identification and reporting of performance levels for the Spectrum of Key Activities. Learning and assessment of many of the Key Activities are supported by the use of rubrics. These rubrics not only identify the criteria of performance for particular Key Activities, but also describe the quality of the elements of performance for each criterion, along a developmental continuum.

Four curricular forms

Teachers and schools are challenged to ask themselves, how can we reconcile the principles of the reform agenda with the constraints of formal systemic curriculum and assessment policies, and our traditional modes of instruction and interaction? We must bear in mind that, 'Those who want to influence the learning of others should try to create as much correspondence as possible between institutional goals and learners' goals' (ASCD, 1999, f. 7, a. 1, p. 8). When all epistemological authority remains with teachers, or with curriculum policy makers, who decide what is worth knowing and doing, two of the most intractable educational problems remain - lack of student engagement and superficiality of learning, along with the myriad associated personal and social problems which flow from them.

The use of different 'curriculum organisers' being explored in some locations to describe alternative ways of 'slicing up' or combining the content of the curriculum 'pie', fails to significantly change the messages communicated by the basically unchanged *form* of curriculum. The New Basics Framework currently being trialled in some Queensland state schools, for example, while attempting a bold move away from the atomisation of curriculum to a set of mandatory Rich Tasks, explicitly asserts that,

there is no sense of having students negotiate the curriculum... Our challenge is not to gratify the immediate needs of the students, but to question the purpose of our curriculum choices. ...it is important that the New Basics Framework does not translate into a Progressivist educational agenda. (New Basics Branch, 2000, pp. 4-5) [Department of Education 2000a]

I believe a more satisfactory solution is to make explicit provision for Four Curricular Forms, and their associated pedagogies: Focused Learning; Transdisciplinary Investigations; Community Development; and Personal Learning Projects.

The distinctions between these Four Curricular Forms are more strategic, or pedagogical, than fundamental, and each overlaps and complements the others. However, each of the Four Curricular Forms has a particular significance.

1. *Focused Learning*: Focused learning and teaching relating to particular mandated learning outcomes and Key Activities that cannot practically be learned and mastered solely in complex, interdisciplinary or real-life contexts.
2. *Transdisciplinary Investigations*: Complex, active-learning units, each incorporating a variety of particular mandated learning outcomes and Key Activities from several key

learning areas, which individuals and/or groups undertake according to readiness, at the discretion of the teacher.

3. *Community Development Activities*: Real-life, on-going, multi-participant projects with consequential, public outcomes, which provide authentic contexts for complex role performance and a wide variety of identified Key Activities.
4. *Personal Learning Projects*: Largely student-directed, purpose and problem based learning activities, in which the topic and the Key Activities to be incorporated in the activity are negotiated for individuals and/or groups.

...The Key Abilities Model does not rely solely on changing teachers' mindsets to bring about new and much needed educational outcomes. Nor does it rely on the complete dismantling of the traditional curricular form. However, if we hope to achieve a learning society, a healthy, productive and sustainable society of innovative, creative problem solvers, it is essential that we change the *dominance* of the traditional curricular form. This Model embeds important new political, cultural and institutional dimensions in the experience of schooling by highlighting and assessing our most valued outcomes, and by making room for additional curricular forms and their associated pedagogies.

In confirming acceptance and refereed status of this article, the editor of the publishing journal, *Curriculum Perspectives*, provided me with comments made by one of the 'blind' referees. I quote from those comments here.

...The refreshing feature of the whole piece is the author's attempt to tackle large and difficult policy issues in a practical way, which encompasses both the requirements of traditional curriculum and demands for accountability on the one hand, and the need for pedagogical reform on the other. It is a relief to read a piece which is about curriculum reform but avoids narrow reformist zeal and takes account of the range of pedagogies and of kinds of knowledge which are of value.

I found the piece a substantial and significant contribution to practical action in the field. While the introduction of yet another conceptual framework for curriculum reform is not necessarily the most desirable strategy, I think the author's grasp of the range of pedagogical requirements

and readiness to tackle difficult but necessary issues (eg time allocations) make this a most useful addition to the field.

...It is clear, well-presented, very well-written, both ambitious and well-realised, and makes a real contribution to the area. I congratulate the author on a fine piece of work.

[Field Journal Extract: 21 June 2002]

I have been exploring various approaches to student 'behaviour management' recently. I visited a couple of schools which are using Ed Ford's 'Responsible Thinking Process' (RTP) [Ford 1994] approach to school discipline. I know of schools where the intent of the program is not realised in practice, and I wanted to talk with schools where it is being used well. At these schools I was very impressed at the way the RTP process was being used in a way that closely reflects the values and principles guiding my thinking about behaviour *and* my thinking and efforts in pedagogy and curriculum reform.

[End Field Journal Extract: 21 June 2002]

[Field Journal Extract: 16 August 2002]

Many teachers would find it difficult to make the leap to accepting the following principle expressed in an RTP handout I was given at one of the RTP schools I visited: 'Teachers must give up any and every form of control that they have within the confines of the school environment. Without this, RTP is simply another in a list of failed techniques'. Or, as Powers put it, speaking about Perceptual Control Theory, upon which RTP is based: 'The question is, do we really want to give up the idea of forcing other people to behave as we want them to behave? That's what the PCT solution boils down to' [1998, p. 122].

[End Field Journal Extract: 16 August 2002]

[Field Journal Extract: 14 September 2002]

Earlier today, I watched a video by Ed Ford and Tom Bourbon titled ‘The Heart of the Process’ [Ford & Bourbon n.d.]. It covered the basic principles of Ed Ford’s Responsible Thinking Process and Bill Powers’ Perceptual Control Theory. Some key points I noted are these:

1. We teach people to think by asking them questions. This not only encourages thought, but allows responses to situations always to be the child’s choice.
2. Teachers are trained to control behaviour.
3. B.F. Skinner was quoted as saying “upfront” in his early 1950s book, that “When you control other people, you have to be prepared for them to control you back”.
4. The only way to avoid such ‘counter control’ is to stop controlling other people.

[End Field Journal Extract: 14 September 2002]

Towards the end of 2002 and throughout 2003, I undertook a formal review of literature relating to human knowing, learning, agency and change, and in late 2003/early 2004 I formulated the Dynamic Paradigm of Learning and Change. These constitute Chapter 3.

During 2002 and 2003, I continued to develop guidelines and resources to assist schools to ‘flesh out’ the Key Abilities Model. Many of these resources I made available on my website [www.andrewseaton.com.au], while I made others available to schools I worked with. The number of resources produced is too extensive to reproduce within this thesis. A few of them, however, have been reproduced in the Appendix, which contains the following:

1. A one-page summary of the Key Abilities Model, headed ‘Curriculum Overview ~ The Key Abilities Model’.
2. A one-page diagrammatic overview identifying some of the key elements of school life that the Dynamic Paradigm of Learning and

Change suggests need to be coordinated to generate a coherent and viable schooling experience for young people. The diagram is headed, 'Key Abilities Model Overview of School Life'.

3. Two pages headed, 'Generic Curriculum Elements', in which I have:
 - a. described the generic elements of an authentic school curriculum, which are identified in Construct 12 of the Dynamic Paradigm of Learning and Change as the meaning-making, -testing, -expressing and -applying procedures associated with various disciplines;
 - b. identified over fifty such Generic Curriculum Elements (neither an exhaustive, nor a prescriptive list);
 - c. briefly described their relationship to the Four Curricular Forms of the Key Abilities Model;
 - d. identified which of them might be suitable in particular Transdisciplinary Investigations in particular Year Levels;
 - e. briefly identified how, when assessed with the aid of rubrics, they may serve as indicators of development along a continuum of six Key Abilities: Understanding, Multiliteracies, Problem Solving, Creativity, Self Management, and Community Participation.
4. A genre guide (from my KidSolutions website, Seaton n.d.[b]) for a Letter of Invitation, as an example of the 17 genre guides for various generic curriculum elements, which I have so far developed for the use of students and teachers.
5. A learning and assessment rubric (from my Key Abilities Model website, Seaton n.d.[d]) for a Letter of Invitation, as an example of 16 such rubrics for generic curriculum elements, which I have so far developed for the use of students and teachers.
6. A one-page explanation (drawing on the Constructs of the Dynamic Paradigm, as well as the writings of some specific authors), headed, 'Understanding as a Pedagogical Goal'. This sheet briefly clarifies for

teachers the nature and conditions of student learning focused on understanding (making and re-making meaning), with specific identification of how teacher-led Transdisciplinary Investigations lend themselves to students making, critiquing and re-making meaning, and identification of specific pedagogical ideas for supporting student construction and re-construction of understandings.

7. A one-page 'Framework of Transdisciplinary Investigations', which 'maps' mandated Core Learning Outcomes (CLOs) from most of the new KLA syllabuses across Years 1 to 7 (the Queensland primary school years). The Framework shows how most CLOs can be 'clumped' together to be addressed in active investigations across four sub-organisers: Our Personal World, Our Technological World, Our Social World, and Our Natural World (the primary curriculum organisers being the Four Curricular Forms). I originally emphasised the "transdisciplinary" nature of these investigations (and of Personal Learning Projects) as an approach to curriculum integration that "dissolves all boundaries between the disciplines". As my own understanding evolved through synthesising the Dynamic Paradigm of Learning and Change, I came to emphasise their transdisciplinary nature as an approach that "dissolves the 'body of knowledge' boundaries between the disciplines, and makes use of generic curriculum elements commonly associated with various disciplines to shape curriculum to support student engagement in productive citizenship and construction and reconstruction of meaning through investigation of real-world issues, questions and problems". (Summaries of the CLOs would normally accompany this Framework, but are too bulky to include within this thesis.)
8. An outline of one of the Transdisciplinary Investigations (Year 7, 'How Can We Promote Sustainable Energy?') identifying the CLOs addressed, the real-world context or issue driving the investigation, the Generic Curriculum Elements essential and optional to the investigation,

the conceptual understandings students should develop, methods of assessment of understanding and the Generic Curriculum Elements, specific learning activity suggestions for each phase of a flexible 9-step approach to problem-based learning, and a list of teacher resources. I wrote such an outline, minus the brief, draft list of specific learning activity possibilities, for all 28 of the investigations shown on the Framework of Transdisciplinary Investigations. They have not been included within the thesis for reasons of space.

9. A one-page sheet identifying for teachers 'Appropriate Assessment Strategies' for learning within each of the Four Curricular Forms.
10. One page of a possible tally sheet mechanism for teachers to record student demonstrations of Key Abilities performance levels as the teacher marks students' Generic Curriculum Elements using rubrics.
11. A one-page sample of a sheet for inclusion in students' reports, showing 'Key Abilities Performance' on a continuum.

In February 2005, I received some unsolicited feedback in an email from a Deputy Principal of a school where I led Key Abilities Model reform in late 2002-2003:

...your work you left behind is the hub of all we do. ...I'm very excited and never fail to marvel at what you produced. [The Curriculum Coordinator] continues to sing your praises especially as we watch the new syllabuses roll out and how easy it is to align them with what you prepared. So again - A HUGE THANK YOU FROM [OUR SCHOOL].

5.6 FORMAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FIELD (1999-2005)

In addition to a coherent conceptual framework, the Dynamic Paradigm of Learning and Change synthesised and articulated within this thesis, this inquiry has also generated critical insights and developed practical models, resources and texts consistent with the Dynamic Paradigm, that may assist academics, policy makers and education practitioners in the design and interpretation of, and response to, educational change. The inquiry has already generated many such outcomes.

It has already been noted that there is worldwide interest in educational reform, and Fullan (2001, pp. xii-xiii) notes, from his experience and discussions with those involved with educational reform in many countries, that, ‘the nature of problems and the principles of success and failure are common around the world’. Thus, while this research was conducted in a particular educational context, many of its outcomes will be of interest and relevance to those concerned with or engaged in education in other national and international contexts. Indeed, insights generated through the research have already been sought and applied by educators further afield, as indicated below.

Dissemination itself has been a major process within this research project. The inquiry focused on my efforts to develop and promote in schools insights, models and resources generated through my critical reflection on issues of school reform. Many of these materials and other writings have also been made available publicly through my website at www.andrewseaton.com.au

Dissemination has also taken, and will continue to take upon completion of the formal aspects of the inquiry, the form of published writings and conference presentations for both professional and academic audiences. Work directly emerging from my research, from 1999 to the present, includes:

2.6.1 Book chapter

Seaton, A. 2002, ‘Four curricular forms: Supporting literacy in middle-school programming’, in B. Gordon (ed.), *Practical Literacy Programming*, Primary English Teaching Association, Newtown, pp. 93-107. Commissioned work.

2.6.2 Refereed conference papers / Book chapters

Forthcoming: Seaton, A. 2005, ‘Towards a Pedagogy of Authentic Intelligence: The Character and Form of the “Dynamic Paradigm of Learning and Change”’, Paper to be presented at the international conference on educational research, *Redesigning Pedagogy: Research, Policy, Practice*, Singapore, 30 May to 1 June.

Forthcoming: Seaton, A. 2005, 'The "Dynamic Paradigm of Learning and Change": Viable constructs and forms for personal, organisational and economic development', Paper to be presented at the 19th International Conference on Education, *Learning Organization in a Learning World*, Bangkok, April. Refereed status pending.

Seaton, A. 2004, 'Resolving dichotomies of power and identity in pedagogical theory and practice: A way forward for democracy', Paper presented at the Australian and New Zealand Comparative and International Education Society's (ANZCIES) Conference, *Global Pedagogies: Equity, Access and Democracy in Education*, Melbourne, 3 December. In press in book of conference proceedings.

Seaton, A. 2004, 'On creating a kind of person: New paradigms, new pedagogies... new people?', Paper presented at the *6th Australian Conference on Quality of Life*, Melbourne, 25 November. Refereed status pending.

Seaton, A. 2001, 'Curriculum organisation for a learning society: The Key Abilities Model and four curricular forms, in M. Brennan (ed.), *Education Futures & New Citizenships: Proceedings of the 10th National Biennial Conference of the Australian Curriculum Studies Association*, ACSA, September/October.

2.6.3 Refereed articles

Seaton, A. 2003, 'Literacy, learning and pedagogy', *Australian Journal of Middle Schooling*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 24-28. Invited work.

Seaton, A. 2002, 'Reforming the hidden curriculum: The Key Abilities Model and four curricular forms', *Curriculum Perspectives*, vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 9-15.

2.6.4 Keynote conference addresses

Seaton, A. 2004, 'Language: tool or tyrant?', Keynote address delivered at the Australian Literacy Educators' Association and Tasmanian Association of Teachers of English combined state conference, *Change... Continuity... Connections: What's Essential in English and Literacy?*, Hobart, 26 June. Commissioned work.

Seaton, A. 2004, 'Change: Learning and Pedagogy', Keynote address delivered at the Northern Territory AGQTP Teachers' Conference, *Pedagogy in Practice - Creating Powerful Learning Environments*, Darwin, 5 April. Commissioned work.

2.6.5 Non-refereed articles

Seaton, A. 2002, 'The power of reform, or the reform of power? Issues at the learning edge', *Leading the Learning Edge*, Joint International Conference (2002) Website of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders / Learning Environment Technology Australia, <http://www.acea.edu.au/conference2002/part_3.html> (no longer available online).

Seaton, A. 2001, 'New wine demands new bottles', *EQ Australia*, (magazine of the Curriculum Corporation), Spring, September, Issue 3.

Seaton, A. 2001, 'Getting off the stage', *Professional Exchange*, Issue 5, August.

Seaton, A. 2000, 'Getting on with IT: Recent developments in the paradigm shift', *INSITE*, (newsletter of the Queensland Society for Information Technology in Education), pp. 5-7, April/May. Invited work.

Seaton, A. 1999, 'Taking the kids to the CyberFair', *INSITE*, (newsletter of the Queensland Society for Information Technology in Education), May.

2.6.6 Non-refereed conference papers

Seaton, A. 2004, 'Investing in intelligence: A philosophical and practical-critical inquiry into the character and form of a new paradigm of learning and change: A report on PhD research', Paper presented at the Australian Association for Research in Education's (AARE) International Educational Research Conference, *Doing the Public Good: Positioning Education Research*, Melbourne, 30 November.

Seaton, A. 2004, 'Changing your mind: The paradigm shift essential to would-be transformative educators', Paper presented at the conference, *Knowledge*

Producing Schools: A Transformative Educational Agenda, Geelong, 27 November.

Seaton, A. 2004, 'Investing in intelligence: A philosophical and practical-critical inquiry into the character and form of a new paradigm of learning and change: A report on PhD research', Paper presented at the DUSA Postgraduate Research Conference, *Intersections: Power ~ Knowledge ~ Production*, Geelong, 2 October.

Seaton, A. 2003, 'The Key Abilities Model: A practical pathway through the school reform minefield', Paper presented at the New South Wales Association of Independent Schools' conference, *Making the Most of the Middle Years: Connecting, Engaging and Motivating in Practice*, Sydney, August. Commissioned work.

Seaton, A. 2003, 'Intelligence, passion and practice: Opening minds in the middle years', Paper presented at the Logan Education Alliance's conference, *Igniting Passions, Opening Minds*, Logan City, August. Invited paper.

Seaton, A. 2002, 'Getting off the stage: Supporting engagement and autonomy in learning', Paper presented at Logan Education Alliance's conference, *Learning for Tomorrow*, Logan City, August.

Seaton, A. 2001, 'Are we there yet? Challenging the imperialist regime of truth and moving towards post colonialism through new conceptions of power in schooling', Paper presented at the University of Queensland's conference, *Disrupting Preconceptions: Post colonialism and Education*, Brisbane, August.

Seaton, A. 2001, 'Approaches to integrated curriculum, literacy and outcomes-based education', Paper presented at Woodridge State High School's conference, *Outcomes-Based Education*, Surfers Paradise, August.

Seaton, A. 2001, 'Curriculum organisation for a learning society: The Key Abilities Model and four curricular forms', Paper presented at Multi-age Association of Queensland's Conference, *Free to Learn*, Surfers Paradise, August.

Seaton, A. 2001, 'Rules of engagement: The pedagogy of purpose', Paper presented at University of Queensland's *New Pedagogies & School Reform: Challenging Research & Practice* Conference, Surfers Paradise, July.

Seaton, A. 2001, 'School and curriculum organisation for valued outcomes: A model', Paper presented at Education Queensland's *Curriculum Education Adviser Conference*, Brisbane, May/June.

Seaton, A. 2001, 'Who's the man? Improving learning through personal empowerment', Paper presented at Logan Education Alliance's conference, *Boys, Gender and Schooling*, Logan City, April.

Seaton, A. 2000, 'Taking your kids to the CyberFair', Paper presented at Queensland Society for Information Technology in Education (QSITE) Annual State Conference, *Warming to Information Technology*, Townsville, September.

Seaton, A. 2000, 'A student-centred framework for IT integration: A practical approach', Paper presented at Queensland Society for Information Technology in Education (QSITE) Annual State Conference, *Warming to Information Technology*, Townsville, September.

Seaton, A. 2000, 'Active literacy: A general abilities approach to curriculum, assessment & pedagogy', Paper presented at meeting of the English Teachers' Association of Queensland, Townsville, August. Invited paper.

Seaton, A. 2000, 'The General Abilities Framework: A student-centred approach to curriculum, assessment & pedagogy', Paper presented at *Teacher 2000: Changing Worlds, Changing Roles* Townsville, August.

Seaton, A. 1999, 'KidSolutions: A resource for an IT supported, student-centred, problem-based approach to learning and teaching', Paper presented at *Get with IT*, (Information Technologies in Education Conference), Brisbane, August.

2.6.7 University courses / study guides

Seaton, A. 2005, *TCHE 2201 Understanding Literacies*, School of Education, RMIT University, Melbourne.

Seaton, A. 2004, *TCHE 2112 Introduction to New Learning*, School of Education, RMIT University, Melbourne.

Seaton, A. 2004, *TCHE 2116 New Ways with ICT*, School of Education, RMIT University, Melbourne.

Seaton, A. 2001, *PRB416 Classroom Assessment Practices*, (study guide and selection of readings for external students), Queensland University of Technology Department of Teaching and Learning Support Services. Commissioned work.

2.6.8 Additional consultancy

Appointed to the Steering Committee of the Victorian Schools Innovation Commission's 'Year 9 Project' by Commission Chief Executive Officer, Viv White, December 2004.

Contracted by the Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training's Curriculum Services Branch in 2004 to assist in embedding the Key Abilities Model as a framework within systemic curriculum policy, with an initial focus particularly on high schools within remote indigenous communities. Project Manager, Marissa Boscato, has expressed interest in taking the work "much further" and has requested a further proposal for consultancy support and research. Negotiations in progress.

Contracted by the Tasmanian Department of Education's Office for Curriculum, Leadership and Learning to facilitate a one-day weekend workshop on Whole-

School Reform for 80 high school teachers, principals and system leaders in February 2004, as part of an Australian Government Quality Teacher Program project. Assistant Directors-General, Penny Anderson and Ruth Radford, have expressed interest in developing a continued relationship of consultancy support and research in 2005. Negotiations in progress.

Contracted by Hilliard Christian School, Hobart, to provide one day of consultancy support to whole teaching staff relating to their implementation of my Key Abilities Model as part of their Essential Learnings school reform, November 2004.

Contracted by the Tasmanian Department of Education's Office for Curriculum, Leadership and Learning to facilitate a one-day weekend workshop for Grade 9 and 10 teachers on Transdisciplinary Inquiry Projects in February 2004, as part of an Australian Government Quality Teacher Program project.

Commissioned in 2003 by Griffith University to write a literature review to inform the university's major overhaul of the Bachelor of Education (Primary) program. The 27,000 word review was titled: 'Leading change in teacher education for the knowledge economy: A critical review of literature on desirable teacher attributes and how they might best be developed in a pre-service teacher education program'.

Contracted in 2003 by Canterbury College to offer guidance and work with curriculum leaders and primary and secondary teachers on organising curriculum, teaching and learning, and reporting based on 'outcomes' syllabuses.

Contracted in 2002 by Shailer Park State High School to undertake an independent evaluation over two days of a curriculum development initiative.

Consulted in 2001 by Vicki Knopke, a research officer with the Queensland School Curriculum Council, for "insights" into "making judgements" in assessment and reporting on a continuum.

Contacted by schools in both the Independent and Catholic systems requesting permission to use, reproduce and distribute my web-based curriculum guidelines and resources.

2.6.9 Submissions

Submission to Griffith University's Review of the Bachelor of Education (Primary) Program, April, 2003. (This submission led to my being commissioned in August 2003 to write a review of the literature relating to the attributes needed by future teacher education graduates, and how those attributes might best be developed within a primary teacher preparation program.)

Submission made during proceedings of the Taskforce for an Assessment and Reporting Framework for the Years 1-10 Curriculum for Education Queensland Schools, October, 2001.

Submission to state and federal Ministers of Education on Curriculum for a Learning Society, November, 2000.

Submission to the Queensland School Curriculum Council's online Cross-Curricular Planning Forum, 2000.

Submission to the Director-General of Education Queensland for a school-based trial of a General Abilities Framework for Curriculum, December, 1999.

2.6.10 Website resources

Seaton, A. n.d., Andrew Seaton's education website, <www.andrewseaton.com.au> (accessed 1 January 2005).

Seaton, A. n.d., The Key Abilities Model, <www.andrewseaton.com.au/kam.htm> (accessed 1 January 2005).

Seaton, A. n.d., KidSolutions (teacher and student resources for problem-based learning), <www.andrewseaton.com.au/solution.htm> (accessed 1 January 2005).