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LESSONS FROM ALBANIA: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAT TRANSFORMS EDUCATORS, SCHOOLS, AND COMMUNITIES

BARDHYL MUSAI
JAMES M. WILE

Abstract – *Programs of staff development for in-service teachers often focus on the introduction of specific skills and technologies. Seldom do staff development programs take on more broad goals of professional and personal growth. In this article the authors describe one program, the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking project, a literacy-based project developed and implemented by the International Reading Association. The project began as a training program with rather modest goals of instructional skills development, but resulted in a surprising number of unexpected outcomes. These outcomes clearly distinguished this program as a professional rather than a technical development activity. The project, a three-year training of trainers model, introduced innovative literacy-based techniques in Albania (and 29 other countries in Europe and Asia) from 1997-2001. The authors, both members of the International Reading Association, participated in the project's implementation and dissemination in Albania. In this article, after reviewing the project, the authors summarize their investigation of the project's impact on individual participants through data collected in survey and case study. In doing so, they differentiate between technical and professional development and offer suggestions, based on this study, regarding how other in-service programs might be shaped to lead to opportunities for in-service teachers to truly develop as individuals and professional educators.*

‘At the beginning I was thinking that only little things had changed in me.
I was provided with some new techniques,
I was feeling comfortable during my classes,
I was feeling certain when teaching and like that.
But later I noticed that the change was big.’
Zhuljeta, History Teacher, Elbasan,

Introduction

Professional development is often initiated for the purpose of improving *students'* performance, expanding *students'* self-concepts, or increasing *students'* motivation and positive behavior. As participant-observers for four years in the International Reading Association's professional learning program *Reading and*

Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT), we believe professional learning programs can have even more powerful and long-lasting implications for the lives of *educators* and the *school communities* in which they work.

The increased capacity in human resources and a refreshing sense of professionalism can be, in itself, a significant outcome. But not all so-called staff development or in-service training lead to transformative experiences, experiences that dramatically shift the way participants come to understand their students and their students' families, the nature and purpose of schooling, their role in the construction of meaning, and so forth.

What are the characteristics of professional learning programs that transform teachers' ideas about theory and practice? And, what are the ways professional transformations manifest themselves in the classroom and in the school community? In this article, we describe the organization, process, and sample outcomes of the *Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking* project as it was implemented in Albania over a three-year period. We believe professional development programs patterned after this project can be highly effective in transforming practice and practitioners, enhancing and enriching the lives of teachers, their colleagues, and their students. What's more, we believe lessons learned in Albania have application to teachers everywhere.

Professional development: informative or transformative?

Education theorists (e.g. Goodlad, 1994; Sizer, 1992; Soder, 1996) have outlined visions of educational transformation intended to realign traditional models of schooling along more productive values of a democratic society. These include such virtues as active individual participation, respect for individual difference, equal access to high status rewards, moral stewardship, and reciprocating systems of support between individuals and the community.

Educational philosophy can provide a vision of *what* schools might become. It stimulates intellectual discussion about ideal worlds of goals, attitudes, and values. Unfortunately, visionaries may offer little guidance about *how* such transformations might come about in the very real worlds of public schools.

Critical theorists (Apple, 1989; Callahan, 1962; Giroux, 1983; Tierney, 1993) point out barriers to meaningful educational transformation include well-entrenched traditions of class, ethnicity, and gender. Removed from the central equations of power, educators often feel powerless to effect even modest changes in their own classrooms. Fewer still appear able to promote change across the school communities in which they work. Why might this be so?

Teachers and administrators often adopt passive roles in their approach to their work, and limited sense of their own selves and efficacy. Like factory workers in

a production-oriented educational system, educators often view their work as a process of applying appropriate techniques to produce skilled learners. In such environments staff development programs often aim to enhance the technical skills of teachers, but may do so without substantively affecting their perspectives, status, or access to power (Graves, 1983; Routman, 2000; Shannon, 1989).

We agree educators can and must be change agents in their own schools. They can become leaders in the process of transforming schools into democratic communities. A rich background in theory and research must guide professional development. But we contend that classroom teachers are more likely to embrace change when it is presented in the form of a transformative pedagogy.

The rise of the Professional Development Schools studies (Abdal-Haqq, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1994; Holmes Group, 1986, etc.) underscore the power and effectiveness of creating school-based learning communities. By changing traditional school staff development into clinical communities of praxis, in-service teachers are encouraged and empowered to develop reflective pedagogy, share expertise, and provide mutual support and assistance. Clearly, the impetus for such clinical activity is derived from real-life issues of best classroom pedagogy and outcomes for children and their families.

DuFour and Eaker (1998) describe six characteristics of schools as professional learning communities. These include: (1) a shared mission, vision, and values; (2) collective inquiry; (3) collaborative teams; (4) action orientation and experimentation; (5) continuous improvement or a constant search for a better way; and (6) a results orientation or the goal of tangible improvement. We contend that these elements were intentionally built into the design of this professional development program. Further, these elements help to distinguish this professional development program apart from traditional models and contributed to its transformative results.

Based on our experiences in the *Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking* project in Albania, we would hypothesize that literacy pedagogy is particularly well-suited to promote professional development and promote transformative outcomes. We base this hypothesis on several key assumptions about instruction in particular and about language in general.

A twentieth century industrial mind-set introduced a division of labor and specialization that carried over to many educational systems. As a result, it is not unusual for teachers even within the same school to have difficulty finding areas of shared purpose, common problems, and strategies. Each subject area is believed to have discrete learning objectives and a corresponding pedagogy, making communication between teachers of literature, mathematics, and science appear unnecessary and unproductive. Similarly, a strong tradition of developmental psychology has helped fracture the school curriculum making discussions

between primary teachers difficult, and between primary and secondary teachers unimaginable.

Literacy skills, however, and the pedagogy associated with such skill development, however can be a powerful perspective to unite these specialized groups. Teachers readily acknowledge the fact that the skills of reading, writing, and discussion are developed and improved from primary through post-secondary education. In a sense a portion of this development includes learning to become literate and at the same time includes learning to use literacy as a tool for learning and interacting. Just as the literacy curriculum and pedagogy cut across (and therefore unite teachers of all grade levels, so too does literacy skill cut across all subject areas.

This notion of literacy across the curriculum is typically referred to as content area literacy. Simply put, content area literacy suggests that literate skill and competence is critical to student success in learning math, science, history, geography, etc. Naturally, all teachers showed interest in any strategy or intervention that made them more effective as teachers and their students more successful as learners.

Further, the idea of content area literacy suggests that each subject area provides a meaningful or functional opportunity to enhance students' competency with literacy. After all, it only seems logical that if we expect students to use reading and writing to think critically, we must give them content to think about. Similarly, enhanced literate skills (reading, writing, discussion, etc) enabled students to use information they were learning (from textbooks, lectures, experiments, and so forth); it also helped them express their own understanding and, not insignificantly, to begin to monitor, reflect upon and evaluate the quality of their own learning (Vacca, 2002).

An innovative approach to literacy instruction and assessment can be a powerful lever to bring about a 'mindset for change' (Fullan, 1993). As we will demonstrate, constructivist literacy pedagogy can significantly affect student learning and performance and shift the way *students* think of themselves as readers and writers. A professional development program with constructivist literacy pedagogy as its focus can dramatically transform the ways *educators* see themselves and their relationship to their colleagues, administrators, parents, and the curriculum.

Similarly, as we were striving to create professional development learning communities within schools, it seemed reasonable that much of the communication traditions (between teacher and student, between teacher and teacher, and between teacher and supervisor) would need to be considerably transformed from the traditional hierarchical patterns of Albanian schools. A language perspective helped first to sensitize participants to the subtle but critical

components of discourse, second to employ specific techniques as alternative discourse strategies, and third, to reflect on the implications of those alternative discourse strategies.

In total, then, we believe a language both a harmonizing and strategic perspective for initiating personal and institutional change. In designing and implementing a professional development program in Albania we assumed that language (albeit well-entrenched by traditions of power, gender, and status) was a fundamental component of change.

Finally, as an expressive behavior, language use (by students, teachers, and administrators) is highly amenable to measurement. As we had in mind a very praxis-oriented, outcomes based approach to our professional development program language use, discourse patterns, even personal grammars such as question-answer routines, the ability to support personal opinions with facts, or the ability to identify bias or authors' purposes were easy to describe and therefore easy to observe. Teachers' lesson plans and students' written works also become valuable artifacts for setting goals, explicit pedagogy, and measuring change.

Technical skills or professional development?

We make a distinction between programs that lead to technical development and programs that are intended to promote professional development. Traditional staff development programs are often limited to the dissemination of technical information (that is, information about new techniques or procedures). The measure of a technical development program is how well participants have received and understood the new information. The effects of such programs can be observed in teachers' behaviors and gains in student performance.

While professional development programs may also introduce new techniques and have the intention of improving teacher and student performance they differ from technical development in important ways. First, they embed opportunities for guided reflection and discussion. Reflection enriches individuals' understanding of their own experiences. Shared reflection promotes observations and analyses that cut across a variety of contexts. Inquiry and discussion help participants generate new, grounded theories about teaching and learning.

Second, professional development presents innovative techniques within a coherent framework. In fact, instructional techniques can be purposefully used to illustrate new instructional frameworks. The acquisition of new frameworks enable educators to make informed decisions, to anticipate outcomes, and to make sense of those outcomes. A coherent pedagogical framework enables decision-making based on knowledge not just experience.

Third, a transformative professional development program includes a social interaction aspect. Such programs promote teachers' abilities to see connections between to other people, places, and times outside their own. These programs enable educators to work collaboratively with other adults.

Fourth, a transformative professional development program addresses issues of self-esteem and self-concept. This includes the ability to see oneself as more competent and thus more valuable. It means the willingness to try new tasks and to form new relationships.

A professional educator must have intellectual skill and moral courage. We submit that a program of professional development organized around these characteristics constitutes a powerful transformative force that supports the development of the skill and courage required for changing lives in schools and communities.

In total, we agree with Goodlad (1994) that the standard for professional development should be the degree to which intervention promotes introspection. Because school is after all a social organization and learning is a social activity, we assume that an effective professional development program should strive not only to transform individuals but the collective community in which they live and work. Ideally, such a transformative program will both enable the individual to examine his or her role in that community and provide the practical tools for maximizing his or her contribution to the overall success of the learning community.

Our study focuses on the *Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT)* project as a model professional development program. Our plan is to identify features of the program that promote professional development and to identify ways professional development manifests itself. Our hope is this model and the information we report here will be useful to others who design and evaluate programs of professional development.

Background to the Study

We chose as a case model of a transformative professional development program, the Reading and writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) project in Albania. It should be pointed out that the program and these results have been replicated in nearly thirty countries in Europe, Asia and Central America.

The program was designed and implemented in the late 1990s to fit the needs of a variety of countries that were in transition following the break up of the Soviet Union. Implementing this project in Albania revealed some unique aspects of that country's historical, political, cultural, and educational contexts.

The former centralized government of Albania held complete control over political, economic, intellectual, and social interaction. Prohibited from travel, even domestic travel was restricted. Most citizens were denied access to Western literature and had limited opportunities to encounter contemporary Western ideas about teaching and learning. As a result, very little real changes occurred in the professional lives of teachers. Thus whilst political change has propelled Albania into contact with the rest of Europe and the international community, after years of cultural isolation, it remains Europe's poorest country (Leach, 1996). Although the isolation that characterizes the Albanian context may seem extreme, it's curious that many teachers in the United States and Western Europe also refer to a sense of isolation in their daily work, as well.

Our interest in this study grew out of our numerous observations of the many people who had participated in the RWCT professional development program experienced and subsequently underwent profound changes in their professional lives. These changes often took the form of new roles and responsibilities.

Confronting a range of traditional barriers—hierarchical structures of power and status, ethnic and gender bias, restrictive or poorly developed infrastructures—RWCT participants used literacy issues to enhance their access to structures of authority and autonomy. The study was initiated by a single question: Why was this program so effective in transforming participants' professional development?

Our presentation here consists of (1) an overview of the educational context in Albania, (2) a brief history of the program's implementation, dissemination and institutionalization in Albania, and (3) data we collected from Albania educators who participated in this professional development program.

The educational context of Albania

Albania is a Mediterranean country of early culture and civilization, but educational development remained stunted, largely due to the invasion of the Turkish Empire, which led to an occupation that lasted for about five centuries. The first school in the Albanian language was only set up in 1887, in the district of Korça. Teacher education too is quite a recent development in Albania, compared with trends in other Western European countries. The first school of teacher training was set up in Elbasan in 1909, and was called *Shkolla Normale* (Normal School)—a secondary level institution.

In 1948, a 2-year Pedagogical Institute started functioning in Tirana. Nine years later, the University of Tirana was established, marking the beginning of university level teacher education. Higher Pedagogical Institutes responsible for

training elementary school teachers were set up in Shkoder, Elbasan and Gjirokaster. In 1982, a new branch of teachers' training for the lower primary school teachers was set up at these institutions. In 1992, these institutions were converted into Universities.

After the Second World War up to the collapse of the communist dictatorship, Albanian teachers and educators were among the most discriminated members of the intelligentsia. Party totalitarianism imposed a rigid and authoritarian pedagogy. From the 1970's up to the collapse of the dictatorship in Albania in 1991, no published material on philosophy, psychology, sociology, civics, didactics or literature was allowed to enter Albania from abroad. The same was true for the natural sciences, with books and magazines becoming very scarce given the fear of penetration by foreign ideology.

The structure of the education system in the Republic of Albania is as follows. The pre-university system is divided into two educational levels: the compulsory 8-year education (grades 1-4: one teacher for all classes, grades 5-8: different teachers for different subjects) and the secondary education that has two subdivisions general secondary education and vocational education.

During the past decade Albania has been involved in the democratic change processes. These attempts to change the general educational situation were mostly isolated and non-systematic efforts. They were typically not harmonized with other education links and levels, and generally did not bring significant change in the system. What has so far been called an educational reform, was an *ad hoc* reform.

Efforts have been made to modernize teaching methodologies and democratize the teaching-learning process by giving priority to both independent and group work and diminishing the reliance on lecture-recitation models. The effectiveness of such efforts left much to be desired. They were generally divorced from the curricula and textbooks, key instruments built on and reflecting different didactic principles than the new methods. The incongruities and discrepancies between the two are numerous. Teachers were often left in the middle.

In 1992, a national teacher training scheme was put in place, which worked through a system of *formators* (teacher advisers). The scheme became national with around 1000 *formators*, who were supposed to be the best teachers (not always the case) and who provided teacher training in the districts. Normally one formator was in charge of the training of fifty teachers.

In 1998 the Ministry of Education and Science removed the system for budget reasons and the training responsibility was delegated to the inspectors in the local education authorities, on top of their normal observation and other duties. Time showed that this delegation was ineffective. There is a pressing need for a national teacher training system that will identify the needs and organize the general

training and training-by-subject of the teachers. Since 1998, the Albania Education Development Program (AEDP), a national non-governmental organization has implemented a number of pilot projects to this end in the districts of Elbasan, Korca, Tirana, and Durres. Evaluation feedback and results have been very good.

Teaching and learning remain largely traditional in spite of efforts made in the past few years to improve them. Many non-governmental organizations have carried out numerous activities with teachers, university faculty, and education leaders. But the effects have not been what was hoped for as these activities were generally isolated, sporadic, and not well organized. On the positive side, what has been essentially a bottom-up process of reform has allowed individual initiative to be taken in the face of a previous history of centralised control (Whitehead, 2000).

Teaching materials are not sufficient and sometimes not even appropriate. This has led to a further deterioration of the quality of teaching and learning. Textbooks at all levels, especially those of the compulsory education are inadequate. The subject matter is organized in the traditional form of informative, knowledge-giving text and does not support the development of students' thinking skills, inquiry and discovery of phenomena, and problem solving. In fact, whether the cause or the effect of a deficiency in materials, the majority of teaching in Albania is characterized by oral lecture and oral recitation.

Cooperation between educators in Albania and on the international level is still insignificant. There is no infrastructure to support dialogue among educators. Professional organizations of teachers are insignificant and there are no relevant professional publications. The few organizations that exist have a very tepid and isolated professional life. Contact with the international community is even more problematic. Only a few individuals are members of international organizations and participate in international events.

RWCT implementation in Albania

The Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking project (RWCT) started its activity in Albania in 1997 as a network project of the Soros Foundation coordinated by the Open Society Institute, New York. During the first year, the project involved nine countries from Central and Eastern Europe. The number of countries from Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia involved in the project eventually reached twenty-eight.

The project aims at introducing teaching methods and strategies that promote independent, creative and critical thinking. Rather than limiting education to

simply a teacher-centered task of transferring content information to students, the innovative methodology aimed at cultivating elements of group and co-operative learning. These pedagogical shifts reflected and supported a new vision of education; that of enabling teachers and students to develop sound problem-solving skills and become long-life learners.

In its implementation phase during the 1997-1998 academic year, the RWCT Project in Albania involved 30 teachers, school leaders, and university faculty who participated in several 4-day training workshops conducted by volunteer teacher educators from the International Reading Association (IRA). These training workshops were organized around new teaching strategies and methods intended to promote critical thinking. The major program goal for students was to make them active and critical thinkers, to enable them to take responsibility for their own learning, and to provide the habits and strategies needed to become lifelong learners.

The aim of the RWCT project is to form a critical mass of educators to serve as agents of change in schools and other educational institutions in Albania. During the second year of the project, 1998-1999, the first-year trainees became trainers for another 150 teachers, school leaders and university faculty in six districts of the country through a series of two-day workshops held every other month for a period of two years. RWCT was implemented in six districts of the country, where there are teacher-training colleges: Shkoder, Tirana, Elbasan, Korca, Gjirokaster and Vlora.

The dissemination of ideas worked on parallel fronts: in-service teacher training, pre-service teacher training, development of critical thinking courses at the universities, as well as a broad and effective publication program. RWCT in Albania aimed at re-dimensioning classroom teaching and establishing sustainable models of teacher training. After three years, the dissemination of the project was as follows: 27 teachers, university faculty, and educators from other educational establishments completed the first series of workshops and fulfilled the criteria to become national certified trainers. Another 200 teachers and educators participated in regular RWCT workshops. An additional 34 university faculty attended a short RWCT training course while approximately 250 teachers attended a version of RWCT training. In addition, 25 publishers have been trained in ways of incorporating the RWCT methodology in their textbooks.

The Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking Project has spawned an ambitious publication program of its own. The RWCT program was presented in a series of guidebooks to accompany each of the different workshop topics. Originally published by the International Reading Association, these guidebooks were revised to fit the Albanian context and translated into the Albanian language. The original titles of the eight guidebooks:

1. *A Framework For The Development Of Critical Thinking Across The Curricula*
2. *Development Of Critical Thinking*
3. *Reading, Writing, And Discussion In Every Discipline*
4. *Further Techniques For The Development Of Critical Thinking*
5. *Co-operative Learning*
6. *Lesson Planning And Evaluation*
7. *The Writing Workshop: From Self Expression To Written Arguments*
8. *Creating Thoughtful Readers*

As the program was implemented and the cascade dissemination began, the need for additional materials became clear. Ancillary and supporting materials were developed either in collaboration with international consultants or completely by Albanian educators. These publications included an anthology of readings in educational psychology *Study Everything, Reason First*; a national quarterly professional journal *Mprehesi* (Focus); a collection of sample model lessons *Models for Successful teaching: Methodological Guide For The Implementation Of Critical Thinking Across Classes And Subjects*; and a practical guide to implementing new pedagogical approaches *Creating Child-Centered Classrooms*.

Methodology

We began our inquiry into the nature of transformative professional development with a very basic distinction and premise. Whereas technical development programs, even the very best, aim to transmit technical competence for application in highly specific contexts (e.g., English as a Second Language methodology, computer desktop publishing, football skills, etc), transformative development programs transmit information that enables participants to apply competence in innovative ways and novel contexts. From this distinction we suggest that transformative development programs should not only have an impact on increasing participants' competence and effectiveness (as teachers, teacher educators, or school administrators, see program evaluation executive summary, www.rwct.org), but should also enhance participants' capacity (i.e., enhanced skill plus self-concept) to apply this new information in a variety of new contexts. Quite simply, we set out to document instances where participants did just that.

In fact, we did observe that a number of RWCT participants had taken on new roles and responsibilities as a result of their experiences in the workshops and through implementing program methodology in their classrooms. We set out to determine what factors contributed to such transformations.

We wondered whether participant characteristics (e.g., age, gender, years of experience, place on the education hierarchy) contributed to such dramatic shifts.

We considered the possibility that any innovative professional development program might appeal primarily to stronger, more experienced educators, people more likely to be risk-takers and leaders.

We also wondered if there were program characteristics that contributed to the powerful changes we were observing. The RWCT program consists of a variety of different elements. These include a series of intense, interactive workshops conducted by volunteer teacher educators from the International Reading Association via local professional translators. The volunteers were experienced professors of education from universities in the United States. The workshops were based in a series of written guidebooks for facilitators and participants. These workshop materials were translated into Albanian during year one of the project, then subsequently rewritten by Albanian educators. The workshops were characterized as highly practical in which teaching techniques were demonstrated, followed immediately by critical discussion.

An important program feature was the guided implementation of the teaching techniques that had been demonstrated in the workshop. Workshop leaders helped each participant develop an implementation lesson that fit his or her grade level or subject area. Prior to implementing lessons, participants had opportunities for microteaching and for receiving feedback from the workshop facilitators and other participants.

We wondered whether the delivery system of the program contributed to the outcomes we were observing. The RWCT program was delivered at four intervals across an entire academic year. Between these workshops interim sessions were held for discussion, self-evaluation, and problem solving. Local, in-country facilitators moderated these interim sessions. During the second and third years of the program a cohort of certified RWCT-trained Albanians took over responsibility for facilitating workshops and conducting classroom observations,

Finally we were interested to know whether participants were able to connect specific aspects of the program with shifts in their thinking, growth in self-concept, or enhanced interaction with colleagues, students, and other members of the school community.

The Survey

We developed a survey instrument (see appendix) consisting of three parts. The first part, a personal profile, categorized responders by years of experience in the project, gender, age, education assignment, and years of teaching experience.

The second portion of the survey asked respondents to evaluate the level of impact participation in the RWCT project had on their thinking or actions in the following areas: relationship with students, relationship with colleagues, relationship to curriculum, definition of teaching and learning, relationship with students' parents, and overall motivation and satisfaction as a teacher.

In the third part of the survey we asked responders to identify personal and professional roles and responsibilities they have taken on since their participation in RWCT began. The range of new responsibilities included: teacher educator, author, mentor, consultant, administrator, editor, conference presenter, and education researcher. We asked responders to briefly describe connections between participation in RWCT and their new roles and responsibilities.

Preliminary drafts of the survey instrument were reviewed by peers. Reviewers' comments and suggestions were incorporated into a revised draft. The survey was then translated into the Albanian language and field-tested before a final version was prepared. The survey instrument was hand-distributed during meetings of different groups of program participants (past and present). The surveys were distributed mainly in Tirana, Elbasan, and Korce, regions accessible by automobile. The total number of completed surveys was fifty-four (n=54).

Summary and observations of the survey data

The summary data from the personal profiles are shown in Table 1.

The data reflect a pool of responders that was mainly female, mainly

TABLE 1: New roles and responsibilities

Source	<u>DF</u>	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F Value	Pr>F
Model	6	72.7451025	12.1241838	8.47	<.0001
Error	43	51.5748975	1.4319744		
Corrected Total	49	134.3200000			

R-Square Coeff Var Root MSE nRoles Mean
0.541581 76.70842 1,196651 1.560000

Source	DF	Type III SS	Mean Square	F Value	Pr>F
Q1	2	28.88651674	14.44325837	10.09	0.0003
Q5	3	15.10265601	5.03421867	3.52	0.0229

elementary and secondary level educators, mainly experienced (i.e., more than six years of experience in education), and between one and three years of participation in the RWCT program.

The data from the second portion of the survey revealed that participation in the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking project had ‘very great impact’ on participants’ relationship with students, colleagues, teaching and learning, and participants’ motivation and satisfaction as educators. All of the participant responders felt the project had an impact on their definitions of teaching and learning. The summary data from the second portion of the survey is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2: Summary of effects

Relationship to students	Relationship to colleagues	Relationship to curriculum	Relationship with students’ parents	Definition of teaching & learning	Teachers’ motivation & satisfaction
0.....	0.....	0.....	0 (7.69%)	0.....	0.....
1.....	1 (18.52%)	1.....	1 (11.54%)	1.....	1.....
2 (3.7%)	2 (12.96%)	2 (7.41%)	2 (26.92%)	2	2 (7.41%)
3 (35.19%)	3 (35.19%)	3 (40.74%)	3 ((25.00%)	3 (20.75%)	3 (25.93%)
4 (61.11%)	4 (33.33%)	4 (51.85%)	4 (28.85%)	4 (79.25%)	4 (66.67%)

Note:

- 0 = no effect
- 1 = very little effect
- 2 = moderate effect
- 3 = great effect
- 4 = very great effect

Survey respondents were unable to pinpoint any specific feature of the program that contributed to these impacts. However, as the table suggests however, the participants’ perceptions were that they had received a great deal more than simple technical skills. In an attempt to probe the situation further, we followed up with a series of individual interviews. We decided to interview educators from Tirana, Elbasan, and Korce.

The interviews

We contacted approximately 15 educators—classroom teachers, administrators, and university faculty—who volunteered to be interviewed and videotaped. The interviews were based on responses to the question: *How has*

your participation in the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking program affected your personal and professional life? Interviews were conducted in Albanian, videotaped, then transcribed by a professional translator.

As we reviewed the participants' reflective responses about their lives since participating in the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking program some interesting patterns began to emerge.

Generally, respondents emphasized that changes in their competence went far beyond the acquisition of new technical skill. Their participation seemed to be a gateway to new worlds of opportunity and responsibility. Respondents appeared confident in their abilities to take on and successfully meet these new challenges.

The project itself created entrepreneurial and intellectual opportunities for new products and services. Some workshop participants saw themselves as thinkers and doers in supplying these products and services. For example Ali, a professor in a teacher preparation program, described his contributions as author of several written products (journals, books, instructional materials, etc.) that resulted directly from the program.

'We are now working on our publications...we have been incorporating many of the techniques we have been learning during the critical thinking project. I am a regular contributor to the journal Sharpness of Mind. I have published three articles. At the same time I have published a textbook that combines Albanian linguistics and critical thinking...And using the framework of the critical thinking project, I have published two other textbooks that are directly related to my daily work with the students.'

Other participants described the how the format of the program influenced their way of working. Mimoza, a veteran teacher educator, described the impact of the deliberate interaction, guided discussion, and collaboration during workshops on fostering a new spirit of collegiality.

'I would evaluate as one of the most important elements of the critical thinking project the work we do in groups. It is one of the defining moments of the project that has brought together many intellectuals, working on joint groups, doing common work and feeling success together. I'll give an example: The organization we founded is very close to the critical thinking project and it is the National Reading Association. Though it is a very new association with modest contribution in this field, together with other associations we may undertake new initiatives.'

We were intrigued to find classroom teachers applying the pedagogical ideas in contexts other than classrooms. These ideas appeared to have had an important effect on reshaping their views of themselves as teachers and learners. The

experience of Zhuljeta, an experienced history teacher reflects this shift in self-concept:

‘At the beginning I was thinking that only little things had changed in me. I was provided with some new techniques, I was feeling comfortable during my classes, I was feeling certain when teaching and like that. But later I noticed that the change was big. I was invited by the University to be part of a group for the drafting of alternative texts. When I was giving my ideas about how to write this text, I noticed that I was giving more interesting ideas than the other members of the group, ideas that were welcomed by the other members of the groups. People thought my ideas were interesting. I said the text should not be structured like we used to do it but it should be according to the elements of critical thinking, to have elements that would confront students with different alternatives, that would make them think, that would ask them questions that would make them express their ideas.’

Other participants, described how the concepts and the techniques presented in the program helped guide them in their new careers, not only helping them become effective in their new positions but also enabling them to make sense of their new roles. The comments of Aurela, a classroom teacher turned researcher reflected this.

‘I had been working as elementary school teacher for five years and afterwards I started work as researcher in the Institute of Pedagogical Studies. This project helped me to view the process of teaching and learning from a different angle. This has carried over to my work on the training programs for new teachers, and the development of the new elementary school curricula. I have grown also as a member of the project. From a teacher receiving training I have become a trainer of other teachers. I have been taking part in some professional conferences organized in and out of the country. I have been assisted a lot by the joint work with foreign experts with whom I have written an article ‘How to become a teacher researcher.’ So, the profession of the teacher and the profession of the researcher have been going together.’

It was interesting to us that the cascade model of dissemination, a train-the-trainer system, stimulated the development of new traditions of mentoring. Participants who became trainers of other cohorts of Albanian classroom teachers took on the new responsibility for training and mentoring other adults. They expressed confidence in their ability to do so effectively as a direct result of their experiences in the RWCT program. This is particularly striking in a context where traditions of hierarchy and authority distinguishing between higher education and primary education, males and females, and regional cultural groups have

tended to constrain mentoring relationships. The experience of Brikena, a young female teacher with relatively little classroom experience illustrates the impact of participation on establishing professional relationships.

‘To work in a class with the methods of critical thinking means we teachers should be critical, creative, open to accept diversity—not only to have these qualities for ourselves but also to know how to model these for others. Besides the changes in myself, there have been changes in my work as well. I have been an elementary school teacher in one of Tirana schools. This project provided me with skills that I am now improving. These made me credible in front of other teachers. I have written practical articles for the use of the new techniques in the schools. I am a member of the journal board that is publicizing this project in Albania and in other countries. These are steps that I have been climbing one by one thanks to my participation in the project.’

One unanticipated outcome was the impact the program had on school administrators, inspectors, and other supervisory personnel. The program’s central theme of a student-centered approach to education found applications in school administration as well. Fatmir, a school director in Tirana, described how participation in this program influenced his interactions with teachers in his school.

‘This project has made it possible to view things and problems differently. The rapid developments in our society demand new perspectives. And critical thinking is one suitable perspective for these—seeing things not as static objects but as developing phenomena, to analyze, to see a problem in motion, in relation to other contexts and to promote opposing ideas—in order to solve problems our school is actually facing. We need new alternatives now. Not only from students, but from teachers. I invite new alternatives because having different alternatives means viewing a problem from different angles and the ultimate decisions can be better. Of course that is a huge change.’

The RWCT project emphasized that problems and social interactions are open to diverse perspectives of interpretation and multiple possibilities for action and resolution. Initially, these ideas were introduced in the context of responding to literature. Liliana, a school director, spoke about how she applied this concept to her relationships with teachers in her school.

‘I really feel I am not so rigid as I used to be when I started. I am much more tolerant, much more cooperative, and leave a lot of space to the teachers. I do not say that this should be done like that, but I ask the others how they think it can be done.’

Conclusions

The original aim of the RWCT program was to introduce innovative, student-centered techniques for instruction and assessment of literacy. These techniques were intended to promote active learning and critical thinking. While the program was unquestionably successful in its goal of introducing new pedagogy, a somewhat more remarkable phenomenon occurred.

We observed that the participants in this program (cohort after cohort) underwent profound shifts in the way they viewed the teaching and learning process, and in the way they viewed themselves as teachers and learners. Looking across the interviews and surveys we concluded that the most profound aspect of this program may have been the very nature of new ways of thinking about and using language—reading, writing, reflection, opinion—formation, discussion, and consensus building.

We conclude that teachers who experience a new understanding of literacy begin to see language itself in a new way. This powerful new conceptualization of communication (i.e., that everyone is entitled to and responsible for author original ideas and not just recite known information; that all information is subject to interpretation and multiple perspectives; that all complex contexts—natural or social—require complex and multiple solutions, etc.) permeated and transformed a variety of social relationships not limited to teacher-student interactions.

Participants appeared to connect their own professional development to factors that were more general, and we suspect therefore having greater applicability. These factors included attention to the social nature of communication. The literacy development activities revealed how important language was for social interaction. In a similar vein, the program emphasized the functional nature of communication. In other words, the program shifted communicative competence from a school objective to a social goal.

The RWCT program attacked the traditional pedagogical concept of a single correct response for every teacher or textbook question. Attempting to better match learning tasks with real world tasks, RWCT activities not only enabled teachers to become comfortable with notions of divergent over convergent thinking it also enhanced their tolerance for ambiguity and open-endedness. This had implications that extended well beyond the understanding of texts. It appeared to permeate all levels of social interaction and problem solving. The RWCT program makes it unlikely that any authoritarian voice will be able to dominate the group. This democratizing element of literate behavior, i.e., that events are open to multiple valid perspectives, was reflected in democratizing effects in other areas of social intercourse.

We observed that the program's presentation of techniques that promote collaborative learning provided participants with meaningful experiences about group work. Moreover, the collaborative nature of the program that included extensive pair and group work had powerful effects on participants' ideas about organizing themselves in problem-solving situations. The program itself repeatedly emphasized cooperation over competition and coercion. Again, while these ideas were originally conceived as shifting the relationship between teachers and students, we saw that this theme repeated as well in the relationships between teachers and their peers, teachers and administrators, and teachers and the rest of the school community.

Finally we suggest that the RWCT program succeeded in its widespread implementation for the simple reason that at its core, the program was intended to empower individuals not to control them. Unlike most programs of technical development that aim merely to enhance individuals' technical skills and that these skills ultimately are used to control the destinies of others (most often students), real programs of professional development aim to provide participants with the intellectual strategies and perspectives they need to control their own destinies and to transform their own lives and their interactions with others. We would suggest that with the continued demand for professional development program organizers keep these larger goals in mind.

Bardhyl Musai is Associate Professor and Executive Director of the Center for Democratic Education, Rruga Mustafa Matohiti, Pallati 7, Shkalla 1, Ap 2/1, Tirana, Albania. E-mail: bmusai@cde-ct.org

James M. Wile is the Director of the International Development Division, International Reading Association. Mail address: 444 N. Capitol Street, NW, Suite 630, Washington, DC 20001. E-mail: jwile@reading.org

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PRESERVICE TEACHER TRAINING THROUGH ACTION RESEARCH: THE CASE OF A PRESERVICE SCIENCE TEACHER IN CHANGE

MAHA AL-QURA'N

Abstract – *In March 2000, a researcher from Al-Qattan Center for Research and Educational Development (QCRED) in Palestine, integrated reflective practice into the process of the third year science specialized preservice teacher training through collaborative action research. Five preservice teachers from the Educational Science Faculty (ESF), which is one of the institutions of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and an inservice teacher from Beddo cooperative school shared in the study. Many preservice science teachers continue to view teaching as lecturing. They fail to put the constructivist theory in action. In addition, they are unaware of the complexities of the teaching profession, and expect success through following a 'preordained' task. This case study aims at studying the factors that hindered one of the preservice third year science teachers, who participated in the study, from adopting the constructivist theory in teaching science to the sixth grade students. Data obtained during both the two months and the three weeks implementation phase was analyzed qualitatively.*

Introduction

This article analyses the case of a preservice third year science teacher from the UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) Educational Science Faculty (ESF), who participated in a collaborative action research project, whose aim is to encourage student teachers to adopt student-centered teaching methods. I chose to discuss this case thoroughly, because among the five preservice teachers who shared in a collaborative training project, the preservice teacher of this case was the only one who continued to be a traditional teacher. The action research project involved a researcher from Al-Qattan Center for Research and Educational Development (QCRED) who is also a science instructor and trainer at the ESF, five preservice teachers from the ESF, and an inservice teacher from the Beddo UNRWA basic school. The project, that went through two phases of two months preparation and three weeks implementation, used reflective practice to overcome the problems of ordinary training programs that view teaching as 'something to do not something to think about or study'.

The review of literature covered the causes of the prevailing knowledge transfer teaching practices, the constructivist approach to teaching science, the

need for reflective practice to accomplish a real change in the content of student teachers' beliefs, and the problems with preservice teacher training programs. Qualitative data analysis clarified the dissonant reasons that caused the preservice teacher to disdain the intended change, and highlighted the need for alternative teacher training programs that go beyond the survival skills through technical means.

Despite the limited scope and time of this pilot project, it explored the problems of preservice teacher training through authentic experience. The exploration of these problems is essential for evaluating the strategies used to implement wider scope programs.

Literature review

Preservice teacher training is considered a major issue in teacher development. Ginns, Heirdsfild, Atweh and Watters (1997) pinpoint the importance of early school experiences in inhibiting or catalyzing effective mathematics and science teaching, and advised educators to start building an action research culture. Action research can be conducted through final year project where collaboration and reflection can take place. In Brazil, Hong Kong, and USA, preservice teacher training takes the form of school-university partnership (Garrido, Pimenta, Moura & Fusari, 1999; Angelina & Priscilla, 1996 and Levine, 1988). In these countries, student teacher training and field teaching experiences occur in the cooperative schools, which are also called practice schools or partner schools (Goodlad, 1990).

A major concern of teacher educators is to alter the way the preservice teachers perceive teaching. Student teachers persist in using a teaching methodology that views teaching as dictating, and learning as recalling (Calderhead, 1991 and McDaniel, 1991). Russel (2000) refers to 'teaching as telling' as the 'default teaching style' and asserts the importance for preservice teachers to recognize that their accepted teaching style is due to early school years, cultural aspects, and existing training programs. Many researchers confirm the effect of the early twelve years schooling and the later university years, in which preservice teachers observed models of teaching, to form their own teaching theories (Ginns et al., 1997; Mayer, 2000; Russel, 2000). Britzman (1986) discussed the impact of cultural effects or 'cultural myths' on the preconceived conceptions of teaching that reinforce teacher control, view the teacher as the expert, and propagate the idea that teachers are self-made. Ordinary preservice training programs that provide student teachers with survival and technical teaching skills have little impact on the coexistence of the 'default teaching style'. Researchers call these programs that fail to challenge the existing beliefs of good teaching as 'default

programs' or 'vocational programs' (Russel, 2000; Mayer, 1999; and Hill, 1999). Lack of suitable training programs is one of the problems of science teaching.

Contrary to knowledge transmission, constructivism proposes that knowledge does not exist outside a person. Students can only obtain knowledge through constructing it within their minds (Cobb and Steffe, 1983). Thus in teaching science, Wittrock (1986) emphasizes the need to utilize strategies that allow students to construct 'conceptually ordered representation' of the relations among the parts to be learned and one's knowledge base and experiences. According to Fullan (1982, P. 33) 'beliefs guide and are informed by teaching strategies'. Other researchers also highlight the issue of changing prior teachers' beliefs to overcome conservative, and problematic teaching (Borko, Lalik, and Tomchin, 1987).

However, changing long lasting beliefs is not an easy task. Studies suggest that teachers tend to avoid information that might attack their deep-seated schema, and put their prior conservative beliefs into action (Bullough, 1991; Calderhead, 1991; Kagan, 1992; Zeichner; Tabachnick and Densmore, 1987). Studies on student teachers' beliefs, found that it is not easy to change the persisting personal beliefs and teaching perspective (Mayer, 1999; Borko *et al.*, 1987, and Griffin, 1989). Preservice teacher education has a major responsibility to put preservice teacher theories in action so that later they may be applied to practical situations. Teachers might filter out theories if educators failed to integrate theory into preservice belief system (Feynman-Nemser, 1983; Johnston, 1994 and Wubbles, 1992). Gore and Zeichner (1991) recommend a greater emphasis on self-reflection to help reconstruct beliefs.

Schon (1987) asserts the necessity of blending reflective practice into teacher training. Educators should create an environment where reflective practice becomes a habit in student-teacher experiences, and student teachers should be encouraged to utilize reflection in examining the educational strengths and weaknesses of different educational theories. Moreover, Johnston (1992) criticizes many programs that focus on specific skills and knowledge outcomes, rather than teacher development through reflection.

Several problems are expected with preservice teacher training. In fact, studies imply that student teaching experience might actually be harmful to their professional growth. '[It] may block the flow of speculation and reflection by which we form new habits of thought action.' (Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann, 1985, p.56). Many preservice teachers are unaware of the demands of the teaching profession, and hold idealistic and unrealistic expectations about their ability to master it (Feiman-Nemser, 1983). They perceive teaching as a 'preordained' task to follow and fail to appreciate the complexities and unpredictable nature of teaching (Johnston, 1994b; Kagan, 1992; Britzman, 1991). They may also fail to see the connection between the content of their course work and the realities of the

schools classrooms (Johnston, 1994a; Kagan, 1992; Wubbels, 1992; Aitkin and Mildon, 1991; Britzman, 1991).

Purpose of the study

This collaborative action research attempted to change a science teacher from being a content oriented and textbook dependent to a teacher who is a curriculum inquirer and reflective practitioner. The project endeavored to create an environment that helps to change the teacher from acting as a dispenser of knowledge and students as receivers of knowledge to a teacher whose role is to provide situations and information and students as information gatherers, processors and constructors of knowledge. The research answers the following question:

What factors hinder the preservice teacher from acting as a facilitator of student learning instead of a dispenser of knowledge?

The action research spiral of 'plan-action-observation-reflection' followed by 'revised plan-action-observation-reflection' was applied (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988). The application took the form of small spirals representing week-to-week short-term changes. Hermes and Zengerle (1999) used this methodology with university student teachers to acquaint them with action research method. Both Hermes and Zengerle's and this study used triangulation in the form of different angles of observations.

In adopting collaborative action research through a process of critical inquiry, we intended to act on the world rather than being acted on. Since qualitative studies are real social experiences, they have real consequences in people's lives despite the problems of the quality of conclusions. 'There is a responsible view of what happened in a particular situation (including what we believed, interpreted, etc.)', and we should not consider our work unjudgable (Matthew, Miles, and Michel, 1994).

Background and setting

This collaborative action research took place through a partnership project between the Educational Science Faculty (ESF), and the Qattan Centre for research and educational development (QCRED), in cooperation with Beddo school in Palestine.

The research was carried throughout the second semester of the third year science education students at the ESF. These students went through around fifty

training hours before entering this semester training course. They also completed the basic education courses in the college: Introduction to Psychology, Child Psychology, Education System in Jordan and Palestine, Psychology of Teaching and Learning, Curriculum Development and Instructional Design, Curriculum and Methods of Teaching Science I, Curriculum and Methods of Teaching Science II, Measurement and Evaluation, Classroom Management, and Practice Teaching (theoretical).

The Trainer: The trainer, a 37 years old science instructor at the ESF and a part time researcher at the QCRED, and holds a masters degree in physics and a master degree in education. She worked as a physics instructor and trainer at the ESF for 10 years. As a member of the action research unit at the QCRED, she is continually engaged in action research.

The Subject (Mona): Mona is a 20 years old, third years science education student, and an excellent and committed student. The researcher taught her physics but never supervised her in a teacher-training course. Mona taught during the training course at Al-Ama'ri school which is one of the UNRWA schools at Al-Ama'ri refugee camp.

The Collaboration Team: the collaboration team consisted of the trainer, the cooperative teacher and five preservice teachers. Normally, Preservice teachers do not have a preparation phase prior to their three weeks of actual teaching training at the cooperative schools. Moreover, the college training course require a minimum of two trainer visits and the Preservice teachers have to teach twenty teaching classes. The cooperative teacher and the trainer evaluate the preservice teacher by filling a checklist.

The preparation phase: during this phase the trainer, a cooperative teacher and five preservice teachers collaborated in unit development using the integrated curriculum approach. During this phase unit objectives, activities, and teaching methods that encourage learner knowledge construction were discussed and concept map that reflect the integrated approach was drawn. Student teachers prepared the lesson plans and work sheets that were discussed thoroughly by the team members.

The implementation Phase: the case study student teacher taught the lessons in the 6th grade class at the cooperative school. The classroom of forty average students was arranged in four columns with two or three students sitting at each desk, and the teacher's desk in front. The preservice teacher taught some of her lessons in the classroom, and the rest in the science lab.

Data Collection

Initial interview: A semi-structured interview was held with the team members that focused on their previous experience as student teachers. Student teachers criticized the role of the cooperative teacher and the trainer and expressed the difficulties they faced during the training course. Action research was also introduced as a training methodology.

Audio Taped Preparation Meetings: Unit preparation meetings were also audio taped. In these meetings student teachers reflected on traditional teaching methods, organized integrated unit concept map, discussed suggested activities and prepared working sheets. At the end of these meetings, they were able to extract a definition of action research.

Observational Data: Observational data consisted of comments of trainer and peer's comments on the period observed, and an observation checklist filled by the trainer.

Post Classroom Teaching Conference: Data included discussion of the observed classroom period by the trainer, the peer, as well as the student teacher reflections on her classroom.

Discussion of video tapes: every Monday the team observed video tape of the student teacher classroom period. The team then discussed the lesson and the student teacher as well as her peers reflected on her classroom period.

Other Documents: Other documents consisted of prepared work sheets, student exams and lesson plans.

Data analysis and interpretation

The whole process aimed at helping the student teacher to alter her role as a traditional science teacher and to study the factors that hindered this change. Due to the fact that the majority of teachers at all levels have been educated in traditional fact-based science classrooms, it is not surprising that their knowledge structures take the form of transmission and that traditional science teaching remains the norm (Holt-Reynolds, 1990).

The preservice teacher was prepared during the preparation phase to opt for a number of methods to increase the time for students to talk, think, and discuss in

order to construct knowledge. The most effective methodology from team's point of view was group work. However, group work had to be carefully planned and can only get underway on the basis of concrete tasks to be carried out. Other methodologies like role-playing, self-learning were also used.

Data analysis began with a narrative approach sequenced in time from the beginning of the experiment until the very beginning of the implementation phase to help construct an idea of the case, and then discussed the factors that hindered the preservice teacher change.

Narration

The preservice teacher was suffering from the negative consequences of a previous technical training experience. This was clear from the discussion that took place during the initial interview upon starting the unit preparation phase. She described her experience:

'I taught at Al-Ama'ri school. I'm not intending to criticize the school but only to state facts. There was no discipline and the big shock was that I taught the noisy 8th grade students. By the end of the training course, I was happy to see it end and to escape the psychological pressure.'

She added:

'There were 40-50 students in each classroom and every student had her own problems at home or at school. There were excellent students but they were also selfish. In addition to maintaining discipline, I had to cover the curriculum. I'm not there to tell one student to keep silent and another to stay in her place. I wanted to have a real discussion in the classroom. My experience was catastrophic.'

The teacher realized that she had a problem in managing students' inappropriate behavior. Consequently, she had to spend more time in controlling the classroom chaos rather than in creating a powerful learning environment, and became frustrated.

By the end of phase one, she expressed her apprehension about the new approach:

'The experiment style is now different. I have to accomplish substantial outcomes. I'm afraid that the plan or the implementation period might not be appropriate and that obstacles will show up later. I feel that I have to give the students more efficiency and trust. Now they had to work and think instead of just memorizing. Student work will be central. I'm not sure that

I will succeed because the schools' status is catastrophic, and the students are not used to this teaching style or to teachers who respect their feelings and ideas. Sudden change might not be easy.'

The teacher's insecurity discouraged her from entering the experiment, even though she knew that she was expected to change her interaction with and perception of the students. She was conscious of the constraints of this approach, the ones related to the students and the others related to her.

The teacher's statement reflects her low self-efficacy upon entering the training course. According to Bandura (1977, 1986, and 1997), as cited by Dharmadasa (1999), self-efficacy is one's perceived ability to perform a task, and his/her performance contributes to the high or low efficacy beliefs. Henson, Stephens, Jennifer, and Grant (1999) referred to Ashton and Webb's (1982) first element of teacher's belief known as teaching efficacy and to the second element known as performance efficacy. The first deals with whether or not teachers and/or teaching methods could impact the students' learning and motivation. The second considers the teacher's own ability to perform in a way that would increase learning and motivation in all students. The teacher was not convinced that the new student centered approach would suit the students, and was not confident of her own ability to motivate the students.

Tschannen-Moran, Woollelk, and Hoy (1998) explained that lack of self-efficacy causes the teacher to express different teaching behaviors and attitudes. As noted, the teacher was critical of the students' errors, showed less enthusiasm in teaching, and was unable to persist with struggling students. After two or three periods from starting the implementation of the experiment, she held a meeting with her students and reflected on this meeting:

'I'm feeling afraid. Students need to acquire basic information, because there is no base information to build on. The students' attitudes towards each other are negative. They are feeling jealous of each other. Some students don't like science classes and try to escape them in different ways.'

The teacher's fear of the new experience and her criticism of the students' behavior persisted with almost no visible change.

Factors that hindered the preservice teacher from achieving the goals of the experiment

Even though the value of field-work experience in teacher education is accepted equivocally, Zeichner (1980) noted that 'field based experiment' seems to accomplish both positive and negative consequences. In this special case,

unfortunately the negative consequences were more pronounced. My data analysis is concerned with the factors that caused the negative consequences and prevented the achievement of change.

In addition to the influence of the teacher's previous experience and low self-efficacy, other factors affected teacher's teaching performance. Data analysis detected four other factors: pressure, teacher's instructions, inconsistency with constructivism, and discipline that continued to affect her performance.

Emotional pressure

Student teachers are surrounded by a myriad of pressures in the school site. These include: learning to cope with procedural unknown, feelings of insecurity over the curriculum, the evaluation of supervisors, the wider school context and their relationship with cooperating teacher (Britzman, 1991; Griffin, 1989 and Johnston, 1994a). The preservice teacher perceived the desired change as an additional pressure:

‘I feel there are too many things to change: I should integrate the concepts, maintain the discipline, engage students actively, talk less than the students, and act as a supervisor rather than a dictator. These make me feel unable to concentrate on one issue.’

Even though all these interrelated issues were discussed during the preparation phase, the implementation procedure was left to the preservice teacher. However, she got overwhelmed and was not able to integrate these issues. Feiman-Nemser & Buchman (1985, p.56) stated that ‘overwhelming indicate that student teaching did not significantly alter the substance of the [student teacher's] teaching perspectives.’ Towards the end of the experiment she criticized her performance,

‘I should have started group teaching gradually, starting by two students cooperating in their desk, then increase the number of students working together and the time of group work gradually.’

Discipline

Ginns et al.(1997) refer to Veeman's (1984) citation that analysis of research from United States, Europe, Australia, and Canada reveals that discipline is one of the major problems faced by the preservice teachers who have unrealistic expectations of teaching in real classrooms. The teachers focus on stopping misbehaviors without trying to understand their causes and to evaluate strategies

to deal with them. Educators should help them to develop such strategies before they begin to concentrate on students' learning (Kagan, 1992, and Swanson, O'Connor & Cooney, 1990).

The student teacher frequently identified discipline as her most significant problem. Prior to the implementation phase she said:

'My colleagues told me that the students make trouble. I'm afraid of this, but I hope that I will be able to overcome this.'

During the first implementation week, she tried unsuccessfully to apply the group work and gave the students time to accomplish their activities. She commented on the student's behavior:

'I met with the students and asked them why they make trouble during the period? They said that this is a strategy to escape the class.'

By the second week she commented:

'The classroom is a big chaos. It is even hard to hear each other.'

During the preparation phase the team discussed new teaching methods and activities, without raising the issue of students' disruptive behavior. The team underestimated the consequences of the teacher's concern of the students' misbehavior on her success in unit teaching.

Instructional practices

Bullough & Knowles (1990) noted that 'there seems to be a crucial gap in novice teachers' understanding of the nature of pupils and the ways to design instructions to meet pupils' needs, and student teachers can become disillusioned and frustrated police men.'

Peers criticized the student teacher's instructional practices, and assumed that the classroom mess resulted from her practices of giving the instructions in the form of orders that students have to obey at the beginning, and converting to ease instructions later on. She also failed to give instructions in the appropriate time and tone. One of her colleagues said:

'I think there is a problem with your instructions. You should give clear instructions. The tone of your voice while giving instructions was not assertive enough, and you should also continue to remind students about the agreed method of instructions.'

The student teacher admitted that she had a problem in giving instructions:

‘I think the problem was that I gave all the instructions from the first period and I was too tough, which caused a negative effect. They said they felt happy when I blamed them for disobeying the instructions, because then I stopped teaching.’

Another peer commented:

‘You should not have given instructions without noticing any behavior that require a special instruction.’

The preservice teacher attributed her ease instructions to her previous experience as a student:

‘I used to become angry when my teacher looked angry at me. That’s why I thought I should be nice to them.’

The teacher’s change to loose instructions later on assures the relevance of her previous experience as a student on her classroom behavior. Many researchers attributed nonprofessional behaviors to the beliefs acquired from pupil’s perspective, and emphasized that learning to teach is distinctively different from previous school experiences (Wubbles, 1992; Zeichner et al., 1987 and Feiman-Nemser, 1983).

Inconsistency with constructivism

Tobin (1989) outlines a process of knowledge construction as follows: Sense perception, reflection, collaboration, consensus, and sharing. This outline suggests the need for adopting teaching methods that reflect a change in teachers’ beliefs about how their students learn. However, the practices of this case study teacher were not consistent with the constructivist approach.

The preservice teacher’s comments indicated that she was more interested in giving information rather than scaffolding students to construct information and acquire skills:

‘In this period there were many new concepts about rocks, like the rock bar and the rock bound. These concepts were strange to the students. Consequently, I decided to use the classroom discussion rather than giving the students the opportunity to do activities.’

She added:

‘On purpose, I spoke most of the time. Otherwise, there would be no time left to explain the lesson, and I wanted to finish and I didn’t want to leave part of the lesson unexplained.’

She kept repeating that the students had no information to build on, and knew nothing. A peer confirmed:

‘Yesterday, she felt that the students lack an acceptable academic background, and today the students interacted very little. She tried to deal with the students as the center of the educational process, and planned to give them the opportunity to conduct hands on activities and to explain concepts by themselves, and to give them home work. However, she was upset because the students have no academic information.’

The preservice teacher asked the students to write a short dialogue at home. She reflected on the classroom period, where the students read the dialogue they wrote:

‘The students were happy with this activity, but I was not, since it was just reading information; questions and answers. The students couldn’t arrive at any informative conclusions for they were used to just memorizing information.’

Rather than just giving academic information to the students, the constructivist theory proposes that the student always has some knowledge of the subject, and it’s the teacher’s duty to discover it and build on it. Teaching is not about dictating well-organized facts to the students, it is about helping students to connect their fragmented ideas about science, and to change misconceptions through engaging students in hands-on/minds-on activities, and to conduct active dialogue with the students. Another important teacher’s role is to help the students to overcome the borders that stand against their readiness to understand science (Hashweh, 1991).

The student teacher found that the students were used to reinforcement as motivation to study and to interact in the classroom, contrary to the constructivist theory. As the student teacher discovered the students’ positive reaction to reinforcement, she decided to go on with the procedure of praising the students with no intention to change to strategies that relied on the students’ exploration and understanding. Constructivist theory states that students do not learn as a result of being reinforced by the teacher (Hashweh, 1991). The preservice teacher said:

‘I noticed that the students’ engagement in the learning process depends on reinforcement. If I promised to give them good marks, and praised them using words and phrases like: good work, excellent, fine, great answer,... etc, they interact, study, and prepare their lessons, otherwise they don’t. When they recognized that there will be marks and prizes they actively interacted, and actively prepared their lessons.’

And,

‘The best methodology is to ask the students to prepare for the class, and to do the home works, accompanied by my satisfying their need for enhancement.’

The student teacher wrote in the questionnaire:

‘I recognized the importance of reinforcement.’

And,

‘I noticed that our students rely very much on reinforcement to learn. They need it.’

The student teacher’s final decisions about the experiment

The student teacher faced many obstacles in carrying out the experiment, which caused her to reject the desired change. Bolin (1988) stated that being unable to make adequate sense of their experience, some student teachers might fall back to their latent philosophy.

Towards the end of the experiment, the group held a discussion conference to evaluate the long-term result of the experiment on the student teacher’s practices. During the discussion, the student teacher expressed clearly that she discarded the new practices as soon as the students began the hands on activities and turned the classroom into a messy place:

‘I should have prepared the demonstration and presented it to the students. From the beginning I wasn’t convinced by the idea that the students should work by themselves. I told my colleague that I was crazy for allowing the students to work with stones.’

Later, she informed the researcher:

‘I was not convinced by your idea that my role in the classroom should be as a supervisor, nevertheless, I applied what we agreed upon regardless of

my own beliefs. I thought that I might be wrong, and should give myself the chance to try out the new practices. I tried as much as possible, but I found that I resorted to my old practices and beliefs.'

The preservice teacher found that classroom teaching was more effective than moving to the science lab that allows for group work. She also rejected using the group work in teaching the lessons:

'The group work was not appropriate without training the students gradually on conducting it. They made noise in the library when we went to watch the video-tape and the librarian came and complained about the noise. I should have treated them individually rather than allow them to have group discussion.'

Discussion and conclusion

This case study aimed to throw light on one preservice science teacher's interaction with an experiment designed to help a teacher to change her teaching methodology towards a more student-centered approach that relied on the constructivist theory of teaching science.

The case of this preservice teacher was analyzed because among the group of five preservice teachers, she was the only one who decided finally to reject all the new practices and converted to the previous teacher-centered practices based on the behaviorist theory of teaching.

The preservice teacher was chosen to be part of the team that worked on unit development, and designed lesson plans, working sheets, and activities that foster students to construct knowledge. The reason for electing her was that she was a young, committed and an excellent student. The researcher deemed these characteristics as the factors that would accelerate the change process. However, at the end of the process the researcher unexpectedly concluded that these factors caused the teacher to hold to her previous practices. The preservice teacher remained committed to the traditional teacher-centered method used by her teachers that allowed her to excel as a student. Cooney (1994) states that the ability to be reflective and adaptive has to do with the teacher's orientation. For teachers with external orientation, who view what is salient to come from external authoritarian agent, their school experiences, as students will affect the change in their beliefs and practices. From the beginning of the experiment, the preservice teacher expressed her doubt about its success.

This study was mainly concerned with the factors that hindered the preservice teacher to change. These factors were: her inability to give appropriate instructions

on time, the pressure that she was exposed to during the training course, her worry about the classroom discipline, her concern to give information to the students and her reliance on reinforcement. The preservice teacher ascribed her failure to implement the change to the lack of students' readiness to cope with the given freedom and responsibilities to accomplish activities in a group.

As a researcher I do not deny the external factors mentioned by the preservice teacher, but I conclude that other factors related to her abilities to deal with the training variables are more relevant to the teacher's decision to resort to her previous practices. A peer once replaced the preservice teacher and gave the lesson to the preservice teacher's students. She was able to overcome problems faced by the preservice teacher. The preservice teacher commented:

'I noticed the change when my peer gave the period to my classroom, she was able to overcome the problems and to give a good period.'

The peer teacher commented on the period:

'I was able to give appropriate instructions, to explain the lesson very well, to keep the students busy all the time, to encourage students to cooperate, and to check students work in class.'

Her peer asked the students about their opinion on having the period in the science lab that allows for group work. The preservice teacher mentioned this:

'I asked my peer to interview the students and to ask them why they liked to have the period in the classroom? She told me that some students told her that they preferred to have the period in the lab.'

Unlike the preservice teachers, her peers were able to apply the planned change and were amazed with its effect on the students' learning.

However, another factor that affected the final results, was the teacher's low self-efficacy upon entering the implementation phase. The teacher's previous training courses strengthened this problem, and the preparation phase paid no attention to aid the preservice teacher to overcome the problem. The preservice teacher's belief in her ability to teach and motivate the students to learn is critical for success (Wingfield, and Nath, 2000). Researchers emphasized the importance of building teacher's self-efficacy especially in the case of preservice teachers training. First, self-efficacy is easier to establish with preservice teachers who are more receptive to instructional feedback, and second, once self-efficacy is established it is resistant to change (Drahama, 1999). For any innovation to succeed, it is imperative to assure the individual teacher's high self-efficacy.

However, more time was needed for the student teacher to enter new ‘practice-reflect-evaluate’ cycles so that she can make her final decision about her teaching methodology.

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Maha Al-Qura'n is an Instructor with Educational Science Faculty (UNRWA), and a researcher with the Al-Qattan Center for Research and Educational Development. Address for correspondence: Al-Qattan Center for Research and Educational Development, P.O.Box 2276, Ramallah, Palestine. E-mail: mquran@qattanfoundation.org

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KNOWLEDGE AS A GOOD IN THE EDUCATIONAL MARKETPLACE: THE CASE OF THE LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY EXTENSION IN ISRAEL

RACHEL PASTERNAK

Abstract –*This paper explains the activities of the Liverpool University Extension in Israel according to a new approach that treats knowledge as an economic good operating according to defined rules. The paper reports findings of a case study, performed in the spirit of qualitative research that examined the Liverpool University Extension in Israel, which offers a program toward receipt of the MA in education and art. The purpose of the study was to investigate the Extension as an illustration of the processes of interest. Specifically, the study attempted to determine whether the Liverpool University Extension had adopted and applied principles corresponding to the perception of ‘knowledge as a good’. The study, the first of its kind regarding higher education, explores four issues: (1) the extension’s policy, (2) its programs of study, (3) the student body (i.e., demographic profiles, the reasons for turning to the extension and expectations regarding the program of study) and (4) qualitative aspects of the MA theses submitted. The research questions ask to determine whether a relationship can be established between these four factors and whether those relationships result from the approach adopted (i.e. ‘knowledge as a good’).*

Introduction: the establishment of foreign university Extensions as an outcome of globalization in higher education

Globalization, by which we mean the eradication or disregard of national boundaries for the purpose of marketing and selling goods and services, has not escaped Israel. Since the early 1990s, the penetration of international brand names into the Israeli market has become increasing blatant. Israel, with its population of about 7 million, is considered to be a medium-sized market that nonetheless exhibits availability of considerable capital for consumption (e.g., the large number of cellular phones per thousand) and highly developed consumerism. The penetration of brand names has been accompanied by massive investments in marketing, advertising and sales promotion. The same process, witnessed throughout the world, including Eastern economies such as China, has been based on adoption of competition and cooperation as behavioral norms (Kwiek, 2001; Scott, 2000; Vander Wende, 2001). As part of this trend, globalization has affected

higher education as well (Alderman, 2001; Willis, 2001). Until the mid-1990s, Israel's higher education industry operated by means of state-owned universities and colleges in addition to a small number of private colleges. From the mid-1990s on, 25 U.S., European and African universities came to offer degree programs in Israel; they soon attracted B.A. and M.A. students that today number about 9,000 in comparison to the 108,595 students studying in the universities and the 98,473 studying for a BA in the colleges (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2002). In 1998, legislation was passed — the Council of Higher Education Law — that permitted foreign university extensions to operate under the supervision of the Council of Higher Education.

A recent amendment to this law, Amendment No. 11, requires foreign universities be licensed and sets down guidelines for their operation (Gottlieb & Yakir, 1998):

1. The programs licensed in Israel shall be identical to those at the home university. Graduates of the Israeli programs have the same rights as 'home university' graduates.
2. Entrance requirements, evaluation procedures, quality control and staff appointments are to be applied in Israel by the home university.
3. Extensions of foreign universities in Israel will not cooperate with a recognized Israeli institution of higher education unless the Council has given special permission to do so. Foreign extensions will not receive public funds.
4. At least 30% of the program shall be taught by instructors from the home university. Twenty percent of the Israeli staff shall declare the foreign extension as their main employer or hold an appointment at the foreign university for at least four years.

The university extensions, whose primary goal is profit making, have striven to acquire as many students as possible. To achieve this goal, intensive advertising and sales promotion campaigns have been launched, a strategy that treats the distribution of information and the marketing of education in a manner similar to any other consumer good. In the following, I discuss those marketing principles applied by the Liverpool University Extension.

The Liverpool Extension's adoption of the 'knowledge as a good' approach

The Liverpool Extension is managed in Israel by a profit-oriented commercial body, the Kidum College Network. The Extension treats knowledge in the manner of an economic good, waiting to be successfully marketed and geared to satisfying

the wants of the majority of its consumers. This perception of 'knowledge as a good' dictates a unique mode of behavior with respect to the acquisition of knowledge, beginning with its marketing and concluding with determination of its quality level and characteristics. The type of knowledge, its substance and method of transmission are influenced and adjusted to the consumer's needs. This approach is revolutionary when considered against the classical concept of higher education, one that framed knowledge as an absolute entity, offered to the consumer public without any reference to marketing and certainly not to consumer needs or satisfaction. In contrast, the 'knowledge as a good' approach gives rise to a different conceptualization of the educational process. The innovative perception of students as *clients* as opposed to *consumers* now provides the foundations for planning knowledge's features, marketing method and transmission (Kotler and Hornik, 2000; Scitovsky, 1992). In the following, the six principles of this new approach and how they are applied by the Liverpool University Extension are described.

Supply and demand

The 'knowledge as a good' approach requires adoption of a market strategy given that knowledge is to be sold to a maximum number of clients. Marketing campaigns rest on four basic concepts: *supply*, *demand*, *wants* and *needs* (Kotler and Hornik, 2000, p. 66). First, needs and their demand are identified. Needs indicate dissatisfaction of some human condition; wants represent the desire for some unique method of satisfying those needs. Demands are wants for distinctive products and the willingness to purchase them and are susceptible to fluctuations in supply by the market. Wants are transformed into demands once they are supported by purchasing power.

From this perspective, the Liverpool University Extension exploited a situation where the demand for higher education exceeded its supply. This dimensions of this demand resulted from the massive wave of immigration from the former Soviet Union in the 1990s (about 1 million individuals), a high rate of unemployment (9%), rapid growth in the hi-tech industry and changes in the demographic profiles of potential university entrants when confronted by inflexible supply, as detailed in the following.

- *Demand* for higher education in Israel has generally been greater than *supply*. The majority of the public accepted this condition whereas those with sufficient economic means were able to complete their education abroad. Since the 1980s, with budding privatization and economic decentralization, the equilibrium between supply and demand underwent modification.

- *Drastic increase in the number of high school graduates from all demographic sectors.* The number of high school students graduating from the Hebrew education system rose from 6,581 in 1960 to 20,503 in 1970 to 31,316 in 1980, 52,735 in 1990 and 78,420 in 2001. With respect to the Arab education system, the number of high school graduates rose from 139 in 1960 to 535 in 1970, 3,743 in 1980, 8,550 in 1990 and 14,399 in 2001. Among these graduates, the number qualified to receive a full matriculation diploma rose consistently over the years, from 22,740 in 1987 to 45,029 in 2000. It should be noted that although the absolute number of graduates eligible for a full matriculation diploma rose, the rates have remained stable in recent years: 50.4% in 1996, 49.7% in 1998 (CBS, 2001) and 51.5% in 2003.
- *Increase in the number of BA graduates.* The number of university students earning a BA has risen, from 6,740 in 1980 to 30,520 in 2001; the trend was similar in the colleges, from 197 in 1980 to 11,500 in 2001, and in the Open University, from 281 in 1990 to 1,775 in 2001. Thus, 56.6% of all BA recipients studied in the universities.
- *Increase in BA graduates pursuing an MA.* As a result of the sharp increase in BA graduates, the number of students aspiring to earn an MA has also increased. As the universities are incapable of accepting the majority of applicants, demand has burgeoned for advanced studies despite the dramatic rise in the number of university MA graduates, from 6,740 in 1980 to 17,298 in 2000. Pressure for privatization has intensified, which led to the opening of alternative educational paths outside the universities, that is, colleges and foreign university extensions.
- *Increase in demand for BA degrees in law, business administration and computers.* Because the universities are unable to absorb the deluge of applicants, the colleges have begun to offer programs culminating in a BA in the demanded professions. To illustrate, the colleges awarded 253 law degrees in 1995; the number reached 1793 in 2000.
- *Increase in the number of rejected university applicants for BA degrees in law, business administration and computer science.* In 2000, the universities rejected 21% of all applicants although in the three most-demanded disciplines, the rejection rate was considerably higher. Entry requirements are higher in these fields, and fewer are accepted. This situation, in which the demand for academic education exceeds its supply,

presented an apt environment for the Liverpool Extension's entry into the Israeli market.

Definition of target population and identification of market segments

The Liverpool University Extension identified the existence of a broad target population for MA studies in education and focused its activities on this market segment. This population was composed primarily of veteran members of the education system: teachers, counselors and principals having BA degrees who find it difficult to be accepted to the universities due to the rigid entrance qualifications, who live in the periphery and who are unable to integrate work with study. The Ministry of Education encourages teachers to continue their education and expand their knowledge; it even compensates teachers for the cost of their studies through wage increments that are recognized for pension purposes upon retirement. Precise location of this target population allowed the Extension to identify their needs and to construct an appropriate policy as well as programs of study.

Product differentiation and client needs

Often, one can identify a market niche, that is, a small group of consumers whose needs are inadequately met, within a larger market segment. In order to promote marketing efforts, a product differentiation strategy will be devised, based on product quality and maximum fit to the needs of niche members. The Liverpool Extension performed such an adjustment to their product. Their stated target population was, in fact, dissatisfied despite their urgent desire to acquire an MA in one of Israel's universities. In order to capture this clientele, the Extension's marketing strategy stressed the credibility of its degree due to the fact that unlike other extensions and even some university programs, Liverpool requires completion of a thesis. In order to adjust itself to the student's needs, the Extension pledges to provide close personal mentoring during the writing process; most importantly, it bases the thesis topics on the student's professional experience.

Identification of competitors' goals, evaluation of competitors' advantages and disadvantages

The Liverpool Extension also succeeded in identifying the advantages and disadvantages — in terms of its clients — of its competitors, the other foreign university extensions as well as the local universities. This information was incorporated into its marketing strategy.

We begin with the universities' disadvantages:

- Programs of study are constructed according to the institution's needs and not the students' needs; hence, they are unsuitable for teachers.
- Rigid entrance requirements.
- No personal guidance is provided during the writing of papers and the thesis.
- Campuses are often not easily accessible.

The disadvantages of the other foreign extensions include:

- A thesis is not required.
- The program of studies does not take the students' professional experience adequately into consideration.

In recognition of these drawbacks, the Extension constructed a concentrated program of studies that is conducted during school vacations. Entrance requirements are more flexible, and personal mentoring is provided to each student when completing assignments; professional experience is an important factor in the program. The Extension's facilities are quite accessible to students residing in the periphery (the main campus is located a five-minute walk from the railway station). Because a thesis is required, the degree has high standing.

Salience of client satisfaction

Like organizations involved in the sale and marketing of consumer products, the Liverpool University Extension adopted the motto: 'The customer is always right.' Extension staff is highly sensitive to any indication of the level of student satisfaction. To this end, a feedback questionnaire is distributed to ascertain performance of lecturers and mentors; if their scores are low, the Extension dismisses faculty. The Liverpool Extension also demands teaching excellence, another factor that is examined at the conclusion of each course.

Advertising, sales promotion and public relations

Considerable sums have been invested by the Extension in advertising, sales promotion and public relations, conducted by hired professionals. Within the framework of these activities, the faculty participates in professional conferences and study days open to their target public: teachers, school principals and counselors. Significant sums are likewise invested on advertising in newspapers and journals geared to education professionals.

The Liverpool University Extension in Israel — a case study

Methodology

Purpose of the study

The Liverpool University Extension in Israel opened its doors after foreign extensions were licensed to award academic degrees or, stated otherwise, institutionally legitimated. The case before us is, in effect, an illustration of how the ‘knowledge as a good’ approach is implemented by a private institution in the era of globalization. Because the Extension is a private university, managed by a commercial organization, it receives no institutional support and displays attributes characteristic of globalization: the sale goods, in this case knowledge, from one country — the UK — to another country — Israel. The present study, the first of its kind applied to higher education, adopts the approach that treats knowledge and higher education as economic consumer goods to be treated according to market principles.

The study focuses on four main issues: policy, students, programs of study and MA theses. The study will examine the coherence between the four issues and their relationship with the conceptual approach adopted.

The research questions

Each research question relates to one of the four basic issues at the study’s core:

1. Policy: What is the Liverpool University Extension’s declared policy, what factors distinguish that policy, and does that policy reflect the features of the ‘knowledge as a good’ approach?
2. Programs of study: What programs are offered? Do they correspond to Extension policy on one hand and student expectations on the other?
3. Students: What demographic profile characterizes the student body? What factors brought them to enroll in the Extension and what expectations do they have of their studies?
4. Theses: What characterizes the theses written by the Extension’s students? Do the theses reflect Extension policy?

Method

The analysis was based on an in-depth, qualitative case study that stressed the views of the subjects and their interpretations of their experience. Descriptive statistics were used to construct the demographic profiles.

Research tools

The research tools were chosen to respond to the questions guiding the study.

Question 1: Content analysis of Course catalogues and official documents.

Question 2: Content analysis of the programs of study.

Question 3: Construction of demographic profiles of the student body based on data collected from 375 personal files, 21 structured interviews and comparative analysis of the responses.

Question 4: Content analysis of 375 MA thesis topics.

Background

Liverpool University was founded more than 100 years ago. About 12,000 full-time students (1,000 of which come from countries outside the European Union) and 18,000 part-time students are currently enrolled. The academic staff numbers about 1,000 full-time faculty. Teaching and research cover a broad range of subjects including social and environment sciences, the humanities, education, engineering, law, medicine and mathematics. Liverpool is known for the number of Nobel Prize winners counted among its faculty. The extension in Israel has been active since 1996 and is managed by a commercial body entitled the Kidum College Network. Its physical plant, administrative and classroom facilities are divided between two locations. The main branch, serving about 200 students, is located a 5-minute walk from Tel Aviv's main railway station, a hub connecting travelers from the north and the south. Another branch is located in Jerusalem. The teaching staff includes 15 faculty members from the UK and 15 from Israel. By June 2003, about 500 graduates had successfully completed their studies and received an MA.

The university's Israel extension offers three programs of study: an M.Ed. in Educational Curriculum and Management Studies, an M.A. in English Language Teaching and Learning and an M.A. in Contemporary Art. About 80% of the Extension's students are enrolled in the M.Ed. program. With respect to the research questions, questions 1 and 2 will be examined in the context of all three programs whereas questions 3 and 4 will focus on the M.Ed. program.

The Liverpool University Extension is one of 10 comparable institutions offering similar programs in the Tel Aviv area. Compared to other extensions, Liverpool is relative small, with about 150 students per class, spreading throughout all three programs, as compared to the 1,000 students enrolled in the University of Derby extension, and the hundreds in each of the other extensions. Liverpool is exacting in its admission requirements and demands completion of many written papers; moreover, it is the only extension that requires submission

of a thesis as a condition for award of a degree. Prior to 2001, the home university demanded that the theses be written in English. This demand was softened in 2001, with theses now submitted in one of three languages: Hebrew, Arabic or English. Inasmuch as the other extensions do not require a thesis, and the fact that Liverpool is unwilling to lower its entrance requirements or learning demands, the number of its students remains limited.

Research Population

Data regarding 375 out of the 400 students attending the Liverpool University Extension up to June 2002; structured interviews with a sample of 21 students.

Procedure

The research was conducted during the 2002/2003 academic year. At the first stage, data were collected from the students' personal files. This stage was performed by a research assistant in cooperation with Extension staff. During the second stage, structured interviews were conducted with 21 students. The interview data were collected and analyzed by a research assistant. The first two stages were conducted in order to prepare micro-level demographic profiles. In the third stage of the research, a content analysis of the programs of study and thesis topics was performed.

Limitations of the Research

The study's limitations proceed from the nature of qualitative research, which is based on interpretations offered by the subjects as well as the researcher. These interpretations are subjective in nature and capture the attitudes of the subjects exclusively. Furthermore, the sample of 21 interviewees does not entail a representative sample; the data gathered therefore do represent the attitudes of the remaining 400 students enrolled in the Extension. Hence, the research does not make any claims for generalizability of its findings; rather, it employs the findings to support the suggested new theoretical approach.

Findings

The findings will be presented according to the four issues at the core of the research: policy, programs of study, students and theses.

Policy

The Liverpool University Extension in Israel maintains the policy declared by the mother institution. A content analysis of university documents (catalogues and internal directives) identified the following operative principles:

1. Considerable weight is given to the student's professional experience; the purpose of the program of study is to upgrade that experience. Considerable stress is placed on integrating professional experience into every learning assignment, including the final thesis. The goal of this integration is to improve the student's professional competence in practice. Only those applicants having experience in the profession of teaching or other educational positions are eligible for admission (*Bulletin*, p. 1).
2. Whether within the framework of frontal instruction or written papers, students are required to display reflective thinking and a critical attitude by means of a discourse with written texts. Again, this approach is realized by incorporating personal and professional experience. In their writing papers, students are required to make critical assessments and substantiate their comments by reference to their experience. These analyses are meant to represent 20% of each paper.
3. The program of studies is targeted at improving the application of knowledge so as to enhance outcomes such as the level of teaching and the school's educational achievements. As stated in the catalogue: 'Student papers are meant to improve the level of the school in which you teach...The program is designed to improve the level of teaching in the school and to raise the level of the students' educational achievements' (*Catalogue*, pp. 5, 10).
4. Studies are based on graduated progress in the student's writing capabilities. The student is required to complete eight papers, with demands steadily rising in terms of scope and depth. The university believes in learning through constant practice.
5. Students receive personalized guidance before and during the writing of each paper. A personal mentor is available to each student throughout the course of studies.
6. The university is punctilious with respect to grading examinations and papers. Papers are graded according to 'explicit criteria that are learned in the course of studies' (*Catalogue*, p. 12). About 20%-25% of the students receive failing grades and are required to revise their papers; about 5% receive outstanding grades.

7. All applicants holding a B.A. degree from any recognized institution of higher learning are accepted to the M.A. program.

Analysis and interpretation

It appears that the Extension's educational policy can be conceived as operating along three main axes: maximum assistance to the individual, instruction based on professional experience and application of the knowledge acquired. This policy differs from that of Israel's universities in that the mentoring received within the framework of courses and thesis preparation is relatively impersonal. Furthermore, personal experience is considered to be tangential to academic learning. The universities are certainly not geared to the practical aspects of knowledge — only to its growth and investigation — at least on the declarative level. Instead, official policy rests on student needs and maximal student satisfaction from the programs of study.

Programs of study

M.Ed. in Educational Curriculum and Management Studies

The two-year program is divided into three levels, each composed of four course units (modules). Each module is equivalent to 15 credits in the British system. At each level, students are required to submit papers of 20,000 words in English or 15,000 words in Hebrew or Arabic.

Level 1 is comprised of four modules: Study Skills, Assessment and Evaluation in Education, Personal Perspectives on Education and the Political Context of Education.

Level 2 is also comprised of four modules: Research Skills, Policy and Management, Comparative Perspectives on Education and Language, Education and Power.

Level 3 contains two modules: Advanced Research Workshop 1 and Advanced Research Workshop 2.

The thesis involves two modules.

Instruction and supervision throughout the course of studies is conducted according to procedures stipulated by law, which require the teaching team to include British and Israeli instructors. Classes are taught one day a week during the entire two years of study (excluding holidays and vacations) and in workshops concentrated during the education system's vacations.

Syllabi

The home university prepares a syllabus for each course; lecturers in Israel are required to follow these syllabi to the letter. The Israeli teaching staff is obligated to visit Liverpool University for several weeks in order to familiarize itself with the curriculum. In addition, the Israeli lecturers are tested by the British university's faculty and must be accredited in order to work at the Extension. The course material is acquired by the Israeli team in common with those British colleagues who will travel to Israel. Beginning in 2001, the majority of papers have been written in Hebrew and submitted to Israeli lecturers. Theses, however, are judged by a team composed of the British faculty. As a result of these steps, the curriculum offered at the Israeli extension are identical to those offered by the mother university in Liverpool.

M.A. in English Language Teaching and Learning

The two-year program of studies contains three levels: *Module 1* covers aesthetics, interpretation and criticism, *Module 2* covers museumology within the context of modern art while *Module 3* covers preparation of the thesis. Classes are taught by the Israeli and British faculty according to the curriculum constructed by the mother university.

Analysis and Interpretation

This program of studies reflects the Extension's policy. First, close personal mentoring is provided to each student during his or her studies and while writing the thesis. Second, class schedules are adjusted to the student's attendance capacities and constructed according to that criterion. That is, the focus is on the student, with the Extension responding to his or her needs and capabilities. Third, excellence in teaching is stressed, expressed by employment of British and Israeli instructors have outstanding teaching skills. This approach is meant to achieve the greatest level of consumer — that is, student — satisfaction.

An internal survey conducted among the Extension's students indicated that the majority had enrolled as a result of recommendations made by friends who were currently studying or had received their degree from the Extension. These findings support our premise that knowledge is perceived by the Extension's students as a good marketed according to three criteria: (a) the most appropriate contents — interesting programs of study, (b) attractive packaging — high quality teaching and (c) a consumer-oriented approach — personal and continuous mentoring at each of the program's stages.

Students

A different methodological approach was adopted with respect to construction of the students' demographic profiles and identification of their reasons for studying at the Liverpool University Extension as well as their expectations regarding the program's outcomes.

Demographic profile

The basic data was culled from the students' personal files (n=375). The age profile was as follows: 30-34: 10%; 35-49: 18%; 50-59: 57%; 60-67: 15%.

The students attending the Extension are relatively older than the students attending the universities. About 72% of the students are over 50 years of age and none of the students are under 30.

85% of the students are women, while 15% are men. 61% of all students are teachers, 10% school counselors, 10% kindergarten teachers, and 19% school managers.

48% of students hold a B.A., 41% a B.Ed., 6% are veteran teachers, while the remain 5% fall in the 'other' category. The B.Ed. degree is awarded by Israel's teacher training colleges and recognized by the universities. However, holders who wish to earn an M.A. from the universities are required to takes 4-12 annual hours (or credits) of supplementary courses.

A review of the residence data shown in Table 1 reveals that the Extension's students live in all areas of the country.

TABLE 1: Residence

Area	Percentage
Jerusalem	12.0
Gush Dan (the central region including cities comprising the Tel Aviv Metropolitan Area: Holon, Bat-Yam, Petah-Tikva, Ramat HaSharon, etc.	33.0
Central Plain (including towns and villages such as Netanya and Even Yehuda)	30.0
Northern District	15.0
Southern District	6.0
The Golan Heights	1.6
Judea and Samaria	2.4

Specifically, 53% of the students live in large cities, 23% in rural towns and villages, 1.6% in the settlements (Judea and Samaria as Gaza), 4.8% in Arab towns and villages; 4.8% in remote towns and villages and 12.8% in development towns. Hence, 47% of the Extension's students live in the periphery.

Analysis and interpretation

The students attending the Liverpool University Extension in Israel display unique characteristics in comparison to the general population of university students. The majority of students are middle-aged women, teachers, hold a B.A. and live in the periphery. This demographic profile describes the Extension's target population: the Extension offers services to a population that finds it difficult to attend the regular universities whether due to academic demands — completion of supplemental courses for holders of the B.Ed. — or other constraints, such as accessibility as well as family and work obligations. We can thus assume that in the absence of university extensions, this population would not ordinarily continue their education at the available institutions of higher learning. In contrast to Israel's universities, the Liverpool Extension provides responses to these constraints. It does not require completion of supplemental studies, is readily accessible by rail from points throughout the country, constructs class schedules appropriate for teachers, provides close personal mentoring and allows assignments to be completed in three languages (as stated, Hebrew, Arabic and English). As a result, the acquisition (or purchase) of higher education is made feasible for Israelis residing in the periphery, distant towns and villages, the settlements and Arab towns and villages. The research findings indicate that the demographic profile of the students indeed matches the profile of the Extension's chosen target population.

Motivations and expectations

In order to respond to the respective research questions, a structured interview was conducted with a group of students studying toward the M.Ed. because this track contains the largest number of students (80% of the Extension's entire enrollment).

The Sample Population (n=21)

Age — 30-34: 4 (19%), 40=43: 9 (43%), 47-57: 7 (33%). One participant refused to respond to this question.

Religious affiliation — Moslem: 1 (4.7%), Jewish: 20 (95%)

Religious observance (among Jews only) — Secular: 13 (61.9%), Conservative: 3 (14%); Orthodox: 4 (19%).

Education — B.A.: 14 (67%), B.Ed.: 7 (33%).

Profession — Teachers: 15 (71%), kindergarten teachers: 2 (9.5%), school principals: 3 (14%). Note: one participate did not respond to this question.

Place of Residence — Gush Dan: 12 (57%), small towns and villages, moshavim and kibbutzim: 7 (33%), Arab towns and villages: 1 (4.7%), settlements: 1 (4.7%).

Length of Residence in Israel — Native-born or veteran residents: 19 (91.4%), new immigrants (i.e., residents for less than 10 years): 2 (9.5%).

The demographic profile of this group reflects the multiculturalism characterizing the Extension's students. Hence, the students represent every major sector in Israel's population: Religious, secular, Arabs, settlers, new immigrants as well as veteran residents, residents of the major cities as well as the periphery.

Research tools

The main research tool used was a structure interview that requested the interviewees to indicate three reasons for their choosing to attend the Liverpool University Extension as well as two expectations they held regarding outcome of their studies.

Findings: reasons for choosing to attend the Extension

A content analysis was conducted of the 60 responses received. These were assigned to four categories, as shown in Table 2:

TABLE 2: *Reasons for choosing to attend the Extension*

Reason	No. of Responses
Convenience	26 (43.3%)
Admission requirements	12 (20.0%)
Extension's reputation	12 (20.0%)
Professional interest	8 (13.3%)

Convenience

The majority of reasons (43.3%) for choosing the Extension belong to the category convenience. Nevertheless, a number of subcategories can be distinguished (the subcategories are listed below, followed by indicative statements.)

Convenient hours

- ‘Class hours are amenable for my job and home workloads.’
- ‘It enables me to work, as well as study; class hours are at night and don’t interfere with my job.’
- ‘Classes are coordinated with my working days.’
- ‘The number of days that I study can be coordinated with my work schedule.’

Easy access (transportation)

- ‘The train schedule provides convenient arrival and departure times.’
- ‘The railway station is nearby so there’s no problem arriving or going home.’

Comfortable program of studies

- ‘The program’s duration and the number of weekly class hours were important factors in my choice of this university.’
- ‘Learning is based primarily on writing papers according to my own pace.’
- ‘The program is short and intensive; I’ll be able to obtain my degree quickly and soon start teaching in the colleges.’

Admission requirements

This group represents 20% of all the reasons given. These reasons relate to the appeal of the Extension’s entry requirements, particularly the lack of supplemental course requirements and academic standards that were perceived to be lower those demanded by the universities.

- ‘The Extension’s requirements are less onerous than those of the universities.’
- ‘The Extension doesn’t require a teachers college graduate with a B.Ed. to complete supplemental course, a requirement that is annoying and tiresome.’
- ‘I was very disappointed by Israeli universities, which set up barriers and require that you take a lot of supplemental courses.’

- ‘I thought that the studies would be easier than in the universities.’
- ‘Learning here is based on writing papers, not on exams.’

Reputation

This category, which also received 20% of the comments, refers to choices made in response to recommendations by friends or acquaintances who had attended the Extension, the institution’s reputation for quality and sincerity, and the presence of known lecturers among the faculty (as listed in the catalogue).

- ‘The Extension is known for its seriousness.’
- ‘The institution’s characteristics and how it is described in advertisements.’
- ‘Recommendations from friends who studied here.’
- ‘A lecturer I had formerly studied with appeared on the faculty list.’

Professional interest

This category of reasons for choosing to attend the Extension received the lowest percentage of all the responses: 13.3%.

- ‘During the interview, they gave me information about courses that suited my specialization.’
- ‘The program is very close to my field of interest.’
- ‘The subjects taught interest me and will help me find work in the future.’
- ‘I was looking for something interesting that would occupy me while my son is completing his army service in a combat unit.’

Analysis and interpretation

The majority of reasons for choosing the Extension (86.7%) relate to technical factors such as convenience, especially of specific types of, academic requirements and reputation. Only 13.3% of the comments were substantive, that is, referred to professional interest in the program of studies. It appears that choice of an institution that provides knowledge is conducted in a manner resembling choice of any other consumption good. Its packaging, reputation and convenience represent the most meaningful aspects considered by the students when choosing the good’s supplier, in this case, an institution of higher learning.

It appears that intellectual interest remains a persistent factor; yet, instrumental aspects appear to be those determining the actual choice. Each of the 21 subjects set down three reasons for attending the Extension; we anticipated that their

responses would belong to different categories. However, the limited number of responses belonging to the category ‘professional interest’ — 8 out of 60 — indicate that the majority of interviewees did not consider this as a reason for their choice. We should stress that these statements represent the subjects’ subjective perception of their motivations, not the objective factors. Thus, for example, although the requirements to be met for receiving a degree from the Extension with respect to the scope of the assignments and the number of class hours do not differ from other institutions, the situation is sometimes reversed. Students at the Liverpool University Extension are required to submit papers 60,000 words in length if written in English, and 45,000 words if written in Hebrew or Arabic. In contrast, the universities have no such explicit paper submission requirements, with each lecturer deciding the number and length of papers according to his or her own criteria.

Expectations of outcomes of their studies

Each of the 21 subjects was requested to submit two of the main expectations he or she held regarding their studies; hence, a total of 42 statements were transmitted. Despite the difficulty of distinguishing between *reasons* and *expectations*, a clear differentiation was made between the two concepts. Content analysis of the statements resulted in four expectation categories, as shown in Table 3:

TABLE 3: *Outcome expected*

Outcome Expected	Responses	
	N	%
Interest and self-enrichment	14	33.3
Professional development and skill acquisition	10	23.8
Efficiency: Benefit versus cost	10	23.8
Personal professional support	8	19.0

Interest and self-enrichment

The expectation category receiving the highest number of responses was ‘interest and self-enrichment’: 14 statements (33.3%). These statements refer to the students’ anticipation of finding interest in the course material and development of their personal and professional attributes.

- ‘Interesting and enriching subjects.’
- ‘In-depth studies.’
- ‘Promote my professional capacities.’
- ‘Courses that were in-depth, interesting, and thought-provoking.’
- ‘Broaden my knowledge and interests.’

Professional development and skill acquisition

This category received 10 responses (23.8%).

- ‘To acquire academic writing skills.’
- ‘To learn research skills.’
- ‘To acquire skills for treating children with learning difficulties.’

Efficiency: benefit versus cost

Individuals studying at the Extension claim that they invest considerable sums in the program; hence, they expect that the resulting benefits will be at a level proportional to the cost. Ten statements entered this category, a number equal to those that entered the category of professional development and skill acquisition.

- ‘To acquire a degree as quickly as possible.’
- ‘The time will be well-spent and fully exploited, without any time wasted.’
- ‘To hand in my papers on time and successfully complete assignments.’
- ‘To acquire a degree quickly so I can advance professionally.’

Personal professional support

The smallest number of statements (8, or 19%) belongs to this category.

- ‘The staff’s (lecturers and administrators) professional, personal and sincere attitude.’
- ‘Close personal mentoring.’

Analysis and interpretation

Analysis of the sample’s expectations revealed an interesting phenomenon. Although the majority of reasons for choosing the Extension related to technical (instrumental) rather than substantive factors, the absolute majority of expectations — 57.1% — referred to course content, professional interest, self-

enrichment and development of professional skills. The expectations relating to efficiency and personal support were likewise discussed from the perspective of teaching and learning. In effect, these expectations do not betray motives of convenience or low requirements. It appears that instrumental motives drive the students to choose the Liverpool Extension although once they are accepted and begin studying at the institution, their primary expectations are directed at the faculty and administrative staff. Their feeling can be encapsulated in the statement: ‘I paid a lot; therefore, I anticipate the most interest, best enrichment and most serious and qualitative teaching.’

Dissertations (Theses)

A total of 375 theses were analyzed in order to examine whether the Extension’s policy regarding the incorporation of students’ professional experience within their academic studies — is reflected in the topics chosen for the M.A. thesis. Each thesis was examined according to two variables:

1. Was the thesis a case study? The assumption at its foundation was that writing a thesis entailing a case study indicates a topic directly related to the author’s experience, that is, the topic touches upon the student’s place of employment and/or profession.
2. Does any relationship exist between the thesis topic, the student’s profession (e.g., teaching computers or mathematics) and his or her place of employment (e.g., junior high school or technical high school)?

TABLE 4: Distribution of statements by relationship between thesis topic, place of work and profession

Relationship between Thesis Topic, Place of Work and Profession	Statements	
	N	%
No relationship	45	12.0
Dyadic relationship: Subject and place of work	73	19.4
Dyadic relationship: Subject and profession	46	12.2
Triadic relationship: Subject, place of work and profession	211	56.2
Total:	375	100.0

TABLE 5: Examples

Type of Relationship	Thesis Title	Student's Place of Employment	Student's Profession
Triadic: Thesis topic, place of employment, occupation	The effects of participating in the <i>Ne' emaney Theatre</i> on the academic performance of 10th and 11th grade students in the Aliyat Hanoar Boarding School – A case study	Aliyat Hanoar Boarding School	Teacher of theatre arts
	Employing adolescent with learning difficulties within the community – A case study	A center for the occupational training of adolescents with learning disabilities	Special education teacher
	The school work plan as a means of empowering the principal as a team leader – A case study	An elementary school	School principal
Dyadic: Thesis topic and place of employment	The professional image of urban school teachers in comparison to Kibbutz school teachers – A case study	A kibbutz as well as an urban school	Teacher
	<i>Hila</i> : A program for coping with student dropouts – A case study	The <i>Hila</i> project	
	The absorption of immigrant youth from the former Soviet Union in Israeli schools	A high school	
Dyadic: Thesis topic and student's profession	Educational perceptions of rabbis teaching in Israel's high schools		A religion and home room teacher
	Helping pupils with learning disabilities to succeed in mathematics		Mathematics teacher
	Physical education as a catalyst for empowerment of students with problematic socio-economical backgrounds		Physical education teacher

Findings

Of the 375 theses examined, 270 (72%) were case studies. Content analysis of the theses revealed four categories of relationship between the thesis topic, the student's profession and his or her place of employment: No relationship, dyadic relationships between either the topic and student's profession or between the topic and the student's place of employment, and a triadic relationship between topic, profession and place of employment. Table 4 shows the distribution of statements relating to the relationship between the thesis topic, place of work and profession, whereas Table 5 presents three examples of each type of relationship by type of relationship.

Analysis and interpretation

The absolute majority of theses, 72%, are case studies, specifically, research involving the authors' investigation of their work environment. Moreover, in 87.8% of the cases, either a dyadic or a triadic relationship can be identified, whereas only 12% of the theses display no relationship whatsoever between the subject and the student's personal or professional, work-related characteristics. In 52.2% of the theses, a triadic relationship between the thesis subject, the student's profession and his or her place of work is apparent.

These findings indicate that the Liverpool University Extension in Israel has succeeded in realizing its policy goal, that is, maximum incorporation feasible of the students' professional experience within the formal program of studies. By doing so, the Extension contributes to the student's professional development at the same time that it promotes the work environment's effectiveness. This approach is supported by the students, who enthusiastically welcome the opportunity of investigating their work environment and who urge employers to support their studies. The policy is therefore one of the main factors that persuades students to enroll in the Liverpool Extension.

Discussion and conclusions

The article introduces a new approach to the perception of knowledge and higher education: the 'knowledge as a good' approach. The research conducted at the Liverpool University Extension in Israel among students studying for an M.Ed. examined four factors: policy, programs of study, the students' demographic profile, and the students' reasons for choosing to attend the Extension. The last factor included student expectations regarding the program's

outcomes and the topics researched in the M.A. thesis. The study's findings reveal characteristics attributed to privatization and globalization and the implications of viewing knowledge and education as consumer goods responsive to the forces of supply and demand. The relationship between the study's findings and the theoretical concepts are analyzed below. As required by the principles underlying qualitative research, no attempt is made to generalize the data beyond the framework of the research and the suggested theoretical framework.

Acquisition or purchase of higher education has broken free of geographic boundaries, an event illustrated by the performance of the UK-based Liverpool University Extension in Israel (Scott, 2000). The Extension has extended the option of acquiring advanced education to a broad spectrum of the population beyond the boundaries of Israel's elites (Longden, 2002). The study's findings indicate that the Liverpool Extension's student represent the cultural mosaic characterizing Israeli society, with most students living in small towns and villages located in the periphery, far from Israel's center. The majority of students, primarily women, include Arabs, religious Jews, settlers as well as kibbutz and moshav members. Although all students hold recognized B.A. degrees, the majority would not have been accepted to State-run universities or, if accepted, would have been required to complete supplemental course work. Content analysis of the 21 interviews conducted, during which the interviewees were asked to note their three main reasons for attending the Extension, revealed that the major reason for their choice was convenience: course schedules that allowed them to combine studies and a job, comfortable class hours, easy access by public transit, intensive personal mentoring and written assignments or papers rather than examinations.

Further analysis indicates that the Liverpool University Extension operates according to the principles of *supply and demand*. The limited supply of opportunities to earn a university MA in the field of education — only a few hundred are accepted throughout the country despite the thousands of teachers, principals and other education system personnel applying. This demand results from Ministry of Education (the main employer of these professionals) policy that encourages academization of staff and offers remuneration in the form of financial benefits realized in salaries and pension rights.

From the point of view of the supplier, the Extension has adopted *teaching excellence as a sales promotion mechanism*. The institution employs lecturers and mentors (teaching assistants) of proven quality but on a temporary basis, without tenure. A decline in performance can culminate in immediate dismissal.

Free competition, a direct outcome of privatization and globalization, has motivated numerous institutions of higher learning to offer MA degrees in education; this includes every university, several colleges and numerous extensions associated with foreign universities. Competition has brought the Liverpool Extension to offer unique services expressed in its programs and advanced thesis requirements. Furthermore, its education policy stresses the applied or practical aspects of knowledge, bases learning on the student's personal and professional experience and the provision of close mentoring throughout. The program of studies is organized on three levels, with assignments adjusted accordingly; classes are held with the student's comfort in mind — one day a week in addition to a concentrated session during the summer break. The thesis topics encourage research of the student's work environment. Hence, 72% of the theses represent case studies, and 88% of the topics display a relationship between the topic, the student's profession and his or her place of work. An analysis of this relationship reveals that 12.2% of the theses indicate a dyadic relationship between the topic and the student's profession, 19.4% between the topic and the student's place of work and 56.25% a triadic relationship between all three elements.

These findings indicate that the Liverpool Extension successfully implements its policy. We suggest that this policy, which is intimately responsive to the student and his or her profession, represents yet another marketing instrument. Rooting the program of studies directly in an individual's professional needs appears to provide a greater incentive to acquire higher education than does university policy, which focuses on the accumulation of knowledge per se, development of conceptual models and the capacity to conduct theoretical research. Stated differently, the Extension's policy stresses, as stated, the salience of *applied knowledge*. The acquisition of knowledge is therefore meant to assist students in improving their professional practice in areas such as student assessment and treatment of special students, for example. The findings regarding the number of theses based on case studies and the linkage between the thesis topics, place of employment and student's profession reflect this principal.

Other findings clearly indicate that students weigh *benefits against costs*. This represents one of the most interesting of the study's findings. The high *cost* — in terms of tuition — incurred, almost three times that required by the universities, motivates development of expectations regarding the *benefits* to be gained in terms of professional interest, teaching excellence, close mentoring, relevance of the course material as well as timely completion of the degree. Unexpectedly, these high expectations do not correspond to the reasons given for opting to attend the Extension. An absolute majority of student noted *convenience* as the main

motive behind their choice rather than *professional interest, teaching excellence* or *personal or professional enrichment*. This finding can be interpreted as populist in the sense that it indicates the degree to which the Extension attempts to meet students' expectations through its program of studies. The Extension enjoys considerable income (tuition); it therefore attempts to satisfy its clients, who prefer higher tuition to meeting higher academic criteria. Hence, the *willingness of the Israeli public to pay* a great deal in order to earn an advanced degree transforms them into a sought-after market. Given that, we must consider the dangers inherent in such an attitude coupled with the pressure to acquiesce to those demands.

We may conclude that the 'knowledge as a good' approach has been adopted *de facto* by the Liverpool University Extension in Israel. Moreover, the correspondence and close coherence between the extension's policy, programs of study, students' thesis topics and their expectations supports the argument that the Extension's goal, like that of any other economic organization, is to maximize its success in the sale of knowledge. The Extension is aware of the danger lurking behind any decline in this coherence, a situation that may induce lower demand and the institution's eventual collapse. The continued existence of the Extension is, therefore, directly dependent on student-client satisfaction, an outcome of sustained coherence.

The Liverpool University Extension in Israel likewise demonstrates the repercussions of the 'knowledge as a good' approach. We can certainly number the benefits of greater distribution of knowledge and of making that knowledge accessible to a broad population that had previously been deprived of this opportunity. Yet we cannot ignore the incipient negative implications for quality of knowledge and the method of its purchase. In order to learn more about this issue, long-term follow up as well as comparative research is required.

Rachel Pasternak is a member of the Department of Behavioral Sciences, the College of Management, Academic Studies, Israel. Address for correspondence: 22 Hadar Yosef St., Tel Aviv 69705, Israel. E-mail: rachelp@macam98.ac.il

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MULTI-DIMENSIONAL CHANGE PROCESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE IN A PUBLIC UNIVERSITY IN TURKEY

YASAR KONDAKCI

ALI YILDIRIM

Abstract – *This paper is a part of larger study that was designed to investigate administrative processes in a large Turkish public university. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data. The data were subjected to content analysis and the results suggested that change process is a complex process with several dimensions: forces for change, change domains, means of change, and problems of change process. A hierarchy identified among these dimensions and this hierarchy enabled a model for organizational change process. Using this model the findings interpreted within the framework of both the recent global developments in higher education and peculiar characteristics of the Turkish Higher Education System.*

Introduction

The phenomenon of change has been one of the most commonly investigated subjects in administrative sciences. Many researchers on organizational theory and the practitioners of management believe that the main concern over the concept of change results from the fact that organizations live in flux and they need to adapt to their environments in order to survive. Several different approaches developed in order to explain the relationship between the environment and the organization. Organizational adaptability perspective suggests that organizations adapt themselves to the environment (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Lowrence & Lorsch, 1967; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Contrary to organizational adaptability, population ecology perspective argues that the organizations are not flexible enough to adapt to different environment. Their survival completely depends on the selection (Aldrich, 1979; Hannan & Freeman, 1977; Kimberly & Miles, 1981). These perspectives resulted in a hybrid view of evolutionary theory which posits that change is a continuous, recurrent, cumulative, and probabilistic progression of variation, selection and retention of organizational entities. The obligation to compete for scarce environmental resources and the environment's selection ability lead continuously to small and incremental changes in the organizations

(Van de Ven & Poole, 1995). However, these explanations fell short in describing the organizational change satisfactorily because of their ignorance of sudden breaks in organizational life. This gap was filled by the punctuated equilibrium model which states that small and incremental changes are interrupted by sudden breaks (Abernathy & Utterback, 1978; Tushman & Anderson, 1986). According to punctuated equilibrium organizational life is not a long steady state spent on a straight equilibrium level but consist of short sudden breaks which radically alter it (Gersick, 1991).

Although there are different views about the process of change, many scholars are in agreement on the fact that the environment in which the organizations is functioning puts tremendous pressures on organizations to change themselves. Bolman and Deal (1991) in their analysis summarized five main sources of environmental pressures for organizational change: (1) the turbulent world of modern organizations which underlies persistent changes in an uncertain pace in the environment resulting in a big source of pressure to reconsider the existing mission, policies, and practices in the organization, (2) globalisation which makes the organization compete in a wider market across different nations and cultures, (3) information technology pushing the organization for changes in organization's human resource, political, and symbolic aspects, (4) deregulation which leads to flexibility, competition, and new investment opportunities (5) demographic shifts which bring demands of new services such as training, affirmative social services.

Like other organizational contexts such as industry, trade, and service organizations, the researchers of higher education attempt to understand the process of change. Although there is a general consensus that these organizations are different from trade and industrial organizations, the approaches developed for other organizational contexts provide a framework to analyse the concept of change in higher education organizations.

Previous studies and analyses on organizational change in higher education highlight different aspects but mainly concentrate on three important domains: studies investigated the forces of change (Bailey, 1994; Hartley, 1999; Jick, 1995; Johnson, & Srinivasan, 2000; Keastle, 1990; Kemelgor, Morrison, 1998; Pascale, Millemann & Gioja, 1997; Ramaley, 1996; Simsek, 1999; Tichy, 1983; Webb and Kilgore, 1995), studies investigated organizational change in terms of leadership (Birnbaum, 1989; Coleman, 1997; Fullan & Miles, 1992; Hamlin, Reidy & Stewart, 1997), and approaches on resistance to organizational change (Kanter, Stein & Jick, 1993; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1996).

The studies on the forces of change suggest that in the last two decades many factors have forced higher education organizations to change themselves. The financial look of these organizations was found to be the most striking force for change (Bailey, 1994; Hartley, 1999; Ramaley, 1996; Simsek, 1999). For example,

Simsek (1999) argued that the worldwide transformation of higher education systems was mainly triggered by financial factors. He attributes the reasons of financial constraints of higher education systems to shrinking public resources in general. Hence the countries preferred to cut public expenditures on several public services such as education and health and encourage private enterprises to assume these services. As a result of decreased financial resources, higher education institutions have turned towards finding their own resources, and this trend placed additional pressure on them (Jick, 1995; Kemelgor, Johnson & Srinivasan, 2000; Pascale, Millemann & Gioja, 1997). As a result marketplace dynamics (Keastle, 1990), global market and informed consumers (Morrison, 1998) have become the other new forces of change for these organizations. When competition among these organizations combined with another force of change, the increasing demand for higher education (Hartley, 1999), concern over student learning outcomes increased (Ramaley, 1996). Therefore, quality (Bailey, 1994; Hartley, 1999) becomes another force of change in higher education. Higher education organizations are trying to secure their quality through different means but mainly through accrediting themselves (Webb & Kilgore, 1995) through internationally recognized standards. Since these organizations are not free as in the past, there is an increasing demand from policy makers for higher education to provide solutions to social and economic problems in an increasingly urbanized world (Ramaley, 1996). In this sense, accountability and enhanced productivity (Bailey, 1994; Ramaley, 1996) are two other forces of change in higher education. Finally, technology is stressed as another force of change since it leads to changes in many processes in these organizations (Kemelgor, Johnson & Srinivasan, 2000; Keastle, 1990; Morrison, 1998). Because of these forces higher education organizations are acting in a new era and they are administered in a new understanding in which workplace-specific conditions (Kemelgor, Johnson & Srinivasan, 2000), and many organization issues (Hartley, 1999) become internal forces of change.

Not only the forces of change but the relationship between leadership and organizational change process has always been subject to investigation. Leadership is an important concomitant factor for organizational change process. Simsek and Aytemiz (1998) indicated that change periods are associated with new leaders. Leaders may undertake the role of being trigger, facilitator, critical catalysts or the actor of change process within organizations. Birnbaum (1989) highlighted bilateral aspect of leadership effect on organizational change process. According to Birnbaum, complex social organizations cannot function effectively without leaders. However, Birnbaum warns that we have to be careful when we attribute the reasons of change to leaders for several reasons: 'the cognitive processes of human mind make us to attribute the reasons of changes in institutional functioning to the presidents because it is easy to attribute the reason

of changes to human agency rather than to complex interaction of interpersonal forces' (p. 133). Hamlin, Reidy and Stewart (1997) also suggested visionary leadership as one of the critical factors for change. Coleman, (1997) indicated that change is a painful process for every organization but leadership can be a facilitator in this process.

Another common approach to analysing organizational change is to look at it in terms of 'resistance to change.' Unfortunately, the people in the organizations do not always welcome change. Employees may resist and even act against the change because it may interfere with economic incentives, state of power, and status in the organization (Kanter, Stein & Jick, 1993). There are also psychological reasons behind resistance to change because of the fact that it disturbs stability and leads to fear of unknown (Baron, Bryne & Suls, 1989). In addition, employees may resist change because it may result in knowledge and skill obsolescence (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1996). Finally, there are some material reasons that inhibit change process in organizations because it demands human resources, financial resources, time and the like.

The Turkish Higher Education System (THES)

The history of modern Turkish Higher Education started with the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. Since that time, THES has gone through five main reform efforts via legislations of 2253, 4936, 1750, 2547 and 3837 respectively in 1933, 1946, 1973, 1981, and 1992. It is commonly accepted that the reform of 1981 is the most comprehensive one in terms addressing major problems of THES. Although there are quality concerns, the number of the students enrolled, the number of faculty members employed and the number of higher education institutions have had a steady increase after the reform of 1981 (Guruz *et al.*, 1994). However, there are still serious problems in THES. Simsek (1999) indicated the pressure for further expansion, demand for qualified teaching staff, shrinking public resources, organizational and management issues and quality as the major issues waiting for solutions in THES. In addition to these general problems, the universities also have serious problems specific to their own context. Simsek and Aytemiz's (1998, p. 156) study is illustrative of the institution level problems in THES. In their study of anomaly based change (anomaly defined as 'the problem that threatens the core functions of an organization which inevitably leads to poor performance') in higher education identified six sources of anomalies in THES: (1) issues related to the university's general status including economic and budgetary issues, technology and competition issues, (2) issues related to students including expansion of the student population,

inefficiency of basic student services (transportation, health and housing), decline in students' academic qualities, and problem of student involvement in administrative processes, (3) issues related to academic staff including quality of academic staff, financial and psychological dissatisfaction, limited research facilities and problems of promotion, (4) issues of administration, including lack of communication among stakeholders within the university, and lack of professional administrative staff, (5) issues of teaching and learning including quality concerns (6) issues of physical infrastructure including computer and laboratory facilities, and classroom space.

This review proves that research on organizational change in higher education concentrates on a single aspect of organizational change process, that is, the driving forces of change. Although literature presents robust explanations for driving forces of change, it provides us with only a partial understanding of change. We need a grand look into change process which reveals all dimensions of change. Therefore, this study was designed to investigate different dimensions of organizational change process in a Turkish public university.

Research questions

This study seeks answers to the following specific questions:

1. What are the forces of change process in the University at the faculty level?
2. Which domains of faculty governance demand change in the faculties?
3. What kinds of problems do the faculties confront with during organizational change process?
4. What kinds of means are used for accomplishing organizational change?
5. What kinds of strategies are necessary for a better functioning of organizational change process?

Method

A qualitative case study design was used in this study. Qualitative studies provide a holistic picture of a case, situation, activity, material, or fact (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990) and bring the researchers close to the practices and enable them to witness the actors' actions in-depth (Yildirim & Simsek, 2000). There were several reasons for using a qualitative case study design in this study. First, the focus of the study was a single institution. Second, it is believed that qualitative case study is instrumental in finding different dimensions and complicated nature

of organizational change process. Third, qualitative research methods are potent in providing a holistic picture of the organizational change process. Finally, in search of change process, qualitative methods are more preferable to quantitative methods because such phenomenon is not easily translated into numbers.

The researchers used the general interview guide approach as the data collection technique. The pilot interviews were conducted with the administrators at department level (i.e., chairs and assistant-chairs). The pilot interviews also enabled the researcher to do modifications, develop alternative questions and prompts in the interview guide.

Sampling

In this study purposeful sampling approach was used to identify the respondents. The logic of purposeful sampling method is to enable the researcher to select information-rich cases from which one can learn a great deal about the purpose of the study (Patton, 1987). The subjects of the study were the deans and assistant deans of METU (Middle East Technical University). Considering the structural characteristics of THES, deans and assistant deans were selected as the subjects of the interviews in this study. In THES the responsibility of the deans is not limited only to academic affairs but includes other administrative affairs of their faculties. In addition, they join many administrative boards as a member or as the head of the board such as university senate, university administration board, faculty board, and so forth. Moreover, their position within the structure of THES makes them undertake a bridging role between the president's office and the departments. Therefore, they have rich experiences and information about a wide array of administrative processes in a typical Turkish university.

Data collection process

After getting a formal permission from the university administration, the researcher arranged appointments with the respondents. At the beginning of each session, the researcher informed the administrators about the study and the purpose of the interview. The sessions were recorded with the permission of the interviewees and the recordings were transcribed by the researcher.

Data Analysis Process

These interview transcriptions were subjected to content analysis (Miles & Huberman 1984; Patton, 1987) in three steps. First, the data were labelled by descriptive codes. This helped simplify the complexity of the data into

manageable units. Second, the list of initial codes was analysed and the patterns were identified based on the labels. These labels were collected under major categories. Finally, these categories were refined under several themes related to organizational change process.

The case: the Middle East Technical University

This study conducted at the Middle East Technical University, located in the capital of Turkey, Ankara. The university was founded in 1956 with the mission of contributing to social, economic, and technological development of Turkey and other Middle Eastern countries. It was planned to be the internationally recognized centre of pure and applied sciences in the Middle East. That is why METU has always used English as medium of instruction since its foundation year.

METU was initially designed to enrol 12,000 students. But the university has continued to grow in terms of the number of the students, faculty, personnel, and facilities. According to the data in the year 2000, METU serves nearly 20,000 students and employs around 2000 academic personnel. It has high quality academic, research, social, sport, and cultural facilities. The university involves 36 research centres, a library with rich catalogues of books, subscribed periodicals, and electronic resources. METU is one of the richest higher education institutions in Turkey in terms of computer technology and Internet facilities. It offers 29 sports branches, accommodation and recreational facilities, and dormitories for students and houses for academic staff.

METU has five faculties. The first one, Faculty of Architecture is the oldest faculty at METU, which was founded in 1956 and has three departments. The second faculty, Faculty of Engineering, is the largest faculty at METU in terms of students enrolled and academic staff employed with 11 departments. The third faculty, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, is the second largest faculty with nine departments. The fourth one, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, which was founded in 1957, has four departments. Finally, Faculty of Education founded in 1982 has six departments. These faculties offer undergraduate and graduate programs. In addition to teaching, research activities occupy a significant role in these faculties.

METU had enjoyed a leading role among Turkish universities until 1982 reforms in the THES. Although the 1982 reform led to positive developments in overall THES, it brought negative implications for METU because it lost its autonomy and became completely dependent on Higher Education Council (HEC) in administrative and financial affairs. In addition, the establishment of private universities also shook METU's leading role because these universities attracted

many of public universities' academic staff and high quality students. Finally, the dramatic increase in the student population is one of the main reasons for the quality decline in teaching. In order to preserve its top position in Turkey, METU has initiated several actions. First of all, METU tried to save the current academic staff and attract new faculty members. In addition, the university has entered in a competition process with other private and public universities to attract high quality students through the Student Selection Examination—a nation-wide examination taken by all high school graduates who would like to be enrolled in higher education in Turkey. Moreover, establishing close relations with the industry is accepted as one of the main strategies to generate new resources. METU has continuously tried to enhance its infrastructure, academic and non-academic services provided to the students, faculty members and academic staff. Finally, since 1990 the presidents have tried to apply new administrative approaches to the university. The presidents have focused on enhancement of the communication, promotion of participative decision-making, use of technology in administrative processes and adoption of new management techniques for the administration of the university. The strategic planning is a good example for restructuring efforts at METU. The last two presidents have tried to develop the strategic plan for the 2000-2005 through involvement of the faculty members.

Results

Content analysis of the data suggested five dimensions regarding the organizational change process: forces for change, change domains, means of change, problems of change process, and suggestions of the administrators for facilitating change process within the faculties. Table 1 summarizes these findings.

Forces of change at METU

The findings suggest that the faculties are under a number of external and internal pressures that call for change. The first internal force mentioned is the leadership at the department level, faculty level, and university level. Respectively the chairpersons, the deans, or the president develop suggestions, or set demands and desires which drive the faculty into a change process. Second, young staff of the faculties, most of whom received their Ph.D. degrees abroad, is also mentioned as another internal force of change. Third, historical background and mission of the university in general has been accepted as a force of change. Fourth,

TABLE 1: Five dimensions of organizational change

Forces of change	Internal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership 2. Enlargement of the university 3. Young staff of the faculties 4. Historical background and mission of the university 5. The evaluation processes 6. The students
	External	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Society's needs 2. Technological advancements 3. Changes in the job market 4. Competition 5. Legal regulations
Change domains		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Characteristics of the student population of the university 2. Academic restructuring 3. Characteristics of the academic personnel
Problems of change		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Structure of THES 2. Attitudes of the staff 3. Constraints over the resources 4. Political traditions of the country
Means of change		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Benchmarking 2. Accreditation (national and international) 3. Strategic planning
Suggestions of the administrators		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Open and informal communication 2. Participative decision-making processes 3. Increasing the interest of academic staff 4. Demand for more power in order to initiate change 5. Finding alternative resources 6. Leadership

the evaluation processes of the faculties are mentioned as sources of change. The faculties either develop certain self-evaluation processes or invite international accreditation institutions and try to evaluate themselves. Finally, the administrators mentioned the students' demands and expectations regarding the registration process, elective courses, quality of instructional materials, quality of the academic staff, and physical conditions as forces for change.

On the other hand, regarding the external forces for change, the respondents stated that the society's needs and expectations are the primary force for change. First of all, the social, political and economic developments, and expectations of the society were stated as important factors in shaping the policies of the university and, as a result, the policies of the faculties. Second, the respondents pointed the rapid technological advancements that force the university to make changes both in academic and administrative process such as registration, grading, and performance evaluation of academic staff. Third, the changes in the job market make the faculties consider changes in the curriculum such as developing new courses, removing courses or changing the content of the courses. Fourth, especially after the foundation of private universities in Turkey, METU has developed new strategies or policies in order to be

competitive at national level and save its international reputation in the world. Finally, legal regulations were stated to be an external factor for change in the faculties.

The change domains at METU

The first domain of change that was pointed out by the administrators is the student population. The student population has reached 22,000 but the infrastructure has not increased accordingly. Apparently, the excessive growth of student population threatens the quality at METU. In order to restore the quality and preserve its reputation, the university has accepted a general strategy of decreasing the number of students at undergraduate level and increasing the number of students at graduate level. In addition, interdisciplinary programs is mentioned as another domain of change. Moreover, the interviewees indicated that the characteristics of the academic personnel have been changing. The faculties are not able to recruit quality academic staff because of various reasons such as low salary, intense competition by the private universities, decline in resources of the university, and the cost of advanced education overseas. Finally, it is mentioned that the university has been in an expansion process in terms of physical conditions, number of staff, and varieties of academic and non-academic activities.

The problems in change process

Almost all of the administrators indicated the centralized structure of THES as a problem for change. It is indicated that the centralized structure of THES impedes innovation at the faculty level. In addition, the administrators complained that faculty members do not support the change initiatives. They attributed this reluctance to lack of motivation, work overload and nature of academic enterprise. Moreover, all of the administrators expressed that there are constraints over the resources necessary for initiating change. Finally, political traditions of the country were expressed as another cause of problem for the change process. Unsuccessful efforts in other domains of public administration and specifically change in the education system lead to development of negative attitudes toward change process.

The means for successful change

The administrators mentioned about three different means used for achieving change in their faculties. Faculty administrators indicated benchmarking as a primary means of change. They indicated that they follow the best-practicing faculties in other international universities and they try to implement the same

strategies for their faculties. Moreover, the interviewees mentioned about accreditation at national and international levels as a means for change. Finally, the administrators mentioned that they accept strategic planning as another means for change in their faculties.

The suggestions for a successful change process

Faculty administrators developed several suggestions for a successful change process. First of all, the administrators believe that communication and decision-making processes are important in the change process. In all of the faculties, the administrators suggested open and informal communication in order to accomplish change efforts. The administrators suggested implementing participative decision-making process for initiating an effective change process in the faculties. Communicating major policies to important stakeholders in the university and getting their feedback are necessary steps for successful change process. Moreover, all of the faculty administrators suggested strategies for increasing the interest of academic staff in the change process. They believe that the faculty members need motivational strategies in order to get their full contribution in the change process. Furthermore, the administrators demand more power in order to initiate change. They believe that the current structure of higher education system needs to be improved toward a more decentralized structure enabling the faculty administrators to gain more authority. Finally, the administrators suggested that it is necessary to find alternative resources necessary for change process in the faculties.

Discussion

Recently many scholars have highlighted the need for a different perspective in the study of organizational change (Beer & Nohria, 2000; Van de Ven & Poole, 1995; Weick & Quinn, 1999). These scholars mainly indicated that change process is a complex process with several different dimensions embedded in each other; therefore, a proper understanding of change process is possible only through revealing different dimensions of change and explicating the relationships among these dimensions. This study is an attempt to respond to this call through investigating different dimensions of change and going a further step by revealing the interaction among these dimensions in higher education context. The results suggest that organizational change process involves multiple dimensions such as forces of change, change domains, problems of change, means of change, and suggestions for successful change process. The literature is dominated by studies

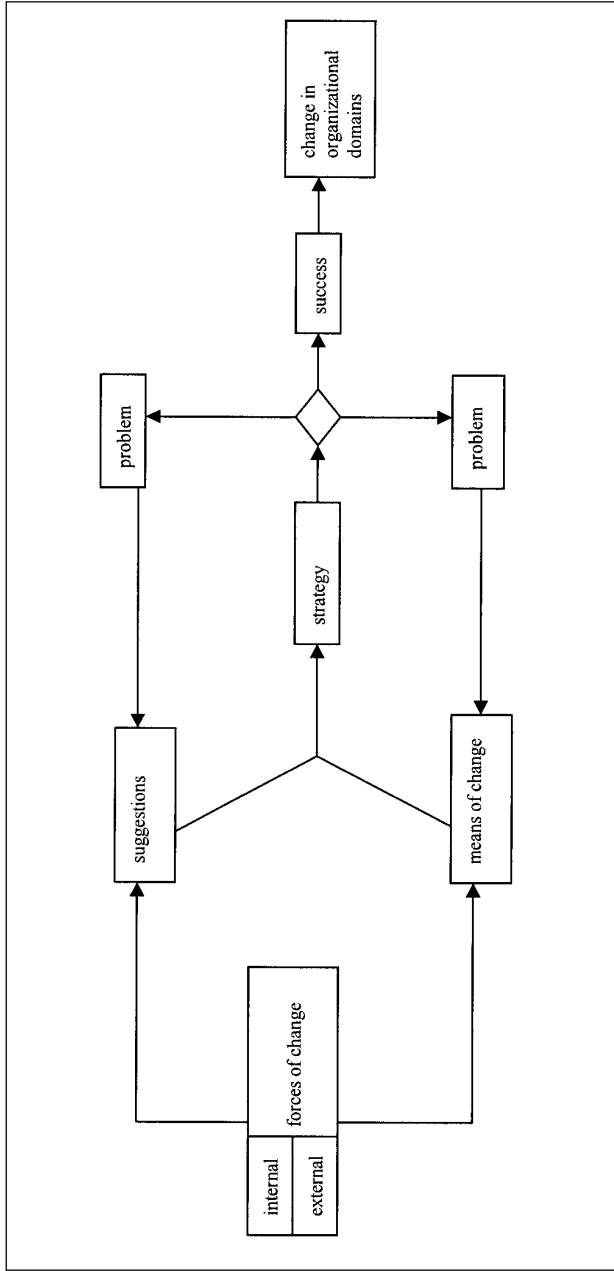
which focus on one of these dimensions but ignore the holistic nature of the change process. From this perspective this study aimed to investigate all dimensions (based on the views of the subjects of the study) of the change process. The strength of this approach is that it enables us to establish relationships between these different dimensions and, as a result, derive a strategy for successful change higher education.

A close look at the dimensions suggested by the result of the study indicates a hierarchy among them, which is illustrated in Figure 1. This figure suggests a model of managing change in the organizations. In this model, either internal or external forces of change always trigger change. The first response of the organization to the forces of change is two-folded. First, members in the organization may develop ideas for encountering these forces. Second, the organization may search and adopt appropriate means of change. There is a difference between the suggestions for change and tools for change in the sense that the former reaction is developed within the organization based on members' perceptions and experiences. In this sense, it is an internal response. However, the latter consists of ready-made tools, such as accreditation and strategic planning. The organization customizes these tools to its own context. Incorporating contextual ideas and ready-made tools, the organization comes up with a general strategy of implementing change. When this strategy becomes successful the organization realizes changes in different domains. However, the organization may also face with problems that require reformulation the strategy through revision of suggestions and adopted tools.

The results of the study verify this model since its components and the relations among them are in line with the findings. The results of this study also make sense according to recent developments in higher education, proving that these developments have a reflection on higher education in Turkey.

When the findings of the study are closely scrutinized a relationship among these findings can be identified. The results of this study, like many studies in the literature, suggest that change process is triggered by certain forces. These forces are parallel to the findings in the literature. Almost all of the previous studies attempted to investigate the driving forces of change more or less address similar forces for change for higher education organizations. Simsek and Aytemiz (1998) name these forces as anomalies and make a distinction between internal and external anomalies. Kemelgor, Johnson and Srinivasan (2000) also name these forces as the driving forces of change. In this study, parallel to the findings of many different studies (Birnbaum, 1989; Coleman, 1997; Hamlin, Reidy & Stewart, 1997), leadership emerged as an important internal force of change, which is an indication of the shift in administrative patterns of higher education organizations from pure collegial understanding to managerial understanding. On

FIGURE 1: The hierarchy of the organizational change dimensions



the other hand, evaluation processes at national and international levels indicate the concern for quality. Quality becomes an important means of developing and securing competitive advantage for higher education organizations.

Unlike the tendency in the literature, which highlights only the external factors, this study suggests more or less similar number of internal and external forces of change. This is closely related to the leading role of the case under study, METU. It is not only shaped by environmental forces, but also has the ability to lead developments in higher education in Turkey.

Based on the universal mission of the universities, shifts in the societies' needs and expectations became one of the major forces of change for universities. The universities adapt their strategies according to the expectations of the society. Therefore, social, political and economic conditions of the society are perceived as triggering factors for initiating change in the university.

The changes in the job market emerged as another external factor for change process. In last two decades, the governments have adopted policies to make higher education organizations more autonomous and at the same time more accountable. The governments prefer to evaluate higher education organizations in terms of their outputs rather than the inputs. The universities' contributions to the society, and specifically to the economies of the nations are important determinants of their effectiveness. In this sense the labour market is a significant external force of change to be considered by the universities.

Parallel to the findings of many studies investigating the forces of organizational change in higher education (Kamelgor, Johnson & Srinivasan, 2000; Keastle, 1990; Kwatler, 1997; Morisson, 1998; Tichy, 1983; Twing & Oblinger, 1996) this study also suggest technology as a force of change for higher education organizations. Technologies have important roles in most crucial processes such as teaching, research, and administration in the academy. Higher education organizations are trying to adapt or employ technologies necessary for teaching, research, administration and distance education and as result make them an opportunity but not a threat.

After the establishment of private universities in the mid 1980s, the concept of 'competition' has entered into the agenda of public universities in Turkey. Private universities have attracted public universities' academic staff, high-ranking students in Student Selection Examination and, even in some cases senior administrative staff. It is a fact that the public universities have to compete not only with private universities but also with each other in Turkey. Findings of other scholars (Jick, 1995; Kemelgor, Johnson & Srinivasan, 2000; Pascale, Millemann & Gioja, 1997) support the fact that competition among higher education organizations is not specific to Turkish higher education organizations but to higher education organizations in other countries.

Finally legal regulations show that THES is highly vulnerable to political interferences. Universities in Turkey should always be ready to unexpected legal regulations that require rearrangements of their existing functioning on teaching, research, monetary expenditures, and personnel administration. Considering the fact that THES has several problems, the universities should be ready for such unpredictable legal changes.

These internal and external forces lead the university to consider change in both its structure and processes. Change strategies are formulated by combining suggestions of the members, and ready-made change tools. First part of the strategies, suggestions of the members, is important in the sense that they are resulted from their experiences. The administrators suggested strategies related to organizational behaviour, organizational structure and financial aspects of the organization. Suggestions related to organizational behaviour are enhancement of informal communication, implementing participative decision-making and other strategies for increasing the interest of the members. These are effective strategies for coping with the problems related to getting members' support and their active involvement. In addition, a desire for more decentralization is not unexpected because the administrators need authority over operations in their faculties. Finally, the administrators highlighted the need for finding alternative resources. Being highly dependent on public resources makes the universities' autonomy highly vulnerable. Generating their own resources will be an important step for the universities to restore the autonomy and as a result be more change oriented.

Another part of the change strategies consists of ready-made tools for change. Higher education organizations do not develop their own management tools but adapt management tools from business administration. Strategic planning, quality management, strength-weaknesses, opportunities-threats (SWOT) analysis are relatively new concepts for the academy. These concepts have leaked into administrative units of higher education organizations after the global restructuring of higher education organizations started at the beginning of 1980s under the title of 'Managerialism'. For example, in continental European countries higher education organizations have forced to develop managerial functioning modes and business like behaviours (Larsen & Gornitzka, 1995). The old modes of administration characterized by collegial and political model of decision-making that formed the basis of the university as an organization until 1970s have been replaced by entrepreneurial management (Neave & Van Vught, 1991).

Organizational change process is not a smooth process without any problem. Several problems lead to reformulation of the strategies for change in higher education context. This study has shown that the centralized structure of THES is problematic for change in higher education in Turkey. In fact, this problem has

resulted from the centralized pattern of Turkish Public Administration of which THES is a part. It leads to a problem of authority at the faculty level. The authority concentrates at upper levels either in the hands of the HEC or the rector. On the other hand, it is difficult to incorporate the academicians in the administrative process in Turkey. One of the reasons of their indifference toward change process is closely related to the academic profession itself. Since the academic profession is a highly individualistic profession, the faculty are unwilling to cooperate or work in groups or teams. Another reason is related to unsatisfactory salary of academicians in Turkey. Change process demands more efforts of the members but the faculty members overloaded with teaching tasks are not willing to contribute to change process if not to resist it. This is parallel to what Ramaley (1996) also addressed as such that the importance of getting the support of the staff, it is necessary to take several measures such as creating incentives, recognition, and rewards to get their attention.

Finance is another problem for change process in Turkish higher education. Appropriations from the state budget are not sufficient to finance the total expenditures. Indeed, the budgets of the universities are line-item budgets that hinder effective and efficient use of the monies. In fact, there are other sources of income for the universities in Turkey such as income from the services provided by the university, students' tuition fees, and researches projects. But the amount of monies received from these sources still remains very small. Unlike the state-subsidized Western European universities or universities in the USA that generate their own resources, Turkish higher education organizations have limited financial capacity. They are not effective in generating their own resources through cooperation with the industry because of the non-existence of such an industry in the country. Finally, the direct effect of politics on educational system of the country emerged as a source of problem for change process. Education system in general has always been the primary area of interest for the political parties. Each political party tries to change the education system according to its own agenda. Education system has turned out to be a trial and error context within public administration. Therefore, not only the academicians but also the public have developed negative attitudes toward change attempts of any kind. These four problems are the indications of dissatisfaction with structural, cultural, material resources, human resources, and psychological conditions for change.

The compatibility between administrators' suggestions and the problems in organizational change process also contributes to verification of the model. This is an indication of feedback loop between the strategy and problem parts of the model. The executives, depending on the problems reconsider their suggestions and as a result reformulate their strategies. For example, the administrators

highlighted the need for open and informal communication and participative decision-making style as strategies for enhancement of organizational change process. These strategies are suggested because of the fact that the administrators have difficulty in getting the support of faculty members. Communicating all aspects of change process, making them participate in the process of change are key strategies to get their support. In addition, highly centralized structure of THES made the administrators demand more decentralization because they need authority over operations in their faculties. Finally, the constraints over financial resources lead to the demand for new resources because state appropriations from the budget are not enough for operations in the university. On the other hand, being highly dependent on public resources limits the universities' autonomy. Therefore, it is necessary to generate alternative resources in order to preserve the autonomy.

The final dimension of the study, the change domains are also compatible with the forces of change. First, the policies of decreasing the number of undergraduate students, increasing the number of graduate students, developing interdisciplinary programs, and recruiting quality academicians have resulted from the desire of preserving the quality and maintaining the leading position among Turkish universities. Another reason of these policies is to make METU a centre of graduate studies, supply the academic staff needs of recently established universities and make METU an international research centre as indicated in its historical mission. These changes are related to METU's historical background and mission. Second, academic restructuring is related to several forces such as society's needs and expectations, changes in the job market, competition and legal regulation. The university initiates new programs in order to respond to the needs of the society and supply the economy with qualified manpower. Third, the change in the composition of the faculty is related to both decreasing resources and competition. Private universities offer high salaries and better facilities, which attract faculty in public universities. However, public universities' competitive abilities are not strong enough to keep their members nor they have the resources to develop new faculty through overseas educational opportunities.

This study investigated organizational change process in higher education and the results interpreted within the framework of recent developments in higher education context. In this sense, the study covered two nested complexities. First, the higher education context, and secondly, the organizational change process in this context. Qualitative research methods were appropriate in working on these two complexities. Global changes in the countries' social, political, and economic structures gave way to transformation of the universities. As a result of this transformation a new administrative understanding has developed for these

organizations. Looking from this perspective, it is necessary to investigate not only organizational change process but also other administrative processes such as communication, decision-making, and leadership in order to understand this new administrative understanding. However, it is impossible to ignore recent developments in higher education context even in the study of organization level processes.

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Yasar Kondakci holds MS degree in Educational Sciences from the Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Education, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey, and is currently conducting his Ph.D. study at the Department of Management and Organization, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium. His research interests includes higher education policy, transformation of European higher education, school management, learning organization, communication and interaction skills, and human resources management in educational organizations. Address for correspondence: Department of Management and Organization, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Ghent University, 9000 Ghent Belgium. E-mail: yasar.kondakci@ugent.be

Ali Yildirim holds an Ed.D. in Curriculum Development from Teachers College, Columbia University, USA, and is currently Professor at the Department of Educational Sciences, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey. His research interests include teacher education, curriculum development and evaluation, thinking skills, social studies and human resources education. He served as educational consultant to several large scale World-Bank financed education development projects in Turkey such as National Education Development Project and Preservice Teacher Education Project. His published books and articles focus on instructional planning, teacher education, thinking and learning skills, teaching of social studies and qualitative research. Address for correspondence: Middle East Technical University, Faculty of Education, 06531, Ankara, Turkey. E-mail: aliy@metu.edu.tr

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EXAMINING INTERPERSONAL CONFLICTS AMONG MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS IN TURKEY

ABBAS TURNUKLU

Abstract – *The purpose of this research was to examine interpersonal conflicts among middle school students. Participants were 461 students from sixth, seventh and eighth grades (12-14 year olds) of middle schools. Of the participating students, 241 were female, and 220 were male. Data were collected using a self-report questionnaire. Since the questionnaire items were all open ended, the whole data were text based. Content analysis, therefore, was used in order to analyse the data. Results showed that students' associations of conflict, types of conflicts which were seen in the school context, and origins of these conflicts generally included violence-oriented destructive features concerning either physical, or verbal and psychological. Similarly, students' conflict resolution strategies and tactics had a tendency to be either destructive or adult oriented instead of being co-operative.*

Introduction

Since students with different needs, interests, goals, aims, beliefs, values, cultural identities, thoughts, attitudes, ethnic and religious origins, and personalities share the same classroom, playground, cafeteria and lunchroom at the same time, conflicts between or among two or more students are natural and unavoidable part of school life. However, the perception and association of conflicts are generally negative rather than positive. Schrupf, Crawford & Bodine (1997, p.15) claim that not only adults but also children respond negatively to interpersonal conflicts when asked to list words or phrases related to conflict (e.g. 'fight', 'hit', 'argument', 'hate', 'anger', and so forth). Although most people recognise the negative sides of interpersonal conflicts, some people also see opportunities in conflict (Danohue & Kolt, 1992, p.3). For example Bush and Folger (1994, p.81) state that conflicts between or among people 'can be viewed not as problems at all but as opportunities for moral growth and transformation'. Theoretically, all interpersonal conflicts are 'mixed-motive, containing elements of both cooperation and competition' (Deutsch, 2000, p.22). In this context, the issue is how you interpret and perceive the conflict rather than the content of the conflict as a fact.

Johnson and Johnson (1995) classify conflicts in school contexts into four types. They are controversy (intellectual conflicts related to ideas, conclusions,

theories, information and opinions), conceptual conflict (related to ideas in person's mind), conflict of interests (related to wants and benefits) and developmental conflicts (related to incompatible activities between adults and children). When concrete interpersonal conflicts between or among students are examined, a variety of types can be seen in a school context. For example, the most commonly met conflicts between or among students are hitting, name calling, rumours, disagreement over ownership of resources, hurt feeling, fighting, name calling, swearing at peers and talking it out/arguing (Johnson & Johnson, 1996; Hart & Gunty, 1997; Tracy, 1999; Williamson, Warner, Sanders & Knepper, 1999). In addition to this, Johnson & Johnson (1996) also found that the highest occurrences of conflicts that bring into peer mediation process are physical attacks (43%) and verbal attacks (42%). On the other hand, students' most common conflict resolution strategies are also physical force (40%) and verbal force (51%).

If the origin of interpersonal conflicts is diagnosed, three main issues can be identified: 'limited resources, different values, and basic psychological needs (belonging, power, freedom and fun)' (Schrumppf, Crawford & Bodine, 1997, pp.16-19). Glasser (1993, p.134) states that people always 'choose all they do. Sometimes they make good choices and sometimes bad choices, but they are all choices'. People's behaviours are also determined by their choice including their basic needs in terms of 'survival, love and friendship, power, freedom and fun' (Glasser, 1993, p.137). Conflicts between or among students are therefore also determined by these incompatible choices and activities.

In addition to the origin of interpersonal conflicts, Kridler (1984 - cited in Bettmann & More, 1994) also points out six factors that increase the existence of interpersonal conflicts in the school culture. These are the lack of a co-operative and collaborative learning environment, an unfriendly and mistrustful learning atmosphere, lack of constructive communication skills, lack of constructive and productive anger management skills and lack of constructive conflict resolution skills, strict classroom rules, and authoritarian use of power. All these categories contribute to the emergence of interpersonal conflicts in the school context.

The resolutions of conflicts that are mentioned above are also taken into account as an opportunity to improve students' problem-solving and compassion skills. Although several conflict strategies have been identified by different researchers, three of these strategies have received more attention. These include: 'collaborative/integrative/principled', 'competitive/destructive/hard', and 'avoidance/soft' strategies (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000, pp.104-105; Schrumppf, Crawford & Bodine, 1997, pp.20-21; Fisher, Ury & Patton, 1991, p.13). 'Collaborative/integrative/principled' strategies include problem solving

negotiations that are carried out constructively face to face. Participants are problem solvers and they seek constructive solutions that ensure that both sides fully achieve their goals (Johnson & Johnson, 1995, pp.4-3; Fisher, Ury & Patton, 1991, p.13). This strategy involves several tactics such as ‘co-operative mutual orientation, seeking areas of agreement and mutually beneficial solutions, expressing trust, and showing concern’ (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000, p.105).

‘Competitive/destructive/ hard’ strategies involve forcing and persuading the other side in order to achieve your goal and to have victory individually. Therefore, the other side is seen as an adversary rather than a friend (Johnson & Johnson, 1995, pp.4-3; Fisher, Ury & Patton, 1991, p.13). This strategy also involves several tactics such as ‘competing, insulting, treating sarcasm, shouting, demanding’ (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000, p.105).

‘Avoidance’ strategies, on the other hand, are generally used either when the goal is not important and one wants to be nice to the other side in order not to lose a relationship or when having constructive solutions is not important in the long run (Schumpf, Crawford & Bodine, 1997, p.20; Johnson & Johnson, 1995, p.4; Simpson, 1998, p.11). Avoidance strategy also involves ‘avoiding issues, shying away from topic, minimising discussion’ (Lulofs & Cahn, 2000, p.105).

Based on this conceptual framework, the purpose of the present study is to examine interpersonal conflicts between or among 12-14 year old middle school students. Specifically, the present study is conducted in order to determine (a) middle school students’ association of conflicts, (b) types of conflicts students engaged in (c) the origins of students’ conflicts, and (d) students’ conflict resolution strategies and tactics. In addition, sex differences based on the above variables were also examined.

Methods

461 middle school students in Izmir, Turkey took part in the research. Students came from the 6th to the 8th grade, and were 12 to 14 years of age. 141 were sixth grade students (78 female and 63 male), 155 seventh grade students (79 female and 76 male), and 168 eighth grade students (84 female and 81 male). Participating schools were all located in low income areas.

The instrument used in this study was developed by the researcher and included open ended questions on interpersonal conflicts among middle school students. To assure content validity (Crocker and Algina, 1986, pp.218-219), the instrument was reviewed by an expert associated with interpersonal conflict resolution. Then the instrument was conducted as a pilot study. After several

modifications were made, the final form of the questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire included open-ended questions in order to elicit middle school students' descriptions of interpersonal conflict in their own words. This provided the middle school students with the freedom to express their own thoughts in each question (Babbie, 1990, p.45; Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996, p.295; Oppenheim, 1996, p.112). Oppenheim (1996, p.113) claims that obtaining students' ideas in their own languages expressed spontaneously is often extremely worthwhile. The questions framed to elicit answers to obtain 'what' and 'why' focused on (a) perception of conflict, (b) types of conflict, (c) the origins of conflict, and (d) conflict resolution strategies based on the most common interpersonal conflicts such as physical violence and swearing.

The questionnaire was administered to the students in the classroom setting. Students were asked to answer each open ended questions with their own thoughts and words. The purpose of the study was also explained to the students.

Since the questionnaire involved totally open ended questions, all data were text based. Content analysis, therefore, was used in order to analyse the written data (Silverman, 1993, p.59). Content analysis involves 'establishing categories and then counting the number of instances when those categories are used in a particular item of text' (Silverman, 1993, p.59). After reviewing all text data several times, themes and patterns that were extracted from text were identified as a code using words and sentences. All codes were descriptive and attached to words, phrases and sentences (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.56). In order to analyse qualitative data, text was counted using predefined codes. Then counts were given as a proportion, and in terms of frequency and percentages (Weber, 1990, p.56). In addition to this, a Chi-square test was carried out for each table in order to compare frequency of difference between male and female students.

Before analysing the text data, coding reliability was also checked (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.60). In order to have coding reliability, 10 pages of randomly selected texts were coded two times with an interval of a week. Then the researchers' coding reliability was computed as an agreement percentage. The reliability coefficient was .85, and this coefficient was accepted as sufficient in order to analyse the whole data.

Results

Findings are presented according to the purposes of the research listed earlier. The association of the conflicts of the middle school students, their types of conflicts, origins of conflicts and their conflict resolution styles when they are hit and sworn by their friends are presented in that order from Table 1 to 5.

Associations of conflicts

Table 1 shows students' responses to the question of 'what is your association for conflict in your mind?' All students' associations for conflict can be grouped with reference to physical violence, verbal violence, emotional items, and intellectual items. According to this classification, Table 1 demonstrates that the majority (around 70%) of associations with conflict is related to physical and verbal violence. Conversely, the association which is the least rarely seen includes intellectual items such as intellectual incompatibility, world without peace, seeking an answer to a question. Similarly, emotional items such as dislike, hatred, disquiet, and sulking are also seen more than intellectual items, but less than physical and verbal violence. The causes of this distribution can be explained with reference to the social and cultural aspects of the sample. As the study was carried out in low income areas, violence - whether physical or verbal - was very common not only as a fact of life, but also in the peoples' way of solving interpersonal problems. These findings are precisely the same as in the literature related to perception and association of interpersonal conflicts in that conflicts are generally interpreted negatively (Schrumppf, Crawford & Bodine, 1997).

Statistical testing of the frequency of categories presented in Table 1, namely physical violence, verbal violence, emotional items and intellectual items revealed no significant differences between male and female students ($\chi^2= 5.76$, $df=3$, $p>.05$). Although it seems there are differences on the frequency of sub categories based on gender, the tendency of association of conflicts seems to be similar. The reason for the similarities may be caused by their socialisation processes. Boys and girls may be affected similarly from their cultural and social atmosphere and develop similar behavioural reactions.

Types of conflicts

The examination of the types of conflicts which are seen in low income schools are depicted in Table 2. Types of students' interpersonal conflicts were classified into four main groups namely; physical violence, verbal violence, learning environment, communication problems, intellectual conflicts, stealing and others on the basis of students' response to survey.

It can be seen from Table 2 that the highest proportion of students have conflicts of physical fighting, verbal harassment, and swearing. They are the most common types of conflicts related to violence. Besides, conflicts about learning environment such as the lesson, inability to share seats and the school materials, and communication problems such as disagreement in games, lack of sharing, jealousy and sulking are also seen occasionally. These findings are virtually the same as those listed in the literature (Johnson & Johnson, 1996; Hart & Gunty,

TABLE 1: Students' association of conflicts

		Females: 241		Males: 220	
Main categories	Sub categories	F	%	F	%
Physical violence	Fight, violence	127	42	110	41
	Weapon	1	0	1	0
	Blood	0	0	2	1
	Death	1	0	7	3
	War	16	5	31	12
	Terror	2	1	0	0
Total		147	48	151	57
Verbal violence	Verbal fighting (shouting, yelling)	32	11	33	12
	Hurt	10	3	4	1
	Slander	1	0	2	1
	Swearing	1	0	3	1
	Belittling	3	1	0	0
	Disrespect	3	1	4	1
	Quarrel	2	1	0	0
Total		52	17	46	16
Emotional items	Dislike	44	15	15	6
	Hatred	8	3	8	3
	Ill manners	1	0	2	1
	Distrust	2	1	0	0
	Disquiet	2	1	6	2
	Lack of communication	4	1	3	1
	Anger	1	0	1	0
	Fear	1	0	2	1
	Sulking	6	2	6	2
	Unhappiness	1	0	0	0
	Sadness	2	1	0	0
Egoism	1	0	1	0	
Total		73	24	44	16
Intellectual Items	World without peace	2	1	2	1
	Being uneducated	2	1	2	1
	Seeking an answer of the any question	4	1	3	1
	Fighting against injustice	0	0	1	0
	Understanding a person whether or not s/he is bad or good	2	1	1	0
	Disrespect to thought	0	0	2	1
	Intellectual incompatibility	20	7	16	6
	Total		30	11	27
Total		302	100	268	100

TABLE 2: Types of conflicts which emerge in secondary schools

		Females: 241		Males: 220	
Main categories	Sub categories	F	%	F	%
Physical violence	Fighting	38	17	59	25
Verbal violence	Verbal fighting (shouting, yelling, seeking quarrel)	30	14	30	13
	Swearing	22	10	23	10
	Lying	4	2	2	1
	Name calling	4	2	10	4
	Rudeness	3	1	1	0
	Mocking	3	1	5	2
	Gossiping	4	2	2	1
	Complaining to the teacher	1	0	1	0
	Spying	2	1	2	1
Total		73	33	76	32
Learning Environment	About lessons	15	7	8	3
	About school materials (seats, books, pens, bags)	1	0	6	3
	Taking other's materials without permission	7	3	3	1
	Looking at the others' papers in an examination	3	1	2	1
	Inability to share seats	4	2	4	2
	Disturbing during lessons	5	2	5	2
	Total		35	15	28
Communication problems	Lack of sharing	3	1	4	2
	Acting contrary to the wish of others	2	1	3	1
	Discrimination	2	1	1	0
	Disturbing	0	0	1	0
	Disagreement in games	9	4	13	5
	Misunderstanding	3	1	1	0
	Sulking	5	2	1	0
	Misbehaving	3	1	2	1
	Jealousy	9	4	1	0
Boys/girls problems	0	0	4	2	
Total		36	15	31	11
Intellectual conflicts	Intellectual incompatibility	13	6	13	5
Stealing	Stealing	1	0	3	1
Others	I have not had any conflicts	26	12	28	12
Total		222	100	238	100

1997; Tracy, 1999; Williamson & Wanner, 1999). Although there are cultural and educational system differences between Turkish and Western cultures and education systems, there are great similarities regarding types of conflicts in the school contexts.

Again, intellectual conflicts were seen very rarely among students aged 12-14. This might be because they lack the intellectual and social competence and as a result of their taking incorrect role models in low income area. At this age, students can be easily attracted by power-based conflict resolution style, so they may choose intellectual items very rarely.

Around 10 percent of the students said 'I have not had any conflicts'. It may be caused by avoidance strategy such as shying away from particular topics, withdrawing from the environment and denying conflicts.

Types of conflicts (physical violence, verbal violence, learning environment, communication problems, intellectual conflicts, stealing and others) are also examined statistically based on gender. There are no statistically significant differences between male and female students ($\chi^2= 6.30$, $df=6$, $p>.05$) concerning types of conflicts. Although there seem to be difference on the frequency of sub categories in Table 2, male and female students were not significantly different based on main categories.

Origins of conflicts

Table 3 shows the origins of 12-14 year old students' interpersonal conflicts in middle schools. The origins of students' conflicts were classified into five main categories; namely, physical violence, verbal violence, communication, learning environment, personal features, intellectual conflicts and others on the basis of students' responses to survey.

There are great similarities and linear relationships among Table 1, 2 and 3 considering the association of conflicts, types of conflicts and origins of conflicts. Again, the origins of conflicts generally include physical and verbal violence. Similarly, communication problems emerge as the major source of conflicts. Like Table 1 and 2, intellectual incompatibility has lack of importance as the causes of conflicts compared to association of conflicts and types of conflicts.

If Table 3 is examined considering gender, there are some differences regarding sub categories of origins of conflicts. Male students show certain types of conflicts such as fighting, swearing, name-calling more often than female students do. On the contrary, female students show jealousy, misunderstanding and intellectual incompatibility more often than male students do considering the percentage difference. This difference may be explained in terms of the role models afforded in Turkish society, as well as in terms of physical difference and

TABLE 3: The origins of conflicts which emerge in secondary schools

Main categories	Sub categories	Females: 241		Males: 220	
		F	%	F	%
Physical violence	Fighting	38	17	59	25
	Misbehaving with hands	2	1	4	2
	Damaging materials	3	1	1	0
Total		27	11	29	14
Verbal violence	Reprimanding	1	0	1	0
	Swearing	25	11	51	25
	Swearing to family members	0	0	2	1
	Joking	7	3	9	4
	Belittling	6	3	2	1
	Name calling	7	3	13	6
	Annoying	2	1	1	0
	Hatred	2	1	0	0
	Threatening	2	1	2	1
	Seeking quarrel	0	0	2	1
	Discrimination	6	3	1	0
	Accusation	3	1	2	1
	Slandering	4	2	6	3
	Gossiping	6	3	2	1
	Disrespect	6	3	7	3
Lying	8	3	2	1	
Total		85	38	103	48
Communication	Taking others' material without permission	7	3	2	1
	Jealousy	26	11	11	5
	Boys/girls problems	2	1	10	5
	Revealing secrets	4	2	1	0
	Misunderstanding	12	5	1	0
	Obstinacy	5	2	2	1
	Lack of understanding	7	3	4	2
	Lack of harmony	4	2	2	1
Total		67	29	33	15
	About lessons	2	1	2	1
	Cheating in the examination	4	2	1	0
	Inability to share seats	5	2	2	1
Total		11	5	5	2
	Playing tricks	1	0	1	0
	Cheating in the games	5	2	7	3
	Lack of compassion	3	1	2	1
	Caprice	1	0	0	0
	Arrogance	2	1	4	2
	Dishonesty	3	1	1	0
Total		15	5	15	6
Intellectual conflicts	Intellectual incompatibility	29	12	17	8
Others	Discord of needs	4	2	0	0
Total		238	100	202	100

the way of life of adolescents. Statistical testing of the origins of conflicts such as physical violence, verbal violence, communication problems, learning environment, personal features and intellectual conflicts revealed statistically significant differences between male and female students ($\chi^2= 21.57$, $df=5$, $p<.05$).

Conflict resolution strategies and tactics

As shown in Table 4 and 5, students' conflict resolution strategies were examined based on the two most common interpersonal conflicts namely physical fighting and swearing. Table 4 shows students' conflict resolution strategies and tactics when they are hit by their friends. As can be seen from Table 4 all three conflict resolution strategies – namely collaborative, competitive and avoidance

TABLE 4: Students' conflict resolution strategies when they are hit by his/her friends

		Female 241		Male 220	
Strategy	Tactics	F	%	F	%
Collaborative/ integrative strategy	A co-operative mutual orientation	12	4	1	0
	Seeking areas of agreement	86	26	79	28
	Expressing trust	2	1	2	1
	Seeking mutually beneficial solutions	2	1	1	0
	Seeking to understand the other side	29	9	6	2
	Being proactive	5	2	9	3
Total		136	43	98	34
	Threatening	2	1	4	1
	Swearing	2	1	2	1
	Shouting	12	4	0	0
	Anger	1	0	1	0
	Physical damage, fight	102	31	125	45
	Complaining to the teacher or school manager	55	17	34	12
	Total		174	54	166
Avoidance strategy	Involves minimising discussion	8	2	3	1
	Shying away from topic	4	1	3	1
	Withdrawing from the environment	6	2	7	3
	Denying conflicts	5	2	1	0
Total		23	7	14	5
Total		333	100	278	100

TABLE 5: Students' conflict resolution strategies when they are sworn by his/her friends

Strategy	Tactics	Female 241		Male 220	
		F	%	F	%
Collaborative/ integrative strategy	A co-operative mutual orientation	2	1	1	0
	Seeking areas of agreement	25	10	24	9
	Seeking to understand the other side	18	7	10	4
	Being proactive	5	2	9	3
Total		59	24	41	15
	Insulting	0	0	1	0
	Threatening	12	5	19	7
	Humiliating	8	3	6	2
	Swearing	28	11	47	18
	Shouting	3	1	1	0
	Anger	1	0	1	0
	Physical damage, fight	24	10	79	30
	Complaining to the teacher or school manager	63	26	42	16
Total		139	56	196	73
Avoidance strategy	Involves minimising discussion	25	10	15	6
	Shying away from topic	3	1	0	0
	Withdrawing from the environment	7	3	6	2
	Denying conflicts	12	5	6	2
Total		47	19	27	10
Total		245	100	264	100

strategies – seemed to be used more often among male students than females. However, no statistically significant difference was found between female and male students' conflict resolution strategies ($\chi^2= 3.63$, $df=2$, $p>.05$).

Although there is no statistically significant difference between male and female students, the frequency of conflict resolution strategies regarding integrative and destructive seems to be different. Girls' proportions of integrative strategies are about 43%; destructive strategies are about 35% whereas boys' proportions of integrative strategies are about 35%; destructive strategies are about 47%.

Since female students have generally developed more social and communication skills than males and they are under more pressure of accommodative social norms, they may choose collaborative/integrative and avoidance strategies more often than they do competitive/destructive ones when compared to boys at the same age.

Table 5 shows students' conflict resolution strategies when they are sworn at by his/her friends. It can be seen from Table 5 that collaborative/integrative strategies, avoidance strategies and complaining to teacher or school manager were used more frequently by female students than male students in all grades. This result is very similar to the one in Table 4.

Correspondingly, competitive/destructive strategies are used rather more by male students. Threatening, swearing and fight are more frequent tactics which are used by both genders with different frequencies.

The total percentage of avoidance strategy and complaining to the teacher or school administrators are also very common for both genders in all grades. Many of the female students' conflict resolution strategies tended towards flight rather than fight. However, the majority of boys have a tendency to choose the reverse. When conflict resolution strategies of students are examined statistically, there are significant differences between male and female students ($\chi^2= 17.66$, $df=2$, $p<.05$).

The results of Table 4 and 5 are also confirmed by Tezer & Demir's (2001) research on the Turkish late adolescent. Tezer & Demir's (2001) research results revealed that males reported more competing (forcing) behaviour. This research also shows that the preferences regarding choice of conflict resolution strategies are different for males and females.

Conclusion

There are great similarities between the data tables. Since students' association and perceptions related to conflicts, types of conflicts and origins of conflicts include markedly destructive items such as physical and verbal violence, their choice of conflict resolution strategies have also a tendency to be destructive. These include causing physical damage, fighting, swearing and threatening. These results show that there are similarities in students' cognitive and behavioural processes considering perception of conflicts and conflict resolution strategies.

These results may be related to the social environments students grow up in. Factors may include frequent exposure to violence, whether physical, verbal and/or psychological. They are often exposed to violence on TV programs, and they are frequently involved in playing violent games. These factors may lead to the violent behaviour and a violent perception, interpretation and association of interpersonal conflicts.

As a matter of fact the students involved in this study seem to generally learn destructive rather than peaceful behaviours. Schooling may provide alternative models for such students, through the implementation of specialised programmes,

and through providing role models and a school ethos that contributes to the development of a culture of peace. Indeed, peaceful student behaviour in low income areas can be facilitated through three policies, namely: the articulation of a school-wide conflict resolution policy, the development of a peer mediation policy, and the implementation of school-wide developmental skills programme that includes the teaching of problem-solving, anger-management, self-esteem building, coping skills, social skills, communication skills, active listening, self-regulation, self-management, empathy, and so on. If these three policies are implemented in the same school at the same time, there is a great likelihood that significant and positive behavioural changes among young people are achieved.

Abbas Turnuklu received his Ed.D. from the University of Leicester in 1999. He teaches graduate and undergraduate courses on classroom management at Dokuz Eylul University in Turkey. His research interests include conflict resolution, peace education, and classroom management. Address for correspondence: Dr. Abbas Turnuklu, Dokuz Eylul Universitesi, Buca Egitim Fakultesi, Ilkogretim Bolumu, Buca, 35160, Izmir, Turkey. E-mail: abbas.turnuklu@deu.edu.tr

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CHALLENGES OF APPLYING COLLABORATIVE LEARNING WITH A SAMPLE OF TURKISH STUDENTS

GULSEN BAGCI KILIC

Abstract – *In this study, collaborative learning was applied in an Elementary Science Laboratory course in an Education Faculty at a Turkish public university. The Elementary Science Laboratory course constituted the first phase of the study, with the researcher putting together the groups to be involved. The groups were required to collaborate in the laboratory while doing the experiments, and out of laboratory in writing their group report. A qualitative inquiry about the students' collaboration was conducted at the end of the course by giving an anonymous questionnaire. Although the students preferred collaborative learning, there were several cases where members did not contribute to the group task. The students' unwillingness in informing the instructor about group dynamics was also observed. Most of the students stated that they preferred forming their own groups. On the basis of the results of Phase I, the second phase of the study was designed and applied in Elementary Science Methods II course with the same student group. In the second phase of the study, the students were given the freedom of forming their own groups. In addition, self and peer assessment was used to provide information about group process. The results of Phase II showed that the students' collaboration increased, but the number of single-gender groups also increased. Self and peer assessment was found helpful in providing information about group dynamics which could not be obtained directly from the students in Phase I. The paper summarizes the application and results of both phases, and then discusses the challenges of applying collaborative learning with the sample of Turkish students participating in the study.*

Introduction

Collaborative learning may be defined as the collaborative efforts of students to learn together. Collaborative learning is also defined as a philosophy of interaction and personal lifestyle (Panitz, 1996). It differs from cooperative learning, since cooperative learning requires structured, systematic techniques for ensuring positive interdependence within groups and recommends individual accountability rather than undifferentiated group grading (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

There is a tremendous body of research on cooperative learning. A few literature review studies were published to organize and analyze the research

results in this area (Johnson, Maruyama, Johnson, Nelson & Skon, 1981; Nastasi & Clements, 1991; Slavin, 1983; Slavin 1991). In a meta-analysis of research on the effect of cooperative, competitive, and individualistic goal structures on achievement, cooperative learning increased students' achievement more than competitive and individualistic learning (Johnson *et al.*, 1981). Slavin (1983) reviewed the research on cooperative learning and concluded that cooperative groups significantly outperformed the controlled groups in most of the studies. Slavin's (1991) second research review also investigated that most experimental research studies favored cooperative learning.

Most of the research studies on cooperative learning have been carried out at elementary and secondary levels of education (Slavin, 1991). Fewer studies have been conducted at college and university level. Cooper (1990) reported a growing interest in cooperative learning among higher education practitioners. Reynolds & Salend (1989) provided guidelines to use cooperative learning in a special education teacher education program, and reported students' satisfaction in one exemplary course.

The effectiveness of cooperative learning in the multicultural classroom has also been investigated. Research results indicate that academic achievement of African American students increased in cooperative learning classrooms (Cohen, 1986; Slavin & Oickle, 1981; Slavin, 1990). It has also been found in a number of studies that cooperative learning experiences result in higher academic achievement for minority students (Johnson & Johnson, 1983a; Johnson, Johnson & Maruyama, 1983b; Haynes & Gebreyesus, 1992; Reid, 1992). George (1994) compared different cooperative learning methods (drill and review dyads, cooperative response techniques, and group grading incentives) with traditional learning methods using a non-cooperative group in multicultural university classrooms. The cooperative group showed significantly stronger performance than the non-cooperative group.

Collaborative learning is not as structured as cooperative learning. Discrete labor division is not required. Group members organize their group-work, determine and share responsibilities on their own. There has not been as much research on collaborative learning as there has been on cooperative learning. At university level, it is sometimes difficult to determine the group members' responsibilities from the beginning. In addition, students at university level should learn to regulate their learning even in group learning. Thus, collaborative learning was preferred in this study. Collaborative learning is a strategy promoted in western countries, individual learning is more common in the university where the study was carried out. Since the cultural setting is different, every new strategy should be tested and adopted to the culture of the student body enrolled.

The purpose of this study was to investigate a method, which supports students' collaboration. For this purpose, different strategies were applied in two different courses with the same students. First course was Elementary Science Laboratory course. The students collaborated in laboratory while doing the experiments and in out of laboratory in writing group reports. The groups were formed by the instructor, and the students' collaboration in and out of class was analyzed. The students' preference in group formation was also searched. This course constituted the first phase of the study. The second phase of the study was designed on the basis of students' feedback on the first phase, and applied in Elementary Science Teaching Methods II course. The students formed the groups and self and peer assessment was used to gather information about group dynamics. The students' collaboration was again investigated. The paper reports the application and findings of the two phases. Some cultural factors emerging from the data which affected the students' collaboration are also discussed.

Both phases of the study were conducted at a university, which is located in a small city in the northwest of Turkey. All of the students were from different cities of the country. No international students were involved.

Phase 1

The first phase of the study was conducted in seven sections of the Elementary Science Laboratory course given by the researcher. The course was a one-semester program and compulsory for the second-year students in the Elementary Education department. The researcher applied collaborative learning strategies in the course. The formation of groups by the instructor is a recommended strategy used in cooperative learning (Fiechtner & Davis, 1992; Smith, 1986) since it prevents the group from over socializing and reducing the effort put on the group's task (Cooper, 1990). In addition, the researcher did not know the students well enough to form the groups by their background or abilities. Thus, the researcher formed the groups according to the student list.

Participants

In total there were 194 students in seven sections of the course. 55 groups were formed. Two groups had six members, 14 groups had five members, 28 groups had four members, 9 groups had three members, and 2 groups had two members. When the groups were classified according to gender, 38 groups (69.1%) were mixed-gender groups, fifteen groups (27.3%) were all-girls groups and only two groups (3.6%) were all-boys groups.

Application

Each laboratory session involved 3 hours a week. Groups were doing science experiments, which they might use in their future teaching, and discussing as a group how they would use the experiments in teaching the subject under study to elementary students. At the end of each laboratory session, the researcher interviewed each group to understand what they had learned and how they had decided to teach that subject by using the experiments. Based on the interview results, the researcher assigned a group score to each group. The students were required to write a laboratory report as a group on the experiments and their group consensus on how to teach the subject. They submitted their group reports in the following week. The researcher graded laboratory reports and a group score was assigned to each group.

Problem

Based on her informal observations during the laboratory sessions and lack of improvement in the students' group reports, the researcher decided that the students' collaboration was not very effective, because group reports were not developing although the researcher had written many comments on the reports and gave them back to the groups. The researcher communicated with some of the groups to obtain information about the groups' dynamics, but they were not comfortable in talking about the problems in their group. The researcher told them they might write the problems individually in their groups and bring it to her office at their convenience. The students did not write any comments or criticism about their group. Finally, the researcher decided to analyze the problems in group-work. At the end of the semester, the researcher requested the students to fill out an open-ended questionnaire about collaboration in their group.

Method

Since, it would have been difficult to analyze 194 questionnaires qualitatively, the researcher randomly selected a group member from each group to fill out the questionnaire. The questionnaire was filled out anonymously to get candid responses to the questions. The students filled out the questionnaire at their convenience and returned it to the researcher's office. Although 55 groups were given the questionnaire, 45 questionnaires were returned and included in the analyses.

The questionnaire consisted of four open-ended questions. The questions were:

1. Do you prefer studying individually or in a group? Why?
2. Did every group member participate in group-work? If not, what were the reasons?
3. Did every group member participate in writing laboratory reports? If not, what were the reasons?
4. Do you prefer choosing group members by yourself? Why?

The aim of the first question was to investigate the preference of the students either to work individually, or in a group. The second question was asked to figure out if group members collaborated in the laboratory sessions. The third question was asked to understand if group members collaborated out of class to write the laboratory reports for the following week. The common aim of the second and third questions was to analyze the group collaboration in and out of the class. The fourth question aims to investigate the students' preferences in group formation.

In addition to the questionnaire, the researcher's informal observations were another data source in the study. Since the researcher was the instructor and laboratory assistant at the same time, more formal observations could not be made.

Analyses

Descriptive analysis method was applied in the analysis of the students' responses to the questions. Each question was analyzed separately. The students' responses were first coded and then categorized. The codes and categories were derived from the data inductively. The frequency of each code was calculated and formed the framework for the discussion of the data. Some cultural factors emerged from the analyses and will be presented in related sections.

Results and discussion

Preference of the students

Forty-four students responded to the first question, which asked if they preferred studying in a group or individually. Thirty-two students (71.1%) preferred working in a group, whereas twelve students (26.7%) preferred studying alone. The students participating in this study were not reflective at all in their responses about the reasons behind their choice, since this was the first research

study in which they had participated. Although they were informed that this is done for research purposes, most of them did not elaborate the reasons in depth in their responses.

The students who preferred studying in groups valued group-work and stated its benefits. They stated that working in a group requires exchange of ideas (eight students), compensates each other's weaknesses (five students), supports peer-teaching (two students), provides a context for sharing (two students), and forms a discussion forum (two students). They also reported that group-work requires collaboration (two students), activates people (one student), and is fun (one student). One student acknowledged the social aspect of group-work by stating that group-work socialized the members in the group. Another student stated that working in a group promotes learning more than lectures. These are the general benefits of collaborative learning as valued by the students.

The twelve students (26.7%) who preferred studying individually reported the irresponsible character of some members (two students), insensibility toward the group task (one student) as reasons for them to dislike the group-work. One student reported that members worked individually in the group. Another student did not like group-work since the students worked less in the group. Two students clearly stated that they work better individually.

Results indicate that the students were aware of the benefits gained by collaborative learning and most of them preferred group-work. The students who did not prefer group-work provided their inadequate experience in the group in which they studied as a reason for disliking group-work. Only two students stated that individual learning is their style and they learn better when they study alone.

Collaboration in the classroom

The intention of the second question in the questionnaire was to investigate if the students collaborated in the laboratory. Forty-three students responded to the question. Thirty-two students (71.1%) stated that each group member participated in the group-work while doing experiments and the discussion after the experiments.

Eleven students (24.4%) reported that every group member did not participate in the group-work. The students proposed some group members' low interest in the course (six students), silent (one student), conservative (not comfortable in working with the people in opposite gender) (one student), and irresponsible (one student) character of students as reasons for not participating in the group-work. Most of the reasons for not collaborating in the groups were related to student characteristics. There was no response relating to the structure of the group-work or difficulty of the group task.

Results indicate that most of the groups collaborated while they were doing the experiments in the laboratory. The groups who reported some members' lack of participation stated that they did not collaborate because of the members' lack of interest in the course or because of their silent, irresponsible, and conservative personalities.

Collaboration out of the classroom

Third question in the questionnaire provided the data on the students' collaboration out of the laboratory. Reports were written out of the laboratory and groups handed in their group report in the following laboratory session. Thus, the students had to come together and work on their group report out of the class.

Forty-two students responded to this question. Twenty-nine students (64.4%) reported the participation of every group member in writing the reports. Although it was not intended in this question, ten students explained how they shared the group-work. They stated that one member wrote the group report one week, another member the following week and so on, instead of coming together and writing the report together or dividing the task into parts and come together to combine the parts and develop the group report. The researcher's observation during the semester supported this result. Group reports were not developing throughout the semester although the researcher had written many comments on the reports. This individual report writing negatively affected the development of the quality of reports, because the feedback of the researcher on the reports was not taken into consideration since another member wrote the report the following week.

Thirteen students (28.9%) clearly stated that every group member did not participate in writing group reports. The reasons for not participating in report writing were: living in different places (two students), the difficulty of report writing (one student), and low quality of hand-writing (one student). Because of the lack of computers in the university, students wrote their report in handwriting. There were two students who indicated the disadvantages of assigning the same score to group members in the assessment of group performance. They stated that the students who wanted to get high grades dominated the group, took most of the responsibility to guarantee the success, and wrote the reports.

'Since we got the same grade for each member, some students who wanted to get high grades wrote the reports.'

'One of our friends could not prepare a good report, so we did not force him. We wrote the reports.'

The main intention of this question was to analyze if the students collaborated out of the classroom. Twenty-nine students (64.4%) reported every member's participation in writing the group report. Ten of these students detailed members' participation in report writing by stating that they rotated in taking the responsibility of report writing; one member wrote the report individually every week. Thirteen students (28.9%) clearly stated that every group member did not participate in writing reports. If these two results were added up, twenty-three groups (54.8%) did not collaborate out of the classroom. The number of the groups, which did not collaborate in the class, was eleven (24.4%) (see previous section). The number of groups that did not collaborate was doubled if the group task was done out of the classroom.

One factor, which might be cultural, aroused from the students' responses to this question and deserves attention. Power of friendship in Turkish culture affected the students' collaboration. One example student response is the following:

'One of the group members did not participate in report writing and got the same grade as us, it is not a problem, because s/he is our friend.'

This student confuses friendship with working together and taking responsibility. Friendship made some students care for each other in group-work. The power of friendship also resulted in overprotection of friends. Most of the students in this study did not report irresponsible group members to the instructor. They did not give any information about the group dynamics to the instructor. One student's response is a good example:

'I wrote four reports, but other members were preparing the content. On the other hand, there was one member who did not collaborate in the lab and write any report. S/he got the same score as us.'

This group did not report this member on time. They report it on the questionnaire at the end of the semester. They should have been disturbed by a person who did not do anything in their group, and should have informed the instructor in order to find a solution, but again the power of friendship in Turkish culture might have prevented this group to bring the problem to the instructor. The instructors in Turkey should observe the groups very carefully if the group-work is done in the classroom. If it is done outside of the classroom, they should find ways to gather information about group dynamics. The researcher did this by giving an anonymous questionnaire in this semester. The following semester, the instructor applied self and peer-assessment and found that self and peer-assessment also provided information about group dynamics.

The students' preference in group formation

The fourth question in the questionnaire asked if the students preferred choosing their group members by themselves, and what the reasons for their choice were. Forty-four students responded to the question. Thirty-four students (77.3%) preferred choosing group members themselves, six students (13.64%) stated that instructor should form the groups. Four students (9.01%) could not decide which option would be better. The students elaborated the reasons behind their choice in this question more than they did in other questions in the questionnaire. The reasons for each choice are presented in the following sections.

Reasons for choosing the group members by themselves

Thirty-four students (77.3%) preferred forming their group themselves. These students stated that they wanted to choose their group members themselves, because they would work more productively (15 students), coherently (seven students), and responsively (two students). They also reported that they would interact (three students) and collaborate (one student) more, and come together to study easily (three students) if they choose their group members.

Based on students' responses, it was concluded that most of the students in the study recognized close friendship as a critical factor for productive and responsible group-work, effective collaboration and coherence in the group. They believe that they interact more and come together to study easily if they form their own group.

Reasons for choosing the group members by the instructor

Six students stated that they prefer the instructor form the groups as in this semester. Only four students elaborated the reasons for their choice. One student stated that s/he was already able to work with close friends by chance. Another student stated that s/he should be able to work with different people.

'It is better if the instructor choose group members, because we should be able to work with different people.'

Another student raised the point that if the students choose the group members themselves, there would be subgroups within the groups.

'If everyone chooses close friends as group members, there would be subgroups within the groups.'

The last student clearly stated that s/he did not prefer choosing the group members, because s/he would not work at all and expect his/her friends to do the work.

‘If I worked with my close friends, I would totally rely on my friends and I would not have worked at all.’

Reasons for undecided responses

Four students stated that they could not decide which option would be better. Two of these students stated that it does not matter who forms the groups. The other two students elaborated the reasons behind their choices. One of them was related to the importance of worldview. This student emphasized that the worldview of students whom s/he would be working with is important for her/him. If the instructor forms the groups, s/he stated that s/he couldn’t interact with group members if their worldview is very different from her/his own.

‘I could not decide, because if I choose the group members and one of them did not work, problems might arise. If I did not choose the group members, there would be no problems but since I did not know that person well, I could not interact with her/him. Furthermore, if her/his worldview is very different from mine, I would be against her/him.’

Another student stated that s/he would have preferred choosing group members herself/himself if it had been asked at the beginning of the course, but that s/he changed her/his mind and was glad to work with other students. S/he stated that they will be teachers and should get used to working with different people.

‘If this question had been asked at the beginning of the course, I would have answered ‘yes’, because I like working with my friends and I would express myself better to my friends. But I am glad I did not work with my close friends. We will be teachers; we should get used to working with everyone.’

Evaluation of Phase I

Most of the students in the study preferred collaborative learning to individual learning. They collaborated more in the classroom tasks than out of classroom tasks. They also preferred forming their groups themselves rather than the instructor forming them.

The power of friendship feelings affected the application of collaborative learning in this course. The students did not inform the instructor about group dynamics and protected irresponsible friends. They proposed that they would study more productively, responsively, and collaborate more if they chose group members by themselves. According to them, forming groups with close friends is a critical factor in establishing coherence in groups.

Based on the results in Phase I, the researcher decided to initiate the second phase of the study. In this phase, the students were allowed to choose their group members. Since most of the students clearly stated that they wanted to form their group themselves in Phase I, the researcher decided to try this strategy of group formation in Phase II.

Two students reported the disadvantage of having a group grade, as some members dominated the group to guarantee the success of the group, especially in the out-of-classroom task (i.e. report writing). In addition, it was difficult to gather information about group dynamics in Phase I. Giving an anonymous questionnaire provided some data, but the anonymity makes it impossible to use this information to give feedback to the groups. In Phase II, self and peer-assessment were applied to assess each member's contribution to group-work, and to gather information about group dynamics.

Phase 2

The second phase of the study consisted of another course in the following year. Three sections of the students participating in Phase I registered in the Elementary Science Teaching Methods II course.

Participants

In all, 139 students participated in Phase II. Thirty-six groups were formed in three sections. The group size was generally three to five students; two groups consisted of two students, nine groups consisted of three students, 18 groups consisted of four students, six groups consisted of five students, and only one group consisted of six students.

Application

Elementary education students are required to take two Elementary Science Teaching Methods courses in the third year of the teacher education program. In Elementary Science Teaching Methods I course, students learn methods of science

teaching, learning theories, and assessment and evaluation. The Elementary Science Teaching Methods II course is designed to offer students experience in elementary science teaching. Since the number of elementary schools in the city was scarce, it was not possible to provide natural classroom experience for pre-service teachers during the course. Microteaching was the only alternative to provide a context in which students would experience science teaching. Since 139 students registered to three sections, the class sizes were large; approximately 45 students in each section. The researcher required students to teach science through hands-on science activities. The expense of the materials for science activities, and application of activities in a crowded classroom is difficult for a student to sustain. Thus, the researcher thought that it would be the task of the group to do activity based science teaching in such crowded classrooms.

The students were allowed to form the groups by themselves in this phase. These groups will be called teacher-groups from now on. Teacher-groups were formal groups, which lasted till the end of the semester. Teacher-groups planned an activity-based science lesson and applied it in the classroom.

During the classroom application, five or six informal student-groups were formed. The student-groups were temporary and studied as a group in the activities during a class session. One member of the teacher-group started the lesson, motivated the students toward the science subject under study, and introduced the science activity. Then, other members of the teacher-group distributed the materials to the student-groups and interacted with two or three student-groups during the activity. At the end, the same member of teacher-group took control, got the results from the groups, and summarized the findings. Teacher-groups conducted three such science teaching as a group throughout the semester.

The instructor observed the teacher-groups' product during the classroom application and assigned a group score to each teacher-group. But most of the group process was out of the classroom. In order to assess the teacher-groups' process and to increase responsibility of group members to contribute the group-work, the researcher used self and peer-assessment. The researcher developed a group assessment form. The students assessed themselves on the first section of the form. It was asked to write his/her responsibility in the group-work, explain what s/he did to sustain the responsibility in an open-ended form, and devote a score out of 100 for his/her contribution to the group-work. The students assessed their peer in the following sections of the form by repeating the same procedure for each member. The student first wrote the member's responsibility, then what s/he did and devoted a score out of 100 to the member. In this way, each member of the group assessed the self and each other on the assessment form.

Each member of teacher-groups was given the form at the end of each group-work and assessed group members' contribution (including the self) to the group-work. The students' self and peer-assessment scores contributed 5% to their score for each group project. Thus, each member received a different score from the same group-work depending on the scores received from the group assessment form.

Results and discussion

More collaboration, less problems

The researcher observed the groups' product, but she noticed that most of the groups provided good science lessons, which indicated group processes were better than in Phase I. In addition, the students were allowed to change their groups if they experienced any problem. Most of the groups formed in the beginning of the course continued with the same members, only a few students changed their groups in the following group studies.

Group assessment forms also supported this result. One question asked if there was any problem in the group process. On the analysis of this question, the researcher rarely noticed problems reported by group members.

Single-gender groups formed

The students chose their group members themselves in this phase. Of the 36 groups formed, 29 groups (80.6%) were single-gender groups. Sixteen groups (44.4%) were all-girls groups and 13 groups (36.1%) were all-boys groups. Only seven (19.4%) groups were mixed-gender groups.

There were 55 groups in the first phase. 17 groups (30.9%) were single-gender groups whereas thirty-eight groups (69.1%) were mixed-gender groups. Fifteen groups (27.3%) were all-girls groups and only two groups (3.6%) were all-boys groups.

The percentage of single-gender groups increased from 30.9% to 80.16% in Phase II where the students formed the groups themselves. The increase in the formation of single-gender groups indicates that students prefer studying with their gender-mates. They would have felt more comfortable in studying with their gender-mates.

The students were allowed to change their group if they experienced any problem. Although seven mixed-gender groups were formed at the beginning of the course, six of these groups separated and members joined other groups

according to their gender: girls joined all-girl groups and boys joined to all-boys groups. Only one mixed-gender group remained in the end of the course.

The formation of single-gender groups when the students were given the freedom of forming their group is another challenge in applying collaborative learning in the study. There was no consensus in literature on the effects of gender in small group learning. Wilkinson & Fung (2002) provided a review of effect of gender on small group learning. Some research studies they reviewed (Webb, 1984; Lee, 1993) found out that the best option for girls (middle and high school level) was to work in balanced-gender groups, because girls were found to be at a disadvantage in both majority girls and majority boys groups. Wilkinson & Fung (2002) suggested that single-gender groups may also be a solution to problems in imbalance of interaction between boys and girls. Working in single gender groups might have increased the students' collaboration in groups in the second phase of this study.

Furthermore, Wilkinson & Fung (2002) concluded that ethnic background moderates the effect of gender on interaction and learning in small groups depending on the two research studies (Webb & Kenderski, 1985; Grant, 1986). Webb & Kenderski (1985) analyzed the effect of gender on small groups of African-American and Latino students, and found no significant differences in interaction between girls and boys and in learning, regardless of the composition of groups. Grant (1986) reported that African-American students at all grade levels were more egalitarian in their interactions whereas boys dominate interactions with girls among white students. The study presented in this paper was not originally aimed at analyzing the gender effect in groups, it was a result of the giving the students the freedom of forming their group. However, the effect of gender on interaction and group learning should be analyzed in detail in Turkey and other countries.

Power of self and peer-assessment in providing information about group dynamics

In Phase II, the students were required to assess each group member's contribution including their own. There are methods of calculating group members' contribution from self and peer-assessment scores (for a review of methods, see Lejk & Wyvill, 1996). The quantitative analysis of students' self and peer assessment scores was out of the scope of this paper, but the students' self and peer scores also provided information about groups' dynamics and is discussed in this section. The researcher analyzed self and peer scores qualitatively and combined them with her observations to provide information about group dynamics.

As an example, the process will be discussed on the self and peer scores of a four-member group. After each student's score was entered into a spreadsheet program, a matrix as in Table 1 was formed.

Table 1. Self and peer-assessment scores of a four-member group

	TD	MC	OG	UO	Mean
TD	85	90	85	85	86
MC	75	85	85	80	81
OG	75	80	80	80	79
UO	80	80	90	75	81

In this group, student TD devoted the highest score to himself (85), and next high score to UO (80), lowest but equal scores to MC and OG (75). If the scores are ordered from highest to lowest, the following order was established. $s(\text{TD})$ stands for score of student TD, $s(\text{UO})$ stands for score of UO, and so on.

TD: $s(\text{TD}) > s(\text{UO}) > s(\text{MC}) = s(\text{OG})$

MC: $s(\text{TD}) > s(\text{MC}) > s(\text{OG}) = s(\text{UO})$

OG: $s(\text{UO}) > s(\text{TD}) = s(\text{MC}) > s(\text{OG})$

UO: $s(\text{TD}) > s(\text{MC}) = s(\text{OG}) > s(\text{UO})$

According to the order of scores, TD devoted the highest score to himself, and also got highest scores from two members. Thus, the researcher decided that he did most of the work in the group. MC placed himself second, and is placed second by two other members. Thus, he was most probably the second hard-working student in the group. The situations of OG and UO are not very clear. The student OG devoted his highest score to UO, which is unreliable since three members, including UO, gave the highest scores to TD. OG devoted the lowest score to himself. UO devoted the highest score to TD and supported the idea that TD was the most hard-working student in the group. UO devoted lowest score to himself. After this analysis, the researcher decided that TD did most of the work in the group, MC was the second hard-working student in the group, and OG and UO were equal and worked the least in the group. Based on the researcher's observation, UO and OG are close friends and complimented each other in their peer-assessment. The researcher devoted different scores to each group member depending on the matrix analysis results.

The method of analyzing each score may seem confusing to an outside reader, but it is easier for an instructor who has rich observations about students in the class. The method was time consuming, but this method was the only method the researcher found useful to gather information from Turkish students about who worked and who did not work in the groups. The researcher sustained the role of judge in the assessment of group-work, depending on information given by the students and her observations. A student, in his response to self and peer-assessment, also suggested this.

‘Peer-assessment is good, because the things we could not tell you (the instructor) face to face could be written on the form. On the other hand, peer-assessment is not good, because some students did not assess each other objectively. The problem would be overcome if the instructor forms a balance between the two.’

Conclusion

In conclusion, most of the Turkish students participated in this study preferred group-work. But, if the groups were formed by the instructor, they collaborated in the classroom tasks, but they could not collaborate in the out of classroom tasks. The formation of groups by the instructor is a recommended strategy (Fiechtner & Davis, 1992; Smith, 1986), since it prevents the group from over socializing and reducing the effort put on the group’s task (Cooper, 1990). However, this strategy did not work in the sample of Turkish students in the study. The students could not collaborate effectively, especially in out of classroom tasks with the members chosen by the instructor. At the end of Phase I, most of the students certainly stated that they wanted to form the groups themselves. They stated that they would form coherent groups with their close friends, work more productively, responsively, and collaborate more if they choose group members by themselves.

In Phase II, the students formed their group themselves, and their collaboration in these groups was better than in Phase I. Based on the results of this study, the instructor recommends that Turkish students should be allowed to choose their group members by themselves. One disadvantage of this would most probably be the formation of single-gender groups, which happened in this study. The percentage of single-gender groups in Phase II was more than twice the percentage of single-gender groups in Phase I. The same tendency was found among ethnic minority elementary students in Australia (Allard & Cooper, 2001). This would be controlled by stating a rule of forming mixed-gender groups for a group to be accepted by the instructor. In this way, they would have the chance to choose the person from the opposite gender with whom they would potentially collaborate.

Results also proved that students' cultural backgrounds affect their collaboration in the groups (Allard & Cooper, 2001). The power of friendship ties prevented students from informing the instructor about the problems in the groups and reporting the irresponsible members to the instructor. This might have been cultural or because the conditions in the university support the formation of strong friendships among students. Students are assigned to a section in the first year and take all the courses in the program together. That means that they generally work with the same students in the same section for four years. Most of them stay in dormitories at the campus or share housing in the city with their close friends. They spend most of their time with the people in their section.

The students' self and peer-assessment scores in this study provided the researcher with data to gather information about group dynamics by the analysis of students' self and assessment scores in the light of researcher's observations on the students. This was the best method of obtaining information from Turkish students about group dynamics that the researcher has found up to now.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the strategies that support students' collaboration in group work. When the results of both phases of the study were considered, the best option for the students in this study was the formation of groups by themselves and the use of self and peer assessment in the assessment of group process.

Awareness and acknowledgement of the students' cultural background may increase collaboration and thus the achievement of students. For this reason, similar studies should be conducted in other countries where there are minority students.

Limitations of the study

Although this was a long-term study, there were some limitations. One major limitation was the collection of partial data from the students. This was caused by students' inexperience of participating in educational research study. They did not elaborate and reflect their ideas to the extent that was expected by the researcher. Although the researcher gave her guarantee that the questionnaire was given for research purposes and would not affect their grades, the students might have withheld their complete trust, for that reason were careful in their responses.

Another limitation of the study was that research was conducted in only one university in Turkey. Over-generalization to Turkish culture was not intended by the author and the reader should take this into account.

Gulsen Bagci Kilic teaches at the School of Education, Department of Elementary Science Education, Abant Izzet Baysal University, Bolu, Turkey. E-mail: kilic_g@ibu.edu.tr or gulsenbagcikilic@yahoo.com

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APPRENDRE LA TOLERANCE GRACE AU TEXTE LITTERAIRE: DE LA COMPREHENSION LITTERALE A L'INTERPRETATION AXIOLOGIQUE

MARC WEISSER

Résumé – *La littérature de jeunesse sert ici à induire dans deux classe d'élèves de 9 – 10 ans des discussions à propos de l'idée de tolérance. Cet article étudie le passage de la compréhension littérale du texte à son interprétation axiologique en s'appuyant sur un outillage conceptuel issu de la sémiotique de Greimas. Les élèves, regroupés en communauté de lecteurs, se montrent capables d'endosser la responsabilité de jugements concernant les actions des personnages du récit, et de se distancier de leurs préjugés initiaux.*

Problématique

Le présent article relate une expérimentation menée avec deux classes d'enfants de 9 – 10 ans, auxquels il a été proposé de discuter de la signification de textes littéraires. Nous entendons par texte littéraire une œuvre qui présente une ouverture interprétative certaine, qui laisse un champ d'action à son lecteur, des virtualités de sens à explorer (Eco 1965).

Les débats, conduits par les enseignants responsables des classes, ont été organisés dans le but de savoir si les élèves, par le jeu des interactions, étaient capables de passer d'un niveau de compréhension élémentaire (ce que raconte l'histoire) à l'élaboration d'un contenu axiologique (ce que l'histoire me dit sur ma propre vie, à travers l'identification des valeurs sous-jacentes aux actes des personnages). En d'autres termes, nous avons cherché à tester les effets proprement *éducatifs* du littéraire à l'école.

S'agissant d'enfants de cet âge, on peut se demander en particulier s'il est possible de les aider à quitter une attitude égocentrique pour aller vers des prises de position davantage tournées vers l'accueil d'autrui dans toutes ses différences. Reboul nous soumet une hiérarchie des valeurs 'dont pourrait s'inspirer tout éducateur' (1992, p.39):

1. le plaisir, qui vise la satisfaction immédiate d'un désir,
2. l'utile, dont le bien-être matériel et physique (santé),
3. le collectif, qui voit pour la première fois le sacrifice de l'individu,
4. l'humain, qui transcende toute appartenance à un groupe identifiable,

5. le salut, valeurs qui se situent au-delà de la mort (aspects religieux et philosophiques).

En accord avec cette taxonomie, nous chercherons à observer les occurrences d'énoncés se situant aux niveaux 3 et 4, faisant appel notamment la notion de *tolérance* (voir ci-dessous).

Bien évidemment, on aurait pu susciter des échanges portant sur ces questions d'éthique en abordant le sujet de front, soit en se référant à un événement de l'actualité, soit en interrogeant directement les élèves sur leur vécu. Il nous a paru plus pertinent pédagogiquement parlant d'intercaler un objet médiateur entre l'enfant et sa propre vie: le texte littéraire va ainsi construire la *distance* qui seule autorise une réflexion critique dépassionnée. On se dégage alors du quotidien, on se libère de nos actes passés, on suspend notre responsabilité personnelle d'acteur social. La lecture d'une œuvre va modifier l'horizon d'attente du lecteur (Jauss 1978, p.53), en ce qu'elle le surprend, le rend conscient de son idéologie, l'ouvre à d'autres idées. La littérature n'est donc pas un simple reflet de l'existant, mais une façon d'étudier des comportements virtuels à partir d'une représentation fictionnelle. Elle se fait prétexte à l'ébauche de normes d'action (Jauss 1978, p.130), ce qui va bien plus loin que la simple libération cathartique.

Plusieurs effets potentiels de ces lectures – discussions sont attendus:

- le texte va susciter l'énonciation des réactions du lecteur par rapport aux actes des personnages, lecteur qui prend ainsi conscience de son propre système de valeurs;
- mais ces commentaires vont varier d'un élève à l'autre, poussant chacun à relativiser son point de vue;
- une confrontation devient alors inévitable, dans laquelle chacun approfondit sa position, l'argumente, la remanie quand il entre dans le jeu d'autrui, passant grâce à cela de préjugés implicites à une position retravaillée, plus rationnelle.

Nous allons dans un premier temps présenter de façon plus précise le dispositif pédagogique mis en place, ainsi que les deux ouvrages retenus. Nous étudierons ensuite en détail certains moments clés des discussions entre élèves, pour conclure sur un élargissement de la notion d'*ouverture* dans le domaine des apprentissages scolaires (Weisser, 1997).

Dispositif pédagogique

Deux séquences ont été organisées, dans deux classes de Cours Moyen 2^o année (vingt-huit et douze élèves, cinquième année de l'enseignement obligatoire en France) du sud de l'Alsace. Cette région fortement industrialisée est de plus

frontalière de l'Allemagne et de la Suisse. Du fait de ce tissu économique très dense, on trouve parmi les parents d'élèves des familles immigrées de deuxième ou troisième génération, principalement en provenance des pays du Maghreb (cinq enfants) mais également de Turquie (trois enfants), d'Italie (deux enfants) et du Portugal (un enfant), et (et parfois simultanément) des travailleurs frontaliers employés dans les pays limitrophes. Une population hétérogène donc, tant au niveau de l'origine géographique, qu'à celui des pratiques culturelles, qu'à celui des revenus, en fréquent contact avec 'l'étranger', parfaitement représentative de la population locale, le lieu de scolarisation étant obligatoire en France, attribué sur des critères de proximité géographique.

Chacune des séquences commence par la lecture de l'ouvrage retenu, différent d'une classe à l'autre. Suit un moment de réaction écrite individuelle: 'Qu'est-ce que le livre m'apprend sur ma vie personnelle?', qui a pour but d'amener tous les élèves à préciser leurs sentiments immédiats, et qui servira de point de départ pour alimenter la dernière phase, de discussion collective. Cette question initiale reste délibérément vague, dans le but de favoriser l'apparition d'une pluralité d'interprétations, source de débat. Ces trois moments occupent un laps de temps que l'on peut estimer à une heure maximum, le débat n'excédant pas vingt minutes (corpus complet disponible chez l'auteur).

Le choix des textes est délicat: ils doivent à la fois être à la portée du public visé et en même temps se prêter à une lecture à plusieurs niveaux. Mais la littérature de jeunesse est particulièrement riche en écrits aussi polysémiques (pour sélection d'ouvrages francophones, voir Tauveron et al., 1999, ou encore Stoecklé, 1999). Nous avons quant à nous retenu *Loin des Yeux, Près du Cœur* de Thierry Lenain (2001), et *Pierrot ou les Secrets de la Nuit* de Michel Tournier (1979).

Si nous avons opté pour ces deux récits c'est que, en-dehors de leurs qualités littéraires, ils nous apparaissent comme propices à faire apparaître cette valeur de l'ordre de l'humain (niveau 4, cf. ci-dessus) qu'est la *tolérance*, définie comme une ouverture d'esprit laissant à chacun toute liberté d'opinions quand bien même on ne les partage pas, comme un effort pour surmonter les différences entre les personnes pour trouver ce qui les rassemble. Chacun des deux auteurs met en scène à sa manière les tensions qui existent entre ses personnages. Mais les antagonismes ont toujours une même cause: l'apparence des uns provoque le mépris, le rejet des autres.

Il est d'ailleurs assez significatif d'observer que dans les deux textes, il est question de couleurs, les codes chromatiques étant à la fois des codes faibles (où les liens entre signifiants et signifiés sont peu constants) et des codes très axiologisés (certains de leurs signes, certaines couleurs donc, sont connotés positivement ou négativement dans certains groupes de locuteurs: le noir du deuil,

le blanc de la pureté, le rouge de la honte ou de la colère, etc.).

Un bref résumé des intrigues est nécessaire pour comprendre les relations entre les protagonistes et replacer dans leur contexte les réactions des jeunes lecteurs.

Loin des yeux, loin du cœur:

Hugo, le narrateur de l'histoire, est aveugle. Le premier chapitre s'intitule 'Les couleurs' et insiste sur l'absence de cette représentation chez les non-voyants. Il vient d'être scolarisé dans une 'école de voyants'; il s'aide d'un ordinateur à commande vocale. Les premières difficultés surviennent à la cantine, il a du mal à manger proprement. Mais quelqu'un l'aide: Aïssata. Aïssata est noire, on la surnomme 'la négresse'. Mais Hugo l'aime, 'la peau d'Aïssata aurait pu être violette, ça n'aurait rien changé pour moi', 'les autres sont des imbéciles'. Les deux enfants passent leur temps ensemble, Aïssata lui apprend les couleurs, Hugo lui explique les sons. La classe les prend en grippe: 'L'aveugle est amoureux de la négresse', mais ils demeurent inséparables. La famille d'Aïssata est ensuite expulsée vers le Mali: 'Les gens qui décident des lois se fichent des histoires d'amour'. Hugo, parvenu à l'âge adulte, associe encore les couleurs à leur rencontre.

Ce texte est donc raconté à la première personne: le lecteur est informé de ce qui se passe, mais aussi de l'opinion de Hugo à ce sujet; il est peu ou prou invité par l'auteur à s'identifier à ce personnage, contre les autres. Le dernier des critères évoqués par Adam (1997, p.57) pour une définition du type de texte *Récit* est celui de l'existence d'une évaluation finale, 'qui donne le sens configurationnel, moral, de la séquence narrative'. Cette évaluation est ici apportée par la désapprobation qu'exprime Hugo à l'encontre de ses camarades et du législateur.

Pierrot ou les secrets de la nuit:

Pierrot le boulanger et Colombine la blanchisseuse se connaissent; ils ont en commun leur enfance et la couleur blanche. Colombine évite Pierrot: elle a peur de la nuit, qu'elle imagine peuplée d'animaux effrayants. Pierrot lui écrit des lettres d'amour, mais ne les lui fait pas parvenir. Arlequin le peintre arrive au village avec sa roulotte et ses habits multicolores. Il initie Colombine aux couleurs: il repeint sa boutique, il en fait une teinturerie. Colombine est séduite et s'en va sur les routes avec l'artisan nomade. Vient la fin de l'été: les couleurs d'Arlequin passent, puis la neige rend tout uniformément blanc. Colombine découvre un billet de Pierrot, qui lui décrit les couleurs profondes de la nuit. Elle le rejoint, il l'accueille dans la chaleur de son fournil et pétrit une brioche à son effigie. Arlequin, transi, demande lui aussi le gîte; Pierrot accepte. Tous trois mangent la brioche-Colombine.

L'aventure est cette fois relatée par un narrateur externe. On ne pénètre pas dans la subjectivité des personnages. L'évaluation finale du récit est implicite dans ce second ouvrage (cas prévu in Adam 1997). Une telle décision de l'auteur va modifier l'image du Lecteur Idéal que prévoit le texte: c'est à lui de 'tirer la morale' de ce qu'il vient de lire. C'est ce que nous observerons à travers l'analyse comparative des discussions dans nos deux classes.

'Loin des yeux, près du cœur'

Le premier débat examiné a été induit par la lecture de l'ouvrage de Thierry Lenain dans l'une des deux classes. De telles études ont été effectuées par ailleurs sur des corpus analogues du point de vue de la linguistique pragmatique (Weisser, 2000, 2003) ou de la didactique des sciences (Weisser, Masclet et Rémigy, 2003). Les classes étudiées ont d'ailleurs acquis une réelle 'culture de débat', du fait que leurs enseignants se sont engagés dans une étude initiée par l'Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique, intitulée *'Argumentation et débat de preuve à l'école'*, sur une durée de trois ans. Les mêmes élèves ont donc été invités à confronter leurs positions de nombreuses fois, en français mais aussi en sciences expérimentales. Ce qui est pour nous un gage de la liberté de ton que l'on retrouve dans les échanges.

Ici, nous optons pour une approche sémiotique (Greimas et Courtès, 1979) qui tentera d'expliquer comment les interprétations du texte naissent et évoluent, comment les différents interlocuteurs prennent position, s'écoutent et se comprennent, s'accordent ou non: comment les élèves passent-ils de 'Voici ce que le texte dit' à 'Nous adhérons à telle valeur'?

La classe est ainsi considérée comme une 'communauté de lecteurs' (Weisser 2001, p.166), levier didactique de premier ordre pour les apprentissages, milieu protégé dans lequel l'initiation à l'intersubjectivité et à la confrontation va se vivre sans surinvestissement affectif inhibant.

Un premier énoncé attire notre attention:

4. Ana: *'Hugo est aveugle. (...) Il est blanc. Aïssata est noire. Les autres n'ont pas de handicap. Ils sont tout un groupe, ils sont blancs.'*

Le jugement d'inhérence initial: 'Hugo appartient à l'ensemble des non-voyants' est la reprise d'une information donnée par le texte dès la page 6: 'Je le sais, moi qui suis aveugle'. Le deuxième des jugements d'inhérence relève de la seule compétence épistémique du locuteur: il n'est écrit nulle part que Hugo est blanc; simplement, l'élève se sent autorisé à l'inférer pour rétablir ce que Grice appelle la Maxime de Quantité (1979): 'Donnez autant d'informations que nécessaire, ni plus, ni moins'. Si Hugo avait été noir, l'auteur aurait dû le signaler

Cette innocente abduction aurait nécessité qu'on s'y arrête, tant du point de vue de l'élève que de l'auteur. Mais personne ne l'a relevée lors du débat: les préjugés communs passent souvent inaperçus.

Le troisième est une traduction de la page 20: 'Ils ne se moquèrent plus qu'à voix basse de la 'nègresse'. Il est effectivement difficile à Hugo–narrateur de parler en son propre nom de la couleur de peau de sa camarade.

Un jugement de relation est ensuite actualisé, bien que sur un mode implicite: 'Hugo a le même problème qu'Aïssata, il souffre d'un handicap, contrairement aux autres élèves de leur classe'. Pour ce faire, on est obligé de présupposer la prémisse suivante: 'Etre noir constitue un handicap'. Ce présupposé n'ayant pas été discuté non plus, l'instance qui en endosse la responsabilité n'est pas identifiable. Qui est de cet avis: l'élève Ana qui vient de parler? Les enfants qui côtoient Hugo et Aïssata dans le récit? Hugo lui-même?

Suit un échange qui donne lieu à une dénivellation discursive: on passe du plan de la compréhension littérale à celui de l'interprétation sur un mode déontique (devoir-faire):

10. Ane: *'Il ne faut pas se moquer des gens différents, car nous aussi, on risque de l'être'*

qui met en avant la valeur modale de l'*Interdiction* (devoir ne pas faire), mais dont la justification relève à l'évidence de l'égoïsme: la raison invoquée est moins recevable (niveau 2: utilité, cf. ci-dessus) que l'attitude de respect qui en découle.

12. Ana: *'C'est pas parce qu'on est noir qu'on est différent.'*

conteste la prémisse implicite de 4 tout en s'opposant à 10. Il est à remarquer au passage que c'est le même élève qui a énoncé 4 et 10: évolution de sa pensée? changement de point de vue, de celui du texte au sien? Toujours est-il qu'au fil de la discussion, les positions se modifient sous la pression des interlocuteurs.

13. Max: *'On peut aimer tout le monde, même si on est différent.'*

Une tentative de conciliation des énoncés précédents: les personnes sont différentes (4 et 10), mais ça n'empêche pas les relations de sympathie (12). Une position semblable sera reprise en

43. Elo: *'Cette histoire me rappelle une morale. Ce n'est pas parce que tu es différent que tu ne peux pas avoir d'amis, d'amour',*

à partir d'éléments intertextuels.

C'est toujours la modalité déontique qui sous-tend les énoncés, cette fois sous l'aspect de la *Permissivité* (ne pas devoir ne pas faire): à la suite de 13, on aura encore

14. Elo: '*Le handicap n'empêche pas l'amour.*'

L'échange autour de ce thème se clôt par le retour de l'interdiction initiale (10), étayée par des arguments plus affinés:

16. Kev: '*Faut pas trop se moquer des handicapés. La couleur de la peau, c'est pas important. Même les aveugles peuvent faire des trucs: aller à la piscine, ...*'

19. Elo: '*Un aveugle, ça peut s'aider du bord, de l'escalier qui monte, ...*'

23. Ane: '*Quand nous on va à la piscine, il y a bien des handicapés.*'

On est passé du domaine de la stricte conservation de la personne (10) à l'utile ('*même les aveugles peuvent faire des trucs*') et à l'humain ('*la couleur de la peau, c'est pas important*'), comme justification de la nécessité de *tolérer* les différences. Le terme même sera prononcé en toute fin de débat, dans une sorte de moment de synthèse:

111. Ana: '*J'ai aimé ce livre. Il parle de l'intolérance en même temps. (...) Les autres, c'est des intolérants, qui n'aiment pas les différences.*'

117. Tho: '*Les autres, c'est des racistes.*'

La classe a ainsi réussi à construire une interprétation du texte autour de l'idée de tolérance, ce qui correspond à l'objectif éducatif visé par la séquence. Il reste à noter que l'ouvrage lu a en quelque sorte 'préparé le terrain' aux élèves s'agissant de cet investissement axiologique qui finit par faire l'unanimité:

'Seulement, je n'osais rien dire. Ni dire à Aïssata que je l'aimais depuis le premier jour. Ni dire aux autres qu'ils étaient des imbéciles.' (p. 20)

'L'ordinateur a dit:

– l'aveugle est amoureux de la négresse. (...)

Les phrases ont commencé à tourner dans ma tête. Puis elles sont descendues dans mon cœur. Et elles l'ont brisé.' (p. 30)

'Les gens qui décident des lois se fichent des histoires d'amour.' (p. 39)

Comme on le voit, l'attitude intolérante est décrite par Lenain avec un vocabulaire et des tournures de phrases connotés négativement. Ce qui est tout à fait compréhensible du point de vue narratif, puisque c'est Hugo qui s'exprime en

première personne. Ce qui induit également chez le jeune lecteur une forte tendance à l'identification au héros et à sa cause. L'effet obtenu chez les élèves (adhésion à la valeur de tolérance) sera sans nul doute jugé satisfaisant par tout éducateur; mais ce ralliement ne résulte-t-il pas davantage d'une action rhétorique sur le *pathos* de l'élève que d'une réflexion critique? Ne conviendrait-il pas, avec les mêmes élèves, de progresser vers une acceptation plus rationnelle, plus objective des valeurs dont ils viennent de prendre conscience? C'est un point important à nos yeux, auquel nous aurons l'occasion de revenir au sujet du second ouvrage, dans lequel personnages euphoriques et dysphoriques sont présentés sans aucune connotation méliorative ou péjorative dans l'énonciation de leurs actes.

Nous avons cependant au préalable à considérer de plus près un dernier épisode de notre discussion dans le but de compléter l'observation des conduites sémiotiques des élèves. Le passage 30 à 36 figure un point de controverse: Hugo est-il bien accueilli au départ dans sa classe? Ou bien ses camarades le mettent-ils déjà à l'écart?

30. Elo: *'Au début, on remarque qu'il est aveugle; il est bien accueilli.'*

34. Kev: *'C'est un handicapé, comme ça, ils font attention à lui ... Ils voulaient voir comment ça se débrouille, un handicapé.'*

36. Ane: *'Je ne suis pas d'accord. Au début, il y a plein de chuchotements.'*

On voit dans ces quelques énoncés s'exercer la compétence épistémique des apprenants: que tiennent-ils pour certain (croire-être)? pour probable (ne pas croire ne pas être)? Sur quelles bases fondent-ils ce croire-vrai? Le jugement d'Elo est relativisé par Kev; en effet, comment interpréter l'intérêt dont Hugo fait l'objet de la part de ses camarades: sont-ils appliqués à lui venir en aide au besoin (hypothèse d'Elo)? guettent-ils son premier faux pas? Ni Hugo ni Kev ne le savent apparemment. Et Ane semble finalement pencher pour une réaction d'emblée distante.

Ce qui est intéressant pour l'enseignant, c'est que la controverse évolue en s'appuyant sur des références au texte lu: la discussion permet non seulement de construire des attitudes éthiques, mais en passant a pour effet d'amplifier l'attention portée à l'écrit, jusque dans ses moindres détails, d'en approfondir par conséquent aussi la compréhension littérale.

Les bénéfices que l'on peut escompter d'une lecture—débat autour d'une œuvre littéraire ont pu être mis en évidence sur cette première expérience. Nous allons désormais pouvoir nous pencher sur un deuxième corpus du même ordre, afin d'essayer d'y retrouver des constantes, d'y percevoir des différences.

‘Pierrot ou les secrets de la nuit’

Il est à rappeler pour commencer que les deux ouvrages diffèrent notablement s’agissant du point de vue adopté: Tournier retient l’option du narrateur externe, dont l’omniscience s’arrête à la description des faits perceptibles. Aussi, nulle information n’est donnée au lecteur concernant des émotions des personnages, et encore moins en ce qui concerne la position prise par le narrateur (l’auteur?) par rapport à leurs actes. De cette manière, l’élève n’est pas incité à s’identifier préférentiellement à l’un des trois protagonistes le *pathos* s’efface devant le *logos*.

Prenons l’exemple d’Arlequin pour tester cette neutralité. Il est présenté page 14:

‘L’homme vif, souple, aux joues vermeilles, aux cheveux roux et frisés, était vêtu d’une sorte de collant composé d’une mosaïque de petits losanges bariolés. Il y avait là toutes les couleurs de l’arc-en-ciel, plus quelques autres encore, mais aucun losange n’était blanc ni noir.’

On s’en tient à une description classique, sans aucune connotation péjorative ou méliorative: ce portrait n’inspire ni antipathie ni méfiance. Après quelques péripéties, nous retrouvons le peintre itinérant et Colombine aux prises avec l’hiver:

‘Leurs beaux costumes bariolés commencent à déteindre. (...) Ils traversent des forêts de bois mort, des champs labourés bruns et noirs.’
(p. 24)

Le changement n’est notifié qu’au plan du perceptible, sans aucune tentative d’axiologisation, même subreptice. Ce sont les élèves qui lors du débat font jouer les modalités véridictoires:

2. Rom: *‘Le noir et le blanc de Pierrot, c’est des vraies couleurs. Les couleurs d’Arlequin, elles partaient sous la neige. Tandis que les couleurs de Pierrot, elles ne partaient pas, sous la neige.’*

10. Jul: *‘Moi, je pense qu’au début, elle croyait que les couleurs d’Arlequin, c’était des vraies, je pense. Ça la changeait, parce qu’avec Pierrot, elle avait que du noir. Elle aimait bien.’*

26. Jul: *‘Pierrot, il est pas comme elle l’avait dit au début.’*

88. Max: *‘Je veux dire qu’Arlequin, il est beau, il a l’air comme ça, quand on le voit pour la première fois. Mais après, quand on a l’habitude de le voir, on sait qu’il est moins bien que Pierrot.’*

A travers ces quelques énoncés prélevés au fil de la discussion nous voyons se préciser le jeu de l'Être et du Paraître (modalité véridictoire):

- qui, de Pierrot ou d'Arlequin, possède les *vraies* couleurs?
- avec comme corollaire la question de savoir lequel des deux soupirants *est* (authentique), alors que l'autre ne serait qu'*apparence*.

Le texte, comme on l'a constaté à travers les deux extraits ci-dessus, ne fait que relater la chronologie de l'intrigue, sans se prononcer sur le caractère fade, falot de Pierrot, ou sur la rouerie d'Arlequin. C'est donc bel et bien la classe qui prend l'entière responsabilité de cet approfondissement du côté de la psychologie humaine. Et les énoncés 10 et 26 vont plus loin encore: ils enchâssent la modalité véridictoire dans un investissement épistémique dont l'énonciateur est Colombine: l'*Être* d'Arlequin est lu à travers le *Croire être vrai* qu'actualise l'héroïne à ce moment de l'histoire; l'élève Jul croit que Colombine croit qu'Arlequin est authentique, lors de leur première rencontre. C'est cette possibilité d'inclusions multiples, de voix qui font écho qui, selon nous, témoigne de la qualité littéraire d'un texte narratif.

La classe est désormais prête à passer du véridictoire (être; paraître) surdéterminé par l'épistémique (croire-être) au déontique (devoir-faire). Nous nous proposons de l'illustrer par les prises de position pour ou contre Arlequin dont témoignent les élèves.

La balance penche tout d'abord en défaveur de l'homme aux couleurs vives:

35. Jus: '*Moi, je trouve qu'il est un peu trop frimeur parce qu'il montre trop ses couleurs.*'

39. Dam: '*Il était un peu méchant, je trouve. Il était ... ouais, il a voulu se vanter. Parce qu'il a pris Colombine de Pierrot.*'

43. Max: '*Moi non; je l'aurais pas fait. [laisser entrer Arlequin dans le fournil] Parce qu'il était un peu méchant quand même avec lui. Il lui a tout piqué.*'

Les élèves énoncent des *interdits*: il ne faut pas se vanter, il ne faut pas 'piquer' l'amie d'autrui. Il est à noter cependant qu'il n'y a aucune volonté d'accabler Arlequin: les prises en charge énonciatives et les modalisations en témoignent à l'envi. Chaque élève prend bien la précaution d'adoucir son jugement en entourant le 'devoir ne pas faire' qu'il croit être en droit de lire dans le texte, de nombreux '*moi*', '*je trouve*', '*quand même*', '*un peu*', et autres verbes au conditionnel. La condamnation du peintre est assortie de circonstances atténuantes.

D'ailleurs l'épisode du pardon initié en 43 marque un retournement de la situation:

44. Nat: *'Moi si, je l'aurais fait entrer.'*

46. Yan: *'Moi, je l'aurais aussi fait entrer.'*

48. Yan: *'Ben, même s'il lui avait pris Colombine, il avait aussi le droit de se réchauffer et de manger.'*

53. Mat: *'Eh ben moi, je l'aurais laissé quand même rentrer, parce que c'est pas parce que ... il lui a volé sa copine qu'il doit le laisser mourir de faim.'*

Comme nous l'avons postulé initialement, l'approfondissement des idéologies spontanées des interlocuteurs par le biais de la lecture—discussion mène à une hiérarchisation des valeurs. C'est exactement le cas ici: les élèves Nat, Yan et Mat donnent la priorité à la vie humaine (*'se réchauffer, manger, ne pas mourir'*) sur l'amour-propre ou l'honneur (*'il lui a volé sa copine'*).

Et le renversement est total quand on découvre des raisons de *tolérer* le comportement d'Arlequin le vantard ou de Colombine la volage:

66. Jul: *'Si Arlequin n'avait pas été là, Colombine croirait encore que la nuit, il y a des sales bêtes.'* (ce qui l'empêchait de rencontrer Pierrot le boulanger)

79. Dam: *'Moi, je crois pas ce qu'ils ont dit, qu'Arlequin n'était pas utile. Parce que Pierrot, il mettait ses lettres dans des enveloppes, et il allait même pas les envoyer !'*

Ce qui est retrouvé par la classe dans ces échanges, c'est que toute initiation a un coût: Arlequin contribue à rapprocher Colombine et Pierrot, il est le catalyseur qui débloque une situation qui n'évoluait plus. D'ailleurs Tournier se garde bien de nous indiquer quelle position prendre à son égard, puisqu'il a décidé d'achever son conte par cet ambigü repas à trois où tous dévorent une brioche—Colombine symbolique.

Au terme de cette seconde analyse, nous constatons que les élèves ont parcouru un chemin encore moins rectiligne que précédemment, ce qui est un gage à la fois de liberté d'expression (toutes les idées ont le droit d'être énoncées), et de distanciation des interlocuteurs (toutes les idées ont le droit d'être discutées). L'étagement des niveaux de lecture nous était déjà devenu familier (du véridictoire à l'épistémique puis au déontique). Par contre, la complexité des investissements épistémiques et déontiques est nouvelle: le silence du texte sur les opinions des personnages et de l'auteur ouvre davantage encore les possibilités interprétatives. Ici, aucun des protagonistes n'est désigné comme antipathique par un vocabulaire connoté. S'ensuit une rotation des places préférentielles du côté des trois héros: Pierrot semble fort à plaindre, mais après tout, il est bien discret; Colombine paraît irrésolue, mais au moins a-t-elle le mérite d'avoir osé essayer de changer; Arlequin est perçu comme superficiel, mais n'a-t-il pas permis à tous

de se retrouver finalement? La compréhension de la richesse des comportements humains, de leur ambivalence souvent, finit par se dégager à l'issue du débat, encourageant chacun à prendre le temps de la réflexion bienveillante plutôt que de s'engager dans la critique. C'est une nouvelle attitude de tolérance qui est en cours de construction, tolérance envers les interprétations divergentes des autres lecteurs, tolérance envers les actions des personnages lues comme des possibilités de conduite réelle.

Degré d'ouverture des textes littéraires

Dans ces deux expériences, le texte littéraire a prouvé qu'il fonctionnait fort bien comme inducteur d'un discours autre, ici portant sur des comportements et des valeurs. Et même chez de jeunes élèves, pour peu qu'une discussion polygérée soit organisée, favorisant la construction dialogique d'une 'vérité' intersubjective. Bien évidemment, cet effort dans le domaine axiologique demande à être poursuivi dans les classes ultérieures, spécialement par la réflexion philosophique. Mais il s'avère qu'en la matière, il faut surtout se garder de faire *moins*; en particulier, il serait tout à fait regrettable d'en rester à l'imposition directe de valeurs par le biais du discours magistral, à coup d'argument d'autorité. Cette position explique aussi nos réserves par rapport au premier texte: l'auteur nous y apparaît comme trop présent encore dans le passage du véridictoire (cela est) au déontique (c'est cela qu'il faut faire).

Chaque texte littéraire prévoit un Lecteur Idéal qui lui appartient en propre, et qu'il construit page après page, à travers les inférences qu'il laisse le soin d'actualiser, à travers les jugements qu'il choisit ou non d'explicitier à sa place. La différence se perçoit alors dans le degré de confiance à l'égard de ce Lecteur Idéal: est-il conçu comme quelqu'un de pleinement actif, capable de trouver dans l'écrit non seulement ce que signifient les mots, mais aussi un début de réponse aux questions existentielles qu'il se pose? Car il ne s'agit de rien moins que cela: l'accueil des handicapés, le rejet raciste, les relations de couple figurent au rang des interrogations que les élèves amènent avec eux quand ils pénètrent dans la salle de classe.

Le pari du texte *ouvert*, c'est que sa polysémie virtuelle autorise des lectures multiples, par lesquelles chaque lecteur collecte des éléments de sens compatibles avec son propre horizon d'attente, la richesse de l'écrit entrant en résonance (presque acoustique) avec son expérience subjective. Jauss parle à ce propos de 'l'efficacité esthétique' de la littérature (1979, p. 112). Ce qui est réalisé de manière plus convaincante encore grâce au second ouvrage. Et l'on s'aperçoit grâce à la discussion que cette mise en relation entre l'horizon du texte et celui du lecteur ne

renvoie pas ce dernier à lui-même: la différence est celle qui existe entre le problème (auquel on est sensible ou pas) et ses solutions envisagées (dont le texte démultiplie le répertoire).

Multiplés ne signifie pas infinies cependant: on ne peut lire n'importe quoi dans n'importe quel texte; aussi le choix de l'ouvrage à étudier, dévolu à l'enseignant, est-il primordial. L'association des élèves pour un débat au sein de la communauté des lecteurs est un second garde-fou: la relation discursive intersubjective force chacun à approfondir son point de vue initial, ne serait-ce que quand on le pousse à l'argumenter; elle lui interdit aussi de délirer en s'éloignant trop de la thématique retenue.

On n'aura pas été sans remarquer, nous l'évoquions à l'instant, que durant le débat, l'enseignant suspend délibérément son propre jugement axiologique et se contente de réguler l'échange (Weisser, 2003). C'est qu'il conçoit l'élève comme un *Sujet Compétent*, en d'autres termes comme une personne douée d'une *savoir-faire* qui lui permettra, en situation didactisée, de *faire-être* les connaissances visées. Ce passage de l'élève d'une compétence virtuelle à une compétence actualisée est favorisé par l'interaction, à la fois avec le livre (au moment de la lecture et de la rédaction des réactions personnelles) et avec ses pairs (au moment de la discussion). C'est là le pari de toute éducation: amener quelqu'un à devenir capable de faire quelque chose en le plaçant dès le départ en situation de le faire.

Et le parcours d'accession à la compétence, ici relevant du domaine de l'éthique, s'inscrit dans la succession des modalités invoquées, depuis les aspects véridictoires s'originant dans le texte, le passage par l'épistémique quand le lecteur construit sa compréhension de l'histoire, jusqu'au déontique qui conclut à un système d'obligations (prescription: devoir-faire; interdiction: devoir ne pas faire). L'attente de l'éducateur relevant quant à elle du factitif: faire-faire à quelqu'un, de façon autonome et volontaire, ce qu'il croit devoir-être.

L'acquisition de telles compétences est bien entendu extrêmement difficile à évaluer. Se pose en particulier la question du niveau taxonomique auquel la tester: savoir les énoncer (niveau élémentaire de la taxonomie cognitive de Bloom, 1969) ne signifie pas les appliquer (niveau 3), et encore moins savoir évaluer les situations qui les réclament (niveau 7); accepter de discuter d'une valeur (niveau 2.2 de la taxonomie des capacités socio-affectives de Krathwohl, in Hameline, 1988, p.128) n'est pas encore intérioriser cette valeur comme principe régissant nos comportements (niveau 5.1: disposition généralisée). Et l'appréciation de compétences de très haut niveau taxonomique ressortit davantage à la rencontre de deux subjectivités, plus qu'à une simple prise d'information de type béhavioriste.

Ce qui est par contre plus clair dans le cadre de la recherche INRP évoquée plus haut, c'est la relation entre le nombre de prises de parole et l'apprentissage effectué. Il nous a été possible, en sciences expérimentales principalement

(Weisser, Masclet et Rémigy, 2003), de montrer l'absence de corrélation entre ces deux phénomènes. Certains élèves n'interviennent que très peu, sans pour autant que cela les empêche de tirer profit de la séquence. L'idée est que leur opinion est défendue par certains de leurs pairs, et que par conséquent, ils n'éprouvent pas le besoin d'intervenir personnellement: leur activité d'auditeur attentif leur suffit, en ce qu'ils vérifient qu'au fil des tours de parole, ce qu'ils pensent est bien énoncé.

L'absence de possibilité d'évaluation formelle ne doit cependant pas être retenue comme un défaut rédhibitoire des séances d'interprétation littéraire dès les premières années de la scolarisation: l'action de l'enseignant s'exerce là au niveau des finalités éducatives plus qu'à celui des objectifs opérationnels disciplinaires.

Marc Weisser, *Laboratoire d'Intelligence des Organisations, l'Université de Haute Alsace. E-mail: M.Weisser@uha.fr*

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BOOK REVIEWS

Mark Bray (ed.), *Comparative Education: Continuing Traditions, New Challenges, and New Paradigms*, Dordrecht, Boston & London, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003. 264+iv pp. ISBN 1-4020-1143-1 (paperback), price: not listed.

The field of comparative education has been expanding for sometime now, and with the creation of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) in 1970, the number of conferences and publications that pertain to the field have also experienced a remarkable surge that has been prospectively responsive to the evolving and, at times, emerging theoretical and practical realities of the role of education in the social transactions and development possibilities of peoples across the globe. It should also be the case that with the collapse of the Eastern Bloc as a coherent political entity a decade-and-a-half ago, and the double-tier entry (economic capitalism and rhetorical communism) of China into the international exchange of goods and services, complemented by the rapidity of the techno-economic and educational (or instructional) components of the now ubiquitous program of globalization, international and comparative education researchers have wisely expanded their domain of focus in analyzing and critiquing the prospectus as well as the *problematique* of their areas of study.

This book, edited by the well-known comparativist and Secretary-General of WCCES, Mark Bray, who is also the current Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong, critically and quite effectively responds to these emerging learning and research platforms of comparative education. Besides the introduction, the book is divided into three sections that treat conceptual and methodological approaches to comparative education, the intersections of political forces and education, and the role of culture as well as its interactions with comparative education. Cumulatively, the three sections contain 12 chapters that represent revised versions of academic papers presented at the 11th World Congress of Comparative Education that was held in Korea in 2001. The chapters are well organized and mainly written with a style and expressive qualities that are accessible and easy to follow. The 12 chapters engage topics that include the interactive processes that comparative and international education projects have been forming, primarily via the facilities of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), with the cross-boundary realities of globalization, with all effecting a number of discernible modifications, not only in the economic and political domains of people's lives (as generally perceived), but as much (if not more) in the educational and inter-learning terrains of our world.

That discussion is followed by a critique of the continuities of Western meta-narratives and their far-reaching methodological tentacles in the education and overall, postcolonial and ontological beings of non-Western peoples. It is clear here that despite the benign rhetoric of the ever amicable third space proposed by the high ranking apostles of cultural studies personnel, indigenous peoples across the world are still marginalized, not only in the enfranchisement of their knowledge systems, but also in the way their ideas, the epistemic valuations of their know-how, even their institutions and the diplomas these dispense, are located and operationalized vis-à-vis those that are produced by former colonizers and 21st century late imperialists. After this disquisition, a specialized treatment of select methodological insights that pertain to international schools in Hong Kong is undertaken. Here, the need for a comprehensive understanding of these international education experiences' characteristics and inherent functions (presumably as contextually privileged platforms of instructional and social development) is emphasized.

The four chapters in the second section of the book discuss the design, formations and attached reform agendas, as well as policy and overarching state influences on education. For their geographical focus, these chapters look at educational transformations and reform in East and Central Europe, issues of decentralization and their effects on education in Siberia and the Russian Far East, a comparative perspective on how global education is undertaken in the United States, England and Japan, and primary schooling in China and India, which together (and as a measure of their educational and developmental importance) are home to one-third of the world's estimated six billion inhabitants. Here, a combination of long-term economic difficulties hindering the needed reform, the changing focus of learning provisions from teacher/school-driven to student centered and all the related policy and psycho-cultural detours that are involved, and the limited, if any, successes of primary school reform in the case of China and India, are all deployed so as to comprehend the magnitude as well as the intensity of the learning obstacles people have to deal with. It is also discussed how, as a counter-measure of hope, these same realities would herald, not only the desire of policymakers, educators and other stakeholders in the educational enterprise, but also the harnessable energy as well as the determination of all of these to achieve transformative platforms of teaching and learning that would minimally, not de-link these societies and their young and adult learners from the prevailing global plateaus of schooling and derivatively induced (possibly and hopefully) socio-economic and political advancements.

In the last section of the book, the focus of the work moves to the issue of culture in comparative perspective, as conveyed in the book. The importance of this area in both the descriptive and analytical intersections of comparative

education is not only an interesting case of academic review for me but also an affirmation of a personal project that enhances my understanding of the centrality of culture and cultural symbolisms and pragmatics for any education that aims for the inclusive enfranchisement of peoples and societies. By extension, I should add, a 'de-cultured' education (as the majority of Africans and others should remind us), may represent, to borrow a line from Claude Ake (1996), a possible absence of education and development. Again, while I should not assert that the contributors to this book are also advancing my line of thinking in the situation, it should be the case that in the two cases where a comparative approach among Europeans or Euro-Americans and Asians is intended, the localities of not only the primordial cultural package, but also select cultural capitals harnessed via the involuntary belonging to a privileged group (not necessarily economically only but also possibly otherwise) would influence the relationship between the learner and where emphasis is placed in the aims, objectives and results of the educational process. In the chapter on Childhood Ideology, for example, it should be interesting to note the world of babies as entertainment components of Sumo wrestling spectator sport in Japan, and how the 'facts' in this context, despite the globalization-driven tendencies to generalize, are counter-Disney and Hollywood culture. With childhood education being where it all starts, therefore, getting (or doing) the philosophy as well as the culture of comparative international education right at all levels and contexts should be important.

These observations could also be attached to the chapter's concern with the issue of how modernity might have selectively betrayed the development of children in Europe and Asia. The main point here is that while children in earlier times were allowed to grow up as children, currently the adult ego-driven rationalizations of open, competitive societies is imposing a system of microcosmically calculated project on young people with everything including 'the years of childhood', as Soyinka (1989) would characterize it, reduced to a scarce commodity that must be exploited (I am overusing the elasticity of the author's points) as efficiently as possible, and, where necessary, at the expense of the rest of the world. In both cases, it is clear that the call is overdue for a re-cultured infancy and young adulthood, all undergirded by the more humane possibilities of schooling and overall transition into a type of citizenship that is less egocentric, even less anthropocentric, and more attuned to both the local and the global, or as some are already labeling it, new platforms of glocalization in educational and related social development relationships. The other chapter in this last section also problematizes culture and education with a focus on higher levels of learning, i.e., 'The meanings of Work and Vocation/Profession in China'. Here, a line of caution is drawn on how we understand and deal with the conceptual and the resulting practical formations of culture, education and work in China, so

as to effectively ascertain how these perceptions are shaping education and development in contemporary China.

To sum up, this is a well-conceived, effectively organized, and, especially in its topical and analytical contributions, excellent addition to the available literature in the area. The book is also thematically instructive and as such, addresses, beyond the familiar domains of comparative education, a number of novel and emerging perspectives in a world that is rapidly changing on so many fronts. While, as an Africanist myself, I would have welcomed a chapter or so on African education and development, I should also be cognizant of the possible 'fact' that constraints of time, space or even the contextual absence of that work itself could not have helped my expectation. To again minimize my concern here, the same could also be said of Latin American education, Pacific Region education and, undoubtedly, about other systems in other parts of our world. It is, therefore, practical that each book will selectively respond to these circumstances and could only deal with certain components of comparative and international education. In that case, this is an imaginative, exceptionally timely and highly needed work that adds so much to our understanding of the pointers and questions under consideration. This book should, therefore, be widely read, and enthusiastically welcomed as a course text, a supplementary copy or a general reader, not only by international and comparative education students and scholars, but also by those in such important sub-disciplines of education as sociology of education, anthropology of education, politics of education and, indeed, cultural studies in education. I would also recommend this book to scholars in the humanities and social sciences, for there is so much that would enhance their understanding of the overall situation in the countries and areas studied and analyzed in this work which constitutes a remarkable scholarly achievement.

Ali Abdi
University of Alberta

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Christopher Bezzina with the collaboration of Vincent Cassar and Andrew Triganza-Scott. *Educational Leaders in the Making*. 2003 Malta: Indigo Books. 221 pages. ISBN 99932-46-10-7.

Using a portrait based approach and face-to-face dialogues, the authors conducted a case study of eight secondary school heads to investigate the factors that led to their formation and accession. The eight heads met criteria balancing gender, age, social background, length of experience, type of schools and geographical location. The authors' methodology was primarily based on the work by Gronn and Ribbins but also benefited from the theories of leadership by Sergiovanni, Mortimer & Mortimer, Day and Bakioglu.

After interviewing the eight heads, certain themes began to emerge that affected their development. These were the formative influence of parents and sometimes other members of the family, the local community, and some of their teachers. In the next phase of the heads' career, the accession phase, the interviewees described their educational background and work experience that made them eligible to become heads. Those heads who had attended the Teacher Training Colleges commended them highly especially for their role in shaping them socially and culturally. The heads also stressed the value of the Diploma in Educational Administration and Management but suggested the need for more training in accounting in that program. However, on assuming their complex jobs as school heads, the heads felt that no matter how good their educational training had been, practice was different from theory. Several heads referred to their initial months on the job as a 'baptism of fire'. Some of them therefore recommended establishing a mentoring program for new heads. Most heads stressed the need for having a greater say in the hiring and firing of teachers although some acknowledged the sensitivity of that issue given the small size and inter-relationships between people in Malta. Most heads recommended conducting (and enabling) professional development programs for heads on the job. Some heads expressed the need for more support staff.

Although the book's main goal was to study the formation and accession phases of the careers of selected heads, it inevitably touched upon the challenges, constraints and satisfaction encountered by the heads during their incumbency. It is here that the book's strength lies. The book is well organized, presented, sequenced and printed. Another strength is that while focusing on the development and accession of eight school heads, it provided the reader with an overview of the Maltese educational system and the reforms in progress such as decentralization and the National Minimum Curriculum.

In Part 3, the authors presented a good summary of their findings including some significant quotes from the interviews. However, they did not end up with

any prescription for future heads. In their concluding statements, the authors wrote: ‘Various points brought out in this study which explored the formation and accession into headship help to highlight the need to take headship more seriously’ (p. 200). The authors did not describe how that should be done. The authors moreover did not highlight the recommendations made by the heads, which could in fact, if adopted by the Education Office and the Faculty of Education, have a stronger impact on the training and performance of school heads.

Waguida El Bakary
American University in Cairo

Paul A. Bartolo and Mark G. Borg (eds.): *Homosexuality: Challenging the Stigma*. Malta, Agenda. ISBN 999932-622-4-2.

Out of the depths of a nation that is traditionally rooted in religion and patriarchy, emerges a book that raises awareness of the plight of the Queer (gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered) community in Malta. *Homosexuality: Challenging the Stigma* by Bartolo and Borg (2003) examines the life of the Maltese Homosexual, contextualized against modern Western theories, discoveries and trends, in hopes of identifying the experiences and life of the Maltese Queer, and its' similarities and differences from European counterparts. This review aims to critically analyze these contents and extend further notions of development that could contribute to future directions, discoveries and assertions. I break these down into three components: compromising insider/outsider status in Maltese Queerness, the essential role of women and reconciliation efforts to the apparent oppressions described in the book.

As a gay Maltese-Canadian educator/researcher, I know that writing about Queer struggles, challenges and livelihoods can be a complex task. Often there are many types of pressures that contribute to 'boxing' the homosexual, into capitalist-based identity groups that determines right/wrong. This renders him/her without options and surviving through essential living to hide/hiding to live strategies. At times, it takes the heterosexual to defend/speak for/raise awareness of Queer issues. This books works well in this regard, as well as providing a concise historical overview of homosexuality. However, the identity of the authors asserts an insider/outsider binary that can be seen as a positive step (heterosexual researchers speaking out in solidarity), yet could also disengage the audience (heterosexual researchers unknown of the lived experiences of Queers).

'Coming out' does not simply mean telling the family, 'I'm gay.' It has transcended boundaries of sexual identity, and can now refer to revealing one's self in order to contextualize the insider/outsider status. While reading from heterosexual authors about Queerness does hold some value, Queer people needs to know their background so that they can relate to the author on a personal and/or professional level. There are elements of the being Queer, which are similar to being black, disabled, a woman, poor and young, that need the personal connection that only a fellow Queer person can speak to.

It is important to encourage more Queer people to speak out of their experiences, so that these unspoken elements can become agents of change. For example, in rural Canada, where homophobia is still a social disease, a conference on Queer Issues in Education (University of Saskatchewan) uses recorded voices to share these stories. In liberal Brighton, United Kingdom, gay men still explore their identity through masks and storytelling. Speaking out does not mean coming

out. Rather, it is coming out, through different powerful methods, that produces speaking out against existing structures that continue to promote the 'heterosexual is normal/homosexual is evil' discourse.

This question is similar to other marginalized people, especially women. In the book, *Homosexuality: Challenging the Stigma*, the voice of women, in particular Maltese Lesbians, is undernourished. While this is common for most cultures where patriarchy remains dominant, lessons learned from other Queer communities remark that the Lesbian community needs to be included in everything, or risk separation from the Gay male/Bisexual communities. Now, in certain circles, Lesbians do not welcome 'outsiders' and maintain a 'Lesbian Only' club. Since this book does not carry much on Lesbian literature/poetry/narratives, or many female authors, this book risks falling into the Gay male domain, despite its inclusive aim. The Lesbian community needs to be integrated into the Maltese Queer movement/ideology to ensure an equal representative change and a definitive force of solidarity.

Solidarity can be an act/belief/thought that aims to liberate/develop another person or another person's community to promote social justice for all. For example, I highlight the plight of women and racial minorities in my work because I appreciate their struggle as oppressed people. Acting out of solidarity is not an expression of pity, but out of a common interest one can achieve a fair and just world. This book carries research and stories that are written out of solidarity with Queer people, and it presents itself well in this regard. Solidarity, in Peace Education, is viewed as a bridge for reconciliation and social healing. Queers feel rage, just as another marginalized group of people, towards their oppressors (non-Queer people) over actions/beliefs that promote intolerance and social isolation. However, acting/believing out of solidarity re-shapes the homo-hetero relationship in order to establish a more positive and constructive force to confront dominating and controlling structures.

Solidarity could shape itself out of community conferences (such as the one that lead to the publication of this book), policy changes, support groups, and training on Queer issues. However, Queer citizens must be at the forefront, and in control at the whole time, or else the cycle of dominance continues. Further editions could explore the outcome of these initiatives, and be inclusive of more Maltese Queer (including transgendered) experiences and expressions. This book puts the Maltese Queer on the right path, and hopefully, it will be Queer citizens themselves that will continue to steer the future directions of peace building, equality and mutual respect.

Robert Mizzi
Queer Peace International

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