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ABSTRACT

FOLK PEDAGOGY AND THE COMMON CURRICULUM: AN EXAMINATION OF ALTERNATIVE FOLK PEDAGOGICAL FORMS IN THE CONTEXT OF A PARTICULAR CURRICULAR INNOVATION

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The folk pedagogy construct is used to differentiate between alternative conceptions of competence and the pedagogical moves aimed at altering or enhancing that competence. Two quite different models characterize the contours of the current educational landscape, each defined by a unique set of mental, epistemological, and pedagogical assumptions. Behaviorist folk pedagogies regard competence as the possession of knowledge that must be transferred in a unidirectional fashion from an instructor, text, or other resource. Constructivist folk pedagogies regard competence as entertaining the appropriate shared beliefs through collaborative discourse.

The two principal themes of The Common Curriculum initiative, outcome-based learning and integrative/collaborative studies, are shown to map onto the essentially competing folk pedagogical forms described above. Reference to a series of extensive interviews with teachers actively engaged in efforts to understand and interpret the reforms provide accounts of practice that fall into these contrasting pedagogies - some point to a consideration of that which is generally "known" and others to the subjective mental life of their students. This contradictory pedagogical character of teacher practice is hypothesized to hold a certain functional appeal in a context fraught with uncertainty and ambiguity.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Consider the challenging and somewhat daunting task of teaching multi-digit multiplication to a group of nine-year olds. If, like most, you rely on the tried and true method you were exposed to as a student, multiplying 86 by 3 would likely involve the following set of procedural rules: (1) multiply 6 by 3 to get 18; (2) "put down" the 8 and "carry" the 1; (3) multiply 8 by 3 to get 24; (4) add the "carried" 1 and "put down" 25. Arriving at a solution of 258, the written form would probably look something like:

```
86
x 3
---
258
```

Magdalene Lampert (1986) wanted to reconcile students' procedural knowledge of "put down the ___ and carry the ___" with their knowledge, acquired from single-digit multiplication, that multiplication is a form of adding and involves principles of regrouping. The students in her class were perfectly able to "prove" $3 \times 4 = 12$ concretely by making four groups of three blocks (or three groups of four blocks) and adding them. After a series of exercises involving parting and wholing (see Lampert, 1986, for details), children would eventually solve the problem as follows:

```
86 \rightarrow 80 + 6
x 3
---
18 \leftarrow 3 \times 6
+ 240 \leftarrow 3 \times 80
---
258 \leftarrow 18 + 240
```
So there we have it, two different ways of teaching multi-digit multiplication. But how is an individual educator to choose which is best? This, in a sense, is a misleading question because it incorrectly implies that the choice is to be made at the level of the technique. It masks the fact that divergence occurs beneath the level of classroom practice. Underlying the two pedagogical approaches are different conceptions of what it means to learn multiplication, of what it means to learn mathematics, of what it means, more generally, to learn. The differences, it can be argued, exist at the level of what we may call a folk pedagogy (Olson and Bruner, 1996).

Our everyday interactions with others are largely affected by our commonplace intuitive theories about how their minds, and indeed our own minds, work. Frequently referred to as folk psychology, these often implicit theories guide and structure the nature of almost all human interpersonal activity (Astington, 1993). Education is no exception. Learning for most is thought to involve, if not occur in, the mind (Strauss and Shilony, 1994). Thus, our efforts aimed at cultural transmission, our pedagogical practices, are essentially determined by a cohesive set of beliefs about the learner's mind, by a particular folk pedagogy.

The learner, in fact, need not be of the human variety. Coren (1994) argues that most dog obedience trainers hold implicit theories of dog intelligence that often determine the nature of their training techniques. Some feel that dogs have limited thinking abilities and simply learn patterns of responses that they play back at appropriate times. Others believe that dogs are rational and capable of using logic to solve problems. Is it possible that parents and teachers make similar assumptions about children? What form(s) might these assumptions take? We begin with the latter.
**Contemporary Folk Pedagogies**

Two quite different folk pedagogical models characterize the contours of the current educational landscape. As each of these models is discussed, it will be useful not only to consider their philosophical origins, but also their mental, pedagogical, and epistemological assumptions (Case, 1996). In this way, it will be possible to see how divergent sets of practices are inextricably linked to distinct notions of mind and knowledge. Although each orientation has been labeled differently by different authors, in most cases the labels reflect the same underlying thrust. For convenience, we adopt the naming convention advanced by Pelletier (1994; Astington and Pelletier, 1996).

**Behaviorist folk pedagogy**

Behaviorist models have grown out of learning theory that attributes behavioral change to principles of reinforcement. Concern, for all intents and purposes, is focused at the level of observable/measurable outcomes. Originating in the seminal work of E. L. Thorndike (1874-1949), learning is conceptualized as changing the strength of stimulus-response (S-R) associations. His classic monograph, *Animal Intelligence* (1911/1965), summarized how hungry cats placed in a box learned to open a door leading to food by pulling on a loop of string. Thorndike noticed that with each successive trial, a cat would produce fewer extraneous responses, such as trying to squeeze through any opening, and more quickly pull the string. These findings led to the creation of two highly influential "laws of learning": the law of effect and the law of exercise.
Briefly, the law of effect states that if the response (pulling the string) to a stimulus (being placed in a cage) has a pleasing effect (escape), then the probability of response repetition in the presence of that stimulus is increased. The law of exercise states that the more a response or behavior is practiced (exercised), the more strongly it will be established or learned. Although he experimented with lower-order mammals, Thorndike believed that these same laws applied to humans well. In his book, *Educational Psychology: The Psychology of Learning* (1913, p. 16), he wrote:

> These simple, semi-mechanical phenomena are the fundamentals of human learning also. They are, of course, much complicated in the more advanced states of human learning, such as the acquisition of skill with the violin, or of knowledge of calculus, or of inventiveness in engineering. But it is impossible to understand the subtler and more planful learning of cultural men without clear ideas of the forces which make learning possible in its first form of directly connecting some gross bodily response with a situation immediately present to the senses.

In discussing the historical origins of a behaviorist folk pedagogy, it is both interesting and important to note the absence of any reference to the notion of a mind. Indeed, Thorndike and the prominent behaviorists who followed him saw no need to posit the existence of such an unobservable entity. Skinner's work, in fact, is popularly recognized as an attack on mental content, not simply the adoption of a passive stance towards it. However, with the arrival of the cognitive revolution (Gardner, 1985) in the 1960's, the actuality of a mind became impossible to deny in a psychological theory and the debate shifted to a characterization of its nature. To talk about behaviorist folk pedagogy as it exists today, then, is not to ignore all reference to the mental, but rather to consider the way in which a central feature of the behaviorist tradition is manifested in popular conceptions of the mind (Astington and Pelletier, 1996). That is, we need to ask
what view of mind is compatible with a Thorndikian focus on outcomes? The answer, quite simply, is a passive view, one which is best illustrated by the Lockean metaphor, “mind as a container of the habits acquired through the laws of learning” (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1996).

In the “container” tradition, learners’ minds are considered devoid of the necessary facts, rules, and principles which must then be transferred in a unidirectional fashion from the instructor, text, or other resource. Astington (in press) reports the publication of a “Morning Smile” in a local newspaper which read, “Sign on school door: Free knowledge. Bring your own container.” Thus, in keeping with the mind as container metaphor, teaching becomes an exercise in telling, and learning an exercise in remembering, the habits established through practice and reinforcement. To teach and learn the algorithmic version of multi-digit multiplication presented at the outset illustrates this perspective. The structure is sequential and hierarchical, an image captured by Bernstein’s (1972) “collection codes” view of knowledge. The “collection codes” approach emphasizes the acquisition of hierarchical sequences of information specific to given disciplines and largely unrelated to everyday experience.

In subscribing to a particular view of mind and learning, a contemporary behaviorist folk pedagogy advances an equally particular set of epistemological assumptions. Kitchener and King (Kitchener, 1983; Kitchener and King, 1981; Kitchener, King, Wood, and Davidson, 1989) suggest structuring the study of beliefs about knowledge according to questions of knowledge certainty, the process of knowledge acquisition, and evidence for beliefs. We adopt this framework in discussing the epistemological implications of a behaviorist folk pedagogy.
If teaching is telling and learning is remembering, it follows that something must be told and something must be remembered. That something is knowledge, and for it take on the status of a transferable commodity it must achieve an existence independent of the individual knower. Knowledge, considered in this light, is certain and permanent. From what has been called a “dualist” (Perry, 1970) or “absolutist” (Chandler, Boyes, and Ball, 1990; Kuhn, 1991, 1992) perspective, knowledge is viewed as either right or wrong. It is a “… free-standing attribute of the environing world that only secondarily comes into the passive possession of those who, because they happen to be in the right place at the right time, automatically end up with some portion of the unmitigated truth directly embossed upon the recording equipment of their minds” (Chandler et al., 1990, p. 377). Disagreements between people are attributed to the lack of facts among one of the parties, or the epistemic posture of “defended realism” (Chandler et al., 1990) is invoked in which a working distinction is made between facts and opinions. As the gospel of journalism states, “Comment is free, but facts are sacred”.

In turning to the process by which knowledge is authenticated, access to “the truth” is thought to lie with the appropriate authorities (Kitchener, 1983; Kitchener and King, 1981; Kitchener et al., 1989; Kuhn, 1992; Perry, 1970). Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) call this “silent knowing”, in which the individual accepts the authority’s proclamation as to what is true. There is no belief that the knower can learn from his or her own experiences and thus, knowing does not belong to the individual.

Intimately bound to the process of knowledge acquisition is the nature of the evidence used to justify belief. Since truth is acquired from appropriate authorities,
justification for belief normally takes the form of what Belenky et al. (1986) have termed “received knowing”. That is, evidence consists of returning the words of the authority, be it person or text. Many educators have experienced this in its purest form when, upon asking a student to explain a certain phenomenon, they received the reply, “Because you said so”.

Constructivist folk pedagogy

The uniting theme among constructivist theories of education is a consideration of the child’s point of view, an image well captured in the writings of the educational philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952). Heavily influenced by Darwin’s theory of evolution and the psychology of William James, Dewey accepted that the human ability to think and learn had evolved for the same reason as all other capacities of living organisms - survival. As Phillips and Soltis (1991, p. 38) write in their commentary on Dewey, “... thinking and learning are ‘practical’ capacities, in the exercise of which we actively interact with our surroundings”.

Dewey was an ardent critic of the Thorndikian/behaviorist philosophy of education which he believed treated students in ways that disregarded the function of thinking and learning in the natural world (Dewey, 1902). In nature, he argued, thinking is stimulated by real problems that the learner has a vested interest in solving. Traditional schools, however, restrain both mental and physical activity. Teachers present subject matter that is perhaps of relevance to them, but which does not stimulate pupil interest. Without the opportunity to use the information in problem solving and action, it becomes “static, cold-storage knowledge” (Dewey, 1958, p. 186).
To guard against these dangers, Dewey advanced three overarching principles about the nature of curriculum. First, instruction must focus on the development of the student's mind, not on artificial blocks of subject matter. Second, instruction must be integrated and project-oriented, not divided into small, domain-specific, timed units. Third, through the years of schooling, curriculum movement must be from practical experiences to formal subjects to integrated studies (Dewey, 1902; Farnham-Diggory, 1992).

In advancing his progressive ideals, Dewey saw knowledge emerging from a process of interpretation and clarification of meanings related to various aspects of experience in the world (Dewey, 1938). This central tenet unites both cognitive-developmental and sociocultural perspectives under the constructivist umbrella. Evolving out of Piagetian and neo-Piagetian theory, cognitive developmentalists emphasize the child's interaction with the physical environment. Learning occurs as previously acquired cognitive structures are coordinated and form new superordinate structures. Initially, structures develop from concrete experiences and thinking remains concrete until the coordination of superordinate structures allows for the emergence of abstract thought.

Sociocultural models emphasize the child's interactions with other people. Rooted in Vygotskian theory, cognitive development is regarded as a socially mediated process. The conversation metaphor (Applebee, 1996) is a popular one, as student and teacher engage in a dialogue in an attempt to construct meaning. Notions of communities of learners (Brown and Campione, 1994; Rogoff, Matusov, and White,
1996) and cognitive apprenticeships (Collins, Brown, and Newman, 1989) portray learning as the result of a coordination of perspectives between teacher and learner.

In considering the child's point of view, constructivist theories acknowledge the mind as the place of privately held beliefs and ideas (Olson and Bruner, 1996). Children are seen as individuals, capable of sense making both on their own (cognitive constructivist) and through discourse with others (social constructivist). To teach multi-digit multiplication as Lampert (1986) does is to believe that learners are capable of deriving the unknown from the known. Guided by the facilitating hand and voice of the teacher in the form of activities designed to coordinate perspectives, students access and build on their knowledge of single digit multiplication as a form of addition, eventually constructing an understanding of multi-digit multiplication.

Olson and Bruner (1996) suggest that it is necessary to differentiate between the constructivist world of subjective beliefs and the constructivist world of "objective" knowledge. Reflecting the distinction between Popper's (1972) World's Two and Three, the teacher's role shifts from facilitator/collaborator to what the authors term "information manager". That is, in guarding against the dangers of pure subjectivity and free for all relativism, teachers help children evaluate their beliefs against "that which is generally known". Beliefs are thus formed and revised on the basis of the evidence accumulated in the cultural store. Learning, rather than consisting of strict subjective interpretation, becomes an exercise in belief evaluation, in what Olson and Bruner (1996) call "knowledge construction".

Alternative conceptions of teaching and learning within the constructivist paradigm are closely tied to epistemological concerns. Like their behaviorist
counterparts, constructivist folk pedagogies embody certain assumptions about the nature of knowledge and we examine these according to Kitchener and King's (Kitchener, 1983; Kitchener and King, 1981; Kitchener et al., 1989) certainty, process, and evidence categories introduced earlier. Specifically, we will consider Olson and Bruner's (1996) intraconstructivist distinction within each of the categories in order to advance a notion of "objective" knowledge in a constructivist, as opposed to a behaviorist, folk pedagogy.

In recognizing that the "known" is neither God-given truth nor an indisputable fact of nature, some subscribers to the constructivist tradition view knowledge as fundamentally uncertain. Termed "multiplists" or "relativists" (Kuhn, 1991, 1992; Perry, 1970), these individuals see all opinions as valid and nothing as certain. After all, even experts disagree. Truth, on this view, varies from person to person, and knowledge is interpreted subjectively. Alternatively, they adopt the stance of "skeptic" in which "...all claims are challenged, every heart-felt belief is held up to ridicule, and all action is seen as permanently premature" (Chandler et al., 1990, p. 379).

Remaining within a constructivist framework, movement from Popper's (1972) World Two to World Three as Olson and Bruner (1996) suggest entails certain conditions for knowledge certainty. Some things become knowable at least temporarily or within certain contexts. Establishing conditions for certainty, though, is an activity embedded in the processes by which knowledge is acquired as well as in an understanding of what counts as evidence for belief.

For the unbridled relativists, the source of knowledge lies in personal, idiosyncratic processes such as individual opinion (Kitchener, 1983; Kitchener and King, 1981; Kitchener et al., 1989; Kuhn, 1992; Perry, 1970). Belenky et al. (1986) use the
term "subjective knowing" to convey the delimiting role of intuition and gut feeling in the epistemological enterprise. Personal belief counts as evidence for knowing. To justify beliefs is to share them with others. In this way, teaching, as mentioned earlier, is collaboration, while learning is subjective interpretation.

What then of contextual certainty? What is the epistemological stance given to us by notions of teaching as "information management" and learning as "knowledge construction"? We are referring here to inhabitants of Popper's (1972) World Three, the world of justified or "objective" knowledge. What constitutes "objectivity" is not that which conforms to a Thorndikian or behaviorist version of a free-standing reality, but that which has stood the test of time and been tested against the best available evidence. The distinction is between "the truth" versus "that which is taken to be true" (D. Olson, personal communication, March 1997). Belenky et al.'s (1986) "constructed knowers" acquire knowledge by integrating what is known intuitively with what is "generally known". Evidence for belief comes in the form of reasons. "Evaluative" theorists (Kuhn, 1991, 1992) or "postskeptical rationalists" (Chandler et al., 1990) "... appear to have abandoned the empty quest for absolute knowledge in favor of what amounts to a search for arguably good reasons for choosing one belief or course of action over another" (Chandler et al., 1990, p. 380). Provisional standards of judgment can be argumentatively defended without relying upon access to some unmitigated truth.

In discussing Olson and Bruner's (1996) intraconstructivist distinction, we have seen how generally colloquial notions such as "truth" and "objectivity" take on quite different meanings in a constructivist, as opposed to a behaviorist, folk pedagogical arena. Indeed, epistemological differences in the areas of knowledge certainty, process
of acquisition, and evidence for belief were shown to be intimately bound to divergent conceptions of teaching and learning which, in turn, were shown to follow from different theories of mind. Subscribing to the child-centred perspective of the mind as a place of privately held beliefs and ideas holds very different pedagogical implications than those entailed by the empty vessel or container view of mind, hence our identification of the two folk pedagogical forms. The distinction, as we will see, becomes important when individuals confront external pedagogical demands.

**Folk Pedagogies in Practice**

In order for folk pedagogy as a construct or heuristic to hold any real utilitarian value, it must move out of the realm of theory and into the arena of practice. In much the same way that Clay (1996) has argued that it is not groups that learn but rather individuals, so too does teaching need to be considered in the context of individual agency. Thus, we must ask how folk pedagogy becomes embodied in studies of the personal, in what we may call a personal folk pedagogy.

Learning interactions of any sort serve as appropriate venues for testing the explanatory powers of folk pedagogy. "Watch any mother, any teacher, even any babysitter with a child and you'll be struck by how much of what they do is steered by notions of 'what children's minds are like and how to help them learn,' even if they may not be able to verbalize their pedagogical principles" (Bruner, 1996, p. 46). That said, Western societies place an enormous emphasis on the formal dimension of the enculturation (education) process, a fact best exemplified by the existence of culturally sanctioned professionals (teachers) charged with its facilitation and in the creation of culturally
sanctioned places of learning (schools). Thus, it seems sensible that if we are to begin to ask questions about the origin, evolution and function of personal folk pedagogical beliefs, we start with teachers.

The origin and evolution of teacher folk pedagogy

Researchers have little direct information about the origin and evolution of teachers’ folk pedagogical theories. Surprisingly, what little research there is tends to discount the effects of teachers education programs. Theories once learned during teacher education seem to evaporate from teacher knowledge. Prospective teachers are taught theories concerning pedagogy, psychology, and subject matter areas, but experienced teachers claim that it is necessary for them to forget all theories from university and learn the “real” practice in the classroom (Ben-Peretz, Bromme, and Holkes, 1986; Day, 1984; Zahorik, 1987). In fact, preservice teachers tend to leave their university programs with the same beliefs they brought to them (Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann, 1986; Tabachnick and Zeichner, 1984). Strauss (1993; 1996; Strauss and Shilony, 1994) found that teachers’ mental models of children’s minds and learning more resembled a container-like information-processing model than the Piagetian and Vygotskian models they had heard about in their teacher training courses. Buchmann (1987) argues that professional courses for teachers tend to confirm preexisting beliefs by either being of a common sense nature themselves (too easy) or by not seeming to be about teaching at all (too theoretical). Ironically, Eisner (1984) has noted a similar ineffectiveness of educational research among professors of education at the post-secondary level!
If not through formal training, where do teaching practices such as those presented at the outset of the paper come from and how do they reflect teachers’ beliefs about learning and the mind? One promising line of argument is that which was touched on above; that teachers’ personal folk pedagogical theories develop in the course of practical experience (Brown and McIntyre, 1986; Buchmann, 1987; Clandinin and Connelly, 1986). This empirical bias appears evident even at the preservice stage, when student teachers are more influenced by their host teachers than their university instructors or courses (Calderhead, 1988; Hoy and Woolfolk, 1989; Zeichner, Tabachnick, and Densmore, 1987). But to say that an educational belief structure only begins to take shape after one’s formal career choice would be a mistake. At the very least, formal schooling provides Western individuals with extensive practice at learning and at thinking about learning. By the time high school is completed, twelve years have been spent practicing what they and others think it means to learn (Strauss and Shilony, 1994). Exercises in reflective practice (see, for example, Astington, in press; Gomez and Tabachnick, 1992) have consistently pointed to an internalization of beliefs congruent with personal evaluations of teaching made during countless hours spent as a student (Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann, 1987; Tabachnick and Zeichner, 1984; Weiniinger and Daniel, 1992). “Students expect to become teachers like the teachers they have known and to teach pupils like the ones they went to school with. Vivid memories of 10,000 hours in classrooms help them determine what they want to be and do in teaching” (Buchmann, 1987, p. 189).

It is precisely the experiential nature through which personal folk pedagogical systems develop that contribute to their characteristic properties. Experience, according
to Polanyi (1958), results in the formation of tacit, as opposed to articulate, knowledge. Thus, a direct question such as “What is your philosophy of teaching?” will yield little in the way of uncovering teachers’ folk pedagogical beliefs. Indeed, Strauss (1993; 1996) has distinguished between teachers’ “espoused” and “in-use” pedagogical content knowledge. The former come into play when teachers speak about how they would teach in a particular situation, while the latter occur when teachers actually teach. The distinction is between “know how” and “know that”, one that Ryle (1949) made famous although James (1830/1950), almost a century earlier, postulated much the same thing in his “knowledge about” versus “knowledge of acquaintance”. In “knowledge about”, something is the object of cognition (a metarepresentation). In “knowledge of acquaintance”, we “just know it” as a form of implicit knowledge exemplified in practice. Quite often, the two are incommensurable (Olson, 1984; Strauss, 1996). Applebee (1996) points out the inherent contradiction between what teachers say and do in the context of classroom questioning. Specifically, while often the articulated objective is for students to think for themselves, teachers are aware of the answers they are looking for. Thus, instead of honest requests for information, teacher questions become occasions for drill and practice. Right answers, instead of reasons, come to characterize the nature of classroom intellectual life (Buchmann, 1986). In the language of folk pedagogy, behaviorist models underlie their constructivist images.

Precisely because they are of a tacit and unreflective nature, teachers’ folk pedagogical beliefs are able to embody inherent contradictions (Huber and Mandl, 1984; Roth, 1984). Unlike scientific theories, subjective theories are not logically coherent systems of statements but rather loosely connected ones (Huber and Mandl, 1984). As
such, it is conceivable for opposing elements to be contained within teachers' personal
teachers' personal folk pedagogical theories and consequently appear as so-called "knots" (Wagner et al.,
cited in Huber and Mandl, 1984) in actual practice. To date, very little empirical
evidence on this point exists, and the elucidation of contradictory folk pedagogical
elements that characterize the landscape of teacher practice is the primary goal of the
the landscape of teacher practice is the primary goal of the present study. The rationale underlying the expectation that an inconsistent, imperfect,
and incomplete way of thinking would prove functional in the classroom is presented
below.

Folk pedagogical function

Why do teachers internalize a unique, elaborate, and possibly contradictory
personal folk pedagogy? In answering this question, one possibility is to look to the
uncertain and ambiguous nature of teachers' professional worlds (Ashton and Webb,
1986; Berlak and Berlak, 1981; Doyle, 1986; Kagan, 1992; Schon, 1983). Within the
classroom, opportunities for uncertainty pervade in form of concerns such as whether a
lesson will go as planned, determining the connection between what is taught and what is
learned, and how to judge student comprehension. Add to this the need to motivate
students, cater to pupils of different abilities, and retain control over the entire class
(Phillips and Soltis, 1991; Shavelson and Stern, 1981) and you have a situation that
Berlak and Berlak (1981) describe as being characterized by a "number of dilemmas".

But the dilemmas that confront teachers are not confined to those that originate
from within the classroom. Teachers do not operate as autonomous individuals on
islands of consistency. They comprise part of larger cultural structures that we call
schools, which, in turn, are embedded in still larger cultural structures known as communities. Extra-classroom pressures in the school such as administrators and policies and in the community (especially parents), add further dimensions of complexity onto teachers' professional lives. Consider, for example, the often controversial area of assessment. Applebee (1996) has noted the tension that exists between embedded assessments consistent with a constructivist claim and the need to report performance standards for comparison often requested by parents and school administrations.

Selection of content also seems subject to forces from the outside. Floden et al. (cited in Shavelson and Stern, 1981) observed a willingness on the part of teachers to change content whether the pressure for change derived from texts, curriculum guidelines, a community newspaper, the principal, or the parents of students in their classes. Tabachnick and Zeichner (1986) have shown just how powerful school culture can be in placing pressure on teachers' pedagogical decisions. In their longitudinal ethnographic study, they document the pedagogical metamorphosis of a single teacher, Beth, as she makes a career transition to a school whose beliefs about learning and education are quite different from her own. By the end of the first year of her new placement, Beth’s beliefs about what she should be doing had changed considerably. Active learning and inventing activities to challenge pupil thinking and stimulate interest were replaced with concern for the schedule, a diminished value of open discussions and “hands on” pupil activities, less time explaining the required work, and an omission of discussions on topics that were not tested. In characterizing the culture of Beth’s new school, Tabachnick and Zeichner (1986) noted the presence of a principal quick to alert teachers to any deviations they might have made from “standard practice” and of an
evaluation system that saw all students in a grade writing common exams at the same time.

But what does the uncertain and ambiguous nature of the teaching enterprise have to do with folk pedagogical function? One possibility is that a teacher cannot function in the highly unpredictable environment of the classroom without knowing whether things are going well. A teacher must be able to identify, label, solve, and evaluate solutions to a variety of problems. In the absence of indisputable external guidelines (Ashton and Webb, 1986; Kagan, 1992), we might suggest that teachers create their own in the form of a personal folk pedagogy. "In a landscape without bearings, teachers create and internalize their own maps" (Kagan, 1992, p. 80).

The "psychological comfort" that the belief system provides appears most evident in teachers' reactions to externally imposed pedagogical innovations, an observation embraced for the purposes of the present study and articulated fully below. In this context, the implicit belief system might be said to approximate a filtration function, interpreting and translating new information. Some data already exists indicating how teachers/parents accommodate their pedagogical models to new demands. A nice illustration is provided by John Olson's (1981) account of the way in which a group of science teachers interacted with an innovative curriculum document, the Schools Council Integrated Science Project.

Interviews with teachers working to implement the ideas of the document indicated the presence of dilemmas concerning reduced classroom influence. This reduced influence came as a consequence of project features such as free ranging discussion episodes, a reduced emphasis on the importance of examination preparation
and content, and the requirement for teachers to teach outside of their discipline. Moreover, these elements were explained in the project documents in a language unfamiliar to teachers. Teachers were accustomed to talking about the effects of instruction, not in terms of students achieving certain levels of problem solving skill, but in terms of notebooks accumulated and content learned as measured by examination results. Ultimately, we can say that the folk pedagogy of the project doctrine was inconsistent with that of the teachers’, a statement supported by Table 1.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCISP Doctrine</th>
<th>Science Department Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Approach</td>
<td>Lecture/question-answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science as process</td>
<td>Science as content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No syllabus</td>
<td>Syllabus based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No revision for exams</td>
<td>Revision for exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher control of content</td>
<td>Mandated content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal assessment</td>
<td>No internal assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude change assessed</td>
<td>No attitude change assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment criterion referenced</td>
<td>Assessment norm referenced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dilemma was resolved in favor of the familiar and reliable methods. “Project domestication” occurred as doctrinal language was translated into familiar terms. Discussions became lectures or recitations, intellectual skill development was translated as content memorization and examination rehearsal, and the integrated design became a patchwork of specialized content.

Another interesting case, effective in capturing the tension between competing folk pedagogical theories, is provided by Rogoff et al. (1996). Here the focus is on parents who volunteer time in their child’s classroom as part of a community of learners.
As previously mentioned, the community of learners approach is grounded in social constructivist philosophy. Students learn as they collaborate with adults and other children "... in carrying out activities with purposes connected explicitly with the history and current practices of the community" (Rogoff et al., 1996, p. 390).

The authors report that until parents are able to alter their personal folk pedagogical theories in a way that is consistent with the practices of a community of learners, their participation in the classroom is tentative and awkward. Initially, they interpret and evaluate classroom events through a lens fashioned according to the specifications of their own behaviorist schooling experiences. They see the community of learners classroom as lacking structure, with an uncomfortable absence of teacher authority and direction. Encouraging children to choose and pursue interests is viewed as an attitude endorsing play and fun at the expense of school work. When given the chance to facilitate an activity, these parents tend to assume directorial roles, taking over decision making and providing "leash-like guidance" (Rogoff et al., 1996).

Essentially, what we have begun to talk about in the two preceding examples is teacher practice, that essential testing ground for the conceptual utility of the folk pedagogy construct. We have already seen that what teachers say and do are not necessarily the same, and it is with the doing that we now concern ourselves.

If implicit personal folk pedagogies serve to manage uncertainty through their representational structure, then we might expect the nature of interactive teaching to be somewhat less than a rational affair. In fact, over the last decade or so an increasing proportion of the relevant research literature has begun to concern itself with what is often referred to as "teaching routines" (Brown and McIntyre, 1986; Huber and Mandl,
1984; Lowyck, 1984; Olson, 1984; Peters, 1984; Shavelson and Stern, 1981). Briefly, these studies have sought to differentiate the planning (saying) and interactive (doing) phases of the teaching enterprise. While the former allows for conscious theoretical reflection, the latter is characterized by simultaneity, multidimensionality, unpredictability, and so on. In the course of actual practice, teachers seem to proceed on the basis of stable and well-established routines which we would suggest are anchored in implicit personal folk pedagogical theories. Although the term “routine” could conceivably take on a number of meanings, we refer here to those activities and actions that are unreflective (Peters, 1984), stereotyped (Lowyck, 1984), resistant to change (Shavelson and Stern, 1981), and serve to maintain what Brown and McIntyre (1986) have termed the “normal desirable state of pupil activity”.

Personal folk pedagogies, then, contribute to the establishment and maintenance of “teaching as usual”. External curricular innovations present an interesting case in that “patterns of action and interpretation meant to compete with teaching as usual must provide workable, effective replacements which give ordinary teachers under ordinary circumstances and with ordinary preparation an objective chance to meet the demands of their work” (Buchmann, 1986, p. 187). In discussing the J. Olson (1981) and Rogoff et al. (1996) examples, we have already seen that teachers’ interactions with innovations that originate on the outside provide an interesting testing ground for exploring the possible ways in which folk pedagogies play out in the practical realm (see Ben-Peretz, 1984 for further discussion on the relationship between curricular materials and teacher thought). For the present study, we capitalize on this phenomenon and explore the folk
pedagogical construct in a context delimited by teachers’ practical interactions with a particular curriculum mandated reform in the province of Ontario.

Folk Pedagogy and The Common Curriculum

The Common Curriculum is the foundation of a new approach to teaching and learning as set out by Ontario’s Ministry of Education and Training. Slated to be in place in all primary and junior classrooms at the time of this writing, this vision for education is most fully articulated in the document entitled, The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes, Grades 1-9 (Ministry of Education and Training, 1995). Essentially, two primary themes characterize the nature of this document: integrative/collaborative studies and outcome-based learning.

Integrative/collaborative studies promote a curriculum that emphasizes connections and relationships among ideas, people, and things, as well as among academic disciplines. Teachers are expected to plan units that create authentic learning situations in which students collaborate with adults and other children in “... a constant search for meaning” (Ministry of Education and Training, 1995, p. 17). Learning is conceptualized as an outgrowth of existing knowledge, skills, and values, and traditional subject boundaries are avoided in an effort to promote the view of life as an integrated whole in which people, things, events, processes, and ideas are interrelated. For our purposes, we can say that this portion of the document is essentially characterized by a constructivist or Deweyan folk pedagogy.

Outcome-based learning, the second major theme of the document, is promoted as the vehicle for setting out clear learning expectations, along with performance
standards, to help schools and teachers measure and report on student achievement.

Specifically, the learning outcomes provided in the document are said to "identify the observable/measurable knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to have developed at certain key stages of their schooling" (Ministry of Education and Training, 1995, p. 9). Seemingly ironic in the context of the integrative/collaborative dimension of the document, subject areas are resurrected for the presentation of specific learning outcomes and become even more specialized in discussing provincial standards. Thus, from this brief synopsis, it will hopefully be apparent that the outcomes portion of the document lends itself to a behaviorist or Thorndikian interpretation.

While it is tempting, based on the preceding theoretical discussion, to proffer possibilities as to how teachers might reconcile the tension that exists between two essentially orthogonal educational philosophies, specific predictions of this sort are not what we are after at this stage. In fact, whether teachers even recognize the presence of a potential conflict remains open to inquiry, and even this presupposes that teachers actively work to integrate the document into their practice which in itself is not fixed. As mentioned previously, the aim of the present study is first and foremost exploratory. That is, the goal is to explore the ways in which alternative folk pedagogical forms play out in the practical arena of teachers' professional lives.
CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

The Research Intent

The purpose of this exploratory study is to explicate the ways in which the previously identified folk pedagogical forms manifest themselves in teacher practice. Specifically, it will provide a practical illustration of the dual, yet orthogonal, concern for both the subjectivity of the “knower” (constructivist folk pedagogy) and the transmission of “the known” (behaviorist folk pedagogy) that exists in teachers’ professional lives. The apparent importance of these two epistemological and pedagogical elements in the realm of educational policy was highlighted in an earlier discussion concerning The Common Curriculum. The empirical portion of this study serves to capture the shift from policy to practice.

Participants

The present study forms part of a larger, Ministry sponsored longitudinal investigation of how teachers implement complex changes in curriculum, assessment, and approaches to student learning in their daily practice. The initial phase of the parent study focused on 29 teachers who were teaching in Grade 7 and 8 classrooms. The participants were selected from four large school boards (over 50,000 students) with the assistance of The Learning Consortium - a partnership for teacher development established between The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto and the four boards. The teachers were identified by administrators in their
boards as ones who were actively engaged in efforts to understand, interpret, and perhaps utilize The Common Curriculum initiatives.

The sample is clearly not representative of all intermediate level teachers. The teachers in the study had been identified because they were seen to have serious and sustained commitments to new initiatives. As such, the study offers significant insights into the working lives of those who operate on the "leading edge" of the pedagogic enterprise.

Twenty-one of the teachers remained in the sample for the second phase of the longitudinal project, and of these, seven were randomly selected for the analysis presented here. Selection took place after data collection, the restriction of sample size being a matter of economy. Five of the teachers were female, two were male. Teaching experience ranged from five to 30 years, and all taught at the Grade 7, 8, or 9 level. Individual differences within the sample were not a concern of the present study, the participants having already been identified from the general teaching population in the manner described above. The macro-level focus is consistent with the exploratory and illustrative intent of the study.

**Data Collection**

Data collection took place by way of semi-structured qualitative interviews (Kvale, 1996), each lasting between one and two hours in duration. Six researchers shared the interviewing responsibilities, and followed a 63 item standard interview protocol replete with preset questions, probes, and preamble (see Appendix A).
The specific interview questions were classified and constructed according to six major areas: Class Demographics, Specific Curriculum Unit, The Bigger Picture of The Common Curriculum, Description of a Teacher’s Day, This School and Your Place in it, and Reflections. “Class Demographics” included questions about grade level, gender, linguistic makeup, ability range, and the number of students in the class. “Specific Curriculum Unit” asked teachers to provide an account of a past teaching unit thought best reflective of their stance as an educator. “The Bigger Picture of The Common Curriculum” questioned teachers about their attitudes and beliefs regarding this particular curricular initiative. “Description of a Teacher’s Day” had each participant provide a detailed description of the day of teaching that immediately preceded the interview. “This School and Your Place in it” inquired about perceptions of others in the school. Finally, “Reflections” asked the teachers to look back over the two years since the inception of The Common Curriculum. In keeping with Strauss’ (1993; 1996) distinction between “espoused” and “in-use” pedagogical content knowledge, it is important to note that the interview schedule was constructed so as to include questions that asked teachers to state their beliefs as well as describe what they do in concrete terms. The instrument was pilot tested for length and question clarity on six volunteer teachers.

Although the teachers in the study were all familiar with The Common Curriculum, they varied in the extent to which they actively attempted to integrate it into their practice. Closeness of fit between policy and practice was not a concern of the study and the explicit non-evaluative context of the interview offered teachers the opportunity to describe what they think and do beyond the boundaries of the particular curricular initiative.
Data Analysis

Interviews were tape-recorded and then transcribed. The transcripts were analyzed through a combined top-down and bottom-up analytic perspective. Answers from all questions in the interview schedule were considered. Using Folio Views 4.1 information management software, single sentences were defined as the analysis unit. Initially, statements were classified according to one of three major themes: “Obstacles and Challenges”, “Behaviorist Folk Pedagogy”, or “Constructivist Folk Pedagogy”. This allowed some 40 percent of the sentences to be categorized, with the remainder providing background. Once this was complete, a grounded or bottom-up approach consisting of unitizing and categorizing (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) resulted in the emergence of a number of sub-themes grouped as follows:

Obstacles and Challenges

- Student Dynamic
- Feelings of Uncertainty
- External Influences
- Physical Constraints

Behaviorist Folk Pedagogy

- Expected Knowing
- Communicating Expectations
- Measuring Outcomes
- Subject Specificity
- Requisite Behaviour

Constructivist Folk Pedagogy

- Children and their Needs
- Self-Regulated Learners
- Cooperative Learners
- Making Connections
Subject Integration
Facilitator and Fellow Learner

The three major categories, taken together, provide a framework for examining the identified alternative folk pedagogical forms within a particular context. As we saw in the previous chapter, teachers' professional lives are characterized by difficulty and uncertainty, a context that must explicated as the background against which any pedagogical account takes place. The sub-themes united under the "Obstacles and Challenges" umbrella aim to do just this. Thereafter, it will be appropriate to illustrate the behaviorist and constructivist folk pedagogies according to their respective emergent structures.

Ethical Considerations

The study was cleared by the Human Ethics Committee of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. In addition, project approval was granted by each board's Educational Research Advisory Committee, and the principal at each of the involved schools was made aware of the study. Oral and written communication with each participant detailed the purpose of the research, and discussed confidentiality, anonymity, and withdrawal rights. Participants in the study individually indicated informed consent by signing a release form (see Appendix B).
CHAPTER THREE
DATA AND INTERPRETATION I: OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES – THE TEACHING CONTEXT

The pragmatic realities that define the contours of classroom life often go unacknowledged when pedagogical practice becomes the substance for theoretical discourse. Perhaps this is why teachers claim that it is necessary for them to forget all theories from university and learn the “real” practice in the classroom (Ben-Peretz, Bromme, and Holkes, 1986; Day, 1984; Zahorik, 1987). The literature documenting this empirical bias was reviewed in the first chapter and does not bear repeating here. Suffice it to say, the challenge, as Buchmann (1986) reminds us, is to situate all pedagogical accounts in a context delimited by ordinary teachers operating under ordinary circumstances. Such a context, as we saw earlier, is characterized by uncertainty and ambiguity (Ashton and Webb, 1986; Berlak and Berlak, 1981; Doyle, 1986; Kagan, 1992; Schon, 1983).

The present chapter serves to firmly plant the forthcoming folk pedagogical account in a professional world fraught with obstacles and challenges. The teacher interviews yielded four categories that prove illustrative of just such an environment. The first of these, “Student Dynamic” is comprised of statements reflective of the nature of the pupils in the classroom. The second category, “Feelings of Uncertainty”, captures teachers’ concerns about their effect, their ability to assess learning, and the rate of educational change. The third category, “External Influences”, details the demands
encountered in the form of policies and other people. Finally, “Physical Constraints”

discusses schedule and workload difficulties.

**Student Dynamic**

The present-day Ontario classroom is one characterized by a seemingly ever
increasing number of students:

There are 30 registered in my core class.

As of today I have 37 students.

Such class sizes set constraints:

I have to sit them in groups of six just because my room cannot fit the huge, ridiculous
number I have...

One teacher shared an anecdote that, although retrospectively humorous, is a distressing
illustration of the size phenomenon:

No one told me there was a new student in the room. The poor kid is sitting right there in
front of me and I’m looking around and I think, “Who the heck are you?” He tells me
he’s been here for the last few days. “Oh, I’m sorry, no one has told me you exist.”

In addition to the difficulty involving size, teachers are presented with the
challenge of having to cater to pupils of different abilities (Phillips and Soltis, 1991;
Shavelson and Stern, 1981). The heterogeneity of student ability emerged in teacher talk:

There are a few kids who do quite well, but most of them are your average or below
average kids...
I have students that should be in Grade 2 and I have students that could already be in high school.

I go from reading at a Grade 2 level to reading at a Grade 12 level.

With this group you either have extremely high end kids or kids who scrape by...

Moreover, immigrant populations interject the added challenge of dealing with English as a second language (ESL):

I have ESL students in the class...

We have a huge ESL component. Learning new words, especially in science, is very difficult for them.

One teacher summarized the diversity of his class as follows:

There are two ESL. The one girl is in ESL for everything except math, and the other boy for everything except math and integrated studies. I have three who are informally withdrawn, one for comprehensive help on a fairly regular basis now. Two of them will probably be in a special class in high school. One is not this year because his mother refuses to have him tested and there's nothing we can do about it. There's another boy who is on alternate attendance. He should be getting comprehensive help but he's not in his home school.

Countless extracurricular circumstances accompany students into the classroom and become the concern of their teachers:

Many of the kids are from single parent families. They are new immigrants. Often refugees with a low socioeconomic status...

I have a girl who's been undergoing emotional problems. Her dad committed suicide in the Fall and I think basically this is just affecting her right now. On three different days over the last three weeks something set her off. The one day she saw a picture in a math text book that reminded her of her Dad. It just set her off. The other day a teacher had made a comment about hanging in the fourteenth century and that threw her off for the rest of the day.
One student felt that I was continuously picking on him and that I had never once said anything positive to him. All this came out the weekend he was brought home by the cops and suspended from school which had nothing to do with me. He's been suspended quite a bit and none of his suspensions have had anything to do with me.

One teacher, a thirty year veteran, reflected on the change in the student population he has witnessed over the years. Describing the unparalleled life challenges encountered by today's students, he proffered the following illustrative account:

The boys in one of my math classes were talking one day and they said, "Show Mr. [name] your bullet wound." I said, "What?" They said, "He's got a bullet wound in his side." I said, "What did you do?" He said, "Four or five years ago I was standing on a street in Miami and there was a drive-by shooting. Someone shot at us." And this kid comes to school. And sure he's disruptive but you don't know his background.

**Feelings of Uncertainty**

What defines successful teaching? How is a teacher to gauge pedagogical effectiveness (Kagan, 1992)? Such determinations are indeed necessary, but prove somewhat problematic for teachers. Feelings of uncertainty accompany judgments of personal efficacy:

Maybe I haven't taught them the right skills for success in high school.

When I send my Grade 8 students out of here with the math program that I've taught them, are they going to be sufficiently qualified to meet the goals of the Grade 9 program in high school...?

I know when my ex-students come back and tell me what they're up to, they're the good ones. What happened to the other ones? Why didn't they get through high school? Why didn't they succeed? What could I have offered them...?
For one teacher, uncertainty stemmed from having to teach in an unfamiliar domain:

I’m teaching ESL now and I have no qualifications. You’re thrown into a position teaching things that you don’t know a lot about.

For another, formal teacher training did little to prepare her for the practical dimension of the job:

I have found that teacher education, the faculty of education, did not prepare me at all to be a teacher…

Successful student learning serves as the yardstick against which teacher effectiveness is generally measured. Assessment of learning, though, proves to be an acutely difficult task for teachers (Applebee, 1996; Earl and LeMahieu, 1997):

The problem, and this is the dilemma for all of us, is that outcomes don’t fit marks.

Marks really do not fit with the thrust of the curriculum we are using.

The interim report asks for satisfactory or not satisfactory. Well, what is satisfactory. Who defines what is satisfactory. Is it 50s, 60s, 70s? It’s not really clear. And if it’s not clear to us it’s not clear for the parents…

Referring to a particular Common Curriculum outcome, one teacher explained the assessment difficulty:

How do you know that a kid “appreciates”? That is really, really tough to measure.

Modified curricula posed a particular difficulty for the teachers:

Teaching for kids who are quite weak and are quite low academically, or their skills are not developed, we haven’t quite figured out how to assess them. We modify the
cumculum because that's where the kids are at. They feel successful and they are learning, although according to their marks they are technically failing.

I think I have to be inconsistent with my standards of where a Grade 8 student should be at with my identified and low level students. I have to be inconsistent only to help their self-esteem and realize that these are identified students functioning at their highest levels.

The specific concerns about effect and assessment were accompanied by general feelings of uncertainty about the rate and extent of educational change:

I think the rate and degree of change that the government, and the board to a certain extent, continues to impose within a very unrealistic time frame is very anxiety provoking.

We sort of struggle to get a handle on something, then all of a sudden it is changed again. I’m not sure how long teachers can keep this pace up. I mean at this rate some people are just going to be filling the hospitals.

I’m negative about what’s going to happen to us in the future with the changes. Have they ever asked teachers about the changes we’ve had to cope with? It’s been changes constantly and yet we’re the ones that have to deal with them. We’re expected to be able to do the changing as fast as possible.

**External Influences**

In the first chapter we reviewed evidence suggesting that the dilemmas that confront teachers extend beyond the confines of their individual classrooms (Applebee, 1996; Tabachnick and Zeichner, 1986). Teachers, as we noted, comprise part of larger cultural structures - schools - which, in turn, are embedded in still larger cultural structures - communities. In the context of the former, teachers in the study reported feeling constrained by “incompatible” colleagues:
We develop curriculum collaboratively so to a certain extent I am restricted in what I can do...

Within the framework of this school, for example, you’ve got groups of people who don’t want to change. They’re not flexible.

I’ve done presentations, two in the last two years, on student-led conferencing, but people won’t follow through with it. And I just feel frustrated, like knocking my head against the wall, but that’s the way they want to go and you can’t really make them change.

It’s having to deal with the different philosophies of the people you’re working with, following what the people just above you believe in.

We have a problem with geography and history because their tests are worth 40 percent. They’re very test oriented and I totally disagree with that. It’s an ongoing fight.

It’s very, very isolated here. It’s this is my section and this is my section and don’t come in it.

Beyond the walls of the school itself, parents in the community exert a set of pressures. One teacher, reflecting on the possibility of an ungraded form of student evaluation, explained:

This is a very competitive area in terms of its community. Parents are going to freak, “Where are the As, where are the Bs” and we’re going to have a problem with that. I can also see the parents going, “You know my student is going to be in university and they give marks so why can’t we have marks now?”

Policy initiatives, such as The Common Curriculum, constitute an additional force from the outside. Here, teachers reported struggling with document wording and interpretation:

The policies, the documents, are written in a language that is not understandable. The jargon is just really ridiculous. It is not helpful for the kids, the parents, or the teachers...
I don’t even know what The Common Curriculum is. It’s just this big thing that looms over us.

A lot of the outcomes seem very fuzzy to me. Like the way they are written up. Teachers themselves are saying, “What does this mean?” How can parents know what it means if we don’t know what it means?

There are so many documents coming out now where the wording is so bizarre. New ones are coming out where I don’t even know what they mean. Like an outcome that the children will be able to philosophize about, you know, the literary element in… I don’t even know what it means so how can I teach it. And there’s no place that ever explains it.

The wording is too legalese. The wording is not for the common person to read. It’s still too much jargon.

In addition to struggling with policy content, the teachers shared feelings of frustration over the sheer volume of mandated reforms:

We have all these things coming down the pipe at the same time. It’s really hard. You have to deflect some of them. You just can’t do it all. You can’t read it all...

It’s just too much to implement. If we would implement everything we’d never get anything done.

Does the government realize they are putting out so many documents. The actual boards are putting out documents, the government is putting out documents, everybody is putting out documents...

You take what they have and you go, “Thank you very much I’ll look through it. It’s an interesting document.” And you go back to your room and you put it on your shelf...

**Physical Constraints**

Physical constraints in the form of schedule and workload difficulties add to the complexity of the teaching context. Externally imposed timetable structures directly impact on what transpires in the classroom:
Half of my class was missing which is very frustrating. They went for a sex-ed class and it's hard to teach when half the class isn't there...

I get one class for math everyday in the afternoon. I don't like that at all. They are tired at that particular time and that's when they need to be active. They should be having phys-ed, music, or shop...

Often you'll start a lab and there will be six gone because they're in music, or three gone because they went to a drama presentation, or this one's gone because of something else...

I find that the morning is long for them. It starts at 8:10 and we go to 11:30.

Time-related issues also set constraints on teachers' interactions with their colleagues:

I'm teaching Grade 7 English but I don't have any planning time that is in coordination with any Grade 7 team so I'm basically on my own.

It would be nice if we could get some more time to do workshopping and to talk to each other but there just isn't.

The principal has been unable to work it out so that the intermediate teachers have at least one prep all at the same time to get together...

Participants in the study also spoke generally about the amount of work involved in being a classroom teacher:

I'm feeling quite overwhelmed by things. A teacher's job is just so overwhelming. I feel we don't have the time to do the things we are supposed to do.

My biggest concern is that I teach so many things. And I don't think I'm doing a really good job at anything.

When am I going to have the time to prepare and figure out everything that I have to work with?

I'm planning lessons that deal with guidance for eight other people to be able to use which is an extra load within my timetable. I'm the person out there taking the kids to
electives, taking them to ski day. I was the crazy person that cooked three hundred pancakes the night before.

From the evidence presented in this chapter, we begin to gain an understanding of a teaching context that Berlak and Berlak (1981) describe as being characterized by a "number of dilemmas". Obstacles and challenges reflected in student dynamics, feelings of uncertainty, external influences, and physical constraints define the contours of teachers' working lives. For teachers to function in this unpredictable environment, pedagogical practice must offer some assurance of stability (Kagan, 1992). That is, pedagogical practices or teaching routines (Brown and McIntyre, 1986; Huber and Mandl, 1984; Lowyck, 1984; Olson, 1984; Peters, 1984; Shavelson and Stern, 1981) that unfold in this atmosphere of simultaneity, multidimensionality, and unpredictability must serve to maintain the "normal desirable state of pupil activity" (Brown and McIntyre, 1986). Doing so, as we hypothesized in the first chapter, likely results in the appearance of "knots" (Wagner et al., cited in Huber and Mandl, 1984), practices that can be traced back to incommensurable sets of beliefs. Stated slightly differently, we might expect the teaching context sketched out here to support the presence of alternative folk pedagogical forms. And as we are about to see, it does.
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA AND INTERPRETATION II:
BEHAVIORIST FOLK PEDAGOGY

The emergent picture from the interview data is one of teachers whose professional lives are characterized by what we may appropriately term folk pedagogical conflict. Concern for the predetermined knowledge commodity and its transmission, a behaviorist folk pedagogy, “shares space” with an equivalent concern for the subjectively charged dimension of individual student thought, a constructivist folk pedagogy. By “shares space” we do not mean on an educational landscape populated by groups of teachers who consistently tend in one direction or the other. Rather, the simultaneity of existence that we refer to here is a property of the individual teacher. This distinction is important to bear in mind as we present prototypical interview evidence that exemplifies a behaviorist folk pedagogy in this chapter, and a constructivist folk pedagogy in the next.

Five major themes reflective of a behaviorist folk pedagogy emerged from the interview data. “Expected Knowing”, “Communicating Expectations”, and “Measuring Outcomes” involve teacher-driven efforts aimed at the determination, the transmission, and the measurement of what students need to learn. The fourth theme, “Subject Specificity”, deals with the utilization of traditional discipline domains in structuring pedagogical content. Finally, “Requisite Behaviour” captures the behavioral stance of students deemed necessary for the successful receipt of knowledge.
**Expected Knowing**

For some teachers, what students are expected to know is best described in terms of the absence of that very knowledge. Talk about “knowledge gaps” was not uncommon:

The kids are coming up with gaps in their learning...

The kids were just so far behind with so many gaps in their learning that it was quite shocking.

Often, the identification of missing knowledge content was illustrated in concrete terms:

I gave them a page of different word uses. Instead of reading the word minute (small), the kids would automatically read it as minute (time).

The idea of possessive. “The boys’ arrows”, s’, many told me that it was incorrect, that the apostrophe had to come before the s even though it was correct. They didn’t know the idea of possessive.

Some kids have no idea about short vowel and long vowel sounds. Spelling hop or hope is really hard for them.

I find it very frustrating as a teacher to have students who don’t know what 6 x 3 is and they have to try and count on their fingers...

One teacher described her students’ lack of fraction terminology as follows:

I’d write a fraction on the board and I’d say, “Tell me the parts of the fraction.” The kids wouldn’t put their hands up. Then one of the children said, “I always mix up which is which” and then everybody said, “So do I, so do I.” They just said that they knew one was called the denominator... And then I said, “What about this kind of fraction?” and had fifteen over three. “What is this called?” Not one student could answer what it was called... I wrote on the board, “improper fraction.”
The emphasis on terminology was brought up repeatedly by many of the teachers. For example:

They were calling apostrophes commas...

They had to talk about the perimeter, the altitude, and the base... They had to talk about factoring, forty-five and ninety degree angles.

They had to name the different parts of the cell...

As one teacher put it in describing the learning demands of her favourite teaching unit:

It’s definitely a lot of language words and pronunciations that have to be mastered.

Other teachers talked explicitly in terms of “what students need to know”:

They need to know what the differences and similarities are between plant and animal cells. How those make up organ systems in mammals and reptiles... How they come together to make up a system...

To conceptualize knowledge as a transferable commodity is to subject it to properties of measurement. The exercise of quantifying “the known” emerges clearly in the teachers’ references to content coverage:

I’ve tried to say to the kids, using a comparison with my hands, “This is what we have to cover this year” and I show them a metre. And, “This is what we have covered” and I show them a centimetre...

We have got a lot to learn if we want to cover the grade eight program.

There are areas that we didn’t cover that we should have.
Communicating Expectations

Once teachers have determined what their students are expected to know, these expectations must be communicated to the pupils themselves. After all, if the objective, "the known", is thought to exist independently of the subjective, then sensitizing the naive to that which must be learned defines part of the teacher's role as expositor. In keeping with a principal tenet a behaviorist folk pedagogy, this sensitization proceeds along a route best characterized by the language of direct transmission:

All of the outcomes for the unit are posted...

I show the kids what is expected.

I give them some ideas as to what I am looking for...

There is a model for them to look at on the sheet that I give them and they follow that model.

I give each child a large draft-board with all of the outcomes right across the curriculum on it.

I tell the student beforehand, "This is what I'm expecting from you."

I hand out an expectation sheet for the presentation - what I'm looking for...

Measuring Outcomes

The responsibility of defining and communicating what is to be known places the teacher in a position of pedagogical authority. The unidirectional transmission of "the known" from teacher to student elevates the former to a position of expert. As such, the task of determining the success of student learning lies not with the student but rather
with the teacher. This pattern emerged from the interviews in the form of teachers’ talk about the use of traditional testing practices:

I was shocked by my test results in math, spelling, and reading...

We’ve got a lot to cover and the quickest way I’m going to do it is to teach those lessons and then test them.

I had five classes all day yesterday and three of the periods were taken up with quizzes.

If they can do well on a test then I’ve done my job.

Not surprisingly, learning success was sometimes quantified:

In order to be successful they need to have at least eight percent.... If they got less than that or the class as a rule got fifty to sixty percent then I haven’t done my job.

I’m looking at around 750 marks for them.

I received a call from a concerned mom who figured ninety-seven percent isn’t enough.

One teacher responded to a question asking her to describe the academic abilities of her students as follows:

Well, based on the last report card the class average was seventy-three percent.

**Subject Specificity**

The sequential and hierarchical structure of a behaviorist folk pedagogy is well captured in Bernstein’s (1972) “collection codes” view of knowledge. As we saw earlier, the “collection codes” approach emphasizes the acquisition of hierarchical sequences of
information specific to given disciplines. This subject specificity emerged from teacher talk in the form of references to traditional academic disciplines:

- We do math in the morning and then they go to French.
- They are in rotary for French, art, science, and phys-ed.

The Grade 8s had geography first and are in the process of having science right now. Then they will be having history.

After lunch we had math and we did a lesson on integers.

I teach Grade 7, 8, and 9 science.

One teacher described the intermediate division in her school as follows:

- We’re a group of five people delivering five different programs in five different subject areas.

**Requisite Behaviour**

For knowledge to be successfully received, the student must adopt a particular behavioral stance. The ability to pay attention was frequently mentioned as a necessary prerequisite for receipt of an instructional message:

- It has been sit down, get quiet, learn to focus, learn to concentrate...

They are able to listen to lessons now. They know how to listen with their eyes as well as their ears. They know how to put pencils, toys, and rulers down.

We had to work on listening skills and go over the instructions.

I find I have to repeat myself incredibly when it comes to instructions and then wait time and again. I keep telling them that there is no point in me talking unless they can hear me.
Moreover, learning success was tied to diligent behaviour patterns:

The emphasis is on good work habits...

The kid is not in trouble because he’s black. The kid is in trouble because he’s bad or his behaviour is not appropriate. [That’s] why he is not doing well in school. Why is this person doing well in school? Well, probably because they work harder...

The good student will always succeed, the one with the proper work ethic and the proper organizational skills.

There’s nothing about behaviour in the report card which I wish there was. There’s nothing about late or incomplete assignments.

The emphasis on appropriate behaviour patterns included descriptions of techniques designed to bring it about. Classical behaviorist notions of reward and punishment appeared in various guises:

I had a list of people who had broken the rules and they knew they had broken the rules. They know there are consequences.

I’m worried about the behaviour component and the lack of learning that is coming from it. I have them on a reward system that all the teachers are in on.

We talked about how to [deal with misbehaviour.] Maybe giving detention and when do we get the office involved. It didn’t have anything to do with the curriculum as such, but it helped with our delivery of the curriculum in the end.

Because the kids have been fantastic for the last few days I gave them a free period which their mouths dropped at. I said, “No, I can’t just stand up here and tap you on the hands when you are bad. You have been fantastic. You’ve earned a free period.”

The five thematic elements of teacher practice presented in this chapter group sensibly under the rubric we have defined as a behaviorist folk pedagogy. Indeed, if the
story were to end here the emergent picture would be one of mental, epistemological, and pedagogical consistency. Teachers determine, transmit, and measure what students are to know, while the latter enhance the likelihood of successful learning by behaving appropriately and filtering out surrounding "noise" that may interfere with the intended transmission. But the story does not end here. A very different set of features simultaneously characterize the practical context inhabited by the same group of teachers, features we may describe as reflective of a concern for the subjectivity of the student. We present shades of evidence for this - a constructivist folk pedagogy - in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE
DATA AND INTERPRETATION III:
CONSTRUCTIVIST FOLK PEDAGOGY

The teacher interviews yielded six categories that prove illustrative of a concern for the subjective features of knowing. The first of these, “Children and their Needs”, is comprised of statements reflective of an identified need to consider student individuality. The second and third categories, “Self Regulated” and “Cooperative Learners”, detail the ascribed student role. The fourth and fifth categories, “Making Connections” and “Subject Integration”, deal with the substance of pedagogical content. Finally, “Facilitator and Fellow Learner” captures teachers’ reports of their own roles.

Children and their Needs

Mary Clay (1996) has argued that it is not groups that learn but rather individuals. Concordant with this perspective, the teachers in the study articulated the need to acknowledge the diversity among the learners in the classroom:

I look at meeting the needs of all kids...

I believe that all kids are different and that they have different ways of learning.

We’ve had discussions about meeting the needs of the children in the school...

If I’ve got a lot of children that love to research then I need to meet their needs. I also have kids that need activities, so I’ll structure the unit towards that as well.

One teacher spoke explicitly in child-centred terms:
The whole thing centres on the child. A lot of us here have the same view of the child in mind. Some people don’t really take a look at these kids and say, “Hey, where are these kids coming from?” They stress content and want to keep that as the number one priority, not the child.

A successful activity or lesson was often defined as one which offered something for everyone:

All of them try it. It doesn’t matter what level they’re at. They are able to do some of it. The number one concern behind it is that it shows a concern for the kids.

It’s good because all of the students can do it at one level or another. It integrates all of the different levels in the class.

We modify the curriculum because that’s where they are at. They can successfully achieve the curriculum that has been modified.

**Self-Regulated Learners**

When pedagogy tends in the direction of the subjective, the stance of the learner becomes one imbued with images of activity. Self-regulation is said to occur when “students activate and sustain cognitions, feelings, and behaviours oriented toward attainment of academic goals” (Gettinger, 1995, p. 671). In effect, self-regulated learners take responsibility for their own learning (Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons, 1992). Such responsibility emerged in the interviews through talk about the promotion of student self-reflection:

I have students involved in the generation of learning criteria on an ongoing basis, doing things like self-assessment...

I have them write the test questions...
They think about their own learning. What they have been doing, what they did in the past, how they felt about it, what they are doing now, how they feel about it.

I want them to have confidence in their abilities as learners and I want them to be able to communicate and reflect on that.

They write down what the activity was, what they did, what they learned from it, how they felt about it, and what they'd like to do next.

As illustrated in the immediately preceding quote, some of the teachers encourage their students to assume responsibility for the direction of future learning:

I tell them they’re my little scientists. They have to go out there and do it on their own. I’m trying to teach them to be inquirers...

I’ve given them the chance to go and investigate for themselves. They decide, “What can I go and learn from here and not have Mrs. [name] tell me that I have to learn this?”

**Cooperative Learners**

As we saw in the presentation of the epistemological assumptions of a constructivist folk pedagogy, subjective belief counts as evidence for knowing and, moreover, to justify beliefs is to share them with others. Acknowledgment of the collaborative or communal (Brown and Campione, 1994; Rogoff, Matusov, and White, 1996) features of the learning environment emerged in talk about group work:

It has always been my philosophy to have them sit with their friends and work at cooperative learning...

I encourage peer tutoring a great deal.

They worked in companies to build pasta bridges.
I find they learn more with groups...

We were doing a jig-saw. Everybody had become an expert on one of the five kingdoms.

They do research projects on World War II in a small group situation.

**Making Connections**

Earlier we considered Lampert's (1986) approach to teaching multi-digit multiplication as an example of a constructivist folk pedagogy. In particular, we saw how students access and build on their knowledge of single digit multiplication as a form of addition, eventually constructing an understanding of multi-digit multiplication. Although not a common feature of reported teacher practice in this study, references to past student learning were made:

The activity is based on applications of some mathematical skills they’ve learned in the past. There are also extensions into algebra that some kids are able to handle.

They start off by counting, something very simple. Then they begin to use addition and multiplication.

Dewey (1902) argued that thinking is stimulated by real problems that the learner has a vested interest in solving. Reviewing the essence of his educational theories in the first chapter, we noted his warning that without opportunities to use information in an authentic way it becomes “static, cold-storage knowledge” (Dewey, 1958, p. 186). In addition to making connections to past learning, teachers also spoke of a connections between classroom learning and the “real” world. For example:
They can see a reason for doing this because I try to relate most of the things they do to a real life activity or bring it within their experiences. They see some reason for doing this. An example is fractions. I've always found children to have a great deal of difficulty with fractions. They want to know why they have to learn fractions because where do you use fractions in the real world? It's very difficult to explain to them where you might use them. In the stock market in the U.S. they still use fractions, but you can also use decimals. You have to try to be realistic with them to give them a purpose.

When I was a student we did hands on, real things. I really enjoyed that. It was relevant to me. It was very relevant. If it wasn't relevant, I didn't enjoy it. I still try to use some of those things I learned thirty or forty years ago with my own groups of kids.

**Subject Integration**

In the previous chapter we noted the discipline-specific talk of teachers indicative of what Bernstein (1972) described as a "collection codes" orientation. One cannot help but note the definitional similarity to the "traditional" view of education that Dewey (1938) criticized in advancing his "progressive" ideals. In setting out his vision of progressive education, Dewey (1902) called for instruction to be centred around integrated and project-oriented activities. Such an "integrative codes" (Bernstein, 1972) orientation was exemplified in teachers' talk about subject integration:

Our reading is integrated with our geography. [We read] magazine articles that are appropriate to human geography and then take spelling from that...

The unit integrates literacy, numeracy, thinking skills, and social skills.

There's math in terms of how cells divide - exponentially. There's language, always language. We did some journal writing and things like that. In terms of self and society, we looked at diseases of cells, cancer causing agents, toxins. It was looking at the whole picture.

The unit cuts across every single subject area including some that I don't teach. I add to the curriculum being taught by other teachers.
I look at their ability to connect a math assignment to an English assignment to what may be the geography part of the program.

A couple of the teachers provided content-specific examples:

We don’t teach a month of history and then a month of geography. It’s integrated. The unit we are currently working on is a historical and geographic look at Canada. The geographic aspects are looking at river systems, how river systems either facilitate or hinder exploration and settlement. In terms of history, we are looking at the settlement of Upper and Lower Canada, the reasons for settlement, push-pull migration factors, and then the French/English issue. In terms of the language arts, we looked at social structures, the hierarchies. We wanted to see the differences in the hierarchies of New France and Upper Canada. Then we bring it to the present. What are our hierarchies? What are the social structures that we have? How do they compare with the past?

The students express their opinions about how and where things are done with respect to whaling and ships, and why you would study an endangered species. Then it comes into the math program. We’re looking at charting the ocean floor. We look at maybe doing some ratio and rate of catch of the fish and the whales. We look at the analysis of the cost of putting an expedition together. I bring science into the room simply because it goes so well with it. We are talking right now about red tide and algae, and contaminating fish but not humans. And of course there’s the history behind whaling and the history regarding the land, the ocean floors, and the ways of catching fish.

Facilitator and Fellow Learner

In acknowledging the subjective dimension of knowing, the teacher’s role shifts from that of expositor to that of facilitator:

I did a lot of facilitating in the unit. I tend to not like to talk very much.

I try to move them along in their own learning rather than me just spouting information.

I do less talking and let their learning “flow” more...
Learning becomes a partnership process, with the teacher assuming the posture of fellow learner:

If we’re trying to teach kids to be lifelong learners then we need to be as well.

You cannot go through this day to day business without learning something yourself.

I do not talk down to my students. I talk to them as equals.

I learn from the students everyday.

I learned something new from Scientific America the other day and used it in class with the grade sevens. They were as amazed as I was.

Taken together, the six categories presented in this chapter are reflective of a constructivist folk pedagogy. Children are seen as active agents, assuming responsibility for their own learning. The mind is acknowledged as a place of privately held beliefs and ideas, and teaching serves to create opportunities for intersubjective interchanges, for sharing beliefs through collaborative discourse. Realistic and project-oriented activities form the substance of pedagogical interactions.
CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSION

Just as we saw in the policy context, accounts of teacher practice are filled with examples that point to a simultaneous consideration of the subjective mental life of their students and at the same time that which is "known". In the language of constructivist and behaviorist folk pedagogies respectively, this duel concern becomes problematic in that each element maps onto a different mental and epistemological assumption. But the problem is not one generally identified by teachers. The teachers we interviewed seemed quite content to straddle the fence separating the "subjective" and the "objective" dimensions of "the known" without any attempt to bridge the two. Indeed, this contradictory pedagogical character of teacher practice was hypothesized to hold a certain functional appeal in a context fraught with uncertainty and ambiguity (Ashton and Webb, 1986; Berlak and Berlak, 1981; Doyle, 1986; Kagan, 1992; Schon, 1983).

Moreover, the evidence reviewed in the first chapter outlining the experiential origins of pedagogical practice adds further support to the observed pattern (Ben-Peretz, Bromme, and Holkes, 1986; Day, 1984; Zahorik, 1987). What remains, at this point, is to consider some of the implications of the observed bifurcation.

**Bifurcated Folk Pedagogies: Implications**

Earlier we reviewed Olson and Bruner's (1996) account of "objective" knowledge in a constructivist, as opposed to a behaviorist, folk pedagogy. In notions of teaching as "information management" and learning as "knowledge construction" we
saw a model in which the subjective and collective dimensions of the known could be recognized and related. Distinguishing between “the truth” and “that which is taken to be true” acknowledged the human origin of “objective” knowledge, while free for all relativism was avoided by justifying the revision of beliefs on the basis of the evidence accumulated in the cultural store. While this model is appealing in its integrated concern for the both “the knower” and “the known”, the present study illustrates the more common experience of teachers being pulled between the two sets of constraints - a concern for the transmission of “the known” and an equal concern for the subjective mental life of students.

Although these concerns emerge from teacher practice, are they in fact valid? Should one concern predominate? Attempts to reconcile them have been a common feature of educational theory and policy at least since Dewey (1902). Yet classical theorists on one hand, and educational reformers on the other, staked opposing claims as they attempted to come to grips with this gap between what is known collectively and should be taught, and what one knows subjectively and should be developed. However, both elements of the epistemological enterprise seem to be valid. Few would deny that Newton’s theory has managed to outlive Newton. Yet if there had never been a Newton with his personal subjective experiences there could be no Newton’s theory. The distinction, as Smith (1990) points out, is between knowledge as independent of particular knowers and knowledge as arising in the subjective activities of particular subjects. “Knowledge exists only in the participation of subjects as knowers” and yet, “[to talk of] knowledge discards the presence of the knowing subject” (p. 66). Taken in this light, the identified inconsistencies in teacher practice do not indicate the need for a
choice, but rather the need for a richer pedagogical theory of the sort Olson and Bruner (1996) hint at. That is, a framework in which "objective" knowledge is demythologized by reading the human knower into it and "subjective" knowledge is objectivized by relating it to archival tradition.

The practical possibility of developing and communicating a framework that bridges the elements of the more mainstream behaviorist and constructivist folk pedagogies is not at all clear. The unreflective character of teaching routines makes it likely that educators move between pedagogies in a single teaching episode, a tactic that we have suggested might prove functional in managing the complexities of a school day. In one reported lesson, for example, a teacher prepared her students for an upcoming common assessment by having them practice a vocabulary list, then switched to an interactive discussion in which students were asked to provide subjective points of view.

A call for the adoption of a more complex folk pedagogical theory poses a substantial challenge to teachers, one of changing beliefs. Effecting such a change seems a formidable task. As previously mentioned, direct instruction appears relatively ineffective (Strauss and Shilony, 1994). Preservice teachers enter teacher training programs with well-established beliefs about students and learning (Kagan, 1992). More telling, though, is that they tend to leave their university programs with the same beliefs they brought to them (Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann, 1986; Tabachnick and Zeichner, 1984). Simple persuasion is ineffective, probably because beliefs are formed on the basis of cognitive and affective information (Bruning, Schraw, and Ronning, 1995). Whether beliefs are changeable may depend in a large part on how the beliefs were formed initially. Those formed on the basis of affective responses may be resistant to change by
cognitive means and vice-versa. Traditional teacher education programs probably pay far more attention to the cognitive dimension than to the more subjective affective one. However, if we subscribe to the argument that anchors folk pedagogy in personal history, then this subjectively charged affective component cannot be ignored. Earlier illustrations of the emotional labour inherent in the teaching context offer support for this line of argument.

Kagan (1992) suggests that attempts to change teachers' beliefs should proceed along the lines suggested by research on conceptual change. Nussbaum and Novick (1982) propose a three-step model geared to this end. First teachers must be assisted in making implicit beliefs explicit. Efforts aimed at reflective practice in which teachers collectively analyze individual classroom performances attempt to do just this (Astington, in press; Gomez and Tabachnick, 1992). Second, teachers must be confronted with the inadequacy of their beliefs. Finally, extended opportunities that allow for integration and differentiation of old and new knowledge must be provided.

It is far from given that such a folk pedagogical conversion will be possible for more than a few gifted teachers. Despite this, it remains a worthwhile goal. Pedagogical practices of all varieties communicate something about the learner to the learner. They each communicate a way of thinking about the self. They are the vehicles through which children come to think of themselves as competent on the one hand or as incompetent on the other (Olson and Bruner, 1996). And moreover, it is pedagogy that makes culture possible; without means for preserving and accumulating competencies, culture could not be created (Kruger and Tomasello, 1996; Premack and Premack, 1996; Tomasello, Kruger, and Ratner, 1993).
In discussing folk pedagogy from the perspective of the teacher, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that beliefs about learning and the mind are characteristics of the learner too. Thus, we might do well in the future to ask about the importance of an intersubjective congruence between the folk pedagogies of teacher and student. Alternatively, perhaps it may be that successful student outcomes in certain domains can be connected to some folk pedagogical theories but not to others. Yaakobi and Sharan (1985) have shown that teachers in the humanities hold beliefs about learning and knowledge that differ markedly from those in science and language studies. Specifically, the folk pedagogical theories of science and language teachers are largely consistent with what we have referred to here as a behaviorist orientation, while humanities teachers uphold a constructivist philosophy. One might well imagine student success in the "hard" sciences to be associated with a concern for "the known", while evaluations in the arts would reserve space for "the knower".

Through its utility as a conceptual construct, folk pedagogy allows us to see that pedagogical practice is never neutral. Accounts of classroom practice become more than just windows to teaching techniques. They become visible portions of a set of assumptions about knowledge and the mind. In this way, teaching practices reflect notions of competence. And it is in notions of competence that we find definitions of education, of self, and of society.
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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Beyond Transitions - 1998 Follow Up

Preamble to Teacher Interview

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed again. Like last time, we are going to tape your comments but you can ask us to stop the tape if there is something that you don't want recorded. As we mentioned in the letter, your responses will be confidential and you will not be identified in any reports unless you give written permission.

We hope that this follow-up interview will give you a chance to reflect on what has happened for you in teaching over the last couple of years. We want to gather some information about how you feel and what you think about The Common Curriculum reforms now that you've had some time to work with them. This is not an evaluation of you. We want to know both about what you are and what you aren't doing and why. Your responses will be analyzed along with the other teachers' in the study to try to understand how teachers are experiencing the changes and responding to them. We'll consider all that we have from the group of teachers that we're interviewing to prepare a report and will send you a summary when it's done, probably next year. We have left the interview format as unstructured and open as possible so that we can explore the issues from your perspective. Like last time, I will also ask you to describe a unit that you've done, in some detail. Since I don't have a lot of time with you, I may interrupt and redirect you along the way.

Interview Protocol

I'm going to start with some questions about your assignment and your class this year. (Note-move through this section fairly quickly, as a warm-up).

Class Demographics

1. What grade level and subjects are you teaching? (probe: i.e. rotary program - & split grade or straight)
2. How many students in your class(es)? (range in rotary)

3. What is the gender split in your class(es)?

4. What is the racial, ethnocultural, linguistic makeup of your class(es)?

5. How would you describe your students in terms of range of academic abilities?

6. Are any of your students receiving additional support? (probe - ESL, special ed, peer tutoring).

7. How is your classroom physically organized? (probe - rows, centres, eclectic)

Specific Curriculum Unit

One of the most interesting parts of the last interview was your description of a unit that exemplifies your approach to teaching and to assessment. I'd like you to do the same thing again. Pick a unit that you have done that you think worked well and is a good example of you as a teacher. Describe it for me, in detail. Tell me about what you as the teacher did in this unit (probe - what instructional strategies did you use? What resources did you use?)

8. What aspects of The Common Curriculum do you think this unit addressed?

9. What outcomes did it address?

10. What about curriculum integration?

11. Overall, how consistent do you think this unit is with The Common Curriculum?

12. What was not consistent with The Common Curriculum?

13. What did you look for as evidence to decide how well your students had met the outcomes? (probe - How do you know what the students have learned? How did you know as a teacher what you were doing was working?)

14. How did you assess the learning in this unit? (probe - What assessment approach(es) did you use? Why did you use these/ How did you know they were successful?)

15. How consistent was this assessment with The Common Curriculum?
16. Is there anything you did that wasn't prescribed by The Common Curriculum?


18. How did your students do in relation to the outcomes covered in the unit?

19. What percentage achieved the outcomes?

20. How did you communicate or report progress to the students in this unit? To the parents?

21. How did you handle time issues in this unit? (probe - What about timetables, prep time, homework, e.g. work done outside of school?)

22. Are there key activities other than the clock that determined how you implemented this unit?

23. There are occasions when time seems to fly by or drag on. Describe when this happened during this unit?

24. How did you ensure students had time to achieve the outcomes? (e.g., enrichment, remediation)

25. Why do you think this unit gives us a good sense of you as a teacher? (probe - What in it are you proud of? What was particularly effective? Why?)

26. Looking back at the unit, is there anything you would have done differently? (ie. in terms of instruction or assessment; in relation to The Common Curriculum)

**The Bigger Picture of The Common Curriculum**

Now that we've talked about a specific unit I want to ask a few questions about the bigger picture of The Common Curriculum.

27. Overall what is your involvement in The Common Curriculum in relation to using outcomes, assessment and teaching right now? (probe - What quadrants of The Common Curriculum do you teach? Are you working with others jointly? Are you involved in any other activities in school, board, consortium?)

28. How is what you're doing now different with what you were doing 2 years ago?
29. To what degree are The Common Curriculum reforms compatible with your own attitudes/beliefs about the teaching/learning/assessment process?

30. To what degree are The Common Curriculum reforms incompatible with your own attitudes/beliefs about the teaching/learning/assessment process?

31. How do you think this affects you in terms of implementing The Common Curriculum?

32. Are your attitudes or beliefs significantly different from other teachers/administration/parents/board?

33. Do these influence or impact your own attitudes and beliefs in any way?

34. How much control do you feel you have over the implementation of the Common Curriculum?

35. How dependent are you on others for implementing reform initiatives?

36. How do you make the Common Curriculum reforms fit with the many other reforms that are occurring at the same time? (e.g., safe schools, equity) (probe - How do you decide what gets implemented and what does not within your classroom?)

Description of a Teacher's Day

In this section I'm interested in your relationship between home and school. I'd like to ask you to describe a day in your life for me, so that I can get a feel for what a day in the life of a teacher includes.

37. Even though it may not be a typical day, describe your last teaching day for me. Feel free to editorialize, tell me how you felt about the day and about individual events or activities within it, what was on your mind, what worked and what didn't work, how you handled situations that arose. Pretend I'm a diary and you're trying to capture your day in words and ideas and feelings. So, just start with getting up in the morning and walk me through the day, step by step. (probe - including out of school, full day, no gaps. What happened in classes; how did you feel?)

This School and Your Place In It

The next few questions are about your school and your place in it.
38. Describe your role in your school. (e.g. in terms of leadership, decision-making, assignments)

39. Has it changed over the last 2 years?

40. What kind of place is your school?

41. How are you controlled/limited in what you do in terms of time demands imposed by the school or other people?

42. Describe your relationships. with students/colleagues/administration/parents.

43. Can you talk openly with your administration?

44. Do teachers work in isolation or do they pull together?

45. How do students interact with each other in the school?

Reflections

46. Looking back over the past 2 years, what obstacles have you experienced during implementation of The Common Curriculum in terms of instruction? in terms of assessment? (e.g., materials organizational, political and human barriers in your work.)

47. How have you tried to overcome these obstacles?

48. How did you feel about these obstacles? (positive and negative feelings?)

49. Again, in retrospect, what has been a support for you or facilitated what you had wanted to do? (probe - Where did you get your knowledge for assessment strategies? outcomes?)

50. Who has provided leadership?

51. What about staff development (probe - any teacher collaboration?)

52. What support would you have liked that you didn't get?

53. Have you found any particular personal coping strategies to be effective in dealing with these changes?
54. How would you describe yourself as a learner?

55. What keeps you learning?

56. Reflecting on the past two years, how have issues related to "time" influenced your work? (e.g. time for preparation, professional development time for reflection, inquiry.)

57. What do you think your principal believes are the key ways time influences your work?

58. Have there been any changes in your personal circumstances that have influenced your work during the last few years?

59. How do you balance time between work and your personal life?

60. Describe the relationship of your work to your life interests and commitments (e.g., interest in children, commitment to life long learning, commitment to family, interests in the arts, music, sports)

61. What positive/negative feelings do you have about all the changes you experienced in the last 2 years in your work?

62. What positive/negative feelings do you have about all the changes you experienced in the last 2 years in your personal life?

63. Is there anything you'd like to add about your experience with The Common Curriculum reforms that hasn't been discussed? (e.g. concerns about The Common Curriculum, recommendations etc)

Thanks for being willing to talk to me. As we mentioned in the letter, we may also send you a short questionnaire before the end of the school year.
APPENDIX B

RELEASE FORM


I, ________________________________ have read the letter of invitation to participate and understand the objectives and methods outlined in the proposed research. I agree to participate under the study’s terms of reference and I am satisfied with the confidentiality safeguards and protections of individual privacy.

I understand that all data collected by means of semi-structured interviews are intended to be used strictly for analytical, research, and educational purposes. I give my permission for release of these data in the public domain, within the confidentiality guidelines outlined, including use of these data in written reports, graduate teaching, and educational conference contexts. I realize that my name will not appear in these reports, unless I give explicit written permission and have read the report.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time, if so desired, at which point all interview data will be destroyed.

Name (Please Print)______________________________

Consent Granted (Signed)______________________________