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# International Education Journal

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Designed by Katherine Dix

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## Centre and Periphery in Higher Education: The Case of Israel

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*Higher education systems all over the world are currently occupied with the crucial problems of equal opportunity and accessibility in the tertiary level. The paper focuses on the perennial issue of center and periphery in higher education. It takes Israel as a case in point.*

*Like many other Western countries Israel is undergoing a speedy process of what is termed 'massification of the higher education system'. The inauguration of fully accredited public and private colleges as well as the academisation of the teaching profession brought about a dramatic increase in the enrolment of degree programs. During the 1980s and the 1990s the number of students in Israel tripled and the odds of attending a higher education institution grew by 50 per cent.*

*The paper poses several pertinent questions in this respect. a) Has the recent transformation in the Israeli higher education system really increased the odds of higher education attendance? b) Has it indeed reduced social selection processes in higher education? c) Has it really equalised opportunity to attain access to the most desirable fields of study?*

*The paper tries to answer these questions first by analysing available data published by the CBS (Central Bureau of Statistics) and second by analysing data pertaining to the largest public college in the country.*

*It arrives at a cautious conclusion that the system did increase the odds of higher education. It reduced social selection in higher education. It also enhanced opportunities to attain access to the most desirable fields of study. Peripheral populations definitely benefited from the establishment of a binary system of higher education in Israel.*

Higher education, equal opportunity, peripheral populations, social selection,  
accessibility to tertiary education

### **EDUCATIONAL EXPANSION AND GRADUAL MASSIFICATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

In spite of the fact that schools existed in ancient times in all known civilisations, schooling became universal only during the last hundred years or so. As late as 1800 the great majority of West European adults had not attended any school at all. Even a hundred years later, those whose schooling exceeded four or five years of formal education were considered a rarity (Williams, 1960). The twentieth century revolutionised education. Schooling became compulsory in Western

countries during the first half of the century. It was adopted by developing countries in the second half of the century upon attainment of independence.

Secondary education followed suit with the United States acting as a pioneer of the comprehensive public high school system (Krug, 1969). In 1910, less than 15 per cent of the 14 to 17 year-old age group in the United States were enrolled in high schools. In 1940, 75 per cent of that age group attended school. About 50 per cent of the population could realistically expect to graduate from high school (Trow, 1961). In the 1980s that rate shot up and was believed to exceed 85 per cent (Hurn, 1985, Chapter 3). Secondary schools enrolment increased by nine per cent between 1994 and 1999, while the percentage of high school dropouts shrunk dramatically between the years 1960 to 2000; the trend of decline from 27 per cent in 1960, to 15 per cent in 1970, to 14 per cent in 1980, to 12 per cent in 1990, to 11 per cent in 2000 (NCES, 2002).

The story of higher education has been somewhat different. Its expansion started as late as the second half of the twentieth century. It has been recognised that historically the main function of higher education, in most societies, was to groom an elite and provide it with both the knowledge as well as the social network needed for managing the State's affairs. This function of higher education as a grooming ground for the elites, worked properly until the post World-War II period (Morrison, 1998). Needless to say that for a long period higher education both reflected and reproduced the existing class structure of society. Thus, in the 1950s three per cent of the English-speaking people were classified as upper class, seven per cent as upper-middle class, 20 per cent as lower-middle class, 50 per cent as upper-low class and 20 per cent as lower-low class (Havighurst, 1958). On the other hand, higher education reflected very strongly the social preponderance of the upper classes at that time. The break-down of university graduates was as follows (*ibid.*): 15 per cent upper class, 26 per cent upper-middle class, 32 per cent lower-middle class, 21 per cent upper-low class and only six per cent lower-low class. One could definitely concur with Musgrave's conclusion, "... there is a social class bias in the proportion of those undergoing education beyond sixteen" (Musgrave, 1965, p.175).

In so far as higher education for the masses was concerned, here too the United States led the way. The rapid development of the higher education reflected the trends toward more extensive and intensive use of education (Perrucci, 1967). College and university attendance grew constantly in the 1920s and the 1930s. In 1870, 9,372 college degrees were granted in the United States. This number rose to 29,375 in 1900 and to 53,516 in 1920. It catapulted to 139,752 in 1930 (Perrucci, 1967, p.113).

The second half of the twentieth century has been characterised as a significant period of worldwide rapid educational expansion as well as improvement in educational opportunity. Once again, the United States led the way. In 1940, about 15 per cent of the 18 to 21 year-old age group attended colleges and universities there. Their rate reached 45 per cent in 1970 (Hurn, 1985). Especially in the Nordic welfare states in Europe, the educational reforms from the 1960s onwards were facilitated by the ideology of equality of educational opportunities, producing a considerable increase in the number and availability of institutions of higher education (Kivinen et al., 2001).

The rapid expansion of higher education typified many Western countries in the 1970s. Hence the talk about "massification of higher education" (Trow, 1974). By and large it could be said that higher education has been transformed from the opportunity for a privileged few to the right for all, and nowadays, even a civic obligation (Trow, 1972).

It is noteworthy that rapid expansion of higher education was not limited to Western countries. Indeed, between 1970 and 1990, the most rapid increase (in so far as the different levels of education were concerned) was that of higher education, with the number of students in the developing countries rising from 9 to 32 million. That meant an average growth of 360 per cent, with 625 per cent for the Arab states and 550 per cent for Africa.

Moreover, attention has been drawn to the fact that the context of higher education has changed recently. Some researchers maintain that the fundamental change in that context is a shift in higher education's place within modern and modernising societies and economies. Basically, the shift has been to move higher education from a peripheral status, on the margins of societal concern and importance, to a core status of central importance to societies and economies (Morrison, 1998). As reflected in Table 1, the shift of higher education from periphery to core status occurred over the last decade or so. In England, for instance, there was a huge expansion in absolute student numbers. In 1991, some 216,000 people were accepted for various programs in higher education. By 1998, this figure had risen by 53 per cent to 330,000, supplemented by another 100,000 in 2002 (Tonks, 1999). The same goes for Australia, where higher education enrolment grew from 534,500 in 1991 to 604,200 in 1995, to 726,200 in 2001 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002).

**Table 1. Trends in educational attainment at tertiary level in OECD countries, 1991-2001 (percentage of the population of 25-34 year olds that attained tertiary education)**

Country	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Australia	23	m	23	24	25	25	26	28	29	31	34
Austria	8	8	m	9	9	9	12	13	13	15	14
Belgium	27	27	29	30	30	32	33	34	34	36	38
Canada	32	33	35	38	40	42	44	45	47	48	51
Czech Republic	m	m	m	12	12	11	11	10	11	11	11
Denmark	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	27	29	29	29
Finland	33	33	m	34	35	35	36	36	37	38	38
France	20	22	23	24	25	26	28	30	31	32	34
Germany	21	20	m	20	21	20	21	22	22	22	22
Greece	m	m	m	25	26	28	22	24	25	24	24
Hungary	m	m	m	m	m	14	12	14	14	15	15
Iceland	m	m	m	m	m	24	23	24	28	28	26
Ireland	20	21	m	24	27	31	33	29	41	47	48
Italy	7	7	m	8	8	8	m	9	10	10	12
Japan	m	m	m	m	m	m	45	45	45	47	48
Korea	m	m	m	m	29	30	m	34	35	37	40
Luxemburg	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	21	23	23
Mexico	m	m	m	m	m	m	17	17	16	17	18
Netherlands	22	24	m	24	25	25	m	27	25	27	27
New Zealand	23	23	m	21	24	m	25	26	26	27	29
Norway	27	28	m	31	32	30	30	33	35	35	38
Poland	m	m	m	m	10	m	10	12	12	14	15
Portugal	9	m	m	13	14	14	m	11	11	12	14
Slovak Republic	m	m	m	13	12	12	10	11	11	11	12
Spain	16	22	m	25	27	29	30	32	33	34	36
Sweden	27	27	m	27	29	28	29	31	32	34	37
Switzerland	21	21	m	22	22	23	25	25	26	26	26
Turkey	6	6	m	7	8	m	7	8	8	9	10
United Kingdom	19	21	m	23	23	24	25	26	27	29	29
United States	30	30	m	32	34	35	36	36	37	38	39
<b>Country mean</b>									<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>

Source: OECD, 2003, Table A2.4

In this context it should be mentioned that this shift in higher education's place within modern societies is also reflected in direct public expenditure on higher education institutions. In most West European countries there has been a growth of direct public expenditure on higher education despite budget cuts and second thoughts about the limits of the social welfare policy. Thus, in France, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and Austria this growth had been modest in the 1990s. Yet, it was consistent. In the United Kingdom and Denmark the growth was strong. In Finland and Belgium it was moderate but clearly discernible (Cheps, 2001).

All in all, it is now taken for granted that a college diploma is rightly becoming as much the norm in this century as a high school diploma was during the twentieth century (Allen and Allen, 2003). The era of higher education as a domain of elites is apparently over. The challenges of higher education now is planning, designing, managing and funding an all-encompassing system. The current talk is about a shift in demand for improving access to higher education as a matter of social justice. In the words of the English Robbins Report (1963), “Higher education should be available for all those qualified by ability and attainment to pursue it” (Tonks, 1999).

Not less important in this respect, in fact, some would say more important, is the recognition that higher education contributes to economic growth and therefore access to it should be improved by all means. Economists maintain that education creates human capital, which directly affects knowledge accumulation and therefore productivity growth. There again, education is important for successful research activities, which are, in turn, important for productivity growth (Gemmell, 1997, Section 4). The empirical growth literature draws attention to the following conclusions bearing on the economic importance of higher education on the national level:

- Countries with higher average years of education of their labour forces tend to grow faster, other things being equal.
- Other things being equal, OECD countries that expanded their higher education more rapidly since 1960 experienced faster economic growth.
- There is some evidence that education affects physical capital investment in the economy as a whole, which in turn, raises income growth rates.
- It has been proven both conceptually and empirically that more education may raise a country’s income level permanently above what it would have been with less education (Gemmell, 1997, *ibid*).

### **CREDENTIALS INFLATION AND INEQUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

The so-called massification of higher education has been accompanied by advocacy of the transformation of this system from class mirror to mobility gateway, with a high premium placed, as already mentioned, on improving access to higher education. Even those clinging to the concept of ‘where there is a will there is a way’ had to recognise that in the human-capital economy that dominates the world nowadays, honesty and hard work alone are insufficient for success. Both individual as well as social welfare are increasingly determined by formal education. There is no simpler, more direct, or more important determinant of human welfare today than educational attainment. On average, more education leads consistently to more income and to higher living standards to which most people aspire (Mortenson, 2000). This tie between education and income grew stronger from the early 1970s. Due to the growing link between education and income, the least educated would seem to be living increasingly desperate and hopeless lives.

This shift in demand for improving access to higher education raised in its turn the question what were the repercussions of higher education expansion. In simple words, ‘who studies where’ in so far as the socio-economic background of the students as well as the history of their former studies are concerned. A pitched battle is now being waged between two schools of thought, the so-called **diversity approach**, which represents the ‘functional’ paradigm in sociology, and the **stratification approach**, representing the ‘conflict’ paradigm in sociology.

The diversity approach regards the massification of higher education as a process contributing to educational and social equality through the development of a wide gamut of higher education institutions, operating alongside of the classical research universities, and catering to different and specific sectors of students. The stratification approach, on the other hand, regards the



massification of higher education as nothing more than a competition between different institutions supplying different standards of education and reflecting the existing order, serving as a class mirror.

Put in a nutshell, the diversity approach has a positive view of the variety and diversity of the wide gamut of institutions of higher education. The proponents of this approach maintain that this institutional diversity contributed to major changes in the composition of the student population. It enabled a sharp increase in participation by those aged over 25 years as well as greater representation by those from minority ethnic groups and other under-represented sectors (Dey and Hurtado, 1999). Various representatives of this school of thought have maintained time and again that different institutions cater to different sectors of clients. The diversity of institutions is said to be 'horizontal', not necessarily 'vertical'. Hence, the system of higher education is neither stratified nor hierarchical by nature (Meek et. al., 1996; Goedegebuure et. al., 1993), in spite of the fact that the diversified institutions cater to and also reflect different socio-economic backgrounds.

The stratification approach has a different view altogether of the massification of higher education. Its general viewpoint is that higher education reproduces and reinforces class inequalities (Archer et al., 2003). It maintains that a strong correlation exists between the socio-economic profile of the students and the types of the institutions in which they study (Dougherty, 1994). The British system is cited as an example. There is a wide consensus that the British higher education system is highly stratified (Scott, 2002). The shift in the demand for general access to higher education transformed the face of higher education institutions there. On one side is found the old universities that were previously meant to serve the indigenous elites but later-on focused on excellence in research (Farnum, 1990; Jones 1988). On the other side is found a rather diversified assortment of institutions of higher education. Thus England can be found side by side with the traditional elite universities other kinds of higher education institutions, such as the civic universities, which came into being in the late Victorian era to provide local professional and commercial elites with alternatives to the old universities and to represent the growing power of industrial England; or the so-called 'Redbricks Universities' established in the wake of World War I; or the younger universities founded later on by successive governments longing to establish world-class science and technology universities (Scott, 1995). Thus, the colleges of advanced technology, now known as the technological universities came into being. Last but not least, in the 1960s the polytechnics were established. They were hailed as 'people's universities' (Scott, 2002).

This stratification is magnified by the Higher Education Council for England (HECE), which budgets the higher education institutions according to their achievements in research and teaching (Watson, 1999). Research carried out in England, Australia, Japan, France and the Netherlands led to the conclusion that in all these countries the higher education system is highly stratified in one way or another (Teichler, 1988).

As mentioned above, the British system is cited as an example. The British higher education system has undergone a period of considerable growth and expansion in recent decades. Yet, participation among non-traditional social groups remains persistently low in the United Kingdom (Archer, 2000). As is well known, this phenomenon is also echoed throughout many other industrialised countries (Goldthorpe, 1996; Hatcher, 1998; Scheuze and Wolter, 2000).

A survey carried out in England recently (Archer, 2000) found out that the majority of respondents claimed that only less prestigious universities are in fact accessible for working class students. Access to the so-called 'dream' high-status universities, was considered the domain of middle-class students, who had the necessary money and status, and whose families were able to plan ahead. Working class respondents, in comparison, recognised that a mixture of both social and

financial factors necessitate attending a local second-rate university. No wonder, then, that another recent research study revealed that while the two upper socio-economic groups in England account for about 39 per cent of all 18 year olds, some 70 per cent of acceptances to the older and more prestigious universities belonged to these two groups. They were clearly dominant in the high-status universities (Halsey, 1992).

The same holds apparently for the United States. Some claim that the prestigious public and private four-year colleges and universities have become more academically selective over the past 20 years or so. Consequently, the United States is fast retreating from affirmative action on behalf of the under-represented groups in higher education. The social policy tools supporting inclusiveness in the high status institutions of higher education have been eroded over the past two decades (Mortenson, 2000).

All in all, therefore, the mere massification of higher education did not open the gate to real equal opportunity in education (Bok, 1998). Rather, it exacerbated a situation that could be judged as problematic to begin with.

Indeed, in this context attention has been drawn to the view (Brown, 1997), that in an elite system of higher education, the possession of higher qualifications is conducive to gaining access to the coveted professional and managerial occupations. On one hand, the growing competition for academic credentials is an uncontested social reality in the context of thorough scrutiny of employers, due to heavy rush for graduate education. On the other hand, the over-supply of graduates – the natural outcome of higher education massification – has accelerated a new problem: that of so-called ‘credentials inflation’ (Dore, 1976).

Credentials inflation in its turn contributed again to inequality in education. It has intensified competition for credentials from elite and most prestigious higher education institutions, since degree holders stand relative to each other in a hierarchy of both academic and social worth. The market naturally gives priority to status credentials. Hence, access to opportunities is influenced by the status of the diploma gained, while the latter is directly influenced by the status of the institution granting the diploma. There is no equal access to the prestigious and most sought after institutions. Therefore, the higher education system has not turned to be the ‘big equaliser’. Rather the opposite, it fulfils the task of the ‘gate-keeper’.

In any case, nobody contests the fact that massification of higher education was intended to implement a policy termed in Australia as “*Knowledge Nation*” (Breen, 2002, p.18), and has been defined elsewhere as a governmental commitment “to the principle that anyone who has the ability to benefit from further and higher education should have the opportunity to do so” (The Scottish Office, 1998, Section 6.19) or as an intent meant at “widening of access to higher education by under-represented groups as one of the key challenges facing the sector” (SHEFC, 1999).

### **EXPANSION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ISRAEL**

Israel is a good case in point in this respect. Its system of higher education has undergone vast expansion and major changes since the early 1990s.

The foundations of the higher education system in Israel were laid in the 1920s when the Technion (Israel Institute of Technology) and the Hebrew University were opened in 1924 and 1925 respectively. When the State of Israel was established in 1948 these were the only two institutions of higher education in the country. The increase in population, as well as economic and social developments, led to a demand for higher education and, in response, five new universities were established during the 1950s and 1960s: Bar-Ilan University, Tel-Aviv

University, the University of Haifa, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, and the Weizmann Institute of Science (CHE, 2003).

From the mid 1970s there was an additional stage of development and diversification in the higher education system in Israel. The Open University began to operate and its operation soon extended to all parts of the country. At the end of the 1970s teacher training in Israel also underwent a process of academisation. The formerly post-secondary teacher training seminaries turned into teacher colleges – institutions of higher education granting B.Ed. diplomas to their graduates.

During the 1990s the higher education system underwent further expansion, when the tenth amendment to the Council for Higher Education Law made possible the launching of various academic colleges: general colleges, technological colleges and colleges specialising in one particular profession or discipline. In 2002, the higher education system in Israel comprised eight universities, 24 fully accredited academic colleges, 26 academic teachers colleges and 12 academic programs at regional colleges for which universities were academically responsible (CHE, 2003).

When the State of Israel was established in 1948 there were about 1,600 students in the two institutions of higher education, and by the end of the first decade of statehood the number of students had increased to about 9,000. During the 1960s there was a rapid growth (about 14 per cent per year) in the number of students, and in 1970 there were more than 35,000 students in the higher education system. This rapid growth of student numbers continued during the 1970s and by 1980 reached 56,000. During the 1980s growth tapered off to about 2.5 per cent per year and in 1990 there were 76,000 students in the higher education system (CHE, 2003).

Since 1990 the institutions of higher education have expanded their activities significantly. The number of students, at all degree levels (bachelor, master and doctorate) increased from 76,000 in 1990 to 180,229 (not including Open University students) in 2002.

The most significant phenomenon is that commencing from the 2002/03 academic year, the number of undergraduate students in the colleges is greater than that in the universities. This is considered a tangible expression of greater access to higher education for wider segments of the population (Brodet, 2003). It ostensibly facilitates a process that opens the gates of higher education to students previously excluded from academic tertiary education. The most significant fact in this respect is that the rate of rejected student applications dropped from 30 to 34 per cent in the 1990s to a mere 19 per cent in 2000 (Kimmerling, 2000). This is exactly what the Council for Higher Education had in mind when it allowed a whole array of colleges in the early 1990s to grant academic diplomas. That decision was accompanied by an explanation (PBC, 1997) to the effect that the Israeli higher education system would henceforth comprise 'two tiers'. The first tier includes the universities. It was meant to concentrate on research advanced degrees. The second tier includes the colleges. It was meant to help actively in the implementation of the principles of social justice and equality by enhancing the enrolment rates of various peripheral social groups or categories within the society as already mentioned. As succinctly summed up by the Regional Colleges Association in 1992:

Currently, the number of potential students refused admission by the universities is estimated at 25,000. This intolerable situation has led the regional colleges to a decision to invest additional resources in order to absorb another 15,000 students by the end of the decade, thus participating in the national effort to solve serious problem of lack of space for undergraduate students. (The Association of Regional Colleges, 1997)

On the whole, then, the Israeli higher education is defined as a dichotomous or binary system (Guri-Rosenblit, 1996, Guri-Rosenblit, 1999). The universities mainly pursue the so-called

'autonomous functions' (Trow, 1970): inculcation of high culture, facilitation of science through research, and moulding and granting credentials to elite groups. The colleges mainly pursue the so-called 'popular functions' (Trow, 1970). These include exposure of new sectors of the population to the contents of high culture, granting diplomas necessary for securing a decent job, supplying practical services based on knowledge and information to the community.

It is precisely this dichotomy that gave rise to a heated debate. Some researchers claim, as mentioned, that the binary system is conducive to enhancing equal opportunity in higher education (Guri-Rosenblitt, 1996, Guri-Rosenblitt, 1999). Others state that there is no real equal opportunity in the higher education system as of now. The centre's chances to avail itself of the new opportunities are much bigger than those of the periphery. Students originating from higher-status families, members of the privileged ethnic groups, and graduates of the academic track have better odds of tertiary education (Ayalon and Addi-Racah, 2003). Moreover, colleges indeed provide the lower educational strata with an alternative to the selective universities. However, only the affluent classes can use them to attend highly desirable fields of study (Shavit et al., 2003). The private colleges marketing these desirable fields of study are not subsidised by the government. Hence, tuition is much too expensive for the rank and file to attend them. Still others maintain that the colleges are bound to grant second-class higher education to peripheral groups in the Israeli society (Swirski and Swirski, 1998).

### **THE IMPACT OF THE TRANSFORMATION ON THE ISRAELI DISADVANTAGED POPULATION**

In the wake of the debate mentioned above several questions ought to be asked:

1. Has the recent transformation in the Israeli higher education system increased the odds of higher education attendance?
2. Has it indeed reduced social selection in higher education?
3. Has the transformation really equalised opportunity to attain access to the most desirable fields of study, or have opportunities primarily been expanded in the least selective fields?
4. Last but not least, is the opportunity supplied by the new colleges' tier inferior to that supplied by the veteran universities?

Official data published by the CBS (Central Bureau of Statistics) show that in 1989/90 the number of students studying for the first degree in universities was five times higher than in other institutions for higher education. In 1994/95 the ratio was 3:4. In 2000/01 it dropped to 1:3 (CBS, 2002, 4, XIII). As mentioned, in 2002/03 the number of undergraduate students in the colleges surpassed that in the universities (Brodet, 2003). On the whole, it should be recognised that during the 1980s and 1990s Israeli higher education changed dramatically. The number of students tripled and the odds of attending higher education grew by 50 per cent (Shavit et al., 2003). It should be noted that the veteran universities were hardly affected by this change. They grew just enough to accommodate demographic growth. The added increase in attendance was taken up by the new second-tier system of public and private colleges. From 1989/90 to 2000/01, enrolment in first degree programs at the colleges increased by an average of 19.2 per cent per year, whereas enrolment in first degree programs at universities increased by a mere 3.6 per cent per year, as presented in Table 2. Between 1991 and 2001 the number of undergraduate students in the colleges grew more than ten times. In three popular subjects, business administration, law and applied art, the number of undergraduate students in the colleges is now greater than in the universities (CBS, 23.2.2003). In other words, the growth rate of the colleges was 5.3 times that of the universities (CBS, 2002, 4, XIII). In the 1999/2000 academic year, colleges existed in 15 localities that were spread over six Districts, compared with nine localities spread over three Districts (Central, Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem) in 1989/90 (CBS, 2002, 19, XV).

**Table 2. Students enrolled in the first degree programmes by type of institution, during 1989/90 to 2000/01 academic years**

Year	Total No.	Universities %	Colleges %	Open University %
1989/90	68,253	68.8	12.1	19.1
1990/91	74,070	65.8	12.9	21.3
1991/92	84,190	64.1	14.6	21.3
1992/93	91,657	64.0	15.3	20.7
1993/94	99,775	63.3	16.9	19.8
1994/95	109,778	60.8	17.7	21.5
1995/96	120,039	57.4	19.8	22.8
1996/97	130,394	53.9	24.2	21.8
1997/98	144,121	50.3	28.5	21.2
1998/99	153,591	48.1	30.9	21.0
1999/2000	159,867	46.4	33.3	20.3
2000/01	165,980	44.6	34.4	20.9
<b>% Annual change</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>9.3</b>

Source: CBS, 2002, 4, XIII

The crucial question is whether there is any difference in the profile of the undergraduate students attending the two different tiers. The CBS data indicate that the profile is indeed somewhat different. The first difference is in the students' age composition. The median age of the colleges' students is higher than the universities' students (26 versus 24 years). The frequency group of the colleges' students in 2000/01 was the 25 to 29 year-old age group. It constituted 44 per cent of the whole student body. Yet, this very age group constituted a mere 25 per cent of the universities' students (CBS, 2002, 19, 16). What is more, the rate of the relatively elderly students (30 plus year-old age group) at the colleges is almost twice that at the universities (14% versus 7.5%) [ibid]. It is the other way round in so far as the youngest age group of students (19 to 24 years) is concerned. Its weight at the universities (67%) is very much higher than at the colleges (38%) [ibid].

It can therefore be deduced that the colleges offered a so-called 'second opportunity' to a significant number of their students to gain access to higher education after having missed it before. The relative weight of those who got that opportunity at the universities is much smaller. This is due to the fact that enrolment is much less selective at the colleges. It is also due to the fact that the colleges reach out to these so-called 'ripe' age groups, offering them special programs.

The second significant difference is in the students' ethnic profile. In many societies ethnicity plays an important role in stratification. Most Israeli sociologists have taken the ethnic cleavage to be one of the main axes of stratification in Israel. On the whole, it is acknowledged that the Western segment of the Jewish population occupies more desirable social positions than the Orientals. The latter constitute the majority among those regarded as the social periphery (Yaish, 2001; Ben-Refael and Sharot, 1991; Smooha and Kraus, 1985). The CBS data draw attention to several interesting points in this respect. First, there is no significant difference in the 'Sabras' (students born in Israel) rate in the two tiers. Second, the rate of Oriental students (those who trace their origins to Middle Eastern and North African countries) studying at the colleges is higher than that of the Western students (those who trace their origins to Euro-America). Thus, in 2000/01 32 per cent of the Oriental undergraduates studied at the colleges, as against a mere 25 per cent of the Western students who studied there. In simple words that means that a third of all undergraduate Oriental students were enrolled in the colleges as against a quarter of the Western undergraduates (CBS, 2002, 19, 17). This means, once again, that the colleges offered the peripheral group an easier access to higher education. It certainly used that so-called 'opportunity window' to its advantage.

In a recent study a team of Israeli researchers, who looked at the effects of the expansion of Israeli higher education on ethnic inequalities in attendance rates, reached an interesting conclusion. It

found that as the system expanded all ethnic groups increased their enrolment rates. However, increases were most pronounced among the more privileged ones (Bolotin-Chachashvili et al., 2003). Yet, the CBS figures reveal, as already mentioned, an important fact, about two thirds of the students attending the colleges are enrolled in the highly coveted subjects of engineering and architecture, law and business administration. About 64 per cent of the Oriental students enrolled in the colleges in 2001 studied these popular subjects (CBS, 2002, 19, 17). It can be concluded, therefore, that a large proportion of the peripheral group gained an opportunity to earn a degree in a prestigious subject previously effectively closed to them.

The third difference is in the geographical profile of the students. There are six districts in Israel. Geographically seen, the two peripheral districts in the country are the Northern District (with 17% of the Israeli population in 2002) and the Southern District (with 14% of the population) [CBS, 2003]. Altogether, 31 per cent of the population might be defined as geographically peripheral therefore. It should be noted, though, that these two districts are concurrently defined as socio-economically peripheral as well. The CBS arrived at an aggregate ranking of local authorities in Israel, based on a complex list of socio-economic indicators. All the local authorities in the country were consequently divided into ten clusters according to their ranking order. Cluster 10 includes the highest-ranking local authorities. Cluster 1 incorporates the lowest ranking authorities (CBS, 2002).

The two peripheral districts turned out to be the most disadvantaged. More than 65 per cent of the local authorities in the Southern District are to be found in the three lowest clusters. A mere 13 per cent are to be found in the two uppermost clusters. Almost 60 per cent of the local authorities of the Northern District were likewise to be found in the three lowest clusters. Barely 10 per cent were to be found in the two highest clusters (CBS, 4.3.2002). No other district comes close to that disadvantaged profile.

The question that ought to be posed here, is to what extent have the new colleges benefited the peripheral districts by improving the chances of their residents gaining access to higher education. The answer seems to be clear: a rapid development of publicly funded colleges occurred from the early 1990s within the framework of a declared policy to transfer educational resources from the centrally located districts to the periphery, namely, the Northern and Southern Districts. Establishing colleges in the peripheral regions was specifically designed to enable these population groups to obtain academic education at a lower cost per student (CBS, 2002, 19, XIV). Data indicate that the overall number of students whose domicile was in the Northern and Southern Districts amounted to 26,621 in the academic year 2000/01. Out of these, 6,650 (25 %) studied at the colleges (CBS, 19, 19). Moreover, between 1995/6 and 2000/01 the rate of the peripheral students studying at the colleges doubled. It stood at 11 per cent in 1995/96, it was 22 per cent in 2000/01 (CBS, 2002, 19, 18). Last but not least, as it turns out, 5,024 students residing in the Northern and Southern Districts attended local colleges in the academic year 2000/01 (CBS, 19, 37). They comprised the great majority of the students enrolled in these colleges. Hence, it seems safe to surmise that the availability of local colleges greatly enhanced the access to higher education. Bearing in mind the socio-economic profile of the population in the two outlying districts, the local colleges certainly facilitated enrolment of students who would have otherwise missed the opportunity of higher education.

Bearing in mind that educational opportunities were broadened and educational attainment rates among the disadvantaged groups (working-class and minority students) have also been raised, attention should be now drawn to the reduction in inequalities. A recent hypothesis, known as MMI (Maximum Maintained Inequality), was developed in the early 1990s (Raftery and Hout, 1993). It strongly negates the assumption that the expansion of educational systems decreases social gaps *per se*. Indeed, the MMI hypothesis claims that new educational opportunities tend to

be exploited first and foremost by less able students from privileged groups rather than by members of peripheral strata. The first, who possess more material (and perhaps also cultural as well as cognitive) resources are able to take better advantage of the new educational opportunities. Social background advantages seem to work effectively and continuously for the children of advantage, to secure advantaged locations of their own (Lucas, 2001). According to Raftery and Hout (1993), the advantage of the dominant, centre groups in enrolment is retained until the participation of its members reaches the point of saturation. Only at that point will an additional expansion of the education system contribute to the decrease of social inequality in enrolment. The MMI hypothesis gained support from numerous studies (for example, Mare, 1981; Smith and Cheung, 1986; Shavit and Blossfeld, 1993; Gerber, 2000). They all showed that educational inequalities tend to persist in spite of the expansion of educational systems. The MMI hypothesis may be particularly relevant to higher education, where students and parents of different social strata vary in their familiarity with the system. Consequently, members of the privileged groups are considerably better at manipulating the system to meet their goals (McDonough, 1997).

CBS data lead to four important conclusions in this respect. First, the rate of the two lowest socio-economic clusters among college students in Israel is negligible. They constituted a minuscule 1.7 per cent in 2000/01. Second, the four uppermost clusters constituted a massive majority of 60 per cent in that year (CBS, 2002, 19, 34). Third, data indicate that colleges are dominated by the middle class. The four middle-class clusters, 5 to 8 constituted a 69 per cent majority in 2000/01. Fourth, the socio-economic constitution of the colleges' students has changed over time. The rate of the lower strata (clusters 1 to 4) rose from 5.4 per cent in 1995/6 to 13 per cent in 2000/01; a 230 per cent growth over a five year period. The rate of the top two clusters (9 and 10) declined over the same period from 23 per cent to 19 per cent. Also the middle class declined, from 72 per cent to 69 per cent. Succinctly put, it seems that as the rate of the privileged groups declines over time, the underprivileged peripheral groups gain weight over time.

However, as mentioned above, this is not the whole picture. Whereas colleges do provide the lower educational strata an alternative to the selective universities, the affluent classes have a much better advantage to use them to attend highly desirable fields of study. Since the private colleges marketing these desirable fields of study (law, business and behavioural sciences) are not subsidised by the government, tuition there is much too high for working class students.

No wonder that the socio-economic profile of the students in the private colleges (who made up 40% of all college students in 2001/02 (CBS, 23.2.2003)) reflects the well-to-do population segment. The four top socio-economic clusters (7 to 10) constituted 67 per cent of their students in 2000/01. In the public colleges their rate was much smaller, at 52 per cent. On the other hand, the two lowest clusters (1 and 2) accounted for a negligible 0.8 per cent in the private colleges as against 2.5 per cent in the public colleges. The rate of the two top clusters (9 and 10) was 23 per cent in the private colleges as against 15 per cent in the public colleges (CBS, 2002, 19, 34). In view of these data, no wonder some reached the conclusion that the privatisation of higher education through the formation and rapid expansion of private colleges has so far increased inequality between economic strata in access to higher education, exactly in line with the MMI hypothesis. Perhaps more importantly, it increased inequality in access to the more lucrative fields of study (Shavit et al., 2003b).

### **THE COLLEGE, DISADVANTAGED POPULATIONS AND IMPROVED ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION**

In view of all this, it has been decided to examine how the educational stratification process at the tertiary level is reflected in the largest public college in the country (henceforth referred to as the College). The College was established in 1982. It is located in a small, lower middle-class town of about 20,000 inhabitants, 40 km east of Tel-Aviv. Initially it operated as a regional college – an

extension of the Bar-Ilan University. Later, autonomous departments were developed and the College was fully accredited and authorised by the Council for Higher Education to grant first-degree diplomas. The College nowadays encompasses 19 departments (13 of which are autonomous). It grants academic degrees in engineering, architecture, social sciences and humanities, natural sciences and para-medical studies. The academic enrolment numbered 3,900 students in the 2002/03 academic year and almost reached the 5,500 enrolments in the second semester of the following academic year.

The examination is based on a 2002/03 survey of a random sample of 630 freshmen (out of 1,800 freshmen, 250 of whom enrolled at the Bar-Ilan University extension operating on the campus). The students were asked to fill in questionnaires administered to them in class and the numbers are presented in Table 3. Certain figures were complemented by administrative data available at the registrar's office.

**Table 3. First degree students at the College (2002/03) and in other institutions of higher education by age group (1999/00)**

Age group (N=596)	The College <sup>1</sup> %	Universities <sup>2</sup> %	Accredited colleges <sup>2</sup> %
18-24	50.7	67.0	38.0
25-29	34.2	25.4	44.0
30-34	5.5	3.4	6.7
35+	9.5	4.1	7.3
Total	100.0	99.9	96.4
mean	26.1	23.9	26.1
Standard deviation	5.94		

Sources: <sup>1</sup> College survey, <sup>2</sup> CBS, 2002, 19, 16.

Following the analysis that dealt with the national level, an attempt is made to evaluate the age breakdown of the college students, their ethnic profile, their geographical origins, their socio-economic background, and lastly, their high school record. All these parameters should facilitate an objective evaluation of the College contribution to enhancing access of the underprivileged groups to higher education.

As far as the age composition of the College students is concerned, the survey draws attention to two interesting points. First, the frequency group at the College is the 18 to 24 year-old age group. This is similar to the university. Yet, its rate is much smaller than in the universities (51 versus 67% respectively). Second, the rate of the elderly students (30 plus year-old age group) enrolled at the college is double that in the universities (15 versus 7.5% respectively). Consequently, it can be said that in this respect the College does offer a 'second opportunity' to a large segment of its students, who might have missed higher education altogether were it not for the College.

As already mentioned, the representation of Oriental Jews in the universities falls short of their share of the relevant age group. In the academic year 1995/96 they accounted for 26 per cent of university students as against 40 per cent of the 20 to 24 year-old age cohort (Swirski and Swirski, 1998, p.17). Western Jews were 43 per cent of Jewish university students and 33 per cent of the age group. The under representation of the Oriental Jews in universities reflects the social stratification in the country. It is one of the problems meant to be rectified through the establishment of the colleges.

The ethnic profile of the College students resembles the profile of the college students nationwide. Data published by the CBS indicate that by 1992 only 30 per cent of the Oriental holders of matriculation certificates began to attend universities as against 46 per cent of their Western counterparts (Swirski and Swirski, 1998, p.17).

The survey's data, presented in Table 4, indicate that whereas in the universities there is a 14 per cent difference in the relative weight of the two ethnic groups in favour of the Westerners, this difference is minimised to a mere 2.1 per cent in the College.



**Table 4. First degree students at the College (2002/03) and in other institutions of higher education (1999/00) by ethnic group**

<b>Ethnic group (N=612)</b>	<b>The College<sup>1</sup> %</b>	<b>Academic colleges<sup>2</sup> %</b>	<b>Universities<sup>2</sup> %</b>
Israeli (2 <sup>nd</sup> generation Sabras)	38.1	37.1	36.1
Oriental	29.9	30.2	24.9
Westerners	32.0	32.7	38.9
Total	100.0	100.0	99.9

Sources: <sup>1</sup> Survey, <sup>2</sup> CBS, 2002, 19, 17.

Attention should be drawn in this context to the fact that the field of study is an important factor both in terms of socialisation and the shaping of life prospects (Van de Werfhorst, 2001). The question is, therefore, to what extent has the College helped in facilitating alteration of access to different categories of fields of study. The survey's data indicate very clearly that the College has indeed opened an 'opportunity window' for Oriental students. Thus, 36 per cent of the first year students in Architecture are Orientals, as well as 36 per cent of the Economics and Business Administration students. These are two fields that are in high-demand. Their share in the College departments is much higher than in either the universities or the colleges as a whole. Data indicate that the Orientals' share in the field of Economics and Business Administration was 11 per cent in the colleges (CBS, 2002, 19, p.17) and 26 per cent in the universities (Ayalon and Yogev, 2002). The Orientals' share in the field of Architecture was 14 per cent in the universities and 24 per cent in the colleges (Ayalon and Yogev, 2002). In this sense, then, the College does help to moderate ethnic inequalities in enrolment.

As mentioned above, the College is located in the central part of the country, about 40 km. east of Tel-Aviv. No wonder, therefore, that most of the enrolments are from two adjacent Districts: Central and Tel-Aviv. Nevertheless, the available data indicate that the College serves the two peripheral districts, the Northern District and the Southern District to a much larger extent than most of the colleges located in the Tel-Aviv and Central Districts. In the academic year 1999/2000 12 per cent of the College students were residents of the two peripheral districts. Beside the College there are 12 other colleges in the two central districts. Five of these colleges accommodated a higher rate of peripheral students than the College. However, three of them are private colleges of Law, a most prestigious subject that is very popular with students who can afford the high tuition fees.

Once again, the figures presented in Table 5, point at the fact that the College is definitely instrumental in enhancing the chances of peripheral populations to gain access to higher education.

The last parameter to be tackled in this context is the socio-economic profile of the College students and is presented in Table 6. As already mentioned, data indicate that the rate of the two lowest socio-economic clusters among college students in Israel is negligible, it stood at 1.7 per cent in the 1999/2000 academic year. The same holds up for the College, where the percentage according to the survey is 1.6. Moreover, whereas the rate of the lower and lower-middle class students (clusters 1 to 6) in the colleges stood at 41 per cent in the 1999/2000 academic year (CBS, 2002, 19, 19), it was much higher at the College in the 2002/03 academic year, where it stood according to the survey at 53 per cent. These figures clearly support the hypothesis that the College contributes to the reduction of inequalities between social strata in attendance of higher education. The College is definitely attended by economically weaker strata than those attending not only the universities but also many of the colleges. It becomes much clearer when the rates of the two top socio-economic strata (clusters 9 and 10) at the College (a mere 1.3%) are compared to that in the colleges (19%) (CBS, 2002, 19, 34). In fact, the negligible rate of the two upper clusters at the College is its most outstanding feature.

**Table 5. Students in colleges by institution, district of institution and district of residence, 1999/2000**

Institution and District of Institution	Northern District %	Southern District %
<b>Central district</b>		
Netanya Academic College	11.0	3.7
Ruppin Academic Center	15.1	3.7
Sha'arei Mishpat – The Academic College of Law	9.2	6.1
<b>Tel-Aviv district</b>		
Tel-Aviv Academic College of Engineering	5.1	6.4
The Academic College of Law	6.2	14.7
The Academic College of Tel-Aviv-Jaffo	3.5	3.9
The College of Management – Academic studies	4.2	6.1
The Interdisciplinary Center	5.0	3.8
The Holon Academic Institute of Technology	3.6	6.9
SADNA, College of Architecture and Design	1.4	1.4
Shenkar- School of Engineering and Design	7.0	6.8
<b>The College</b>	5.7	6.6

Source: CBS, 2002, 19, 38.

**Table 6. Students in the College (2002/03) and other colleges (1999/2000) by socio-economic cluster**

Socio-economic cluster	The College <sup>1</sup> %	Public colleges <sup>2</sup> %	Private colleges <sup>2</sup> %
1+2	0.7	2.5	0.8
3+4	9.5	12.6	8.9
5+6	42.9	32.8	23.4
7+8	45.6	37.2	43.9
9+10	1.3	14.8	23.0
Total	100.0	99.9	100.0

Sources: <sup>1</sup> From raw data, Registrar's Office, <sup>2</sup> CBS, 2002, 19, 34.

The students' socio-economic profile is also reflected in their parents' education, as presented in Table 7. This is very significant, because the effect of parental education is positive and strong on students' educational attainment (Shavit et al., 2003; Ayalon and Shavit, 2001). Since education and socio-economic profile are very strongly correlated in Israel, parents' education assumes primary importance. In a very detailed study (Ayalon and Yogev, 2002) a strong correlation was found to exist between parental education and the type of higher-education institution attended by the students. Thus, the mean education of the father of an elite university student stood at 14.5 years, the mean education of the father of a regional college student stood at 12.4 years, the mean education of the father of a teaching-college student stood at 11.9 years (Ayalon and Yogev, 2002). A similar picture emerged from a comparative research published two years earlier (Frenkel, 2000). Our survey at the College indicates that parental education of this institution's students is lower than that found at either the university and the regional college covered by Frenkel's sample. Whereas the rate of fathers with tertiary – non-academic and academic-education stood at 70 per cent at the university and at 53 per cent at the regional college, it was a mere 41 per cent at our College.

Table 7 strongly indicate that the colleges are substantially less selective on parental education than the universities. Our College turns out to be even less selective on parental education than are the colleges on the whole. In this sense it offers a second chance to underprivileged segments of the population that had no access to higher education before.

As already noted, the expansion of higher education in Israel over the last decade has been by and large accomplished through the establishment of second tier degree-granting colleges. Being academically less demanding, at least as far as enrolment is concerned, they provide opportunity to get an academic degree, and attract less able students, lacking in cultural resources (Shavit et al., 2003; Ayalon and Yogev, 2002). The survey carried out by Ayalon and Yogev established the

fact, that while the mean matriculation mark of the elite universities students was 100, it was 98 in the ordinary research-universities, 92 in the professional private colleges, and 87 in the other colleges (Ayalon and Yogev, 2000, p.38).

**Table 7. Parental education of the College students (2002/03) and two other institutions of higher education**

<b>Father's education</b>	<b>The College<sup>1</sup> %</b>	<b>University<sup>2</sup> %</b>	<b>Regional college<sup>2</sup> %</b>
No formal education	0.0	0.8	1.1
Elementary school	9.9	5.1	14.6
Secondary school, no matriculation	28.0	11.5	14.6
Matriculation	18.9	12.6	16.9
Tertiary, non-academic	-	26.1	29.2
Tertiary- Academic	41.4*	43.8	23.7
Yeshiva	0.7	-	-
Other	1.2	-	-
Total	100.1	99.9	100.1

\*This figure includes also tertiary, non-academic fathers.

<sup>1</sup> Survey, <sup>2</sup> Frenkel, 2000, 36.

Enrolment data, presented in Table 8, show that the mean matriculation mark of the College's freshmen stood at 89.9. Yet, the data also reveal that 18 per cent of the freshmen did not possess a matriculation diploma. In this respect too, the College was demonstrably much less selective than the universities, allowing access to higher education to populations who would otherwise be excluded from institutions of higher education.

**Table 8. Eligibility to matriculation diploma among freshmen at the College (2002/03)**

<b>Eligibility status (N= 630)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Valid %</b>	<b>Cumulative %</b>
Possess matriculation diploma	507	80.5	81.8	81.8
Academic prep-course	23	3.7	3.7	85.5
Age over 30. No diploma	18	2.9	2.9	88.4
1 matriculation-mark missing	13	2.1	2.1	90.5
2 or more marks missing	6	1.0	1.0	91.5
Possess previous academic credits	27	4.3	4.4	95.8
Possess practical-engineers or technician diplomas	26	4.1	4.2	100.0
Total	620	98.4	100.0	
Missing system	10	1.6		

Mean = 89.9; Std. Deviation= 7.82; Source: Survey

Last but not least, 47 per cent of the surveyed students stated that the College was not their first choice: 59 per cent of these students explained that they enrolled there after a university had rejected them. No doubt, then, that the College offers a second choice to a large number of students, who would have no real chance to study in a university. In this respect it fulfils an important social role.

## SUMMARY

Like many other Western countries Israel is undergoing a speedy process of what could be termed as massification of the higher education system. The inauguration of public and private colleges as well as the academisation of the teaching profession brought about a dramatic increase in enrolment in degree programs. During the 1980s and the 1990s the number of students tripled and the odds of attending higher education grew by 50 per cent. In 2002 the higher education system in Israel comprised eight universities, 24 fully accredited academic colleges, 26 academic teachers colleges and 12 academic programs operated by various universities at extensions in regional colleges.

Yet, like in many other countries, Israel's diverse social groups are unequally represented in the students' body, which has so far been strongly tilted in the direction of the privileged strata of

society. Clearly, the accreditation of the colleges has given the country a larger, more diverse system of higher education. It has also created scholastic opportunities for new sectors of high school graduates. The public colleges represent the 'grass roots' academia, a term coined by a well-known Israeli sociologist of education (Swirski and Swirski, 1998, p.10). They are expected to take in much of the anticipated increase in Israel's student population. The purpose of the Israeli colleges from the outset was to serve the periphery (geographical as well as social) and enhance equal opportunity to gain access to higher education. The colleges were meant to meet the needs of candidates who, "in terms of their achievements on the matriculation diploma and psychometric tests... do not meet the current admission terms of the institutions and the various faculties" (CHE, 1992, p.59).

This paper poses four pertinent questions in this respect:

1. Has the recent transformation in the Israeli higher education system increased the odds of higher education attendance?
2. Has it indeed reduced social selection in higher education?
3. Has it really equalised opportunity to attain access to the most desirable fields of study?
4. Is the new opportunity inferior to that supplied by the veteran universities?

The paper sought to answer the first three questions by analysing available data published by the CBS, and by employing additional data derived from a sample of 630 freshmen students enrolled at the largest public college in the country. The main conclusions arrived at are, that the system indeed increased the odds of participating in higher education. It clearly reduced social selection in higher education, and enhanced opportunities to attain access to the most desirable fields of study. This occurs except for the field of Law, which is taught only in the private colleges, where tuition fees are prohibitive. Consequently, in this field of study the gap between the haves and the have-nots is deepening. Peripheral populations definitely benefited from the establishment of a binary system of higher education in Israel. The last question posed is left open, since the available data published by the CBS so far do not include the necessary information needed to reach a conclusion in that respect.

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# Beyond Educational Tourism: Lessons Learned While Student Teaching Abroad

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*Many universities provide overseas student teaching yet little is known as to what knowledge, skills, and dispositions university students have prior to arriving in their host country as well as after their return to their home country. This article considers several key issues and suggests factors that schools of education should consider when planning, developing and providing prospective teachers with an exposure to international student teaching abroad beyond educational tourism.*

International education, overseas student teaching, student teaching abroad

## INTRODUCTION

It is important for United States teacher candidates to experience student teaching or study abroad so they may better understand the world community and the United States' place in it so they can be more reflective and effective teachers while working with immigrant children in our schools (Blair, 2002). We know from research that most teachers prefer to teach near or within their own neighbourhood schools. Yet the majority of the teaching positions are in urban areas where there is a high concentration of children from distinct ethnic and linguistic minorities who look different from those who are seeking teaching positions. Many universities and schools of education require teacher candidates to take a course in multicultural education or promote issues of diversity, peace education and social justice within their curriculum. However, a course alone, reading a textbook about multicultural education, conducting course discussions and even having a variety of ethnicities represented in university classrooms and working with children from different ethnic and linguistic minorities are not sufficient. Future teachers need to experience the cultural roots that immigrants experience in their new country that may develop international knowledge in a way that assists the understanding of their perspective students.

A research report from the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) stated that study abroad was found to be the activity that provided university students' with international experience. In many campuses studying abroad was available in principle, but few students majoring in elementary or secondary education tended to participate. Therefore, some cutting-edge schools of education have led the way in developing and creating international training programs for prospective teacher candidates so they may become more worldly teachers (Germain, 1998).

Different models exist that provide internationalisation experiences for future teachers. One way is to provide study abroad opportunities (tourist approach), a second model is to internationalise the curriculum, and a third is to allow future teachers to student teach in another country and immerse themselves not only with the country but also within the schools and the community.

While many institutions of higher education have study abroad programs and have instituted end-of course evaluations and program evaluations, little is known as to what knowledge, skills, and dispositions university students have prior to arriving in their host country as well as after their return to their home country. It is, therefore, proposed to discuss some questions as to ways that



schools of education can create, develop and provide prospective teachers with exposure to international education through student teaching abroad. The following questions may assist in providing a framework for this experience: (a) what does it mean to be a global teacher or a global citizen; (b) what types of international student teaching programs are available to prospective teacher candidates; (c) what does the research indicate regarding the preparation and experiences of student teachers while teaching abroad; (d) what knowledge, skills and dispositions can they be said to 'transport and unpack' while in their host countries; and (e) what do students teaching abroad bring back that may enhance their life, educational experiences and skills in their future classrooms?

### **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TEACHING PROGRAMS AND CONSORTIUMS**

A review of the literature revealed two program models. Some schools of education have created or developed their own global education programs in which international education opportunities exist, both in teaching courses specifically on educational issues abroad or stand-alone student teaching abroad programs in one or more countries. A second model includes schools of education that are part of a consortium that includes various universities in the United States that are partnered with host country universities. Students do their practice teaching in three types of schools: Department of Defence K-12 Schools, United States Department of State American Sponsored Overseas Schools, and host country schools. The Department of Defence K-12 Schools serve children of military families stationed abroad. The language of instruction is English. Countries include those located in Europe and Asia, as well as Guam, Puerto Rico, Panama, and Cuba. United States Department of State American Sponsored Overseas Schools are private schools open to all children on a tuition-paid basis. The schools are supported by the Department of State and serve as models for American education overseas. Some are housed in United States embassies while others have external campuses in the local community. Many children from diplomatic families attend. The languages of instruction are usually English and the host country language. Host country schools are the public schools attended by local children. The language of instruction is the country's primary language.

The following is a brief description of the various types of student teaching program models. Some universities participate in international consortiums with United States universities and universities abroad. Other universities base their international student teaching programs in schools of education in which they have developed international partnerships with specific elementary or secondary schools or universities abroad.

#### **Consortium for Overseas Student Teaching (COST)**

COST is a consortium of 15 United States colleges and universities and 28 colleges and universities from other countries that have banded together to plan and create opportunities for prospective teacher candidates to complete their student teaching abroad. Over 600 college students have participated in student teaching in overseas schools. The consortium was established in 1973 and meets annually to update its bylaws, discuss new overseas placements and to assess itself as an organisation. Placement is in national schools including countries such as Australia, the Bahamas, Canada, England, Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland, and South Africa. Student teachers may also select to be placed in United States or international schools in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Greece, Japan, Mexico, and Switzerland. Each year 60 to 75 students participate and complete their student teaching outside the United States (Mahon and Cushner, 2002; Clement and Outlaw, 2002). The United States colleges and universities include Auburn University, Berry College, Eastern Illinois University, Grand Valley State University, Kent State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Northern Kentucky University, Ohio University,

Thomas Moore College, the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, the University of Kentucky, and the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

### **Foundation for International Education**

The Cultural Immersion Project of the Overseas Student Teaching Project at Indiana University-Bloomington was created in the 1970s to prepare and place student teachers in national schools in England, Wales, Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, the Republic of Ireland, India, Taiwan, Kenya, and Costa Rica. Students complete 10 to 16 weeks of student teaching in Indiana and eight weeks in another country. The program provides certification for both elementary and secondary education, and includes certification in subject areas such as music, special education, and physical education. Placements are made in cooperation with the Foundation for International Education. Prospective students must participate in an extensive preparation program for the educational teaching abroad experience (Stachowski, Richardson and Henderson, 2003).

### **International Teacher Education Consortium**

The California State University System, San Diego State University, CSU-Long Beach and CSU-Bakersfield are involved with the Bilingual Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development Certificate Program (BCLAD). The CSU system participates in a consortium of all of the California State University Campuses and the Office of International Programs to help support the preparation of teachers working with English language learners in California. The program combines coursework in the United States and in Queretaro, Mexico as well as student teaching. Teacher candidates can receive teaching credentials or master's degree credits. Candidates have access to both indigenous (meaning unclear) and public schools. Candidates who complete the program receive a certificate from the Bilingual Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CSUS, 2004).

### **Pacific Region Student Teaching Program (PRST)**

This teaching program is a collaborative program between New Zealand, Australia, and the United States colleges based on cross-cultural exchange. It allows students to teach in a cross-cultural setting from any of the three countries. Its purpose is to allow the student teachers to engage in experiences that promote an understanding of the diversity of the country and allows students to share their beliefs in order to justify learned behaviours, actions and the implications on teaching (Kuechle, O'Brien, and Ferguson, 1995).

### **University of San Diego-School of Education Global (SOE-Global) Project**

The mandate of the SOE Global Education Resource Center is to provide SOE students and faculty with information about global education opportunities and the resources necessary for planning a global education experience. SOE Global supports the school of education's mission and promises to provide students with the professional knowledge, skills, and ethical perspectives they are likely to need for effective leadership and practice in a diverse society. SOE Global seeks to accomplish this by providing educational opportunities to students and also offering opportunities for non-United States students and scholars to study at the University of San Diego. SOE Global currently has student teaching abroad opportunities in Trinidad, Haiti, and Costa Rica. Teacher candidates student teach for 16 weeks under the supervision of cooperating teachers in both elementary and secondary American international schools. The school of education is currently planning to develop and create new partnerships with other countries in order to provide student teaching opportunities.

### **Christopher Newport University-Newport News, Virginia**

This university provides cross-cultural internships to pre-service teachers in Mexico, Germany, Peru, Brazil, Ireland, and Saudi Arabia. Most of the participating schools are American overseas schools, where English is the predominant language of instruction. Most pre-service teachers participate over an eight to 15 week period.

#### **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TEACHING PROGRAM SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES**

In the investigation of overseas student teaching programs various similarities and differences have emerged. Programs that have been in existence for many years have created and developed excellent partnerships with host universities as well as with local elementary and secondary schools, the community, and with host families. In order to prepare student teachers for the experience many universities have an application procedure with more rigid requirements than for those applying to the regular teaching credential program. In many cases students undergo extensive preparation for the cultural and educational experience. Students have to attend orientation meetings and take a course where they learn about the host country, its history, its customs, its people, and study their educational system. The purpose is to eliminate candidates who only want to take an educational tourist approach while student teaching. The majority of the programs include a two-phase approach. The first phase is a five to eight week student teaching experience in the United States. prior to doing their second phase of five to eight weeks student teaching abroad. In some cases they continue into a third phase where they continue their student teaching after they have returned from overseas. For the most part student teachers live with host families, but some live in apartments or in host university housing. While student teaching abroad they are paired with host university supervisors, principals or teachers who become their immediate supervisors and then are placed accordingly with cooperating teachers. Student teachers also communicate with their United States university supervisors through e-mail. Students complete the same requirements as their United States counterparts by reflecting on their experiences, completing mid-term and final evaluations with the selected university personnel from the host country. In some instances, United States university supervisors travel with groups of student teachers or visit at least once during their placements and also provide weekly feedback through e-mail. However, for the most part student teachers are on their own compared with other study abroad programs where they are in groups from their own institutions. Some student teaching abroad programs also provide course opportunities where students take half of their core teacher credential courses while teaching abroad and complete the remaining courses when they return to the United States, as is the case with the California State University International BCLAD Student Teaching program.

#### **REPORTS ON THE INFLUENCES OF STUDENT TEACHING ABROAD**

It is well documented that both study abroad and international student teaching experiences have positive effects on university students' cultural understanding of the host country. According to Quinn, Barr, Jarchow, Powell and Mckay (1995) such experiences result in increased personal and professional competence. The literature seems to be consistent in reporting both professional and personal knowledge, skills, and dispositions that student teachers acquire while teaching abroad. The literature review of research that has been conducted supports three general themes based on students' personal reflections, program evaluation, and perceptions from host educators. The three themes are instructional pedagogy, self-learning and genuine multiculturalism. Studies conducted by Bryan and Sprague, (1997), Clement and Oflaw, (2002), Mahon and Cushner, (2002b), Stachowski and Visconti, (1997), Stachowski, and Chleb, 1998, and Stachowski, Richardson, and Henderson, (2003) further support the three themes.

## THE THEMES

### **Theme 1-Instructional Pedagogy**

Student teachers found that some aspects of teaching were universal such as classroom management and administrative procedures. Student teachers were also able to compare their teaching experiences and practices in their home country and the host country and take the best from both. Since there were fewer resource materials provided student teachers had to become more creative in their curricular planning and delivery of instruction. Student teachers also had to learn how to adapt planning from local and state curricula in the United States to planning lessons from a national curriculum while student teaching abroad.

### **Theme 2-Learning about Self**

Most study abroad program models allow for large groups of students from one institution to attend school and live in university housing. Therefore, students have support systems that make the transition experience and cultural shock much easier. In comparison, many student teachers live and travel alone; therefore, they grow personally as a result of feeling isolated, homesick, and out of place during their first weeks in the host country. The experience is later seen as a positive one since student teachers self-efficacy is much higher. Gibson and Dembo (1984) have reported that teachers with higher self-efficacy guide, motivate, and praise students much more. Therefore the results of their student teaching experience may have a direct impact on culturally diverse students in their home country who are likely to need more guiding, motivation and praise. The experience that immigrant children undergo in the United States is thus placed into context. Students become more independent and mature as a result of their experiences. Student teachers appear to learn about the importance of family time and parent and extended family time with children. This may lead to student teachers taking a more relaxed approach. Therefore, student teachers' reflections and evaluations of their roles with their host families influenced how they planned to change their approach to life.

### **Theme 3-Genuine Multiculturalism**

As a result of learning about a new culture on a daily basis and in a new context, and the manner in which the programs are designed, student teachers may alter both personal and professional dispositions. An increase in cultural awareness and global thinking is evident. Student teachers may begin to question aspects of their own culture that may have previously gone unexamined (Mahon and Cushner, 2002). Student teachers who work with language minority children can then relate their experiences while working with English language learners in the United States. The teachers also see that children in their host countries address their teachers with much more respect. The experience gained plays a large part in cultural learning (Cushner and Brislin, 1996).

Student teachers may develop an increase in cultural sensitivity by viewing the United States from a different point of view.

Researchers also report that United States student teachers often returned with new skills, fresh ideas and enthusiasm that provided host children with a broader outlook on the world, in general, and the United States, in particular. Cultural enrichment in many instances was evident for the entire school community.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Some recommendations in the planning and implementation of new programs should be considered in order to improve effectively the experiences for student teachers preparing to teach abroad. The following suggestions, based on the literature review from various programs, include

integrating a planning phase, providing in-service training as part of the experience, providing scholarships, and conducting follow-up interviews with program participants.

### **Recommendation 1-Planning Phase**

In planning new programs the need to include a preparation phase is very important. Cultural shock can be minimised by requiring cross-cultural coursework and an orientation program to address the culture, beliefs, customs and the curriculum of the educational system of the host country for prospective student teachers.

### **Recommendation 2-Service Learning**

The student teaching experience should require in-service training so student teachers may become involved and immerse themselves more deeply in the local community. Building partnerships with international service clubs, such as Lions, Rotary, and Kiwanis, would be a start by helping the students to feel less isolated during the beginning of their student teaching. At the same time, the students receive invaluable cultural experience that increases their feeling of self-worth and accomplishment.

### **Recommendation 3-Scholarships**

There could be increased provision of scholarships for economically disadvantaged students. A study conducted by Mahon and Cushner (2000b) showed that less than 10 per cent of university students who participated in student teaching or study abroad programs came from ethnic minority students or were students who lacked economic resources. Most students cited cost as a factor in their lack of participation. Although student loans were available the need to provide mechanisms for financial support appeared to be required as positions for student fellowships or graduate assistants might be made available to those students who have fewer resources and who, therefore, were least likely to participate in study abroad programs.

### **Recommendation 4-Follow-up**

There appears to be minimal research on the effects of student teaching abroad and its impact on teaching practices in the home country classroom. A need to provide follow-up studies on the transfer of knowledge, skills, and dispositions once candidates are employed is lacking both from participants who have studied and those who have student taught abroad.

## **CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED WHILE STUDENT TEACHING ABROAD**

There are several challenges that student teachers have encountered while teaching abroad. By addressing many of the recommendations cited, the possibilities of minimising the challenges can be addressed. The most common challenges are adapting to the national curriculum, having minimal contact with peers their own age, and in some instances having difficulty communicating in the community outside of the schools.

### **Challenge 1-Adapting to the curriculum**

Adaptation and planning lessons to meet the national (overseas) curriculum is very challenging. Learning about a country's educational standards in such a short period can be daunting. Learning about the national curriculum during the preparation phase or in coursework may alleviate this anxiety.

### **Challenge 2-Lack of contact with peers**

Lack of contact with other young people may increase isolation. When student teachers are not placed in groups they may feel isolated and homesick, particularly when many of the teachers at their schools are much older. If their host families do not have children, the age gap may minimise conversation. Having at least two student teachers in one location can help support their personal needs. They can plan together and may become more involved with the school in extracurricular activities and with the community in-service learning projects.

### **Challenge 3-Language barrier**

In some instances students also felt frustrated when placed in countries whose language they could not speak or when their initial fluency was limited. Although they were able to communicate in the school there was limited involvement with the community. Some challenges exist anytime one travels abroad; therefore, it is much easier when one is in the position of a tourist. Students teaching abroad are young professionals who may become teachers once they return to the United States. They are the emissaries and ambassadors of United States schools of education and representatives of higher education institutions. Therefore, minimising the challenges can help support future student teachers abroad from the recruitment phase to the teaching placement phase.

### **CONCLUSION**

It was evident from the research that over 100 universities in the United States participated or provided some form of student teaching abroad. As a result of participation in international student teaching, university students grew personally and professionally from their experiences. They learned effective pedagogical practices and adapted their instructional planning. They became more sensitive to issues of multiculturalism and were, therefore, able to relate to experiences immigrant children and families went through in the United States. They showed an increase in self-efficacy as they learned more about themselves, the international communities in which they lived and the children they worked with. They had moved beyond educational tourism.

### **FUTURE IMPLICATIONS**

An increase in efforts to globalise United States' institutions of higher education increases the need to infuse, integrate and implement international student teaching programs if this country is to develop global citizens who support cultural and global diversity. Will the graduates be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of citizens in the twenty-first century? Will they have the required skills and sensitivity as well as the respect for human dignity that is likely to improve current and future conditions? These are the fundamental questions that are faced by educators who prepare future teachers (Kirkwood, 2001). Providing overseas student teaching experience is the key ingredient if the United States wants its future teachers to be culturally and globally literate to meet the challenges of this new age.

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# Developmental Speech Problems and Bilingualism: The Difficulties of Identification

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*The developmental speech problems and the speech problems derived from bilingualism could have some similar characteristics but they need different intervention. So, distinguishing between them is essential. The present, multi-method (methodological triangulation), case study aimed to investigate whether it is possible to identify developmental speech problems of an eight-year old Albanian boy who attended a public primary school in Greece. The identification of his speech problems had some specific difficulties, mainly related to the lack of IQ, psycholinguistic and school performance standardised tests for bilingual children.*

Bilingualism, identification, developmental speech problems

## INTRODUCTION

### Diagnosis of Speech Problems

Developmental speech problems are initially retardation in the development of first oral and later in written language, without sensory, kinetic or phonological problems. The problem is rather related to a specific intellectual structure that prevents the reception or even the expression of speech and it can be divided into two types: receptive and expressive developmental speech disorder.

The linguistic characteristics of receptive type vary depending on the severity of disturbance and the age of the child. Initially, the child cannot react when hearing familiar words, and later on, he cannot comprehend simple orders or may have difficulty in the comprehension of certain categories of words, such as words for space and time and even more, in complex utterances. In more severe cases, the child may exhibit multiple difficulties, such as weakness in the comprehension of basic vocabulary or simple utterances and insufficiencies in various aspects of the hearing process, such as discrimination of sounds, combination of phonemes and symbols (Tzouriadou, 1992).

Otherwise, the linguistic characteristics of expressive type speech problems are evident from the early years of life. Thus, two-year old children may be incapable of producing single words and three-year olds are unable to use telegraphic speech. Later, they present limited vocabulary, difficulty in learning new words, vocabulary errors such as substitutions, transpositions, overgeneralisations, and falsifications. The length of their utterances is short, their syntax is simple, and the variation of different grammatical types is limited. In some cases, basic elements of utterance are absent, the order of words is wrong or they give atypical responses. During the first grades of primary school, these difficulties in oral speech are reflected in the written speech too (Tzouriadou, 1992). Moreover, the mild types of difficulties could be obvious later in puberty, when the requirements for speech are increased and the used speech becomes more sophisticated. Often, some children have difficulties in both, expressive and receptive speech, so their problems



become more complex, and this is an accepted and reliable indicator for learning disabilities at school age.

Assessing level of speech can be very difficult, since single speech quotients are rare and perfect measures for the various parts that constitute overall speech do not exist. However, since speech is connected to a variety of other operations in the central nervous system (CNS), the estimation of these operations can help obtain a global picture of operations of speech and at the same time provide information about other functions of the CNS.

According to Michelogianni, and Tzenaki, (2000), the estimation of speech can include: (a) estimation of speech regarding mainly articulation and vocabulary, (b) estimation of writing regarding speech or the motor ability of the hand, (c) estimation of perception and expressive speech with respect to hearing, and (d) determination of whether the speech disorder is organic or psychological. So, the assessment team should be interdisciplinary one.

Consequently, it is accepted that children referred for speech assessment should be assessed for intelligence, reading and spelling as well. The verbal subtests of these, should give some useful information. It is important to point out that the verbal score on an intelligence test is low as well in the cases that the full intelligence score is generally low. In these cases, a differential diagnosis is essential in order to be clear if the speech disorders are a result of a low IQ or they are developmental ones.

The tests usually used are for sound discrimination, perception of speech related to words and utterances, expressive speech related to the whole spectrum of speech and also, tests for memory related to words and utterances. A widely accepted test used in speech evaluation is the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Ability (ITPA), as well as the Detroit Test that is available in Greek (Tzouriadou, 1989, cited in Markovitis, and Tzouriadou, 1991).

### **DIFFICULTIES IN ASSESSMENT OF BILINGUAL CHILDREN**

A bilingual person can be considered anyone who knows and systematically uses two, or more, languages. So, the emphasis is given in the criterion of use and least in the degree of possession of two languages, but in any case, it is admissible that the bilingual individual should get to know at least one of the two languages to a level comparable to those of a monolingual speaker (Agiakli and Chatzidaki 1999). A good knowledge of maternal language constitutes the base for learning the second language, because thought already has been developed through the maternal language (Kanakidou and Papagianni 1997).

Bilinguals and multilinguals, however, include an extremely heterogeneous population. They can vary along a significant number of dimensions, including (a) sociolinguistic background, (b) type of bilingualism, (c) degree of proficiency, (d) age and sequence of acquisition of the languages, (e) method of acquisition of the second language, (f) language-specific factors, and (g) anatomical dimensions (Ardila, et al., 2000). Although there is extensive research on bilingualism, it remains a poorly understood phenomenon.

The use of language of a cultural minority negatively influences the possibility of absorbing social goods and facilities (for example, education) and the possibility for social and economic integration of emigrants and refugees (Anthogalidou et al., 1998). It is widely accepted that many bilingual children, particularly those who came from low socio-economic familial environments, are disadvantaged in the acquisition of the required abilities for a high level of performance in the state educational system. Education is the main factor that can contribute to the awareness of their identity and to feel adequate as members of the new society. Nevertheless, some problems in education decrease its effectiveness.

Research has shown that at least five to six years of school attendance are required for any bilingual to reach the level of his monolingual schoolmates (Cummins, 1984). This takes into account that (a) for a bilingual student a difference in level of language knowledge during the first years of school is expected, and (b) his surface fluency in the second language should not constitute a criterion for making a decision about the need of further educational support.

Any assessment procedure should recognise that culture is not a single entity that every child acquires equally, because each child is unique and confronts the environment in unique ways. The child brings past experiences to the learning situation, as well as individual ways of interacting with the world. The school adds new sets of experiences, but these experiences are uniquely assimilated by each child. The acquisition of knowledge, or cognitive development, is a phenomenon that occurs throughout the years and is not limited to the classroom (Omark, and Watson, 1983).

Research (such as, DeBlassie, and Franco, 1983) has shown that the children of minorities: (a) were over represented in special education classes, (b) education became the means of conservation in the situation from which the children came, and obtained a profit and reward from their society, not from the wider and prevailing cultural, (c) the tests in which they were submitted, increased the difference, (d) the low expectations of schoolteachers led the children to corresponding low performance according to the self-fulfilling prophecy, (e) when they were placed in a special class, they almost never come out from it, (f) the results of IQ tests were neither valid nor reliable.

One of the most important educational problems is the diminished ability of bilinguals to perform well in official and standardised tests (DeBlassie, and Franco, 1983). It is important that standardised tests do not include corresponding norms for the comparison of scores, thus there are problems in the interpretation and evaluation of scores based on the comparison with norms from different cultural and linguistic populations. So, these tests are in doubt regarding to their validity and reliability. If everybody is different, the logical approach to testing would be to design individual assessments that would examine each child in terms of the child's ability to function within his or her own world. So, for the bilingual exceptional child the critical question is not, How does this child compare with national norms? but rather, How does this child compare with the local bilingual population? (Omark and Watson, 1983).

In Greece, although various institutions have made scientific studies to identify knowledge of Greek as second language, for example, the Pedagogic Institute, the National Kapodistriako University of Athens (Prof. Markou and Prof. Fragoudaki), the Centre of Greek Language (Agiakli and Chatzidaki 1999), only a few empirical studies of bilingualism have been recorded, particularly for Albanian emigrants (Tsimploulis, 2002). However, recently, Tzouriadou and her colleagues' studies on bilingualism and speech problems have found that in Greek special and integration classes many students from minorities have attended without cognitive impairments (Tzouriadou, et al. 1999, Tzouriadou, et al. 2000).

### **The aim of the study**

The approach mentioned above, that the cultural diversity and bilingualism should not stand as an obstacle to intellectual growth, as well as the social and psychological potential of bilingual children, is adopted by the present research. The present study extensively examined and assessed the potential of an eight-year-old child whose maternal language was Albanian and who was in second grade of primary school. The intervention program based on this assessment was presented in another publication (Tzivinikou, in preparation).

The aim of this study was to investigate whether it was possible to identify speech problems derived from bilingualism, and developmental problems, either expressive or receptive type, using

a case study. The subject was an eight-year old Albanian boy who was in the second grade of primary school in Greece.

## METHOD

The present study was a case study, focused on an only child, as a target subject of the bilingual school-aged population in Greece. It was a methodological triangulation, involving qualitative and quantitative approaches. The triangular techniques in the social sciences attempt to map out, or to explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint (Cohen and Manion, 1994). The present triangulation was between methods, which means it involved the use of more than one method in the pursuit of the chosen objective. So, it has used psychometric measures, teacher's ratings, interviews, and informal observation in order to build up an overall and complete assessment of the child.

### Tools and Data Collection

The following methods were used for data collection:

- a semi-structured interview of the child's parents to obtain information about the developmental history of the child;
- child's assessment using the Detroit Test, (DTLA-2) that is a formal psycho educational test, not standardised but adjusted by Tzouriadou (1992) in Greek;
- assessment of reading and spelling using informal tests (These tests were structured and used in the doctoral thesis of the researcher (Tzivinikou, 2002));
- educational assessment of the child by the teacher using a specific tool (a questionnaire) structured for the needs of the present study named "Teacher's Assessment", making a detailed qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the school performance of the child, with emphasis on the linguistic lessons;
- a questionnaire filled in by the teacher in order to obtain information on some personal characteristics and the behaviour of the child, named 'Teacher's Questionnaire', and
- observation of the child in the school setting and out of the school.

### Procedure

Initially the study involved an informal screening process by the researcher in co-operation with the schoolteacher of a primary school in a suburb of Thessaloniki, in order to locate any students that presented any specific problems in their school performance in relation to their linguistic development. Four students met these criteria. One of these is a student with soft cerebral palsy, the second had specific reading difficulties, the third student some orthographic and mild reading difficulties, and the fourth student, was a bilingual child, of Albanian origin, with speech problems. None of these had any formal diagnosis. For the present research, the latter student was chosen on the basis of his family consent and the interest that he presented as a case.

### *Interview*

The parents' interview about the developmental history of the child was held at their house, and during the interview all the members of the wider family were present (for economic reasons, two small families with narrow related bonds lived together in this house).

### ***Formal and informal tests***

The Detroit Test (DTLA-2) was administered to the child, at the child's home, because the process is particularly time-consuming, using the most suitable space of the house that was kindly offered by the parents. On the other hand, the informal tests for reading and spelling assessment as well as the comprehension, were administered at the child's school, in a quiet classroom, that was kindly offered by the headmaster of the school.

### ***Teacher's Assessment***

A detailed, qualitative, as well as quantitative assessment of the school performance of the child was made by his teacher.

### ***Teacher's Questionnaire***

A questionnaire was filled in by the teacher giving some information about the socio-economic status of the child's family. Additionally, it gave information about the child's behaviour at school based on the peers' social relations.

### ***Systematic Observation***

The child was observed by the researcher for two weeks. The observation took place mainly in the school setting and at his home as well. More specifically, it was done in the classroom during Language and Mathematics, outside the classroom during the break, and at his house. The observer used a protocol of observation including the following sections: (a) the way that the child answered the questions of the schoolteacher, right, wrong, hesitantly (b) spontaneous speech during the lessons, (c) his spontaneous speech to his classmates of his work group, (d) his schoolmates speech to him, (e) his reading, and (f) his comprehension of text after silent reading, (g) during the break, emphasis was given to the social relations of the child, for example, if he played alone or with others, if he had friends, if his friends were Greeks or Albanians, (h) finally, during the observation at the child's home, emphasis was given mainly to his behaviour and his spontaneous speech.

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The study was conducted under rigorous ethics, in order to protect the child and his family. Therefore, the first principle involved informed consent, which allowed the parents, the teacher and the headmaster of the school to choose whether to participate in the present study, after being informed of the purpose and the procedures of the study. Diener and Crandall (1978) defined 'informed consent' as involving four elements: competence, voluntarism, full information and comprehension. Additionally, the informed consent of children presents further problems. Even if they can reasonably be expected to understand fully what it is they are agreeing to, the researcher needs to make sure that he or she has the consent of a parent or guardian. On the other hand, the privacy, confidentiality and deception were the ethical matters that were fully under consideration.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

According to the reported information referring to the child of the study, he came from a family of economic emigrants from Albania. Their economic level was particularly low, and worsened because all emigrants and refugees were accustomed to having social relations mainly with a closed society of Albanians in Greece and according to Anthogalidou et al. (1998) that influences negatively the possibility of absorbing social goods and facilities. The education level of the parents was mid-level for the Albanian population, but exceptionally low for the Greek population. A member of their wider family (an uncle of the child) was a teacher in Albania until

a little time ago, and he appeared to have had an important, positive effect on the parents with regards to the upbringing, education and their expectations of their child.

On the other hand, according to the child's medical background-history information from the semi-structured interview of parents, some serious problems from his birth until his fourth year of age were reported. The most important of these was the problem of the refusal of food, and the developmental problems based on it. The results of this problem are visible even now, with the child, not presenting the expected growth, for example, very low height and weight. Another basic problem was related to an extensive burn that happened at the age of around two years that created a malformation in the left side of his body.

The parents also reported problems of speech that they observed in the child, in his maternal language as well. For the quality of oral speech in his maternal language, the information came only from his parents, there was no other information, especially from any type of assessment. Another important aspect was that the child had not been taught to write the Albanian language.

However, according to the results of the Detroit test, the child's intellectual ability was average, his total score was 105, while in the linguistic subtests he had lower scores. Thus, in subtests (a) sequence of words, (b) conceptual cross-correlation and (c) completion of words, his scores were below average, and particularly in the completion of words considerably under the average score (score 5, Poor). These findings were consistent with the views of DeBlasie and Franco (1983) that bilinguals have difficulties in performing well on official and standardised tests. On the other hand, the study had an important limitation, as described by Omark and Watson (1983), that the bilingual individual child has to be compared with the local bilingual population from which it has come, not with national norms. But as was mentioned above, in Greece as well as in many other countries, there are no such formal and standardised tests.

According to the standardised scores of the test manual, the ratio of his linguistic ability (verbal aptitude) and his non-linguistic one was 5/10.7. The very big difference in linguistic and non-linguistic ability may show some problem in oral speech (in expressive speech). According to the informal tests and the observation, the child presented the following characteristics:

### **Language Development**

As was reported by the child's parents, his knowledge of the Albanian language was perfect and of Greek very good. The findings from informal observation at school and at his home showed that sometimes (not often) the boy had very mild stuttering, mainly when he was at any stressful situation. During reading he did not stutter at all. So, the study of his stuttering was not part of the purpose of the research, because according to his teacher and his parents, the stuttering did not influence his speech, psychological, or other aspects of behaviour. From the formal and informal test it was found that his knowledge about the syntax and grammar of Greek was at a low level, although his comprehension (receptive speech) was perfect.

The child made many grammatical errors and he could not generalise the suitable forms of words and moreover made a lot of pauses, gestures, repetitions of words and had a limited available vocabulary. Sometimes he could produce generally sufficient grammatical forms, at other times he presented problems in the recall of the right order of the words. Moreover, the child had difficulties in the production of utterances, in his spontaneous speech or when he was asked by someone (like his teacher), he often presented problems finding or recalling the suitable words. These results created a profile that met the criteria for expressive type developmental speech disorders as described by Michelogiannis and Tzenaki (2000), and Tzouriadou (1992).

### **School Performance Assessed by Informal tests and Observation**

Regarding the boy's school performance assessed by informal reading and spelling tests, as well as observations of his performance, his reading ability was slightly lower than that of the other students in his classroom. Although he read fluently enough, his reading had some specific characteristics, such as monotonous rhythm, lack of punctuation (no full stops), and conjunct words. Generally, all the other students (except three of them) in his classroom were better readers than he was.

On the other hand, his spelling ability was characterised by many grammatical errors (mainly at the end of the words), and specific letters replacements ( $\Phi$  - B -  $\Theta$  -  $\Xi$  -  $\Psi$ ). Very often, he transmitted the oral speech difficulties in written language (e.g. same syntactic structure). Generally, his performance of spelling was low in comparison to his classmates. On the other hand, in Mathematics, his performance (according to the assessment of his teacher), was above average.

### **Behaviour**

According to classroom observations, the child's behaviour in school was very good. He was particularly quiet, and very hesitant, and did not create problems. His basic personality characteristic was low self-confidence and self-concept. When he apprehended his errors, he was fearful and he was very angry with himself. Although the teacher dealt with him in a sensitive and understanding way and gave more time and chances to him, the child could not utilise them.

Regarding his relations with his schoolmates, observations found that he did not interact with his schoolmates to any degree. During work in groups, other students did not speak to him at all, they behaved as though he did not exist. This occurred even when they were particularly energetic and uneasy often causing the teacher to react. Generally, communication with his classmates seemed to be insufficient for various reasons, including mainly his speech difficulties and additional social problems deriving from his personality.

On the other hand, from the observation of familial environment and the behaviour of the child at home, it was evident that he was a good-natured, well-mannered boy, with innate politeness, who had been brought up well by his parents. He was a withdrawn child and the lack of self-confidence was perceptible even when he was in his familiar environment.

The multi-method of data collection showed that the child had an average intelligence level with a developmental speech disorder. He met the diagnostic criteria of DSM-III for expressive type developmental speech disorder (Tzouriadou, 1992). Of course, it was obvious that these difficulties were made worse by bilingualism. In addition he did not have other academic chances except that provided by the school, and came from a quite deprived environment. So, he did not have many opportunities to improve his speech.

The child in this study appeared to have already developed a satisfactory knowledge of his maternal language. Consequently, the findings of the present study were not in agreement with Kanakidou and Papagianni (1997), because the child had developmental speech problems in Greek despite a good knowledge of his maternal language. A possible explanation could relate to the fact that a detailed history of linguistic development of the child, and his knowledge of the Albanian language was certified only by his parents, and their estimation was not considered very reliable, because of their lack of special knowledge about these matters. Thus, it would be possible that the developmental speech problems were present in both languages.

## CONCLUSIONS

Summarising the findings, the bilingual child in this study appeared to be of average intellectual ability with developmental speech discords, expressive type in Greek. Although it was reported that he had a good knowledge of his maternal language, this information was provided only by his parents without any scientific basis, and so it was not considered reliable. It is possible that the developmental speech problems were present in both languages.

The lack of standardised and formal tests for bilingual populations is well known from various scientific studies, (for example, Omark and Watson, 1983, DeBlassie and Franco, 1983). On the other hand, the new situation in Greece, whereby a large number of emigrants have moved into the country, created an imperative need for the development of such tests in the Greek language as well. Because of a lack of appropriate reading, spelling, and IQ tests for bilingual Albanian-Greek children, the present study used informal tests created for the purpose. Thus, the evaluation of school performance of the child, even if it were supported by a set of different methods, complementary to each other, could not be considered to be fully valid and reliable. Therefore, a clear distinction between developmental speech problems and speech problems derived from bilingualism was not strongly supported.

The difficulties of identification were related to the causes of the problems. The child clearly faced various problems other than those of speech, such as developmental ones, very low socio-economic and educational status of family, deprived linguistic environment, and the lack of educational occasions beyond attendance at school. All these problematic situations could create speech difficulties and the co-existence of causes could create more serious and accumulative ones.

## FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the present study showed that there was need for further research in the topic, because the population of such children is continually increasing. The creation of standardised, formal IQ, reading, spelling and mathematics tests for bilingual children is a major need, as it would help to diagnose if speech problems were related to both languages in order to be characterised as developmental.

Professionals should take into consideration the low reliability and validity of measures of assessment, to minimise the adverse discrimination of bilingual children. Only with such an approach, would both the cultural diversity and bilingualism not stand as an obstacle in these children's growth in intellectual, social and psychological potential.

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# Indonesian Postgraduate Students studying in Australia: An Examination of their Academic, Social and Cultural Experiences

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*Prior studies suggest that adjustment is a significant contributor to the academic success of international students, and cultural differences can lead to adjustment problems. However, while Australia takes many international students from Indonesia, and there are substantial cultural differences between Indonesia and Australia, there has been little research on the adjustment of Indonesian students in Australia. The study investigates the adjustment experiences of 25 Indonesian postgraduate students (8 female, 17 male) studying in universities in Victoria, Australia, using an open-ended questionnaire. The results confirm the importance of cultural issues in the adjustment process, particularly in relation to classroom interaction and student-teacher relationships. The main problems faced by the Indonesian students concern the use of academic English, and Australian academic requirements, and the lack of specific facilities for Muslim students. The study suggests recommendations for improvements in pre-departure training programs and degree programs in Australia.*

International education, Indonesia, Australia, cultural differences, adjustment, postgraduate students

## INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of tertiary students now undertake their education in a country other than their country of citizenship. Australia is a major global provider of international education, and is the third largest provider at degree level after the United States and the United Kingdom. In 2003, there were 210,397 international students enrolled in Australian higher education, including more than 155,000 on shore in Australia, who were 22 per cent of all students. This was 13.7 per cent more international students than in 2002 and constituted 22 per cent of all students enrolled in Australia. The largest source countries in order were Singapore, Hong Kong China, Malaysia, mainland China, Indonesia and India. In 2003 11,865 students from Indonesia were enrolled in Australian higher education institutions, of whom 8307 (70.0%) were in either Business Studies (5590) or Information Technology (2717) programs and 1065 enrolled in Engineering (OECD, 2003; DEST, 2004).

In economic terms, international education is very important to Australia, providing 13 per cent of the revenues of higher education institutions (DEST, 2004) and injecting \$5 billion into the national economy in 2003 including student expenditures on transport, accommodation, food and other living expenses (Nelson, 2003). Education is Australia's third largest services export (Cameron, 2002). International education enhances university engagement with Asian nations and has the potential to broaden the cross-cultural experiences of local students. Nevertheless, international education will only continue to contribute to Australia if it produces adequate benefits for the international students themselves and constitutes a successful experience for them.

One key to the success of international students is their adjustment, not only to the academic demands of Australian universities but to the social and cultural environment. Academic success enhances personal confidence and status, helping students to fit in; and research (for example, Hellsten, 2002; Hedges and Soutar, 2003) suggests that social and personal adjustment to life in the host country, and its characteristics inside and outside the classroom, are keys to academic adjustment.

While the literature contains a large number of studies touching on issues of the adjustment of international students, few specifically focus on Indonesian students and most investigate international education in the United States rather than Australia (e.g. Huntley, 1993; Wan, 1999; Nicholson, 2001; Toyokawa and Toyokawa, 2002). Little research has focused specifically on the adjustment of Indonesian students in Australia. Hasanah (1997) and Philips (1994) note that Indonesian students encounter difficulties in fulfilling certain Western academic requirements, particularly in relation to critical thinking. These studies do not explore the broad range of academic and social problems. Yet this is a fruitful area for research, not just because of the importance of Indonesian students to Australia, and the importance of the Australia-Indonesia relationship to both neighbouring nations, but also because adjustment problems are magnified by cultural differences. There are clear differences between Indonesian and Australian cultures, so that a study of Indonesian students in Australia might also be of broader academic interest.

The study used a background (demographic) questionnaire and an open-ended questionnaire to investigate the academic social and cultural experiences of 25 postgraduate Indonesian students during their period of study in a number of universities in Victoria, Australia. The study aims to help Australian academics to understand better the experiences faced by Indonesian students both in adjusting to academic work, and to the larger cultural and social setting in which that academic work takes place, particularly the cultural environment of the universities themselves. Because the number of students in the study is relatively small, and the study is confined to universities in Victoria, the study cannot be seen as definitive of Indonesian students studying in Australia. However, the open-ended questionnaire data are detailed, and the findings produce certain clear conclusions that are indicative of directions for further research.

### **INTERCULTURAL ADJUSTMENT**

All people who embark on a new program of work face adjustment issues, more so in a new institution, and much more so in a new country. Adjustment is a psychological process that directly impacts the performance and functioning of the individual (Robie and Ryan, 1996). Miller (1993) states that students who experience adjustment problems or stresses or what is termed 'culture shock' (see below) can experience a range of negative responses, from mild symptoms such as tiredness, to severe reactions such as the feeling of being victimised, paranoia, and the refusal of most or even all aspects of the host culture. Poyrazli, et al. (2001) agree that not being able to adjust to a new environment can affect students psychologically, for example by generating stress and depression; and physiologically, for example by triggering headaches. Both reactions are likely to cut into potential academic performance. Poyrazli and colleagues also note that adjustment problems are more likely to occur when students live and work in a culture different from their own. Barker et al. (1991) note that problems experienced by international student are often affected by unfamiliarity with host nation cultural norms, and cultural difficulties are often manifest as difficulties in adjustment.

Studies of international student adjustment discuss a range of problems, including the pressures created by new role and behavioural expectations, language difficulties, financial problems, social difficulties, homesickness, difficulties in dealing with university and other authorities, academic difficulties, and lack of assertiveness inside and outside the classroom (Charles and Stewart, 1991; Hayes and Lin, 1994; Barratt and Huba, 1994; Parr, Bradley and Bingi, 1992). These factors can

combine, exacerbating problems of adjustment and the anxieties and performance lags that result. For example, Poyrazli and colleagues (2001) report that students under sponsorship had more problems than those without scholarship support, suggesting that this was due to the additional bureaucracy that sponsored students dealt with, and expectation of superior academic performance. Barker and colleagues (1991) report that some Asian students find it difficult to engage in tutorials and seminars. They are not accustomed to having to participate in the Australian manner and a lack of language competence and self-confidence further affects their capacity to do so.

But inter-cultural adjustment is not solely determined by the international students themselves: it is shaped in relationships with others and affected by differences in values. Wanguri (1996, p.456) notes that “we tend to like people who are similar to us and dislike those who are dissimilar”. Among the most influential work on the values dimension of cultural difference is Hofstede (1997), who conducted empirical studies in a large multinational cooperation in 40 countries to investigate cultural differences in value systems. He identifies four main dimensions in which differences in values can be identified, describing these as: power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity and femininity, and uncertainty avoidance. Of these dimensions the masculine-feminine concept is less relevant to this study, but the other three concepts are used in data analysis (see the discussion below of Findings):

- **Power distance** is about how a culture deals with status inequality and authority; “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (Hofstede, 1997, p.28). Hierarchical relationships are more readily observed in Asian cultures than in Western cultures. In social interactions most Asian students are conscious of “who is older and who is younger, who has a higher level of education, who has a lower level, who is in a higher institutional or economic position and who is lower, or who is teacher and who is student” (Scollon and Scollon, 1995, p.81).
- **Individualism versus collectivism** refers to relationships between individual and others. Most Asian people live in the societies that value what is referred to as ‘togetherness’, and think of themselves as a ‘we’ group. They typically relate to extended not nuclear families and “are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups which continue throughout a lifetime to protect in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (Jandt, 2001, p.200). In individualist Western cultures people think more in terms of ‘I’ than ‘we’ and focus on the interests of themselves and their immediate family. In an individualist culture the cardinal values are creativity, bravery, self-reliance, and solitude. In a collectivist culture they are reciprocity, obligation, duty, security, tradition, dependence, harmony, obedience to authority, equilibrium and proper action (Triandis, 1994).
- **Uncertainty avoidance** refers to “the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertainty or unknown situations” (Hofstede, 1997, p.113). People from strong uncertainty avoidance cultures are active, expressive of their feelings, aggressive, emotional, compulsive, security seeking, and intolerant; while those from weak uncertainty avoidance cultures, such as Southeast Asian cultures (Clyne, 1994) are contemplative, less aggressive, unemotional, relaxed, accepting personal risk, and relatively tolerant (Jandt, 2001). The latter cultures also tolerate ambiguity and value harmony. Jandt asserts that students from high uncertainty avoidance cultures expect their teachers to know all the answers, whereas in low uncertainty avoidance cultures, students do not expect their teachers to know everything.

## UNDERSTANDING INDONESIA

### Indonesian Collectivism

Indonesia is characterised by linguistic, cultural, religious and local diversity; but is also unified in certain respects, as indicated by the widespread use of Bahasa Indonesia and the national flag, and the dominance of Islam in religion. Indonesia's national motto is *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, an old Javanese phrase meaning 'They are many; they are one', usually translated as 'Unity in diversity' (Turner, et al., 2000; Sneddon, 2003). The Ramayana and the Mahabrata story, performed through the Wayang puppets, reflects the Indonesian value system. This includes cooperative harmony, decision by consensus (*musyawarah mufakat*) and mutual assistance (*gotong royong*) in accomplishing economic tasks (Draine and Hall, 1986). In terms of Hofstede's individualism or collectivism, Indonesian culture is definitely collectivist. Indonesians maintain traditional family values, group concerns are more important than individual concerns. People are very courteous. Western individualism is seen as odd and selfish. "Criticisms are not spoken directly and they will often agree with what you say rather than offend. They will also prefer to say something rather than appear as if they don't know the answer" (Turner, et al, 2000, p.59).

### Education in Indonesia

The relationship between Indonesian teachers and students is circumscribed by their respective social positions and traditional beliefs about learning.

The teacher is seen to be a moral authority and students are expected to defer to all their superiors, including teachers. Teachers are also viewed as the fountain of knowledge – while knowledge is viewed as a more or less fixed sets of facts to be transmitted and digested by thirsty learners, later to be regurgitated in test (a deficit model of learning). (Lewis, 1997, p.14)

In the typical secondary school classroom teachers mostly dominate talk. Teachers urge the students to listen, to obey and to memorise things (Buchori, 2001). Indonesian school students are not encouraged to ask questions of their teacher, and are reluctant to ask questions even when they are invited to do so. Questioning is seen "to challenge teacher's authority, and to demonstrate one's arrogance or ignorance – to risk the possibility of punishment or personal humiliation (loss of social face)" (Lewis, 1997, p.13). This can have negative long-term implications, given the need to formulate questions and develop critical thinking in tertiary education. Nevertheless,

A cultural tradition can clearly shape the dynamic of the learning environment... The imposition of a 'western' model of learning, or aspect of it, in such a culturally sensitive environment carries with it a degree of cultural presumption. Such a model might not be responsive to (or even valid within) this context given the specific characteristics of the Indonesian education system. (Meyer and Kiley, 1998, p.289)

When students are in a foreign language context, language becomes a key factor in adjustment, as the Findings will make clear. In Indonesia English is learnt as a foreign language; and though it is one of the compulsory subjects in secondary and tertiary education, it is taught for only three hours per week in Lower Secondary School and four hours a week in the Upper Secondary School. Moreover, "English is seldom used in the classroom as teachers tend to use Bahasa Indonesia to carry out their English lessons in the classroom – except, perhaps, when greeting students before the sessions get started and then when students are dismissed" (Mustafa, 2001, p.306).

## Islam

Islam is not only the predominant religion in Indonesia but part of the framework of Indonesian moral values. Its day-to-day customs and requirements directly affect most Indonesian students in Australia. Muslims are required to pray five times a day: at dawn, at noon, afternoon, sunset and at night. Islam prohibits alcoholic beverages and eating pork; and animals such as cows and chickens must be slaughtered in accordance with Islamic religious requirements before they can be consumed<sup>1</sup>. The strictest Muslims are very careful with the ingredients in various food items available in the supermarket, and in relation to detergents, soaps, toothpaste and shampoo.

### STUDY METHODS

The 25 participants in the study were aged between 24 and 42 years, from a diversity of locations in Indonesia, from a mixture of academic fields, and enrolled at a number of universities in Victoria, Australia. There were 17 men and eight women students; and 17 of the 25 students were Muslim; the remainder were Christian (seven) and Buddhist (one). All were postgraduate students because it was expected that their relative maturity and experience would enable more thoughtful reflections. Similarly, all were required to have lived and studied in Australia for at least one year. In addition, all were coursework students rather than research degree students, to ensure that they attended classes on a regular basis and their classroom experiences could be investigated. All participants were self selected (volunteers), contacted through the Indonesian society.

The background questionnaire was designed to provide detailed information about the participants, covering such areas as age, gender, religion, prior learning experiences, experiences of living abroad, and details of their course of study and other arrangements in Australia. The open-ended questionnaire sought information from the participants concerning any difficulties they had experienced in relation to their course of study, and social and cultural life in Australia, and asked them to identify positive aspects of Australian education and socio-cultural life. In part the questionnaire was adapted from Robertson et al. (2000).

### STUDY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### Issues in the academic setting

##### *Language and learning*

The study confirms the results of many others (for example, Robertson, et al., 2000; Li, et al., 2002; Bayley, et al., 2002) in finding that language difficulties are a significant barrier to learning by Indonesian students, and a major factor in their cultural and educational adjustment. In total 23 out of the 25 participants in this study reported at least some difficulties in the use of English in academic situations. Making oral presentations and writing essays were the areas of difficulties most often cited. The specific difficulties are shaped not just by unfamiliarity with English *per se* but by the linguistic character of Indonesian, the approach to English learning in Indonesia, and what happens when the two different pedagogical and linguistic traditions intersect. Although both English and Indonesian use the same script, there are differences particularly in their grammatical and syntactical structures. For Indonesian students, grammatical mistakes are almost inevitable, and this can be a source of frustration for some students, especially in relation to writing tasks. For the students in the study English was more problematic in academic situations than in social contexts. In normal social interactions there was less at stake for the participants, for

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<sup>1</sup> The term *halal* (permitted under Islamic law) can be used in the context of food such as *halal* meat, or it can be used with things like *halal* income, meaning income earned by using halal means (Saeed, 2003).

example in making grammatical mistakes, though they were concerned about conversational rules such as how to start a conversation or topic selection. Likewise, Cummins (1984, in Borland and Pearce, 2002, p.109) notes that it takes longer for language learners to become competent in the academic context. He finds that children in the Canadian context could perform well in basic interpersonal communication skills within a short time span, but took years to acquire cognitive academic language proficiency.

Five participants stated that they were nervous about speaking, or lacked the confidence to participate in classroom discussion, or did so only because it was to be assessed. Several noted the speaking skills taught in their bridging program were insufficient, and others emphasised that classroom presentations had not been part of their prior educational experience. As a result, local students dominated the classroom. Not only did the Indonesian students experience difficulties of communication but often the topics of the discussion were unfamiliar. One student commented that:

*The main difficulty within my course of study is the ability to follow and get involved in classroom discussions that are heavily dominated by local students. Since international students have no idea about things like work experience in Australia, discussions that are going on in the class simply get out of context... When international students come to those local issues, the result is they become passive with total confusion and loss of understanding.*

Nine participants specifically mentioned difficulties with writing in English. Some participants noted that when writing in English, they faced the difficulty that their own language system structured essays in a different manner. One participant also remarked that:

*Writing was and is a problem as well. The main criterion for assessment in the course I'm taking is based on writing skills. We have to submit two to three papers to pass a unit (a course). What makes writing difficult is that it was not a skill that received prominence in my prior education. I hardly wrote for my bachelor's courses except a thesis in the final semester.*

Three participants felt the reading materials required a very high level of English comprehension, though one noted that local students had the same difficulty. Participants found it hard to develop both their reading and their content knowledge at the same time, especially under examination conditions when both elements had to be addressed within a time constraint.

### ***Cultural differences in learning***

For many participants, their difficulties in academic spoken English academic learning intersected with cultural differences in learning styles so as to affect their educational progress. Indonesia is one Asian country that highly values what Hofstede (1997) calls 'power distance'. This can be a barrier for Indonesian students in adjusting to their new environment, in two ways: it can be difficult to manage a less hierarchical teacher-student relationship, and difficult to assert themselves within the classroom as required. Indonesians are expected to obey and to respect older people, for example by using a particular language code to refer to a person senior or older than themselves. This is not the way it is in Australia, where professors and lecturers are often addressed by their first names. A number of participants stated that they found this awkward, even after learning how to do many things in the Australian context. As one participant put it:

*In Australia if I want to communicate with an older person, I just mention his or her name without any formality or title. It is contrary with my culture: in Indonesia, I have to refer to her or him by 'pak' (sir) or 'bu' (madam) to communicate with the older person respectfully.*

In Indonesia students manifest their respect for older people such as teachers by being obedient and listening to them; and because Indonesian culture embodies strong commitments to collectivity and harmony, students often prefer to give indirect signals than to argue directly with lecturers. Interrupting lecturers in the middle of the presentation is considered rude, and criticising the lecturer is even worse. Three participants said that they found it intrinsically difficult to provide critical comment on what lecturers said. Behaviour that is culturally appropriate in Indonesia can be interpreted as classroom passivity in Australia. This further mars teacher-student relationships. Again, in this respect the study confirms previous findings. Barker et al. (1991, p.83) argue that “the reluctance to deal with higher-status figures generally may mean that the student-lecturer relationship is a fragile one”. Chalmers and Volet (1997) and Biggs (2001) agree that international students from high power distance cultures tend to participate less in classrooms, and often lack the critical skills required in Western learning. But to change Indonesian education in this respect is difficult. Dardjowidjojo states that:

Changing the role of the learner and that of the teacher takes up a deep down into our fundamental values and traditions which, whether we realise it or not, have shackled our ways of thinking and behaving... The culture that allows people to express their views freely, to be direct in what they say, and, if necessary, to be critical of their elders, is just not with us. Conformity, rather than individuality, is still the most dominant rule. (Dardjowidjojo, 2001, pp.314-316)

Likewise Kaplan (1966, p.10) notes that in writing, speakers and readers of English expect linear development as an integral aspect of communication. Asian traditions often involve more indirect presentation. The difficulties faced by international students who are unfamiliar with the more direct form of argument are magnified by linguistic constraints.

Nevertheless, the cultural differences in learning were not always seen as negatives. The very elements that were the source of learning difficulties, such as teacher-student intimacy, and the emphases on individual integrity and self-expression, were also valued by the students.

*The thing that I like about the Australian education system is that it gives me independence in the sense that I am the one who is responsible for the success of my study. That's why I have to read a lot of articles, books, journals in order for me to gain what I am supposed to understand from the unit I am taking.*

*The policy of honesty and genuineness are some of the things I most like about Australian education system. In Indonesia the same policy exists, but does not really work in many educational institutions. Students become uncreative, lazy and poor in the outcome, since punishment or law reinforcement on plagiarism has not really been established.*

One participant liked the fact that “students can give their opinion and express what they think without being afraid they will be judged to be wrong or right”. Another participant noted that critical thinking in essay writing - questioning, analysing and evaluating – was very valuable, training students to be creative rather than just to memorise. Students were being motivated to read a lot and to do their own research; this was good. Some mentioned the two-way interaction between lecturers and students in classroom discussion, and lecturer ‘friendliness’ as a plus.

### ***Academic servicing***

There were some differences between the participants and their universities in relation to workloads and completion times for assignments. Seven participants found the study program

very difficult. They were not accustomed to doing this many assignments while also completing lengthy reading programs. It was difficult to manage their time<sup>2</sup>.

One stated:

*The main difficulty that I had to overcome in the early months of my academic life in Australia was to get used to the habit of reading a lot. My prior education in Indonesia did not really require me to read a lot, a condition that inevitably influenced my way of behaving in academic life. Brought into an Australian academic culture, at first I found it difficult to cope with a pile of reading materials prior to a lecture. It was beyond my imagination that before attending a class I had to read four to five chapters or articles related to what was going to be discussed in the class. This at first was quite stressing!*

The findings in relation to academic staff support are mixed, and varied obviously from case to case. Clearly, some staff provided good support for international students. They were friendly, accessible, punctual, resourceful and helpful, they understood the difficulties, and they showed respect for the students, for their efforts. These staff members encouraged and trained students to be active in group discussion and gave students sufficient time to prepare themselves for an examination. On the other hand, several participants noted that some lecturers appeared to have not had any experience with international students, and a couple suggested the University should address this in its professional development programs. A key issue was the difference between many of the participants and their academic staff on the amount of help international students could require. Lecturers expected students to be independent and solve their own study-related problems. Twelve participants saw a positive side to this expectation about independence, but others were unhappy (20 participants). What was at stake here was not just differences in learning philosophy but differences about the allocation of resources, differences about whether international students were entitled to special help as international students and second-language learners, and even differences about whether as fee-paying students they were receiving value for money.

The common feeling among participants was that in cases where students faced course-related difficulties, there was insufficient help from either the international student unit or the university administration. Some participants were clearly unhappy with the level or type of academic support provided by their university, particularly in relation to language learning. One participant noted that extra language help was provided to scholarship students but not to full fee paying students. This student had to hire a private tutor to proofread essays, which was very costly. Some participants stated directly that in its handling of academic programs, the University discriminated against international students; that they were being treated as a 'gold mine' without little concern for their academic progress or for themselves as people. They felt that international students were being left to flounder educationally, with most failing at least one subject per semester.

### ***Other dealings with the university***

In some universities in the study, the international student advisers played a great role in supporting international students, and participants emphasised this. As one stated: "*it is a friendly, encouraging and relaxing atmosphere that the international student body has created. This condition has helped me focus on my study, and this is the most important thing*". Several participants also cited the family support programs organised by the university. International

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<sup>2</sup> Whether local students express similar views is beyond the scope of this study. If they do, this may suggest the need for reconsideration or re-evaluation of syllabuses.



students with families enjoyed excursions and other programs organised on a semester basis. Other services mentioned positively included computer laboratories, sporting facilities, student clubs and the union, and libraries with their books, e-journals, computers and discussion spaces. Participants appreciated the fact that the library was open during week-ends. The internet-based administration enrolment, examinations and timetable also drew positive comments.

On the whole, participants were more positive about non-academic servicing and support than about academic support, particularly in relation to language where many of their difficulties lay.

## **Social and Cultural and Issues**

### ***Day-to-day interactions***

Participants had fewer problems in adjusting to socio-cultural life in Australia than to its educational demands. Almost half the participants (11 out of 25) stated that they had no problems at all in response to the question 'What difficulties, if any, have you experienced with adjusting to social life in Australia? One difficulty mentioned frequently was the toilet system. In Australia as in many Western countries toilet tissues are common; in Indonesia a wet bathroom is used.

In relation to daily interactions with local people, some participants reported that the problems lay not so much in language itself but in selecting topics of conversations. Lack of knowledge of 'footy' could be a barrier to making friends: it forced the Indonesian students to be silent, inhibiting the flow of conversation. Another difficulty was the lack a shared alcohol culture.

### ***Islam***

The most fundamental problem of a social-cultural nature was that day-to-day Muslim practices were not always understood or appreciated in Australia. Seven participants specifically mentioned difficulties in this area. Finding a place for praying, and washing prior to praying, was a serious issue. A Muslim is required to pray five times a day: at dawn, at noon, afternoon, sunset and at night. As the Muslim students in this study spend most of their time outside their houses, much of it on campus, finding a place to pray is one of their principal daily concerns. Participants also complained it was difficult to find halal food:

*Due to my religious beliefs, it's quite difficult for me to find halal food (chicken, beef, lamb), you know my kids like pizza very much. Only certain markets provide stores or stands selling halal food, and reaching them is quite a problem for me.*

Some found it hard to accept public gestures of affection. One participant commented:

*When I came here for the first time I could not cope with Australian social life, maybe because I grew up with religious background that was totally different from Australia. I was very shocked when I saw two girls kissing each other in front of me. Why they did it in front of public, since not every one will respect their social life style?... Now I don't care anymore what they do. I try to understand that I live in a different environment.*

Students from a Muslim background experience different adjustment problems to those facing non-Muslim students. There has been little written about the potential of international students' religious backgrounds to affect their socio-cultural adjustment to a new environment. The present study suggests that this is an important area of inquiry.

### ***Difference and discrimination***

Dei (1992) notes that international students can be exposed to discrimination and racism; and previous studies have noted discrimination in relation to employment opportunities, and the

curriculum and materials provided in educational program (Dei, 1999; Arthur, 2004). In contrast with these previous studies, two participants in the present study linked discrimination to academic practices. It was suggested that lecturers failed international students in at least one subject per semester, to increase the number of times those students would have to pay fees.

Participants also felt vulnerable in other, more public ways. Several were concerned that they were exposed to the so-called 'soft marking' debate, which presented international students as people with low academic standards who did not deserve to pass, and even suggested that international students were responsible for lowering the standard of Australian education. No one had proved these things, but they were still being said, and this harmed all international students. Participants also faced prejudices that were specific to Indonesia. The Bali bombing, especially, and the Marriott bombing in Jakarta, exposed them to anti-Indonesian and anti-Muslim attitudes. After these incidents prejudices were expressed more openly. Reports of attacks on mosques and on women for wearing the hejab (head-covering) affected some participants. It was more difficult to be an Indonesian student in Australia, with so much criticism in the media and ordinary conversation about 'radical Islam' and 'terrorism', and with wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. One participant stated that:

*I was very sad when the Bali bombing happened. It influenced Indonesians who live here. I was stressed when Australian or Westerners asked where I came from. I saw on TV many Indonesians being arrested as they were suspected to be involved in Bali bombing. One Australian said that Indonesian is not good anymore to visit. I realise that many Australian are very angry and upset with what happened in Bali, but we are only students here and do not deserve to be blamed. What had happened in Bali could happen everywhere.*

### ***Belonging and adjustment***

Most participants responded positively towards aspects of Australian culture. They valued Australia's clean environment, and friendly punctual people. As many saw it, Australia is a multicultural society, containing many differences, and people are taught how to respect differences. Australian people did not interfere with each other's business; and they also respected disabled people and the elderly, who were given priority and easy access. Some participants emphasised that they saw Australians as very open and tolerant of differences.

Being involved and accepted in local community activities facilitates adjustment, providing relationships that enable the students to enter Australian social life. This facilitates more rapid learning. One participant acknowledged the benefit of involvement in a very welcoming Australian church community that fostered social adjustment. Likewise other studies have highlighted the importance of social networks in migration, particularly the supporting role of churches, civic groups, rotary and student clubs (Massey, et al., 1998; Tilly, 1990; Vertovec, 2002).

## **CONCLUSIONS**

As noted in the introduction, a sample of 25 postgraduates does not permit firm conclusions to be drawn about the whole Indonesian student population, but it does enable firm conclusions about the experiences of these students. Their experience, which is largely consistent with the findings of the other studies mentioned above, suggests both areas that are worthy of further investigation, and possible strategies for improving international education programs and provision.

Education in a new cultural context can be an exciting and rich experience. This experience is constrained by unfamiliarity, not only with the academic customs, but also the social and cultural environment, and the two aspects tend to affect each other. Many of the problems faced by

Indonesian students during their course of study, as outlined in these findings, can be explained in terms of differences between Indonesian cultural values and Australian values. This confirms previous studies that identify cultural difference as a key factor in difficulties of adjustment. What stands out in this study are Indonesian students' difficulties with English, particularly in the classroom, the combined power of the language and culture, and the importance of Muslim identity as part of participants' Indonesian cultural background. Issues related to power distance, individualism or collectivism and uncertainty avoidance recur frequently. It is clear that Indonesian preferences for ambiguity, collectivism, non-confrontation and formality in dealing with authority affect these participants. The study also confirms previous findings about the benefits for adjustment of positive social interactions between locals and internationals.

The participants' difficulties with English probably derive in part from insufficient exposure to English in Indonesian education, given that English is taught as a foreign language, with limited hours per week. Indonesian students need more prior exposure to real communication contexts. Unfortunately, this study suggests that the preparatory courses in English, provided to Indonesian students before their degree course in Australia, are insufficient to compensate for the weakness of English language learning in Indonesia. This suggests the need for more language support in the country of study. Most universities provide language assistance for international students, through language advisers, but as Coley (1999) notes, the ratio of international students to academics in charge in language assistance tends to be high. The rapid growth of international enrolments is placing more pressure on language assistance. Universities need to recruit more staff in this area.

In relation to the cultural differences in learning styles, between Australia and Indonesia, educational institutions in Indonesia, and the preparatory courses in English provided before commencement of the degree program, should make this issue explicit and train students in how to handle it. For example, international students should be made aware of different styles of writing, and how to modify their own approach so as to meet Australian university requirements. In addition, orientation programs that prepare international students in Australian academic, social and cultural life should more strongly encourage students to use English actively in the classroom, participate in discussion and develop conversation skills. And many lecturers could better sensitise themselves to the silent ways of Indonesian students, not by condemning that silence but by positively encouraging students to ask questions or make comments and so acquire Australian classroom skills. Australian university lecturers should always remember that they are facing a diverse cultural group of students with various approaches to learning.

Most universities now pay more attention to the needs of Muslim students as Muslims. Most Indonesian students find aspects of Australian culture unacceptable for both cultural and religious reasons. Drinking alcohol is not part of Indonesian culture and not acceptable according to most students' religion. This should be better understood by Australian institutions, and people from other cultures, to avoid negative stereotyping of Muslim students. Facilities for prayer are a major issue. Muslim student associations are appropriate bodies for arranging facilities for religious activities, including venues for praying. Universities should provide support for these student bodies. Another important issue is the provision of halal food in campus canteens and restaurants.

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## Global Education Policy Directives: Impact on Teachers from the North and South

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*Education policies from international organisations such as the World Bank and OECD are restructuring education to promote a utilitarian vision of education. By examining the experiences and opinions of teachers from countries representing north-south global regions, it is possible to identify the social and political implications of education reform as it impacts on teachers as not only practitioners, but also as social and political agents. As global communities are more inexorably linked through global, macro policies, an outcome of this trend is a growing political and social divide between the global north and south. The paper aims to identify and discuss the significant concerns of teachers from the global north and south in relation to education reform.*

Globalisation, neo-liberalism, global north and south, education reform, teachers, World Bank

### THE CONTEXT OF REFORMS

From the early, tumultuous beginnings of the teaching profession, Lawn (1996) delineates the period 1920s to 1990, as the period which saw the rise of the so-called 'modern' teacher. The modern teacher is one whose agency extends beyond the classroom into the heart of social and political change. Modern teachers' agency was constructed in response to the emergence of mass, public education. Extending education to all classes was on the one hand a huge step forward for building social equality through educational opportunity however, adjunct to this development were issues about the relationship between education, class and social equity. It is during the modern era, that teachers' struggle for recognition of their expertise in educational matters and struggling for greater self-determination of their profession came to the fore. The issues for teachers concerned the impact of public education and whether the outcomes did in fact enable greater social justice and equality through access and social mobility or whether education was used as a means to reproduce the social and economic order.

Issues of power and interests stir the type of political questions that, according to Lawn (1996) are central in the establishment of a new social group. These factors influence how this group fits into an emerging structure. The political questions that engaged teachers, as a new social group, were based on the teachers' view that their role did have the capacity to influence the direction of change so that teachers should have a stronger voice in the political economy. Teachers sought to politicise their work practices and construct education as a site challenging the regulatory control of education by the State.

By the 1990s, emergent social phenomena challenging the structural parameters of social and educational change had a distinct and global character. The reconceptualising of teachers from the mid 1990s onwards educational change started to focus on issues and conflicts that arise from the altered context generically called 'globalisation'. Educational policy and change responded to the emerging global market ideology underpinned by human capital rationalisation restructuring education priorities (Spring 1998). The emergence of globalisation as a social, financial and

economic force presented a transitional historical marker for teachers. In a similar way to Lawn, Mason (1998), states that globalisation ushered in a new era for teachers, one that is divorced from previous ties with the nation and national control of the profession. Mason states, "The end comes when the discourse, the forms of control, its drive and confidence are eroded" (Mason 1998, p.10). By discourse, Mason is referring to the way education is constructed. The current context couches education in the language of the market underpinned by human capital measures and education as a 'weightless' product. In this context, new ways to fit education and teachers into the wider social landscape are sought.

This social change has implications for teachers as agents of the education system. In the era of globalisation, the teachers are experiencing the dissonance that comes from global educational policies and the globalised template for education change that requires a new form of teacher professional. Teachers are aware of these new demands and their reactions have a distinct global dimension. Teachers' reflections on educational change and their agential reconstruction show that there are differences between the global north and south in how teacher want to reconstruct their practice and agency. The paper aims to identify significant concerns that teachers from the global north and south have about education reform in their local spaces.

The global south refers to lesser-developed countries characterised by:

Per capita GNP of less than U.S. \$9,656 (EMTA); Recent or relatively recent economic liberalization (EMTA 2000 privatization of previously state-owned companies, and/or removal of foreign exchange controls and obstacles to foreign investment); Non-membership in the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (Emerging Markets Traders Association <http://www.emta.org/>)

In conclusion, the paper then discusses the social and cultural differences between teachers from the north and south and finally makes suggestions about implication for the teaching profession in the future.

## METHOD

In July 2001, Education International held its third World Congress in Thailand (<http://www.ei-ie.org/congress2001/index.htm>). The paper draws on evidence of teachers' union delegates from 29 countries and regions who attended the Education International Third World Congress. The Congress attracted participation from over 55 national teachers' unions from across the world in order to address the key issues relevant to education and teachers about educating in a global economy, which was the theme of the congress. Teachers' views, presented by their national delegates, engaged the assembly on a range of issues related to their work, practice and agency capacity in relation to the global economy. These presentations were recorded as national delegates spoke in sessions at the congress.

The next stage of the research involved collating the opinions and views of teachers and analysing significant themes running through their views. This process used computer assisted qualitative data analysis software, Atlas/ti. This program facilitates the grouping of qualitative data through a coding mechanism where codes are used to construct nominal categories to construct themes that run through teachers' views. From the views presented by teachers representing 29 different regions and countries, 13 themes were recurrent in teachers' concerns about social and education change and the development of the profession. The results of this research are presented in the following tables.

### TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

Table 1 shows the main concerns for teachers at the Education International Third World Congress, classified into 13 broad themes. The themes that feature highly in teacher concerns include neo-liberalism, social conditions, teacher conditions, gender issues and the role of Education International. From the 13 concerns, only four could be classified as teacher-only concerns, that is, issues that affect teachers and their teaching practice at the school level only. For the most part, teachers' concerns are couched in the social contextualising of teachers' practice and agency.

**Table 1. Education International Third World Congress: Educating in a global economy**

	Code of ethics	Curriculum Content	Education International	Gender	Globalisation	Health	Neoliberalism	Social Conditions	Teacher Conditions	Teacher Role	Teacher Status	Union/Rights	World Bank	Total
African Region		1		1			2	1				1		6
Asian region		1	1	3			1	2	2					10
Australia							6	1	1	1				9
Botswana					2				1			1		4
Canada		1	6					3					1	11
Caribbean		1		2		1			2	1				7
Chile		3		1	2	1	7	1	4	9	1	4		33
Congo										1		1		2
Ecuador				1	1			1	1		1			5
El Salvador					4			1	2			2	3	12
Europe			1	2					2					5
Fiji				2		1	2		1			1		7
France		1	1				3	1	4	1				11
Gambia			1							1		1		3
Germany									1	1	1			3
Kenya		1					3	4		1			1	10
Korea							2	1	1					4
Latin America			2	2			1			1			1	7
Morocco				2			1	1					1	5
Nepal			1				6	6	1					14
Norway		2												2
Philippines	1			7	1	1			1			1	3	15
Poland	1	1					3	1			1		1	8
Senegal							2		2			1		5
South Africa		1	1				2					1		5
Spain	1		4		1		2	1	1		1	1		12
Switzerland	1		1											2
United States			1		1		2	1				1	5	11
Zambia						3	1	1				2		7

A number of themes are interrelated such as social conditions and neo-liberalism. The heavy criticism of neo-liberal policy, shown through 47 references to neo-liberalism from 233, shows it as a salient factor of concern for teachers. The social and economic reform process of neo-liberalism is based on global economic competition between nations and regions, the downsizing of the public sector to enhance its competitive capacity, privatisation of public institutions, and the marginalisation of the working classes and lower social economic classes (George 1999). George states, "At the international level, neo-liberals have concentrated all their efforts on three fundamental points: free trade in goods and services, free circulation of capital and freedom of investment" (<http://www.tni.org/george/>). Teachers expressed disagreement with neo-liberal policies in similar arguments as George linking the neo-liberal social and economic reform to the



privatisation of education and the exclusion of poorer children and learners, especially girls, the restructuring of learning for global economic utility, the marginalisation of teachers as social agents, and the degradation of working conditions for many teachers around the world. In this case, there was clear overlap between neo-liberalism and deteriorating working conditions for teachers.

Neo-liberalism and views about social conditions also overlapped with concerns about gender issues. Gender was discussed on two levels. First, in terms of girls' education, teachers were concerned that girls were still less likely to attend school especially in countries where poverty and cultural differences preclude girls from education. It was argued that the worsening social conditions resulting from neo-liberal reform had serious impact on girls' education because in such a context, educating girls was an added family and social expense. Second, gender was discussed in terms of the feminisation of the teaching force and the negative impact this had on pay and conditions as well as the lack of female representation at the upper levels of education management and leadership in policy and institutions.

In contrast, globalisation, as distinct from neo-liberalism was used to refer to a form of social progress and modernisation that nevertheless needed to be humanised. Teachers, for the most part distinguished between the politics of neo-liberal change from the processes of globalisation. Therefore, concerns about deteriorating social conditions correlated with the impact of neo-liberal reform and the negative social and education consequences in lesser-developed countries such as Kenya and Nepal and South American nations. Fifteen criticisms named the World Bank as a direct cause of neo-liberal policy. The most strident criticism came from the United States and El Salvador. For example, the United States criticised the polarisation of rich and poor, the suppression of human right and union rights, the commercialisation of education and the ongoing debts for third world countries.

These concerns were implicit in arguments against neo-liberal reform and the policy actions of the World Bank.

In more specific concerns about teachers and their work, the most prevalent problem concerned the working poor conditions of teachers around the world. This situation was evident in less developed countries for example, a wage six-year wage freeze in El Salvador and teachers being jailed in Colombia for opposing social policy. The teachers' representatives from France summed up many concerns for more developed countries of the need for teachers to be more engaged with curriculum matters, to construct a political curriculum that educated future workers.

In order to redress deteriorating conditions there was a need to reclaim educational authority as part of teachers' practice and in doing so to stress the social responsibilities of teachers. In other words, the aim was to increase teachers' power in the reform process and thereby reclaim status in education. For teachers to be more socially active and construct a social and political agency, especially in the current context, meant extending teachers' agency beyond delivering education.

Teachers presented a united front in wanting to have greater representation in the reform process. They argued in favour of keeping education as a public good for all. However, when strategising the details of enhancing their capacity to influence reform, distinct differences appeared in the way that teachers sought to infiltrate the reform processes that were increasingly constructed at the macro level.

### **EMERGING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE GLOBAL NORTH AND SOUTH**

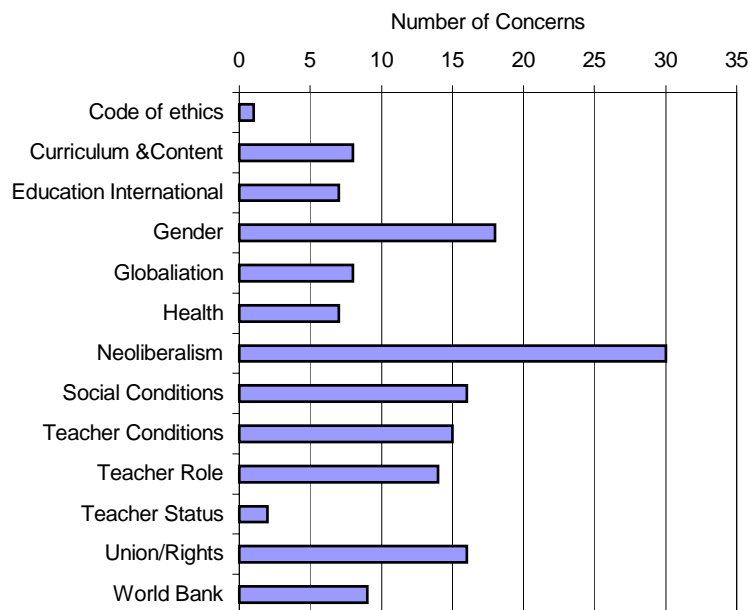
When considering the concerns of teachers as presented at the Education International Congress, there were clear differences between the types of problems faced by teachers from lesser-

developed countries to those from more affluent countries. Figures 1 and 2 present the different emphases.

When the concerns expressed by teachers at the world congress were examined, taking into account the social economic context in which teachers were situated, differences emerged in relation to their social and economic context that constructed teachers' practice. For 18 countries<sup>1</sup> that fall into the middle income or lesser developing nations (LDCs) definition, the overriding concerns were neo-liberalism, gender and social issues.

In most of these cases, the ideology of neo-liberalism was held responsible for creating social division, reducing education to a privatised, market good and marginalising teachers from being socially active agents. Teachers from Chile extrapolated a litany of social deprivation and exclusion resulting from neo-liberalism that has buried countries in a cycle of underdevelopment. Chilean teachers' representatives stated,

*Chile has been world pioneer of neo-liberal policies that have had great social impact. In the 1980s under Pinochet regime, the constitution was changed to alter labour code, health and social security laws and the opening of the market included education. As a result, the role of the teaching staff changed completely. Due to neo liberal tendencies and radical policies the constitutional rights were over ruled to suit neo liberal agenda of change. Chile calls for an alternative to the forces of globalisation that includes living with dignity. The harm of neo-liberal policies must be highlighted and the challenge is to remain united in the wake of such policies.*  
(Chilean Delegates at the Third World Congress)



**Figure 1. Concerns expressed by teachers from lesser-developed countries**

For lesser-developed nations such as Chile, the prevalence of neo-liberal reform has been part of the modern history of development. These reform measures have altered the social fabric of society and upon this foundation education has emerged as another means by which the neo-liberal reform further penetrates institutional reform. The link between education and social

<sup>1</sup> African region, Asian Region, Botswana, Caribbean, Chile, Congo, Ecuador, Fiji, Gambia, Kenya, Latin America, Morocco, Philippines, Senegal, South Africa, Zambia

reform was foremost in Chilean teachers' concerns about the role of teachers in this dynamic. Showing awareness of the cultural reproductive role of teachers that might lead to the endorsement of neo-liberal policies through their practice and agency, Chilean teachers stressed, "*In the education sector, teachers need to rethink the role they are to play. Professional teaching staff must be a human resource to combat for the rights of people*". The significant role for teachers in this situation is to unite with the people against neo-liberal reform. Neo-liberal reform creates an education system that is uneven and promotes imbalance in society.

At a regional forum for African nations, African teachers concurred that neo-liberal social change had brought negative changes such as the increase in child labour. They called for child labour to be 'outlawed'. Fijian teachers pointed out that the lack of resources resulted in students not being able to perform and called on the government to deal with the social disparity. Another outspoken critic of neo-liberal reform came from the teachers in Nepal. They were concerned with "*the rate of privatisation and commercialisation of education, which is bought and sold on the streets of Nepal*". This was in the context of an increasing divide between rich and poor and the increasing lack of opportunity for excluded groups. The teachers reported that neo-liberal reform was pursued in the context where 66 per cent lived below the poverty line and 30 per cent had no schooling and lacked basics such as food, clothes and housing. The source of dissonance with neo-liberal reform targeted the World Bank's lending policies that created social division and maintained an unhealthy system. In terms of World Bank lending, the Nepalese teachers' representatives reported that, "*ten per cent of monies goes to target group and 90 per cent goes to rulers' pockets*".

A common factor that linked anti neo-liberalism of teachers from less affluent nations was their relationship to international organisations such as the World Bank and IMF. Underlying much of the criticism directed at neo-liberal reform were the lending practices of the World Bank, especially in the education sector. For example, in El Salvador, World Bank financial restructuring had established a system that further excluded children. Teachers reported that after the implementation of World Bank reform there had been an increase in non-enrolment of children due to unexpected hardships. For example, in 2000 there were half a million children not enrolled in school. After a devastating earthquake, this number increased to three-quarters of a million children. The fragile economic status of those struggling to stay above the poverty line were not cushioned by a social safety net of welfare and provision that maintained a standard of living despite unforeseen hardship. The most vulnerable group were poor children who forfeit their educational rights due to economic hardships.

Another concern for teachers in lesser-developed nations related to gender issues. Teachers from the Philippines were especially vocal with respect to gender issues. To stress that the social status of women needed to be improved, they called for "*gender sensitive education; strengthening of women's committees and participation in all levels of decision making and planning*". However, these concerns were not limited to the classroom and institutional level, they also called for greater action against the feminisation of the workforce because "*that gender equates to lower income and status*" for the whole profession. They stated, "*The overriding negative is the stereotyping of the profession as a nurturing or caring profession which leads to lower salary and lower income*".

As a way forward, teachers from lesser-developed nations aligned their agential capacity with a call for greater social activism. There was a recognition that educational change and changes to working conditions were linked to broader social and economic change that would undermine the neo-liberal reform measures taken by governments under pressure to restructure social and economic institutions in order to take part in the global economy and qualify for loans from

international organisations. As Moroccan teachers stressed, “Economies are handicapped because of IMF and World Bank policies”.

Teachers in LDCs demanded a form of agency that encompassed social capacity in addition to institutional and classroom capacity. Chilean teachers’ definition of a well-rounded teachers included, “*Professional expertise in political, cultural, social and ethical dimensions*”. Social capacity referred to teachers’ having a greater input into social policy in order to address issues of exclusion and marginalisation of sectors of society. Underlying these demands was the issue of control and power over the profession and in education. With the tumultuous changes happening in developing countries, as educated professionals, teachers are often excluded from change. Teachers from Botswana added, “*Democracy in the regions is needed through the empowerment of regional bases to implement policies at the regional level, for example, EFA*”.

Teachers’ voices strategically left out of policy making formed a silent gap in policy that reconstructed social and educational reform. In such cases, change occurred in the society and in the schools without the necessary dialogue between agents who were constructing change and implementing the processes. Teachers in developing countries experienced the top down causal change without any real opportunity to have input. This process was a detriment to the profession and to the education system, which proceeds as a reproductive tool for other neo-liberal institutional reforms. However, teachers in lesser-developed nations wanted to redress this tendency, and reconstruct new agential boundaries that reclaimed their sphere of influence. Chilean teachers reminded others about this potential capacity to reclaim agency. They stated,

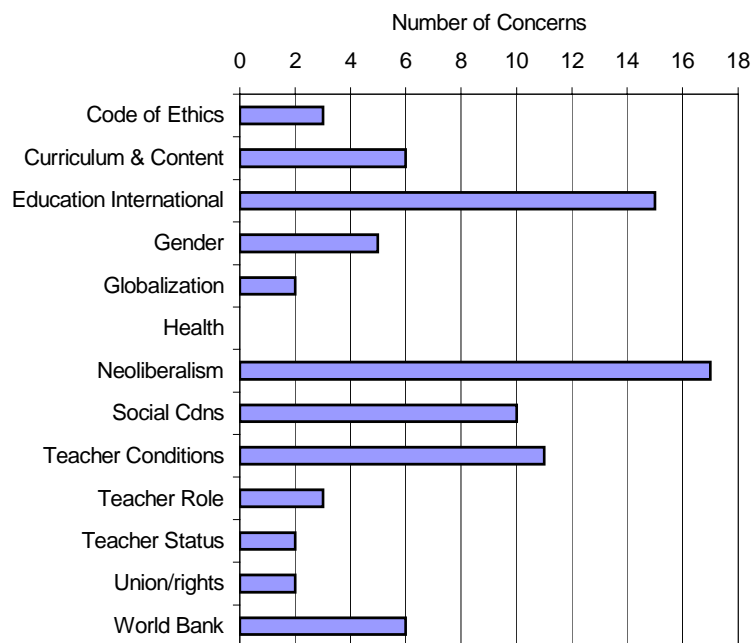
*Teachers are forces that bring about change. We know about teaching and how to bring about change with our expertise. We must be creative and autonomous as educators; Schools not be thought of as places where change is introduced and measured but as places of awareness.*

Exclusion from making real differences to structural changes reorganising social and education institutions left teachers in lesser-developed nations with a sense of being dictated to by global organisations with power and dollars to implement change. These organisations also worked in close partnership with governments to deliver outcomes and thus within these partnerships, teachers are the silent voice. There was a sense that ownership of education, once the cultural domain of nations, was in the hands to global agencies such as the World Bank who maintained governance over educational reform and left the management of that reform to national bureaucracies. The role of the World Bank in regional and national education systems received heavy criticism from teachers in both more and less developed nations, the sum of which could be shown through the comment from a Nepalese teachers who stated, “*Funding by INGOs and International Organisations (IO) make the rulers richer and the people poorer*”. Therefore, the issue for teachers was one of ownership of education and of their practice. Teachers from Gambia reminded others that, “*We teachers own education*” and in effect this was a call for the profession to reclaim education on behalf of cultural heritage grounds and on political grounds so that education was not a tool for the global agencies and their development agenda, but education was a public good and a human right.

### TEACHERS FROM THE GLOBAL NORTH

When comparing the concerns of teachers from more affluent nations, the significant common ground shared with their south colleagues is the opposition to neo-liberalism, as presented in Figure 2. Australian, Spanish, Polish and teachers from United States also criticised the dismantling of the welfare state and competition as a model for society that had exasperated intra-national and international social and economic differences. For example, the United States delegates at the Education International Congress criticised policies that impinged on workers’

rights and democratisation while stressing the need for greater compliance to international standards, enforceable labour rules and greater technical and legal support to developing nations. The United States implicated organisations such as IMF and the World Bank as international agencies, whose policies contravened their demands for equitable working conditions. There was much solidarity between north and south in their opposition to neo-liberal reform.



**Figure 2. Concerns expressed by teachers from more developed countries**

A subsequent issue for global north teachers dealt with the role of unionism and especially Education International as a global union representative for teachers. The way forward according to northern teachers was by enhancing the governance capacity of Education International as a macro structure able to represent teachers at the macro level of policy construction. This was not to say that global south teachers did not have an interest in Education International and union activity. Indeed 16 references were made to union concerns and seven to the role of education international in the concerns of LDCs. What was of interest is the predominance of references to Education International from teachers in the global north and more specifically teachers wanting to have greater input into how this body functioned at the macro structural level. For teachers from the north representation at the global level was a significant aspect for their profession to consider as it moves into the twenty-first century.

Canadian representatives were especially outspoken in terms of the role that Education International needed to play in the international arena. They stated,

*To optimize its policies E.I. must be a catalyst in the field and must be connected with international movements and have a higher regional presence. There must be more coherence of E.I. work to regional work and it must be present. E.I. must ground itself in regions.*

The Canadian recommendations disclosed a key point of difference between global north and south underlying issues of power, representation and global identity. Canadian teachers queried the logical position of Education International in forming partnership with the World Bank, especially in the context of World Bank history and poor track record in many developing

countries. They asked, “*How can Education International reconcile and be consistent in its approach of dealing with the World Bank and still maintain a credible position?*”

This query highlighted a distinct political and strategic divide between north and south teacher politics. Teachers from LDCs demanded more social and political action against imposed neo-liberal social policies while those from countries that were more affluent sought assimilationist means to humanise global policy in educational systems. The local experiences of globalisation were important to consider in the distinct responses. To struggle against the totalising forces of neo-liberal policy, the Latin American response to ‘globalisation’, for example, began from an ideological premise that the current form of globalisation meant neo-liberalism. The arguments exposed the contradictions of neo-liberal policy that hinged on classical economic theory upholding trade liberalisation and privatised competition between public goods and services as the natural way to serve public interests. The social and economic outcomes of such social policy had opened up social cleavages within nations where those able to pay for education were able to take advantage of the further opportunity that education brought. The praxis of globalisation is delivered through structural adjustment policies from the World Bank that model neo-liberal reform and underpinned much of the calls of defiance from LDCs.

However, for MDCs, globalisation or more specifically growing the knowledge economy offered competitive advantage for nations in the global market place. Education and the quality of its provision was a means to secure an advantage in the global market (Duan 1999; Green 1999; Hargreaves 2000; Hegarty 2000). The policy arguments put forward for the sectorial advantage of more developed nations ran through the policy of the OECD. For example, concerned that the future might favour the trade advantage to LDCs, the OECD (OECD 1997, 2001) underpinned policy with a so-called ‘winner-loser’ dynamic. Teachers in MDCs were torn between reproducing a system that was part of the broader global capital competitive model or letting their students down by not giving them the competitive edge. On the one hand, the global competition model took advantage of those countries, regions and economies that were still emerging, creating what Wallerstein (1990), Clayton (1998) and others have called ‘peripheral economies’ while maintaining the power in the core economies. Teachers within these peripheral economies experienced the effects of neo-liberalism and the competitive model first hand, blaming this model for social and education change as a source of greater exclusion and marginalisation of rich and poor in lesser-developed nations. The issue for teachers experiencing globalisation differently was how to unite teachers as professional class in the interests of social and education justice globally?

### **REDEFINING RELATIONS, BUILDING ALLIANCES AND DEGREES OF SEPARATION**

Negotiating change and redefining agential boundaries was a continuous process for teacher educators. In the current context though, this negotiation could not take place unilaterally nor be confined to national interests because of the interrelatedness of local restructuring with global changes. The emerging governance of macro structures in the form of global agencies had broadened the reach of change in systems so that social and education change from such macro structures was “multilevel and downwardly causal social reality” (Kontopoulos, 1995, p.1618). These structures were too influential to ignore, therefore the issue for teachers was how to engage with these structures and agents to meet the demands of teachers as a global professional class and in the interests of public education as a fundamental human right?

In terms of dealing with the World Bank, a proposition was put forward by Latin American countries that called for a redefining of relations with the World Bank as a way to unlock the ‘logical position’ question. Realising that the World Bank was a key global agent wielding power, the Latin American countries called for relations based on agreements rather than partnership,

using teacher numbers as a power leverage in the negotiations. The formation of partnerships between organisations was a growing phenomena in the global era. These alliances could take many forms, but crucial to the development of partnerships were key assumptions about the stakeholders and their relations.

Partnerships were essentially stakeholders acting as a team and making collaborative decisions directed towards objectives that were held to be important by the members of the partnerships (Seddon, Billet, and Vongalis, 2002). Underlying these relations was recognition of the important role that each stakeholder represented and the equality in decision outcomes. The premise of equality of representation and in the execution of decisions however, was not built into partnership negotiations with the World Bank. It still maintained much of the policy steering power by the fact that it held the money and funding guidelines. The World Bank definition of policy guides how monies were allocated and the process that would be put into place to disburse monies (WorldBank 2001). Latin American teachers surmised that the solution to form partnership with the World Bank in order to take part in education reform discussions was a compromise of teachers and their values. The willingness to form agreements, as a possible solution, kept political distance from the World Bank but still allowed a working relationship to develop as a way to move forward. Partnership implied greater reconciliation and common capacity building while agreements pointed to a more substantial degree of separation until the politics of the organisation was more in tune with real democratic decision making and determination. According to Chilean teachers, partnerships were reserved for “*Teachers and trade unions to work together to promote an ideological framework in school and society as well. Teachers must play a political role in society*”.

However, the proposal for agreements rather than partnership was overturned by the congress vote, and preference was given to working in partnership with the World Bank.

This left a split in north-south political strategy of how to move forward in solidarity. The conciliatory reformist north strategy sought to work with global organisations, and be part of the process of change. In dealing with these organisations and having input into macro policy, the intention was to ‘humanise globalisation’ and bring about a growing awareness into the social and economic policy discussions held by global organisation.

The intention to ‘humanise globalisation’ raises a series of political issues for teachers and the creation of bipartisan strategy to reclaim stronger presence in influencing social and education change. First, the ambiguity of the idea of ‘globalisation’ has to be addressed in clear policy intentions because globalisation manifests as neo-liberalism in many countries. For example, teachers from El Salvador stated, “*Globalisation is having a greater effect on under developed countries. It is a system of change that excludes children and has caused many teachers to lose hope*”. Could a system like this be humanised through partnerships? In order to claim a greater control and influence in education, teachers needed to clarify their stance in relation to the escalation of global capitalism and the role that education played in reproducing social and cultural values associated with this form of development. Fairclough has raised these key concerns,

Is ‘exclusion’ simply a condition which the poorest countries are in, or a process which they are subject to? There is often ambiguity in dominant globalisation narratives.  
(Fairclough, 2000)

Teachers from Morocco for example, argued that poverty needed to be fought in a structural way. It was not that teachers were against development and modernisation but the issue was negotiating education reform so it upheld human rights, equity and inclusion of all. Less developed nations were more vulnerable to poverty and deprivation resulting from the global policies of international agencies interested in profits and advantage.

What was evident from the teachers' responses at the World Congress was the clear ideological divide between north and south in response to globalisation and the ideological position and penetration of this positioning into policy and action. Responses from Latin American countries were consistent with an ideological framework based on theorists such as Bourdieu (1991) and Gramsci (1992). This underpinned a consistency in their arguments and policy stances. There was large-scale criticism of World Bank policy positions as well as the ideas of marketisation of knowledge and education as future directions of reform based on class alliances and consensus. There was a need for reform but in ways that built human rights with progress and modernisation that was inclusive of all. In contrast, Northern frameworks for change pursue the development of knowledge capitalism at the global and local level that had unintentional consequences of propping up processes of reform that had causal consequences of exclusion and marginalisation in some lesser-developed nations. The actions of the north were felt in the local lives of the people and teachers in the south.

This ideological division was especially problematic in articulating the interests of teachers as a global force and organising action in accordance with a consistent logic. The attack on neo-liberalism was a case in point. Latin American countries made the distinction between neo-liberal policies as opposed to globalisation. However, when analysing Education International responses to globalisation, statements that alluded to globalisation being both positive and negative failed to articulate a political stance of what was actually negative about globalisation. For example, the knowledge economy prioritised the use of IT to enhance educational utility and relevance. However, this policy priority aligning education provision with the demands of global knowledge economy was at the heart of the redefinition of education as a marketable good and service. When profits could be made from buying and selling education as a relevant and necessary tool of the global economy, the pressure was on governments to pursue this source of income or indeed to lessen the burden of provision of education through some form of user pay education. While there were fiscal arguments that made such policy seem cogent for the times, these took precedence over humanistic arguments that defined education as a right and thus a public spending that was a priority for governments and one that was exempt from marketisation. Governments had clear responsibilities to deliver rights to the public.

While teachers protested against the marketisation of education (AFP, 2001), the analysis of this practice showed a difference in how teachers from the north and south read the role of education in the global economy. The arguments presented by teachers from South America, Nepal, Kenya, Philippines, for example, drew on the notion that globalisation was a political process, underpinned by ideological premises, such as the notion that competition between nations was the norm in constructing global economic relations. South teachers questioned the need for teachers to buy into the ideology that marketisation of education was consistent with modernisation.

The politics of globalisation presented a dilemma for teachers and one that obstructed a bipartisan movement to move forward. According to Bourdieu's (1982; 1999) theory of practice, the ability to articulate a cohesive vision was a measure of a group's strength of purpose and a fundamental necessity to make effective demands in negotiation. The danger for Education International trying to manage the common ground between north and south was beginning from the analysis of education reform with the notion that ideology was dead. Such a stance that education change was not an ideologically inspired process fuelled the attitude of elite policy makers, for example at the Washington consensus, labelling anti market ideologies, nationalism, anti-American sentiments and the like as 'modern day obscurantism' (Naim, 1995). A consistent and wide reaching policy reach had to represent the contextualised concerns of all teachers in a way that was political, strategic and relevant to teachers' practice and agential capacity in education.



In order to bridge this divide, the work of French teachers' union, UNSA Education (The Association of Independent Unions) was enlightening. French teachers insisted that "*No content should be imposed by international organisations, only public education could be constituted in materials*" and based on this proactive teacher response, constructed a progressive program of educational reform. Insisting that "*the content of education needs to remain free, active, political and democratic in order for the worker to produce the wealth for social benefit*", the creation of policy entitled 'Education society' (UNSA-Education, 2001) was a teacher union initiative to deliver an alternative to neo-liberal education reform. *Pour une société éducative*, intended to restore social humanism into educational reform and offer a counter to neo-liberal reform, advocated for macro policy being driven by markets and global competition. The policy outline centralised the input of teachers as professionals seeking a coherent approach to social and education change that balanced the concerns of business, government and teachers.

*Il importe de clarifier le contrat liant la société, la nation et son service public d'éducation et d'adopter un méthodologie du changement impliquant réellement tous les acteurs du système éducatif.*<sup>2</sup> (UNSA-Education, 2001)

The policy outlined the societal stance taken by teachers by articulating what education meant in the current context. Education, as a human right, developed citizenship directing how people thought and acted within the society. The role of schools and learning was to deepen people's knowledge base from which they could fully actualise their role as citizens. From these macro statements, the role of the profession was to put into place a curriculum and pedagogy that fostered knowledge diversification. The key partners in the reconstruction of knowledge were teachers and education institutions with parents playing a minor role. The aim was to generate a range of practices based on an informed reconstruction of teachers' practice. Such programs were indicative of a way forward for unions to create a solidarity at the local level by constructing programs that address global concerns embedded in their construction.

### CONCLUSION SO FAR

The larger issue for teachers around the world was articulating a stance on globalisation that was neither globophobic nor market driven. The expansion of the global economy and the alignment of education as a "subject and object" (Marginson, 1999, p.20) of change has put great onus on teachers to confront globalisation as influential social and educational policy impetus. However, within the current contextual conditions, how teachers moved forward to respond to the new conditions was proving problematic, especially since teachers had organised at the global level, as a united class struggling against social injustice and educational control by policy elites. As a global professional class, a coordinated strategy that responded to change and to the macro structures that instigated agendas for social, economic and educational change, raised issues about how teachers reformed relations to achieve their goals in influencing educational reform and unhinging global neo-liberal agendas.

Building consensus among the ranks was a key objective of Education International as a global teachers' union in the current era. Consensus included the unity of global and local strategic interests in order to dismantle the neo-liberal agenda driven from top down development plans from global agencies such as the World Bank and OECD. Teachers from the global south were experiencing the ramifications of dramatic neo-liberal reform that had commercialised education and deteriorated working conditions for teachers. For counterparts in the north, the intensity of

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<sup>2</sup> It is important to clarify the contract binding the company, the nation and its public utility in education and adopt a methodology of the change engaging all the actors of the education system (<http://world.altavista.com/tr>).

global competition in a knowledge economy had shifted the priorities of education towards market-based learning.

The lingering dilemma for teachers in the new context for mass education concerned their ambiguous politics with respect to globalisation and an inconsistent political strategy to pursue greater professional control and autonomy. The political demands from teachers at the Education International congress sought a greater role for teachers as social activists to struggle against the current model for social and education change. Specifically, teachers opposed neo-liberal social reform that polarised society and produced more deprivation and inequality. Teachers expressed a need for unity with other social groups and classes countering neo-liberal reform through the construction of an extended professional role for teachers as social and education agents.

Recent moves by teacher unions were indicative of a way forward for teachers. By constructing alternative education plans and programs that were based on exploiting teachers' capacity to construct curriculum and policy for the global age, teachers were building a more robust conception of what education could be for the new age. Such projects as shown by UNSA were a reminder that teachers' reach was not only confined to the classroom, but that education as a right was an extension of teachers' social capacity to represent the interests of all in education. Policy and programs constructed by UNSA and supported by Education International were indicative of ways to unite the profession, globally and locally.

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# Building an International Student Market: Educational-Balanced Scorecard Solutions for Regional Australian Cities

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*There is an international student market suitable for regional Australia, but each region is different. Hence, each region must determine, target and niche market to its best potential international student customer base. For international education there remains scant, relevant, data for regional Australia, hence complete regional approaches to international education must be developed.*

*The Cairns region has developed an international education student model for regional Australia. This approach delineates ideas, pitfalls, structures, strategic directions, dos and don'ts, and future strategies for a region.*

*A balanced scorecard approach ensures that both financial rewards and visionary strategies are coordinated. This approach also offers a vital pathway to delivering regional strategies, and to mapping, measuring and quantifying their results. It produces a spiral knowledge-growth, learning model that can deliver rapid and continuous development of educationally related ideas. Moreover, this approach is a pathway to continuous improvement, and a further move towards maintaining a competitive position in the dynamic global marketplace of international education.*

International students, marketing, international education, balanced scorecard, strategy,  
education, regional Australia

## INTRODUCTION

Most international students studying in Australia are involved in university undergraduate programs, in Vocational Education and Training (VET) or in English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) sectors. These international students are heavily concentrated in business-related and information technology courses (Nelson, 2003). Currently in Australia, 65 per cent of international students reside in the major state capital cities of Sydney or Melbourne.

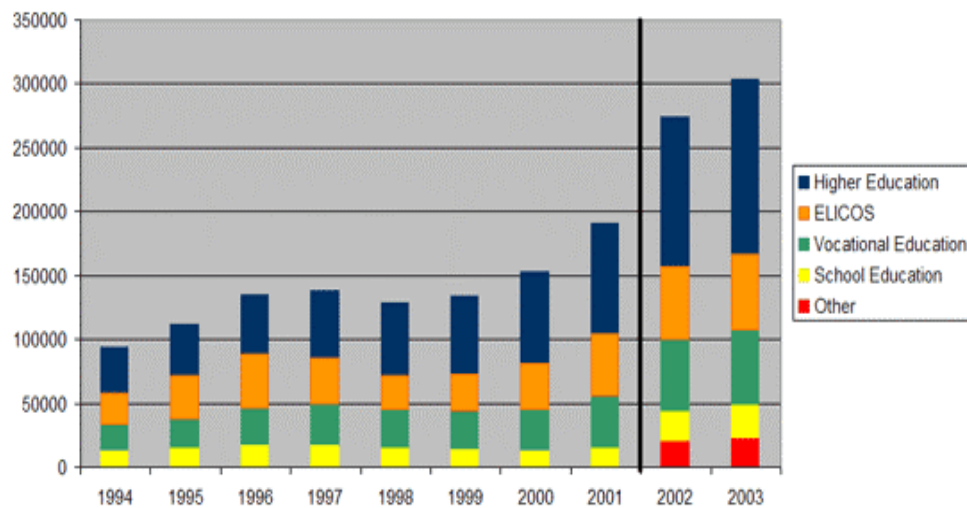
In 2003, a 16.5 per cent increase in the number of overseas college students (to approximately 167,000) was recorded in Australia. Selected markets grew rapidly. The Chinese market grew by 20 per cent to approximately 32,000 students. Large growth in markets from India (27% increase) and South Korea (19% increase) was also experienced (Bollag, 2004). The strong growth in the Australian international student population has been driven by tighter American visa restrictions since the United States Twin Towers terrorist attack of September 11, 2001. Currently, United States universities are suffering steep declines in international student applications, especially in the areas of sciences (Anonymous, 2004). However, over the past 15 years, Australia has maintained a steady, strong annual growth in overseas student numbers. This trend is expected to

continue, maintaining at least a 15 to 20 per cent per annum annual growth in the near future (Schroff, 2003).

A 2002 IPD Education Australia analysis places education as the third largest service industry after tourism and transportation. The Australian Bureau of Statistics currently values this service industry at around \$4.12B (AUD) per annum.

Education and training remain essential contributors to driving world development, and new approaches to establishing international education solutions are required. The Australian Federal Minister of Education has recently stated that, “The world is at a turning-point in the internationalisation of education and training. With population increases and rising incomes, participation in education and training is expected to accelerate” (Nelson, 2003).

Figure 1 displays the growth in international education across Australian. The school education, international student market has not mirrored that of the Australian universities, but recent growth trends have been similar. April 2004 AEI data shows international student enrolments in Australia grew eight per cent over 2003 figures, with strongest growth in the universities sector (13%). Vocational Education showed a weak one per cent growth in enrolments. Schools (4%), ELICOS (4%) and foundation/non-award (2%) sectors showed moderate growth rates (Anonymous, 2004b). Although Education Queensland International (EQI), a state government school education provider, projects international student growth rates in excess of 20 per cent, the growth in the Australia-wide, school-level, international student market has been somewhat patchy.



**Figure 1. International student enrolment statistics (AEI, 2004)**

One approach discussed in this paper, the balanced scorecard approach (Kaplan and Norton, 1996), is to track and evaluate international education and training. Here, the educational provider targets delivering outcomes that generate both numerical and financial rewards.

## MARKETING

Considering universities, nearly one Australian student in every five students is a foreigner. Many of these international students come from east and south-east Asia, and pay full tuition fees (Marginson, 2002). Enrolments of foreign students have experienced a decade of continuous growth, averaging 15 per cent per annum (Blight, 1995). Australia has also moved its educational delivery skills offshore, and has become one of the largest foreign providers of higher education in Singapore. It is also a key player in the emerging Chinese market (Marginson, 2002).

The international student market remains highly competitive, and Australia ranks third behind the United States in its acceptance of international students. In Australia, the school sector

international students are heavily concentrated in and around Australian capital cities, particularly in private, non-government schools. Since the early 1980s there has also been a steady growth in international student numbers within the government school systems.

Australian school international student educators have many avenues to capture increased numbers of international students. They can focus on the uniqueness of their respective, regional, and niche markets (Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson, 1999; Khu, 1998). In targeted regional destinations of Australia, differentiated course approaches; targeted high level learning environments; specific regional advantages; safe, secure, friendly, community supported approaches; and the like, may be adopted. These strategic advantages should focus on a so-called 'whole-of-government' approach to frame and develop long-term positioning strategies. Such strategies align with key elements of the Federal Government's international education policy framework, 'quality' and 'diversity' (Nelson, 2003). These strategies can deliver great benefits, especially for regional Australia. In addition, these initiatives showcase Australia's regional capabilities to the world, broaden the country's international appeal, deliver expanded educational offerings, and additional revenue streams.

Students from countries such as Brunei and Australia are well versed in their understanding of education and educational options (Fien et al, 2002). Students in many overseas countries are increasingly aware of their global education choices. Recognising this maturity of the overseas client base has become a significant imperative. Universities have developed competitive marketing divisions and have become significantly more astute in positioning themselves in the world marketplace. For example, overseas students may be targeted by biasing promotional appeal towards gender specific preferences (Unterhalter et al, 2003), and by promoting the four most important determinants of university preference selection: course suitability, academic reputation, job prospects and teaching quality (Soutar and Turner, 2002). For instance, institutions looking for quality students in reading-focused subjects, may preferentially target female students (Hoffman, 2002).

At the school level, international students tend to mirror their university counterparts. They prefer schools:

- a) providing strong academic reputations;
- b) offering very good teaching quality;
- c) offering courses with clear, recognised study pathways;
- d) providing course options that meet their choice expectations;
- e) delivering good job prospects; and
- f) delivering stimulating educational campus life.

Hence, they tend to select schools with a definite view to the future, and articulated, convenient university pathways.

Throughout the Australian international education framework, providers need to remain focused, and not be driven by the economic imperative of the revenue stream, but rather be the drivers of educational reforms (Pickering, 2001). Creative ideas like Professor Messel's 'International Science Schools' may be utilised. Professor Messel's International Science Schools program brings top students into direct contact with expert lecturers, in cutting-edge learning situations (Anonymous, 2003). Such a model may be developed for other areas of education, for example, a bio-tech, business-orientated project base learning model, enmeshed with practical implementation, or commercialisation strategies.

## Marketing Regional Australia

When the schools sector is considered, regional Australia should develop unique international student marketing strategies. These targeted strategies need to reflect specific, and identifiable, aspects of that destination – those that offer appeal to particular overseas markets. For example, the Great Barrier Reef is a specific attraction that has appeal to sectors of the European student market. Students from Asia may prefer a total education pathways package with no water theme. They may prefer to analyse ELICOS, schools, VET and university pathways, combined with family-based accommodation packages. Such mixes, embedded in a personalised approach, and blended with high quality targeted educational offerings can influence new international students to opt for a regional educational venue.

There remains a real capacity to increase the number of international students studying in regional areas, and smaller capital cities. Wider marketing of well-planned regional programs and packages may raise international student market awareness of such exciting regional opportunities, deliver additional choice and ensure the overall Australian educational product is driven to higher standards of quality and excellence.

When schools in regional Australia work collaboratively in their regional area to pursue differentiation strategies from their capital city counterparts, they may deliver stimulating learning options. Many institutions, for example the United States based international university-preparatory high school, Leysin American School (LAS), deliver high quality international programs at the school level. Such institutions often concentrate on language mastery; academic excellence; a stable, caring balanced learning environment; developing responsible citizens who can think creatively, reason critically, and communicate effectively; motivating and inspiring all students. They build their operation around efficient management and continuous improvement models that respect peoples of other cultures (Anonymous, 2004a.). Regional Australian schools may emulate this model. By capturing the appeal of the region through unique diversification strategies, regional centres may add stimulating new dimensions to their educational offerings.

Both the Australian and the Queensland State Governments have policies that encourage diversification of educational products. Some of these include:

- a) widening the mix of overseas students by recruiting more intensely from Europe and the Americas (while continuing growth in Asia);
- b) extending international students' fields of study beyond business and information technology; and
- c) attracting more international students to the schools sector (Nelson, 2003).

The application of these governmental policies delivered through regionally focused strategies, such as those applied in the Cairns region, may offer a mechanism to deliver real growth in international student numbers in regional areas, and especially in appropriately located smaller regional cities. The broadening of the marketing framework beyond state capital cities to include strategic regional programs is likely, in time, to raise international students' awareness of the range of Australian educational opportunities, thereby broadening their perspectives and influencing their choice of destination (Anonymous, 2003a).

The Cairns Region of Queensland, Australia has developed a unique and highly innovative model to win international students. This model, the Regional International Education Model has been trialled across 31 regional primary and secondary schools throughout 2003 and 2004. This model encapsulates the latest educational and marketing initiatives and is regionally focused. It is now delivering substantial numbers of international students and study tours and meeting its three-year Cairns Region Strategic Business Plan targets (Forbes, 2003).

## **THE REGIONAL INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION MODEL**

### **History of International Education in the Cairns Region**

The World Competitiveness Yearbook (Garelli, 2003) rates Australia number one (95%) for its quality of life, and number one (95.7%) as a safe, politically stable destination. Cairns has been voted Australia's most liveable city. The Cairns region of Northern Australia is a vibrant, expanding, economically diverse area representing over 240,000 people. It has the fifth busiest international airport in Australia, and a large international seaport, and in 2003 had a GRP of \$6.2B AUD.

Educationally, over the past decade, the ELICOS sector has experienced strong growth in international student numbers. Non-government high schools have maintained significant international enrolments, especially from Papua New Guinea and Japan. Government schools are also involved in the international student market. Cairns State High School has participated in this international market for approximately ten years, drawing international students from countries including Japan, Germany, Brazil, United Kingdom, Thailand, Philippines, United States, Scandinavia, China and Italy. Two additional government high schools, Smithfield and Trinity Bay State High Schools have now joined this program, each with three year marketing plans targeting approximately 50 international students. The regional institutions, James Cook University (JCU), and Tropical North Queensland (TNQ) TAFE, provide English language centres for international students, and continue to build their international student and marketing infrastructure. Cairns remains a very popular destination for Japanese school study tour visits. Schools from Canada, Singapore, Hong Kong and Korea are other key study tour participants. In order to win more international students, and drive the region as an educational centre of choice, a new model was devised.

### **The Cairns Region's Strategic Reference Group**

In October 2002, the North Queensland (NQ) office of EQI was established to operationalise the Queensland State Government's agenda of growing the international student market in Cairns and the NQ region.

A cross-sectoral approach was adopted. The community was asked to develop a framework. In order to coordinate views and develop strategies a 'Regional Strategic Reference Group' was established.

The Strategic Reference Group maintained what they called a 'whole-of-government', 'whole-of-community', positive, proactive, energetic, approach. Its participant framework is displayed in Figure 2. It operated dynamically, drawing regional education offerings and support infrastructures together in a cohesive, productive and focused manner. Those in positions of regional power constitute this dynamic group. Members include: the Pro Vice Chancellor of JCU, the TNQ TAFE Director of Business, the Regional Executive Director Schools, the Executive Officer of the Chamber of Commerce, the Chief Executive Officer of Advance Cairns, key school Principals, Senior Officers of Regional State Government Departments, and the Queensland General Manager of EQI.

The Regional Strategic Reference Group delivered latest regional strategies and developed Cairns as an international education destination of choice.

Today schools are:

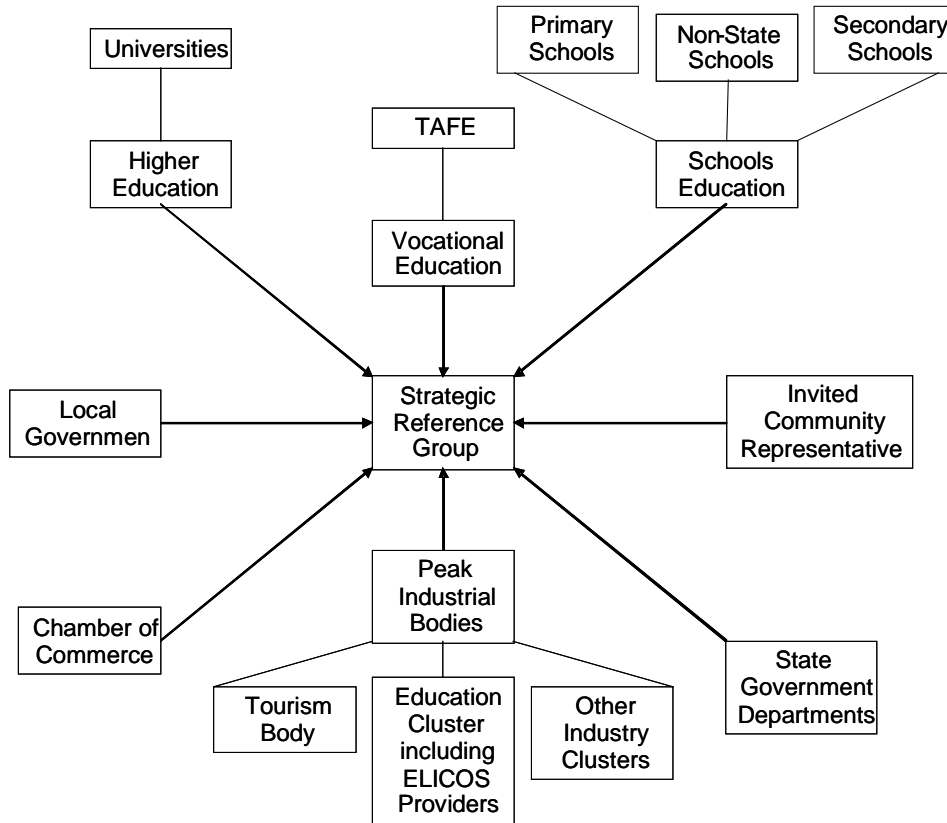
- a) collaborating,
- b) developing high levels of excellence,
- c) differentiating their products,



- d) chasing international accreditation, and
- e) cross promoting their competitors' skills.

In addition, regional higher and vocational education participants are assisting with:

- a) pathways developments,
- b) subject credits,
- c) cross-sector joint planning,
- d) secondary schools' marketing, and
- e) fast-track transitions.



**Figure 2. The strategic reference group model (Forbes and Hamilton, 2004)**

In 2002, EQI funded a manager’s position. The Premier’s Department of the State Government through Queensland Education and Training International (QETI), the local tourism industry and local businesses funded cross-sectoral education agents’ visits promoting the region, and driving new networks for the region. The Cairns City Council, Advance Cairns (the peak regional economic development agency), and the Cairns Chamber of Commerce continue to promote regional education initiatives into Hong Kong, China, Guam, Taiwan, Japan and Korea. These peak bodies are driving a united regional international agenda for education across all sectors.

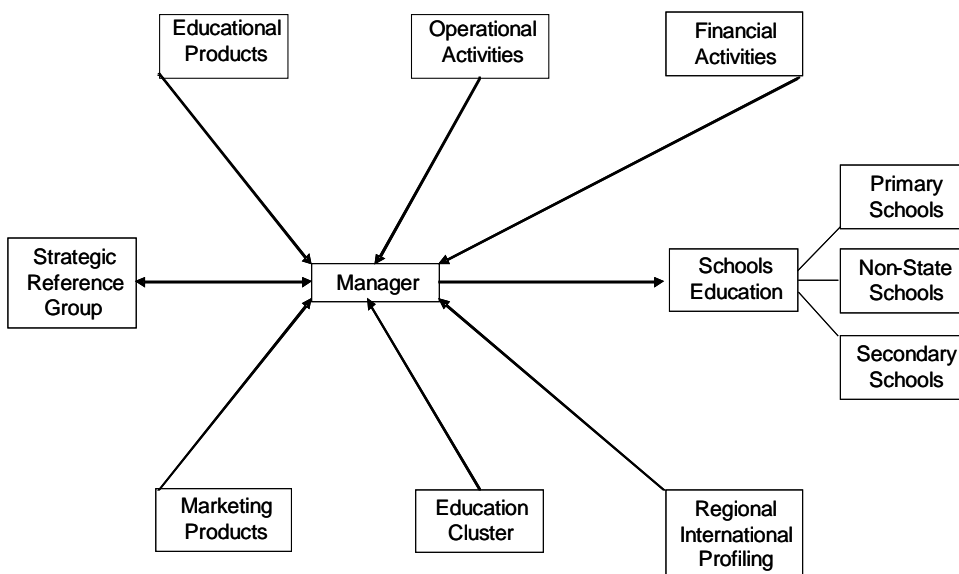
Schools generate additional revenue streams by including international students, and international student programs into their activities. This, in turn, creates an additional pipeline of international students into the vocational and university education sectors. The Cairns region schools sector captures over 28 per cent of international student visits to Queensland, and generates over 15 per cent of the study tours revenue for Queensland. International students generate many additional economic benefits to the region including tuition fees, accommodation, living, entertainment, tours, family visits, multiplier effects, and the like.

## The Importance of a Management Structure

Regional coordination requires high-level, strategic, managerial and educational expertise. The manager must have a diverse range of skills including: an excellent understanding of education; experience in management, accounting and interpersonal relationships; and a sound knowledge of the region. This person needs to initiate, develop and deliver productive, quality partnerships across all education sectors in the region. Many disparate groups must be drawn into a sharing, cooperative relationship, and must then pursue benefits for all members of the educational sector and its wider support community.

The regional manager must work harmoniously across all sectors and must drive a dynamic region education focus. Schools participating in international programs must differentiate, and meet rigorous quality assurance standards. They must agree to regional strategies, targets, and objectives and must deliver a business plan that forms part of the regional strategic business plan. They then must perform and deliver their educational products and initiatives, on-time and in-budget.

Key roles of the regional manager are displayed in Figure 3. The Regional International Education Manager must be a visionary, capable of setting and driving micro and macro agendas. For example, how can a school differentiate itself from another?

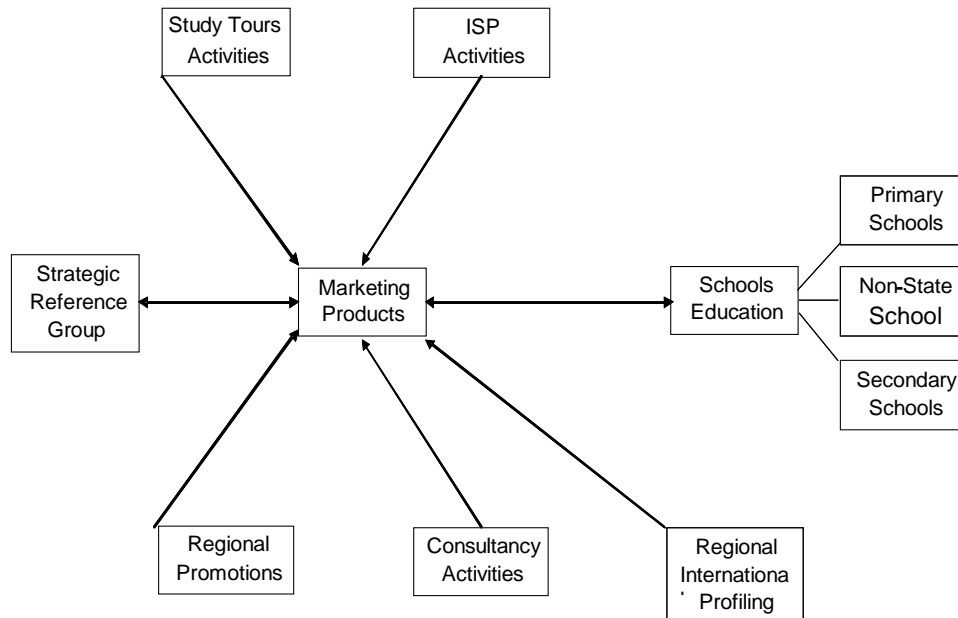


**Figure 3. The international education regional strategic manager model (Forbes and Hamilton, 2004)**

## The Regional Marketing Strategies Approach

The difficulties involved in drawing international students to regional Australia are considerable. Some regional impediments that must be overcome include knowledge and understanding of regional Australia; the regional educational status (compared to that of a capital city); regional accessibility; perceived regional educational standards; and the like. Recognising such difficulties, the Cairns region adopted a targeted market approach as its strategic, international student, regional marketing approach (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2001). Markets displaying preferences for quality of life, education, tropical climate, safety, and outdoor activities were targeted. Australian universities' experiences in strategic markets were also considered. This marketing model is displayed in Figure 4.

The Cairns Region selected China, Japan, Brazil, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Germany and Korea as a focus for its international education marketing. Key agents within these localities were sourced, and contacted. Visits to Hong Kong, China, Japan, Korea and Guam were undertaken to enhance relationships, and offshore education agent delegations from China, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan, Mexico, Brazil, Germany and others were received. Extensive international networks were established and promoted.



**Figure 4. The international education regional strategic marketing approach (Forbes and Hamilton, 2004)**

Research from key Australian bodies including EQI, Australian Education International (AEI), IDP (Australia), Queensland's Department of State Development, QETI and Study Cairns was sourced. National, State and Regional marketing strategies were developed, and modified as new initiatives arose.

A regional EQI marketing strategy was developed with EQI's General Managers and Marketing Manager. The EQI marketing and sales team provided quality marketing feedback to the Cairns region regarding promotions, activities, and future strategies.

QETI assisted the Cairns region by funding a cross-sectorial regional education showcase. International educational agents were brought to Cairns. These agents met individually with representatives from each regional education institution, and assessed synergies. A promotional brochure for the International Student Program (ISP) schools, TAFE, the University and EQI was developed, circulated widely to agents, to overseas State Development offices, and to visitors. This brochure promoted the region's differentiated educational offerings. In conjunction with the so-called 'whole-of-region' strategy, the Regional manager became a focal point to sell Cairns educational products. New products for the schools sector continue to be developed.

Marketing briefs and promotional information have been developed and incorporated into 'on-line', and regional publications for peak regional bodies including, Advance Cairns; the Cairns Chamber of Commerce; Study Cairns; the Cairns City Council; Tourism Tropical North Queensland; and others. Schools' promotional packs are forwarded to potential ISP students, targeted education agents and others. Innovative education curriculum products are being developed. International educational accreditation, global information technology solutions research with major corporations including: Microsoft; HP; and NEC, have commenced. Multimedia, biomechanics and robotics solutions have also been developed. Schools sector

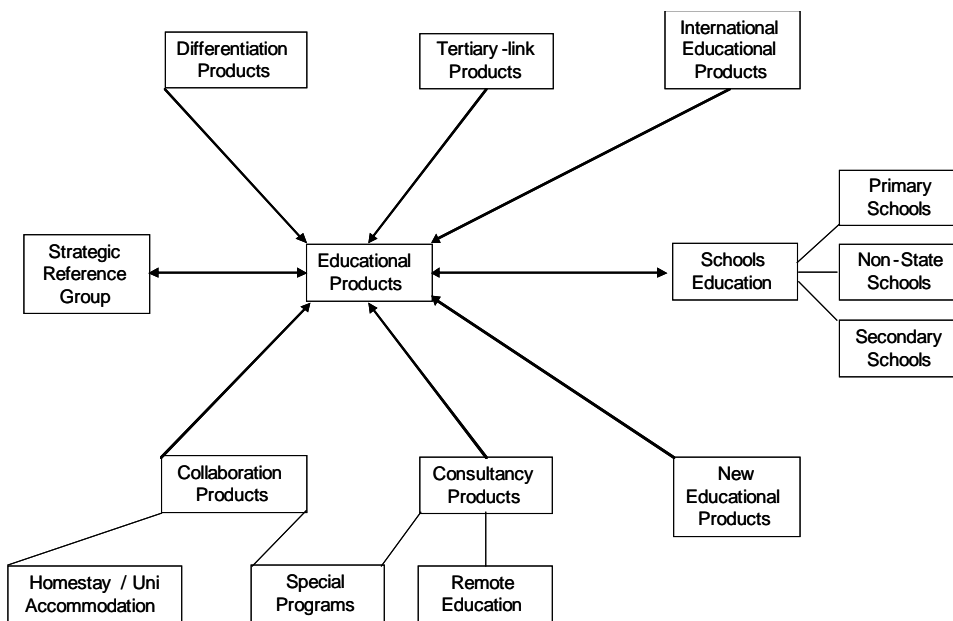
training programs including, what are called, 'export planning and preparation workshops' have been developed. All education sectors share information freely, and the whole region is benefiting.

This collaborative approach has reduced the negativity often created by competition. It has delivered a highly streamlined, cohesive approach to winning a larger international market. The Cairns region, and its targeted education agents, have found this collaborative centralised contact point approach to be a successful international student model. The cohesive matching of agent requirements with regional education and business solutions has delivered a greatly increased market share, especially in the schools and ELICOS sectors.

Marketing remains the key driver of the success of this program. A united, team-based, collegiate approach is delivering highly successful outcomes for all – students, schools, agents, English Language Colleges, vocational and university institutions, government, industry, and the region.

### The Cairns Regions' Strategic Educational Strategies

The regions' educational strategies are summarised in Figure 5. The region is well known internationally as a top tourist destination. Tourism Tropical North Queensland (2003) reported Cairns as second only to Sydney as the top international tourist destination in Australia. Daily international flights from Japan to Cairns have delivered a new school sector market – Japanese study tour visits. Over 4000 school sector educational study tour visitors are projected for 2004, and the market will continue to grow.



**Figure 5. The international education regional strategic educational products model, (Forbes and Hamilton, 2004)**

Study tours range from half-day to full-day visits, and some may extend for several weeks and include home-stay accommodation. Visiting students participate in a range of activities including home-stay or farm-stay accommodation; schools visits; English language classes; so-called 'buddy' programs in local schools (with age appropriate student peers); excursions to popular tourist destinations; and special activities (for example, camp fires, rafting, rainforest hikes, and indigenous cultural activities), that showcase the local culture. This educational market continues to grow, with large Japanese student groups (up to 350 students per group) regularly visiting North Queensland on 96-hour school excursions. School excursion groups typically require half-day and full-day school visits, including the popular, so-called 'buddy' experience, and

participation in local classroom activities. To date, EQI has accredited 31 Cairns schools as hosts for specialist study tours. This process ensures that the accredited officers in each host school are trained to deliver quality study tour programs for all visiting international students.

Regionally-based full-time international students, and their agents, now recognise the quality of the schools in the region, and are beginning to promote the region's worth. In the international education industry, so-called 'word-of-mouth' recommendations are powerful marketing tools. One government school (Cairns State High School) is up-skilling all its programs and staff. It is pursuing full International Schools Accreditation. Its entire school community is working to achieve this high, internationally recognised status. There are approximately 200 schools world wide with this high level international recognition. This school maintains the top youth orchestra in Queensland. It has an extensive history delivering academic excellence, an outstanding performing arts department, and an innovative senior school program. It offers additional student initiatives including an array of work experience, industry qualifications, SCUBA and marine certificates, VET programs, and subject-specific extension tutorials.

Two additional schools in the Cairns International Student Program have also differentiated both their educational programs and their products. This second school sector education provider (Trinity Bay State High School) delivers outstanding science programs, and its bi-yearly 'Science Expo' has won Queensland Government's 'Showcase Awards for Excellence'. This school partners with the local TAFE, and complements its senior studies programs with VET offerings. The third school (Smithfield State High School) is the Queensland 'Centre of Excellence for Maths, Science and Information Technology', offering robotics, multimedia, high level programming, biomechanics, and the like. This school has special articulation agreements with the local university. Its high-performance students receive exemptions for some university subjects. Regional quality independent schools also differentiate themselves on religious grounds; on their academic performance; on gifted and talented programs; on unique centre of excellence programs like 'excellence in sport', or 'excellence in music'.

The sharing of information, resources and ideas between education providers has improved regional academic performances. In 2003, when measured against the Queensland-wide final-year high school assessment system, the region produced its best academic results. This is, in-part, due to the collegiate approach adopted by schools to sharing ideas and improving their educational packages. Those schools targeting international students enhanced their educational outcomes, and their learning focuses.

To drive international education awareness of the Cairns region, the regional manager promoted the education offerings of the region in Indonesia and Hong Kong. Peak local bodies did likewise in Guam, Hong Kong, China, Japan, and Korea. The University and TNQ TAFE regularly promote the region during their offshore visits. EQI's Marketing Team, in their offshore marketing programs, aggressively promoted the government schools sector and the Cairns initiative. The region has actively promoted their educational products to the global marketplace building new links. Schools have developed self-promotional materials and many new educational initiatives. Some innovations (biomechanics, HP-Microsoft PDA initiative, NEC learning and research laboratory, university and TAFE programs at high school, centres of excellence, on-line learning and research sharing) are underway. Two areas are currently undergoing comprehensive development.

- 1) **Offshore programs:** where local schools partner with an offshore school to deliver the Queensland Year 10 curriculum - for overseas students' articulation into senior studies in Cairns (Advance Cairns, Cairns City Council and EQI are pursuing this area).
- 2) **International projects and consultancies:** where excellent programs developed, and in use in Cairns, are showcased to visiting professional groups. In some projects, aid is

provided to overseas educational groups, seeking appropriate professional development and training.

### **Operationalising the Regional International Education Model**

The initial vehicle to operationalise Queensland State Government's agenda for growing the international student market across the regions was provided by EQI (in October 2002) and the local Government Schools District. There was an agreement to fund, and support, a managerial position for up to three years in North Queensland. The regional manager's task was to draw the disparate educational providers together under a united, vision setting regional approach. The Cairns Region's Strategic Reference Group developed the latest regional strategies appropriate to the building of an international education region of excellence in North Queensland. International education business plans for the region were developed, shared, logged and instigated.

International Student Program (ISP) targets for each school were shared. A differentiated school strategy was selected to maximise regional appeal. Because the tertiary sector is a key focus for international students when they consider their choices of locality for overseas study, University and TAFE offerings were heavily promoted to all school-aged international students. Agents were sourced and pursued to deliver study tours. This strategy spread the revenue base to a wider range of schools. It increased the interest in the so-called 'whole-of-region' push for international education recognition, and it delivered new initiatives and options. A mix of study tours (Half-day and Full-day visits, EQ Model and TO Model) was achieved. The choice of study tour (size and duration) matching the regional schools' preference (cultural outcomes), capacity and availability at the requested time of visit was delivered. Three schools are jointly pursuing the establishment of an offshore program.

EQI's International Project Team collaborated with schools and training organisations in the region, to provide curriculum development programs including a Laotian Education Fellows Professional Group visit. This area remains a future regional focus. New so-called 'value-add' differentiation products such as the tertiary certification in Multimedia, Radio Broadcasting Programs and Certification, Marine Studies and SCUBA certificates, and studies in Bio-Science have been developed by schools. The development of IT and Business focused e-Learning programs are nearing completion. The use of local and specialist Education Queensland facilities such as the Environmental Education Centres have been incorporated.

Quality assurance and articulation programs have been shared across the region with the tertiary sector recognising prior learning in areas such as Multimedia, IT, Journalism, Science and Business, and creating flexible senior studies options for excellent high school students.

ELICOS providers have expanded their capacity to absorb additional students in preparation for high school and tertiary courses. International students under 18 years of age are required to live in family (or home-stay) environments. Specialist 'home-stay' providers have emerged. They now recruit, evaluate and manage home-stay families, delivering quality assured Australian family living experiences for international students.

Agents' visits have been organised to promote the region as a destination of choice for international students. This has been achieved by effective, collaborative partnerships operating between the local tourism authority (Tourism Tropical North Queensland), State Government Departments (Premiers - QETI, State Development and EQI) and Education providers (JCU, TNQ TAFE, English Language Colleges and non-government and government schools). These visits have generated greater regional interest and higher levels of market intelligence. Sharing of Education Agents has meant that Agents now communicate cross-sectorially, knowing their information will be shared, and benefit their international student clients.

Funding and sustainable sources of venture capital remain a concern. At present, EQ, and the government schools pay the manager's salary, on-costs and other expenses. Ways to fund this area include – study tours, new products, sale of expertise (consultancies), and grants. Investment required to initiate such a program is approximately \$150,000 AUD per annum, and a three-year financial plan outlined in a Strategic Regional Business Plan is required. The international market is a challenging one to capture, especially at the school level. Establishing credibility, ensuring quality and comparability, forging valuable relationship links, generating trust, differentiating products, and driving dynamic programs all take significant developmental time.

Major hurdles for regional Australia focus on overcoming traditional international educational approaches. In the past, international students have moved from their home city to a large overseas city. Outside capital cities, overseas knowledge of Australia, and its education systems, especially at the high school level, is limited. This situation may be addressed using a raft of approaches. For example the region may target:

- a) raising agents' awareness (most education agents, usually based in cities, have a mind-set that traditionally targets city placement, not regional placement. Hence a regional education process for agents combined with excellent, open communication channels is essential.);
- b) producing informative marketing collateral, brochures and websites (promoting the region);
- c) publicising great achievements and successful pathways of past students (showcasing the educational and regional winners);
- d) providing quality regional contacts and response and feedback systems (delivering instantaneous, cooperative, collaborative communications);
- e) gathering market intelligence, researching, and then targeting markets that, onbalance, offer the best chances of success (for example, the Cairns region targets wealthy areas seeking educational advancement, high-tech and science focused areas, sports focused areas, lifestyle areas and quality home family support areas); and
- f) overcoming the reluctance of overseas families to send their high-school-aged students to Australia for their education (a safe, secure, quality destination with great future opportunities is required).

Many other support ideas like quality home-stay coordination, international student support meetings, structured social activities and guidance services complement the comfort zone for international students.

We now present our summary of the so-called 'Dos and Don'ts' for establishing a credible, quality regional destination for international students, and then add to this the special challenge of promoting the schools sector. We argue this sector is the most difficult to sell, but if delivered correctly it can be one that delivers great benefits and new revenue streams to the region and its community.

## **THE DOS AND DON'TS**

### **The Dos**

In developing internationally appealing education products that draw international students to regional Australian study destinations, in conjunction with the strategies and models above the following 'dos' apply.

#### **Do:**

- Remain future focused and develop region specific markets. Scant quantifiable statistical information exists relating to regional international education, so develop real destination specific market intelligence, not hearsay market unintelligence.
- Gain an intimate understanding of the regional educational products to be offered, and present these in an award-winning salesperson's approach.
- Network extensively and draw all regional education players into a united, participatory, support infrastructure.
- Listen to and utilise all the regional marketing expertise. Have an energetic, enthusiastic and even more tenacious approach to marketing, and develop accurate local databases of the regions' statistics, local trends, and analyse all international student feedback.
- Actively seek out and build relationships with other Australian regional areas, and with selected target regions within chosen overseas (country) markets.
- Develop relationships with relevant agents and countries and provide like-minded educational philosophies to match student expectations. For example, school age students provided with:
  - excellent care, strong family, school and community relationships, quality unique regional, small city experiences;
  - higher exposure to English language embedded in quality education programs, leading to accelerated rate of English language acquisition, proficiency and learning;
  - safer, friendlier environments;
  - higher levels of personal tracking;
  - opportunities to quickly develop closer cross-cultural relationships.
- Encourage exposure of the region to other countries in a range of differentiated ways (summer camps, study tours, teacher professional development visits, consultancies, offshore education visits).
- Develop extensive knowledge of educational pathways for all students throughout Australia, and not just in the region.
- Offer expertise in educational counselling for study pathways into top institutions.

### **The Don'ts**

The development of internationally appealing regional education products in Australia has many pit-falls. Destinations, strategies and the models discussed above provide some insight into the extensive degree of planning required to create a successful mix, In general, the following 'don'ts' and explanations or suggestions apply.

#### **Don't:**

- Import knowledge and just apply it (Instead, research well and develop a region specific model).
- React to empirical statistics, trends and patterns of market demand (Instead, adopt a proactive approach).
- Listen to the platitudes of the past (past international marketing experience in Australia is limited largely to the successful marketing experiences of universities in key large internationally profiled cities in Australia). (These marketing experiences cannot be

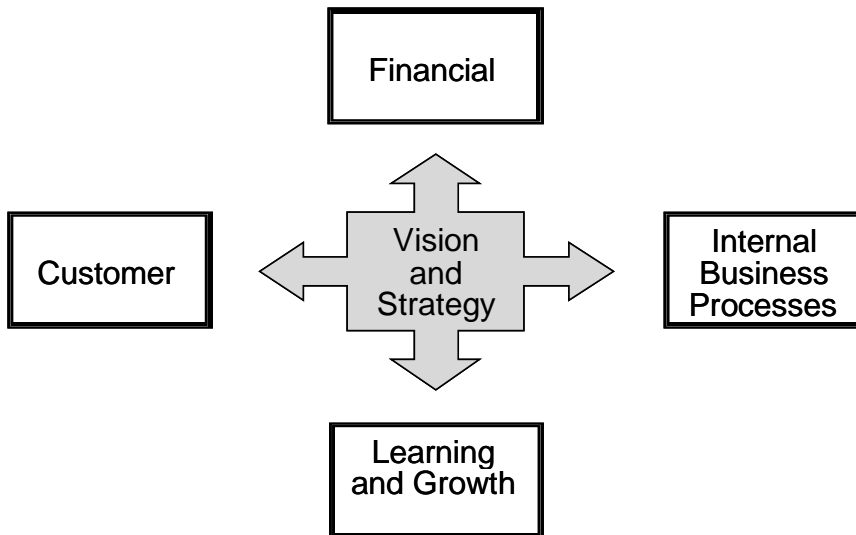


generalised and projected into marketing strategies for regional Australia. Regional Australia needs unique marketing strategies.)

- Assume the limited market intelligence presents an accurate picture. Market intelligence is influenced by:
  - word-of-mouth (for example, individual student experiences to date);
  - current perceptions of quality Australian education only being available in inner city Sydney and Melbourne;
  - reactionary models. (Instead, understand the international education industry in regional Australia is an imprecise, fragmented, differentiated, immature, niche market.)
- Assume aggressive marketing delivers the winning solution. (Instead, marketing should be inquisitive, flexible, agile, intelligent, and responsive to the demands of the international market.)
- Make assumptions about a market. For example, all students and families from certain markets will seize the opportunity of accelerated pathways to Australian Universities through Foundation Programs. (Within a particular overseas country market there will parts of that market that will reject the model – this sector is not the target market.)
- Make generalisations from a few, limited, marketing experience schools examples. (Instead, gather your own market intelligence and learn from the activities of others.)
- Shape and develop your regional marketing strategy from:
  - Marketing plans of the past;
  - Marketing experiences of the past; and
  - Marketing knowledge of the past; (Instead, recognise that for regional Australia, there is very little past experience in international education.)
- Expect that overseas country markets have knowledge of and exposure to the relevant Australian destination. (It is important to build a regional international recognition profile.)
- Ignore the importance and value of location, time zones and closeness to the market with efficient flight connections.

#### **THE STRATEGIC MODEL CHECKLIST: THE BALANCED SCORECARD APPROACH**

The above models, when drawn together, deliver a unique, balanced scorecard approach to regionalising international education. This analytic framework is being used to translate the Cairns regional business's model vision, and its high-level strategies into specific, quantifiable goals. It provides a mechanism to move forward and to monitor performance against these goals (Kaplan and Norton, 1996; Rohm, 2002). The customers who are international students must receive their expected outcomes, the region must develop its skills and knowledge base, and provide improved solutions. The internal processes must meet all legislative and business specific requirements (like home-stay provisions). Finally, a set of financial outcomes must be delivered. These financial outcomes, if correctly established, pursued and delivered allow the region to develop as a viable secondary school international education provider. Such regional educational strategy subsets are broken down into objectives, measurements, targets and initiatives, as displayed in Figure 6, and their effect on overall vision and strategy is monitored. If necessary subset objective may also be further teased down into objective components, and even finer sets of measures may be developed.



**Figure 6. The balanced scorecard model, (Kaplan and Norton, 1996)**

To date, the Cairns regional educational model has delivered high growth rates, differentiated competitive advantage, and has delivered considerable financial rewards. This regional school education business has grown from a handful of schools, with very small numbers of international students, to one involving 31 regional primary and secondary schools. Revenue drawn into Australia is approaching \$1.5M (delivering a net economic benefit of approximately \$5M). Projected growth rates in 2005 are estimated to be well above the national average.

The region has used a balanced scorecard approach incorporating a nine-step strategy development cycle to construct and advance its schools sector international student programs. This model is displayed in Figure 7. It begins with the development of a visionary strategy and a regional school sector international education perspective. This visionary strategy is refined and developed, through a business plan, a vision or mission top-down approach and researching other models. A set of strategic objectives (focusing on delivering customer outcomes) is developed. These strategic objectives are then strategically mapped.

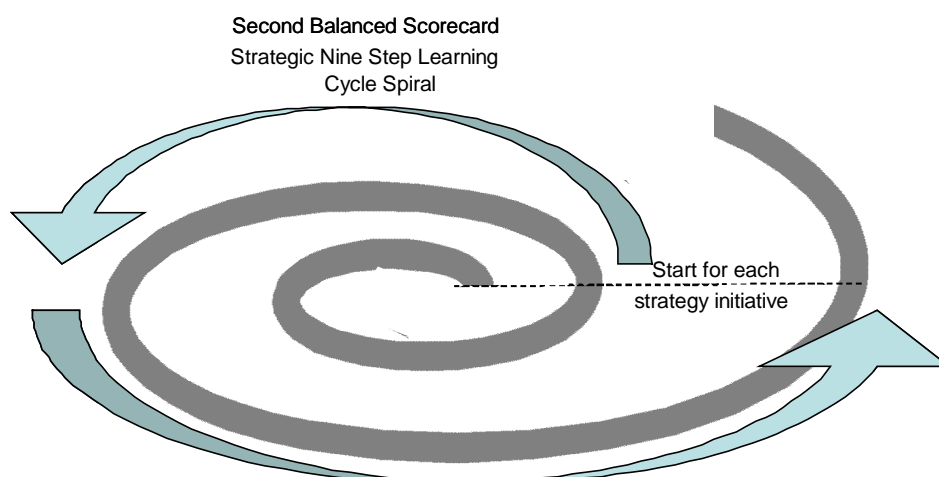


**Figure 7. The balanced scorecard nine-step strategy development Cycle Model (Rohm, 2002)**

Using a learning curve with a position, movement and knowledge approach, strategic objectives are quantified into performance-based measures. These measures, in-turn, are tapped to deliver new initiatives, such as: targeting different countries; delivering different educational products; increasing the product relevance; and the like. The selected educational product mixes (to be marketed) are automated by incorporating a systems approach that allowed the efficient delivery of the internal processes (in a cascading series of process requirements). This ultimately delivers efficient, productive outcomes. Such business related outcomes provide relevant financial results including: increased student numbers and new revenue streams; greater cultural understanding and improved community involvement; up-skilling of teachers and the school; enhanced international school curriculum; and the like.

When balanced scorecard measures are assessed against previous strategies, new strategic improvements may be generated. For example, joint cluster marketing, and sharing of international students, incremental improvements in processes, disruptive (total new pathways) improvements in target marketing, and approaches used, and new funding mechanisms may be operationalised.

A strategic nine-step learning spiral and growth pattern emerges from the balanced scorecard nine-step model. The second learning cycle builds on the first learning cycle, and over-time, more complex, better targeted, multifaceted approaches to international education emerge. This growth and learning cycle is modelled in Figure 8.



**Figure 8. The balanced scorecard nine-step strategic learning spiral**

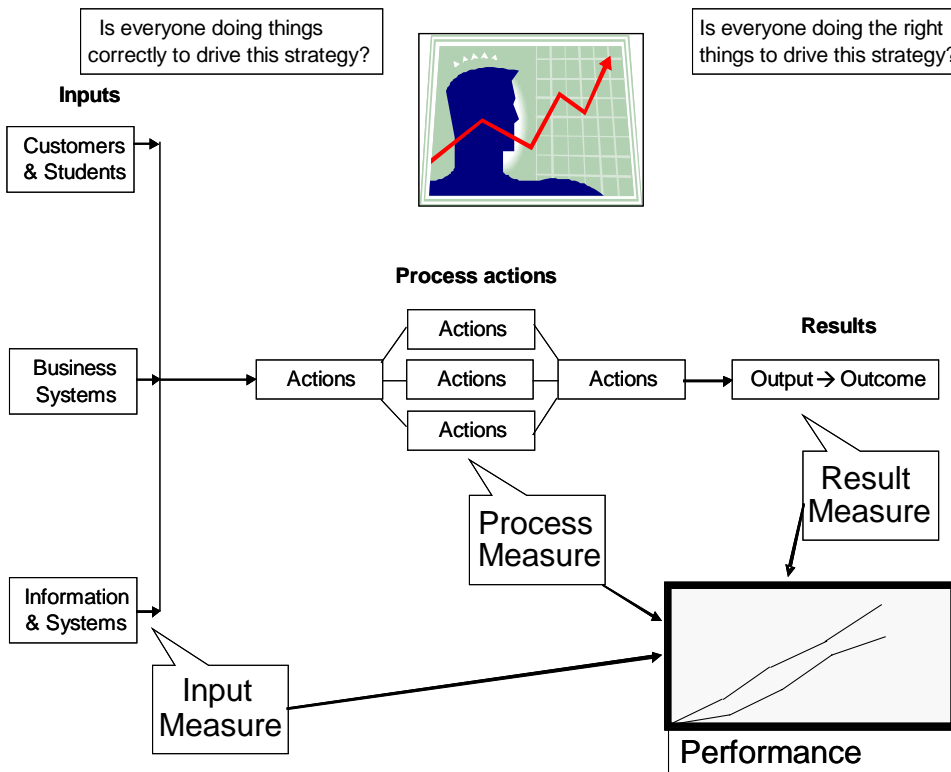
The strategic components delivering the balanced scorecard outcome are displayed in Figure 9. Here specific performance measures may be identified and then tracked. For example, if the objective is to broaden the school revenue mix, all inputs related to this objective are drawn together into the required common process blocks that deliver this desired outcome. The relevant measures are then determined, delivered, and monitored.

Figure 10 considers the four balanced scorecard sectors as displayed in Figure 6 and links them within one scorecard. Using a procedure such as that outlined for Figure 7, and considering the relevant measures as developed through a Figure 9 approach, a series of achievable, measurable, targeted cost related initiatives can be developed to deliver this specific part of the international education strategy for the region.

## THE FUTURE

For international education there is scant relevant data for regional Australia, hence regional approaches to international education should look to the future. A strategic, well constructed, suitably funded and located green-fields approach based on the above model offers an avenue to

success. It should be noted that there is an international student market for regional Australia, but each region is different, and each region will appeal to different markets. Hence, each region must determine and target its niche, and its best potential international student customer base.



**Figure 9. The balanced scorecard strategic services components (Forbes and Hamilton, 2004)**

A smart avenue to tap the international school market is via study tours. Once outstanding curriculum offerings are present, and the region has sufficient products to 'sell' a high quality ISP program may be pursued.

The Cairns region's international student market focus was primarily in parts of Europe (Germany and Italy) and Latin America (Mexico, Brazil and Chile), the United States, Korea and Japan. This market will grow and additional markets under investigation include Hong Kong, Southern and Northern China, and Taiwan. The regions' diversification strategy has delivered students and this strategy will continue. The Cairns Region is continuing to build its offshore and educational agent relationships, and to enhance its targeted markets. It is developing a preferred international student destination status in some of its targeted markets.

The balanced scorecard model is a highly useful tool that can assist with the focusing, targeting and delivery of optimised growth approaches for international education. It can deliver strategies, and ensure necessary financial rewards are targeted.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Education and training is essential to driving world development. The Cairns region delivers the showcase international student model for regional Australia. This model is a working solution to international educational solutions. It delineates whole-of-region ideas, pitfalls, structures, strategic directions, dos and don'ts, and a balanced scorecard model to deliver strategies and maintain financial results. The Cairns region's models approach, incorporating structures, strategic marketing, a region-unique product mix, and the operational strategy constitute a framework model for other regions.

	Strategy to be achieved, and how?	How success measured and traced?	Performance expectation	Key action program required to achieve objectives
	Objective	Measure	Target	Initiatives
<b>Financial</b>	Broaden the revenue mix	Revenue mix	40% ISP 40% Study tours 4% Teacher training 15% Study abroad 1% Virtual programs	Targeting countries Channel marketing O'seas visits Regional staff overseas familiarisations
<b>Customer (Int. Students)</b>	Customer recognition Customer satisfaction	Int. student evaluations Niche growth	'03/'04 – 200% '04/'05 – 300% '05/'06 – 300%	Language support Student support Knowledge and learning pathways Int. language brochures Agents visits, tours, visitor familiarisations
<b>Internal Business</b>	New educational products Differentiation	% revenue from new ed. products % uptake % approval	'03/'04 – integrated regional approach, lead schools '05 – double schools involved	R&D sourcing markets Website Targeted mailing of agents and other feed sourced Direct marketing
<b>Learning and Growth</b>	New strategic skills Learning curve	Training delivered Understanding & knowledge growth	100% to all participation schools Well informed - all participants and leadership (100%)	Student ed. & training Student living structures Student uni pathways Regional knowledge library

**Figure 10. An international educational scorecard (Forbes and Hamilton, 2004)**

To ensure that visionary strategies are delivered, and financial rewards emerge, a balanced scorecard approach is recommended. The balanced scorecard approach, offers a vital pathway to delivering a regional strategy and to mapping, measuring and quantifying results. It produces a spiral growth-learning model that can deliver rapid and continuous development of educationally related ideas. This approach is a pathway to delivering continuous improvement, and a further move towards maintaining a competitive position in the dynamic global marketplace of international education.

Today, there remains considerable capacity for growth in selected regional areas. However, the value of location, time zones, and closeness to the international market (through efficient flight connections) should not be overlooked. The Cairns region's models approach provides wide ranging, and highly creative marketing of unique, differentiated, well-targeted, regional programs. It offers real options and pathways to international students.

When a whole-of-region strategic international student focus is adopted, from both an educational and non-educational perspective, the awareness of the regions' educational opportunities becomes apparent. Thus, the likelihood of international students replacing their traditional Australian capital cities destinations with regional educational solutions is enhanced. This is especially true when a region develops a broad, leading edge, product mix. This product mix must also deliver the requirements of the targeted prospective international student.

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# Public and Private in South Korea's Education Reform Vocabulary: An Evolving Statist Culture of Education Policy

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*Statism is a political economy that prevails in many East Asian countries. This paper explores its negative role in South Korea's education reform since the restoration of civilian democracy in 1993. It takes note of South Koreans' aberrant use of the terms 'public education' and 'private education' and the frame of reference for policy discourses based thereupon. It then shows how this frame of reference restricts the grasp of structural educational problems and the practical context in which to explore policy measures for what the policy makers pursue, liberalisation and diversification. Finally, it relates the aberrant use of the terms to a statist culture that has evolved through the years of military elite's developmental policy and continues to determine the scope of discourses in a post-military era. By doing this, the paper seeks to expand the political economy discourses of statism and institutionalism in the field of education.*

Political economy of education, statism, institutionalism, private education, public education, education reform, Korea

## INABILITY TO REFORM EDUCATION

To note in South Korea's education reform during a decade of civilian democracy, 1993-2003, is the phenomenon that each government begins with a promise of paradigm shifts but ends up business as usual (Cheung and Scott, 2003). Both civilian groups, parents, teachers and other interested parties, and government leaders agree that big changes are in order for solving structural problems in education and coping with the new era of democracy and globalisation. Central to the problems is intense competition for university entrance basically due to the state's rigid control of education and the resultant uniformity of teaching and learning (Kim, 1999). The solution is pretty clear to both civilians and government leaders: liberalise the education system and diversify teaching and learning. Nevertheless, the reform policies that the civilian groups envision and the policy makers actually develop are usually a set of 'dos and don'ts' handed down by the state with limited options for schools and universities to choose from. Thus, the rigidity of state control remains, so too do the uniformity of teaching and learning and, in effect, the intensity of entrance competition.

The literature offers a few possible explanations of the unsuccessful education reform. A typical case can be what South Korean sceptics bring up, that the policy makers, and the government itself, have no real desire for education reform because of their vested interests (for example, Lee, 1999). A solid yet indirect scholarly support for this explanation may be Schoppa's (1991) analysis of Japan's failure in education reform in the 1980s. In his study, Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone's liberalising and diversifying education reform drive was frustrated by the so-called 'immobilist politics' of Ministry of Education officials and Liberal Democratic politicians in the Diet, who cared for their own interests more than for their government's agendas. Eventually,

thus, Nakasone's reform drive became scaled down to the policies of state-dictated liberalisation and diversification similar to what South Koreans employed later. South Korea's education system was built on the foundation left by the Japanese. After their departure, policy makers persistently borrowed from them not only policy ideas but the policy-making procedures permitting bureaucratic manipulation. For this reason, Schoppa's point can bear upon South Korea.

Another explanation can be inferred from the so-called 'institutionalist' case introduced by the circle of scholars in political economy who disagree with the statist interpretation of the role of the military elite's strong state in economic development. The statist holds that South Korea's miraculous economic development, similarly to Japan's and Prussia's, was due to the state's enlightened control and management of the economic activity of civil society with priority on development (for example, Amsden, 1994). The institutionalist says this account is too simple to be true because although state policies may well initiate economic development, they cannot sustain it. The reason is that institutions in civil society, especially institutionalised state policies, can later on filter and often frustrate new policies no matter how strongly they are handed down (for example, Evans, 1992). Even now, in this view, the developmental state's statist policies can still remain entrenched in the education system as self-sustaining institutions and inhibit changes. In fact, most vocal in opposing liberalising and diversifying policies have been schools and universities, which were framed within, and are benefiting most from, the entrenched institutional set-up that provokes entrance competition (for example, Kim, 1997; Lee 1999).

While basically not denying such possible explanations, this paper explores another area of concern, which may shed some new light on the issue. It takes note of South Koreans' aberrant use of the terms 'public education' and 'private education' and the frame of reference for policy discourses based thereupon. It then shows how this frame of reference restricts the grasp of structural educational problems and the practical context in which to seek liberalisation and diversification. Finally, it relates the aberrant use of the terms to a statist culture that has evolved through the military years and continues to determine the scope of educational policy discourses.

### **PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATION AND EDUCATION POLICY**

Theoretically, the concepts of public and private education emerge upon the state's intervention in education. Before state intervention, one can say, education as a service is an object of trade on the market. With state intervention, then, the education market is divided into a **public** sphere, in which the state sets up and operates educational institutions, and a **private** sphere, which operates according to market rules<sup>1</sup>. Public education refers to the educational services that are supplied in the public sphere, and private education to those that are traded in the private sphere. More simply, public education occurs in public schools while private education takes place in private schools.

Admittedly, this distinction may not always accurately reflect the reality, for state intervention varies in degree and in kind. In Smith's (1904, p.182) vision, for instance, public education was that for which the state would pay "a very small expense" in order to "facilitate . . . encourage . . . and . . . even impose upon almost the whole body of the people the necessity of acquiring those most essential parts of education". The state might establish its own schools and charge affordable fees. Or it might partially fund private schools to educate as many pupils as possible with limited resources. Smith, however, advanced this vision a century before his country launched a national system of public education. Since the latter event, state involvement in and commitment to public

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<sup>1</sup> The public sphere here is not completely outside the market if the latter is defined as the place of trade, for education in the public sphere still involves some forms of trade, such as miscellaneous fees and reduced tuition fees.



education grew until it came to offer primary and secondary education to all with small or no fees, and to make higher education available to all qualified and desirous individuals at low fees. The state in many countries now does not need to rely on private schools for “facilitating, encouraging, and even imposing . . . the most essential parts of education”. As a rule, it leaves private schools alone so that they can pursue their private interest freely and independently so long as they meet minimal standards. The South Korean use of the terms is aberrant.

The simple distinction provides policy-making and study with guidelines for determining what problems to address and what not, and what measures to employ and what not, for public and private education. For example, when the governments in North America lately decided partially to fund private schools for the reason of their efficiency, with endorsement by such studies as Chubb and Moe (1990), the critics argued that public monies should not be given to private schools for the simple reason of their efficiency. They did so on the ground that such monies were raised for the public interest, which public schools served, not for the private interest entertained by private schools. In fact, most of the reform policies employed North America did not focus on assisting private schools but, rather, on improving efficiency in public schools by introducing such elements of private education as choice and competition while maintaining their integrity as institutions of public education.

### **THE ABERRANT CONCEPTS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATION AND REFORM AGENDAS**

In the South Korean usage, however, the terms refer to different objects. ‘Public education’ (*konggyoyug*) means an education that takes place in the regular schools of all levels (primary schools, middle schools, high schools and universities) whether they are public or private institutions. ‘Private education’ (*sagyoyug*) stands for an education that occurs outside the regular schools. (Henceforth, these terms will be placed in quotation marks when used in the South Korean sense.) A study conducted on behalf of Korea Development Institute (KDI), a major government think tank for economic policies, distinguishes them in the following way<sup>2</sup>:

‘Public education’ means the institutionalised form of education that the state controls, including education in state, public and private schools at all levels. ‘Private education’ means those educational activities that occur outside the school in such forms as after-school day cramming lessons at home and in *haguon* [street cramming schools]. (Kim et al., 1997, p.9)

This study, then, lists further examples of ‘private education’: home-delivered daily drill sheets, extra-hour cramming sessions in the regular schools, television cramming programs provided by the Educational Broadcasting System (EBS), and computer-based cramming lessons.

Strictly, this exemplification contradicts the given definition, because the in-school extra-hour cramming sessions are directed by the Ministry of Education, and the EBS is a state-run institution. Both can therefore be said to be ‘institutionalised forms of education that the state controls’. Moreover, street cramming schools and even home-based tutoring sessions are not entirely outside state control: the former is said to be ‘supervised and guided’ by the state and the latter banned by law (Law Concerning the Establishment and Operation of *Haguon*). Even so, however, it is clear at least that the study’s authors mean by ‘public education’ an education that takes place within the regular school during the regular school day, and by ‘private education’ what occurs outside the regular school and after the school day. It is also apparent that the hard

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<sup>2</sup> The study was published by the Korean Association of Researchers in Educational Finance and Economics (KAREFE) and partially distributed by the Ministry of Education.

core of what is referred to by 'private education' consists in cramming practices in preparation for university entrance competition.

The contrasting of 'public education' with 'private education' now yields a frame of reference for policy discourses. Since education normally takes place in the regular school—more precisely, since the regular school is there for conducting education normally—'public education' is normal and desirable. Whereas, the cramming practices of 'private education' outside the regular school are not normal: they perform the unnecessary functions of regurgitating what has been taught in the regular schools. Moreover, they are offered in return for high fees and require extra time of the students who have already spent the day in their regular schools. Therefore, they are undesirable. From this, it is inferred that the state's education policy has to promote 'public education' and suppress 'private education'.

This frame of reference is well represented in the key policy agendas repeatedly adopted by all civilian governments and in the topics of major policy documents. One such policy agenda concerns 'private education expenditures' (*sagyoyug-bi*), which studies have estimated as far exceeding 'public education expenditures' (*konggyoyug-bi*) (Kong and Paek, 1994), or as 'intolerably high' (Kim, 1997), or 'the highest in the world' (KITA, 2003). At issue here is of course not that South Koreans spend far more money for private schools than for public schools, but that they expend far more for after-school day cramming sessions than for education in the regular schools. Here, especially notable on the dimension of policy development is parental financial burdens. While expenditures for 'public education' are split between the parents and the state, those for 'private education' are borne entirely by the parents. This is an important policy concern, because such financial burdens can cause public discontent, undermining public support for the government.

Another related agenda that has been persistently brought up in the policy discourses of the civilian era addresses the 'collapsing public education' (*konggyoyug punggoe*). The focal concern here is that the students give priority of their study to after-school day cramming rather than to learning in the regular school. At schools, they mostly care only about the records of their performances in tests, examinations, and other activities that will be supplied to the university or college they will be applying for later. They spend so much time for after-school day cramming that many of them, often the majority of the class, fall asleep during the rituals of school teaching.

Quite logically, thus, discourses on policy development run in the direction of 'reviving public education' (*konggyoyug toisalligi*) and 'uprooting private education' (*sagyoyug buribobgi*), or at least 'reducing private education expenditures' (*sagyoyug-bi kyonggam*). That is to say, it is upheld that policies have to restore education in the regular schools to a normal state and free the students from the necessity of purchasing additional cramming services.

### **THE ABERRANT CONCEPTS INHIBIT EDUCATION REFORM**

The question of university entrance competition, the central concern of the policy discourse that called for liberalisation and diversification, was addressed within the frame of reference based on those aberrant concepts, and by tackling the policy agendas induced by the concepts. And this resulted in blocking, instead of facilitating, liberalisation and diversification. A typical case of this irony was the first civilian government's education reform program published on 30 May 1995 by President Kim Young Sam's Education Reform Commission (PERC, 1995). The approach employed in this document was also visible in the major policy papers of the subsequent Presidents Kim Dae Jung, 1988-2003 (CNEC, 2000) and Roh Mu Hyun, 2003- (Insuwi, 2003).

The PERC's document began with pointing to the fact that the world was now globalising to one of "unlimited competition without national borders", in which a nation's economic survival and prosperity would depend on its global competitiveness (*kuggakyongjaengryog*). The latter, in the

PERC's analysis, consisted in the abilities to carve out niches for the nation in the global market by producing small quantities of many marketable commodities rather than a mass production of uncharacteristic goods. In order for education to support this, the PERC observed, teaching and learning had to be liberalised and diversified and its quality improved, so that the members of the nation, well educated in diverse fields, could move on to carving those competitive niches. Unmistakably, it also implied that the liberalisation and diversification policies should also be necessary for free initiatives in the new civilian era as opposed to the controlled and regulated *modus operandi* under military dictatorship. In this vein, the PERC now turned to the structural problems related to university entrance competition and 'private education' expenditures. The uniform knowledge with which South Korean students competed for university admission was not suitable for the globalising world, for it would weaken the nation's competitiveness. 'Private education' expenditures, on the other hand, were a waste of valuable resources given that they were spent for rote learning and drilling of what had been already learned.

However, the PERC, and the subsequent policy developing agencies, explored policy measures within the aforementioned frame of reference and, consequently, the measures they came up with were misleading. When the serious problems of entrance competition were perceived to be the surge of 'private education' and its soaring costs, and when all this was perceived to come from the collapsing 'public education', as noted in the previous section, such perceptions already suggested what policy was necessary, normalise 'public education', thereby to reduce 'private education' expenditures and eventually to uproot 'private education'. Here, the policy makers turned their attention to determining the normal and abnormal states of 'public education'. At the heart of their perceived abnormality was the unsatisfactory quality of, or the absence of 'substance' (*naeshil*) in, 'public education'. The key to normalising this type of education, therefore, was the provision of quality to 'public education,' or in 'substantiating public education' (*konggyoyug naeshilhoa*). The policy measures thus presented in most of the major policy papers of three civilian governments (PERC, 1995; CNEC, 2000; Insuwi, 2003; KEDI, 2003) included the following typical examples (PBSPE, 2002; BE Kwangju, 2002):

- reduce teacher-student ratios;
- improve the school's learning environment;
- improve the quality of teaching and learning, and, for this,
- upgrade teacher quality by training teachers in graduate schools rather than in undergraduate programs.

The policy agenda of reducing 'private education' expenditures, however, did not yield straightforward policy measures. Those that have so far been recommended in policy papers were multidirectional and often not to the point. Both Kim Young Sam's and Kim Dae Jung's governments tried to uproot 'private education' by resorting to the military regime's legislation banning it with severe penalties. They both tried to make the question items of the state entrance examination at times a bit easier and at times a bit harder hoping to reduce demand for 'private education'. As well, they tried to reduce 'private education' expenditures by expanding state-run television and in-school cramming sessions in order to attract students away from after-school day cramming.

None of those policy measures did, and could, work in the way they were expected to. The policy measures to substantiate 'public education' to fight 'private education' and its expenditures were based on the assumption that the students sought help from after-school day cramming because of the unsatisfactory quality of education in the regular schools. This assumption was mistaken, because, generally, the quality of education in after-school day cramming classes was no better than that of the regular schools. In fact, their learning environment was much worse. Their

teacher-student ratios were no better. Furthermore, the instructors of such classes were no better qualified for professional teaching. The real cause of the flourishing cramming classes was that the regular schools were engulfed in an intense university entrance competition. They themselves crammed their students in preparation for an annual nationwide state entrance examination, incessantly testing and ranking them, and, on this basis, marginalising those students who failed to be ranked high. Where higher ranks were limited in number, the great majority of students had to be marginalised and their reasonable way to sidestep this misfortune was to seek help from outside.

The root cause of the failure in policy making and scholarship was the dichotomy of regular schools and after-school cramming classes. The aberrant labels generated false concepts of public and private education, and the latter in turn concealed the fact that after-school cramming classes were actually an extension of the regular schools in university entrance competition.

### STATIST POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONS IN EDUCATION

If the terms were used in a way widely accepted outside South Korea, the whole picture of the country's problematic educational system would emerge entirely differently. Private schools would now be seen as belonging to the private sphere, only public schools remaining in the public sphere. The latter would appear to demand priority in state intervention and support while the latter would require freedom and independence.

Viewed in this perspective, the existing institutional arrangement of education clearly reveals numerous problems. To exemplify a few problematic legal provisions:

- Laws stipulate that, by nature, both public and private schools bear 'publicness' (*konggongsong*) (Education Basic Law #9-2).<sup>3</sup> They are both subject to guidance and supervision by the provincial Superintendent of Education on matters of operation (Primary and Secondary Education Law (PSEL) #6). Private schools' bylaws, like those of public schools, must be approved by the Minister of Education at the level of primary education and by the Superintendent of Education at the level of secondary education (PSEL #8).
- Both private and public schools must teach the state's curriculum (Ordinance Enacting Primary and Secondary Education Law Ch.4, p.1; Regulations Concerning Different Types of Schools #4) and use state textbooks and, for the subjects for which such textbooks are unavailable, choose from those approved by the state through strict approval processes (Regulations Concerning Textbooks #3). Both are subject to supervision and guidance by the Minister of Education and by the Superintendent of Education in operating the state-imposed curriculum and teaching methods (PSEL #7).
- The duties of private school teachers are identical as those of public school teachers (Private Schools Law #55). They both can be said to be 'civil servants' (Educational Civil Servants Law #2).

On the other hand, the state, through District Education Offices, allocates students to private schools equally as to public schools, and pays teacher salaries as well as some other important

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<sup>3</sup> South Korean scholars often defend this stipulation by referring to the established concept of 'education as a public good.' They claim that since education is a public good, educational institutions are public by nature. This claim does not hold tight. Education as a public good is a concept of political economy justifying state intervention in education; it does not refer to the *nature* of education.

expenses, such as school construction costs, in order to supplement financial shortfalls from state-controlled tuition fee revenues.

What is important to note in this connection is uniformity in teaching and learning in public and private schools and in the method of student selection at the level of higher education (Kim, 1997; Koh et al., 1998). State-imposed curriculum and textbooks, and even state-approved textbooks, are produced and approved on the principle of providing a so-called 'right' answer for each question to be dealt with in classrooms. Therefore, all schools, public or private, teach the same knowledge, skills and values. Given this, the viable method for universities and colleges to employ in selecting from the applicants outnumbering state-set student quotas must be one of ranking them by testing who remembers more than who of what all have learned commonly. Here, the state administers once-a-year entrance examination for all those who desire higher education and requires universities to select students on the basis of their scores (and some other scores produced in the way the state sets) (Higher Education Law #34-1; Ordinance Enacting Higher Education Law #31-42). And the larger the scale of competition, the higher its intensity and the demand for higher education (Kim, 1999). While the stakes in university entrance are high in South Korean society, all schools, public or private, have to prepare their students for the state examination by organising regular and irregular examination and test competitions, by ranking students in the order of their scores, and by discriminating against those ranked low. They thus drive their students to after-school cramming classes. The real causes of the collapsing 'public education' and the soaring 'private education' expenditures are here apparent: a rigid state control of education and uniformity of teaching and learning.

If South Korean policy makers and scholars abandoned their aberrant use of the terms of 'public education' and 'private education', they would readily notice that liberalising private schools would help diversify teaching and learning. If certain degree of freedom were also permitted to public schools as well, and if the state relinquished its unnecessary control of student supply and demand at all levels of schools, entrance competition, as well as cramming practices, would soon cease to be a policy issue. This would be the case given that private schools accommodate one-third of students in lower secondary education, two-thirds in upper secondary education, and four-fifths in higher education. But their non-discriminatory perception of public and private schools prevents them from seeing this venue of policy-making and scholarship. For this reason, although they generally understand that uniformity of teaching and learning due to excessive state control of education is a serious problem, and that survival and prosperity in the globalising world demands free and diverse educational activities, they end up with misdirected policies. Typically, they try to improve educational logistics by increased state intervention in all schools through such means as state-dictated liberalisation and diversification and further restriction on the freedom and independence of private schools.

### **A STATIST CULTURE OF EDUCATION POLICY**

The point of interest, however, is not that South Koreans have created false problems by improperly using the basic terms but, rather, the reasons why they have done so. The most obvious fact to note here is the institutional residues of the statist education policies employed through the decades of military elite's developmental policy. The key elements of the policy were: (a) that the state must control education for the security of power; (b) that available resources should be allocated maximally to strategic industries and minimally to less important areas such as education and, for this, student quotas must be maintained low; and (c) that possible discontent due to entrance competition should be prevented by the state's direct administration of the competition (Kim, 1999). The first element entailed the uniformity of the curriculum and textbooks on the principle of supplying one right answer for each question dealt with in classrooms. The second element kept student places in educational institutions persistently short

supplied and entrance competition inevitable. This situation engendered widespread social discontent already in the late 1960s. The military government reacted by increasing private schools in order thereby to meet the rising demand for education. Its measures included eased requirements for setting up and operating schools, equal student allocation as to public schools, and partial funding. Finally, the third element intensified entrance competition and, simultaneously, caused demand for education to rise further (Kim, 1999). Most of those policies are in place even now. Given all this, the public status of private schools in South Koreans' conception is correct *prima facie*, for after all they spend public monies, albeit partially, and teach the same material in the same way as public schools.

However, a puzzling fact remains unaccounted for. It was sporadically from the last years of military rule and more visibly after the inauguration of the first civilian government in 1993 that the terms 'public education' and 'private education' came to have a wide currency in the sense now established. The earliest example of using 'public education' inclusively of public and private schools, which I could locate in the South Korean educational literature, is a 1989 publication (Kim, 1989, p.133). About 300 books and articles on education reform published between 1992 and 1994, however, were already using 'public education' and 'private education' in the way established now (Kim, 1995). Moreover, it was during the first civilian government of President Kim Young Sam that the Education Basic Law was legislated with the aforementioned provision that all schools ought to bear 'publicness' (*konggongsong*) regardless of there being public schools or private schools. It is quite clear that 'public education' and 'private education' as conceptual devices for educational policy discourses were an invention of the civilian era, not the years of statist developmental policy.

A suspicion, then, arises that the civilian era did not in fact sever itself from the traditions set by the military years but, rather, inherited them and moved further ahead. Whereas the strong military state gradually annexed private schools into the public sector, the civilian leaders, and their policy makers and policy scholars, are now vindicating the annexation on the dimension of conceptualisation and theorisation.

At least two facts come forth to endorse this suspicion. One is that South Korean policy makers and scholars seldom employed the terms of public education and private education through the military years. Educational studies conducted during the military years, except the last few years, mostly used 'school education' (*haggyogyoyug*) for what they now call 'public education' and 'after-school education' (*koaoegyoyug*) for what they now name 'private education'. They distinguished between 'private schools' (*saribhaggyo*) and 'public schools' (*kongribhaggyo*) but generally they did not do so between the public and private spheres in education. Nor did they clearly associate the state with public schools. The cluster of connotations they attached to 'public schools' and 'private schools' basically suggested that private schools were poor in quality and facilities and corrupt in management while public schools were not. So their arguments were typically that the state should more deeply intervene in private schools to improve their poor quality of education and facilities, and eliminate corruption (Chon et al., 1969). In short, they took both public and private schools to be in the public sphere and in need of state intervention and control. Now, by employing the term 'public education' for both public and private schools they neatly incorporate this traditional view to a unique statist theory of public education.

Another fact is that this continuity is observable not only in the works of the conservatives who stick to the status quo but also those of the progressive teachers in the Korean Teachers Union (KTU; *Chongyojo*), who have fiercely resisted the military elite's developmental dictatorship and vigorously pursued to dismantle its remaining institutions. Their vision of private schools is well summarised in the declared goals of a recently formed KTU-led National Movement for Revising the Private School Law (NMRPSL): 'democratisation of governance' and 'prevention of

corruption.’ For the former goal, they demand a private school’s board of governors to be made a public institution, and a school council, comprised of teachers, parents and students, to be the decision-making authority. They also demand the existing board of governors to be replaced by a state-appointed board as soon as a dispute erupts over mismanagement between the board and the teachers, and any board member involved in a scandalous dispute to be permanently excluded from the school.<sup>4</sup>

To be noted here are two points. First, progressive teachers take mismanagement as a key problem of private schools and envision its solution in their takeover of the schools’ governance jointly with the parents and the students. They thus leave out an even more important area of concern, the state-school relationship. Ignore the legitimacy of the takeover of a privately-owned school by its employees and customers, and suppose that the teachers indeed have taken over the school’s governance. The state’s control of the curriculum and other aspects of school operation will remain unaffected. So the uniformity of teaching and learning will continue to restrict their freedom of governance and provoke entrance competition, in- and after-school cramming sessions, and the alleged ‘collapse of public education’. Progressive teachers are of course concerned about the state’s control of education; ironically, however, their response is that the state-education relationship must be reinforced instead of reduced. They claim that education, whether in public or in private schools, should remain thoroughly in the public sphere and any so-called ‘neo-liberal’ conspiracy for independent private schools should be thwarted. Their reason is that the conspiracy aims to transfer financial responsibility for education from the state to the people, as if monies for state-controlled ‘public education’ come from elsewhere.

Second, because of this perspective, progressive teachers do not see that the real cause of mismanagement in private schools lies in the state-education relationship they embrace with the aberrant label of ‘public education’. Where the state guarantees private schools of necessary student supply by equal allocation as to public schools, and revenues from tuition fees and state subsidies but, simultaneously, deprives them of freedom to implement their own educational programs, the remaining concern for the owners should be to exploit as much power and money as possible out of the school of which they are in charge. However, this would be highly unlikely if they are left free and independent and if the state-education relationship were revised to the effect of ending entrance competition, for their immediate concern now should be survival and prosperity in competition for new students. The owners would have to expend large sums of money for developing marketable educational programs and improving the quality of teaching. Free private schools in this case would be beneficial to public schools, for which the state should now have more financial resources. Clearly, the statist frame of reference maintains a firm grip on the progressive South Korean teachers, preventing them from seeing beyond the status quo.

## CONCLUSION

What, then, is the final cause of the failing liberalising and diversifying education reform efforts in a civilian era? Unwillingness to reform due to vested interest is apparently there, not only with policy makers, but also with the progressive teachers. But that cannot be taken as the final cause unless a dangerous assumption is granted that they are all self-seekers. There are of course institutional residues from the developmental years, such as state entrance examination, the uniformity of curriculum and textbooks, and state intervention in private schools. But they are not the final cause, either. What we have seen is clearly a lot more than mere institutional residues. The final cause should be a political economy, a mindset or a culture of statism, with which South

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<sup>4</sup> ‘Saribhaggyobob: Iroke bakuoya handa’ (online), <http://www.pslaw.or.kr>. See also ‘Hyonshigi haggyo munje-oa Chongyojo-ui Taean’ (online), <http://moim.ktu.or.kr/eduhope>.

Korean policy makers and scholars, as well as progressive school teachers, are too familiar to be aware of. The roots of this culture may go back further beyond the military years.

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# Using Action Research to Support International ESL Students in Information Systems Courses

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*This paper reports on an action research project that aimed to explore ways to support international ESL students undertaking Information Systems courses at an Australian university. Using a range of data sets including students' grades, students' evaluations, tutors' evaluations, results from a student focus group, and an interview with collaborating teaching staff, the paper concludes that the main initiative implemented during the research, providing team-taught support tutorials to identified students, was highly beneficial, both in terms of student and staff perceptions and in terms of learning outcomes (for each support tutorial attended, students achieved an increase of 2.2 per cent in their overall mark for the course). However, significant institutional support is necessary, if the recommendation of the research, that support tutorials for core courses are timetabled for all international ESL students in their first year of study at an Australian university, is to be implemented.*

International students, ESL, action research, information systems, Australia

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

In late 2001, the university provided a Teaching and Learning Grant to investigate ways to facilitate improved learning outcomes for international English as a Second Language (ESL) students undertaking Information Systems (IS) courses, specifically Business Systems Analysis and Database Design (see Bretag, Horrocks and Smith 2002). The questions that formed the basis of the research included the following.

- What are the learning issues for ESL business students, particularly those studying Information Systems?
- What do ESL educators and researchers have to say about these issues?
- Is there a particular method or methods that might be able to be adapted to meet the needs of ESL students in IS courses?

### The higher education context

The internationalisation of the Australian higher education sector has resulted in education being regarded as a commodity for export, rather than as an aid obligation or opportunity for exchange (Alexander and Rivzi, 1993, p.114). Alexander and Rizvi (1993, p.120) further argue that "new market-based approaches to overseas students have so far not had any significant impact on the way universities consider issues of curriculum and pedagogy". This apparent lack of pedagogic focus has had the virtual effect of disregarding the language needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students studying at English-speaking institutions. As Taylor, Rizvi and Linguard (1997, p.91) note, "The feasibility of particular initiatives in this area is judged more in terms of market reach and financial viability than educational or cultural benefits".

There are a number of standard tests used to ascertain the English language competence of entry-level students to Australian universities, with the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) the most commonly used. Undergraduate entry level to most Australian universities is typically 6.0-6.5 IELTS, and postgraduate entry level is usually 6.5 or higher, depending on the discipline area. However, in the faculty that was the focus of this study the entry level across all schools and levels of study has traditionally been 6.0 IELTS.

This standard has been criticised as being “barely adequate” for university study by a number of researchers (Pantelides, 1999; Wajnryb, 2000). Entry requirements aside, the university, like most other Australian universities, provides support to equity groups (including international and Australian ESL students) through seminars and one-to-one consultation at an on-campus student support centre. However, since 2001, there has been a shift to a greater dependence on online services, despite warnings by the university’s own Scoping Project (Wajnryb, 2000, p.11) that “it is not a better form of pedagogic communication in terms of helping international students”.

Clearly there is a link between English language competence and the ability of students to reach their academic potential in an English speaking academic institution. However, it has been argued by a number of researchers that when language is not an issue, international students (in particular South East Asian or Confucian Heritage Culture students) achieve comparable standards to those of their Australian counterparts.

### **Using content-based language instruction**

Although content-based instruction (CBI) has been advocated by practitioners in the field for over 15 years (Mohan, 1986; Brooks, 1988; Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989; Iancu, 1993; Sagliano and Greenfield, 1998, among others), very few universities in Australia offer such courses for credit. One reason for this paucity is that current tertiary infrastructures in most Australian universities preclude effective inter-faculty collaboration. Content specialists usually work in their particular departments, and language instructors are most often found in separately housed student support centres. Researchers who advocate a CBI curriculum invariably highlight effective inter-faculty collaboration as being central to the success of the course (Benesch, 1988; Pantelides, 1999; Sagliano and Greenfield, 1998).

Evolving from the ‘Language Across the Curriculum’ and the ‘Language for Specific Purposes’ movements, which both began in the 1970s (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989, p.5), CBI has come to be regarded by many practitioners as an alternative strategy to deal with ESL language and learning issues (see Bretag, 2001). Grabe and Stoller (1997, p.7) argue that although most second language learners master basic communicative competence within a relatively short period of time (around two years), “these language skills are not sufficient for students to succeed in academic learning contexts”. This advanced academic proficiency can take anywhere from five to seven years or more, particularly in Information Systems subjects where the vocabulary is highly specialised.

However, despite the perception that CBI is a useful teaching approach for second language learners in higher education contexts, most research in the field does not use empirical data collection, but rather relies on student evaluations, and other qualitative data. One exception is the research by Beasley and Pearson (1999) based on a longitudinal study from 1991 to 1997 at Murdoch University of two second-year business courses (with a high proportion of international students). In addition to qualitative analysis, the report included a comparison of average grades from 1992 to 1997, and also a comparison of grades for those who took an optional extra support tutorial and those who didn’t. Results showed that students’ grades improved significantly (from a 13% failure rate in 1992 to a 1.5% failure rate in 1997) due to a combination of improvements instigated by the authors. Of particular interest to this research was the establishment of an

additional, voluntary learning support tutorial, team-taught by a Language and Academic Skills lecturer and subject specialist (followed up with a comparison of grades).

### **THIS RESEARCH PROJECT**

Using strategies suggested by the literature, this action research project aimed to explore how international ESL students could be supported in the classroom to achieve their academic potential. The philosophy behind the idea of providing classroom support was not one of remediation; nor was it one based on stereotypes of international ESL (for example, Confucian Heritage Culture background) students as somehow less able than their Australian peers. Rather, the foundation of the research was a burgeoning recognition of the complexities of entering an Australian institution with minimum language competence, different academic and learning backgrounds, and little institutional induction to the new learning environment.

The first stage of the project involved providing TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) training to IS lecturers and tutors at the beginning of the semester. The second part of the plan involved adapting the Beasley and Pearson (1999) model, and establishing a weekly team-taught support tutorial to students identified as having language and literacy problems (see Bretag, Horrocks and Smith, 2002). Evaluation of the first stage was based on student and tutor questionnaires, in combination with quantitative data.

At the end of the first semester, the preliminary findings were so encouraging that it was decided to seek ethics approval and continue to run the support tutorials without funding. The support tutorials were to run for a minimum of three semesters, for both Business Systems Analysis and Database Design, and students' progress would be rigorously monitored to ascertain if the strategy had had any long-term merit.

### **METHOD**

Ayers and Schubert (1994, p.106) suggest that practitioner research in education is "experimental, always in search of better teaching, and by teachers as intellectual practitioners best suited to inquire into the subtle problems arising in their own complex and dynamic classroom settings". Fraser (1997, p.169) recommends action research as "the most appropriate, most effective and least threatening strategy when evaluating curriculum innovations". Perhaps not surprisingly, action research is by far the most common approach used by educational practitioners working with international students.

Action researchers use a variety of models to construct and explore the so-called 'messy complexity' of their practice. Often cited is Lewin's (1946) "spiral of cycles" as revised by Kemmis and McTaggart (1981, p.11): plan, act and observe, reflect, revise and plan; act and observe, reflect, revise and so on. This project used reflective journaling (not reported here), students' evaluations, tutors' evaluations, results from a student focus group, an interview with collaborating teaching staff, and ongoing informal observations and conversations. In addition, following the model by Beasley and Pearson (1999) a small amount of quantitative data (grade comparisons) was used to explore the impact of the action research on measurable learning outcomes.

### **QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS**

#### **Cycle 1**

TESOL strategies training (based on a literature review which explored specific classroom teaching practices) was provided to five sessional tutors and two full-time lecturing staff in Business Systems Analysis and Database Design at the beginning of Semester 1, 2002. In

addition, based on a summary exercise completed during the first tutorial in Week 2, 17 Business Systems Analysis students were invited to participate in a team-taught support tutorial beginning in Week 4 of the semester. However, only six students came to the first class, and only four students regularly attended the weekly sessions, with a number of other students coming occasionally or only once.

### ***Student evaluations***

In total, there were six responses to the evaluation (for full details of the evaluations see Bretag, Horrocks and Smith, 2002).

All students responded positively to the second question, “Did you find the workshops beneficial?” It was apparent that the main benefits of the workshops were in providing an opportunity to safely explore concepts in more depth than a tutorial would provide, or in facilitating the development of generic study skills that could be applied in other courses. The following quotations exemplify these responses: “...*the workshops were quite helpful, because it gave me an opportunity to ask questions and get further clarification on concepts I did not fully understand*”; and “*As I got lots of tips and guide not only related to the subject but also how to prepare them*”.

Students also responded positively about the small size of the workshop and their subsequent increased ability to gain attention from the tutors, “*100 per cent attention*”. One student specifically addressed the issue of having two tutors in the room; one to provide support with language issues and one who was content focused. When asked what they didn’t like about the workshops, there was a variety of responses ranging from the need for the support tutorials to be longer (two hours rather than one), and for the provision of additional exercises to those used in the mainstream tutorials to enable further application of concepts. The majority of students felt that the support tutorials had impacted positively on their ability to learn and succeed in the course. Two of the students specifically addressed how it led to an improvement in how they approached tasks, as shown by the following quotation: “*Yes. I can now better understand what is required of me in the questions put to me by simply highlighting the keywords.*”

### ***Tutor evaluations***

All of the attendees to the TESOL strategies workshop (five sessional tutors and two full-time staff) responded to the survey, which asked them to evaluate the tutor training session, the teaching strategies employed during the semester, and to provide suggestions for improvements.

All of the tutors responded favourably to the training workshop, with responses ranging from a straight “*yes they were useful*” response to a more detailed analysis of how they could be improved. Teaching staff indicated that the session provided them with insight into the issues facing many ESL students as well as a planned approach for dealing with those issues or problems, as indicated by the following quotation:

*Yes [the strategies helped me as a tutor] – but more the enlightenment that; different cultures respond to lecturers (authority figures) in different manners. I believe the subject that we facilitate requires experience and understanding, it requires issue interpretation rather than textbook knowledge. The limited class involvement from some international students and the acceptance of the tutors word as gospel, I believe limits the students ability to experience the subject, particularly when the students’ interpretation may be a viable alternative which could be explored in class.*

## Cycle 2

Based on the positive tutor evaluations from Cycle 1, the same training session on TESOL teaching strategies was offered to all staff in the Division of Business of Enterprise. However, the primary focus in Semester Two was to encourage more students to participate in the team-taught support tutorial for Business Systems Analysis, which was achieved by offering an additional five per cent credit for attendance and active participation. Classes were generally well attended, starting with 23 students, including three local students who went into their own tutorial in Week Four. Of the remaining 20 students, 15 came to all or most tutorials.

### *Student evaluations*

The same questionnaire from the previous semester asked students a range of ten questions, from how they felt when they were invited to attend the support tutorials, to what they liked and didn't like, and if they had any suggestions for improvements. These questionnaires were sent through email to the students about four weeks after the end of semester, once all grades had been finalised. A total of ten responses was received.

Not surprisingly, all ten respondents had been regular attendees to the support tutorial (which had been called a 'workshop' with the students). In response to the first question, "How did you feel when you received an invitation to attend the workshop?" nine out of ten students responded very positively, using words such as "happy", "great", "marvellous", "glad" and "excited" to indicate their pleasure at having the opportunity for additional support. Only one student said she felt "awkward" at being identified as needing this sort of support.

Every respondent focused on the benefits of being able to ask questions and seek clarification directly from the content lecturer, as a major benefit of the support tutorials. The following quotation indicated this very clearly:

*The [benefit] is that I can ask question[s] directly to the lecturer because in [the] lecture lesson, I can't stop the lecturer and ask my question. Also, in [the] workshop you talk in more detail that is helping me to understand how to answer the tutorial question and assignment question.*

In response to the question, "What did you like about the workshops?" a range of comments was received, including the opportunity for informal discussion, the question and answer format (particularly being able to receive immediate explanation and feedback), the friendly atmosphere, plus the chance to "learn more stuff outside the course like 'how to avoid plagiarism' and 'how to make good notes'". All respondents reported that the support tutorials had had an impact on their ability to learn and succeed in the course. In particular, students mentioned that they were grateful for the additional help in completing their main assignment, "...the help with the main assignment was priceless".

## Cycle 3

The final cycle of the research targeted students in Database Design. In keeping with the process established during the previous two cycles, all students were asked in the first lecture of the course to write a short summary of an appropriate article, which was then assessed for language and literacy. In this cycle of the research students were not offered any credit or incentive to attend the support tutorial, which had an impact, not only on attendance rates, but on the research team's ability to determine the effect of the support tutorials on learning outcomes. Of the 17 students identified as needing language support, 13 students attended the offered workshop at some stage of the semester, with only five students attending regularly or semi-regularly. The largest class during the semester comprised six students.

A number of revisions were implemented in the next cycle of the research study. These included: a stronger commitment to understanding course content by the ESL lecturer; a commitment to pre- and post-teaching collaboration and discussion; and a clearer content focus for each support tutorial. To facilitate these revisions, the ESL lecturer agreed to become a *de facto* Database Design student, and made a commitment to attend all Database Design lectures, to read the relevant chapters and handouts assigned for each week of the course, and to complete tutorial exercises ahead of time. This commitment required approximately one day per week.

### ***Student evaluations***

As the attendance for the Database Design support tutorials in Cycle 3 was very low, it is perhaps not surprising that the response rate for the student evaluations was similarly low. Only one student responded to the invitation to evaluate the tutorials, despite three email reminders. This student reported that although feeling initially embarrassed at being invited to attend the workshop, participation in the support tutorials proved to be very beneficial. This student, in keeping with respondents from previous semesters, recommended that the workshops should be longer, and that the same sort of support tutorials should be offered for each course.

### ***Focus group results***

Despite numerous emails to the 42 students who had attended the support tutorials for either Business Systems Analysis or Database Design during the previous three semesters, requesting their participation in a focus group (and the offer of a free, catered lunch), only five students attended. Using a semi-structured approach, based on a method suggested by Feast and Anderson (2002), large pieces of butcher paper were taped to the wall, each with a particular heading. The headings included positive, negative, suggestions for improvements, wish list, and 'any other comments?' Notes from the focus group were audio-taped and transcribed for analysis.

In summary, the positive issues reported by the focus group included the closer relationship that was formed with the content lecturer as a result of the support tutorials; students' improved understanding of the course content; the assistance with weekly tasks, assessment pieces and examination preparation; and the opportunity "*to talk away from Australians*". The main negative issue reported had to do with scheduling of support tutorials and the need for longer classes (two hours instead of one). A full analysis of the focus group discussion is available in Bretag (2004, unpublished).

Students were in agreement about the following suggestions for the future.

- Support tutorials should be two hours long, and timetabled into every international ESL student's study schedule, ideally for all core courses in the first year of study.
- Participation in support tutorials should be graded and given credit
- Students should have access to a so-called 'come and go' tutorial, perhaps in the form of a Help Desk.
- Extra assistance, such as a tutor-led study group, should be provided to international ESL students during the examination preparation period.
- All international ESL students should have a foundation course (for credit) that would provide induction into the Western academic environment.

### ***Interview with teaching staff***

Using the same broad headings from the focus group the research team discussed their own perceptions of the three semesters of the action research. The positive issues reported during this interview included the opportunity to engage with international students on a more personal level;

the opportunity to reflect on and improve teaching practice; and the benefits of having a mixed inter-disciplinary teaching team.

In terms of negative issues, both content lecturers highlighted the personal cost in terms of workload, particularly in Cycles 2 and 3 where there had been no workload points allocated to the team-taught support tutorials. Without institutional support, another negative statement (although this might ultimately be viewed as a positive statement, if the necessary resources were provided) was that students had begun to regard the support tutorials as vital to their success: "...the downside of it too, is that students are now coming and wanting it in other classes. So in other words, you try something and then you've almost got to live with it". Both staff members expressed disappointment with the low student attendance.

The following suggestions for the future were made (many of which paralleled suggestions by the students):

- a fully funded international support person to work hand in hand with content lecturers across the core courses of the division;
- a two-hour, team-taught support tutorial to be timetabled for all international ESL students in core courses during the student's first year of study, regardless of year level;
- all international ESL students to take a foundation academic skills course;
- all international ESL students to be required to have a higher standard of English than is currently accepted for enrolment;
- the ESL and content lecturer to be fully funded including allocation of workload points for significant preparation time and collaboration; and
- a system to be established to facilitate the development of study groups.

The concluding remarks from the interview revolved around the fact that without institutional commitment to ensuring that international students had adequate English proficiency, the support tutorials would be little more than a so-called 'bandaid'. The research team agreed that the support tutorials were most likely to benefit those motivated students with reasonable English but who needed further mentoring and assistance. *"The significant number of students who couldn't even read the textbook, were still likely to slip through the cracks, as their overwhelming assignments and examination preparation precluded them from joining the additional tutorial."*

## QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

Having completed three cycles of the action research, and drawn data from a range of sources to ascertain the effectiveness of the strategies employed (in particular the weekly support tutorial), Table 1 summarises the key quantitative data.

**Table 1. Comparison of students' grades during the three semesters of the action research**

Course	Semester	IS	InS	O
Business Systems Analysis	1, 2002	60.0	52.0	64.0
Business Systems Analysis	2, 2002	66.4	N/A	66.9
Database Design	1, 2003	55.0	42.4	54.1

IS = Identified students who regularly attended the support tutorials; InS = Identified students who did not regularly attend the support tutorials; O = Other students in the course; N/A = Not applicable. In Semester 2, 2002 nearly all of the students identified as needing assistance attended the support tutorials.

From the data provided in Table 1, it can be seen that regular attendees of the support tutorial for Database Design appeared to bridge the gap with other students in the course, and in fact, actually achieved a slightly higher average mark. This result parallels the research by Haupton, Wesche and Ready (1988), which demonstrated that CBI resulted in second language learners achieving comparable grades to native speaking students on subject matter tests (cited in Grabe and Stoller,

1997, p.17). However, given the small number of regular attendees, it is not possible to draw conclusions. Not surprisingly, the low attendance rates for both Cycles 1 and 3 (where no credit incentives for attendance were offered) resulted in data sets that were too small to be statistically significant by themselves.

However, for the second cycle of the research, where Business Systems Analysis students were offered five per cent credit for active participation in the support tutorials, and most of the 23 identified students attended on a regular basis, the sample size was considered large enough to suggest a positive correlation between tutorial attendance and grade scores. The data indicated that for each support tutorial attended, students achieved an increase of 2.2 per cent in their overall mark for the course (for full details see Bretag, 2004 unpublished). This result clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of regular and active participation in the support tutorials, and the value of providing a credit incentive to identified students to take advantage of the support offered.

### CONCLUSION

While the quantitative data indicates that there is still a gap between the learning outcomes of international ESL students and their local counterparts, it is also apparent that those students who regularly participated in the support tutorials (and who received an incentive to do so) outperformed those students who had been identified as having language and literacy issues, but who did not attend the support tutorials. It is not possible to make broad statements that suggest the support received in the extra tutorials is the differentiating factor; however, it is reasonable to suggest that the results look promising.

Based on the qualitative analysis, it is clear that both students and staff regard the support tutorials as one useful strategy to facilitate improved learning outcomes for international ESL students in Information Systems courses. Both groups reported on the benefits of closer contact between lecturers and students and the opportunity for international ESL students to ask questions (and have those questions answered) in a supportive, non-threatening environment, separate to the Australian mainstream class. Students during all three cycles of the research recommended the need for a longer support tutorial, and in parallel with the concerns raised by teaching staff, suggested that support tutorials be timetabled as a compulsory part of all international ESL students' first year courses to ensure equity of access and full attendance. Collaborating staff indicated that the CBI approach, with a content lecturer working hand-in-hand with a language specialist, was a crucial ingredient to the success of the support tutorials.

Given the promising results, both quantitative and qualitative, it is recommended that faculties that have identified a discernible gap in the learning outcomes between international ESL students and local, native-speaking students, adopt or adapt the approach explored in this action research. This study has found that, in combination with a whole-of-school approach that devotes resources to providing TESOL training to all teaching staff, additional support in the form of a weekly, team-taught tutorial (with credit incentives) has the potential to assist international ESL students reach their academic potential. To be successful this method needs to be supported by a workload allocation that takes into account the time-consuming but vital inter-disciplinary collaboration and preparation inherent in the approach.

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## International Students in New Zealand: Needs and Responses

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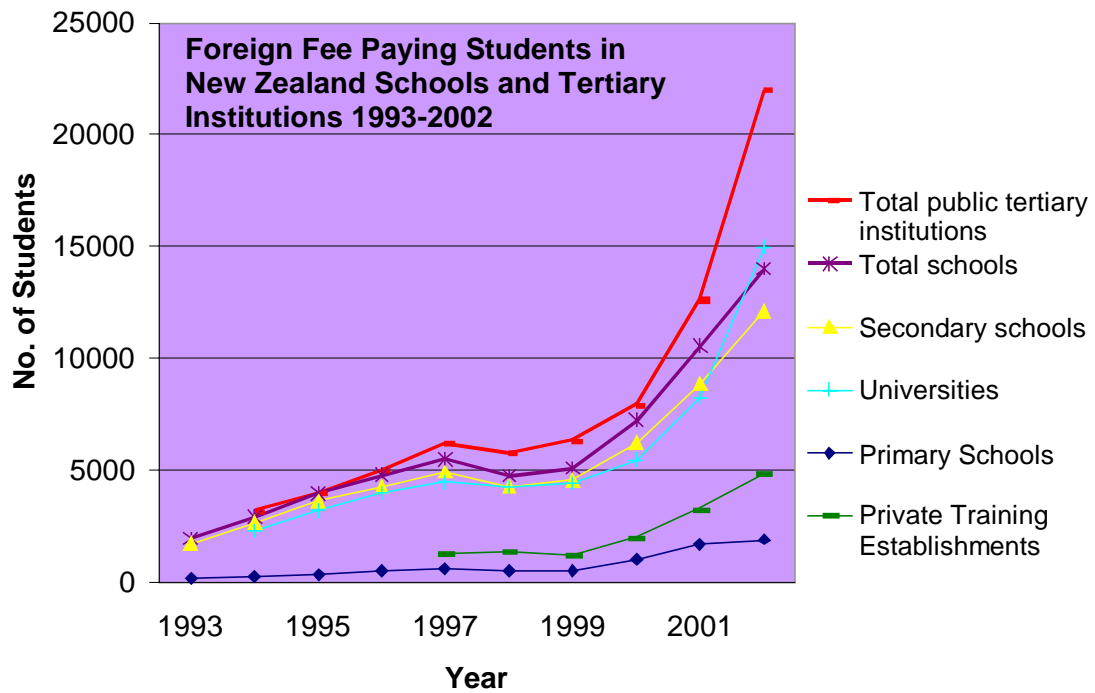
*This paper considers the pastoral care needs of international students in New Zealand. Using the relatively new Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students as its departure point, this paper critically evaluates the assertion that there is a crisis in New Zealand's export education industry. It does this through considering international students' expectations and experiences in New Zealand and their delineation and evaluation, and criticisms of pastoral care provisions through research and policy documents. Drawing on recent empirical research, the academic, social (including health and safety), and financial needs of international students in New Zealand are identified. The paper concludes by suggesting proactive responses to these needs and asserting that proper pastoral care of international students is essential and necessary for the sustainability of New Zealand's export education industry.*

Asian students, pastoral care, New Zealand

### INTRODUCTION

In this paper, we seek to unravel the public discourse on Asian students in New Zealand and highlight some of their critical needs. Recognising the needs of international students is more relevant now than it ever has been. The phenomenal increase in international students in New Zealand during the 1990s and into the twenty-first century, as demonstrated in Figure 1, has simultaneously anecdotally saved institutions from bankruptcy while putting increasing strain on student support services; it has diversified and injected significant revenue into communities and cities, while also provoking increasing resentment in these communities against the sheer numbers of students; it has buoyed the property markets in many major cities, especially Auckland, while other potential tenants say they do not want to share a property with English language schools; it has opened up trade and educational opportunities with China as never seen before, while also creating controversy in the way Chinese students are treated and the criminal behaviour they are engaging in; and it has diversified New Zealand's culture, while also seeing international students as a threatening sub-culture.

There is a perception that all international students are wealthy (or at least their parents, as fee-payers, are wealthy) and cannot but help themselves to flaunt this wealth to all and sundry. However, international students in New Zealand come from a variety of countries with a variety of fee-payers. Some are government-sponsored, while others are the beneficiaries of aid-grants; some are on university scholarships, while others are paid for by companies; some are paid for by siblings, while others are paid for by parents; some are wealthy, but many are not.



**Figure 1. Growth of full-fee paying students in New Zealand (Lewis and Butcher (2003) derived from data provided by the New Zealand Ministry of Education)**

Some choose to come to New Zealand because it is cheap and easy, but most come for more complex reasons. Some choose to come to New Zealand to study because they will attain a Western degree and the ability to speak English, but most come to New Zealand with more varied expectations. Some students come to New Zealand and walk around with wads of cash, buy European cars, and flaunt their wealth; while others struggle to pay for their daily meal, cause their parents great financial sacrifice, and cannot afford to return home in the holidays. Some students come to New Zealand and commit crime, do drugs, gamble their money away, and never turn up to class; most, however, study late into the night, wish they had more New Zealand friends, say little because they don't think their English is good enough, and wonder how much colder it can get. Some students are Asian, speak Chinese and like rice, but other students are from South America or the Pacific Islands or Europe or America or Africa and speak many different languages and like all sorts of different foods.

In addition, there has been an increasing role played by central government in the marketing and regulation of New Zealand's export education industry. The reasons for this are complex and are discussed in more detail elsewhere (Lewis, 2003). However, the ongoing changes in the regulation of the industry recognise, at least at face value, that looking after the needs of international students through our pastoral care of them is strategically important to the export education sector in particular and New Zealand in general. The mandatory *Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students*, enacted in 2001 and revised in 2003, effectively highlights three aspects of information, safety and care (Ministry of Education, 2003)..

We have discussed elsewhere some of the shortcomings of the Code (McGrath and Butcher, 2003), but here we wish to discuss the international students' needs alongside these various discourses, interactions and regulations.

International students have a variety of dreams, expectations, fears, concerns, frustrations, disappointments, and successes. Their lives are complex, sometimes difficult, and combine a range of educational, psychological and social experiences. International students in New Zealand are on sojourn and in transit. They arrive with a variety of expectations from a variety of sources.

Their initial period of contact will significantly affect their perceptions of New Zealand and New Zealanders thereafter: friendship and hospitality offered to them will engender positive experiences, perceptions and memories; discrimination, isolation, and dislike will create long-term negative perceptions.

### FACING A CRISIS?

Some may argue there is a crisis in New Zealand's export education industry. A recent significant downturn from certain markets (discussed below in this paper), negative media attention, and even negative comment from within the industry would tend to support this assertion. Research would also suggest this. Li et al. (2002) note two studies where Chinese students expressed dissatisfaction with New Zealand's current education practice (Tang, 2002; Mao, 2002). According to Mao (cited in Li et al., 2002, p.2), New Zealand is facing a crisis because of:

- the shortage of qualified ESOL teachers;
- teachers' poor knowledge of the learning needs of international students;
- unsatisfactory learning situations in schools;
- lack of learning support;
- poor quality of money-oriented commission-earning agents; and
- social problems faced by international students.

If this is a crisis, then we need to respond with effective and responsible crisis management; if this is not a crisis, and merely a moral panic, we need to consider closely what has provoked this moral panic and whether responsibility rests with some of the practices and philosophies of the export education industry and its providers and agents.

Are the experiences of contemporary students bearing out this notion of a crisis? Regrettably, we cannot equivocally say either way, since there is no substantial research looking at international students' experiences in New Zealand, nor has there been a significant longitudinal study undertaken. However, Table 1 shows findings of research by Berno and Ward (2002; tabulated by Lewis and Butcher, 2003) of student experiences and expectations in New Zealand.

**Table 1. Expectations and experiences of Asian students in New Zealand**

<b>Expectation</b>	<b>% Expected</b>	<b>% Experienced</b>
Understand New Zealand English	80	57
Express myself effectively in English	77	40
Get good grades	87	28
Form friendships with New Zealanders	91	41
Enjoy socialising with New Zealanders	82	52
Understand NZ social customs	82	34
Be accepted by New Zealanders	72	37
Maintain a positive outlook	88	69
Feel stressed	31	49
Have enough money	62	51
Have no problems with my living arrangements	59	70

### Students' Experiences: Delineation and Evaluation

In considering these experiences of contemporary students, however, we should be cautious against reading these experiences solely within the framework of the Code. For largely pragmatic (although also philosophical) reasons, the Code delineates students' experiences into definable categories such as accommodation and marketing (even if its underlying notion of 'quality' is vague and indefinable). This creates a false distinction between the experiences of international students and does not recognise that the experiences in a home-stay may affect the students educational performance or *vice versa*. It is significant that students' educational experiences are absent from the Code.

## Concern and Criticism

Concerns and criticisms about the experiences of international students have been voiced from a variety of quarters. Here, we wish to note some of those concerns.

### *The International Education Advisory Authority*

In their 2002 report, the International Education Advisory Authority (IEAA), noted five major concerns:

- Pastoral care;
- Appropriate orientation programs;
- Responsibility for agents and integrity in marketing;
- Appropriate class-level placement of students; and
- Interpretation of contract documentation.

Their concerns with pastoral care centred on the specific roles and responsibilities of the staff allocated to international students. We believe that this is an area of some concern, as it may suggest:

- there are not adequately trained support staff for international students;
- that support staff are not adequately resourced;
- that support staff are spending a disproportionate amount of time on administrative tasks; or,
- that support staff are seen in the institutions as the one-stop shop for all issues to do with international students, even if these issues are best dealt within academic departments, or through other avenues.

The IEAA Report (2002) also expresses concern about contact with other stakeholders, such as the articulation of expectations to home-stay parents, and overall communication to all its stakeholders. The revised Code of Practice may address some of these issues; but, nevertheless, if there is poor communication between stakeholders, or even within an institution, then the needs of international students may be too easily overlooked. The IEAA Report (2002) also expressed concern that management meetings should take place with a specific agenda directed toward the needs of international students. This would serve, we believe, not only to articulate the students' needs in an open forum, but also to communicate to the managers and decision-makers in an institution what processes and policies need to be in place to best meet these needs.

### *Auckland City Council*

The IEAA Report's (2002) concerns, as noted above, are echoed in part by concerns expressed by the Auckland City Council in a briefing paper written in 2003. The paper bemoans the lack of comprehensive information, particularly about private training establishments (Butcher, 2002a), as well as issues particular to Auckland surrounding accommodation, transport, market risk, sustainability, and the diversity of students in the CBD (Auckland City Council, 2003). There are also issues surrounding promoting Auckland as a study destination (Lewis and Butcher, 2003) and the significant numbers of migrant and permanent resident students in Auckland's institutions (Butcher, 2004).

### *Research*

Some institutions, such as the University of Auckland, have undertaken in-house research on the needs and experiences of international students within their institutions. This research, however, is usually confidential to that institution and therefore is not in the public domain. Published

research on the needs of international students in New Zealand, however, includes research on the adjustment facing Asian and Polynesian tertiary students (Beaver and Tuck, 1998); the interaction of Indonesian, Thai, Malaysian and Singaporean students in tertiary classrooms (Mills, 1997); a survey of homestay experiences of Non-English Speaking Background students (Welsh, 2001); the cross-cultural needs of international students (Bennett, 1998; Holmes, 2000); and the re-entry of international students into their countries of origin (McGrath, 1998; Butcher, 2002b). The Asia2000 Foundation facilitates a research database of New Zealand research, which is on their website at <http://www.asia2000.org.nz>, and there is an Australian-based database with an extensive collection of references at <http://aei.dest.gov.au/general/research.htm>.

While the documents and research noted above address a variety of needs, we wish to comment specifically on academic, social and financial needs of international students.

### ACADEMIC NEEDS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The academic needs of international students, while being the focus of Wellington-based research (for example, Li et al., 2002), are largely poorly understood within institutions. As the Asia2000 Foundation (2003) noted in their presentation to the Education New Zealand Conference 2003:

International students and in particular students from the Asian region, are now a significant part of New Zealand's education system and society and New Zealand is firmly linked and increasingly integrating with the region in many other respects too. The fact that the word Asia hardly appears in the draft charters of New Zealand's universities stands in contrast to other models.

This absence of Asia within charters may reflect both a particular parochialism and a lack of interest in the substantial issues surrounding international students *vis-à-vis* curriculum, funding, resource allocation, future direction, and the particular needs of international students.

There are several academic needs of international students, which include:

- their proficiency in English and ability to understand textbooks and their lecturers;
- their lack of understanding of non-verbal communication, references to New Zealand historical events, use of humour, and so on;
- their difficulty in responding to the Socratic mode of teaching, particularly if they have been educated in rote-learning and taught not to question authority (such as the lecturer or author);
- their difficulty in comprehending questions, assignments, and research skills;
- their ability to communicate effectively in English in order to attain good marks and attendant difficulties surrounding plagiarism and cheating;
- their lack of cultural connectedness with the material being presented to them;
- the possible lack of international applicability of their degrees (for example, will a New Zealand business degree equip them to work in Hong Kong?); and
- their cultural reluctance to participate in class discussions and tutorials.

Research by Li et al. (2002), of 23 Asian students at the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand and the Wellington Institute of Technology, found that language difficulties constituted a significant barrier in the learning and cultural adaptation of these students; this impacted upon interaction in the classroom as well as coping with unfamiliar learning situations, and differing concepts of learning and role expectations. Many students are not used to the participative approach used in business courses (Li et al., 2002). A similar Socratic method of teaching is used in the Social Sciences. In these teaching models, and in contradiction to Asian students' expectations, neither the teacher nor the textbook is the final authority on information. As Li et al. (2002) noted of one student:

Her learning experiences in her own country had led her to believe that there must be a **right** answer to every problem and it could be found in the textbook. She did not realise that for assignments and most examination items in Business Communication, very often there were no “answers” to “questions” or “problems” but **responses to tasks**, and that the responses could vary from one task to another.

The response to this need can work both ways: students can be better equipped and prepared for particular forms of teaching while lecturers can more clearly express their expectations of international students, while also broadening their curriculum and teaching methods to encompass a multicultural classroom (Lim, 2002).

This speaks to the broader philosophies of an institution surrounding internationalisation. It is not enough to claim that international students on a campus equals internationalisation. It does not. Internationalisation requires significant and fundamental policy initiatives, such as those adopted by the University of Melbourne (cited in Asia2000 Foundation, 2003):

While it is true that international fee-based enrolments have generated urgently-needed revenue growth, the primary strategy behind international student recruitment has been the internationalisation of Melbourne as a learning community, particularly through engagement with Asia. That is why international student enrolments have been paralleled by an ambitious Melbourne Abroad program providing hundreds of Australian students each year with an international education experience.

This demonstrates a further connection with academic internationalisation: supporting exchange programs for domestic students. While we proclaim the cross-cultural benefits of recruiting and enrolling international students, we should recognise that cross-cultural experiences necessarily involves at least two parties and an increase in exchange programs would allow domestic students to understand better the transition experiences of international students.

### **SOCIAL NEEDS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

The academic needs of international students are as important as their social needs. International students are firstly in New Zealand to study and there are often great expectations placed upon them by the fee-payer for them to return to their countries of origin with a qualification. Yet their social interactions will affect their academic performance.

Research has suggested that a significant proportion of overseas students feel ambivalent about their relations with host nationals and that many perceive discrimination (Ward et al., 2001, p.188; Berno and Ward, 2002). Butcher (2002b) identified two groups of international students: those who remain among themselves and do not interact with the host culture and those who interact readily and easily with the host culture. Although research shows that international students prefer close friendship with co-nationals (Ward, 2001; Ward et al., 2001), it also shows that international students who befriend members of the host culture ultimately have a more fulfilling and enriching study abroad experience (Butcher, 2002b; McGrath, 1998). Many students who fell into the first category, in Butcher's (2002b) research, expressed regret that they had not interacted more with domestic students. Returnees who fell into the second categorisation bemoaned their peers for not mixing more, as this returnee noted (cited in Butcher, 2002b, p.117):

Well those who want to join their own group; I think they...took education as secondary. I think they...more like...having fun.... I don't quite like international studies having formed their own group. I mean they are going to other countries they should learn you know the culture; there are more opportunities to learn the cultures.... I don't quite agree with them you know forming their own group [pause] well I don't know what they usually talk about, ah I don't think I want to join their group.

Students also perceived a lack of institutional student support structures (Butcher, 2002b). This may, in part, be a reflection of inadequate resourcing and cumbersome workloads on support staff, yet it also encompasses issues surrounding students' awareness and use of these services. Extensive research has demonstrated that social networks are important in migration (Massey et al., 1998; Tilly, 1990; Vertovec, 2002) and many students found their social support to be within the host communities, such as through churches, civic groups, Rotary, and student clubs (Butcher et al., 2002).

While the orientation of students to New Zealand culture is important in establishing positive perceptions and experiences, similarly orienting students to their re-entry into their countries of origin is also important. In their re-entry, students face many significant transitions, including to work, lifestyle and an altered worldview (Butcher, 2002b, 2002c; McGrath, 1998).

Students' social needs can also be ascertained through their negative experiences, such as discrimination. Australian research by Mullins et al. (1995) showed that ten per cent of international students saw off-campus discrimination as a serious problem, while 54 per cent saw it as a minor problem. For on-campus discrimination, seven per cent saw it as a serious problem while 52 per cent saw it as a minor problem. Discrimination is based on prejudice and stereotyping. As one student expressed it in Butcher's (2002b, p.114) research:

I would say that...there are still a lot of presumptions or stereotypes... such as... international students go over to New Zealand...from a very much a society that is less developed or something like that. To a certain extent its quite true, but then for us who come from the city like K[uala] L[umpur] or [Kota] Kinabalu like this, we're not that far behind in that sense; its just that we need a place to study.... In terms of expectation...they expect us to be courteous and conservative and to a certain extent I would say that some of these presumptions are true in a sense. But then some of these presumptions or stereotypes that is no longer valid and like most of the things what ever that they know about Malaysia or other countries they are mainly from the media which can be quite misleading at times and it doesn't give the whole truth, the [whole] picture.

Other researchers (Ward et al., 2001, p.166); our emphasis) confirm the same problem:

There are a number of factors that affect the structural components and functional outcomes of intercultural contact, and stereotypes, in particular, are known to exert a strong influence on the interactions between local and overseas students. In some situations, such as equal status contact under conditions of low threat, stereotypes may foster positive intergroup relations. However, this is not uniformly the case for interactions between domestic and international students. **Research has suggested that a significant proportion of overseas students feel ambivalent about their relations with host nationals and that many perceive discrimination.**

Positive experiences can counter discriminatory experiences and these experiences can lose some of their negative significance when issues surrounding international students' social and academic needs are addressed.

### **Health and Safety of International Students**

Anecdotally, there is an apparent increase in the number of international students with mental health difficulties; or, to put it another way, there is a perceived increase in mental health difficulties faced by international students. However, there is no conclusive research in New Zealand in this area at this time (Ho et al., 2003). We know that international students face many stresses, including language barriers, acculturative stress, and lack of social support networks.



Overseas research has shown that international students are more likely to suffer psychological and social distress than domestic students, including facing depression, anxiety and psychosomatic disorders (Canadian research by Sam and Eide, 1991) and social, psychological and health problems (Scandinavian research by Chataway and Berry, 1989). However, research is ambivalent as to whether there is an increased usage of support and counselling services by international students, although, among other things, it highlights issues surrounding the cultural appropriateness of some of these services.

Although students' mental health difficulties may go largely unnoticed outside the industry itself, the apparent deviant behaviour of many international students provides bold headlines for newspapers and material for negative media publicity, while also feeding a particular discourse about the types of Asian students in New Zealand (and the discourse is almost exclusively about **Asian** students). Anecdotal evidence suggests that there has been an increase in crime among Asian students, particularly kidnapping. While there is no conclusive evidence to support this, what we do know is that:

- proportionately, crime committed by Asians in New Zealand is quite small;
- the crime that is committed is intra-ethnicity (that is, by Asians, against Asians);
- many of the perpetrators are migrants or permanent residents (not students); and
- many students are vulnerable victims.

There is no adequate police data in this area and there is only one dedicated four-person police unit in New Zealand, based in Auckland, which deals with Asian crime. It is worth noting that many students arrive in New Zealand with the expectation that it is crime-free (Butcher, 2002b) and therefore in our response to that we need to equip students to look after their personal safety, in a similar manner that we do for primary school children. There are also issues surrounding the authenticity and acquisition of driving licenses and attendant issues surrounding the purchasing, use and selling of cars. There is no general regulatory policy regarding these issues; however, individual institutions often have their own regulatory procedures, and organisations such as the Land Transport Safety Authority and the Automobile Association of New Zealand are considering responses. There are similar *in situ* responses for issues surrounding fraudulent ESOL certificates: many institutions have rigorous checking procedures along international guidelines.

### FINANCIAL NEEDS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

There is also anecdotal evidence that there is an increase in gambling problems among Asian students. Again, there is no research to bear this out. However, we can speculate that if this were so, it might highlight financial difficulties as well as perhaps cultural practices of these students. Financial difficulties are a further area that has generally received very little coverage, publicly at least. Research by Ward (2001), found that while 62 per cent of the students surveyed expected to have enough money, only 51 per cent felt they did so. Recent changes to immigration policy (such as an increase in required funds from \$7,000 to \$10,000 per year) may only accentuate financial difficulties. Students who are financially at risk include:

- poor budgeters,
- gamblers and affected associates,
- immigration requirement circumventors,
- family dependents and those affected by altered family circumstances, and
- those facing unexpected needs, such as theft, accidents, fines, or tenancy requirements.

It is worth noting, as we did at the outset, that many students' parents, if they are the fee-payer, have made significant sacrifices in sending their children abroad. With that sacrifice, there is a significant obligation to obtain a qualification. There is no New Zealand research that supports the

contention that all international students are wealthy; indeed, some research implies that they are not (Ward, 2001). Furthermore, it is necessary to consider remittances to their countries of origin (that is, monies earned through part-time employment sent back to the payee or family in their country of origin), as well as financial obligations placed upon the student at the end of their studies, such as financing siblings or others for their study abroad.

It is worth considering the fees international students are expected to pay. The perception that higher fees equals higher quality is dubious as it overly simplifies quality and implies that it is measured only by the expenditure costs to the student or the revenue costs to the institution. However, issues surrounding resource allocation, the demography of students, and the interaction with the host cultures also play a significant role.

### **RESPONDING TO THESE NEEDS: PROACTIVE PASTORAL CARE**

Having identified the needs, we wish to use the final part of this paper to look at various responses to those needs. Here, we draw on some of our previous research (McGrath and Butcher, 2003; Butcher et al., 2002).

We believe that pastoral care should involve caring for the whole person – that is, the student's integrated experiences, educative, social, spiritual and psychological. As part of that pastoral care, we see two forms of care, reactive and proactive. Reactive care, as its name suggests, is intervention care in a crisis, such as at times of accidents, bereavement, illness or acute culture shock.

Proactive care, by contrast, anticipates students' needs and potential problems and therefore enhances the quality of students' sojourn. It articulates and addresses expectations; it provides education and information; and it enhances well-being. It should include academic orientation (alongside social orientation), which would cover living skills, health, legal, and safety issues, and identify community friendship programs. Proactive pastoral care can provide learning support in academic assistance, anticipate accommodation needs, respond to culture shock issues such as homesickness and making friends, and have procedures in place for crises. It can offer life-skills training in cooking, shopping and budgeting and warn students of potential dangers in car purchasing, gambling and tenancy. Proactive pastoral care can offer friendship programs, social events, recreational activities, assist teachers in adopting a multicultural pedagogy, and implement and facilitate early intervention programs for at risk students. Given the significant contribution offered by the informal sector, they should also be involved in proactive pastoral care.

Proactive pastoral care programs can be used to address the gap between expectations and experiences and therefore lead to a more fulfilling overall experience for international students in New Zealand. Proactive pastoral care should also affect funding provisions. Rather than considering what residual funding may be available, proactive mechanisms should be budgeted for so that policies and provisions cover international students' needs. Proactive pastoral care should also affect marketing, it should determine policies, and it should drive practice. As Bennett (1998, pp.87-88) argues:

It is not enough to send a trawling mission to Asia to back up a slick advertising campaign, and then allow recruits to sink or swim. Recruitment must have a clear conception of student expectations, and the authorities should meet those needs with impeccable service if customer satisfaction and loyalty are to be achieved.

### **CONCLUSION**

Among New Zealand's alumni are Royal Advisers, Cabinet Ministers, world economists and others, including, the Director for the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, a

distinguished political scientist at Jakarta's Research Institute for Democracy and Peace, and a Recipient of the World Food Prize (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2001). As students in New Zealand under the Colombo Plan, they had positive experiences; they befriended New Zealanders then and are friends with them still. Their distinguished influence has not gone unnoticed. However, while we may bathe in their reflected glory, it is not enough to rest there. We must celebrate the past, but we should also make memories for the future.

Currently, New Zealand's export education industry is suffering a downturn, which has caused no shortage of hand wringing. Much of the cause of this downturn is seen to be external. However, it may suggest issues that need to be addressed closer to home. As we have argued elsewhere (Lewis and Butcher, 2003; McGrath and Butcher, 2003), it may reflect that: the characteristics of New Zealand are no longer dependable; a loss of competitive edge; a saturation of particular markets; and the end of the golden weather, as well as more fundamental problems with the philosophy and practice of recruiting, teaching and offering pastoral care to international students.

International students have significant needs; but programs and procedures cannot just meet these needs, although they have their place. Fundamental changes are required in some institutions; others require funding reallocation; while many more need to shift from reactive responses, to proactive pastoral care. Furthermore, while responding to international students' needs is in large part the responsibility and role of the institutions that recruit and enrol them, it is also the responsibility of the communities and cities in which they are a part, and the nation to which they offer significant contributions. We conclude with this astute comment by Hughes (1993, p.100) that:

The future...in a globalised economy...will lie with people who can think and act with informed grace across ethnic, cultural linguistic lines. And the first step in becoming such a person lies in acknowledging that we are not one big world family, or ever likely to be: that the differences between races, nations, cultures and their various histories are at least as profound and durable as their similarities; that these differences are not divagations from a European norm, but structures eminently worth knowing about for their own sake. In the world that is coming, if you can't navigate difference, you've had it.

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# Household Determinants of Schooling Progression Among Rural Children in Cambodia<sup>1</sup>

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*This study examined the individual and household determinants that affected the chances of Cambodian rural children being enrolled in or dropping out of school before completing grade four. Data were obtained from interviews with 159 children aged between 12 to 18 years and their families from two rural villages in Pursat province of Cambodia. The findings revealed that boys had a higher chance of being kept in school than girls. Household economic conditions, though important for children's educational attainment, were not a significant determinant for the continuation of schooling among rural children. Other household assets such as parental education, particularly that of the father were highly related to this phenomenon. Parental attitudes towards education and intervention in the process of children's schooling significantly affected children's educational participation.*

Cambodia; education; household determinants; schooling progression; children

## INTRODUCTION

There has been a growing realisation that emphasis on the expansion of the overall enrolment in the education system has proved inadequate and ineffective in the achievement of the goal of education for all. Despite a great increase in enrolment growth, 872 million adults or one in every three remain illiterate and 125 million children of primary school age are excluded from the education system (Oxfam, 1999). Educational participation has been marked by wide disparities in class, gender, ethnicity and residence during the course of educational expansion (Lockheed and Vespoor, 1991).

Over the past decade, Cambodia has also shared worldwide trends in the following aspects: (a) the expansion of basic education; (b) the growing number of excluded children; and (c) the continuing disparities in educational participation. Following the shift to a free-market economy and the elimination of economic sanctions in late 1980s, the Cambodian education system, with a large injection of international assistance, has doubled its enrolment from 1.57 to 3.17 million children between 1990 and 2001 (EMIS, 2001/2002). Yet, this growth has not been able to keep pace with the rising numbers in the school-aged population, and has resulted in an increase in the number of 'out-of-school' or excluded children who do not attend school. About 10 per cent of students leave schools every year and this figure increases the number of out-of-school children. Disparities in educational participation by income, gender, and geographic residence are also obvious in the Cambodian education system (MoP, 1997). These inequalities in the educational participation are a direct consequence of household decisions as to which child is to be sent to school, decisions that are influenced by many different factors.

Several theoretical perspectives from other countries, both developing, and developed, have been put forth to explain the nature of household decisions on children's education. Consideration of

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<sup>1</sup> This article was extensively edited by Dr B. Matthews of the Flinders University Institute of International Education.

the return to schooling, status attainment, and children's endowment are the most powerful driving forces that influence parents' decisions concerning children's schooling (Becker, 1968; 1991; Becker and Thomes 1976). However, these choices have often been constrained by the limited financial resources available to parents (Colclough and Lewin, 1993; Lloyd and Blanc, 1996; Schultz, 1993). To make things worse, a family with a large number of children may limit parental choice to provide an education to all their children (Fuller et al., 1995; Knodel et al., 1990; Parish and Willis, 1993). Despite the general acceptance of these perspectives, their applicability to the actual situations differs from one context to another.

However, relatively little is known about the pattern of educational decision-making in Cambodia. This paper attempts to test the aforementioned theoretical framework by examining the household factors, which determine the educational opportunities of children in the rural areas of Cambodia. Using data from questionnaire surveys and actual observation in two rural villages in the north-western part of Cambodia, the study addresses the question of how school enrolment and progression from one grade to another are determined by household resources, parental perceptions and expectations about children's education. It examines the effects of individual characteristics and household composition, such as the position in the birth order of a child and the number of school-aged children in the family, on the chance of being enrolled and progressing in school beyond grade four.

The next section reviews some theoretical perspectives and analytical issues concerning household decision-making on the education of family members. This is followed by a brief description of the background of Cambodian formal education system and the conditions that are found in the labour market which have a direct link to parents' expectations that result from an investment in their children's formal education. Then, the paper goes on to elaborate on the data collection and research methods that are used in the analysis. The subsequent section provides empirical findings from the survey and presents the results of analyses undertaken using logistic regression to identify the determinants of educational participation of children aged between 12 and 18 years. The concluding section provides a summary of the empirical findings and offers some reflections on specific policy intervention if the goal of education for all is to be achieved as planned.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

Research on children's educational opportunities has examined different theoretical perspectives in an effort to explain the pattern of educational decision-making at the household level. The earliest and most frequently referred to research is the theory of human capital pioneered by Gary Becker (1968). The human capital framework, which provides an almost exclusive focus on the economic behaviour of individuals, offers a convincing context in which individuals are rational decision makers in maximising their wealth. The decision of individuals and families to invest in education is largely guided by the consideration of future return on schooling (Becker, 1968; 1991). Parents whose altruistic behaviour maximises the utility of any investment of the family's welfare may have to choose to invest in certain children more than others, depending on the promise of a return on that investment. In this regard, Becker and Thomes (1976) have found that parents tend to invest in the human capital of the more able children rather than the less able ones. This means that children who are performing better in school are likely to be favoured by parents making decisions about educational investment. In the same way, gender discrimination, which alters the employment market for women, has a direct impact on the lack of opportunity for girls to be sent to and kept in school. In general, this model appears to be more applicable to developing countries where the absence of a pension program increases the likelihood that parents may have to depend on children in their old age.

Even though parents perceive education to be beneficial for the future of their children and the family, their desire to contribute to their children's schooling may be constrained by the limited resources available in the household to invest on children (Fuller et al., 1995; Walter and O'Connell, 1988; Schultz, 1993). The family-economy model offers a comprehensive explanation of the situation in which parents cannot afford to increase the welfare of their children. This model postulates that parents with low income or parents with many children have to balance between the future welfare and the immediate needs of their households, and therefore, cannot anticipate future returns on their children's schooling by risking the immediate family welfare or survival. In this instance, when the local labour markets provide income-earning opportunities, the allocation of children to productive activities at home or in the labour market is a common survival strategy for poorer families. This argument is parallel to the current debate on the negative relationship between child labour and schooling participation in many developing countries, which posits that productive activities of children at home or in the labour market often compete with their schooling participation. However, this argument is far from being conclusive. Chernichovsky (1985), in a consideration of empirical findings in Botswana, has challenged the notion that the need to retain girls for household work is a reason to withdraw girls from school. A similar line of argument is also supported by more recent findings that a considerable number of children are neither enrolled in school nor engaged in any productive activities (Buchman, 1996; Fuller et al., 1995; Mahotra, 1996). Therefore, it is still unclear whether there is direct competition between working and schooling for young children in developing countries, as has been commonly believed.

Closely related to the household resource is the composition of the family, which may improve or suppress the resource limitation within the household. Advocating this argument is the resource-dilution hypothesis, which stresses that the number of children in a household has an inverse relationship with children's educational opportunities. This model theorises that parental resources such as time, energy, and money are finite and that these resources are divided more thinly with additional children. Thus the larger the number of siblings, the smaller the amount of money that is invested in the education of each child. Various studies in both developing and developed countries have consistently confirmed the inverse relationship between number of siblings and the education of children (Downey 1995; Knodel et al., 1990; Lillard and Willis 1994; Parish and Willis, 1993). However, Chernichovsky's (1985) study in Botswana has challenged this notion with two convincing arguments. First, he found that a larger number of school age children within a household enhances the likelihood for a child to be enrolled in school. This finding, as argued by Chernichovsky, reflects the lower demand for labour of each individual child at home when more children are available, and reduces the indirect cost of educating a child. Second, the consideration of family type suggests that the extended family could mitigate against the family size effect. Therefore, by having grandparents residing in the same household, children are more likely to be enrolled in school than those in nuclear<sup>2</sup> families (Chernichovsky, 1985). The extended family may be a source of emotional as well as material support, which can facilitate children's schooling.

Embodied in the resource dilution perspective is the argument that it is not the size of the family that determines children's educational participation but the birth order and the child's position in the family, which may influence his or her educational opportunity. As Parish and Willis (1993) have noted, "a large number of children in the family can lead ... to improved educational opportunities for the later born. Once they begin to work, early born children continue to send or bring resources back to the family" (Parish and Willis, 1993, pp.868-869).

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<sup>2</sup> Nuclear family refers to a family with only parents and children present while an extended family generally includes earlier generations, i.e. grandparents.



In addition to the resource dilution perspective and parental education, family resources are listed as one of the most important factors that determine children's educational opportunities. Many studies have confirmed the relationship between the level of parental education and children's educational attainment (Chenichovsky, 1985; Lloyd and Blanc, 1996; Tilak, 1989). For example, in rural Botswana, each year of schooling gained by the head of the household appears to increase the probability that the already enrolled children are likely to continue to a higher level of education by 19 per cent, and the propensity of the impact is likely to be greater in case of female heads of households (Chenichovsky, 1985). Tilak (1989) also notes that better educated parents tend to have better access to information and these parents are more likely to have first-hand knowledge of the economic benefits of education. Hence, they are more willing to send their children to school and keep them there longer.

How applicable is this knowledge to the Cambodian context? After a brief discussion on the Cambodian educational setting and an overview of data collection and research methodology, the remainder of the paper considers the results of the empirical findings in order to determine which factors significantly affect the enrolment of rural children in Cambodia.

### **THE CONTEXTUAL SETTING: EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA**

After independence Cambodia saw an increasing expansion of the formal education system. A strong belief existed that the theory of human capital was the most important vehicle for development and modernisation of Cambodia through formal education. The state, over the period of 16 years (1954-1970), spent more than 20 per cent of its national budget on education (Ayres, 2000). Almost all children had access to basic education at least and the number in the educated labour force rose dramatically. Then the country was plunged into civil unrest and genocide from 1975-1979 during which time education was totally abolished and the educational infrastructure and resources were destroyed or allowed to flounder. The collapse of the Pol Pot regime in 1979 signalled the rebirth of normalcy in the lives of Cambodian people. The education system was restored together with the return of the basic governmental infrastructure. Because only a handful of the educated people had survived, the restoration of the free Cambodian government created a strong demand for highly educated people.

The Cambodian education system in the 1980s was directed by the urgent need for national rehabilitation and restoration, whereas the system of the 1990s and beyond was driven by competition for status and acceptance by international institutions. Cambodia was actively moving to catch up with the world in the achievement of basic education for all citizens. The share of the education sector in total government expenditure rose slightly but steadily every year. As a percentage of GDP, it had risen from 0.9 per cent in 1997 to 1.7 per cent in 2001, resulting in the growth of the governmental share of the total cost of education from 21 per cent in 1997 to 41 per cent in 2001 (World Bank, 2003). In addition, the education sector enjoyed a considerable portion of external assistance from many bilateral and multilateral aid institutions as well as local non-governmental and international organisations. By 1997, 17.4 per cent of more than \$201 million US dollars worth of technical assistance to Cambodia had been allocated to the education sector alone (Godfrey et al., 2002). As a consequence of the dramatic increase in the overall investment in education, many more schools were built and the gross school enrolment rates increased by over 100 per cent at the primary level by the year 2000.

However, as the rapid expansion of education has not been able to keep pace with the more rapid population growth, many children have remained outside the educational system. Although the number of children enrolled in the education system has increased from 1.57 million in 1990/1991

to 3.17 in 2001/2002, according to 1999 socio-economic survey<sup>3</sup>, 1.6 million, aged between six and 18, are still not in school. Of those who are in school, 85.3 per cent are in primary education (EMIS, 2001/2002)

In addition, the system is marked by obvious regional, economic and gender disparities in educational participation. For example, the net enrolment for Phnom Penh is 81 per cent or 25 per cent higher than that in the rural areas. At the same time, the gap in enrolment rates between rich and poor households is large with only 55 per cent of children aged between six to 11 from the poorest 20 per cent of the population enrolled compared to 81 per cent of children from the richest 20 per cent of the population. Gender disparity is no less notable especially at the higher education levels (MoP, 1997). At lower secondary level (years 7 to 9), male students outnumber their female counterparts by 1.58:1 and in upper secondary level (years 10 to 12) by 2:1 (EMIS, 2001/2002).

The Cambodian education system is marked by internal inefficiency with high attrition rates, leaving the system with fewer students enrolled in higher grades. While the gross enrolment rate at primary level stands at 125 per cent, lower and upper secondary enrolment rates have declined to a mere 32 per cent and 11.5 per cent respectively (EMIS 2001/2002). The sharp decline in participation rate across grade levels is the result of high dropout rates and increasingly low completion rates among pupils as they move up the educational hierarchy.

Therefore, emphasis on educational expansion has occupied a priority position in the national development agenda of all governments throughout Cambodian history since independence with the exception of the period of the Khmer Rouge occupation. The Cambodian people have viewed education as the means to gain social mobility through employment opportunities in the paid workforce. However, the relatively small employment market makes these opportunities more competitive, which leads to a higher demand for educational qualifications if parents are to secure family welfare and children attain social mobility. Therefore, the perceptions and expectations that parents have for the education of each child, balanced with family survival strategies, may shape parental decisions on which children are to remain in school.

### **DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS OF ANALYSIS**

To determine the factors that affect the educational participation of Cambodian rural children, a field study was conducted in Pursat Province of Cambodia. In order to examine school factors, households that were located within a one-kilometre radius from Tonle Om primary school, were selected for the study. This research involved 159 children aged between 12 and 18 years from 76 households<sup>4</sup>. A parent, in most cases the mother in each household, was asked a wide range of questions which included a substantial set of items that investigated the household and educational background as well as the daily activities of each school-age child. The interviews were supplemented by informal discussions with non-family village residents and selected members of the, Village Development Committees (VDC), to gain general information about the villages, as well as to obtain opinions on educational problems as seen by the village heads and selected villagers.

Data obtained from this field research were coded into categorical and dummy variables and processed by logistic regression analysis. Logistic regression was the most appropriate statistical tool to assess the influence of independent variables on a dichotomous dependent variable (Garson, 2001). Because the dependent variable in this study (enrolment) was coded as a dummy variable, logistic regression was employed to examine factors (independent variables) that

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<sup>3</sup> Socioeconomic Development Survey of Cambodia, 1999.

<sup>4</sup> An effort was made to select girls aged 12 and over among the dropout group to avoid girls who may have re-enrolled as ten was found to be the most common age for the enrolment of rural girls.

determined the likelihood of a child to remain enrolled in school beyond grade four or to drop out of school before reaching grade four. A list and description of dependent and independent variables may be found in Table 1.

**Table 1. Descriptions, means and standard deviations of variables**

Variables	Name	Description and Code	Mean	S.D.
<b>Dependent</b>	Enrolment	1 = child is currently enrolled in Grade 4 or above 0 = child has dropped out before completing Grade 4	0.47	0.50
<b>Independent</b>				
Individual Factors	Child Sex	1 = male, 0 = female	0.41	0.49
	Child's age	Age of the child ranging between 12-18 years	15.01	1.93
	Age at start	The age at which a child first started school	8.78	1.26
	School-age children	Number of children aged 6 to 18 residing in household	3.82	1.29
	Child's birth order	The position of the child in order of birth.	2.23	1.06
	Academic performance	A child's academic performance rated by parents: 1 = poor, 2 = average, 3 = above average, 4 = very good	2.16	0.85
Household Factors	Land	Number of hectares the child's family owns, in intervals: 1 = 0-1, 2 = 1-2, 3 = 2-3, 4 = 3-4, > 4 hectares	2.53	1.00
	Cattle	Number of cattle owned by the child's family in intervals: 1 = 0-1, 2 = 2-3, 3 = 4-5, 4 = 6-7, 5 = 7 or more cattle	2.54	1.01
Parental perceptions	Parental education	The highest educational level obtained by a parent. 0 = Illiterate, 1 = Literacy education, 2 = Primary education, 3 = Lower secondary education, 4 = Upper secondary education, 5 = University	1.82	1.06
	Parental career expectation	1 = if parents expect the child to obtain formal job 0 = if parents do not expect child to obtain formal job	0.42	0.49
	Parental financial expectation	1 = if parents expect financial help in old age 0 = if parents do not expect financial help in old age	0.85	0.36
	Parental involvement	1 = for each action selected - Checking Children's book - Supervising Child's homework - Consulting with teachers about educational matters	0.58	0.49

## FINDINGS

### Factors at individual level

In Table 2, Model 1 shows characteristics of the individual child such as age, sex, birth order and the total number of school-aged siblings that he or she has and incorporates them into the analysis to explore the determinants of enrolment at the individual level. The findings reveal that age is not an important factor in school participation, despite its negative coefficient. However, sex appears to be important in determining a child's educational opportunity. Boys tend to enjoy a better chance of staying at school longer than girls. The results from the logistic regression analysis in Table 2 show that as a girl, the chances of her staying on in school to the completion of grade four declines by over 80 per cent ( $p < 0.01$ ). This confirms the national trend that girls are disproportionately under represented among pupils who continue to secondary education.

According to the resource dilution hypothesis, children who are born into a family with a larger number of children should have less probability of staying in school until the end of grade four than those who are born into families with fewer siblings. However, in the current survey of the Cambodian sample, this hypothesis does not hold true. When the number of school-aged children is included in the analysis as an independent variable, no significant relationship is found between the number of school-aged children in the household and their chance of staying on in school.

Nevertheless, a child's birth order has been found to have a significant implication on his or her schooling opportunity. The later born children in the family have a significantly greater chance of

being in school towards the completion of the primary education cycle. The younger children in a household are more likely to have an advantage as they are generally released from household chores to do their schoolwork instead.

Model 2 included two additional variables that reflected educational characteristics of the children. Because the age of a child and the age at which a child first started school may have been highly related, age was excluded from the analysis to avoid multi-co-linearity. The results of the analysis revealed that children who were first sent to school at a later age (older than six or seven years old, the normal starting age) appeared be much less likely to stay enrolled to complete grade four of primary education than children who were sent at the recommended age. Thus, starting school at a later age is a negative factor that mitigates against children's academic survival.

**Table 2. Coefficient and odds ratio of determinants to enrol above Grade 4 (Models 1-3)**

Independent Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Logit	Odds Ratio	Logit	Odds Ratio	Logit	Odds Ratio
Age	0.188 (.131)	1.207	—	—	0.530 (0.241)	1.700
Sex (Female)	-1.774** (0.398)	.170	-2.079** (0.544)	.125	-2.184** (0.675)	.113
Child's Birth Order	.888** (0.248)	2.429	0.137 (0.258)	1.147	.626 (0.400)	1.870
Number of school children	-0.242 (0.145)	0.785	0.095 (0.201)	1.100	0.062 (0.233)	1.064
Age of starting school	—	—	-1.659** (0.319)	0.190	-2.060** (0.488)	0.128
Academic Performance	—	—	1.525** (0.389)	4.597	1.844** (0.473)	6.320
Land size	—	—	—	—	0.703* (0.317)	2.020
Cattle Ownership	—	—	—	—	0.155 (0.330)	1.167
Parental Education	—	—	—	—	0.888** (0.330)	2.429
Constant	-2.950	2.399	4.653	3.864	2.407	4.266
-2 log likelihood	175.745		92.331		75.960	
P = <	0.0001		0.0001		0.0001	

\*\* P<0.001, one-tailed test, \* P<0.05 one-tailed test; Standard Error are in parentheses.

Likewise, children's performance, as perceived by their parents is another critical factor affecting the academic progress of a child. The results of the logistic regression illustrate that the more highly the parents evaluate the child's performance in school, the greater the chance that the child will stay on in school beyond grade four. Interestingly, children's birth order becomes insignificant when the performance variable is included in the analysis, leading to the conclusion that parents are more willing to commit resources for the educational development of a child who excels in school regardless of the child's birth order. This result confirms the earlier argument that has been put forward by Becker and Thomes (1976), which postulates that parents reinforce inequality among siblings by investing disproportionately in the human capital of academically better-endowed children. This may also explain why Cambodian girls have fewer educational opportunities than boys.

### **Factors at the family level**

The attempt to accurately measure the economic status of rural households is hampered by the very nature of the subsistence economy of rural areas. This study has tried to make an estimate of the economic condition of rural households by examining two indicators: the size of the area that is farmed and the number of cattle owned by the families. It is worth noting that land and cattle

are the most important assets for rural farmers in Cambodia, a country where farming methods are backward and bulls and buffaloes are widely used as primary sources of wealth and power.

Model 3 of the analysis shows that area of farmland that the family owns is positively associated with greater likelihood of children remaining in school beyond grade four. If a child born into a family that owns more than one hectare of land, the chance of being enrolled and kept in school doubles compared with children of small landholders or farmers. The same model, however, does not indicate any significant relationship between number of cattle owned by the family and children's education. In other words, the children from a family who owns many cattle may have to drop out of school to look after cattle just as children from a family who owns few or no cattle, but who are too poor to pay for the cost of education. It is, therefore, inconclusive that household economic resources are an exclusive determinant of the educational participation of a child. Other factors may have greater explanatory power concerning the differences in children's educational participation.

Extensive literature has shown that parents who are educated themselves have more enlightened attitudes towards education and provide their children with a more stimulating environment for education than parents with less education. This study has also confirmed this argument. As shown in Table 2, Model 3 derived from the logistic regression analysis, for every additional level of education attained by either of the parents, a child is 2.4 times more likely to be enrolled in school beyond Grade 4.

Table 3 shows Models 4, 5, and 6. Model 4 includes two additional variables, which test whether the expectation gained from educating their children has motivated parents to invest in their children's schooling. The conceptual framework that is discussed in the previous section has hypothesised that parents who expect financial help in their old age are more willing to send children to school. In order to avoid multi-co-linearity and because parental expectation of financial assistance in old age may be related to a child's performance in school, the educational variables, age of starting school and academic performance are excluded in this model. The analysis has found no effect from parent's expectation of future financial remittances on current decisions to invest in children's schooling. It is also worth noting that parental concern for financial assistance in old age has no relation to their current economic status. Eighty-five per cent of the parents in the study expect financial help from their children and the magnitude of that expectation does not differ widely between parents of different economic strata. The expectation of future dependence on children is common in the Cambodian setting, where a government welfare system has never existed.

Parents who anticipate that their children are likely to get formal-sector jobs as teachers, policemen, and civil servants that require at least a high school education, need to be more willing to commit time and money to their children's schooling. This hypothesis is tested in Model 5 of the analysis. The model shows that parents' expectation of their children's future careers has a strong positive influence on children's current educational participation. Children whose parents expect them to obtain jobs in the formal sector in the future are four times more likely to have completed grade four than those whose parents expect their children to earn a living in self-employed businesses as barbers, hair-dressers, and retailers.

Another important and influential factor for consideration is the parental attention or ignorance, as reflected in their daily actions with regard to their children's schooling. Questions that have been asked include whether children have ever been told to work hard in school, if their books have ever been checked, their homework supervised or if their educational prospects have ever been discussed with teachers by their parents. The field observations reveal that parental ignorance about their children's schooling is widespread at the household level. More than half of the children (52.8 per cent) in the survey sample have never received any monitoring by their parents.

This has made parental attention a significant factor in determining the schooling participation of the children. As might be seen in Table 3, Model 6 shows that additional actions that are taken to intervene in children's education increase the chances of a child being in school beyond Grade 4 by 81.7 per cent. In addition, the survey has shown that parent-teacher interaction tends to be weak. Less than 30 per cent of all parents in the survey have ever consulted teachers about their children's education.

**Table 3. Coefficient and odds ratio of determinants to enrol above Grade 4 (Models 4-6)**

Independent Variables	Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	Logit	Odds Ratio	Logit	Odds Ratio	Logit	Odds Ratio
Age	0.139 (0.156)	1.149	.265 (0.146)	1.303	0.263 (0.145)	1.301
Sex (Female)	-1.982** (0.504)	0.138	-1.914** (0.449)	0.147	-1.937** (0.451)	0.144
Child's Birth Order	0.920** (0.308)	2.510	0.999** (0.268)	2.714	0.987** (0.276)	2.682
No. of school age children	-0.139 (0.177)	0.618	-0.198 (0.162)	0.820	-0.293 (0.164)	0.746
Land size	0.611** (0.230)	1.842	0.635** (0.224)	1.887	0.588** (0.225)	1.801
Cattle Ownership	-0.186 (0.224)	0.688	-0.329 (0.212)	0.720	-0.303 (0.221)	0.738
Parental Education	1.198** (0.276)	3.312	—	—	—	—
Financial expectation	0.939 (0.784)	2.558	—	—	—	—
Career expectation	—	—	1.450** (0.448)	4.262	—	—
Parental Involvement	—	—	—	—	0.597** (0.165)	1.817
Constant	-6.650	3.109	-6.137	2.727	-5.453	2.623
log likelihood	132.924		151.607		148.515	
P = <	0.0001		0.0001		0.0001	

\*\* P<0.001, one-tailed test, \* P<0.05 one-tailed test; Standard Error are in parentheses.

## CONCLUSION

The study has revealed that boys' education is seen more as an investment and is more favoured by parents. Further, their chance of staying in school long enough to finish primary education and beyond increases if they are younger children in the family. Those who have been sent to school at the age of six or seven are the ones who perform relatively well academically. This suggests that encouraging parents to send children to school at the recommended age is likely to enhance children's academic performance which, in turn, increases parents' willingness to invest in children's schooling.

Household economic resources are necessary, but they are not the most important determinants of children's educational opportunities. Other influential factors have considerable weight in explaining the pattern of educational decisions that are made in Cambodian rural households. The factors, which may determine children's educational opportunities, are: parental education, parental expectation of children's future paid employment, and parental involvement in their children's educational process that is seen by their interest and intervention in the educational progress of their children. It is observed that Cambodian parents tend to have low levels of daily interaction with their children's education. Parent-teacher relationships have also been found to be weak. If educational expansion is to meet the goal of education for all eligible children effectively and efficiently, then parents' participation in their children's education must be increased. This

necessitates that educational institutions and teachers take a more proactive approach in the interaction between parents and the community.

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# Postgraduate Students' use of Reading Strategies in L1 and ESL Contexts: Links to Success<sup>1</sup>

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*The article reported the results of an investigation conducted in a university in the United Kingdom. The general research question addressed in the study was: How did students approach the task of academic reading. Data for this study came from five sources: audio taped interviews of 17 postgraduate students; a demographic questionnaire; the Adult Survey of Reading Attitude (ASRA); a reading efficacy belief instrument; and three texts that measured reading comprehension. Results of the study revealed that: a) ESL students rated anxiety and difficulty highly, whereas, L1 students rated modalities on the ASRA as more important; b) L1 students rated scores on both efficacy items on the reading efficacy belief instrument higher than ESL students; c) interviewees from both groups showed a clear preference for cognitive strategies, followed by metacognitive and support strategies (however, where L1 students reported high and frequent use of metacognitive strategies, ESL students reported more frequent use of support strategies); and d) reading comprehension scores were similar for both groups of students on the instruments used.*

Reading strategies, English as a second language, first and second language reading, English for academic purposes, academic reading, United Kingdom

## INTRODUCTION

Reading involves a variety of factors, which may have an impact on learners' target language reading ability. Some of these factors are: learners' lack of target language proficiency and vocabulary (Kasper, 1993), unfamiliarity with the content and/or formal schemata of the texts to be read (Carrell and Floyd, 1987) and inefficient reading strategies (Carrell, 1989).

Strategies have been investigated widely for reading comprehension in general and in second and foreign language contexts, in particular. These studies have discovered that readers spontaneously use different strategies in the reading process. As Paris and Jacobs (1984, p.2083) state,

skilled readers often engage in deliberate activities that require planful thinking, flexible strategies, and periodic self-monitoring... [while] novice readers often seem oblivious to these strategies and the need to use them.

The study has been designed to document what postgraduate readers do to facilitate their reading with the possible influence of the reading context in mind and to examine how the strategy they have adopted is related to their overall reading comprehension. Two distinct groups of readers are examined: ESL and L1 readers. Students in these two groups are reading in two very different contexts. Readers in one group, referred to as the English as a second language (ESL) learners, are non-native-English-speaking international students and students in the second group are students

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<sup>1</sup> This article was extensively edited by Dr B. Matthews, Research Associate, Flinders University Institute of International Education.



whose first language is English. They are native-English-speaking students and are referred to as (L1) learners.

### **Research questions**

The general research question addressed in the study was: How did L1 and ESL students approach the complex task of reading? The specific research questions were:

- a) what was the reading comprehension, reading attitude and reading efficacy profile of postgraduate students?
- b) can readers be grouped according to the reading strategy or set of strategies that dominate their approach to learning?

### **BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

This research review examines the conceptual framework of reading strategies and previous research into reading strategy usage.

#### **Conceptual framework of reading strategies**

Many applied linguists, (for example, Ellis, 1994), have commented on the lack of consensus about the definition of the term 'reading strategies'. This diversity is largely due to the way the term has been used in different contexts, such as first, second or foreign language learning (Cohen, 1998).

Reading strategies, as noted by Garner (1987), may be defined as an action or series of actions employed in order to construct meaning. Bamett (1989, p.66) has used the term reading strategy to refer to the mental operations involved when readers purposefully approach a text to make sense of what they read. In the light of these somewhat tangled concepts, definitions and arguments, the term 'reading strategy' is defined for the purposes of this research as specific actions consciously employed by the learner for the purpose of reading.

#### **Why investigate reading strategies?**

Reading comprehension is essential to academic learning areas, to professional success and to lifelong learning. In a review of the developments in second language reading research, Grabe (1991) points out that the crucial importance of reading skills in academic contexts has led to considerable research on reading in a second language. Levine, Ferez and Reves (2000, p.1) state that:

the ability to read academic texts is considered one of the most important skills that university students of English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) need to acquire.

Shuyun and Munby (1996) note that ESL academic reading is a very deliberate, demanding and complex process in which the students are actively involved in a repertoire of reading strategies.

Existing research has shown that, based on the specific needs of their research projects, professional readers make choices as to what to read. That is to say, when readers encounter comprehension problems they use strategies to overcome their difficulties. Different learners seem to approach reading tasks in different ways, and some of these ways appear to lead to better comprehension. It has been noted that the paths to success are numerous and that some routes seldom lead to success. The hope is that if the strategies of more successful readers can be described and identified, it may be possible to train less successful learners to develop improved strategies.

## **Impact of reading strategies on reading comprehension**

An impressive number of empirical investigations have established a positive relationship between strategies and reading comprehension. For instance, Brookbank, Grover, Kullberg, and Strawser (1999) have found that the use of various reading strategies improved the students' reading comprehension. Certain studies in second language (L2) contexts have shown that reading comprehension may be attributed to the level of the effective use of reading strategies (Braun, 1985; Dermody, 1988).

Other studies that have attempted to investigate the relationship between reading strategies and success in comprehension by speakers of other languages have produced interesting results. These studies have demonstrated that different text types may call for the use of different reading strategies. Studies examining the reading strategies of both good and poor readers have shown a differential use of strategies pertaining to text type. Golinkoff (1975) has stated that poor readers peruse all types of texts in the same manner. Similarly, Jiménez, Garcia and Pearson (1996) show that less successful bilingual readers read both narrative and expository texts in similar ways. Furthermore, researchers argue that the strategies preferred in the beginning stage of learning are not the same as those preferred in the advanced stage (Takeuchi, 2002).

Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) state that literature on the reading strategies of advanced or proficient second language learners that compares the strategies of such learners with those of L1 speakers is almost nonexistent. The present study is intended to fill that gap by reporting on a study that compares the reading strategies of ESL students studying in the United Kingdom with those of native English-speaking British postgraduate students.

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

The setting for the current study was a school of education in the United Kingdom. The study involved 11 postgraduate non-native-English-speaking international students from different countries including Japan, Korea, Qatar, China, Greece and New Zealand and six native English-speaking British students who were doing postgraduate study. All participants were female. This is typical of teacher education postgraduates where the intake has historically consisted of more female students. Ninety-two per cent of the sample was over the age of 26 years.

As part of their application for admission to the university, the ESL students had to attain a score of 550 or better on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), a score level considered by many universities to be indicative of a proficiency level in English sufficient to pursue university-level course work without language-related restrictions.

Furthermore, before their full-time academic study, ESL students were enrolled in an intensive ESL program where academic language skills were taught. Over 75 per cent of the international students in the sample reported that they had studied English for at least three years. In addition, the L1 students were able to speak at least two foreign languages, generally, French, Spanish or German.

### **Instrumentation**

Data for this study came from five sources. First, a demographic questionnaire was used to elicit information about the participants. Second, the Adult Survey of Reading Attitude (ASRA) was used to gather information on the students' attitude to reading. Third, a reading efficacy belief instrument was used to collect data on students' self-efficacy beliefs. Fourth, three texts were used

to elicit information about reading comprehension. Fifth, selected postgraduate students were interviewed to explore students' patterns of reading strategies in more detail.

### ***Demographic questionnaire***

Each student completed a single page questionnaire that contained questions or statements about the participant's age, sex, educational and cultural background.

### ***The Adult Survey of Reading Attitude (ASRA)***

The attitude to reading survey, based on the work of Smith (1991) consisted of 40 items. Subjects responded to the statements on a five-point Likert-type scale (where 5=Strongly Agree and 1=Strongly Disagree). Three dimensions of reading attitude were assessed. The Anxiety and Difficulty scale (11 items) measured the extent to which the person experienced problems or confusion when reading. The Social Reinforcement Scale (six items) assessed the extent to which the person's reading activities were recognised and reinforced by others, for example family and friends. The Modalities Scale (six items) measured the extent to which the individual preferred to use sources other than reading when faced with a learning task. The ASRA was been shown to have high reliability (Cronbach alpha = 0.81 in this study).

### ***Reading efficacy beliefs instrument***

The reading efficacy beliefs instrument consisted of questions relating to language efficacy, where students were asked to rate themselves on a scale from one to three in order to indicate how good they thought they were at reading English (1=Disagree, 2=Undecided, 3=Agree). The questionnaire was shown to have reliability of 0.73 in this study.

### ***Texts to measure reading comprehension***

The texts used for the study were three 300-350 word TOEFL texts, which were selected from social and educational studies. The texts selected were based on the criteria of age-appropriateness, interest, content, and relevance to the cultural backgrounds of the participants. Therefore, the texts were general enough to be understood by students of all disciplines and did not require a specialist's knowledge of the topics discussed. They were suitable in terms of content and level. Each article was followed by a set of multiple-choice questions to test understanding. All the questions were conceptual, focusing on the main ideas, the purpose of the writer, the organisation of the text, and the key supporting evidence.

### ***Interviews***

Since meaning is generally gathered through silent reading and is, therefore, inaccessible to direct observation, it is now widely agreed that questionnaires are not sufficient for studying the process of reading comprehension. Therefore, we have conducted interviews to probe more deeply into the students' perceptions regarding their use of reading strategies. The interview schedule is based on the *Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS)* instrument (Mokhtari, 2000), which is intended to measure adolescent and adult L1 and ESL speakers' metacognitive awareness and perceived use of reading strategies while reading academic materials such as textbooks. The SORS instrument measures three broad categories of reading strategies: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies and support strategies. In order to avoid possible misunderstandings, the interviewer would reread her notes at the end of the interview. Taking part in the interview was voluntary.

### **Data collection procedures**

The study began at the start of the academic year and lasted three months. The survey data on L2 reading strategies were collected during the last two weeks of the study. The 17 subjects were interviewed individually in their spare time. The interviews were tape-recorded. Throughout each interview, the students were encouraged to introduce any new information they felt was appropriate.

### **Data analysis procedures**

The ASRA, the reading efficacy scale, and reading comprehension test data were analysed for mean reported frequencies in order to highlight differences. Data analysis of the interview materials followed standard qualitative research procedures. Recurring themes were identified through a constant comparison method that involved sorting, coding, prioritising and connecting pieces of data according to emerging patterns of interpretation (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998). When listening to the audio taped journals, the researcher, who was also a post-doctoral student in the department, took extensive notes. The data were transcribed and further analysed. The three categories that emerged from this analysis are discussed in the section that follows.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Second language reading of specialised academic material has begun to receive greater attention. This paper adds to the relevant literature by presenting an investigation designed to provide a more concrete picture of the reading strategies used by postgraduate students in their academic reading. As noted above, data analysis was conducted with respect to the research questions that guided this study: (a) what was the reading attitude, reading efficacy, and reading comprehension profile of postgraduate students? and, (b) were readers able to be grouped according to the reading strategy or set of strategies that dominated their approach?

### **The Adult Survey of Reading Attitude (ASRA)**

This section sought to elicit the attitudes of the student cohort about academic reading activities. We examined students' responses in terms of the three scales (Anxiety and Difficulty; Social Reinforcement; Modalities).

Table 1 shows that the mean (M) of the ESL students for Anxiety and Difficulty level was quite high (M=4.12). This finding suggests that these students still experienced problems or confusion with reading. L1 students had a lower mean score of 2.69, on this scale.

**Table 1. Participants' attitude toward academic reading activities**

<b>Scales</b>	<b>Groups</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
1. Anxiety and Difficulty	L1	2.69	1.15
	ESL	4.12	0.85
2. Social Reinforcement	L1	3.56	0.95
	ESL	4.04	1.05
3. Modalities	L1	3.66	0.95
	ESL	4.05	0.94

The second scale was Social Reinforcement, which assessed the extent to which a person's reading activities are recognised and reinforced by others (for example, a supervisor or a colleague). ESL students rated themselves with a mean of 4.04 whereas L1 students had a mean of 3.56. This finding suggests that both groups, especially the ESL students, still felt the need for their academic reading activities to be recognised and reinforced by others.

The third scale, Modalities, measured the extent to which the individual preferred to use sources other than reading when faced with a learning task. ESL students had a mean of 4.05, whereas L1 students had a mean of 3.66.

### Reading efficacy beliefs

Two items on the questionnaire aimed to explore the students' judgments relating to reading efficacy. Students were asked to rate themselves on a scale from one to three to indicate how good they thought they were at reading in English. Table 2 presents these findings.

**Table 2. Students' self-reports relating to reading efficacy**

Items	Groups	M	SD
1. I am average at reading and understanding research and research terminology related in my field	L1	4.12	0.85
	ESL	3.46	1.05
2. I am above average at reading and understanding research and research terminology related in my field.	L1	3.52	1.06
	ESL	2.68	1.36

Reading efficacy referred to students' perceptions of themselves as competent readers and learners. This was a perception associated with academic achievement that was vital to becoming a competent reader. ESL students, with a mean of 4.12, said that they had average reading abilities and understood research and research terminology related to their field. Interestingly, even the L1 students did not feel that they were much above average ( $M=3.52$ ).

Oxford and Shearin (1994, p.21) commented that "...many L2 students do not have an initial belief in their own self-efficacy." Analysis of the scores indicated that the ESL students in this study had lower efficacy beliefs about their reading. This was a major cause for concern, especially when one considered that students needed to read and comprehend a large number of academic texts.

### Reading comprehension

The results were analysed to measure academic reading comprehension and differential achievement in the ESL and L1 groups. Table 3 shows the score differences on the three tests for the two contrastive groups. As the results show, scores in the two groups were similar.

**Table 3. Comparison of reading comprehension test scores between L1 and ESL participants**

	L1 (N=6)			ESL (N=11)		
	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3
<b>M</b>	72.3	85.2	72.1	71.8	77.7	71.3
<b>SD</b>	1.68	1.35	1.94	1.15	1.43	0.99

The results showed that there was little evidence that ESL and L1 students had noticeably different English language ability when undertaking academic reading.

### Interview data

The students' responses were examined in terms of the three broad categories of reading strategies: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and support strategies. Students responded to the questions twice: once indicating their reading strategies in their first language (L1) and once indicating their reading strategies in their second language (ESL).

We analysed the data according to the three SORS scales. In accordance with other research (for example, Sheorey and Mokhtari, 2001; Mokhtari and Sheorey, 2002), both ESL and L1 groups showed a clear preference for cognitive strategies. Furthermore, the L1 students also reported using cognitive reading strategies more frequently than students of other nationalities.

Flavell (1979) has stated that reading is a “cognitive enterprise”, which occurs, in part, as a result of the interaction between the reader, the text, and the context in which the reading took place. Cognitive strategies enabled the learner to manipulate the language material in direct ways, by reasoning, analysis, note taking, and synthesising. Examples of cognitive strategies included adjusting one's speed of reading when the material became more difficult or easier, guessing the meaning of unknown words, and re-reading the text for improved comprehension.

Cognitive strategies were followed by metacognitive strategies and support strategies respectively. The L1 students reported higher and more frequent use of metacognitive strategies. Special attention was given by L1 students to the use of metacognitive strategies.

Metacognitive strategies are those intentional, carefully planned techniques by which learners monitor or manage their reading. Such strategies included having a purpose in mind, previewing the text as to its length and organisation, or using typographical aids, tables and figures. These strategies have been considered to be vital for successful learning in a second language (SL) literature (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). Certain studies in L1 and L2 contexts showed that potentially useful strategies for effective reading are attributed to the level of the metacognitive awareness of the students. Carrell, (1998) argued that successful reading strategy use was dependent on whether a strategy was employed metacognitively. This may account for the fact that poor readers often did not lack cognitive strategies but failed to access them metacognitively. Carrell, Pharis and Liberto (1989) also suggested that successful use of reading strategies was, largely dependent on an awareness of, and flexibility in, the use of these strategies according to the purpose of the task or the problem to be solved.

Support strategies are basically support mechanisms intended to aid the reader in comprehending the text. Indeed, the general consensus is that using a dictionary, taking notes, or underlining or highlighting the text to better comprehend it are critically important aspects of skilled reading. Both groups seem to consider support reading strategies relatively valuable, but ESL readers report using support mechanisms (using a dictionary, taking notes, or underlining textual information) significantly more than L1 readers.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Reading comprehension is essential to academic learning in all subject areas. It is an especially vital skill for postgraduate researchers since a great proportion of science-related research papers are written in English. In order to operate effectively in the academic world, postgraduate students must read English. However, many students enter higher education under prepared for the reading demands that are placed upon them. They experience difficulty. This difficulty is often due to their low level of reading strategy knowledge. As stated by Saumell, Hughes and Lopate (1999), students when pressed to read, often select ineffective and inefficient strategies with little strategic intent.

The results in this study were analysed to ascertain academic reading comprehension and differential achievement between L1 and ESL groups. Little evidence was found that ESL and L1 speaking students had different reading comprehension in their academic reading.

In this article we have also reported students' attitudes to reading in L1 and ESL in the context of a British university. The results we obtained, though based on a small sample, accorded with expected reading comprehension results. ESL students rated higher on the Anxiety and Difficulty scale while L1 students rated higher on the Modalities scale on the ASRA.

Results of the study revealed that both groups showed a clear preference for cognitive strategies, followed by metacognitive strategies and support strategies. What this study also confirmed was that while the L1 students reported frequent use of metacognitive reading strategies, the ESL

students reported more frequent use of reading support strategies. L1 students produced higher scores on both efficacy items on the reading efficacy belief instrument.

The present study has served to deepen our understanding of the issues associated with reading comprehension in both L1 and ESL postgraduate students and has shown that very little may be assumed in cross-cultural research.

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## Reflections on Vocabulary Size of Chinese University Students

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*College English teaching in China aims at developing students' communicative competence, in which vocabulary size plays an important role. According to Basic Requirements in the College English Syllabus (1999), Chinese university students' vocabulary size should be 4,200 words. From investigation and a study of the research literature, the author finds that the deficiency of College English teaching in China lies in its small vocabulary size due to the very few words that students absorb in each period of English class in both universities and high schools as well as how intensive reading classes are taught in universities. The author argues that vocabulary size has become a hindrance for Chinese university students in both inputting and outputting information in English and that to enlarge Chinese students' vocabulary size is therefore critical to the teaching of English in China. The paper concludes with suggestions for dealing with this issue from both a macro and micro point of view.*

Vocabulary size, College English teaching, productive and receptive words, reading, university students in China

### INTRODUCTION

College English teaching in China refers to the teaching of English to Chinese university students whose majors are not English. There are six bands for them: College English Band 1 (CE 1) to College English Band 6 (CE 6). According to the College English Syllabus (1999), CE 1 to CE 4 belong to Basic Requirements, while CE 5 to CE 6 relate to Higher Requirements. As a result, College English Test Band 4 (CET 4) and College English Test Band 6 (CET 6) are carried out as national tests to determine whether teaching of College English has already met the Basic or Higher Requirements. Because CE 4 is compulsory, almost all Chinese university students have to pass CET 4 by the end of the second year of their English learning at universities. According to the Basic Requirements in the College English Syllabus (1999), students at CE 4 should be able to recognise 4,200 words, of which they are required to know the correct spelling and the usage of 2,500 words. According to Gairns and Redman (1986, pp.64-65), the 4,200 and 2,500 are receptive and productive words respectively.

West (1953) suggests that a minimally adequate vocabulary is 2,000 words for communication. This seems to indicate that Chinese university students' productive vocabulary size is satisfactory. Fox (1979), however, believes that while such a vocabulary size might be adequate for productive purposes, a learner also needs a receptive vocabulary.

The instrumentalist view regards vocabulary knowledge as a major prerequisite and causative factor in comprehension (Anderson and Freebody, 1981). Words are to learners what money is to our life: the more the better. In places where L2 has no function in the society, a foreign language should be taught (Cook, 1991; Ellis, 1995; Long, 1983), and vocabulary instruction should be emphasised (Becker, 1977; Marzano and Marzano, 1988; O'Dell, 2002, pp.260-262). It is true of China.

It is common for Chinese university students to have been learning English for 10 or more years. After learning English for such a long time, where is their English and where is their vocabulary size in comparison with native English speakers? Is Chinese university students' vocabulary size large enough? What can be done? This paper tries to answer these questions of importance to the teaching of English in China.

### WHERE ARE CHINESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AT IN THEIR ENGLISH?

As a College English teacher for 19 years, the author has often been asked by his students: 'I've been learning English for over 10 years since I was in primary school. Where am I now in comparison with a native English speaker?'

Two documents are very helpful in answering this question. One is the *South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework (SACSAF)*, which has been in use since 2001 to guide the teaching at primary and high schools in South Australia (South Australian Department of Education, 2003). The second document is the *College English Syllabus (CES)* (1999), which has been guiding College English teaching at universities in China.

Now let us make a comparison between *SACSAF* and *CES* to see where Chinese university students are at in their College English. Of the five standards for pupils and students from Year 1 to Year 10 in *SACSAF*, focus here is on Standard 1, which is designed for pupils toward the end of Year 2, and Standard 2, which is designed for pupils toward the end of Year 4. *CES* basically consists of two requirements: Basic Requirements and Higher Requirements. Being compulsory for Chinese university students, the Basic Requirements are the principal focus. A comparison is made in four areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing, and is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that, compared with the underlined and boxed parts for *SACSAF* and *CES*, we see that Chinese university students' English in listening is roughly between Standard 1 and Standard 2 in South Australia. However, 'with simple sentence structures' and '130-150 words/minute' indicate that Chinese university students cannot understand when English is complex in structure or when it is spoken to them faster. This means that English has to be controlled in both structure and speed. For Australian primary pupils, however, there seems no problem in their understanding English spoken to them at a normal speed and in normal structure.

When we compare the underlined and boxed parts for *SACSAF* and *CES*, we see that Chinese university students' English in speaking is also roughly between Standard 1 and Standard 2 in South Australia, but the italicised part in the Basic Requirements in *CES* may indicate that there are still some difficulties for Chinese university students to express themselves clearly when they speak in English, whereas there is no problem for Australian pupils to speak in English.

If we compare the underlined and boxed parts for *SACSAF* and *CES*, we see that Chinese university students' English in reading might not be much higher than that between Standard 1 and Standard 2 in South Australia.

Again, comparing the underlined parts for *SACSAF* and *CES*, we see that Chinese university students' English in writing might not be much higher than that between Standard 1 and Standard 2 in South Australia. However, comparison of the italicised parts suggests that Chinese university students may still have some difficulties when they write in English.

From the four sets of comparisons, presented in Table 1, we may conclude that in terms of reading and writing, Chinese university students' English may not be much higher than that between Standard 1 and Standard 2; whereas in terms of listening and speaking, their English is still between Standard 1 and Standard 2 for primary pupils in South Australia.

**Table 1. Comparison in listening, speaking, reading and writing**

Listening	Standards 1 and 2, SACSAF	Basic Requirements, CES
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listens to a range of texts to identify <u>feelings, main ideas and events</u>.</li> <li>2. Listens to <u>a range of texts to identify specific information about familiar topics</u> and to <u>respond to others' views</u>.</li> </ol>	<p>Listens to teachers' <u>instructions in class, short and simple dialogues, interviews, reports and presentations in English at the speed of 130-150 words/minute</u> on familiar topics, <u>with simple sentence structures</u> and basically without new words and grasps <u>main ideas, key points and concerning details as well as the speaker's opinions and attitudes</u>.</p>
Speaking	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Produces a range of spoken texts that describe <u>familiar procedures and events, and experiments with adjusting own speaking to communicate with different audience in a variety of familiar contexts</u>.</li> <li>2. Produces a range of spoken texts about <u>topics and events of personal and community interest for different school and some community audiences and purposes</u>.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Asks and answers questions</u> on teaching materials and suitable listening materials, produces a range of spoken texts on <u>daily conversations, makes simple and short speeches after preparation on certain familiar topics</u> and <u>basically can be understood by others</u>.</p>
Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reads and views <u>a range of texts containing familiar topics and language and predictable text structures and illustrations</u> and <u>recognises the ways that texts are constructed to represent real and imaginary experiences</u>.</li> <li>2. Reads and views <u>a range of texts containing familiar topics and language features</u>, and <u>identifies symbolic meaning and stereotypes</u></li> </ol>	<p>Reads materials smoothly that are <u>not too difficult and on common topics</u> and <u>grasps main ideas</u> and makes certain inference and <u>judgment</u> on the basis of certain facts and details.</p>
Writing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Composes <u>a range of texts that include topics of personal interest and some related ideas</u>, and that <i>can be understood by others</i>.</li> <li>2. Composes <u>a range of texts that include interrelated ideas and information about familiar topics and shows awareness of different audiences, purposes and contexts</u>.</li> </ol>	<p>Makes notes when reading materials similar to classroom texts; answers questions and writes outlines; <u>composes within 30 minutes a range of texts of 100 to 120 words on certain topics and outlines; composes short letters and notes</u>. The texts thus produced are <i>without big linguistic errors and can be understood by others</i>.</p>

### VOCABULARY SIZE OF CHINESE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

As stipulated in the College English Syllabus (1999), Chinese university students should meet the Basic Requirements, where their vocabulary size should reach 4,200 words. According to reports from the CET Committee, the average passing percentage of CET 4 in key universities in China in 2000, 2001 and 2002 was 52.2 per cent, 51.0 per cent and 50.7 per cent respectively. This shows that almost half of the students in key universities failed to meet the Basic Requirements in the College English Syllabus. However, when all universities in China are taken into consideration, we can see that, roughly speaking, most university students failed to meet Basic Requirements in the College English Syllabus during those three years. It might be the case that many Chinese university students in fact do not have a vocabulary size of 4,200 words.

As early as in 1986, it was stipulated in the College English Syllabus that the teaching of English should aim to develop students' communicative competence, and since then this has been a goal of College English teaching. 'Communicative competence', according to Hymes (1997), includes four aspects: (a) systemic potential; (b) appropriateness; (c) occurrence and, (d) feasibility. While 'systemic potential' refers to knowledge of grammar and vocabulary of language, 'appropriateness' is indispensable to paradigmatic relations, which, at the risk of oversimplification, deals with choice of words. Obviously, a person's large vocabulary size might help him or her to develop strong communicative competence. If we suppose that every Chinese

university student has met the Basic Requirements where vocabulary size is 4,200 words, how should we look at this vocabulary size?

### IS SUCH A VOCABULARY SIZE LARGE ENOUGH?

When explaining stages in first language acquisition, Dai et al. (1986, pp.136-137) declare that at the age of two a child can name most things familiar to him; six months later, the child can understand almost everything said to him, and at the age of three, his or her vocabulary size is about 1,000 words.

According to Moskowitz (1993), by the age of five most children have completed the greater part of the basic language-acquisition process in spite of the fact that subtle refinements are added between the ages of five and ten.

Marzano and Marzano (1988, p.16) have made an interesting discovery that in English speaking countries 7,320 words are commonly used in textbooks in elementary schools. Nation and Waring (2002, p.7) believe that a five-year-old native English speaker has a vocabulary of around 4,000 to 5,000 words, of which 2,000 to 3,000 words are productive vocabulary (Richards, 1976). This might actually be the threshold of vocabulary size in elementary schools in English speaking countries.

In terms of vocabulary size, we might see that a Chinese university student is similar to an English child at the age of five. However, Chinese university students do not usually communicate with children, but with adult native English speakers, whose vocabulary size, according to Golden et al. (1990), is around 20,000 **word families**, excluding proper names, compound words, abbreviations and foreign words.

Based on daily lives in China, the *Chinese-English Visual Dictionary of Chinese Culture* (Koshimizu, 2003) involves the use of about 20,000 English words, which is very helpful for introducing Chinese culture to the rest of the world. With a vocabulary size of 4,200 words, Chinese university students may face two embarrassing questions.

- 1) Can they have real communication with native English speakers whose vocabulary size is **20,000** word families?
- 2) Can they introduce Chinese culture to others involving the use of **20,000** English words?

McCarthy (1990, p.viii) argues that people cannot communicate in a L2 in any meaningful way if they do not have words to express a wider range of meanings. "Knowing words is the key to understanding and being understood" (Vermeer, 1992, p.147). It seems that Chinese university students have difficulties in both inputting and outputting information in English and their vocabulary size is far from being enough for communication with native English speakers.

### WHAT CAN BE DONE?

McCarthy (1997, p.64) argues that vocabulary is the largest single element in dealing with a new language and teachers therefore should take the responsibility of vocabulary instruction in their teaching. How to deal with the issue of small vocabulary size seems to be critical at the moment in the teaching of English in China. We have to consider this issue from a policy-making point of view in both high schools and universities. However, it usually takes time to make policies. From a methodological point of view, College English teachers could do a lot in terms of their vocabulary instruction. In other words, we can deal with the issue from both a macro and micro point of view.

## A MACRO POINT OF VIEW

### Enlarging high school students' vocabulary size

According to the College English Syllabus (1999), university students should meet the requirements of College English Band 4, where their vocabulary size is 4,200 words. Given the fact that students are required to have a vocabulary size of 1,800 words when they enter university, university students will have to have a net increase of 2,400 words within two years of their English learning. In most universities in China, students have four periods of English classes each week: one is a listening class, the other three are intensive reading classes. Every semester, students have at least 50 periods of intensive reading class. This means that they learn only 12 new words in each period of their intensive reading class. Such a vocabulary size seems to be small.

However, vocabulary size for each period of English class at high schools is even smaller. English is taught in junior and senior high schools for 12 semesters. After such a long time of English learning, high school students are required to have 1,800 words to enter a university. This means that they enlarge their vocabulary size at the rate of 150 words each semester. Students at high schools usually have five periods of English class each week and 90 periods of English class each semester. This means that high school students learn on average only **1.6 words** in each period, which seems unbelievable. By comparison, it could be seen that there is imbalance in vocabulary size between high schools and universities.

In fact, high school students could have a **larger** vocabulary size, for they are usually aged 13 to 18 years, when memorising is easiest. It seems therefore necessary to enlarge high school students' vocabulary size. In doing so, we need to consider the following three points.

- 1) The gap in vocabulary size cannot be too big between Chinese university students and native English speakers.
- 2) Vocabulary size at high schools in China should be close to that at elementary schools in English speaking countries so that Chinese university students' vocabulary size could be close to that of adult native English speakers' later on when further efforts are made in universities.
- 3) Vocabulary size has to be enlarged gradually.

Based on the above three considerations as well as his own teaching experiences, the author makes the following suggestions.

### *Suggestions for increasing vocabulary size at junior high school*

In the first semester, let students learn only one new word in each period, for it would be very difficult for students to learn a language which is totally different from their own. Then, in each of the following five semesters, make students acquire 2, 3, 4 and 5 words in each English class period respectively. Thus their vocabulary size would be increasing at the rate of 90, 180, 270, 360, 450 and 540 words in each semester of 90 periods, as shown in Table 2. Thus, vocabulary size at junior high school could reach **1,890** words.

**Table 2. The increase of vocabulary size at junior high school**

Semester	Words/semester	Words/period
1	90	1
2	180	2
3	270	3
4	360	4
5	450	5
6	540	6

### ***Suggestions for increasing vocabulary size at senior high school***

At senior high school, vocabulary size could be enlarged to **5,130** words as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. The increase of vocabulary size at senior high school**

Semester	Words/semester	Words/period
1	630	7
2	720	8
3	810	9
4	900	10
5	990	11
6	1,080	12

If such an increase in vocabulary size were possible, when students graduate from a senior high school, their vocabulary size should reach **7,020** words, which is close to the vocabulary size of 7,320 words commonly used in elementary school textbooks in English-speaking countries.

### **Enlarging university students' vocabulary size by reading**

Since 2000, the author has attended over 80 periods of classroom College English teaching and interviewed nearly 100 College English teachers from all over China and finds that most College English teachers usually adopt explicit instruction of vocabulary, explaining and analysing structures, meanings and uses of new words. In other words, College English teachers focus their vocabulary instruction on productive words without paying much attention to receptive words. Besides, in intensive reading classes, teachers usually take one passage or text as their priority in each of their teaching units. Consequently, a teacher completes only about ten passages each semester and at most finishes 40 passages in four semesters of teaching.

The method of vocabulary instruction as well as the small amount of reading involved greatly limits Chinese university students' vocabulary size. How many words should Chinese university students have? Let us have a look at Table 4 which shows the relationship between vocabulary size and text coverage put forward by Francis and Kucera (1982).

**Table 4. The relationship between vocabulary size and text coverage**

Vocabulary size	Text coverage
1,000	72.0%
2,000	79.7%
3,000	84.0%
4,000	86.8%
5,000	88.7%
6,000	89.9%
15,851	97.8%

From Table 4, it can be seen that knowing about 4,000 **word families** provides 86 per cent coverage of written text. However, the coverage of Chinese university students' vocabulary size must be lower than this level, for their vocabulary size is counted **in words** rather than word families.

Laufer (1989) argues that only 95 per cent coverage of a text would be sufficient for reasonable comprehension. This means that Chinese university students should have vocabulary size of around 12,000 word families, which in terms of the present situation of College English teaching in China, seems to be an astronomical and completely unrealistic number.

Richards et al. (2002, pp.178-179) believe that English in China is a foreign language, for it is not used as a medium of instruction in schools nor as a language of communication within the country. In their opinion, the objective of learning English as a foreign language is either for communication with native English speakers, or for reading printed materials in English.

Do Chinese university students learn English to communicate with native English speakers or to read printed materials in English? Let us now examine the English language environment on university campuses in China. It is reported that there were 77,715 international students in China in 2003, but native English speakers accounted for only seven per cent, as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5. Students from English speaking countries in China in 2003**

Countries	Degree and Non-Degree Students
United States	3,693
Australia	918
United Kingdom	657
Canada	557

Source: <http://csc.edu.cn/gb/downloaddoc/2004/2003lhtj.doc>

According to the *People's Daily* (2004), there were about 2,500 teachers of native English speakers working in elementary, junior and senior high schools and universities in China in 2001. There are 1,517 universities in China (Ministry of Education of Peoples' Republic of China, 2003). Even if all the 2,500 English teachers were working only in universities, each university could have fewer than two teachers. In fact, there are no international students or teachers of native English speakers at all in some universities in China.

The English language environment on university campuses in China shows that (a) it is very hard for Chinese university students to find enough native English speakers to communicate with on campuses; and (b) that to take reading as an objective of English learning would be practical for Chinese university students.

Nation and Waring (2002, pp.43-45) believe that reading provides favourable conditions for vocabulary learning, both in repetition of vocabulary and decreased density of unknown words in texts. Of such skills as listening, speaking, reading and writing, reading is stipulated as the priority of teaching in the College English Syllabus (1999). However, Gui (2004) criticises intensive reading classes in China, for they have not actually trained students to have real reading ability in China. Gui is right. It is impossible for students to have reading ability by working through only 40 passages, even though teachers might explain these passages in great detail. Now we have to reconsider the issue of reading.

Reading helps to enlarge students' vocabulary, but to be meaningful the amount of reading must be increased. The necessity to increase reading seems to suggest that College English teachers in China have to switch their focus from productive words to receptive ones. Without the support of receptive words, productive words would be like water without sources. The increase of the former might naturally lead to the increase of the latter, but it might not be the case *vice versa*.

As noted above, in most universities in China, students have 50 periods of intensive reading class each semester. If students could acquire 50 new words in each period, they would learn 2,500 new words each semester, 5,000 new words each year and 10,000 new words over two years. When the 1,800 words that students have learnt at high schools are added to this vocabulary size, university students will have vocabulary sizes of 11,800 words. In that situation, a vocabulary size of 12,000 word families would no longer be an astronomical number to Chinese university students, though it is still larger than 11,800 words.

Many linguists complain that vocabulary teaching has been neglected in the literature of English language teaching and learning (Davies and Pearse, 2002, p.59; Dubin and Olstain, 1986, pp.111-12; Ellis, 1995; McCarthy, 1984; Meara, 1980, p.221; Wilkins, 1972, p.109). Although there is no research that can be applied directly to College English teaching in China currently, dealing with 50 receptive words each class is a practical goal rather than something within sight but beyond reach.

### A MICRO POINT OF VIEW

Lexico-semantic theory suggests that learners have to set up in their minds the systems that keep words well-organized for retrieval and human lexicon is believed to be a web-like structure of interconnected links (Aitchison, 1987). Therefore, Sökmen (2002, p.241) believes that in vocabulary instruction, teachers need to help their students establish those links and build up those associations so that they can store vocabulary effectively. The links lie in word knowledge, which according to Richards (1976), consists of a word's orthographical and phonological form, meanings, grammatical behaviour, associations, collocations, frequency and register. It seems that word association plays an important role in vocabulary instruction.

Word association refers to ways in which words come to be associated with each other and which influence the learning and remembering of words (Richards et al., 2002, p.510). Nation and Waring (2002, pp.43-45) believe that a range of 5 to 16 encounters with a word would make a student truly acquire it. By association in vocabulary instruction, a teacher may make students frequently encounter the words that they are learning, for events, activities, and objects become schematised very quickly and repeated experiences extend and develop our schemes (Katz, 1993). The following might be helpful to increase receptive words by association.

- 1) Word form association
  - (a) association of word family members
  - (b) association of word beginning
  - (c) association of word ending
  - (d) association of derivative antonyms
- 2) Semantic association
  - (a) antonym association
  - (b) synonym association
  - (c) superordinate and hyponyms
  - (d) brainstorming association
- 3) Association by teacher talk
- 4) Association by writing
- 5) Association by doing exercises

Now let us take 'Brainstorming association' as an illustration. Brainstorming is also similar to what Sökmen (1992) calls 'semantic mapping'. A teacher may simply give students one word and ask them to supply words that are associated with it in semantic field. Hudson (2000, p.110) gives an example with the word 'utterance'.

General:	speaking, talking
Manner:	saying, shouting, whispering
Flow of information:	agreeing, announcing, asking, discussing, explaining, ordering, reminding, reporting, suggesting, telling
Source:	acting, reading, reciting, mimicking
Speaker evaluation:	apologizing, boasting, complaining, criticizing, grumbling, joking, thanking
Hearer evaluation:	flattering, promising, teasing, threatening, warning
Effect on hearer:	cajoling, discussing, persuading

This kind of brainstorming is similar to what Marzano and Marzano (1988) call the 'cluster approach', where words are taught in semantically related groups. For example, the word 'light' might be discussed in the following way.



Classification:	lamplight, sunlight, daylight, moonlight, starlight, candlelight
Actions:	shine, sparkle, flash, glow, glitter, glisten, gleam, glimmer, flare, twinkle, shimmer, radiate, illuminate, brighten, lighten, reflect
Effects:	radiant, dark, bright, brilliant, shiny, dazzling, luminous, dim, faint, gloomy
Producers:	torch, candle, lamp, light, fluorescent light, lantern, bulb, beam

Sökmen (2002, p.244) believes that learning is aided by making materials concrete and suggests enhancing memory by giving personal examples, relating words to current events and providing experiences with words. A teacher may ask students to write about a person or a situation in connection with the text they are learning. Before writing, ask them to collect which words will be needed in composition. In such a case, sets of related words may occur to the students. For example, when a teacher asks students to list the words that could be used to describe a person's character either positively or negatively, the following words might suggest themselves:

To describe positively: warm and friendly, kind, nice, pleasant, generous, optimistic, cheerful, relaxed, strong, easy-going, sensitive, honest.

To describe negatively: cold and unfriendly, unkind, horrible, unpleasant, mean, pessimistic, miserable, tense, weak, insensitive, dishonest

After learning "Why I Teach" (Dong, 1997, pp.46-48, Book III), a teacher may ask students to describe an old Chinese teacher. By brainstorming, the following words might be collected:

age, glasses, pen, presentation, desk, books, journals, dictionaries, devotion, committed, patient, kind, publications, clothes, manner, wrinkled face, students, lesson plan, thoughtful, considerate, optimistic, open-minded, industrious, intelligent, traditional, smiling, laughing, ,manner, elegant, learned, knowledgeable, well-informed, competent, voice, enthusiasm,, interest, motivation, noble, research, energetic, computer, scholarly, academic, persistent, experienced, respectable, strong-willed, exemplary, lectures, interview, beloved, amiable, hoary

Gairns and Redman (1986, p.60) argue that only when students perceive the vocabulary input to be useful, will it be easy to engage their interest and effective learning be increased. Brainstorming may result in students' strong motivation in vocabulary learning.

## CONCLUSIONS

Channel (1988) suggests that language acquisition is the end result of vocabulary development. Deficiency in College English teaching in China lies in the small vocabulary size, which the author believes has become a hindrance in both inputting and outputting information in English. Chinese university students' vocabulary size of 4,200 words is too small for meaningful communication with native English speakers whose vocabulary size is around 20,000 word families.

Quality change usually depends on quantity change. It is now critical to enlarge Chinese students' vocabulary size in the teaching of English in China. Chinese university students' vocabulary size should be close to that of native English speakers. Without enlarging vocabulary size, students do not have real reading ability and communicative competence. While memory skills are best, high school students should develop larger vocabulary sizes by learning one to 12 new words in each period of their English class. Given the fact that English is still a foreign language in China, reading is the best way to deal with the issue and therefore should be the objective of English teaching. From a micro point of view, vocabulary instruction in China should aim at increasing

receptive words rather than productive ones on which most College English teachers focus in their classroom teaching.

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# Factors Influencing the Assessment Perceptions of Training Teachers

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*The paper describes a study revealing a number of factors that influence how Bachelor of Education students perceive assessment. These factors include personal histories, student teacher relationships, opportunities for personalisation and deep learning, notions of relevance, and anxiety issues. 'Personal histories', as a term used to describe students' previous experiences, provided participants with an experiential reference point for thinking and talking about aspects of the assessment process. However, the learning and assessment context together with individual motivations, rather than personal histories, seemed to determine the learning approach adopted. The paper is likely to be of interest to those involved in designing assessments for training teachers.*

Assessment, student perceptions, innovative assessment,  
student-teacher relationships, assessment anxiety

## INTRODUCTION

The paper describes a small qualitative study undertaken in one Australian university. The study revealed a number of factors that influenced how Bachelor of Education students perceived assessment. The findings indicated that personal histories, student teacher relationships, opportunities for personalisation and deep learning, notions of relevance, and anxiety issues all influenced how students perceived assessment. 'Personal histories', as a term used to describe students' previous experiences, provided participants with an experiential reference point for thinking and talking about aspects of the assessment process. However, the learning and assessment context together with individual motivations, rather than personal histories, seemed to determine the learning approach adopted.

The main motivation for conducting a qualitative research study into how training teachers perceive assessment lies in the profound influence student perceptions have on learning (Entwistle, Thompson and Tait, 1992; McDowell, 1996; Race, 1999; Ramsden, 1988a). In addition, exploring the intentions of training teachers today may well provide some insights into the classrooms of tomorrow.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature not only provides a rationale for eliciting student perceptions but also contributes to discussions about how these perceptions of assessment are connected to learning approaches, previous assessment experiences, notions of relevance and student teacher relationships.

### **A Rationale for Considering Student Perceptions of Assessment**

Since student teachers are experienced consumers of assessment, their perceptions should make a useful contribution to discussions about curriculum design in university schools of education. Whether or not students are "systematically silenced" as, "insiders and experts" (Erickson and

Shultz, 1992), the call from notable sources to discover more about student perceptions is compelling (Boud and Griffin, 1987; Brown and Knight, 1994; Stefani, 1998). Insights into student perceptions would confer greater legitimacy upon student knowledge (Carspecken and Apple, 1992), encourage partnerships with learners and address suggestions that teachers tend to be unilateral decision makers in matters of assessment (Hughes, 1998; Williams and Norris, 1985).

The notion of asking students to share their perceptions of assessment has occurred during what appears to be a major paradigm shift in the literature, focusing on learning rather more than a technical orientation towards measurement (Birenbaum and Dochy, 1996; Orrell, 1997). Research characterising this shift has revealed the importance of student autonomy, the diversity of ways individuals engage in learning and the consequent need for a greater variety of assessments (Hughes, 1998). Most significantly, there now seems little doubt that student perceptions of assessment profoundly influence learning (Entwistle, Thompson and Tait, 1992; McDowell, 1996; Ramsden, 1988a).

### **Learning Approaches**

Undergraduates consciously adopt either a deep or surface learning approach depending upon their perception of the assessment context (Ramsden, 1992). A learning approach describes the relationship between the learner, their motivation and the modifiable teaching context (Biggs and Moore, 1993; Marton and Ramsden, 1988). Deep learning approaches for example, encourage a personal, active, critical, internally motivated and positive response to learning (Entwistle et al. 1992; Prosser and Trigwell, 1999; Ramsden, 1992), while surface learning approaches reputedly engender memorisation and a lack of reflection on meaning (Biggs and Moore, 1993).

### **The Influence of Student Assessment Histories on Current Perceptions**

Although research has identified a connection between personal assessment histories and current assessment perceptions (Biggs and Moore, 1993; Hughes, 1998; Schmeck, 1988), there seems little elaboration on how exactly this might occur. Instead, we find an emerging, somewhat simplistic polarisation of views on whether it is student histories or the learning context that determines how students perceive assessment and learning (Ramsden, 1988b). Some theorists maintain that perceptions are influenced by motivations such as fear, resulting from past painful experiences that may create a kind of assessment avoidance behaviour or the development of defence mechanisms attributing failure to assessment irrelevance, for example (Nisbett and Ross, 1980). However, we cannot assume causal links between assessment events and student perceptions because our judgments are influenced by many factors other than the original experience (Strawson, 1979).

### **Student Perceptions of Assessment Relevance**

Stensaker (1999) maintained that more attention should be paid to perceptions of relevance in assessment design and for good reason since assessments that make relevant connections with the world of work, for example, appear to have a positive influence on student learning (Huff and Sireci, 2001; Unwin and Caraher, 2000). However, there is some suggestion that these findings do not extend to particular kinds of traditional assessment that present fewer opportunities for students to realise personal relevance in learning and assessment (Grzelkowski, 1987 cited in Grauerholz, 2002).

## **Student -Teacher Relationships Influencing Assessment Perceptions**

Positive student–teacher relationships enhance cognitive learning outcomes and also determine whether both parties attain their goals, dependant as they are upon negotiation, conflict resolution and sharing authority (Bainbridge and Houser, 2000; Oylar and Becker, 1977 cited in Mishna and Rasmussen, 2001). However, few studies have explored how students perceive their relationships with teachers and fewer still focus on how such relationships might impact upon student perceptions of assessment.

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

This small research study drew upon data collected from participants enrolled in a Bachelor of Education program in one Australian university. The methods involved a recorded semi-structured interview, a recorded so-called ‘think-aloud’ card sorting activity eliciting participant assessment preferences, and a written response to a question about the kinds of issues participants would keep in mind when designing assessments as future teachers. These data collection activities lent themselves well to complex, rich, in-depth qualitative research focusing on subjective, student perspectives and beliefs (Laurillard, 1984).

The constant comparative method (Strauss and Corbin, 1994) was used to analyse data. Units of meaning were grouped, compared and coded (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Codes, were continually created, changed or refined, depending on their relationship to data as they were received (Fingfeld, 1999; Strauss and Corbin, 1994). Eventually core codes were identified from categories that appeared to be more central or occurred more frequently though disconfirming evidence was also sought (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The potential for bias in a study using only one major researcher was also reduced by the recruitment of two volunteer research consultants who assisted in checking coding practices and sample transcriptions against recordings. Methodological triangulation was achieved by cross-referencing three methods of data collection. Participant verification of transcriptions also contributed to triangulation by providing multiple perspectives in interpreting the data (Denzin, 1978 cited in Patton, 1990). Ethical procedures were approved by the Social and Behavioural Ethics Committee of the university where the research was undertaken.

Given the small-scale nature of the research some limitations were evident. For example, significant variables such as socio-economic factors, learning styles and intelligences, could not be explored in a small study but were likely to have affected the research outcomes. Secondly, it was recognised that interviews could be problematic in that they did not necessarily provide evidence of covert perceptions (Nisbett and Ross, 1980). Furthermore, the researcher could not assume that participants were aware of the reason why they thought or behaved in certain ways (Foddy, 1999). Finally, as most university staff would hope, it was likely that as student teachers, the participants were influenced by the literature and theories of learning and assessment to which they had been exposed during the course of their training as teachers. Indeed a number of perceptions were reminiscent of theories concerning the relationship between assessment and surface and deep learning (Biggs and Moore, 1993) or the negative effects of traditional assessment upon learning (Entwistle et al. 1992; McDowell, 1996; Race, 1999; Ramsden, 1988) or the rapid decay of learned content (Powell, 1985).

### **THE FINDINGS**

Although student perceptions of assessment were clearly influenced by past experiences, other factors were also identified, including student-teacher relationships, anxiety, student notions of relevance and opportunities for deep learning. The assessment context, however, together with individual motivation, rather than past experiences determined the learning approach adopted. Support for assessment encouraging deep learning approaches was also apparent and confirmed in

data relating to training teachers' future professional intentions. Data from the interview, the card sorting activity and the reflective written response have been combined in the reporting the findings since analysis and coding suggested a high level of consistency between the data collection methods. Participant comments have occasionally been used to illustrate some of the issues raised in the discussion.

### Past Histories

Participants used historical experiences to explain current negative perceptions of assessments citing incidents of failure and disappointment, anxiety and perceived unfair grading practices. These incidents often appeared to be connected to a kind of assessment avoidance behaviour (Nisbett and Ross, 1980). For example, Kisumu remarked; *"I definitely wouldn't want to be assessed on that"*, recalling a high school group project where she *"resented"* being given a lower grade than peers. Consistent with theories that student perceptions were influenced by the familiarity of past experience (Nisbett and Ross, 1980), some participants in the study maintained that they would not enrol in a course where the assessment was unknown to them or indeed where they had had no previous experience of success. For example, Nancy commented, *"[I]...stick with things I know and things I do well at"*.

However, since a number of factors may simultaneously influence a perception these examples are unlikely to be sufficient to suggest that there is a direct correlation between past histories and current perceptions (Strawson, 1979). While Lina, for instance, acknowledged the unpleasant experiences of weekly school quizzes and felt that these kinds of assessment were ineffective, she added, *"So...my previous experiences have had some influence but I wouldn't say, yes, I feel this way because of that"*. Similarly, another participant's rejection of multiple-choice assessment could be related either to a previous experience of failure or her view that such assessments did not ascertain understanding.

### Student-Teacher Relationships

Student assessment perceptions appeared to be influenced by previous experiences of teachers who ultimately became role models. Powerful illustrations of an apprenticeship process were evident in the data and this process appeared to have begun with teaching and learning experiences that occurred long before their enrolment in the university program. The apprenticeship process that was loosely defined as learning by observation of teacher practice did not appear to draw upon negative observations any more than positive ones. An analysis of the data revealed that student observations of teacher practice influenced student perceptions of assessment and their intentions for personal future practice. It was also clear that inconsistencies between theory and teacher practice were noted in academically critical ways.

One individual traced descriptions of poor relationships with teachers and their impact upon assessment perceptions stretching back to kindergarten. The account represented a sorry tale of personality clashes, grudges, lack of trust and feelings of victimisation that impinged upon assessment issues. Feedback was considered useful for finding out, *"... what they [teachers] think of you"*, emphasising the influence of relationships in the process rather than professional observations designed for the improvement of the critically reflective student. Where such patterns of unsatisfactory relationships occurred, it was tempting to consider them as a kind of negative 'primacy effect' in perception formation (Nisbett and Ross, 1980). Teacher and student relationships appeared to be one factor influencing how individuals perceived assessment and this finding was in keeping with the work of Bainbridge and Houser (2000) who suggested that these relationships affected learning more generally. It should be noted, however, that the connection between teacher-student relationships and assessment experiences also applied in positive ways where participants attributed their motivation and assessment success to worthwhile and affirming

relationships. The data therefore indicated that whether for good or ill, student relationships with teachers was an important factor in the formation of assessment perceptions.

### **Consumerist Perceptions of Assessment Practices**

Consumerist tendencies influenced participant assessment perceptions where dissatisfactions were couched in comments such as, “...we are paying money as well” and “I shouldn’t be having to be wasting my money here and my time, on something that is not going to be applicable or relevant”. In addition, some participants perceived summative peer assessment (graded) as poor value for money because students were considered ill qualified or too influenced by personal relationships to make the necessary impartial and fair evaluations. Remarks included, “I think teachers should have that job” and “I think it is down to the people who are paid to ...do that”.

However, consumerist and negative perceptions were not present when referring to formative peer assessment (ungraded) and were therefore more consistent with Kagan’s (1994, cited in Johnston, 2001) findings suggesting a positive perception of peer assessment. Formative assessments, by contrast to summative peer assessments were perceived as encouraging, “...cooperation, interaction...creativity [and] imagination” and preparing students for future teaching roles as well as minimising the effect of teacher bias. A tentative conclusion was therefore drawn that consumerist perceptions may be more closely linked to whether an assessment is summative or formative, rather than being a phenomenon inherent to the kinds of assessments specified.

### **Assessment Anxiety**

While the study bore out the conviction that basically the existence of any kind of assessment is likely to be threatening to many students (Biggs, 1991), vivas, examinations, oral presentations and laboratory assessments, seemed to cause higher levels of anxiety than others. These kinds of assessment were described as “nerve racking”, “daunting”, with “...images of being beaten down with the light shining on your face”, along with “intimidating, very threatening and confronting”.

Most participants preferred courses without examinations. As Ann explained, for her, it was the avoidance of the “do or die”, terminal, high stakes approach that others maintained only served to encourage cramming, lack of sleep and stress. ‘Knowing’ rather than ‘understanding’ was perceived as the examinational credo where ‘knowing’ equated to “regurgitated” details without “...very much comprehension” but nevertheless attracting high grades. Lou attributed the anxiety she felt about assessments such as examinations, vivas and lab experiments to the fact that “you just have to know something in that space of time”. Such stressful assessments involved the delivering and communicating of learning in real time. Given extensive “evidence of the negative effects of test anxiety on academic performance” (Hancock, 2001), the concept and implications of ‘live’ or ‘real time’ assessment needs to be explored further.

### **Some Implications for Learning Approaches**

After having failed an examination, Maria consciously changed her, “learning style”, probably more correctly defined here as a learning ‘approach,’ (Biggs and Moore, 1993; Marton and Ramsden, 1988). As a result, she became, “...more focused towards what is expected...rather than what I would like to learn” and began to view grades as an “important ...prerequisite to moving on”. Maria’s experience therefore embodied the theory that undergraduates adopt a learning approach depending upon their perception of the context (Laurillard, n.d., cited in Ramsden, 1988b; Ramsden, 1992).

Three students, Bridget, Lina and Kisumu appeared to have transformed their learning experience when one compared current approaches and perceptions with somewhat chequered academic histories of deliberate failure, apathy and dropping out. They seemed to be highly motivated in the



desire to become teachers, maintained very high grade point averages, were goal orientated and enthusiastic, typified by Bridget's comments, "*I've learned so much! Just cool stuff*".

The success of these three students could be attributable to the fact that as one student suggested, "*mature age students are renowned for putting in a lot of effort*" but their learning approaches may also have implications. Bridget and Kisumu displayed some characteristics of what Biggs (1991) describes as an "*achieving approach*" in that they appeared to adopt either surface or deep approaches to learning, depending upon the context. As Kisumu commented, "*I just want this end result so I do what comes up to get there*".

Secondly, they also allocated time to assessment activities depending upon their perceived importance (Biggs, 1991). As Bridget commented, "*Well there were just far too many [assessments]...and far too much work and the work was just worth nothing and in the end you are doing something worth four per cent*". The achieving approach is also characterised by a preoccupation with grades. Kisumu's account, for example, had many references along these lines: "*I was getting really good grades...and my grades have just dropped*", "*I was sitting on a credit*" and "*I really enjoyed the exams ..it bumped my grade up to a distinction*". Thus, it appears that the extrinsic motivation to succeed in becoming teachers had resulted in the adoption of an achieving approach, not previously evident in accounts of these participant histories.

In the case of Lina, anecdotal evidence of past assessment experiences suggested a surface approach as compared to the deep approach currently adopted. She reflected on her previous learning experiences and how through cramming she became "*very good at learning how to pass exams*" but not very "*good at learning*." As a school student, she concentrated on "*just passing enough to be an average student*" and "*get by*". By contrast, she later came to believe assessment should "*be built into the whole learning thing and not made into a separate identity*". She also preferred "*innovative assessments*" that required a personal response and made a number of positive comments regarding her teaching and learning experience, a characteristic of those adopting a deep approach. In contrast to students using an achieving approach (Prosser and Trigwell, 1999; Ramsden, 1992), Lina showed little interest in grades, remarking, "*I suppose I don't like grades, full stop*".

Given the associations identified here between learning approaches and outcomes, it appears clear that some relationship between the two exists. Nevertheless since academic performance rests on a multiplicity of unique factors related to both context and individual there is a reluctance to infer causal relationships.

### **Perceptions of Assessment Relevance**

The data reflected Hadzigeorgiou's (2001) contention that establishing relevance was crucial to learning. Lack of relevance in assessment reportedly engendered "*jumping through hoops*" in time wasting activities that endowed experiences with an ephemeral quality; "*They're gone now...There was not much point in them...the assessments just come – they're gone – who remembers?*" or as Lina asked, "*So where did that go?*"

Students interpreted relevance in different ways. For some, it was established when assessments were applicable to other contexts, or as Race (1999, p.25) put it, "*they were authentic because they prepared students for dealing with real situations*". Consistent with previous research (Wilson and Johnson, 2000), some participants viewed assessment that did not contribute towards their final grade, as less relevant to learning. Ungraded formative assessment was disparagingly described as "*...busy work*" that "*wasn't... being marked or anything*".

Work related assessments linked to field experience were perceived as particularly relevant, confirming the findings of Donald and Denison (2001) and LaMaster (2001). Some of the

participants were employed in the private sector or were working part time as teacher assistants and would have welcomed opportunities for negotiating assessments related to these working experiences in their Bachelor of Education program.

### **Opportunities for Personalisation in Assessment**

Participants clearly expressed enthusiasm for assessment that allowed for independent exploration and were negative about those that were, as one participant suggested, “*totally prescribed by the academic*”. The opportunity to express personal beliefs in assessments such as journals was perceived positively though the difficulties involved in creating valid criteria for graded assessment of arbitrary personal beliefs was not overlooked. However, consistent with other research (Laurillard, 1984; Ramsden, 1992), participants expressed doubt about the advisability of expressing independent thought in assessment when confronted with tensions between personal and academically sanctioned responses. Tom’s commentary is a useful example:

*...it’s just a matter...of trying to work out what people want...and then mixed with that, is that [it] might be against what I actually believe [and] people are saying to me, you should be saying [such and such] because this is what they want to hear and I think, well, it’s selling yourself short...*

Participants also desired more personalised assessment feedback rather than leaving them feeling little more than ‘a number’. The assessment process was therefore perceived as deeply personal, both in the development of assignments and in how students expected teachers to relate to their work, as extensions of themselves.

### **CONCLUSION**

The data from this small study has attempted to draw attention to some interesting assessment issues that other researchers might consider within their own contexts. The research has also raised a number of questions that need further exploration. What are the implications of greater consumerism being evident in graded rather than non-graded assessment? How can student notions of relevance and opportunities for personalisation be utilised to maximise some positive aspects of assessment perceptions? If participants view the expression of personal opinions as, ‘risky business’ when they run counter to the perceived sanctioned knowledge and perspectives of their teachers, what does this tell us about how power relationships are related to perceptions of assessment? Given Stegman’s (2000) research indicating the significant impact of personal beliefs on classroom learning and presumably assessment, this is certainly an area worth pursuing. Finally, since academic performance is impaired by anxiety (Hancock, 2001), the concept and implications of ‘live’ or ‘real time’ assessment is also worthy of further research and discussion.

The data appeared to support the theory that learning approaches are adopted depending on how assessments are perceived (Laurillard, n.d., cited in Ramsden, 1988b; Ramsden, 1992) and that motivational factors can result in dramatic, Pygmalion-like changes in both learning approach and performance. However, a causal relationship cannot be inferred between learning approaches and outcomes, given that academic performance and perception rests on a multiplicity of factors as Trigwell and Prosser (1991) have indicated.

The significance of connections between student histories and current perceptions in this study has been confirmed in the anecdotal fabric of most issues arising from the data. Student histories provided an experiential reference point for thinking and talking about how student-teacher relationships, notions of relevance and anxiety, for example, influenced perceptions of assessment. However, the learning and assessment context together with individual motivations, rather than personal histories, determined the learning approach adopted. The overarching conclusion of the study has been that while student histories are influential and anecdotally

illustrative in determining current perceptions of assessment, they remain one factor among others, in the multifaceted, dynamic and unique process of perception formation.

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# Emerging Trends of Research on Transfer of Learning

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*The terms 'transfer of learning' and 'transfer of training' are usually found mutually exclusive in training and development literature. Transfer is a key concept in adult learning theories because most education and training aspires to transfer. The end goals of training and education are not achieved unless transfer occurs. Emerging trends of development in the area of research on transfer of learning from the training environment to the workplace environment have been drawn together and summarised in this review to introduce this important area of human performance support.*

*Transfer of training is defined as the extent of retention and application of the knowledge, skills and attitudes from the training environment to the workplace environment. In other words, transfer of training is the degree to which trainees effectively apply the learning from a training context to the job.*

*The increased attention to the transfer problem in recent years has resulted in the production and use of significant literature and research outcomes from the contexts of modern workplaces that prevail in the industrialised nations of western culture. However, the amount of actual research on strategies to facilitate transfer of formal employee training is still limited.*

*In congruence with the definition and context of transfer of training in government and non-government organisations, this review focused on related literature and previous studies geared towards the process and strategies of facilitating the application of knowledge, skills, and attitudes from training to job. Existing literature and previous research relating to factors influencing transfer of training were found subsequently classified in three main clusters (a) trainee characteristics, (b) training design and delivery characteristics, and (c) organisational or workplace environment characteristics.*

Transfer of training, transfer of learning, adult education, performance improvement, training effectiveness, transfer partnership, workplace

## INTRODUCTION TO THE ISSUE

Transfer of learning from training is the effective and continuing application, by trainees to their jobs, of the knowledge and skills gained in training (both on and off the job). Transfer may encompass both maintenance of behaviour, and its generalisation to new applications (Broad and Newstrom, 1992). This definition of transfer of training by Broad and Newstrom was found consistent with the purpose of this review.

Transfer of training generally relates to adult education, vocational or professional training or workplace education, and is defined as the degree to which trainees effectively apply knowledge,

skills, and attitudes gained in a training context to the job environment (Newstrom, 1984; Wexley and Latham, 1991).

Questions relating to transfer of learning from the training to the job generally include: What causes training success or failure? What characterises transfer of training? Is transfer of training different from transfer of learning? What are the factors that facilitate or inhibit the transfer process? Why do most training programs and courses fail to transfer? Who is responsible for maximising transfer of training to the job? What are the possible strategies effective for facilitating transfer of training in the context of formal training of employees?

Transfer takes place when our existing knowledge, abilities and skills affect the learning or performance of new skills or tasks. In other words, when learning in one context with one set of materials impacts on performance in another context or with different but related set of materials, then transfer of training has occurred.

In addition to effective instructional systems design, participative training delivery, and the trainees' motivation to try out new things; it is necessary "for transfer to have occurred, learned behaviour must be generalised to the job context and maintained over a period of time on the job" (Baldwin and Ford, 1988, p.64).

Researchers and authors have defined transfer of training as the effect of having learned one activity on an individual's execution of other activities. Activity refers to the application of knowledge, skills, and attitudes from the 'source' to the 'target' context. Outcome of transfer can be studied from three different angles, (a) the similarity of the source and the target situations (identical elements hypothesis), (b) the significance of general strategies for transfer, and (c) support of transfer by situated cognition (Tuijnman, 1996).

From these definitions, it becomes evident that behavioural observation is a form of behaviour assessment that entails careful observation of a person's exhibited behaviour in a particular situation. Methods for assessing changed work behaviours and the specific situations in which they occur reflect the extent of transfer of training. Such behaviour is a process that is influenced by ongoing learning, cognition and feeling; and is surfaced in terms of reactions to the perceived need for changed behaviour.

Changed work-behaviours as a result of training interventions indicate transfer. Transfer of training refers to the extent to which trainees apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained from the training back to the workplace (Mandl et al., 1991, cited in Tuijnman, 1996).

Transfer of training (or lack of it) is a complex process and depends upon the intent or motivation of the learner (trainee characteristics), the workplace environment including supervisory support (organisational environment and culture), and the instructional design as well as delivery features (job relevance) of the training program. Trainees' commitment to use the training, perceived ability to apply, and opportunity to use the new knowledge and skills back at the workplace are all linked with the notion of 'transfer of training'.

Human resource development (HRD) is a critical factor for organisational success. Training is the most common form of HRD that helps organisations to enhance workforce effectiveness and productivity by means of specified learning geared towards performance improvement. However, most training outcomes fail to produce full and sustained transfer of new knowledge, skills, and attitudes to the job.

Transfer is a key concept in adult learning theories because most education and training aspires to transfer. The end goals of training and education are not achieved unless transfer occurs. Transfer does not just happen. It is a process that requires implementation of carefully planned strategies to

facilitate positive transfer. It is equally important to minimise the effects of factors that are recognised as barriers or as causes of barriers to transfer.

Transfer partnership requires a balanced distribution of concern for and adequate involvement of trainees, their managers or supervisors, and trainers at all stages of the process – before, during, and after the training program or course (Broad and Newstrom, 1992). Effectiveness of any training program or a course includes evaluation of the extent of transfer of the training outcome at different levels – reaction, learning, application on the job, and organisational results (Kirkpatrick, 1996).

The terms ‘transfer of learning’ and ‘transfer of training’ are usually found mutually exclusive in training and development literature. However, transfer of learning relates to generating knowledge and information through education, which refers to the capacity to generalise and learn by analogy. Active learning is an important criterion for transfer to occur. Active learning requires the learner to be involved in the learning process by making conscious effort to learn. The psychological processes of logical thinking and reasoning facilitate the process of recognising and solving problems in new contexts by applying the solution or analogy from the previously acquired knowledge and skill (Misko, 1999). This process is also called ‘case based reasoning’ in transfer of learning.

Performance improvement requires a supportive organisational environment-which consists of factors such as organisational climate, supervisor support, and co-worker support for transfer of training to occur and sustain in the form of useful knowledge, skills, and attitudes as measures of improved performance on the job (Rothwell and Sredl, 1992).

Transfer of training has also been classified in terms of ‘near transfer’ and ‘far transfer’. Near transfer of skills and knowledge refers to the replication of the previously acquired knowledge and skills in all identical situations based on Thorndike’s theory of ‘identical elements’. Thorndike published the results of his studies in 1901 and maintained that “training in one task was not likely to lead to improvement in the performance of another task unless there was a clear similarity between them”. This theory of transfer is based on the belief that previous learning facilitates new learning only to the extent that the new learning task contains elements identical to those in the previous task (Perkins and Salomon, 1996).

According to Misko (1995), near transfer of training often involves tasks that are procedural in nature. These tasks include steps of operation in sequence, and the sequence of steps is repeated every time the task is performed. This type of procedural training is relatively easy to learn and transfer rate of learning is usually high, but the learner is unlikely to adapt such skills and knowledge when confronted with new environment and changed conditions.

Far transfer of training refers to learning new skills or performing new tasks in situations that differ significantly from the situations of original learning. Training conditions, which focus on far transfer, require learners to adapt the acquired knowledge and skills as guidelines to perform or learn in changed situations or new environments (Misko, 1995). Thus, far transfer goes beyond repetitive application of learned behaviour and involves cognition and analogy to adapt to new challenges. This kind of transformation of learning involves analogy and cognition. Transfer of learning from this type of training is difficult but more important than instances of near transfer from the perspectives of higher order learning and retention.

The dilemma is that when one acquires a near-transfer skill it seems to be at the expense of far-transfer generalisability of that skill. Indeed, most training in industrial setting focuses more on procedural and near transfer than on declarative and far transfer, though the importance of far transfer is acknowledged by almost all those responsible for training (Perkins and Salomon, in Tuijnman, 1996).

Existing definitions and conceptual frame-works illustrated by literature on transfer of learning or transfer of training do not differ fundamentally. Transfer of learning derives more from a knowledge base and generic competencies, whereas transfer of training is focused on specific competencies (perhaps with some generic extensions) in terms of explicit or implicit use of that knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the world of work. However, both these terms relate to learning, be it with children or adults, and originate from the domain of pedagogic psychology.

Putting together the themes of definitions and types of transfer, it becomes obvious that individuals have a tendency to change their behaviour as a result of their perception and subsequently as guided by extrinsic or intrinsic motivation. It also illustrates the fact that the evolution of research on transfer of training draws from theories of motivation, cognition, educational psychology, and learning to learn. Limited studies on transfer of training have focused on conditions, characteristics, nature of transfer, and related contextual phenomenon. Transfer of training can serve as a powerful measure of training effectiveness. However, the process of maximising transfer of training, by means of integrated strategies as characterised by those conditions and mechanisms, including the influence of organisational climate and supervisory behaviours, has not received the attention it deserves in the training literature.

### **EMERGING TRENDS OF RESEARCH**

Early research and experiments on transfer were influenced by the work of behaviourist psychologists (Thorndike, Pavlov, Skinner), and emphasised 'whether transfer did occur'. Contemporary research in transfer of training is generally aimed at determining 'why' transfer occurs- that is, discovering the exact variables that influence transfer (Ellis, 1965).

The debate between 'training' and 'education' still remained. Those distinctions were comparable with the differences between knowledge and skill, or competence and performance, or knowing and doing. Illustrating the difference between education and training one contemporary author argued that- for most people, demonstrating a causal relationship between education and performance problematic; On the other hand, there is a strong argument that there is indeed, a causal relationship between training and performance (Georges, 1996). However, for the purpose of this review, the terms 'transfer of learning' and 'transfer of training' do not make any fundamental distinction.

According to Ellis (1965), the focus of the debate should be on issues and problems of transfer rather than on the terms. Transfer of learning problems have been categorised into four major areas.

- a) Those which deal with research methodology and the more technical problems associated with the measurement of transfer,
- b) The specification of the major variables influencing transfer of learning and the way in which these variables influence transfer,
- c) The development of adequate conceptual models or theoretical structures for organising our knowledge about transfer, and
- d) The development of an educational technology that is capable of translating and applying our knowledge of transfer to the great variety of educational and training problems that exist.

Research studies of the past century in the field of education and training, including those in different areas of psychology, motivation, pedagogy, and adult learning, have greatly influenced the research tradition in transfer of training. Research traditions in the field of training and development, starting from the classic work of Thorndike in 1901 and coming through the century



to the year 2004, have made remarkable movements with encouraging achievements. The early behaviourists, including Skinner and Watson, developed and maintained 'the principle of identical elements' which illustrated that 'training in one task was not likely to lead to improvement in the performance of another task unless there was a clear similarity between them'. Based on this learning potential of adults, commercial and vocational curricula were first introduced in to schools in an effort to make school experience more similar to real work situations.

During the year 1910, Taylor introduced and popularised the 'principles of scientific management' (Taylor, 1911), which emphasised the effect of external stimuli on behaviour control of human beings. The whole thrust of behaviourism on training and development maintained that the environment controlled behaviour, with no input from the forces within the individual. This principle, in fact, disregarded any effect of intrinsic motivations, feelings, emotions or perceptions.

After 1930, the emergence of other theories of motivation on learning, training, and human performance (including the work of psychologists such as Piaget, Bruner, Maslow, Rogers, Herzberg, Lewin, and Vroom) challenged the behaviourists' mechanical account of human learning and performance.

As a result of this shift from the behaviourists' concern with 'observables' to the cognitivists' concern with the 'role of motivation and internal forces', individuals were identified as 'people who not only reflect but also evaluate and alter their own thinking' (Bandura, in Bigge and Shermis, 1992).

Transfer of training, as the resulting application of knowledge, skills and attitudes in contexts other than that of the original learning, started to be viewed as a result of change in individual's perception. This changing focus of research on transfer of training marked the introduction of 'humanism' recognising the influence of motivational and cognitive domains in many aspects of human learning, including behaviour modification, training, and performance.

In a more recent and comprehensive account of literature on training evaluation, Foxon (1989) presented a comparative description from the relevant Australian, British and American journals published during the years 1970 to 1986. Foxon identified critical themes of those publications in the journals and presented a summary. This summary is valuable for other researchers and could be helpful for the profession of training and development as it seeks to understand trends in the area of training evaluation. Transfer of training resembles characteristics of Level 3, on the job application, evaluation of training (Kirkpatrick, 1996).

Presenting a short description of those seventeen years of work on the evaluation of training and development programs, along with an annotated bibliography of evaluation literature, Foxon (1989) has given an account of trends and insights. Since 'transfer of training' relates closely with the evaluation of training in terms of application (or non-application) on the job, it is worthwhile to take note of some of the important observations and conclusions that have been derived from the study.

- a) The literature contains a confusing array of concepts, terminologies, techniques and models. Eighty per cent of the literature reviewed does not define or clarify the term evaluation.
- b) Many imply their definition when they outline the perceived purpose.
- c) Nearly one quarter of the articles neither present nor imply any specific purpose for evaluating training.

- d) The literature is cluttered with suggested evaluation techniques ranging from simple questionnaires to complex statistical procedures. Often the one technique is presented under several different names.
- e) More than 80 per cent of these articles lacked evidence of background research and many failed to offer practical applications.
- f) Kirkpatrick's four-stage model of evaluation is the one most widely known and used.
- g) There is an emerging awareness of the need to perform longitudinal evaluation.
- h) The review confirms that 'evaluation is regarded by most practitioners as desirable in principle, difficult in practice'.

It is not absolutely clear whether Foxon's (1989) findings and recommendations are validated by hard research or they are simply her impressions and observations from reading the literature. However, the analytical review and concluding remarks indicate an inadequacy of objective research in the field of training and development in general, and in the area of transfer of training in particular.

According to Baldwin and Ford (1988), work environment characteristics of training transfer consist of (a) supportive organisational climate, (b) pre-course discussion with boss (supervisor or manager), (c) opportunity to use knowledge and skills, and (d) post-training goal setting and feedback.

Hence, transfer of training is a process of facilitating efforts to make use of the learned behaviours leading to better results in the post-training context. Training cannot be isolated from the system it supports. In fact the organisational context matters (Quinones, et al., 1995; Rouillier and Goldstein, 1991) and matters in a significant way. To understand transfer of training, it is important to study how training providers and organisations analyse, design, develop, implement and evaluate training.

According to Tannenbaum and Yukl (1992), previous research and scientific literature available on transfer of training with focus on the influence of organisational context is limited. Giving an account of training research literature of the period from 1987 to 1991, Tannenbaum and Yukl (1992) clustered the work of training researchers' literature and previous studies into the following main categories.

- a) Training needs analysis: including organisational analysis, task analysis and person analysis.
- b) Design of training: including instructional foundations, performance improvement approaches, mental models, metacognition and learning skills.
- c) Training delivery methods: including simulations, games, high-technology methods and behaviour modelling.
- d) Trainee characteristics: including trainee abilities, skills, motivation, attitudes, expectations, self-efficacy and aptitude treatment interactions.
- e) Pre-training environment: including environmental cues, signals, trainee input and choice, and pre-training preparations.
- f) Post-training environment: including transfer environment, and post-training activities.
- g) Training evaluation: including evaluation design and analysis, and criterion issues.
- h) Training for specific populations: including management development training, needs assessment for managers, leadership training programs, mentoring, and team training.

In most cases, transfer of training could be the only criterion for the effectiveness of any training program. Level 3 and (and partly Level 4) evaluation of training reflect the extent of transfer success. The change of behaviour (Level 3) is the extent to which a change in behaviour has occurred because the trainees attended the training program. These evaluations are performed formally, through testing, or informally through observation, to determine if a behaviour change has occurred by answering the question, 'Do people use their newly acquired skills, knowledge, or attitude on the job?' Level 4 is the highest possible level and it measures the training effectiveness by answering the question, 'What impact has the training achieved?' In other words, 'Is it working and yielding value for the organisation?' (Kirkpatrick, 1996).

If the knowledge, skills, and attitudes from a training environment are carried over to the workplace environment with a relatively smooth transition, then the training is rated as effective and successful. This is in fact the philosophy and meaning of transfer of training. However, this fact has been overshadowed by mix of work in other aspects of organisational development. Most of the researchers have looked upon transfer as a product rather than as a process.

Although the extent of transfer of training becomes apparent in the post-training environment, the process of transfer consists of strategies, which require attention, before, during, and after the training, for the training outcome to be effectively transferable. Every strategy needs to be recognised and enhanced as part of the process of transfer of training. A careful analysis of the organisational environment will identify potential transfer facilitators and inhibitors (Foxon, 1993). On the basis of this analysis, trainees can be provided with ways to deal with the inhibitors, even if the organisational environment cannot be modified to promote transfer (Tannenbaum and Yukl, 1992).

Broad and Newstrom (1992) identified three major role-players Trainee(s), Managers and supervisors of the trainee(s), and Trainer(s) in the process of transfer of training. Across three phases of time before, during, and after the training, they classified a number of actions and strategies that influence transfer of training. This triangular partnership includes initiations or actions by each partner at each level for effective transfer of training to occur. Subsequently, some researchers applied this 'role-time model' and transfer partnership in the field of transfer of learning in workplace literacy programs (Taylor, 2000), and found that the role-time model was a useful classification system to:

- a) understand the different dimensions of a transfer partnership,
- b) document the transfer of learning strategies, and
- c) identify the barriers influencing the transfer of learning.

It was validated from the study that the extent of transfer of knowledge and skills from training to workplace depends upon the development of effective partnership among these three main actors.

The concept of partnership remains crucial in the whole process of transfer management strategies- before, during, and after any organisational training program or course (Taylor, 2000). Salas and Cannon-Bowers (2001), in yet another comprehensive and recent account of development in training research of the past decade, recommended for future researchers, as they contended "research aimed at studying how organisations implement training and why even the best-designed training systems can fail is encouraged" (Salas and Cannon-Bowers 2001, p.491). That recommendation is consistent with the purpose of this study.

## SUMMARY

Existing literature and previous training research relating to transfer of training can broadly be grouped into three categories in terms of coverage and areas of interest. Accordingly, this review

classified related literature and previous research on transfer of training into three main categories, that of, trainee characteristics, training design and delivery characteristics, and work-environment and supervisory support characteristics, detailed below.

- 1) **Organisational or workplace related factors:** which includes post-training transfer environment, supervisory behaviours, opportunity to practice, perceived level of supervisor support, elements of organisational climate and culture such as work-place environment - including incentives, feedback and reinforcement of desired behaviours.
- 2) **Training design and delivery related factors:** which includes theories and practices of human resource development (HRD) such as training needs analysis, organisational analysis, job/task relevance, design of training, methods and mode of training delivery, technology and instructional techniques.
- 3) **Trainee related factors:** which includes factors such as trainee's self-efficacy, ability and skills, goal-orientation, motivation, job attitudes, personality, interests, expectations, commitments, and readiness to learn and apply.

Training literature and previous studies on transfer of training provide evidence to support the claim that training works when it is theoretically driven, focused on required competencies, designed to provide trainees with realistic opportunities to practice and to receive feedback (Salas, and Cannon-Bowers, 2001). There has been an increasing trend of research and thinking in the area of transfer of training.

However, some important questions about transfer of training have not yet been critically examined to explain success or failure of training as interventions or strategies for human resource development. Some of these questions are, for example,

What are the critical factors that facilitate or inhibit the process of transfer of knowledge, skills and attitudes from training to workplace? Which of those factors in the organisational environment can be manipulated to maximise transfer? What are the supervisory behaviours or patterns of behaviour that can facilitate the generalisation and maintenance of knowledge and skills from a training context to the work-environment? What could be the nature of partnership in transfer management in different contexts?

In spite of a century of continued effort and an encouraging trend of development in training research- starting from the early work of Thorndike and Woodworth (1901) and arriving at the present day human performance technology and self-directed learning, some of the critical aspects of transfer of training, including the influence of workplace and supervisor roles, have not yet been researched thoroughly. Researchers, who contributed to our knowledge and insight in this area of training and development, have often researched effects of factors in isolation, and in fact, in contexts of modern workplaces of the western culture. Transfer of training, as a domain of concern for human performance, was not researched before in the context of developing countries.

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