

# International Education Journal



*WCCES Commission 6 Special Congress Issue*  
Special Issue: Volume 2 Number 5  
July 2001

Published by

Shannon Research Press  
Adelaide, South Australia  
ISSN 1443-1475  
<http://iej.cjb.net>



# International Education Journal

Volume 2, Number 5, July 2001

WCCES Commission 6 Special Congress Issue



Welcome to the International Education Journal. This is a broadly based journal encompassing research and review articles. Education is interpreted in a wide manner and includes human development, learning, school education, formal and informal education, tertiary and vocational education, industry training and lifelong learning.

**Online** - While there will be a hard copy version of the journal it is intended that it will be accessed in almost all instances via the web.

**Peer Review** - All articles appearing in this journal have been subjected to a blind peer-review process by two experts in the field.

**Copyright** - Copyright of material produced in this journal rests with individual contributors. Apart from fair use such as brief quotation for scholarly purposes, permission to use material in this journal should be obtained from the authors concerned.

The views and styles expressed in the articles in this publication are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily shared by the reviewers, the editors or the editorial advisory board.

Published by:  
Shannon Research Press,  
39 Dorrien Avenue,  
Woodcroft, SA 5162,  
Australia

Copyright © 2001

Shannon Research Press  
ISSN 1443-1475

All rights reserved. Apart from individual use, no part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means without prior written permission from the publisher.

Designed by Katherine Dix

Printed in Adelaide  
February 2004

## CONTENTS

|  |  |     |
|--|--|-----|
| <b>Towards culturally inclusive teacher education with specific reference to Oceania</b>   | K.H. Thaman                            | 1   |
| <b>The utilisation of the Cross-Cultural Awareness Programme (CCAP) for the cultivation of global understanding and local cultural identity in Korea, with particular reference to Koje Island</b> | H. Kim                                 | 9   |
| <b>Jade's transformation: A case study of teacher professional development in Taiwan</b>   | B. Fwu and H. Wang                     | 16  |
| <b>Educational reconstruction and post-colonial curriculum development: A comparative study of four African countries</b>  | D.C. Woolman                           | 27  |
| <b>Coming to America and Becoming American: Narration of Korean Immigrant Young Men</b>  | S. Choi, M.E. Cranley and J.D. Nichols | 47  |
| <b>Counselling for International Students in Western Universities: A Cross-Cultural Examination of Counselling Expectations and Services</b>   | P.D. Snider                            | 61  |
| <b>Local knowledge and value transformation in East Asian mass tutorial schools</b>  | P. Kwok                                | 86  |
| <b>A media discourse analysis of racism in South African schools</b>   | C. de Wet                              | 98  |
| <b>Educational policy in Africa and the issue(s) of context: The case of Nigeria and South Africa</b>  | O.I.W. Jagusah                         | 113 |
| <b>Losing cultural diversity in Europe?</b>  | T. Quetgles-Pons                       | 126 |
| <b>The impact of university education on conceptions of learning: A Chinese study</b>  | K. Wong and Q. Wen                     | 138 |

### FREE Online Subscription

Subscription is available as a free service in online format only. Either complete the subscription form at: <http://iej.cjb.net> or email the [onlineeditor@iej.cjb.net](mailto:onlineeditor@iej.cjb.net). The reader will be notified of the latest issue and contents.

### Publication Frequency

It is intended that the journal be published three times per year. However given the electronic characteristics of online publishing it is not necessary to wait until a full journal is assembled prior to publishing. Articles once accepted in appropriate form may be published without delay. It should be noted however that in electronic format pagination may vary according to the parameters of the downloading computer. Alternatively the journal article can be downloaded in PDF format, in which case the original pagination will be preserved.

---

**Editorial Board**
**Editors in Chief**

Prof John Keeves  
 Flinders University (Education)  
 Bedford Park, South Australia  
 Phone: 08-8201 2392,  
 Fax: 08-8201 3184,  
 john.keeves@flinders.edu.au

**Special Issue Guest Editor**

Prof Bob Teasdale  
 Flinders University (Education)  
 Bedford Park, South Australia  
 bob.teasdale@flinders.edu.au

**Online Editor**

Ms Katherine L. Dix  
 Flinders University (Education)  
 Bedford Park, South Australia  
 Phone: 08-8201 5684,  
 Fax: 08-8201 3184,  
 katherine.dix@flinders.edu.au

**Executive Assistant**

Ms Helen Askell-Williams  
 Flinders University (Education)  
 Bedford Park, South Australia  
 Helen.williams@flinders.edu.au

**Editorial Advisory Board**

Prof Bob Catley  
 Department of Political Studies  
 University of Otago  
 Prof Kevin Marjoribanks  
 Graduate School of Education  
 University of Adelaide  
 Dr Larry Saha  
 Department of Sociology  
 Australian National University

---

**Invitation**

**Contributors** - Authors are invited to submit material to this journal. As a general guide articles should be not more than 5000 words. The journal may publish longer works such as theses or dissertations as occasional monographs. In every instance material must be received in publisher ready format. Full details of publication style and other requirements are set out under the heading Author Information.

**Publishers** - If you wish to have books or educational software reviewed and published in the International Education Journal please contact the editors.

**Reviewers** - If you are interested in contributing to the journal by writing a review article (500-1000 words) please contact the authors indicating your areas of interest. We look forward to hearing from you.

---

**Aims of IEJ**

The aim of the International Education Journal is to publish articles that possess one or more of the following characteristics or qualities.

1. The presentation of substantive findings which are of importance for policy and practice beyond the country in which the research was conducted.
2. The integration of education with academic disciplines such as anthropology, demography, economics, history, law, linguistics, philosophy, political science, psychology and sociology, or examines educational issues from the perspective of the disciplines or investigates issues at the interface between education and one or more of these disciplines.
3. The examination of educational issues from a cross-cultural or indigenous people's perspective.
4. The evaluation of educational policy or programs or the use of information technology of cross-national interest and significance.
5. The employment of advanced research methods and measurement procedures that are clearly explained.
6. The presentation of empirically or analytically based investigations of theory, models or conceptual frame works in the field of education.
7. The syntheses of research findings from comparative and cross-national studies in education.

---

**Author Information**

IEJ welcomes practical and research manuscripts that focus on educational issues, provide a clear purpose and depth of discussion, and are presented in a straight-forward style accessible to an international audience.

The editors reserve the right to return poorly edited or improperly formatted manuscripts. Hard-copy only submissions cannot be accepted or returned.

Submissions should be forwarded electronically, either by:

e-mail to: [onlineeditor@iej.cjb.net](mailto:onlineeditor@iej.cjb.net)

or,

on a 1.4MB 3.5 inch floppy disk, including a printed copy, to:

IEJ Online Editor,  
 39 Dorrien Avenue,  
 Woodcroft, SA 5162

---

**Manuscript Details**

The manuscript should:

- show the article's title, authors' names, affiliation, and email addresses (these will be included on the online page), and postal address and telephone numbers (these will be removed from the final online page)
- abstract should not exceed 150 words
- paper should not exceed 5,000 words (20,000 for occasional papers)
- include 5 key words describing the article including those in the title
- be in final form ready for reviewing
- conform to the APA Reference System

General Principles for layout:

- Papers should be prepared using the downloadable template *iejbase.doc* with Microsoft WORD on Mac or PC.
- Use the heading and formatting styles contained in the template, under the Styles Menu, to format article.
- Images and tables should be correctly positioned with caption so that they are referred in the text before their appearance.
- Include images that are imported or inserted into the text from an external source as separate graphic files (GIF or JPG)
- Figures constructed in WORD from the Draw Menu must be 'grouped'.
- Use endnotes, with one set of numbers running through the whole article.
- Use italics (not underline) for emphasis.
- Do not create additional headers and footers in the template *iejbase.doc*, just modify appropriately.
- Do not use page numbers in text.

If you have any questions regarding layout and presentation, please contact the IEJ Online Editor by email on: [onlineeditor@iej.cjb.net](mailto:onlineeditor@iej.cjb.net)

---

**FUIIE**

The publishers have arranged for the Flinders University Institute of International Education to produce and host an electronic mirror site containing all material in the Journal, accessed free of charge. There are no restrictions on downloading or printing single copies. The electronic version also provides readers with a search tool.

FUIIE web site:  
[fuiie.cjb.net](http://fuiie.cjb.net)

## Towards culturally inclusive teacher education with specific reference to Oceania

---

**Konai Helu Thaman**

University of the South Pacific *thaman\_k@usp.ac.fj*

*This paper describes attempts by educators in the island nations of the South Pacific to ensure that formal education is more culturally inclusive for learners as well as teachers. Now known by many as Oceania, the region continues to deal with its colonial legacy, educators being at the forefront of the struggle to cope with the impact of its particular circumstances and history.*

Indigenous knowledge and wisdom; teacher education; curriculum relevance;  
culturally inclusive education; Oceania

### SCHOOLING AS CULTURALLY ALIENATING

European and US colonial activities in the islands of the Pacific Ocean resulted, among other things, in the introduction of schools and the teaching of European and Anglo-American based knowledge, skills and values. This led to the transformation not only of the structures and processes of our cultures but also our worldviews.

Today, the degree to which such processes influence the way we think and learn largely depends on our ability to clarify for ourselves the differences between our received wisdom (from our formal, mainly western education) and the wisdom of the (home) cultures in which we grew up and were socialised, and from which we continue to learn important knowledge, skills and values. In the context of formal education, the difference between these two sources is the “cultural gap”, which is small for those students whose home cultures are attuned to the culture of formal education but wide for those whose home culture is different.

### EDUCATION AND CULTURE

For my purposes I define education as an introduction to worthwhile learning, and culture as a way of life of a people which includes their store of important knowledge, skills and values expressed through a language and transmitted to the young for the sake of cultural continuity and survival. In this context, education and culture are inextricably interwoven since the content of all education has value underpinnings that are always associated with a particular cultural agenda, given that no education can be “culture-free.” In most Oceanic societies today, traditional cultural values underpin much of what people emphasise and think about, and continue to be the framework that people use to justify their behaviour and to explain the behaviour of others (Thaman, 1988).

In most Oceanic communities, people still share a worldview in which life is a web of interrelationships that provide meaning to and a framework for their existence in a particular society. This framework, often manifested in different types of kinship relationships, defines particular ways of being and behaving as well as knowledge and wisdom, and how these are passed on from one generation to another. In this context, worthwhile learning ought to be

about cultural survival and continuity, with a “curriculum” that is similar to that described by Lawton (1974) as a collection of the best of a culture, the transmission of which is so important that it must not be left to chance but to specially prepared people – teachers. Sadly, though, most of our schools and institutions of higher learning (such as teachers’ colleges) are actually sites of struggle as most of our teachers and learners continue to teach and learn about knowledge, skills and values that are almost exclusively associated with cultures other than their own, and often very alien to their lived realities, making schooling irrelevant and meaningless for many learners as well as teachers.

### **THE SCHOOLING AGENDA**

In so-called developed countries the school is normally expected to serve three functions, namely to promote economic progress, to transmit culture and to cultivate children’s intellectual and moral development (Serpell, 1993). We know, however, that in practice schools fall far short of the ideal synthesis of all of these functions. In Oceania, as in most developing, post-colonial contexts, the economic and cultural agendas of schooling continue to come into conflict, mainly because of different perceptions about children’s upbringing and its relationship to their moral and intellectual development. The cultural agenda is embedded within Pacific indigenous cultural traditions, while the economic agenda is European-based, informing what teachers and students are supposed to do in school.

In such a situation, many teachers occupy a culturally ambiguous position. On the one hand their professional training commits them to the rationale, processes and practice of a culturally alien school curriculum, while on the other their personal identities are usually rooted in their (Pacific) cultural traditions and norms. Their training makes them part of an (elite) group whose knowledge and skills help set them apart from the rest of the community, yet their early upbringing was mainly in the medium of an indigenous or local language that is similar to if not directly continuous with that in which most of their pupils are growing up. Furthermore the relationships between pupils and teachers as well as those between pupils and their parents are negotiated within the terms of reference of local and/or indigenous cultures which have their own ideas about moral and cognitive development, interpersonal and social responsibility, as well as the development of wisdom.

In Oceania the extent to which the school represents the cultures of teachers and students is minimal. The officially sanctioned values are those of the school bureaucracy, the introduced curriculum and the teaching profession, not those of the majority of teachers and learners. Moreover, as alluded to earlier, school culture relies on universalism and impersonality while the cultures of most teachers and students rely on specific contexts and interpersonal relationships (Thaman, 1988). Schooling promotes individual merit while Oceanic cultures are still generally based on the primacy of the group. At best schooling offers the fortunate few access to the modern, monetised sector; at worst it is a recipe for cultural destruction and systematised selfishness. Today, as we grapple with increasing student underachievement, high push-out rates and general ineffectiveness, many people are asking the question: “What and whose knowledge is considered worthwhile to teach and/or to learn in school?”

### **CURRICULUM RELEVANCE**

The concern with curriculum relevance in our region dates back to the early 1970s when the school curriculum was seen by Pacific Island leaders as an important instrument in preparing people for independence from various colonial masters. A major regional curriculum project funded by UNDP and managed by UNESCO was based at the University of the South Pacific from 1970 to 1975. Charged with the development of curriculum materials for junior

high schools (in Mathematics, English, Science, Social Science, Home Economics and Industrial Arts), the project involved foreign experts and local teachers; some of the curriculum materials produced are still used in our schools today.

An important lesson learnt from this project was the realisation by some curriculum personnel that the products as well as the process of curriculum development needed to be more culturally sensitive and inclusive (Thaman, 1985). The designation by the United Nations of a World Decade for Cultural Development (1987-97) served to strengthen this concern and a UNESCO regional seminar in Rarotonga, Cook Islands in 1992 provided an opportunity for Pacific educators to reaffirm the need for them to have ownership of their formal education, for the betterment of their various societies. The establishment of a UNESCO Chair in Teacher Education and Culture at the regional University of the South Pacific five years later, was evidence of the international community's commitment to teacher education as a vehicle for ensuring cultural inclusiveness in formal education in our region.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHERS**

Teachers have not always been at the centre of the international community's attention. In 1995, for example, the World Bank Education Sector Review of six Key options for reforming education systems did not even mention teachers, their selection or training. Such evident neglect of teachers reinforced a belief in many of our countries (including for example, in the regional curriculum reform project I mentioned earlier) that educational systems could be changed without having to deal with teachers. By the mid 1990s teachers throughout the world, including Oceania, had been relegated to an inferior role both in relation to their working conditions and from the viewpoint of teaching itself. A quote from Colin Power, then Assistant Director General at UNESCO, is revealing. In a speech to mark World Teachers' Day in 1998, Power asked, "Would you let your son or daughter become a teacher in your country today? If not, why not?"

Teachers, however, have finally attracted attention. In 1996 for example, the Report to UNESCO of its Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century (the Delors Report), devoted a whole chapter to teachers, and warned that countries that wish to improve the quality of education must first improve the recruitment, training, social status and working conditions of their teachers. In 1998, a sub-regional seminar, held in Fiji, agreed that teachers in Oceania had low levels of remuneration and status, and in their joint message to commemorate World Teachers Day in October last year the chief executives of UNESCO and ILO appealed to the world community to renew their commitment of support to teachers. They also asked governments to find ways of honouring the pledge made at the World Education Forum held in Dakar in 2000, and to endorse the Dakar Framework for Action in order to enhance the status, morale and professionalism of teachers and to reaffirm the claim that teachers will remain the core of education systems in this century.

The general neglect of teachers in the educational reforms of the last thirty years in Oceania reflects the global picture. However, there were also other factors. The first relates to a general belief that teachers did not need formal training, a view that is particularly unfortunate when held by key people such as Ministers of Education. Another reason might have been the emphasis, placed by overseas curriculum development consultants, on learners rather than teachers and their attempts to produce so-called 'teacher-proof' curricula, based on the assumption that pupils would learn in spite of their teachers. Finally, teachers were generally left out because of our various countries' heavy dependence on overseas aid donors and their foreign consultants, most of whom brought with them their own educational philosophies and ideologies which, together with the absence of clear national

education visions, resulted in the uncritical acceptance of educational theories and ideas by their Pacific counterparts.

### TARGETING TEACHERS

The remainder of this paper outlines how some of us in Oceania are attempting to help teachers ensure that more pupils benefit from their school education by creating culturally inclusive learning environments. I shall explain a joint effort among regional teacher education institutions and the University of the South Pacific (USP), through its UNESCO Chair and its Institute of Education, to assist teacher educators better contextualise their work in the hope that their students, who would be teachers, would do the same.

In 1992 principals of teachers colleges in the Oceania region met in Suva, Fiji, to form the Pacific Association of Teacher Educators (PATE) and to discuss issues of mutual concern. Among these was the appropriateness of the teacher education curriculum for preparing teachers who understood and appreciated students' needs and backgrounds. It was felt that even though a lot of new curriculum materials had been developed, few teachers understood what curriculum reform was about and fewer still were able to satisfactorily implement new curricula. Participants at the PATE consultation also agreed on the need for cultural relevance not only in the content of the (school) curriculum but also in its philosophy. A paper I presented at that first meeting introduced the idea of a culturally inclusive metaphor - *kakala* - as a framework for both curriculum development and teacher education (Thaman, 1992).

Three years later, at another meeting of PATE, I was asked to present another paper on how Pacific cultural knowledge, skills and values might be incorporated into the curriculum, not only of schools but also of post-secondary institutions. At this meeting, participants agreed to review their respective teacher education curricula in order to make them more culturally democratic. The mechanism for this review was a UNESCO-funded research project that was undertaken jointly by the UNESCO Chair, the USP Institute of Education and regional teachers' colleges. The aim of the project was to find out the extent to which teacher education curricula incorporated aspects of Pacific cultures. The results showed a need for improved contextualisation of teacher education courses and a decision was made in 1998 to develop and produce materials in the form of modules which teacher educators in the region might use to help them understand and incorporate indigenous and local (Pacific) knowledge and processes in their work.

The authors of the modules are Pacific researchers and educators who recognise the important role of teachers in any attempt to change what goes on in schools. The modules are intended for use by staff of teachers' colleges to help them better contextualise their teaching as well as to stimulate debate on the relationship between culture and formal education in our region. So far, six modules have been published. The first, entitled *Towards culturally democratic teacher education* was written by me. It introduces the project as well as making brief suggestions about how elements of Pacific cultures might be incorporated into different subject areas such as language and communication studies, expressive arts, science, mathematics, human development and education.

The second module, *Vernacular languages and classroom interaction in the Pacific*, by Dr. Ana Taufe'ulungaki from Tonga, examines the use of the mother tongue in basic education as a medium of teaching and learning, and the implications for teacher education. Module 3, *Incorporating local knowledge in teaching about education and society* is authored by Ms Una Nabobo and describes a very successful course which she and a colleague, Ms Jennie Teasdale, designed and taught at the Fiji College of Advanced Education. Module 4 was



written by New Zealand born Samoan researcher Anne-Marie Tupuola. Entitled *Making sense of human development: beyond western concepts and universal assumptions*, she interrogates western psychological theories of human development and examines, in particular, the stage of 'adolescence' as well as notions of individuality and independence. She concludes that it is culturally inappropriate to interpret human development in Pacific societies using only western psychological terms and concepts.

Module 5, *Ways of mathematising in Fijian society*, by Dr. Sala Bakalevu, suggests that the problems Fijian students face in learning mathematics is largely due to a mismatch between the students' cultural background and the expectations of schooling. She also says that the Fiji school mathematics curriculum does not recognise Fijian ways of mathematising, such as how Fijians count, measure and practice traditional economy and exchange although Fijian notions have the same mathematical purposes as those described in school mathematics. She suggests that an understanding of ethnomathematics would help teachers encourage students to use strategies derived from their own ways of mathematising, and proceed to formal operations only when pupils are ready.

Module 6 is authored by Dr. Kabini Saga of Solomon Islands. Entitled *Learning from indigenous leadership*, Saga raises the issue of schools not reflecting the important values of their communities, leading to a denial of ownership of schooling. He urges teachers to help develop ownership and representation and suggests that the study of indigenous leadership processes and structures be included in the teacher education curriculum. Through such studies, he argues, teachers would not only become more sensitive to the cultures of the communities they serve but become better cultural bridges for their students. Four more modules are expected to be published soon.

### COMPARATIVE STUDIES

As well as materials production, research into indigenous educational ideas is also being encouraged as a major activity. During the past five years, staff and students at our University have been gathering information on various indigenous communities' notions of learning, knowledge and wisdom as part of a course that I teach on *Educational theories and ideas*. A summary of this course appears in Teasdale and Ma Rhea (2000). An important part of the course is students' exploration of their own cultural values and educational ideas, and comparison with those of other students. The exercise has proven to be both interesting and instructive as students become aware of the similarities and differences between their own cultural values and those of other Pacific cultures as well as between Pacific and Western values (Thaman, 2000). A collection of essays about vernacular educational ideas from Oceania is currently under preparation; when completed it will be the main text for the course

### A WAY FORWARD

I will conclude with a summary of a Pacific education symposium held at the University of the South Pacific early in 2001. A group of about fifteen concerned educators from our region met to discuss educational issues currently facing our various island nations with a view to future collaboration especially in the areas of educational research and development. A summary of our main recommendations was presented to a meeting of Education ministers from the region that was held in Auckland in May 2001.

Our symposium was made possible by a grant from the New Zealand Overseas Development Agency. Participants came from Fiji, New Zealand, Tokelau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Tonga, Papua New Guinea, Marshall Islands and the University of the South

Pacific in Fiji. The meeting was jointly hosted by the USP Institute of Education and Victoria University of Wellington, N.Z. Participants were chosen because of their reputation in the areas of innovative teaching, consultancy and research as well as their commitment to seeking alternative ways of addressing long established educational issues. Although participants identified many issues, the two overriding ones were: (i) lack of ownership by Pacific peoples of the formal education process, and (ii) lack of a clearly articulated vision that could inform both development and education in the region (assuming of course that education is accepted as an instrument in achieving national visions and developmental goals). Symposium participants agreed that the main challenge facing our region today had to be the reconceptualisation of education in a way that would allow Pacific peoples to reclaim the education process and at the same time allow for the articulation of a Pacific vision for education. (Interestingly enough the issue of ownership had already been identified at the Rarotonga meeting of 1992). A new metaphor, *The Tree of Opportunity*, was endorsed by participants as an appropriate framework for re-thinking Pacific education.

The *Tree of Opportunity* is firmly rooted in Oceanic cultures. The strengths and advantages that the tree gains from its root source will facilitate growth and strength, and allow for the incorporation of foreign or external elements that could be grafted on to the tree without altering its identity. In educational terms, this would mean ensuring that Pacific cultural values are appropriately embedded within the processes and structures of formal education in order to provide a strong foundation for worthwhile learning.

The symposium also considered the various implications of their accepted metaphor. Politically it means defining a new vision for education that recognises the contributions and roles of Oceanic cultures (including the people) in modern development in general and educational reforms in particular. Such a vision needs to be supported by political commitment and resource provisions, and formalised by various appropriate policies and legislations. Economically, it means focusing on the most disadvantaged groups and ensuring that adequate financial and human resources are allocated in order to facilitate desired results. It would also mean enhancing and strengthening village economies in order to ensure sustainability and security, important bases for developing our modern cash economies. Socially it means strengthening relationships and partnerships at all levels, especially links between schools and their communities in order to ensure that all stakeholders are participating in the formulation of national visions and processes of education and development. It will also require the development of appropriate school language policies and the active involvement of custodians of Pacific cultures in the process of schooling in order to identify skills and behaviours as well as values, beliefs and knowledge systems that are considered critical for the survival and sustainability of our cultures and societies.

Finally it would mean broadening the outcomes of education in order to ensure that Pacific heritages are enhanced and maintained while at the same time provide a foundation for building other types of worthwhile learning that are a synthesis of indigenous and global knowledges. This may be achieved through:

- (i) better contextualising the curriculum;
- (ii) developing a new pedagogy based on Pacific values, beliefs and knowledge systems that incorporate Pacific styles of learning and ways of knowing;
- (iii) reorienting teacher education and training in order to ensure that all teachers are competent in, and have a deep understanding of, as many Pacific languages and cultures as possible;

- (iv) developing new forms of student assessment that take account of the anticipated changes in curriculum and pedagogy;
- (v) incorporating indigenous Pacific processes, ways of management and administrative structures; and
- (vi) strengthening research capabilities in our post-secondary institutions as well as in our various communities.

The symposium also made a number of recommendations both short and long-term in nature, focussing on national as well as regional contexts. These recommendations were grouped under headings such as: Educational Policy Formulation and Development; Curriculum Reform; Teacher Education; and Financing of Education, including the role of foreign aid. However, the recommendations did not seem to sit comfortably with the popular view which promotes education almost entirely for economic reasons, concerned largely with the issue of human resource development and widening paid employment opportunities. Although the importance of the economic agenda of schooling cannot be over emphasised, it was felt that the other agendas of the school needed to be taken seriously if student achievement is going to be an important criterion for assessing the success of national “investment” in formal education.

If, however, we wish to use an economic lens to view schooling in Oceania, we would have to ensure that there is strong link between a community’s economically productive activities and the content of basic education (or primary schooling). Unfortunately the primary school curriculum has been neglected for many years with school examination results (for entry into secondary schools) being used as the main indicator of what a student knows (based on a prescribed program) rather than what a student may know as a result of the quality of teaching experienced. It is therefore important for our schools to place more emphasis on the other agendas of schooling, especially its moral and pedagogical agendas, even though the scope for religious and political manipulation may seem great to some people. Given the contrast mentioned earlier between the practices of children’s home cultures and that of the school it would seem desirable for school authorities to consult with adult members of different communities as part of the process of curriculum development. Another factor which was seen as significantly contributing towards students’ underachievement in school has to do with our region’s heavy reliance on English or French as the mediums of instruction, languages that are the second, third or even fourth languages to many school children. This is a major educational issue that merits deeper analysis.

## CONCLUSION

The contrast between the culture of modern schooling and most Oceanic cultures as these are lived today and its implications for formal education (learning and teaching) cannot be over-emphasised. It is, however, not an unbridgeable gap. The main bridge, in the view of many Pacific island educators, must be the teacher, and so we have decided to focus our attention on those who prepare teachers in our colleges and higher education institutions. We understand that this is not the only solution, however. We continue to encourage research on Pacific indigenous knowledge systems as well as pupils’ learning styles, in the knowledge that these would help inform our work. Much remains to be done as we continue to interrogate our different ways of seeing the world in general and our education in particular. We hope that collectively we will be able to find better and more culturally inclusive ways of ensuring that the majority of our children will benefit from their school education and to have the opportunity to learn about the best their cultures have to offer so

that they can create for themselves a synthesis for the purposes of cultural continuity and sustainability.

### REFERENCES

- Bakalevu, S. (2000) *Ways of mathematising in Fijian society*. Module Five, Pacific Cultures in the Teacher Education Curriculum Series. UNESCO Chair/Institute of Education, USP, Suva.
- Lawton, D. (1974) *Class, culture and the curriculum*. London: RKP.
- Little, A. (1995) In conclusion: questions of culture and education. *Prospects: UNESCO Quarterly Review of Comparative Education*, 25(4):777-782.
- Nabobo, U. (2000) *Incorporating local knowledge in teaching about education and society: a Fiji case study*. Module Three, Pacific Cultures in the Teacher Education Curriculum Series, UNESCO Chair/Institute of Education, USP, Suva.
- Saga, K. (2000) *Learning from indigenous leadership*. Module Six, Pacific Cultures in the Teacher Education Curriculum Series, UNESCO Chair/Institute of Education, USP, Suva.
- Serpell, R. (1993) *The significance of schooling*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Taufe'ulungaki, A.M. (2000) *Vernacular languages and classroom interaction in the Pacific*. Module Two, Pacific Cultures in the Teacher Education Curriculum Series. UNESCO Chair/Institute of Education, USP, Suva.
- Taufe'ulungaki, A.M. (2001) *The Tree of Opportunity: Re-thinking Pacific Education*. Symposium Summary, USP, Suva.
- Teasdale, G. R. & Teasdale, J.I. (eds). (1992) *Voices in a seashell: education, culture and identity*. IPS/UNESCO, Suva.
- Teasdale, G. R. & Ma Rhea, Z. (2000) *Local knowledge and wisdom in higher education*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Thaman, K.H. (1988) *Ako and Faiako: cultural values, educational ideas and teachers' role perceptions in Tonga*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of the South Pacific, Suva.
- Thaman, K.H. (1992a) Towards a culture-sensitive model of curriculum development for Pacific Island countries. *Directions*, 13 (1):1-11.
- Thaman, K.H. (1992b) Looking towards the source: a consideration of (cultural) context in teacher education. In Benson, C. and Taylor, N (eds). *Pacific teacher education forward planning meeting: proceedings*. Institute of Education, USP, Suva.
- Thaman, K.H. (1995) Concepts of learning, knowledge and wisdom in Tonga, and their relevance to modern education. *Prospects: UNESCO Quarterly Review of Comparative Education* 25 (4):723-735
- Thaman, K.H. (2000a) Towards a new pedagogy: Pacific cultures in higher education. In Teasdale, G. R. & Ma Rhea, Z. (eds). *Local knowledge and wisdom in higher education*, London: Pergamon, pp.43-50.
- Thaman, K.H. (2000b) *Towards cultural democracy in teacher education*. Introductory Module, UNESCO Chair/Institute of Education, USP, Suva.
- Thaman, K.H. (2001) Towards a Pacific philosophy of education: the role of teachers. Keynote address, Fijian Teachers Association AGM, Suva.
- Tupuola, A. (2000) *Making sense of human development: beyond western concepts and universal assumptions*. Module Four, Pacific Cultures in the Teacher Education Curriculum, UNESCO Chair/Institute of Education, USP, Suva

# The utilisation of the Cross-Cultural Awareness Programme (CCAP) for the cultivation of global understanding and local cultural identity in Korea, with particular reference to Koje Island

---

**Hyunduk Kim**

Koje College [hdkim@mail.koje.ac.kr](mailto:hdkim@mail.koje.ac.kr)

*As a way to understand the diversity of cultures and to respect differences that exist among peoples and nations in the world, the Cross-Cultural Awareness Programme (CCAP) was launched in September 1998 by the Korean National Commission for UNESCO in cooperation with the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea. CCAP invites foreign residents in Korea to visit Korean schools in order to share the culture of their nations with Korean youth.*

*Based on related literature, reviews of participant reports, and program management experience, this paper will introduce the activities of CCAP in Korea, and particularly in Koje Island, analyse the present condition of CCAP, and evaluate the impact of program management. It then will offer some recommendations for the utilisation of CCAP to solve tensions between local and global cultures and to explore the role of local cultures in cultivating the global understanding of young students.*

cross-cultural awareness, diversity, global understanding,  
Republic of Korea, local cultures

## INTRODUCTION

As the peoples and nations of the world become closer through globalisation, we as human beings have to understand global ties and explore the place of local cultural identity in a rapidly globalising world. Schools need to provide learners with a sense of their own local cultural identities while at the same time offering a global perspective. One effective way to cultivate both the global understanding and the local cultural identity of students is through the promotion of cultural contact among diverse societies (Harvey, 1987; Hammond & Collins, 1993; Anderson, Nicklas & Crawford, 1994).

As a way to understand the diversity of cultures and develop respect for the differences that exist among them, the Cross-Cultural Awareness Programme (CCAP) was launched in September 1998 by the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (1999) in cooperation with the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea. Since its inception, CCAP has served to emphasise the importance of intercultural dialogue in promoting mutual respect and understanding between Korean youth and foreign residents in Korea.

CCAP invites foreign residents in Korea to share the culture of their nations with Korean youth. Foreigners visit elementary and secondary schools with Korean Interpretation Volunteers (KIVs) to share their culture with Korean students. Individuals of any nationality, race, gender and cultural background are welcome to join CCAP as a Cultural

Exchange Volunteer (CEV). Former experience in teaching children is desirable but not necessary. The only requirements for good CEVs are a sense of responsibility and interest in cultural exchange activities and volunteer work. CEVs prepare cultural exchange activities in collaboration with KIVs and school teachers. CCAP is not designed solely to provide Korean students with knowledge of specific cultures, but rather as a means for sharpening their thoughts and attitudes in favour of cultural diversity and open-mindedness in general.

### **OBJECTIVES**

CCAP strives to intertwine local and global communities through a voluntary network of different people residing in Korea. More specifically, CCAP aims to:

- (i) augment education for international understanding in schools by making Korean youth aware of the need for mutual understanding, cross-cultural respect and tolerance;
- (ii) provide opportunities for individuals from different cultural backgrounds to share their traditions with others thereby strengthening their commitment to a community of mutual respect.
- (iii) foster positive interaction between the Korean and foreign communities and create a constructive partnership through a process of open-ended dialogue between the peoples of different nations residing in Korea.

### **CCAP ACTIVITIES FROM 1998 TO 2000**

During the experimental implementation period from September to November 1998, eighty CCAP classes were successfully conducted at 35 elementary, middle and high schools in Seoul and Incheon, with 61 CEVs and 34 KIVs involved. In 1999, CCAP was expanded to include 109 schools in Seoul, Incheon, Kyunggi Province, Taejon, Chunan, Chungju, Kwangju and Koje Island. In total, 114 CEVs conducted 456 CCAP classes in collaboration with 104 KIVs. In 2000 the number of participating classes (N=462) and schools (N=107) increased, and participation extended to remote areas (Korean National Commission for UNESCO, 2000; 2001).

### **MAIN FEATURES OF THE CCAP**

The instructional method of CCAP is not the traditional lecture style. CEVs are advised that when they talk about cross-cultural awareness, they should refer to specific examples from their own daily lives, including what they eat, the way they greet and speak, how they play and interact with friends, and what they value in their lives. CEVs are recommended to utilise activities such as singing, dancing, cooking, sewing, drawing and so on. A CEV is guided not to provide students with knowledge of a specific culture in an encyclopaedic way. Rather, a CEV is encouraged to utilise activity-oriented instructional methodologies to develop the students' thoughts and attitudes in favour of cultural diversity and open-mindedness. Dance, music, song and sports can often bridge the communication gap better than traditional approaches.

The CEVs are asked to try and share with Korean students those aspects of their culture that would be difficult or impossible for the students to experience through the regular school curriculum. The sharing of personal experiences, the display and discussion of cultural artefacts, teaching traditional dances, and cooking traditional dishes, are just some of the approaches that have been used.

CCAP especially tries to include CEVs from East Asian, Central American, South American and African countries which are not familiar to Korean youngsters in order to eliminate cultural misunderstandings and prejudices about those countries.

CEVs, KIVs and school teachers are equally major actors within CCAP. As a main actor a CEV is expected to be a teacher for Korean students and an unofficial diplomat for her or his country. The role of the KIVs is equally as important as that of the CEVs. As an important assistant a KIV can give further ideas and feedback about the CEV's planned presentation in a pre-meeting. A KIV can give a CEV useful ideas from the Korean perspective and tell a CEV about students' expectations. When the presentation is being done in the class by a CEV, a KIV is expected to manage and lead the class. Actually students are listening to a KIV's interpretation as well as a CEV's presentation.

Teachers at the participating school are also critical to the development of CCAP. Teachers are advised to be involved in the pre-meeting stage to give information on their students and their knowledge bases to the presentation topic. During presentation the students become attentive when the teachers are present.

### **Program Management**

Volunteers can join CCAP through the internet. When completing the registration form, they identify the regions which they can visit, and choose the weekdays on which they will be available. Once volunteer registration is completed, the volunteer's name appears on the CCAP-Net. Then a school teacher chooses a CEV & KIV from the list of volunteers who are available in their area on the day they want to have a CCAP class. After the selection is made, both the CEV and the KIV will receive a request for a CCAP class from CCAP-Net through an e-mail.

Once the volunteers accept the request, the class will be confirmed and the detailed class schedule will be sent to them. The CEV is also advised to have a class preparation meeting with her/his interpreter, and with the school teacher. A well thought out plan is essential to make a CCAP class successful and enjoyable for both students and volunteers. As part of their planning, CEVs are advised to avoid overly serious subjects that require lengthy explanations. Both the CEV and the KIV are recommended to approach the class with enthusiasm, and to try and remain responsive, flexible, and curious. A CEV needs to be prepared to answer questions about her or his personal life. Students are as much interested in a CEV as they are interested in the unique culture of the CEV's country.

### **Two Case Studies**

To illustrate the nature of the CCAP, two examples are presented. The first is based on a sixty-minute lesson presented by a CEV from Italy to a class of fifty students at an elementary school. The CEV and KIV shared the common language of English, and this was the medium of communication between them. The CEV focused the lesson on the historic buildings and old fairy tales of her home town, Martina Franca, in southern Italy, and on the *Tarantella*, a traditional dance of that region. Table 1 sets out the plan of the lesson.

The second example is based on an eighty minute lesson about Scotland given at a special school for the handicapped. Once again, communication between the CEV and the KIV was in English. Eight students were in the class. The lesson focused on learning Scottish folk songs and a dance, and colouring the Scottish flag. Table 2 sets out the lesson plan developed collaboratively by the CEV, the KIV and the class teacher.

**Table 1. Italian Lesson Plan**

| Phase                                   | Time (min) | Description   | Teaching Aids                       |
|---|------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Self introduction                       | 5          | Introduce personal and family background  | Map                                 |
| Historical buildings of Martina Franca  | 10         | Introduce historical buildings of Martina Franca<br>Show pictures and postcards<br>Show miniatures of old house                             | Pictures<br>Postcards<br>Miniatures |
| Old fairy tale                          | 10         | Tell the traditional fairy tale to the students   |                                     |
| Traditional dance in southern Italy     | 10         | Demonstrate and teach the <i>Tarantella</i><br>Tell story of the dance  | CD Player                           |
| Korean cultural performance by students | 10         | Students perform a traditional Korean dance   |                                     |
| Questions & answers                     | 15         | Question and answer session about Italy<br>Question students about what they learned, and give a gift to the student whose answer was right |                                     |

**Table 2. Scottish Lesson Plan**

| Phase  | Time (min) | Description   | Teaching Aids                                    |
|--|------------|---|--|
| Self introduction                            | 10         | Introduce personal and family background  |  |
| Brief introduction to Scotland               | 10         | Introduce landscapes and wildlife of Scotland   | Map<br>Magazine pictures                         |
| Telling an old story about the Scottish flag | 20         | Explain about the Scottish flag<br>Ask students to colour the blue parts of the flag  | Scottish flag in black outline on plain A4 paper |
| Two Scottish songs and a dance               | 15         | Teach two simple Scottish songs<br>Teach a traditional Scottish dance   |  |
| The Loch Ness monster                        | 25         | Introduce the concept of the Loch Ness monster and show some pictures and tell stories<br>Ask students to make models of the Loch Ness monster, using coloured modelling clay | Pictures, postcards<br>Coloured modelling clay   |

## ANALYSIS OF THE PRESENT CONDITION OF CCAP

### Effects

The CCAP seeks to develop a culture of tolerance, mutual respect and peace. It provides opportunities for participants from different cultural backgrounds to share their traditions, local knowledges and wisdoms with others, thereby strengthening their commitment to a community of mutual respect. All participants, including Korean students, teachers, foreign volunteers and Korean interpretation volunteers, can deepen their understanding of each other and broaden their commitment towards these goals.

A major reason for lack of peace amongst countries is misunderstanding or rejection of the culture of the other. Because people have biases about the religions, customs and lifeways of other cultures, or make judgements about other cultures based on their own cultural perspectives, they may view the other culture as uncivilised or underdeveloped. This leads to conflicts among countries (Pike & Selby, 1988; Samover & Porter, 1995). In this sense, CCAP helps people to build a culture of peace beyond cultural prejudice and misunderstanding.

Activity reports from the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (1999; 2000; 2001) indicate that CCAP is beginning to achieve its goals of promoting a love for humanity and an unprejudiced perspective on other cultures. In a homogeneous country such as Korea, where most people have never known someone from a different ethnic background, this kind



of program is especially needed. Through participating in CCAP both students and teachers are starting to realise the common humanity of people living on ‘the one and only earth’, and that human beings are the same rather than different. At the same time, they are acquiring a less biased perspective, giving up any sense of the superiority or inferiority of their own culture compared to foreign cultures.

Not only students and teachers, but KIVs and CEVs also are beneficiaries of CCAP. For each group, several effects have been observed. Through CCAP, students and teachers can gain concrete cultural experience rather than vague cultural knowledge. Young students especially can discard cultural bias and prejudice after participating in CCAP. One student said that: “Frankly I had a vague dislike of India. I used to associate India, without knowing much about it, with beggars on the streets and think it is a messy country. But now I realise that was my prejudice about India.” Students also came to realise that Ethiopia is a country with a rich cultural heritage rather than a country of poverty and hunger.

Many students want to participate in introducing Korea to other countries. CCAP gives students a chance to think about “Do I know as much about my country as the CEV knows about her or his country?” “Can I introduce my culture to foreigners as properly as the CEV did to us?”

For a long time the mass media frequently have shown a one-sided perspective which presents only negative aspects of another country. The CCAP offers an opportunity to eliminate cultural bias or misunderstanding towards other countries, and at the same time to learn about those countries in a positive way. Also, through the foreigners’ perspectives on Korea, students, teachers and KIVs can acquire a balanced perspective on their own country, discarding negative perceptions or a sense of cultural superiority.

Finally, at the same time as sharing their country’s culture with Korean students, CEVs are exposed to the students’ views about Korea. Activity reports suggest that the CCAP is providing CEVs with new insights into Korean people and society, with the result that CEVs are gaining very valuable information about Korean culture that they might not otherwise have access to. There is some evidence that CEVs are developing more positive attitudes to Korean culture and lifeways through their participation in CCAP.

### **Problems**

There is evidence from the activity reports that many students and teachers viewed CCAP as an opportunity to enhance their knowledge about foreign countries, or to practice their English. The major goal of CCAP, however, is to go beyond “facts” about the foreign countries, and to expose participants to the deeper values and beliefs of other cultures, thereby reaching greater mutual understanding, cross-cultural respect and tolerance for difference.

KIVs whose English is excellent are not guaranteed to be good interpreters for CCAP. Basic knowledge about the country, a well-planned pre-meeting, and an effective working relationship between KIVs and CEVs are more important elements for CCAP than fluency in English.

### **Recommendations**

With the acceleration of globalisation, it becomes urgently important to keep an effective balance between global understanding and national identity. Schools clearly have an important role to play (Kniep, 1987). Within the Republic of Korea, the CCAP can be an

efficient program for cultivating global perspectives while at the same time enhancing students' local cultural identities as Korean citizens.

To enhance the role of CCAP it is recommended that the program continue to move away from didactic approaches where the foreign volunteer gives a lecture, to a kind of forum where students and the CEV exchange their opinions and perceptions. CEVs should be encouraged to view CCAP as a cross-cultural exchange, thereby helping students to analyse their own lifeways from the outsider's perspectives. In this way students will have a chance to think about their own culture in comparison with others, thus enabling them to discover their own cultural identity through CCAP.

The students could consolidate their cultural identity as they prepared and introduced Korean culture through performances and displays for the foreign volunteers. Class activities such as cooking traditional Korean dishes or displaying Korean traditional dancing could be very effective means of reinforcing cultural identity.

Second, it is suggested that CCAP continue to be extended to remote areas, such as Koje Island, rather than conducted exclusively in larger cities. Unlike urban cultures whose characteristics become more universal with the acceleration of globalisation, the traditional cultures of rural areas and small towns generally are maintained. Sometimes the local culture reveals an animosity towards the global, with people making little if any effort to understand it. In fact, globalisation does not mean discarding the traditional in favour of the global, but can lead to the acceptance of cultural diversity. Therefore rural areas are very suitable places for cultural exchanges. Drawing on my own experiences of CCAP in Koje Island, I suggest that the following may be effective ways to bring a more global perspective to local cultures in Korea:

- (i) CEVs and the students could visit local historical sites together after a CCAP class, and explore the cultural meanings and significance of the sites.
- (ii) A local cultural camp could be held for CEVs, KIVs and the students. They might stay together at a historical site for two or three days to explore local history and traditions, and to exchange their responses and feelings about the local culture.
- (iii) A study group on local culture could be organised, with CEVs, KIVs, students and teachers all participating. The group might make an in-depth study of aspects of local culture and explore its significance in an age of globalisation. When CEVs have a deeper understanding of Korean culture, they are more likely to be effective when introducing their own culture to Korean students.

Third, CCAP needs to include those countries that are unknown to most Korean people, and those that Koreans have negative feelings about. Most Koreans are more knowledgeable about, and have more positive feelings towards, Western countries. On the other hand, Korean students know little about other Asian countries, and about African countries. They need to have an opportunity to clear up any misunderstandings they might have. Cultural contact through CCAP could be very effective, for example, in helping to lessen the long-lasting tensions and hatreds between Korea and Japan.

Fourth, before conducting CCAP with students, CCAP needs to be held for teachers, school administrators and parents. In order for CCAP to be fully successful in schools, teachers, parents and administrators should appreciate its importance for enhancing cross-cultural understanding.

Finally, CCAP should continue to be offered to handicapped students. Handicapped students are especially able to acquire a tolerance for difference, and to accept the universality of human dignity through participating in CCAP.

In conclusion, CCAP in the Republic of Korea has tried to conduct education for cross-cultural understanding in schools, where the future leaders are educated. We hope that the young students who participate in CCAP classes are encouraged to learn more about foreign cultures and to continue developing their understanding of cultural diversity and respect for the differences that exist among cultures.

### REFERENCES

- Anderson, C.C., Nicklas, S. and Crawford, A. (1994) *Global understanding framework for teaching and learning*. Virginia: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.
- Hammond, M. and Collins, R (1993) *One world one earth: educating children for social responsibility*. Philadelphia: New Society.
- Harvey, R.G. (1987) An attainable global perspective. In W.M. Kneip (ed.) *Next steps in global education: a handbook for curriculum development*. NY: American Forum for Global Education.
- Kneip, W.M. (ed.) (1987) *Next steps in global education: a handbook for curriculum development*. NY: American Forum for Global Education.
- Korean National Commission for UNESCO (1999) *Cross-Cultural Awareness Programme (CCAP) Activity Report of 1998*. Korean National Commission for UNESCO: Seoul (in Korean).
- Korean National Commission for UNESCO (2000) *Cross-Cultural Awareness Programme (CCAP) Activity Report of 1999*. Korean National Commission for UNESCO: Seoul (in Korean).
- Korean National Commission for UNESCO (2001) *Cross-Cultural Awareness Programme (CCAP) Activity Report of 2000*. Korean National Commission for UNESCO: Seoul (in Korean).
- Pike, G. and Selby, D. (1988) *Global teacher, global learner*. London: Hodder & Stoughton.
- Samovar, L.A. and Porter, R.E. (1995) *Communication between cultures. (2nd Ed.)*. Philadelphia: Wadsworth.

## Jade's transformation: A case study of teacher professional development in Taiwan

---

**Bih-jen Fwu**

National Taiwan University [janeifu@ccms.ntu.edu.tw](mailto:janeifu@ccms.ntu.edu.tw)

**Hsiou-huai Wang**

National Taiwan University [wanghs@ccms.ntu.edu.tw](mailto:wanghs@ccms.ntu.edu.tw)

*This case study explores the process of change in the instructional beliefs and practices of a science teacher participating in a university-elementary school collaborative science learning project in Taiwan. Multiple research methods were employed. Results show five stages of teacher change: (1) awareness of shortcomings of old strategy; (2) conviction of need for change and search for help; (3) powerlessness in chaotic classroom; (4) establishment of affective teacher-student relationship; (5) new way of teaching in a newly established order. Findings are further discussed in the local context: (1) processes of change are different from those of Western patterns; (2) extrinsic (social) and intrinsic motivation can co-exist; (3) collectively-oriented instruction is dominant in class practice; (4) the most satisfying growth for the teacher is to change from the traditionally authoritative figure of Chinese cultural tradition to a teacher who has established an affectionate relationship.*

professional development, teacher change, science teacher,  
cultural analysis, case study

### INTRODUCTION

It is widely accepted that for decades education in Taiwan has been dominated by a traditional teaching paradigm that stresses: (1) the realist perception of knowledge as an entity that should be delivered to students; and (2) the practice of using extrinsic incentives to motivate students to learn (Executive Yuan, 1996). This approach is especially detrimental to science education as science learning requires students to make sense of relevant concepts by themselves in order to "learn with understanding" (Bodner, 1986; Fleury and Swift, 1989). The outcome of the traditional mode of science teaching has been mixed. International competition shows that Taiwanese students score high in mathematics and science (National Center for Education Statistics, 1994; Mullis et al., 2000). However, a more detailed analysis of student performance in such competition indicates that while they perform well at such low-level cognitive skills as rote-memorisation, they are poor at high-level cognitive processes such as problem-solving, critical thinking and creativity (Yang, 1992, 1993). Being aware of the shortcomings of traditional teaching, science educators in Taiwan have made efforts to introduce new teaching methods based on the constructivist paradigm which emphasises that (1) knowledge is socially constructed and (2) students should be intrinsically motivated to learn (Guo, 1992; Guo and Jiang, 1993).

In line with this new trend, a one and a half year university-school collaborative research project called “The Science Learning Project” (SLP) was implemented and carried out in 1998-99 to develop new science teaching materials and strategies. This new project was based on four basic principles:

- (1) to provide a safe learning environment for children to think, ask, and perform freely;
- (2) to appreciate and nourish students’ curiosity so that children are delighted to think, find problems, and seek solutions;
- (3) to encourage intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation so that children are delighted to learn actively; and
- (4) to inspire children to solve problems in creative ways (Chen, 2000).

Those participating in the SLP group consisted of 7 university experts in sciences (physics, chemistry, geology, atmospheric sciences, geography), psychology, and education from National Taiwan University and 5 science teachers from 5 elementary schools in Taipei City. The 5 school teachers were invited by the university science experts on the team to join the project. Among the 5 teachers, 4 had participated in similar projects with one taking part in this kind of project for the first time. During the project, the SLP group met every other week to develop new teaching materials and strategies characterised by the above four principles in the constructivist-oriented model. Each teacher was responsible for developing several lesson units, which were then brought to the entire group for discussion and refinement. Altogether, 9 lesson units in physics, chemistry, biology, and earth sciences were developed, implemented in the classroom context, and evaluated for their effects on student learning.

As teachers are the key to successful implementation of the SLP, it is extremely important to investigate how teachers who participated in the project developed professionally during the process. This study focuses on one science teacher who participated in the development process and experienced great change in her teaching beliefs and practices. The research reported in this present paper attempts to find out: (1) teacher belief and practice prior to participation in the SLP; (2) the process of teacher change; (3) teacher retrospection on self-growth and student learning. Findings will then be discussed in relation to the specific Taiwanese cultural context.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### Selection of the Participants

Among the five primary school teachers, Jade (pseudonym) was requested to participate as the subject of this case study. As it was the first time that she had participated in this type of research project it was assumed that she would experience greater challenge in the process. Jade, an experienced female science teacher, had been teaching in primary schools in Taipei City for 27 years following her graduation from a junior teacher college with an Associate Degree specialising in Chemistry and Biology. As a person who emphasised self-growth through continuous learning, she had been devoted to acquiring new knowledge and teaching methods to enhance her students’ learning. She had also tried to integrate scientific theories with practices in her teaching and encouraged her students to “learn science by doing.” She prided herself on accomplishments in instructing students who won numerous awards in science project contests at local and national levels. Owing to her outstanding performance, she had been invited to join the SLP. She felt excited at the opportunity to work with other science teachers and university professors.

## **Data Collection**

In order to triangulate the authenticity of the data, multiple sources of data were utilised and collected throughout the one-and-half-year SLP process, including teacher interviews, teacher self-reports, classroom observation and videotaping, and observation of group discussions between the school teachers and university experts.

In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with Jade throughout the project. All interviews were audio-taped with Jade's permission. During the interviewing process, the researchers sought to note important meaning-loaded words and used them as prompts to elicit deeper experiences and interpretations. In the case of inconsistencies, the researchers asked Jade to clarify or elaborate further. The technique of checking the consistency of Jade's statements across different passages of an interview and among different interviews across time assisted the researchers in confirming the credibility of Jade's narratives. It was found that, in general, there was high consistency in her statements across time.

Classroom videotaping was conducted on 4 lesson units, each unit lasting for 2 to 6 hours of teaching. Altogether, a total of 20 hours of videotaping was completed. In addition, the SLP periodic group discussion, meeting for a total of 43 times, was also videotaped to supplement interview and classroom data.

## **Data Analysis**

All interviews were transcribed as a major source for data analysis. In reading the transcriptions of Jade's narrative, the researcher grounded the codes in Jade's actual language by tracking all the terms and phrases she used to describe her change in teaching beliefs and practices. Content coding (Miles and Huberman, 1994) was used to elicit important themes and stages of Jade's professional development. To substantiate these emerging themes and stages, the researchers further analysed classroom teaching and group discussion videotapes, to see if what the interviewee expressed and reflected was manifest in the real context of the classroom and the group discussion. In this way, triangulation of multiple data sources was conducted to validate the change in teacher beliefs and practices prior to, during and after the project.

## **RESEARCH OUTCOMES**

### **Teacher Belief and Practice Prior to the Project**

With Jade's past accredited accomplishments in science education, she had been fairly confident in her own teaching and was satisfied with her students' performance. She prided herself on her ability to maintain an "orderly" classroom where students could engage in attentive discussion under her effective teaching. She considered herself a competent and effective science teacher. It seldom occurred to her that she needed to change her teaching style. The motivation for her to join the SLP was to learn "something new and interesting" rather than to redress an existing problem in her teaching.

Further, Jade believed that she was constructivist-oriented in teaching, as she had been very "open" in her teaching by offering opportunities for students to ask questions, engage in scientific activities, and "learn science by doing." She had even opened up a full month of the course schedule for students to do science projects of their own choice. For the past twenty years when science education in Taiwan was still dominated by the traditional teaching paradigm, her teaching style was rare among her colleagues and had been recognised as fairly "progressive."

At the same time, Jade also believed that a teacher should take a strong role in guiding students to learn. Even though she encouraged her students to brainstorm ideas for science projects, she was the one who decided for them which one to do. Moreover, in the process of class activities and project development, she tended to closely intervene and supervise their activities by offering advice, and stimulating discussion. Jade called this kind of practice a “semi-open teaching pattern.” She also held a “pragmatic” perspective on what counted for good scientific experiments. For example, among the numerous ideas that students proposed, she chose the “appropriate” ones based on the criteria of “whether the plan was executable in a real context,” rather than some “impractical ideas” sprung from “wild imagination.”

It is especially interesting to see that although Jade perceived herself as “progressively constructivist,” she nevertheless relied heavily on a traditional mode of teaching by using extrinsic incentives to motivate her students to learn. In her class instruction, she frequently utilised such extrinsic rewards as gifts, scores, and honours to maintain an “orderly classroom atmosphere” and create “attentive and fervent learning.” Another important element in the traditional paradigm, collectively-oriented control, was also apparent in her teaching practice. Jade developed a very elaborate “point system” based on group performance. She divided the class into several groups and evaluated students’ learning based on group performances. Whenever a group performed well, she would add extra points on their point card; if a group did not actively engage in activities, they would be punished by having points deducted from their card. Jade found this system extremely “powerful” as in using it, her class always did whatever she commanded them to do. She happily recalled that, “Whenever I asked them to discuss or do experiments in a group setting, everyone immediately got involved and took action or no one was fooling around, because his or her group members would not allow him/her to do that for fear of a point-deduction for the entire group.” She further employed “an honour scheme” based on the recording of this group point system. She let students themselves do addition and deduction of the points for their own group, so that “Everyone could immediately see how their group was doing, and this method created great peer pressure so that no one dared to fool around.”

In summary, after a 27-year teaching career, Jade, like many experienced teachers, had developed a sophisticated and integrated system of teacher beliefs and practices that she perceived as satisfying to herself, effective for her students’ learning, and which received the approval of many parents.

### **Process of Change**

During the time Jade took part in the Science Learning Project, she underwent the following five stages of transformation in her teaching beliefs and practices.

#### ***Stage 1: Awareness of the Shortcomings of the Point System***

As one of the project’s basic principles was to encourage intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation in student learning, Jade’s most effective teaching strategy, the point system, faced a great challenge from the other SLP group members. As is clearly shown in the third group discussion videotape (VGD-5), when faced by a challenge from university professors, Jade’s initial response was to question the legitimacy of their challenge, as they had little experience in primary school teaching. In the video, Jade tries to convince the group of university experts that her point system is “so effective and powerful that all the students were attentive and concentrated on learning and doing experiments” in her class. However, the constructivist-oriented university professors reiterated the importance of intrinsic motivation and tried to persuade her not to “... be contented with the immediate effect that

students only learn for the 'points' in your classroom" but to "focus on inducing students' interests in learning science in the long run," because "once the so-called 'powerful weapon' is removed, the students will lose the motivation to learn."

After a period of discussion and self-reflection on the issue, Jade began to see the problems inherent in her practice. She recalled how her students often asked if certain tasks she asked them to do would be counted to the point system, and how they were passive in learning and not used to thinking by themselves if the point system was not exercised. In fact, she understood she had vaguely been aware of this problem for some time and had not been comfortable about the fact that her students seemed to learn just for the points, not for science itself. However, she had tended to ignore this issue because the system worked so well that the slight discomfort she had felt was not strong enough to prompt her to make any changes.

### ***Stage 2: Convinced of the Need for Change and Seeking Help***

After the discussion and self-reflection described above, conceptually, Jade identified with the SLP principle of intrinsically motivating students, and was persuaded not to use the point system. She was convinced to face the weaknesses of the point system. The biggest problem for her, however, was that she did not know how to teach without this "effective tool." She brought this dilemma to the SLP group and asked for advice on alternative ways of teaching. However, she received little help from the SLP university experts because while they were able to provide "abstract constructivist principles of learning," they themselves had not developed any concrete "down-to-earth" teaching strategies appropriate in primary school. They could only offer moral support and continuous encouragement. As demonstrated in the group discussion videotapes (VGD-8; VGD-10), several professors repeatedly stressed the importance of "arousing students' curiosity and intrinsic motivation," and claimed that "although it's difficult for you to give up the point system overnight, but if you make a breakthrough on this point, you will immensely enjoy teaching students who will be learning for the sake of learning itself."

Also manifest in the tape, the other participating schoolteachers tried to provide more concrete examples based on their past project experiences: "... instructional context should be provided to arouse students' curiosity and intrinsic motives; for example, on the topic of combustion, one can start with asking students to burn a pile of paper and figure out how to burn it fast, and just let them play, in this way, they can gradually find out the relations between oxygen and burning." However, it can be seen that Jade still seemed very puzzled at this kind of "*laissez-faire*" instructional approach that was very different from her strong guiding role in the classroom. Apparently she did not receive much help from the SLP group.

As Jade reflected in her interview, at this stage, she was left alone in her own struggle. She did think of looking for other resources outside the SLP group. Further, her colleagues in school could not help her either, because they were even more "traditional" than she was in teaching. She thought to look for books on new teaching methods; however, the heavy workload in school and in the project hindered her from realising this idea.

### ***Stage 3: Feeling Powerless in a Chaotic Classroom***

Jade finally gave up her point system for two reasons. First, she identified with the concept of "inducing students' intrinsic motivation" and second, she felt constrained by the videotaping of her classroom instruction throughout the SLP. After she stopped using the point system, she found that she became a "powerless" teacher trapped in a "chaotic" classroom.



This disorder was reinforced by the extremely open instructional strategies built into the new SLP teaching materials that stressed “giving students space to think, explore, and discuss.” To create this kind of open atmosphere, Jade felt that she should not intervene too much as she had usually done. She also tried to give students more space to explore by playing. When students engaged in a variety of SLP-designed fun activities, the class tended to become more noisy. This is evidently demonstrated in various classroom teaching tapes during this stage (VCT-4 to VCT-7). It is observed that her class was like a “noisy and messy marketplace”: many students walked around, played with friends, and talked loudly with each other. Many students didn’t seem to concentrate on classroom activities. When Jade gave instructions, students appeared to be inattentive. She had to call their attention at the top of her lungs many times to resume her instruction from the chaos.

It seemed to Jade that without the immediate reward used in the points system, students lost their obvious and concrete goal to follow what she said. Moreover, Jade was restrained by the awareness that her attitude towards the students could affect the outcome of the SLP experiment. If she became angry at her students and wielded “the age-old weapon” of traditional Chinese teachers to “yell at, scold and beat” her students, the open and lively atmosphere of the class that was so critical to the success of the SLP experiment would be destroyed. Under this understanding, Jade had to spend a much longer time to wait for the students to quieten down than might have been the case under the point system. Jade felt that the class progressed very slowly and inefficiently. In consequence of this slowness, Jade frequently had to add additional hours of teaching to keep up with the course schedule.

In summary, lost in a disordered classroom, Jade could neither use her effective tool of the points system, nor could she assume the traditional role of an authoritative teacher. She could not even get angry. In this state of powerlessness and confusion, which lasted for almost a semester, Jade, like a defeated warrior who had given up her effective weapons, felt anxious: “I was nervous, confused”; “How could things happen like this?”; and incompetent, “I don’t even know how to teach!”

#### ***Stage 4: Trying to Establish an Affective Teacher-student Relationship***

At this stage, Jade recalled that she could do nothing but “be patient.” She endured all the disruption and commotion in the class, stayed patient with the slow pace of instruction, and restrained herself from resuming her old pattern of teaching. Gradually, she was able to express her feelings more freely and frankly to her class. She found herself appealing for the sympathy of her students with warm and friendly expressions. As evidenced in the classroom tapes (VCT-7; VCT-8), she said to her students, “Your behaviour tells me that you’re not listening, and this really hurts my feelings - you know - my heart is broken!” and “I am getting old. I am not as energetic as I used to be. If you can be quieter, I will feel much better.”

At the beginning, Jade’s new approach seemed to have little effect on her students; but gradually, there appeared to be a subtle change in the student-teacher relationship. Students began to respond to her positively. They began to realise that she was “different” from other teachers, because they expressed that “she never scolded, yelled or got angry with us.” They appreciated her sincere concern for them, and were touched by her affective expressions. The students in turn developed a new sense of concern for their teachers’ feelings. Interestingly, this concern created a special kind of bond between Jade and the students. Later, this concern was further transformed into an interesting form of group sanction that if someone disrupted Jade’s instruction, other students would then stop him or her so as “not to hurt our dear teacher’s feelings.” In this long process of exploring a new way of teaching, Jade gradually established an affective relationship with her students that seemed to work.

However, this new relationship had not been the result of a well-planned strategy but an unexpected outcome of Jade's "survival instinct" operating in an unprecedented and difficult situation.

### ***Stage 5: A New Way of Teaching in a Newly Established Order***

After many months of groping for a new order in a chaotic classroom, Jade recalled that she and her students slowly and gradually established a new anchor, which was no longer based on the concrete and immediate reward system, but rather on a subtle and invisible social relationship based on the mutual trust between teacher and students. She happily recalled that, "By then, the students knew that I cared about their learning, and if they didn't learn, I would feel bad. Once they understood my caring for them, they felt obliged to learn. Later, I found that I only needed to give a hint, and the entire class would quiet down and be ready to engage in the SLP learning activities." In this process of change, this newly established social relationship between Jade and her students had paved the way for students to gradually develop an intrinsic motivation to learn.

In addition, the innate attraction of the SLP activities aimed at arousing students' curiosity strengthened their intrinsic motivation to learn. It is observed that students appeared to love to learn by playing, exploration and doing experiments. At the same time, Jade became more comfortable with giving her students more space for exploration and to intervene less to guide their activities. Moreover, while Jade previously used to ignore students' answers if she thought the answers appeared to be "unrealistic," "absurd," or "unable to be implemented in a real context," now she had developed a higher level of tolerance for divergent answers from her students and she refrained from neglecting or rejecting their "weird" or even "ridiculous" answers. For example, as she discussed with the SLP group (VGD-36), in an experiment on making ice, after students learned the principle that salt will decrease temperature, they began to question, "If salt can decrease temperature, is there any salt in the freezer?" or "If salt can decrease the temperature, why does Mom cook with salt? Will it take more time for the dish to be cooked well?" Instead of brushing these questions off as "ridiculous", Jade responded with an exclamation, "What a fantastic question!" She iterated that the SLP student group had demonstrated many creative ideas on various occasions and she "had never seen such a high level of creativity ever before" during her 27-year career of science teaching.

In addition, Jade abolished her old group evaluation system in which individual differences were neglected and individual students who did learn were not identified. Since the SLP program stressed assisting individual students in constructing their own knowledge in a social process, Jade gradually developed a new assessment system that took both the group and individual performances into account. For example, in a group activity where students were asked to make fire, she asked each one of them to write down their own strategy and explanation for making a big fire in a quick way. These individual records, complemented by the group's final performance, provided Jade with important information on how each student was learning in the social process of the group setting.

## **Retrospection: Teacher Belief and Practice after the Project**

### ***Teacher Change***

A few months after the completion of the SLP, Jade retrospected on the impact of the project on her and her students. First, she realised that both her beliefs and practices in teaching had greatly changed. The most exciting change for her had been that she could "teach without being angry." In her own words, "I never thought a teacher could teach

without yelling at the students and scolding them.” Before Jade had invented the “super powerful” point system to control group order, she had been like most school teachers in Taiwan, prone to anger at student misconduct, inattention or noise, and liable to resort to authoritative measures. After she had implemented the point system, the number of times for her to get angry in class decreased, but occasionally she still had to use the traditional way to maintain the class order. However, in the later period of the SLP implementation, she found that she did not have to resort to any such measure to push her students to learn. On the contrary, the students appeared to be very enthusiastic about the activities themselves. In addition to their obvious interest in learning itself, the newly established relationship between her and her students also facilitated a smooth and effective teaching and learning process in the classroom. Usually she only needed to softly remind them of some general guidelines or give them some hints, and the students would understand her and proceed with the learning.

Second, Jade perceived herself as more constructivist-oriented in her teaching:

I had thought that I was a constructivist, since I always gave students space to ask questions and do experiments. Now I realise I had intervened too much and given them too many suggestions. I used to be too easily satisfied by their answers if they fit in with the textbook version; now I demand them to search for more alternative and creative answers.

In the process of implementing the SLP, Jade considered that she gradually discovered the essence of constructivist principles to “... engage students in meaningful tasks in which their thinking is situated in physical and social context.”(Schunk, 1996) From this perspective, she was more willing to “let go”, thus allowing students to construct their knowledge in continuous social interaction with their peers during interesting and meaningful science activities.

### *Student Change*

In addition to Jade’s own transformation, she was also amazed at how her students changed after participating in the project. She was “astonished” to see how her students became so “autonomous” in doing their own projects. They appeared to be much more responsible for their own learning; they would “... find their own topics, prepare the equipment, arrange the tasks to do, and look for their own solutions.” Due to the students greater autonomy, she felt so “relieved” this year compared with all the projects she had supervised in all the previous years. It seemed that her students were transformed into “... the real masters of their own learning”:

You know, every year when I advised my classes to do the science projects, they always depended on me—for everything—from the topics, to the equipment, and even the task assignment—they asked me for every detail. I was so exhausted. But this year, I just sat there, they seldom asked me for help. Even with one group which could not find a suitable topic, they did not come to me for help but discussed among themselves how to collect the necessary information to begin with.

Jade also found that her students were able to think from a greater range of dimensions and raised multiple questions related to the principles or rules which had been taught beforehand. Moreover, her students became more confident in risk-taking. They seemed to have developed a better sense of scientific inquiry and were more willing to face the challenge of the unknown. For example, “When faced with a question, they seemed to know where to start and they could ‘jump right into’ the experiment without much hesitation.”

## DISCUSSION

### Process of Teacher Change

According to the constructivist model of teacher change (Edwards, 1994a, 1994b; Shaw and Jakubowski, 1991; Sidani-Tabbaa and Davis, 1991), a cyclical model for teacher change can be seen as composed of the following stages: perturbation from dissatisfaction with the old practice, awareness of a need to change, commitment to change, vision of the new teacher role, realisation of the new vision by a role model, and finally emergence of cognitive and observable changes. Furthermore, with each disturbance the teacher encounters, he or she experiences the above cycle again from the first stage to the last. Throughout this process, teacher reflection is an essential integral element.

In our study, however, Jade went through a somewhat different process. At first, she was fairly contented with her old teaching practices without feeling disturbed. Instead of becoming aware of the problem by herself, she was “persuaded” by others to see the problems inherent in her practice. Rather than developing a self-motivated commitment to change, she was “driven” to change under the constraints of continuous monitoring and a sense of responsibility for the success of the project, both of which prevented her from going back and forth between her old and new practice. Without constructing a concrete vision for the new practice by herself or being provided with an exemplary new practice strategy, she was left struggling by herself in her class. Instead of actively seeking a strategy to achieve the ideal vision for teaching, she could do nothing but “endure” the situation “with her hands tied up.” Therefore, she was in a state of powerlessness for a long period of time. Rather than making a conscious effort to make cognitive and observable changes, Jade developed a new affective relationship with students in an imperceptible manner. Throughout the process, Jade was mostly focused on how to overcome the chaotic situation in her class, and seemed to have only little time and energy to reflect on how to improve her teaching. Only with her retrospection after the project was over did she fully appreciate the fruit of her painstaking changes in her own teaching and student performance.

### Change in Student Motivation

Biggs (1995) classifies the ways in which teachers motivate students to learn into four types: extrinsic, social, achievement, and intrinsic motivations. Extrinsic motivation denotes that students learn for obtaining awards or avoiding punishment; social motivation means that students learn in order to please significant others including parents and teachers; achievement motivation refers to student learning in order to compete against other students; and finally, students may be motivated to learn by intrinsic interest and curiosity in the particular tasks or activities. Based on his research on Chinese teachers, Biggs found that Chinese teachers tended to use teaching strategies that stress the extrinsic, social and achievement motives to encourage students to learn. From the perspective of this theoretical framework, Jade's process of change has illustrated how difficult it is for an experienced teacher in this socio-cultural context to give up the extrinsic reward system that worked so effectively. Furthermore, we see the process of how students were changed from motivation through an extrinsic reward system to social motivation based on a sincere student-teacher relationship. It is interesting to see that students can be socially motivated by their teacher to engage in activities that raise their intrinsic curiosity and interest in learning itself. Therefore, in this case, social and intrinsic motivation seemed to co-exist in the teaching and learning processes, in which social motivation serves as a basis for constructing a positive social learning environment while intrinsic motivation naturally arose from those engaging activities that were designed to induce their inner desire to learn.

## Collective-oriented Instruction

Cheng & Wong (1996) and Cheng (1997, 1998) contend that collectivism, as an important component in traditional Chinese culture, has penetrated into many aspects of education, including the teaching practices in the classroom. Therefore, group control is frequently used by Chinese teachers to maintain class order so that they can exercise effective teaching. This group orientation also functions as a sanction mechanism for group members who do not comply, and provides a basis for comparison with others' behaviour. Jade's heavy reliance on group discussion and evaluation provided a good case in point. Moreover, her students seemed to be much more accustomed to this collectively-oriented instructional environment, from complying with the points system to obeying the group sanctions placed on those individuals who did not pay attention to instruction. In sum, collective orientation prevailed in Jade's class.

## Change of Teacher Attitude

Traditional Chinese teachers tended to use oral and corporal punishment to facilitate their teaching and classroom management (Wang and Lin, 1994). Therefore, to be authoritatively strict (*xiong*) was not uncommon in Chinese classrooms. That was why, when Jade's students found that she "never yelled at, scolded or beat" them and was very patient with them, they were touched enough to respond in turn with sincere concern for her, because she was "so different from other teachers." On the other hand, for Jade, it was also a brand-new experience that she could finally "teach without being angry." This was an unprecedented experience and previously had been a "mission impossible" for her, and maybe for many other teachers in Taiwan. However, in the SLP process, she had made it.

After Jade participated in the SLP project, she went through a difficult period of change over an extended time. Through undertaking this lonely journey, Jade has been able to see changes in her attitudes and practices. At the end of the SLP study, Jade considers that she has undergone a process of transformation and has become a "new-born person" who can now see through a new window to teaching and learning.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was sponsored by National Science Council, Republic of China, NSC 87-2511-S-002-022.

## REFERENCES

- Biggs, J. (1995) Motivating learning. In J. Biggs and D. Watkins & (Eds), *Classroom learning: Educational psychology for the Asian teachers*, 82-102. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Bodner, G. M. (1986) Constructivism: A theory of knowledge. *Journal of Chemical Education*, 63, 873-878.
- Chen, T. R. (2000) *Report of the science learning project*. NSC-87-2511-S-002-020 (In Chinese).
- Cheng, K. M. and Wong, K. C. (1996) School effectiveness in East Asia: Concepts, origins and implications. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 34 (5), 32-49.
- Cheng, K. M. (1997) Quality assurance in education: The East-Asian perspective. In K. Watson, S. Modgil and C. Modgil (Eds), *Educational dilemmas: Debate and diversity: Vol. 4 Quality in education*, 399-410. London: Cassell.
- Cheng, K. M. (1998) Can education values be borrowed? Looking into cultural differences. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 73 (2), 11-30.
- Edwards, T. G. (1994a). Using a model to understand the process of change in a middle school mathematics teacher. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (72nd, Indianapolis, IN, April 12, 1994) ERIC NO.: ED 372938.

- Edwards, T. G. (1994b). A reflective cycle: The evolution of a model of teacher change. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the North American Chapter of the International Group for the Psychology of Mathematics Education (16th, Baton Rouge, LA, November 6, 1994) ERIC NO.: ED 380292.
- Executive Yuan (1996) *The general report of educational reform (Jiao yu gai ge zong zi yi bao gao shu)*. Taipei, Taiwan: Author. (In Chinese).
- Fleury, S. and Swift, J. N. (1989) Students as peasants: Are we developing thinkers rather than memorizers? In D. E. Herget (Ed.), *Proceedings of the first international conference on the history and philosophy of science in science teaching*, 161-165. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University.
- Guo, C. J. (1992) Improving math and science teaching in elementary and secondary schools from a constructivist approach (Cong jian gou zhu yi de guan dian tan dao zhong xiao xue shu li jiao xue de gai jin). *Science Development Monthly* (Ke xue fa zhan yue kan), 20 (5), 548-570. (In Chinese).
- Guo, C. J. and Jiang, W. X. (1993) *Improving science teaching in junior high schools by assisting students constructing meaningful knowledge* (Cong xie zhu xue sheng jian gou yi yi de guan dian tan tao guo zhong li hua jiao xue de gai jin). Taipei, Taiwan: National Science Council Report. (In Chinese).
- Miles, M. B. and Huberman, A. M. (1994) *Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook of new methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Mullis, I.V.S. et al. (2000) *TIMSS 1999: International mathematics report: Findings from IEA's repeat of the third international mathematics and science study at the eighth grade*. Boston: The International Study Center, Boston College, Lynch School of Education.
- National Center for Education Statistics (1994) International Comparisons of Education. In T. D. Snyder (Ed.), *Digest of Education Statistics*, 409-431. Washington, DC.: US Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement.
- Schunk, D. H. (1996) *Learning theories*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Shaw, K. L. and Jakubowski, E. H. (1991). Teachers Changing for changing times. *Focus on Learning Problems in Mathematics*, 13 (4), 13-20.
- Sidani-Tabbaa, A. and Davis, N. T. (1991). Teacher empowerment through change: A case study of biology teacher. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (New Orleans, LA, February 16-22nd, Indianapolis, 20, 1991). ERIC NO.: ED 330670.
- Wang, Z. W. and Lin, W. Y. (1994) The cultural origin of oral and corporal punishment (da ma jiao yu tan yuan ). In Z. W., Wang and W. Y., Lin (Eds.), *The dilemma of educational reform (Jiao yu de kun jing yu gai ge de kun jing)*, 77-130. Taipei, Taiwan: Guei-guan. (In Chinese).
- Yang, R. X. (1992) What can we learn from IAEP 1992? (1992 Guo ji shu li jiao yu ping jian IAEP-wo men neng gou xue dao she mo?) *Journal of Science Education*, (Ke xue jiao yu), 149, 1-31. (In Chinese)
- Yang, R. X. (1993) Teachers' response to IAEP outcomes (Wo guo shou shi xue xiao jiao shi dui yu guo ji xue tong shu li jiao yu ping jian jie guo de fan ying-IAEP jie guo tao lun zuo tan hui shi lu) *Journal of Science Education*, (Ke xue jiao yu), 158, 27-47. (In Chinese).

## Educational reconstruction and post-colonial curriculum development: A comparative study of four African countries

---

**David C. Woolman**  
Rhode Island College [dwoolman@ric.edu](mailto:dwoolman@ric.edu)

*Nation-building in modern Africa has faced the challenge of integrating multi-cultural traditions. Reform of inherited educational systems that largely functioned to maintain the colonial order of dependency and elitism has been an essential part of this task. Reconstruction of curriculum to reflect indigenous traditions, social change and empowerment was advocated by African critical theorists from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. This paper surveys African reform thought and curriculum development in Kenya, Mali, Mozambique and Nigeria since independence. Comparative analysis focuses on the inclusion of African culture, history and language in curriculum and innovation in methodology. Finally, African initiatives are contrasted with reconstructionist theory that integrates traditional culture with the demands of modernisation.*

African education, cultural relativity, curriculum reform,  
nation-building, educational reconstruction

### INTRODUCTION

The relationship between education and national development in Africa continues to be a question of critical concern in many countries. Education should function as an agency of cultural transmission as well as change; it should also reflect the dynamic process of nation-building that is continually being modified by new conditions.

The school's effect on culture and its role as a conveyer of culture are issues of great political sensitivity in most countries. Although early European nation-states evolved as the political expression of one culture, most countries today include people of many cultures. Most African states, for example, have high levels of cultural and linguistic diversity. This situation presents many challenges for schools, which are expected to cultivate a common national spirit and unity. Some obvious questions that are asked in many nation-states are whether and how diversity can coexist with unity. Another issue is whether national values can ever have as deep a significance as the moral and social foundations of any particular culture.

Schools can play a significant role in mediating the relationship between particular cultures and the nation-state. National stability and strength depend on effective integration of plural traditions. Under colonialism, cultural diversity was submerged by the exclusion of most African traditions from education. An alternative reconstructive approach would identify the common values within diverse traditions and integrate these with modern content and skills. Educational reconstructionism aims to build a common civic culture based on mutual

respect for cultural differences and acceptance of a social compact based on global standards for human rights.

The idea of nationalism implies something original or unique about the people who live in a country. Today, it may be asked whether such concerns really matter. Global culture may pervade even the smallest African villages. However, the history of colonialism in Africa resulted in a peculiar type of psychological dependency which has made the reassertion of African culture and identity an important part of African nation-building. This revival has involved the study and preservation of indigenous cultures, languages, and natural environments and a full renaissance of the artistic, literary and spiritual potential of African peoples. In any movement of this kind, schools should play a key role.

Another consideration for educators who try to relate school programs to perceived national needs is knowing exactly what is meant by 'national development.' Increasingly, in modern times, economism has become a dominant force influencing education policy. This occurs in highly industrial countries as well as in the poorest developing nations. Education is regarded as the key to economic development. This impression persists in spite of the fact that such growth usually results from complex relationships between many variables rather than any simple one-to-one interaction between schools and jobs. For example, if violent ethnic rivalry causes national instability, this may inhibit economic growth by deterring investment even though schools have produced many graduates whose mathematics and science skills offer a good labour source. In many countries, economic development options depend on natural resource endowment. Another perspective considers growth from the standpoint of the human resources needed to sustain manufacturing and services. Usually a positive effect of schooling on economic development is contingent upon integration of curriculum with a sustainable policy of national growth; such growth should also be inclusive and beneficial to all sectors of the population.

This paper examines school policy development in four African countries since independence with particular attention to the socio-cultural and economic effects of education. Analysis is focused through the lens of the philosophy of educational reconstructionism. The study first reviews some critical perspectives of African intellectuals on national development and the issue of cultural reconstruction. Educational policy and curriculum development is then examined in Kenya, Mali, Mozambique and Nigeria to analyse the extent of decolonisation and reintegration of traditional African educational values and social organisation in school programs after independence. Finally, some insights and remedial strategies from reconstructionist theory are presented.

### **CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES**

Since independence, the role of African education has been inextricably interwoven with the quest for national development and modernisation. The inherited colonial systems were expanded and modified to serve new economic and social needs identified by African governments. For the most part, educational policy decisions and implementation remained highly centralised and reflected the will of ruling elites. In many countries, results have not matched expectations and educational systems have, in some cases, caused new problems for nation-building.

Before and after independence, a number of African intellectuals engaged in critical evaluation of the goals and practice of education. Their thought shares many affinities with a reconstructionist perspective, which regards contemporary education as most effective when it integrates the values and strengths of traditional culture with the knowledge and skills required by new conditions of modern life. The spirit of nationalism embodied in



rediscovery of the roots of African identity in the pre-colonial past is also reflected in this thought. This critical theory is focused on four areas: evaluation of colonial education, critique of post-colonial education, re-examination of traditional African education, and exploration of educational alternatives for liberation and achievement of an authentic African national identity.

The critique of colonial education continues to be significant because this structure conditioned the reactions that led to reform efforts in the post-colonial era. Ajayi (1996:16-20) traces the origins of African reactions to colonial education to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when both James Johnson in Sierra Leone and Edward Blyden in Liberia criticised the neglect of African culture and history by mission schools. Johnson alleged that these schools caused Africans to lose self-respect and “love for our own race.” Both men called for inclusion of African heritage in curriculum. Blyden urged the study of African languages that were repositories of tradition. On the whole, African assessment of pre-independence schooling is negative. Victor Uchendu (1979:3), for example, concludes that the purpose of all colonial education was “subordination of Africans.” Moreover, he rejects the idea that colonial schools provided education on European standards in concluding that: “What reached African colonies were not metropolitan educational transplants but ... adaptations which served to perpetuate colonial domination.”

Several Africans who experienced colonial education report that it had the effect of undermining traditional societies; on the one hand, by introducing an individualistic Euro-centric value system that was alien to African communal mores and, on the other hand, by isolating students from their local communities. Kofi Busia (1964:7) recalled how schools in Ghana separated students from the life and needs of their community. For Apollo Rwomire (1998:19), the role of colonial education in the service of imperial domination and economic exploitation caused a number of undesirable effects, such as economic inequality, social stratification, cultural and intellectual servitude, devaluation of traditional culture, and curricula that were irrelevant to the real needs of society. Ali Mazrui (1978:16) sheds more light on this cultural discontinuity in terms that explain the linkage of education with the rural-urban divide:

Western education in African conditions was a process of psychological de-ruralisation. The educated African became ... a misfit in his own village ... when he graduated ... his parents did not expect him to continue living with them, tending the cattle or cultivating the land.

After independence African governments invested heavily in educational expansion and diversification; the gains in enrolment, literacy, skilled human resources and educational facilities have been impressive given the constraints of limited resources. Many critics, however, think the system has failed to improve life for most Africans and continues to destabilise society. One social observer, B.S. Kwakwa (cited by Bray, Clark and Stephens in Nwomono, 1998:265) reported on the social divisiveness of schooling in Ghana:

The effect of the Western type of education has been to produce ... three nations in one country, each unable to communicate effectively with the others ... the ‘educated,’ ... many who do not understand the ways of the ‘educated,’ ... then ... a third group, the ‘half educated’ who understand neither the ways of their own indigenous society nor those of the ‘highly educated.’

Some problems identified by Uchendu (1979:1-2) include the rural-urban disparities, ethnic and geographic inequality of access, and differences between mission and non-mission based education. He further notes that the traditional roles of education, socialisation of youth and cultural transmission, have been submerged by the political mandate that schools must function as the “servant of government policy.” The rural-urban disparity in educational provision was interpreted by Moumouni (1968:274) as an extension of the same economic exploitation practiced under colonialism:

A cut-rate education ... for peasant children ... will ... prepare the way for a more profitable exploitation of the peasant masses by the leading classes ... acting in the name of their selfish interests and those of their neo-colonial masters.

Another scathing analysis of the impact of education is made by Rwomire (1998:8) who cites numerous problems, like irrelevant curricula, antiquated methods, high drop-out and repetition rates, and overcrowding and laments that many graduates are docile, dependent, low on initiative, and immoral. He also blames schools for inculcating a culture of egocentric materialism, causing the decline of collective responsibility and contributing directly to unemployment.

A critique of the ideological foundations of African education is advanced by Mazrui (1978:13); he regards neo-colonial cultural dependency as a threat to African psychological autonomy and sovereignty and reports that: "Very few educated Africans are even aware that they are also in cultural bondage. All educated Africans ... are still cultural captives of the West." This critique of colonial and post-colonial education together with a quest for identity has led some African intellectuals to re-examine the objectives, methods and outcomes of traditional, pre-colonial forms of education. These studies provide perspectives that may become a guide for reform of education. They also offer valuable insights for post-colonial social reconstruction. Moreover, it is important to understand that traditional education still exists in Africa and provides socialisation for many youth who never attend formal schools.

The traditions of indigenous education vary widely due to the extreme cultural diversity of sub-Saharan Africa. Nonetheless, common elements characterise most societies. With few exceptions, notably Islamic Koranic schools, African traditional education is informal and occurs in the context of family, community, clan and culture group. It is a life-long process involving progression through age groupings that are correlated with the acquisition of experience, seniority and wisdom. Cultivation of the individual's communal responsibility was the dominant objective of this education. Dickson Mungazi (1996:40) notes that the individual's "place in society was determined more by his contribution to its well-being ... the individual had to be trained to remain sensitive to the needs of the community as a whole and others as individuals." Busia (1964:17) further clarifies the African ideal of socially-centred human development: "Traditional education sought to produce men and women who were not self-centred, who put the interest of the group above personal interest." Traditional education was an organic process with a high level of consistency between activities and desired outcomes. For example, the ideal of communal participation was reinforced by immersion in traditions through dance, song, and story, involvement with learning groups, exposure to cooperative work, and ancestor spirit worship that cemented kinship ties and obligations. Because custom prescribed rigid role expectations for males and females, indigenous education was gender-specific and segregated.

Indigenous education was practical and relevant to the needs of society. Babs Fafunwa (1982:9-10) reports that the focus of education in old Africa was social responsibility, political participation, work orientation, morality and spiritual values. Learning was by doing, which involved observation, imitation and participation. Jomo Kenyatta (1965:119-120), for example, compares Gikuya education with the idea of progressive education that the US educator, William H. Kilpatrick, defined as "wholehearted, purposeful activity proceeding in a social environment." Kenyatta further notes that "knowledge thus acquired is related to a practical need, and, ... is merged into activity and can be recalled when that activity is again required. Behaviour also is learned from doing things together, and is therefore directed to social activities from the outset." Education is thus closely integrated with cultural reproduction; given this experience it is no surprise that profound alienation

arose later in response to the isolation of formal schools from the social realities of African communities.

Traditional education integrated character-building, intellectual training, manual activities and physical education. The content included all of the activities, rituals, and skills required to sustain the culture and life of the family and community. Great importance was placed on interpersonal relationships and reciprocal obligations. Fafunwa (1982:9-10) again recalls: "In old Africa ... the man who combined good character with a specific skill was adjudged to be a well-educated and well-integrated citizen of his community." Trades were learned by the apprenticeship system.

Some reflections on indigenous education include analysis of intersections and conflicts with paradigms and value systems introduced by European colonisers. A major incompatibility involves the conflict between Western competitive individualism and African traditions of cooperative communalism. A related contrast occurs between Western schooling that works to eliminate students through failure on tests and traditional education that strives to include all children in the community. Differences of this type caused Mungazi (1996:50) to conclude that Africans who accept Western culture must, of necessity, reject the viability of their own culture. Busia (1964:15), on the other hand, acknowledges the pre-scientific basis of African cosmology and acclaims the value of Western scientific thought in replacing superstition with tested knowledge; however, he and Mungazi (1996:41) rightly cite African traditions of observation and understanding of the natural environment which led to discovery of healing techniques as evidence of indigenous scientific observation and thought. Moreover, African traditional religions, that are polytheistic and based on the worship of life-sustaining natural forces, seem more compatible with today's emergent global environmental ethos than Western monotheistic faiths that place humans over nature. The role of African religion as a foundation for morality in human relationships mandated its inclusion in traditional education; this contrasts with secular modernism which tends to exclude religion from formal education. The global revolution to equalise gender roles is in clear opposition to basic principles of traditional African education and society. On the other hand, in the area of learning methods, indigenous reliance on field experience, active discovery and close observation reflects a progressive pedagogy and seems more likely to promote retention of learning than classroom-based book and test methods that dominate Western schooling.

Re-evaluation of traditional education is part of a process of reclaiming cultural identity with deeper roots in authentic African traditions. Formal education is viewed as a potential means of liberation and many reform strategies have been proposed. Kenyatta (1965:118) thought that education must maintain the traditional structures of family, kinship, sex and age grouping if African societies were to remain stable; otherwise, he foresaw the onset of social disintegration. Busia (1964:31-33) identified a widespread expectation before and after independence that "education should be rooted in Africa's own cultural heritage and values and have relevance to African societies." Like Edward Blyden, he felt that schools could only preserve and transmit this culture by maintaining African languages. This point was made even more forcefully by Moumouni (1968:275), who claims that "real literacy ... can only be taught in an African language and should extend to the entire population." Such mass education is seen as one way to counteract the elitism and class divisions created by Euro-centric schooling.

Mazrui (1978:18) identifies a deeper need for young Africans to "struggle to conquer African self-contempt" which arose as a psychological by-product of Euro-centrism. On the other hand, he asks whether Africa could "return to traditional values without sacrificing any

possibility of a scientific or technological revolution” (1978:35-36). Mazrui suggests a dual solution of Africanising the humanities while boosting technical and vocational training.

A more radical plan is favoured by Unwuachi (1972:10), who thinks that “black cultural objectives can never be obtained by using ... white European standardized educational processes.” In his view, Western culture as motivated by individualism, economic expediency, self-interest and ‘superego’ principles is incompatible with the African emphasis on collective life, economic communalism, resource-sharing, and group obligation. He calls for a new departure in African education to build community values, strengthen the family, teach ethical standards, promote health, and develop capacity to achieve the basic needs of security and human welfare. Like many African intellectuals, Unwuachi was inspired by Franz Fanon (1966:252-255), whose call for liberation urged:

Let us waste no time in sterile litanies and nauseating mimicry ... let us not pay tribute to Europe by creating ... institutions ... which draw their inspiration from her ... we must work out new concepts and try to set afoot a new man.

A synthesis of goals for the reconstruction of African education is found in a recent book by Ajayi, Goma and Johnson (1996:192-194) who considered the reasons why universities have failed to stimulate development that improves the life of the masses in so many African countries. Nine areas were identified as needing attention in school programs. These included many ways to improve living standards such as: elimination of disease, hunger, ignorance, and poverty; moral guidance; promotion of values; building respect for indigenous African culture; reduction of crime and violence; achievement of national integration with preservation of cultural diversity; protection of the environment; and strengthening of democracy.

### **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

After independence, African educational policies were refocused on the priority of national development which encompassed the goals of Africanisation, national unity and economic growth. The motivation for this change was a reaction against policies of colonialism that had imposed a Euro-centric, divisive and exploitative régime upon Africa. Concern for empowerment of African peoples brought the promise of social reconstruction. However, socially-inclusive nation-building has faced many challenges due to the extreme social diversity and poverty in many African countries. It was made more difficult by the goals of rapid industrialisation and modernisation which created a new class structure and soon produced many unfulfilled expectations.

In Kenya, Mali, Mozambique and Nigeria, development and education policy reflected acceptance of economic Westernisation in the form of either capitalism or socialism, with expansion of educational opportunity for Africans. All these countries began their independence with educational systems of European design, modified to fit the needs of colonialism. In Mozambique, Samora Machel’s policy declaration for schools in 1974 called for elimination of illiteracy, liberation from capitalist mentality, elimination of the negative aspects of African traditional culture, empowerment of the masses through education, and restructuring of schools as learning communities based on trust between teachers and pupils. His ideas echoed the FRELIMO goals of building social solidarity by removal of racial and tribal discrimination, emancipation of women, and cultivation of respect for science, service, and work. Concern with combating illiteracy, which stood at 93% in 1975, was paramount. Equal access to education, a goal re-stated in the education laws of 1983 and 1992, was to be achieved by free and compulsory education. Training of skilled persons for economic development is another consistent feature of Mozambiquan policy. The 1992 law, however, deleted most of the Marxist-Leninist theory without altering the basic structure of the school

system. This reflects the demise of this ideology in world politics. Important reform initiatives begun in late 1992 include commitment to “education for all,” basic education, and system expansion. Other goals are decentralisation, privatisation, improvement of teaching methods, creation of community schools, and more relevant curriculum. The Strategic Plan for 1999-2003 continues this emphasis on system-building for vocational skills and economic growth, but also asks education to strengthen democratic institutions.

In Mali, policy set goals of high-quality mass education, equal educational opportunity and rapid training of workers for production. However, the approach in Mali, more than elsewhere, sought to confront the psychological fall-out created by colonialism. Education was to be employed to de-colonise the minds of people who had been alienated from their own culture by years of European domination. The policy also called for promotion of Malian, African, and universal values. Emphasis was given to political as well as economic emancipation by demanding provision of education equivalent to the standard found in other modern countries. This commitment was renewed in 1991 by a national debate which called for “basic education for all” with new schools, added service in deprived regions, and cooperative plans to boost access (Ouane, 1995:616).

In Kenya and Nigeria, educational policy at independence was most concerned with using schools to develop manpower for economic development and Africanisation of the civil service. Consequently, in Kenya, expansion of secondary and tertiary education was the top priority with less concern for basic primary education. The Ominde Report of 1964 called for education to serve Kenya’s national development (Kay, 1975:185). Racially-segregated colonial schools were phased out to provide Africans with the same quality of education once reserved for white settlers. Otherwise, the old system was left intact. However, strong popular demand for education resulted in the foundation of many Harambee schools by fund-drives organised by wealthy patrons. These examples of communal generosity demonstrate a linkage of African tradition with nation-building. Nevertheless, grass-roots demand for education in the 1960s and government neglect of the rural sector caused Kenya to shift policy in the 1970s toward integration of education with rural development. Primary schools were to prepare students for agriculture, family welfare, and community development. Secondary schools were called upon to promote national unity, economic growth, individual development, social equality, respect for Kenya’s “rich and varied cultures,” and international understanding (cited in Kay, 1975:185). In 1983, however, this basic education scheme was dropped with adoption of the 8-4-4 system; once again, secondary and tertiary education became the priority.

Current Kenyan policy espouses universal education, with equal opportunity for all. The core goals reflect traditional values of training in social justice, morality, and responsibility, along with acquisition of life skills needed in the local environment. Modern policy goals include national development and unity along with individual service to the nation. Kenya’s social diversity has brought a collateral concern for preservation of cultural heritage, social justice, human dignity, political equality and multicultural education.

Critical reviews of the 8-4-4 system in 1990 and 1995 resulted in recommendations for reorganisation of content and reduction of subjects due to student overload. A recent high-level reform effort, the Koech Commission, made sweeping recommendations. These included new efforts to build patriotism, national unity, mutual social responsibility, morality and ethical standards; education for all, including early school leavers; provision for continuous learning; quality and relevance based on science and technology for rapid industrialisation; and legal guarantees of each person’s right to education. The report also specified twelve years of compulsory basic education. The Koech plan was dismissed as “unrealistic” by President Moi in the summer of 2000. Current policy calls for modification

of the 8-4-4 system by reducing subjects and strengthening curriculum with emphasis given to industrialisation, environmental education, AIDS awareness, gender equity, and elimination of child labour and poverty.

Nigeria, by far the most ethnically-diverse and politically divided of the four countries, did not begin to construct a national education policy until ten years after independence. This came after several coups and a bloody civil war, which nearly tore the country apart. The foundation for Nigerian educational policy is found in the Second National Development Plan (1970-1974), which proposed the goals of equal opportunity for all citizens, a free democratic society, justice, national unity, self-reliance and a dynamic economy. The succeeding development plan established universal primary education and proposed that education should foster the study of Nigerian culture and teach the importance of national unification. A further policy objective has been correction of regional imbalances in educational opportunity so that citizens of all cultures have equal access to modern schooling. The policy framework is a federal union in which each of the 36 states controls primary and secondary education, except for some federally-run secondary schools. The policy of equal opportunity has led the federal government to apply admission quotas and differential cut-offs in qualifying examinations for federal secondary and tertiary institutions; as elsewhere in the world, these policies have sparked much controversy.

In the 1980s the Nigerian government moved to intensify the role of education in promoting industrialisation and modernisation by boosting emphasis on science and technology. The failure of this initiative, however, coupled with instability in the oil economy, led to structural adjustments and fiscal austerity, which set back educational gains. Expenditures on education actually began to decline long before this in 1977 and were only five percent of the budget in 1984.

Two policy initiatives in the 1980s were significant. Secondary education in Nigeria was restructured. The old colonial model of a five-year GCE O-Level plus a two-year GCE A-Level was replaced by a three-year Junior Secondary plus three-year Senior Secondary system. The junior level combined academic and pre-vocational content that responded to the growing problem of unemployed secondary school graduates. The senior level offered the choice of academic, vocational technology or teacher-training tracks; this again was an attempt to better correlate schooling with employment outcomes. Another federal policy revision in 1981 was the recommended abolition of the primary school Form 6 leaving examination, with new certification being based on continuous assessment; in practice, however, states still have the option of using this examination.

Nigeria continues to face many serious educational problems. Financial crises, political instability, the brain-drain, disintegration of civil order, and military dictatorships have obstructed progress in educational innovation and excellence. Beginning in 1992, a new decentralisation policy was adopted to strengthen community and local government responsibility for primary education; this effort involves 593 local governments. States remain responsible for secondary schools, except for a handful of "Unity Schools," which are open to multicultural enrolments from the entire country. Current policy calls for nine years of basic education for all through Junior Secondary level. The goals are three-fold: building national consciousness and unity; nurturing correct values for the survival of each individual and of Nigerian society; and training citizens for understanding the world. Other policy objectives are reduction of rural-urban school inequality and improvement of gender equity in access to education. Community education programs have been started in remote areas for nomadic peoples. A compulsory education policy is anticipated. The high illiteracy rate (44% of all persons over age 15) influenced adoption of a free universal basic education

plan in 1999 for primary schools, nomads and out-of-school youth. By increasing the relevance of education, the policy intends to improve performance and retention.

Curriculum revision provides another measure of post-colonial educational reconstruction in Africa. The new government of Mozambique, for example, moved rapidly to implement structural reform by replacing the competitive, test-centred Portuguese system with cooperative, less rigid, non-authoritarian schools. Self-help, sharing of experiences, and group learning were emphasised. Implementation of these plans was slow, however, and the colonial system remained until 1983. Colonial textbooks were gradually replaced by teacher-produced, Africanised curriculum and textbooks. Innovative community-based education focused on collective farming, hygiene, literacy and political education. The country's mainly agricultural economy was served by school-based farm programs that aimed to reduce the rural-urban social division; in addition, these programs tried to build acceptance of the dignity of manual work. This emphasis was expanded at the secondary level with agricultural, commercial, industrial and social service courses of study. Such vocationalisation reflects the concern for life adjustment found in traditional African education. Curriculum development in the 1990s has addressed several problem areas affecting Mozambique's well-being and unity; these include environmental education, population and family life, multi-cultural education and education for peace. For example, one innovative UNICEF-sponsored program, Circo da Paz, uses popular theatre to teach peace and conflict resolution.

In Mali, post-colonial curriculum development has sought to Africanise and modify content and structure to suit local and national needs. Nine years of primary school is divided into three cycles, with an early focus on initiation, aptitude and orientation; subjects are taught by means of practical activities based on the culture, economy and society of the students. Content reflected in these activities includes agrarian pastoral life, the environment, science, technology, population, health, nutrition, family and community life, sports, art and cultural expression. Traditional Koranic schools and secular Medersas, or Arabic language schools, have been encouraged to complement religious studies with new curricula in reading, writing, computation, moral and civic education and either French or one of the national languages.

Ruralisation of Malian school programs in the 1980s aimed to make education a means of improving and sustaining rural life. This involved the addition of more relevant content as well as adjustment of the school calendar to fit student participation in the rural economy. Demonstration schools were established to teach technology, home economics, practical agriculture, animal husbandry and market gardening. However, this project encountered resistance from parents who disassociated education from traditional manual work.

Vocationalisation of education is also present at the secondary level in Mali; students may choose between the traditional academic course or a technical track with programs in industry, health, trade and agriculture. The colonial centralisation of curriculum and textbook provision has been retained in the interest of national unity. However, regionalisation of curriculum development was adopted in the late 1970s.

In Kenya, the shortage of skilled labour in fields based on mathematics, science and technology resulted in immediate efforts to improve the mathematics-science curriculum in the 1960s. Programs like Entebbe Mathematics and African Primary Science were developed in Africa by US organisations; activities were based on the Kenyan environment. The Kenya Institute of Education began producing new curriculum and Africanised textbooks were published by the Jomo Kenyatta Foundation; Voice of Kenya broadcast radio programs for schools.

Pre-primary education in Kenya results from initiatives by parent associations which reflect the cooperative nature of African culture. The activity-based curriculum is similar to that of traditional education in its emphasis of language development, environmental awareness, number work, music, movement, art, crafts, physical development, religious and moral education, general health, nutrition and child care.

Primary curriculum revision in the decade 1965-1975 brought the infusion of Kenyan content in history, geography and music; locally-produced teaching materials reinforced this trend. In addition, the new primary approach tried to replace teacher-dominated rote learning with new methods that encouraged active, child-centred group activity designed to develop cooperation, creativity, discovery, self-expression and self-reliance (Kay, 1975:186-187).

Primary schools in Kenya follow a common national curriculum set in the 1980s. The curriculum includes language (English and Kiswahili), mathematics, science, agriculture, social studies, art, craft, music and physical education. In the 1990s, agricultural science, business education, home science and religious education were added. The expected outcomes for primary schooling reflect a blend of goals from traditional African education, Western individualism, and nationalism. Students, for example, are expected to develop desirable social standards and attitudes; to become constructive and adaptive to life based on moral and religious values with responsibility to community and nation; to appreciate their own and others' culture; to grow toward maturity and self-fulfilment; to develop self-expression, self-discipline, self-reliance and full utilisation of the senses; and to acquire a foundation for the world of work in the context of national needs.

The Kenyan secondary school curriculum was criticised for neglect of African literature and Euro-centric bias by a 1974 conference of university professors; they proposed a radical revision, which, if adopted, would have Africanised the content and control of curriculum development. Ngugi wa Thiongo, a leader of this movement, attacked the existing curriculum as a form of "cultural genocide" that perpetuated intellectual dependency on the West (cited in Lillis, 1986:71). He proposed a new sequence with primacy given to African and other Third World literature. Unfortunately, the conference failed to include grass-roots teachers or officials from the inspectorate, ministry or examination board in its deliberations; consequently, the proposal was rejected. However, many of its provisions were later adopted, including a controversial inclusion of the study of African oral literature.

The secondary school curriculum was substantially revised with adoption of the 8-4-4 system in 1985. In part this was in response to the crisis caused by growing numbers of unemployed secondary school graduates. The secondary curriculum was vocationalised to improve the correlation of schooling with the world of work. In addition to communication, mathematics, science, humanities, physical education and foreign language, the theme of applied education provided opportunities to study agriculture, industrial education, home science, art and music. Business education was added in the 1990s along with social skills, ethics and cultural subjects. Other related vocational secondary programs are craft apprentice, artisanship, commercial trade, nursing and veterinary studies. Polytechnics and a technology institute were created to teach secondary school dropouts.

The 8-4-4 reform proposed a reduction of reliance on competitive examinations, a legacy of the British colonial system. However the system has resisted change and old methods continued for many years. Criticism of the Kenyan secondary program in the 1990s stressed that too many subjects were overloading students and contributing to failure. As noted above, recent reforms have reduced the number of subjects.

Like Kenya, Nigeria inherited a British-style, examination-driven system which reinforced widespread reliance on rote learning. This structure also assured that the curriculum was



controlled by the West African Examination Council. A National Curriculum Conference in 1969 (cited in Kurian, 1985:947) initiated the first reform challenge by advocating that education should strive “to prepare for life, relate to others in an environment of mutual understanding, promote civic responsibility and effective citizenship, gain a consciousness of personal and national identity, and appreciate scientific and technological progress.” Nigerianisation of curricula was promoted by the National Book Development Council, which sponsored publication of texts by Nigerian authors. Curriculum is now controlled by each state, but national guide-lines began to be defined after 1980 through the work of the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council.

Pre-primary education in Nigeria was private, urban and elitist. Recently, access to pre-primary education has improved. Instructional goals at this level emphasise: social norms; cooperation; team-work; inquiry; exploration of nature and the local environment; music; art; play; health habits; and the rudiments of colours, letters, numbers and shapes. Subjects offered are English and one Nigerian language, arithmetic, writing, reading, rhymes, social studies, music, singing, basic science and nature study. English and mathematics are the major subjects with daily classes scheduled each weekday.

Nigerian primary school curricula consist of reading, arithmetic, geography, history, nature study, hygiene, cooking, needlework, handicrafts, religion, physical education, handwriting and drawing. Completion of this six-year course used to require a special examination, but this was abolished in favour of continuous assessment. The current goals for primary education are functional literacy and numeracy with the cultivation of positive attitudes leading to cooperation, community and continuous learning that support national development. Therefore, priority is given to communication, literacy and numeracy as learned through the subjects of language arts, mathematics, science, social science, agriculture, and cultural arts. Most emphasis is given to English language, mathematics and science.

Secondary education in Nigeria affords a choice between commercial, grammar or technical schools. The core curriculum includes English, literature, religious knowledge, mathematics, history, geography, physics, chemistry, biology, and physical education. Other subjects are French, Latin, local languages, higher mathematics, agricultural science and home economics. The Sixth Form, a two-year post-secondary college preparatory track that was a legacy of the colonial era, was eliminated with adoption of the 6-3-3-4 system between 1977 and 1981. In this system, science and technology dominate the curriculum; environmental education and population education were also added. The Junior Secondary course includes academic and pre-vocational content; a technical vocational program also occurs at the Senior Secondary level. These changes reflect the policy of widening study options and diversifying outcome possibilities. Junior Secondary graduates, for example, can choose to go on to Senior Secondary, a technical college, vocational training and/or an apprenticeship. These different vocational programs provide opportunities for training in over 39 trades that are essential for a modern economy. The Senior Secondary core curriculum is dominated by English, mathematics and science; however, vocational subjects offer 17 options for skill development.

The language issue in education has serious implications for cultural reconstruction and learning efficiency. Colonialism left a legacy of alien, European official languages in all four countries. Each country has numerous African languages, and many native speakers are multi-lingual. Some widely-used indigenous languages serve as regional lingua franca for trade. Nevertheless, literacy and proficiency in the alien official languages is one criterion for indigenous elite class formation that reproduces the caste system created by colonialism.

In Mozambique, 20 different Bantu languages are spoken; Portuguese, the official language, is the mother tongue of less than 1% of the population. Mali has 12 local languages but French remained as the official and national language until the 1980s. In Kenya, there are 42 African languages along with Hindi, Gujarati and Urdu; English is the official language and Kiswahili, a widely-used medium in East Africa, is the national language. In contrast to the other three countries, Nigeria is a case of exceptional diversity, with 394 spoken languages. Twelve of these African languages with well-developed orthographies, are spoken by 85% of the population. Nigeria uses English as its official language; Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba have the status of national languages.

In these and other multi-lingual African countries, language policy reflects the need to preserve national unity by not granting official preference to any one African language. In addition to offering a culturally-neutral means of communication, the alien European languages provide continuity with colonial political foundations and a basis for essential contact with the outside world. English, in particular, is rapidly emerging as the dominant world language, even though Chinese and Spanish each have more speakers. Nevertheless, this complex African language situation creates significant challenges for language and learning in schools. The language issue in education also has a critical bearing on cultural preservation, intercultural understanding and African nationalism.

Education language policy after independence has been marked by very gradual Africanisation. Until recently in Mozambique, Portuguese has been used as the only medium of instruction in primary, secondary, tertiary and adult education. This policy was identified as a major factor underlying primary level learning difficulties, grade repetition and high dropout rates. Less than 20% of the population speak Portuguese. In secondary schools, English is introduced in grade 8 and French in grade 11. Thirteen African languages have now been recognised as national languages in Mozambique. Curriculum revisions in the late 1990s planned to introduce these Mozambiquan languages as mediums of instruction in early primary grades, particularly in rural areas where Portuguese is virtually unknown.

In Mali, French was used exclusively as the language of instruction until the late 1970s because of concerns that an alternate multi-lingual policy would lead to disintegration of national unity. This situation began to change in 1979 when the National Directorate for Functional Literacy and Applied Linguistics ran successful pilot programs in bilingual education with mother tongue instruction in four rural schools (Ouane, 1995:622). This initiative was expanded in the 1980s with development of “pedagogie convergente,” a French transition program that strives to produce functional bilingual learners. French is not introduced until the child is able to write in the mother tongue; thereafter, oral and written French are boosted through grade 4. From grade 5, the child devotes equal time to one national Malian language and the second language (French). This new policy was associated with the recognition of 11 Malian languages as national languages in the 1980s. English is added as a first foreign language in grade 7. In spite of these efforts, literacy and fluency are low in all languages; in 1987, for example, only 20% of 6-9 year olds could read and write in any language. By 1994, 109 schools were providing instruction in 4 national languages. Development of African language teaching is resource-intensive because of the need to produce original materials for distribution at the local level.

In Kenya, English was adopted as the language of instruction in 1961; moreover, most Kenyans at this time rejected mother tongue instruction because of its association with colonial education policy. English alone was seen as the essential language for empowerment and advancement. Therefore, schools in the early post-independence era followed a ‘straight for English’ policy. Nonetheless, the content of textbooks was Africanised. Concern soon developed, as elsewhere, about the importance of mother tongue

as a medium for early learning. Kiswahili is the language of instruction in grades 1 to 3 in most rural schools; English, however, is the teaching medium from grade 1 in urban schools, and from grade 4 in all schools. English is also taught as a subject in primary grades 1 to 3. Nevertheless, official policy aims to preserve the culture, values and heritage that are transmitted by all 42 local languages; therefore, early instruction tries to utilise whichever mother tongue is dominant in a district. Kiswahili, the national language, is a compulsory subject in both primary and secondary levels. Other languages offered in secondary school are French, German, and Arabic, reflecting Kenya's location between Europe and South Asia, as well as cultural diversity within the country.

In Nigeria, as in Kenya, British colonial policy had encouraged mother tongue instruction, especially in early primary grades. Here, unlike Kenya, the policy was continued after independence; mother tongue or the dominant local area language is used for teaching in pre-primary and primary grades 1 to 3 while English is taught as a subject. In all, 270 Nigerian languages may qualify as instructional tongues for early primary classrooms; many of the smaller languages have no written orthography, which makes materials production quite difficult. From grade 4 on, English becomes the language of instruction and the mother tongue is studied as a subject. Arabic reading and writing is taught to Islamic students in Koranic schools. At the secondary level, teaching continues in English, with the local language studied as a first language and one other Nigerian national language taken as a second language. In addition, French and Arabic studies are offered as electives in some schools.

Some of the concerns and problems affecting schools in Africa provide insights about needed future educational reconstruction. These fall into five categories: policy reform, access, materials and facilities, methodology and relevance. First, in the area of policy, is the question of compulsory education; hitherto, resource insufficiency prevented this and in most cases this obstacle still exists. However, the Jomtien initiative of 'education for all' may only be achievable with a change of national priorities to actualise compulsory education. Some nationalisation of private schooling is needed to assure equity in access to the secular curriculum, however government controls also should be limited to prevent the type of bureaucratisation that stifles innovation and reform.

Inequality in access to formal, modern education contrasts sharply with traditional African education that was inclusive of all children in the village. In most cases, formal education in Africa reproduces a Western-type class structure with greater inequalities than that found in industrial societies where a wide range of wealth and poverty influences individual opportunity. All four countries exhibit significant inequality based on gender, poverty, regional differences and rural or urban residence. Pre-school education, when available, is urban and elitist. Special education is nearly non-existent in Mozambique and Mali and reaches less than 1% of those in need in Kenya and Nigeria. In many areas, rural schools are fewer, more remote, poorly equipped and understaffed. In Kenya, access to basic education is reduced due to emphasis on the secondary/tertiary levels; nevertheless, in 1994 only 30% of primary school graduates found places in secondary schools. Likewise, in Nigeria, just 35% found such placement and these were less than 5% of the school-age population.

Inadequate facilities and instructional resources affect most African countries. Many circumstances contribute to this situation. In Mozambique a devastating war closed or destroyed 3,400 schools. Rapid urbanisation in Kenya, Mozambique and Nigeria caused a growth in school-age population that continues to outpace school construction; this leads to overcrowding and reliance on substandard and unsanitary buildings. Insufficient supplies of textbooks and lack of essential facilities and equipment for science laboratories detracts from the quality and potential of instruction. Rural schools are more affected by these

deficiencies than urban districts. Scarce resources and inadequate government expenditures are the cause of many of these problems. However, in a country like Nigeria, which has huge oil resources, the low expenditure on education is nothing less than a case of mismanagement and misplaced priorities. Nigerian textbook publishers, for example, are capable of supplying the entire country but pricing and distribution problems have resulted in persistent supply problems.

In contrast to traditional African education, where methods involved active participation, observation and learning by doing, instructional methods in modern, formal African schools continue to be dominated by rote learning, pupil passivity, limited verbal interaction, and reliance on text and test. One reason for this is the shortage of trained teachers. Another factor is the climate of competition and high-stakes testing which encourages memorisation for examinations more than acquisition of applied skills, critical thinking or creativity.

A final concern involves the relevance of education to the social and economic well-being of each country and to each individual's fulfilment of potential. All four countries have low completion rates, high grade repetition and significant numbers of drop-outs. These facts seem to indicate either that the schools are not teaching students well or that the curriculum is irrelevant to their needs. In many cases, formal school curricula have been criticised for being unrelated to the conditions and demands of life in rural areas. There is likewise a need to increase the use of African languages as mediums of instruction in areas where these are the only effective means of communication. Another dimension of relevance involves philosophical consistency. In Kenya, for example, the traditional principle implied by Harambee schools, "let's all pull together," is contradicted by reliance on competitive testing which pits students against each other in a process of deselection. In Nigeria, the clash between Islamic tradition and Western education demonstrates that when schooling is perceived as a form of alien socialisation it may become an object for cultural resistance. Finally, as more African countries move to expand democracy, schools should not only teach how this form of government works, but also restructure themselves as participatory, open forums in which students and teachers can practice democracy through debate, discussion and exchange of views about their political destiny.

### **EDUCATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION**

This analysis concludes by considering some indicators for educational reconstruction in the four African countries. Reconstructionist philosophy is concerned with the role of the school as an agency for social improvement. Democracy and belief in the "intrinsic and equal worth" of all humankind are central tenets of this philosophy. The reconstructionist approach to education is experimental; it first tries to foresee future social directions by analysis of past and present trends. It then defines the type of social order needed to preserve fundamental human ideals in the context of the changing future world. These conceptions of future society are then used to reconstruct education (Berkson, 1940:202-203; 209-210). The objective is adaptation to modern life without disruption of traditional culture and community. In the realm of education, this process has been defined as restoration of basic values from the past, transmission of culture, and transformation that revitalises culture through efforts to solve current problems and crises (Brameld, 1971:425-427).

Looking first at African educational policy, there appears to be a need for more consideration of what kind of future society is emerging. How else might planners foresee the type of economy and skills that will determine the opportunities available to young people in the future? The idea of rapid industrialisation as the only path to modernisation may need revision; alternatives point to more balanced solutions that utilise all sectors and local resources. If the trend toward stronger democracy endures, restructuring of schools

should focus on greater participation, critical thinking, problem-solving, and non-authoritarian teaching methods. Many African countries have serious resource deficiencies that limit costly expansion of education; given this predicament, what alternative formats for education exist at the village and community level that could revive some of the informal methods of traditional African education?

In pre-colonial Africa, most children were educated in the home and village. If modern education is to replicate this level of basic education, it may need to restore the role of the community to achieve it. African school systems today still follow the rigid structure of time periods and grade-level progression found in Western education. What would an African-originated modern education system look like? The policy innovations of ruralisation and vocationalisation are good examples of reconstruction; these initiatives respond to prior educational neglect of rural areas and the unemployment of school graduates. Other reconstructive curriculum developments, particularly environmental education and sex education, are restorative and transformational given the current crises of resource depletion, pollution and AIDS.

The development of gender equity is another case of transformative policy. This innovation remains far short of the goal of gender parity. In traditional African education, boys and girls were segregated with different curricula that prepared youth for their divergent life goals. This transition has met with cultural resistance and remains controversial; nevertheless, the evidence of added value that female education brings to child-rearing, health, family well-being, economic life and community makes a compelling case for gender equalisation in African educational reconstruction.

Curriculum content has considerable influence on educational reconstruction. Post-colonial African countries have made significant advances in Africanising their curricula. In some instances, like Mozambique, this required a major research effort to discover, verify and publish new knowledge. The study of African economics, geography, government and history, the cultural heritage of dance, music and visual arts, literature and natural resources are important in the cultivation of self-esteem and the creation of national identity. Multi-ethnic nationalism in Africa requires innovative forms of social studies that balance an understanding of particular cultures with recognition of the commonalities in different traditions that make for unity. Multicultural education offers some promising approaches for promoting social stability in the context of social pluralism. Building tolerance and understanding of cultural diversity should be a major goal of any curriculum.

Cultivation of oral and written fluency in local African languages is important in building self-esteem, preserving culture, and advancing the literary output and identity of African peoples. Two recent articles on language policy in Kenya and Nigeria (Bunyi, 1994; Ufomata, 1999) outline the complexities and advantages of school promotion of indigenous languages. Students also need to study regional African and European languages that widen their circle of communication. The importance of African language development is further underscored by the historical reality that early nation-building in Europe was closely linked to the cultivation of vernacular languages and literature.

Many insights about instruction and learning can be gleaned from the practice of traditional education. Learning was accomplished by observation, imitation, demonstration and practical activities. Applied skills and understanding were stressed over abstract knowledge. Advanced trades and other occupations were transmitted by forms of apprenticeship. Infusing more of these strategies into formal education would provide a valuable alternative to the book and test syndrome that dominates many schools. Work-study, cooperative

education, and similar field-based experiences would provide many more opportunities for meaningful learning.

A key issue for educational reconstruction in Africa involves how to define and balance the equation of cultural transmission. Jomo Kenyatta once observed that for Europeans “individuality is the ideal in life,” whereas for Africans, “the ideal is right relations with, and behaviour to, other people” (cited in Kay, 1975:189). In the West today, schools as well as corporations are concerned about teaching human relations, team-work, and interpersonal skills. This has come about because of a breakdown in family and community that, sadly enough, is also a result of modernisation in Africa. Individuality is needed in the modern world, but it must be balanced with bonds that preserve the family and community. Otherwise, as we have seen, life becomes incomplete and uncivilised. African nations should strive to preserve their traditions of cooperative, communal and extended family culture that provides a foundation for human relations and social security in a changing world. Schools can assist this process by teaching students to value and honour tradition as well as modernity. Some goals that link school and community reflect traditional African educational objectives of character development, respect for elders and established authority, positive attitudes toward work, acquisition of a vocation, cultivation of a sense of belonging, active participation in community and family life, and appreciation and understanding of local cultural heritage (Fafunwa, 1982:9-12; Kenyatta, 1965:119-120).

Another facet of African educational reconstruction involves the need to create a basis for a common civic culture in nations with a high degree of cultural diversity. Each culture must be respected and preserved. However, more is needed to achieve national solidarity. Busia (1964:59), for example, noted that “the tasks of ... achieving a new social unity and cohesion can only succeed if the citizens share a common set of values and standards of public morality which are supported by law as well as public opinion.” He calls on schools to integrate groups in ways that foster associations, inter-group understanding and cooperation. This proposal is exemplified by the mission of the federal ‘unity schools’ in Nigeria.

Historically, however, democracy has not always worked to promote inter-group harmony or consensus. The ancient Greeks, who gave birth to democracy, were deeply divided, often engaged in civil war, and committed what would today be considered gross violations of human rights. In some democratic states, minorities have been abused, whereas in others they have managed to rule over majorities. Clearly, the task of building a stable political order is complex; therefore, schools in Africa should continue to teach basic civics, along with the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as an antidote for civil disintegration that looms as a potential crisis in many countries. Addressing this need, Mungazi (1996:169-197) outlines some priorities for a civics curriculum; these include constitutional government, free speech, critical thinking, multi-party democracy, free press, disclosure in political life, political opposition, regular elections, limited terms of office, ethical conduct of officials, and the issue of corruption.

The reconstructive approach cannot avoid the basic question of the purpose and outcomes intended for African education. Embedded in this concern is the issue of who will benefit from this education. Another aspect of this problem is what type of socio-economic development is desired by the African people. If modernisation with rapid industrialisation is the choice, education will undoubtedly need to reproduce a class structure and hierarchy of occupational specialisation like that found in other techno-industrial countries. On the other hand, if a mixed economy is desired, which balances modern industrial, traditional agrarian, craft, resource extraction, tourism, trade and service sectors, education should foster specialisation along with programs that are more inclusive of all sectors of the population.

The objective in such a society would be to enhance and preserve traditional life while enabling development that assures the provision of basic needs and economic growth.

While Africans must decide for themselves which direction is most desirable, African traditional culture would suggest that the choice should fall on the side of a more balanced, human-centred development. Moumouni (1968:284; 292), for example, called on education to respond to “the profound aspirations of the African masses” by “improvement of the physical and psychological living conditions;” however, he also cautioned of the need to “safeguard the ‘African originality’ and the ‘African personality’ in their most authentic and most positive aspects.” The legacy of colonial and post-colonial education suggests that this goal can be reclaimed through conscious reconstruction. Bray, Clark and Stephens (1998:264), for example, conclude that “Western education has brought a new set of values that has destroyed rather than reinforced much of the old societies.” So we need to ask: can the old values be revived? And if not, what will replace them? The breakdown of order in many parts of Africa suggests that a reconstruction of identity based on progressive traditional values is a viable option.

Uchendu (1979:280-294) conceives that African development should incorporate a duality of plural nationalism and economic modernisation. In this framework, he identifies four challenges: bureaucratic state regulation, multi-cultural nationalism, popular participation in the demand-decision process, and equity in access and distribution of goods and services. The need to relate education to African social structure is central to the transformational ideas of Kenyatta (1965:123). He enjoined teachers to:

promote progress and ... preserve all that is best in the traditions of the African people and assist them in creating a new culture, which though its roots are still in the soil, is yet modified to meet the pressure of modern conditions.

## CONCLUSION

Reconstruction is an ongoing, never-ending process. It works in the context of the present crisis, but moves to transcend this by creative integration of past successes with future goals. Several guidelines for educational change can be inferred from the current crisis in Africa. Foremost is the need to depart from dysfunctional external models of curriculum that do not relate constructively to the needs of all Africans. A fully-indigenous reorganisation of education is essential; new nations should develop programs and institutions that work for their particular cultural and national needs.

Curriculum change should involve teachers at every stage of decision-making; improved in-service training is essential. Curriculum needs to be diversified to be relevant for the great variety of social contexts found in each country. Village development should be as important as urbanisation. Revision of popular ideas about the purpose of education may be useful in correcting the perception that schooling is only a track for literacy and the salaried job. A school serving people-centred development should provide a foundation of knowledge that improves every aspect of rural and urban life. Dependency on textbooks, curriculum designs, teachers and priorities from external sources that cannot be translated into locally-relevant forms of education should be abandoned. African educators in the 21<sup>st</sup> century face the challenge of creating multi-purpose systems that preserve the multi-cultural social fabric of each country in a context of national inclusion and unity. Schools also need to build the capacity for economic growth, improvement of living standards and constructive political life that benefits all people. The future stability of most African countries will likely depend on how effectively these needs are met.

**REFERENCES**

- Ajayi, J.F.A., Goma, L.K.H. & Johnson, G.A. (1996) *The African Experience With Higher Education*. London: James Currey.
- Anyanwu, C.N. & Obanewa, O. (1999) *Contemporary Issues in Educational Theory and Practice in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Amfitop Books.
- Bassey, M.O. (1999) *Western Education and Political Domination in Africa*. Westport, CT: Bergin Harvey.
- Berkson, I.B. (1940) *Preface to an Educational Philosophy*. NY: Columbia University.
- Blav, J.L. (1967) Mordecai Menahem Kaplan. In P. Edwards (Ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 4, 324-325. NY: MacMillan.
- Boyle, P.M. (1999) *Class Formation and Civil Society: The Politics of Education in Africa*. Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate.
- Brady, P. & Zimmer, J. (1988) Mozambique. In G.T. Kurian (Ed.) *World Education Encyclopedia*, 2, 890-903. NY: Facts on File.
- Brameld, T. (1971) Reconstructionism. In *The Encyclopedia of Education*, 7, 425-428. NY: MacMillan.
- Bray, M., Clarke, P. & Stephens, D. (1998) Education and nation building. In J. Nwomonoh (Ed.) *Education and Development in Africa*, 257-272. San Francisco: International Scholars Publications.
- Bray, M., Clarke, P. & Stephens, D. (1998) Indigenous forms of education: the individual and society. In J. Nwomonoh (Ed.) *Education and Development in Africa*, 25-40. San Francisco: International Scholars Publications.
- Bray, M., Clarke, P. & Stephens, D. (1998) Islamic education: continuity and change. In J. Nwomonoh (Ed.) *Education and Development in Africa*, 41-67. San Francisco: International Scholars Publications.
- Bunyi, G. (1999) Rethinking the place of African indigenous languages in African education. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 19 (4/5), 337-350.
- Busia, K.A. (1964) *Purposeful Education for Africa*. London: Mouton.
- Circo da Paz (1993) Edev News (UNICEF), 4, 1-5. In *World Data on Education*. Geneva: UNESCO, International Bureau of Education. [Online] <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/databanks/dossiers/imozambique.htm> [2001, May 4]
- Dewey, J. (1957) *Reconstruction in Philosophy*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Early Child Care Project (ECC). (1997). Lagos: Nigerian Educational and Development Council (NERDC). In *World Data on Education*. Geneva: UNESCO, International Bureau of Education. [Online] <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/databanks/dossiers/inigeria.htm> [2001, May 4]
- Educational profile: Kenya (2000). In *World Data on Education*. Geneva: UNESCO, International Bureau of Education. [Online] <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/databanks/dossiers/pkenya.htm> [2001, February 7]
- Educational profile: Mali (2000). In *World Data on Education*. Geneva: UNESCO, International Bureau of Education. [Online] <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/databanks/dossiers/pmali.htm> [2001 May 3]
- Educational profile: Mozambique (2000). In *World Data on Education*. Geneva: UNESCO, International Bureau of Education. [Online] <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/databanks/dossiers/pmozambique.htm> [2001, February 7]
- Educational profile: Nigeria (2000). In *World Data on Education*. Geneva: UNESCO, International Bureau of Education. [Online] <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/databanks/dossiers/pnigeria.htm> [2001, February 7]
- The EFA 2000 Assessment: Country Reports: Kenya (2000). In *World Education Forum*. Geneva: UNESCO. [Online] [http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/Kenya/rapport\\_1-3.html](http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/Kenya/rapport_1-3.html) [2001, February 6]
- Ekechi, F. (1998) African initiatives in education. In J. Nwomonoh (Ed.) *Education and Development in Africa*, 69-90. San Francisco: International Scholars Publications.
- L'évaluation de l'éducation pour tous à l'an 2000: Rapport des pays: Mali (2000). In *World Education Forum*. Geneva: UNESCO. [Online] [http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/Mali/rapport\\_2.html](http://www2.unesco.org/wef/countryreports/Mali/rapport_2.html) [2001, May 3]
- Fafunwa, A.B. & Aisiku, J.U. (Eds.) (1982) *Education in Africa: A Comparative Survey*. London: George Allen & Unwin.



- Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (1999). In *ICDL Database*. N.P.: International Centre for Distance Learning, The Open University. [Online] <http://www-icdl.open.ac.uk/icdl/database/africa/nigeria/federalr/inst/> [2001, May 16]
- Guidelines [Guidelines for comprehensive sexuality education in Nigeria] (1996) *SIECUS Growing Up*, 4, 1-3. In the *SIECUS Website*. [Online] <http://www.siecus.org/inter/nigeria/acti/grow/grow0045.html> [2001, May 16]
- Habte, A., Wagaw, T. & Ajayi, J.F.A. (1993) Education and social change. In A.A. Mazrui & C. Wondji (Eds.) *General history of Africa: 8. Africa since 1935*, 678-701. Paris: UNESCO.
- Hanson, J.W. (1971) Nigeria. In *The Encyclopedia of Education*, 6, 576-583. NY: MacMillan & Free Press.
- Harber, C. (1989) *Politics in African Education*. London: MacMillan Publishers.
- Harber, C. (1997) *Education, Democracy and Political Development in Africa*. Brighton, U.K.: Sussex Academic Press.
- Ikejiani, O. (1965) Education and tribalism. In O. Ikejiani (Ed.) *Education in Nigeria*, 116-126. NY: Praeger.
- Jansen, J. (1989) Curriculum reconstruction in post-colonial Africa: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 9 (3), 219-231.
- Kariuki, M. (1995) Kenya. In T.N. Postlethwaite (Ed.) *International Encyclopedia of National Systems of Education*, 496-504. Oxford, UK: Pergamon.
- Kay, S. (1975) Curriculum innovations and traditional culture: A case history of Kenya. *Comparative Education*, 11 (3), 183-191.
- Kenyatta, J. (1965) *Facing Mount Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu*. NY: Vintage Books.
- Kivuva, L.A. (2001) *Secondary Education Reform in Kenya: The Quest for Relevance and Quality*. Unpublished paper presented at the Comparative and International Education Society Conference, Washington, D.C.: March 17, 2001.
- Kurian, G. (1988) Mali. In G.T. Kurian (Ed.) *World Education Encyclopedia*, 3, 1530-1532. NY: Facts on File.
- Kurian, G. (1988) Nigeria. In G.T. Kurian (Ed.) *World Education Encyclopedia*, 2, 945-952. NY: Facts on File.
- Lillis, K.M. (1985) Processes of secondary curriculum innovation in Kenya. *Comparative Education Review*, 29 (1), 80-96.
- Lillis, K.M. (1986) Africanizing the school literature curriculum in Kenya: A case-study in curriculum dependency. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 18 (1), 63-84.
- Lucas, G. (1971) Mali. In *The Encyclopedia of Education*, 6, 34-37. NY: MacMillan & Free Press.
- Mali. Ministère de l'Éducation de Base (2001) *Pédagogie Convergente*. Bamako, Mali: Institut Pédagogique National. In *World Data on Education*. Geneva: UNESCO, International Bureau of Education. [Online] <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/databanks/dossiers/imali.htm> [2001, May 4]
- Mazrui, A.A. (1978) *Political Values and the Educated Class in Africa*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Moumouni, A. (1968) *Education in Africa*. NY: Praeger.
- Mungazi, D.A. (1982) *The Underdevelopment of African Education*. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America.
- Mungazi, D.A. (1996) *The Mind of Black Africa*. London: Praeger.
- Nduka, O. (1964) *Western Education and the Nigerian Cultural Background*. Ibadan: Oxford University Press.
- Nharotto, A. (1995) Mozambique. In T.N. Postlethwaite (Ed.) *International Encyclopedia of National Systems of Education*, 669-676. Oxford, UK: Pergamon.
- Nigeria French Language Village (NFLV) (1992). In *Development of Education 1990-1992: National Report of Nigeria*. Lagos: Nigeria Ministry of Education, 1992. In *World Data on Education*. Geneva: UNESCO, International Bureau of Education. [Online] <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/databanks/dossiers/inigeria.htm> [2001, May 4]
- Nwomonoh, J. (Ed.) (1998) *Education and Development in Africa: A Contemporary Survey*. San Francisco: International Scholars Publications.
- Olatunji, B. (2001) Make mathematics more interesting, teachers told. *Comet News*. [Online] <http://www.cometnews.com.ng/29062000/edu34608.htm> [2001, May 16]
- Olatunji, B. (2001) Research Council needs N73m to revise curricula. *Comet News*. [Online] <http://www.cometnews.com.ng/29062000/edu34605.htm> [2001, May 16]

- Ouane, A. (1995) Mali. In T.N. Postlethwaite (Ed.) *International Encyclopedia of National Systems of Education*, 615-622. Oxford, UK: Pergamon.
- Project 2000+ Activities: Nigeria (1997) *Connect: UNESCO International Science, Technology and Environmental Education Newsletter*, 22. In *Educational Programs Database*. Geneva: UNESCO. [Online] [http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/ste/newsletter/eng\\_n2/activit.html](http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/ste/newsletter/eng_n2/activit.html) [2001, May 16]
- Rwomire, A. (1998) Education and development: African perspectives. In J. Nwomonoh (Ed.) *Education and Development in Africa*, 3-23. San Francisco: International Scholars Publications.
- Samuels, M. A. (1971) Portuguese Africa. In *The Encyclopedia of Education*, 7, 185-188. NY: MacMillan & Free Press.
- Scanlon, D.G. (1964) *Traditions of African Education*. NY: Teachers College. Columbia University.
- Sheffield, J. R. (1971) Kenya. In *The Encyclopedia of Education*, 5, 294-297. NY: MacMillan & Free Press.
- Sifuna, D. (1988) Kenya. In G.T. Kurian (Ed.) *World Education Encyclopedia*, 2, 736-757. NY: Facts on File.
- Spencer, J. (Ed.) (1963) *Language in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thompson, A.R. (1981) *Education and Development in Africa*. NY: St. Martin's Press.
- Uchendu, V.C. (1979) *Education and Politics in Tropical Africa*. NY: Conch Magazine.
- Ufomata, T. (1999) Major and minor languages in complex linguistic ecologies: The Nigerian experience. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 19 (4/5), 315-322.
- Unwuachi, P.C. (1972) *African identity and Black liberation*. Buffalo, NY: Black Academy Press.
- Yoloye, E.A. (1995) Nigeria. In T.N. Postlethwaite (Ed.) *International Encyclopedia of National Systems of Education*, 729-737. Oxford, UK: Pergamon.

## Coming to America and Becoming American: Narration of Korean Immigrant Young Men

---

**Sheena Choi**

Indiana University – Purdue University Fort Wayne [chois@ipfw.edu](mailto:chois@ipfw.edu)

**M. Elizabeth Cranley**

State University of New York at Buffalo [cranley@acsu.buffalo.edu](mailto:cranley@acsu.buffalo.edu)

**Joe D. Nichols**

Indiana University – Purdue University Fort Wayne [nicholesj@ipfw.edu](mailto:nicholesj@ipfw.edu)

*Rescinding 1920s restrictive immigration laws, the liberal immigration law of the United States in 1965 encouraged a mass migration from Asian countries to America. As a result, the Asian American population increased five fold within two decades, from 1.5 million in 1970 to about 7.3 million in 1990 with Koreans comprising the third largest contribution of Asian immigrant waves.*

*Researchers have suggested that the trans-Pacific migration of Asians had two dimensions: individual changes of the immigrants whose traditional customs, values, and other elements of lifestyle evolved as a result of immigration, and changes in American society in general as a result of Asian immigrants' settlement. While migration primarily affects the individuals and their immediate families, the receiving society is also impacted in terms of economy, politics, education, culture, social services, and most importantly intergroup relations. This study, which focused on male Korean immigrant youths, explores their perceptions and expectations of their adopted country and their sense of identity.*

Korean immigrants, ethnic identity, immigrant youth, Korean identity,  
education and immigration

### INTRODUCTION

“Who am I?” The question is universal. We frame our own answers out of the uniqueness of our individual personalities and life experiences. But for most of us identity is more than this private sense of self. Identity has a communal, or group, dimension. (Seller, 1977, p1)

Migrating to a foreign country is not an easy task even under the most amiable circumstances. There are many dilemmas to overcome, such as leaving friends, families, jobs, and familiar environments. In addition, upon arriving in the new country, one must adapt to new cultural norms, language and community systems, which add to the burden of newly arrived immigrants (Portes & Rumbaut, 1990). Many studies have explored the changing dynamics of immigrant culture in the United States, and these studies are important in that they help us understand the direction of past, present, and future social change. This study contributes to this literature by giving voice to some of the experiences and concerns of five young men who immigrated from Korea but have grown up in the USA.

Although Korean immigration to America has a brief history, there have been numerous studies undertaken to explore this issue. Yet, most of these have focused on the issues of the economic activities of Korean immigrants. For example, many studies explored new Korean immigrants' business types and patterns (Kim, 1981; Kim & Hurh, 1985; Ha, 1991; Light & Bonacich, 1988; Min, 1984, 1989, 1992; Yoon, 1993) while others discussed settlement patterns (Min, 1993) and levels of assimilation (Chang, 1991; Hurh & Kim, 1984). Min and Kim (1999:11) correctly pointed out that past research tended to focus on the adjustment of first-generation immigrants and "neglected the children of not only Asian immigrants, but those of other post-1965 immigrants". Only recently have "the new second generation" of immigrants gained scholastic attention (Gibson, 1988; Lee, 1996; Min & Kim, 1999; Olsen, 1997). However, most of these earlier studies tended to focus on Latin American or Caribbean immigrants

This study focused on male, Korean immigrant youths who are commonly known as the 1.5 generation - those who accompanied their parents in their passage through immigration during the early stages of their lives. These youths were born in Korea; however, their formative experience has been in the USA. Their perceptions about the larger society and their expectations for the future are expected to add a new dimension to the understanding of immigrant culture among this emerging group. This study focused on questions such as, "Who are immigrant Korean youth?", "Why did their families immigrate?", "What issues are they currently experiencing?", "How does this new experience affect Korean immigrant youth's identity formation process", and "How is this new experience affecting their higher education and career choices?" The experience of Korean youth's adaptation to a new environment at the impressionable age of identity-formation is the central focus of this paper.

Research reveals that most new immigrants from Korea come from entrepreneurial and professional, urban, educated backgrounds (Min, 1984, 1989; Portes & Rumbaut, 1990). This study revealed that in many cases recent Korean immigrants to the USA seek greater educational opportunities for their children while sacrificing their own careers and the comforts of home.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Koreans were among the new immigrant wave. Pyung Gap Min, a Korean-born American sociologist, whose work has focused on Asian-Americans, especially Korean immigrants, describes the characteristics of Korean immigrants as the following:

Koreans are a professional and business-oriented group of more recent vintage. Their main destination is Los Angeles, where an ethnic enclave economy has grown rapidly during the last decade. Koreans have also become prominent in produce retailing and other small businesses in East Coast cities. New York and Washington came next to Los Angeles as their places of destination in 1987; they were also the single largest foreign group arriving in large mid-Atlantic cities such as Philadelphia and Baltimore (quoted in Portes and Rumbaut, 1990: 41).

Other studies also suggest that many Korean immigrants in America came from urban, Christian, educated backgrounds (Light & Bonacich, 1988) contrasting with the rural peasant background of European immigrants during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, upon which many Americans still base their beliefs about immigrants.

## **FRAMEWORK**

Scholarly views vary in regard to defining ethnic identity. For example, primordialist scholars view ethnicity as a collective identity attached to primary groups. Min summarised the primordialist school view of ethnicity as "an extension of a premodern social bond, such as kin and tribal ties, based on commonalities in physical and cultural characteristics and

common historical experiences associated with the place of origin, often called ‘homeland’” (Min, 1999:17). Some scholars viewed such a primal bond as “more emotional than rational, [and] even ‘irrational’” (De Vos, 1995:28). Until the 1960s, the heterogeneous American society regarded attachments to ethnic identity as troublesome -- something to be contained. Emphasis was on assimilation to the dominant American culture by all ethnic minorities. Romanucci-Ross and De Vos note that in most cases, the territorial concept of “homeland” is “necessary to the maintenance of ethnic identity either in symbolic terms or in a literal sense. However, other definitions of ethnic uniqueness such as economic activities, religion, language, or other social activities are equally salient considerations for ethnic identity” (Min, 1999:20).

Unlike premodialists who emphasised the premodial ties, instrumentalist scholars such as William Yancy, Eugene Ericksen, and Richard Juliani, challenged premodialist concerns and “argued that the development and persistence of ethnicity is dependent upon structural conditions” (Min, 1999:21) such as occupational and residential concentration and access to the larger society. Furthermore, ethnicity is viewed as “flexible” and “negotiated across time and social situations, rather than received solely from group membership” (Davidson, Yu & Phelan, 1993:65-87). Extending cultural assimilation theory, Gordon distinguished between cultural assimilation and social assimilation. Gordon defined cultural assimilation as the degree to which immigrants and minority groups adopt the language, customs, and other cultural patterns of the host society; social assimilation is the level of entrance into cliques, clubs, and institutions on the primary level of the host society. According to Gordon, minority groups could potentially achieve high levels of cultural assimilation without an equivalent level of social assimilation for the obvious reason that social assimilation requires a deeper level of acceptance by the dominant group (Gordon, 1964:77). Gordon’s distinction is important in understanding factors of ethnic attachment/identity and assimilation.

In his cultural ecology theory, Ogbu distinguished between voluntary minorities, such as immigrants, and involuntary minorities, who are absorbed into the society by force, generally through conquest or slavery (Ogbu, 1989:181-204). Ogbu asserted that immigrant minorities believe that the inequality they face is temporary and that their situation will improve over time. Education is often utilised as a vehicle for achieving the desired social mobility for these groups. Further, Gibson (1988) noted that as an adaptation strategy, immigrants selectively add new elements, thus, they can embrace “accommodation without assimilation” without evoking a sense of loss in regard to a past collective identity. Involuntary minorities, on the other hand, are more prone to reflect their negative contact with mainstream society through historical memories of rejection from the prevailing institutional infrastructure, especially education. This belief undergirds a sense of “oppositional identity” (Fordham, 1988).

According to Romanucci-Ross and De Vos (1995) individual commitment depends on one’s primary orientations -- past, present, or future. With the emphasis placed on present participation, a present-oriented person directs his or her primary loyalty toward the country of residence. “Here, survival of the nation is more important than personal survival” and patriotism kindles “a powerful emotion, making people willing to sacrifice their lives for the ‘fatherland’ or ‘motherland’” (Romanucci-Ross & De Vos, 1995:26). Occurring less often is identity through occupation or profession, which forms a present-oriented sense of belonging. Individuals who are dissatisfied with the past and the present may adopt a future orientation by identifying with a cause or revolutionary movement. Diverging from the present- or future-oriented sources of social identity, “ethnicity is oriented to special past

heritage”, regardless of congruency with present citizenship (Romanucci-Ross & De Vos, 1995:26).

Ethnicity comprises, for the most part, cultural distinctions such as language, dress, food, holidays, customs, values, and beliefs as opposed to race, class, and gender. In terms of ethnic identity, Richard Alba (1990) pointed out that ethnic groups generally define their uniqueness in regard to other ethnic groups largely through the medium of culture. As a part of the cultural medium, “language is the central component of culture, and as such it has the strongest effect on integrating members into a particular ethnic group” (Stevens, 1985:74-83). Researchers have established a high level of correlation between the use of a mother tongue and other elements of ethnicity. Nonetheless, language is the first component of the immigrant culture to deteriorate and fade over generations (Alba, 1990; Waters, 1990). David Lopez’ study based on 1990 census data is also noteworthy. While language loss of secondary generation Latino and Asian Americans is significant, Asian groups lose their first language more rapidly than their Latino counterparts (Lopez, 1997). Lopez posits that the availability of ethnic community support, which can enforce speaking native tongues, may be the deciding factor of first language retention: the larger the ethnic community, the more likely it is to maintain its native tongue.

Researchers have also noted that ethnic foods and ethnic holidays are often continued by ethnic groups long after the language disappears (Alba, 1990), without practising ethnic culture or partaking in ethnic networks (Gans, 1997). However, religion sustains ethnicity by maintaining ethnic cultural traditions through supporting group members within a congregation (Yinger, 1980; Rosenberg, 1985; Tomasi & Engel, 1970).

In Stacy Lee’s (1996) book, which focused on how ethnic Asians have developed their identity in American society, Lee asserts that most Korean students who are 1.5 generation [those who immigrated as a child with their parents] attempt to maintain a distinct Korean identity from other Asians and Americans. She interprets this as a social distinction driven by the superior social class that Koreans in general achieved through economic means. Although Lee’s interpretation may be partially correct, Korean immigrants typically experienced middle class economic status before their migration; therefore, this desire for social distinction may generate from an additional desire for social uniqueness. Further, she argues that Korean students have a clear social consciousness that motivates them to emulate the middle class white American mode of living. However, at the same time, Lee observed that behaviours such as attempting to maintain a distinct Korean identity and distancing themselves from other minority groups are apparent among Korean youth. She suggests that in the process of socialisation, some of these youth have assumed a dual identity: “American” in outward expressions while internally maintaining Korean traditions and connections with Koreans.

In an effort to better understand young, Korean immigrants’ sense of identity, we prepared a set of questions to draw out the respondents’ views on a number of topics related to their lives in Korea and in the USA, with particular emphasis on how they see themselves in the American cultural landscape. The respondents included five Korean male 1.5-generation immigrant young adults ranging from age 18 to 24 attending a large public university on the East Coast of the United States. We anticipated that the first-hand accounts of the informants’ perspective during this juncture of their lives would be particularly interesting and relevant in understanding the modern immigrant developing in the USA. Some of the interviewees for this study were acquaintances of the first author and others were introduced by friends. When the appointments were made for an interview, the respondents were told what questions would be asked of them and a particular date was set for the interview. Each interview lasted between 90 minutes to 2 hours on the arranged date. The interviews were

tape recorded and then coded by hand and transcribed. Then, the information was coded and sorted on a computer using the “Ethnography” software program.

## LIMITATIONS

This is a pilot study. A sample of responses from five male students from an East Coast research university is not a broad representation of Korean immigrants throughout the United States and, therefore, should not be generalised. In addition, college students in a large research institute may have provided a different social reality, as this population may not represent the general immigrant Korean population in America. Also, the absence of female respondents does suggest the potential for gender bias that is typical of the Korean culture that traditionally tends to be a male dominated society in terms of social and family ethos.

Further, the first author acknowledges that her own experience as a Korean student in an American university who later became a first generation immigrant has influenced her relationship with the informants. While this “insider” status may have helped in the understanding of the issues and enhanced her rapport with the interviewees, several issues may have been overlooked that are critical to readers who do not have a similar background. However, this study can provide groundwork for further comprehensive and illuminating studies.

## DISCUSSION

### Family Backgrounds

As stated earlier, demographic characteristics of Korean immigrants during the 1970s and 1980s can be summarised as a professional, business-oriented group with strong educational backgrounds (Portes & Rumbaut, 1990:41). Questions regarding the respondents’ family background, their economic status, and social position prior to coming to America concur with previous studies: all of the informants indicated their urban background with a relatively high level of parent socio-economic level. Out of five informants, two had parents whose education exceeded a college level, two had a college-educated father and high school graduated mother. Only one said that his parents completed only primary levels of schooling. All of the informants’ parents, with one exception, had either entrepreneurial or professional backgrounds and resided in the urban area from their initial country of residence and where they are currently located in the United States.

Brian is a 23 year old and a first year graduate student from Long Island. He plans to complete his MBA and engage in trading business with Korea. He came to the US when he was seven and is fluent in the English language. Brian feels his bilingual and bicultural knowledge will be beneficial for such an endeavour. His parents had professional occupations prior to their immigration.

Brian: My father was a high school English teacher and my mom taught in a college. Financially we had everything [in Korea].

David is 21 years old and a premed student. He came to the US in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and speaks English with a slight accent.

David: My father had a business. International trading business. So he travelled a lot. My father visited the US quite often. I think we did better than middle class. Upper middle perhaps. . . We had a nice house and all. . . We weren’t really rich but we were really well off.

Derek is 21 years old and his family also originally emigrated from Seoul. He came to the US when he was nine years old and he completed third grade prior to immigration. He

mentioned that he repeated third grade in the US due to his inefficient English at that time. He also said that he did very well in American schools in all academic subjects except English when he arrived. He added that he thinks American schools are not as academically rigorous as Korean schools.

Derek: My father was a pilot in an international airline company [in Korea]. We moved a lot. Each time it was for a bigger house. I think we were quite well off [before we came to the USA]. We had things that my neighbours did not have.

Most of the informants, who are well educated, affluent, and from urban backgrounds prior to their immigration to America, had difficulties understanding their parents' motivation to immigrate. They feel that they had "everything" in Korea without the hardship of initiation into American life. Consequently, these students feel that the price they paid for immigration was considerable, as Brian's comment that "After coming to the United States, our parents didn't have time for us" suggests. Many of these students suspect that their parents' primary reason for immigration was for their education - to avoid the "examination hell" of the Korean education system and at the same time, giving them the edge of an English education, a *lingua franca*, in a globalising world.

Brian: I don't know why we came here [the USA]. Maybe to educate us in an English-speaking environment. My parents own a couple of supermarkets in NYC now, convenience stores.

Derek: I am not sure why we came here. I heard the education system is tough there [Korea]. We have more freedom here [in the USA] about what we think and do. More choices. My parents own an electronic shop now.

Sunny, who is a 22-year-old art major student, is an exception. He came to America when he was seven. He said that his parents only completed elementary education and his family's reason for immigration was clear to him.

Sunny: In Korea we were poor. My family moved around quite a bit because my parents didn't have a steady occupation. We came to America for economic reasons. And I think we did it well. I say we are an upper middle class now - financially. My parents own two large dry cleaning businesses.

Because of their inadequate ability to communicate effectively in English, first generation Korean immigrants are, in general, confined to the ethnic community and are unable to find jobs in their trained professions even with their high levels of educational attainment. Therefore, they experience social/occupational downward mobility, which becomes a source of individual and family tension. Most of these immigrants become self-employed entrepreneurs in alternative blue-collar jobs, and their activities are generally limited to the Korean communities. Ethnic networks provide information about employment and sources of credit and support for entrepreneurial ventures (Min, 1990; Portes & Rumbaut, 1990). The ethnic entrepreneurial communities have an additional advantage of being sources of information for outside jobs as well as sources of employment opportunities as ethnic businesses tend to hire and promote their own people. The experiences of these informants support this.

Conversation with Sunny confirms the findings of previous research. He indicated that his father had bought the grocery shop he was working in when the owner was moving into a gas station business and passed on the mortgage to his father. He added that without such an arrangement, his family could not have offered to buy the shop in America where they had no credit history. Past experiences and contacts with the Korean Community confirm Light & Bonachie's (1988) claim that Koreans have established their own extended business network that provides start-up money for businesses. Within ten years of immigration, most informants express satisfaction at their economic achievement that either is equal to or better than it was in Korea. Portes and Rumbaut (1990) support the finding that Korean and



Chinese groups have above average household incomes as a result of their entrepreneurial orientation.

However, this achievement did not come just by luck. Except for two cases where the mother worked part time, all the informants reported the anguish and loneliness of growing up alone in a land where language and customs are not familiar while all adults in the family were working. They understood the difficulty and sacrifice their parents were making, but nevertheless felt lonely and scared.

Sunny: We stayed with my uncle's family several months after we came to America. The very next day after we got to the US, I woke up to find out the only adult in the house was my mom. All other adults had gone to work. About a week or so later, my mom began to work too. Eventually we moved to a poor Hispanic neighborhood where crime was a constant problem. My brother and I were left in the house all alone. We were scared .... I worried a lot. My parents worked long, long, long [emphasised] hours. I was afraid of things like what if they [my parents] get sick and if we will ever get out of here... I was always scared. Scared of the neighborhood, scared of the future, just plain scared. We had no one to talk to - alone, my brother and me.

My mom worked at a sweatshop. She worked long hours. My dad worked for a local grocery shop owned by a Korean. His job was stocking and delivering. Later, he bought that shop. Profit was good but it was long working hours - 6 a.m. to midnight. We [my brother and I] never got to see my parents and when we saw them they were tired. So they changed to the dry cleaning business. It is still long hours but much less than a grocery shop.

Brian, whose parents were professionals in Korea, again related heartbreaking experiences:

Brian: [After we came to America] My grandmother took care of us because my parents were working all the time. Grandmother doesn't speak a word of English, so we spoke Korean to her. After we left for college, grandmother had no one to talk to. Now, she has lost her ability to talk. I blame my parents for my grandma's illness. I resent my parents for bringing us here. We were very comfortable in Korea. I don't know why we came here.

Therefore, it can be postulated that while every immigrant family worked hard and endured many hardships adjusting to American life, those who are from middle-class/professional backgrounds paid greater costs seeking the American dream.

Some of the informants turned to violence to overcome loneliness and frustration. We were informed that many Korean youth in urban areas turned to violence in the absence of their parents who are working long hours to survive in the new country. Alex is a 22-year-old political science major. His father came to America two years prior to the rest of the family who joined him later. Alex was seven at the time he came to the US and growing up alone, he thinks it was by God's grace that he didn't get deeper into the street world.

Alex: I was frustrated and angry [about my parents being absent]. When I was attending Stuyvesant high [the most elite public school in New York City], I had to commute a long distance. Then, I got involved with the club [referring to a street gang group] and I did many bad things. But we were also considerate. Koreans [gangs] are known for that. We always leave them [victims] with some money to go home.

Sunny: We will go down the street and meet someone coming this [my] way. If it is any other ethnic group, we don't want to appear to be weak, so just for the heck of it we will get into fight.

Sunny mentioned that his parents moved out of the area because they were concerned about his association with gang members. Both Alex and Sunny informed us of the prevalence of Asian gang youth including Koreans in the metropolitan areas. Most of the gang youths were like Alex and Sunny who grew up in empty homes while their parents worked long hours to be successful.

## Academic Experience

All the respondents showed a great desire to improve their academic and educational performance, especially in their response to the expectations of their parents, in addition to their own ambition. All of the interviewees expressed that education is the most important goal for them. The following passage by Kim (1993) expresses well the social pressure and stress that Korean immigrant youth experience as a result of high expectation toward academic achievement.

Korean immigrants consider money and prestige as the criteria for success. However, it is when one understands that, for Korean-American immigrant parents, prestige is synonymous to the academic achievement of their children that one begins to understand the relatively high academic achievement of Korean-American students and their disproportionate concentration on certain majors in college and in certain professional careers.

As stated earlier, except for Sunny who cited economic betterment as a reason for immigration, all others have cited education as a central motive for their family's immigration to the US. This reflects the Korean reality of competitive entrance examinations often referred to as "examination hell" and antecedent gruelling preparation for entrance examinations. Without a college degree there exists no prospect for a prestigious job and social standing within the community. From the first author's recollection, it is not uncommon for families to spend half of their income on expenses needed to supplement/complement schoolwork. Even then, there is no guarantee for admission to a good university in Korea.

Brian: I think we came here for our education. I heard examinations there are quite tough. Maybe my parents were afraid that I might not be able to go to a college. And maybe learning English was important for them since English is the world language.

David: I think we came here for our college education and English. ... [I heard] Korean education is too tough.

As such, all the informants stated that it was the natural thing to attend a university. They did not consider any other option.

Brian: Everyone around me, including my parents, went to college. It was just a natural thing to do.

Derek: The quality of the school was the focus, not whether I am going to college or not.

David: Everyone in my graduating class went to college.

Even Sunny whose parents only had elementary education and came to the United States for economic betterment said that:

Sunny: My parents didn't have college education so they wanted us to get what they never got themselves.

Many of these informants are graduates from very prestigious elite public high schools in New York City or suburban schools near New York City. Although all the participants claimed that it was their independent decision, active parental involvement was apparent in the choice of both school and disciplines.

Sunny: My first love was studying art. My parents thought that I wouldn't be able to make a living by studying art. They persuaded me to study business. [He added that for his parents being economically independent might have special meaning as his parents came to the USA after moving place to place looking for manual work in Korea]. So I gave it a try for the first two years. Didn't work out. Now my parents feel bad and support me fully [studying of art].

David: Well, we are a minority in this country and my dad thought that I should have a good profession - the one with licence. I thought about law but my dad thought that I will be

disadvantaged when competing with white [American] and suggested that I should study medicine. ... I agree with him. Luckily I like biology and chemistry.

Ogbu (1988) noted that voluntary minorities believe in the connection between school and future success. Related to Ogbu's cultural ecology theory, the informants also view education as a vehicle for social mobility. However, a marginalised position of Korean immigrants in American society is well reflected in David's rationale for pursuing a career in science rather than law. David suggested that a career in a science related field is less dependent on perception of command of the English language by "Americans" and therefore there is a greater competitive chance than in careers in the areas of law or management.

However, one informant's view was more optimistic.

Alex: I think in America, with hard work you can make your dream. My dad was a politician [in Korea] and I would like to become a judge ... I want to be a judge because you can make a difference. ... That's how [through domination in legislative and judicial areas] white Americans gained power. Sure I will have difficulty. But I am willing to walk extra ten miles for achieving my goal.

Alex's attitude corresponds to Ogbu's (1988) assertion that immigrant minorities believe that the inequality they are facing is temporary and that their situation will improve over time. In this framework, immigrant minorities focus their effort toward education to improve their conditions. Although all of the informants agreed that Koreans are at a disadvantage in social mobility, they also believe that through hard work and education, and by choosing the right profession, they can improve their lot in the American society.

## **Learning English**

"Language is the house of being" - Martin Heidegger

All of the respondents reported that learning English was the most difficult part of adapting to their new environment. All of them have currently attained fluency in English; some speak like native speakers and some have developed their ability to speak correct, standard English, but with a slight accent. They recall schooling and associations with English speaking friends as the principle medium for learning English. In their attitude, all of them considered that their command of English would have an effect on their professional advancement and further emancipation in American society. All of the participants believed that the first generation immigrants might have to limit their goals to succeed and achieve peripheral success within the ethnic community because of their deficiency in English. The second-generation immigrant however, must go beyond the ethnic community into mainstream American society. To accomplish this task, English is the principal vehicle.

However, special attention is paid to the maintenance of the Korean language. Bilingualism was seen as ideal, and extended ethnic community forces such as the church utilise this function. All of our informants converse fluently in both languages and are proud of their abilities. However, they always speak in Korean when speaking with other Koreans. In fact, most of them preferred to speak Korean with the first author at other social events. Unanimously, they viewed speaking Korean as a prerequisite to being a Korean. Alex put it most eloquently.

Alex: You think with the language you speak. If one doesn't speak Korean, then you don't think the Korean way.

The informants pointed out other practical benefits of being bilingual, such as understanding both cultures and having greater access to jobs and information. Therefore, those who are weak in either language are seen as intellectually and culturally inferior and are looked down upon by others. In spite of the complexities of the Korean language as it distinguishes the

formal polite and informal polite, formal plain, and informal plain, most second generation Koreans displayed a remarkable command of the Korean language. First generation Korean immigrants with limited English skills almost always describe themselves as Korean with American citizenship. This is an interesting contrast to the 1.5 generation who consider themselves as Koreans first and their reference of American usually meant Americans of Caucasian ancestry while second generation Korean youth who are born in the US identify themselves as American with Korean ancestry and speak English primarily.

One of the first author's friends, Jenny, was adopted by a European-American family when she was three. She has no recollection of Korea and, as she grew up, English was the only family language and, therefore, became her primary language. She earned a doctoral degree in English and currently teaches in a prestigious research university. She chuckles at the people who comment that she speaks English well or that some of her white students doubt her English abilities because of her Asian appearance.

### **Culture**

In addition to speaking Korean, ethnic Korean food serves to assert Korean identity as a distinctive feature of ethnicity. It is understood as giving more consideration to a guest when the guest is served Korean dishes. To Koreans, a Korean meal represents Korean hospitality. Thus, Korean food is served at most ethnic gatherings including Sunday meetings at churches. Korean immigrants trust the US and believe they can participate in a potentially gratifying mainstream society. They view their dual identity as additive and complementary, not oppositional and conflicting. Becoming an American does not pose a conflict to most Korean immigrants. New elements of the American culture are selectively added without evoking any sense of loss to a past collective identity (Kim, 1993:230). Similarly, Koreans are adopting a pragmatic strategy of 'accommodation without assimilation,' which is common among immigrant minorities. These claims appear to be true among Koreans in two ways. First, Koreans admit the superiority of American technology but insist that Korean spiritual culture has greater importance. Many reasons are given to illustrate the American weaknesses - too much individualism, too much freedom, which leads to irresponsibility resulting in unwillingness to sacrifice for the greater good of the collective population. On the other hand, politeness and friendliness were points that Koreans wish to learn from their American counterparts.

The favourable economic conditions of Koreans in the US as well as their middle class experience in Korea, provides "cultural capital" which gives them confidence to assert themselves in America. All of the informants viewed their families' economic position as equal to or better than that of most of their white peers. These second-generation immigrants are willing to adopt the best of both their Korean and American experiences while maintaining their Korean ethnic culture. Korean youth view Americans as very sociable but not developing close relationships. The latter are seen as more calculated in their friendships and other human relationships.

Derek: They [Americans] are too individualistic... They don't hold arms together between friends. They think it is queer thing. ... They are polite but it's so artificial. ... They don't know the meaning of sacrificing for friends.

Alex: They are different. I don't feel the depth of friendship with Americans even with those known for long time.

The informants refer to Americans as more emotionally immature, but the respondents also recognise the crudeness of Korean mannerism, which they affectionately termed as *naiveté* and innocence.

## Identity Formation

All of the informants identify themselves first as Koreans. Some have accepted a hyphenated identity of Korean-American, adding to their American experience. Considering the fact that most of them are naturalized American citizens now, their responses were interesting. When asked whether it was conflicting for them as American citizens to assert themselves as Koreans first, they responded that there is no conflict. One aspect of that identity is, according to them, to be pragmatic and functional and the other to be spiritual—the Asian American is a combination of the spiritual and moral values of the East and the pragmatism of the West.

However, close conversations revealed that affiliations with Korean identity are stronger as a result of the American rejection of Asians in mainstream America.

Derek: German, English anybody can come here and next day they can call themselves an American and Americans will accept them. But not if you have an Asian face. ... My son will be called a Korean. ... So, you are rejected by Americans and if you are not Korean, then who are you? ... I will teach my son to be a proper Korean. ... We will always be Korean.

The first author echoed this feeling in some degree through her own experiences. Often she is asked to provide proof of citizenship at the border when she returns from Canada after the holidays while no such demands were made to her white friends. Therefore, it is possible to postulate that such shared experiences of discrimination mobilise ethnic identity. According to Takaki (1989) Asians are still regarded as “strangers from a different shore” in spite of more than 150 years presence in mainland USA.

However, while many have expressed the implicit discrimination practised by Americans against Koreans, all express the hope of overcoming it through hard work. While maintaining self-ethnic identity, learning their way and beating them at their own game was the dominant expression of Korean youth.

Brian: I expect discrimination in my professional pursuit. For the same qualification, white Americans will have an advantage. I have to do better in order to achieve same.

Alex: I believe that I can achieve what I set to become. I just have to go an extra 10 miles to achieve same and I am willing to do that... We should remember what happened to the Japanese during World War II and how Americans have treated Chinese. America as a nation feels guilty of what they did. When someone feels guilty, he doesn't like the person who is making them feel guilty. That is how white America feels. Same time, they feel threatened by our success.

Lee (1995) argued that in the United States, the issue of race is framed in terms of blacks and whites. The Korean informants also were acutely aware of this and feel alienated in this society, thus Koreans have an increasing desire to get more involved in politics by sending more representatives to voice their presence.

Alex: Therefore, we [Asians] must unite. And if we cannot find a Korean to defend us then we should send at least another Asian [to Capital Hill].

Alex's comment hints toward implicitly strong discrimination resulting in the marginalising of all Asians into a collective group, therefore eliminating ethnic uniqueness and encouraging a Pan-Asian identity.

## Spouse Selection

In spouse selection, all of our respondents, with the exception of Sunny, who is in love with a Caucasian girl, prefer Korean spouses. Family appears to be a powerful force in shaping Korean youth's attitudes. Interviewees seem to believe that there is a better understanding of

each other among Korean spouses especially with those who share American experiences. Some even believed that Koreans are more physically attractive than other ethnic groups.

Alex: I was dating a girl who was a mix of a European and Native American. I was in love and planned to get married. ... My father opposed. ... I am an only son and must carry the family name and tradition. That is my obligation. ... My parents love me and supported me all these years. If that is their only wish, how can I possibly go against it? There will be many who will overcome that and marry anyone who they wish to marry. I have a duty to my family.

David: My mom said even within the same family, there are different personalities and problems and the same goes for ethnicity but the risk of difficult relationship is greater in an intercultural and interracial marriages. I happen to agree with her. She said as long as I am happy, she will accept whoever I choose but she will be happier to be able to speak to her daughter-in-law in her own language. I think it makes sense. I don't think of any other possibility.

Derek: My own perception is that non-Korean's are not attractive. My parents, I think are happy about that. Beside, I think it is less problematic to the child who will be born later. It will be less confusing to them. They will know who they are.

Brian: I think my parents are more open-minded about that issue but I definitely prefer Korean. I could marry anyone I want to. My parents cannot control me.

These informants' comments may be typical of the Korean male immigrant population; however, they may not reflect those of the whole Korean immigrant population. Korean female immigrant may have different views on this issue as Korean traditional culture favours males and places females in a subservient role, which might result in dissatisfaction by female immigrant youths.

## CONCLUSION

This study confirmed two interesting patterns of immigration by Koreans. The first follows the traditional patterns of economic migration, meaning immigrants of primarily working class backgrounds who come to the US for economic betterment. The second, newly emerging pattern consists of middle class entrepreneurial/professional immigrants. This latter category of immigrants propose an interesting new trend in which middle class Koreans are immigrating to the US for the education of their children so that they may avoid the "examination hell" of the Korean educational system and learn English. This reveals the problematic Korean educational system: without a diploma from a prestigious university, there is no prospect for entering into a good profession and little opportunity to gain social respect. Further, learning English is much desired among the middle class Koreans - a lingua franca, which will graft them into the global economy.

However, unlike economic immigrants, education immigrants appear to pay greater costs for their opportunities. Unable to find a job in a trained profession due to language barriers, these middle class immigrants appear to experience greater anxiety in addition to the problems experienced by immigration. The extraordinary burden caused by the social/occupational downward mobility of immigrant families has an evident psychological impact. Furthermore, the sacrifices that parents make and their subsequent high expectations for their children both motivate and add stress to young immigrants' lives. Children want to live up to their parents' expectations, but at the same time they struggle with the desire to embrace the American ideal of independence and self-determination. These socio-cultural conflicts are at the centre of these youths' efforts to forge a sense of identity and place.

The participants in this study are successfully negotiating a place for themselves. They identify first as Koreans, indicating that their families, language and culture are an essential part of who they are. However, they also embrace aspects of what they perceive as American culture when it suits who they want to be. Yet conflict remains as they try to fight against discrimination and a feeling of alienation in their adopted country.

The informants expressed the hope of taking part in American society, but internal and external conflicts among race and ethnic relationships within society at large as well as within their families and themselves shape the 1.5 generation Korean identity in the US. The subtle discrimination Korean youths feel in their relationships with fellow “American” students must be examined. As a racial and linguistic minority, Korean youths feel they are disadvantaged and must “walk an extra ten miles” to overcome such discrimination, which points to the stress and unease that characterises the development of their identity and personality. These young men’s perceptions are important because they potentially become part of the cultural baggage of immigrant populations and can effect the way immigrants participate in American life. America is an immigrant country and if these findings were generalised, it would be an indicator of a growing social pattern of tension that must be addressed before it becomes a social explosion.

To better understand immigrant cultures and cultures made from immigrants, it is crucial to examine identity formation, especially that of youth, who are at an impressionable age. We emphasise the importance of this adolescent stage as this is indeed a time when people form their opinions and attitudes toward society, which will have a lasting impact on both the individual and also on the society.

How far is this Korean identity going to assert itself against the American backdrop? How far will American values and culture “drown” this identity and how can the two continue to coexist? These and other questions should continue to be pursued and explored to provide greater clarity toward understanding the issues that immigrants must overcome in their journey to becoming an American face in the pluralistic American society.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

An earlier draft of this paper was presented at the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES 2001), Chungbuk, South Korea, July 2-6, 2001, under the title “Growing up in the US: narration of Korean immigrant youths” by the first author. We thank Professor Bob Teasdale for having confidence in this article. We also gratefully acknowledge heartfelt support and insightful comments from Gay Garland Reed of University of Hawaii, throughout various stages of this paper.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alba, Richard. 1990. *Ethnic Identity: The Transformation of White America*. New York: John Wiley.
- Chang, W. H. 1991. “Korean American and Korean Newspapers.” In *Koreans in the United States* [in Korean], edited by Min, Pyung Gap. 281-300. Seoul: Yurim.
- Davidson, A., Yu, H., & Phelan, P. 1993. “The Ebb and Flow of Ethnicity: Constructing Identity in Varied School Settings.” *Educational Foundations*, 7(1). 65-87.
- De Vos, George. 1995. “Introduction,” in *Ethnic Identity: Creation, Conflict, and Accommodation* edited by Romanucci-Ross, Lola & De Vos, George. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.
- Fordham, S. 1988. “Racelessness as a Factor in Black Students’ School Success: Pragmatic Strategy or Pyrrhic Victory.” *Harvard Educational Review* 58. 54-84.
- Gans, Herbert. 1997. “Toward a Reconciliation of ‘Assimilation’ and ‘Pluralism’: The Interplay of Acculturation and Ethnic Retention.” *International Migration Review* 31. 875-892.
- Gibson, Margaret A. 1988. *Accommodation without assimilation: Sikh Immigrants In An American High School*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Gordon, Milton. 1964. *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origin*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ha, D. S. 1991. “Business Patterns in the New York Korean Community. In *Koreans in the United States* [in Korean], edited by Min, Pyung Gap. 88-121. Seoul: Urim.

- Hurh, Won Moo & Kim, Kwang Chung. 1984. *Korean Immigrants in North America: A Structural Analysis of Ethnic Confinement and Adhesive Adaptation*. Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.
- Kim, E.Y. 1993. "Career Choice Among Second-Generation Korean-Americans: Reflections of a Cultural Model of Success." *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 24(3), 224-248.
- Kim, I. S. 1981. *New Urban Immigrants: The Koreans Community in New York*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kim, K. C. & Hurh, W. M. 1985. "Ethnic Resources Utilization of Korean Immigrant Entrepreneurs in the Chicago Minority Area." *International Migration Review*, 19, 82-111.
- Lee, Stacy. 1996. *Unraveling the "Model Minority" Stereotype: Listening to Asian American Youth*. New York: New York: Teachers College Press.
- Light Ivan & Bonacich, Edina. 1988. *Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Koreans in Los Angeles. 1965-1982*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lopez, David. 1997. "Language: Diversity and assimilation." In *ethnic Los Angeles*, edited by Waldinger, Roger and Bozorgmehr, Mehdi. New York: Beacon Press.
- Min, Pyung Gap. 1984. "From White-collar Occupations to Small Business: Korean Immigrants' Occupational Adjustment." *Sociological Quarterly*, 25, 333-352.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1989. "Korean Immigrant Entrepreneurship: A multivariate Analysis." *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 10, 197-212.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1990. "Ethnic Business and Economic Mobility: Korean Immigrants in Los Angeles." In *Immigrant America: A Portrait* edited by Portes, Alejandro and Rumbaut, Ruben. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1992. "Korean Immigrant Wives' Overwork." *Korea Journal of Population and Development*, 21, 23-36.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1993. "Korean Immigrants in Los Angeles." In *Immigration and entrepreneurship: Culture, Capital, and Ethnic Networks*, edited by Ivan Light and Parminder Bhachu. New York: Transaction.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999. "Ethnicity: Concepts, Theories, and Trends" in Min, Pyung Gap & Kim, Rose *Struggle for Ethnic Identity: Narratives By Asian American Professionals*. Walnut Creek: Altamira.
- Min, Pyung Gap & Kim, Rose. 1999. *Struggle for Ethnic Identity: Narratives By Asian American Professionals*. Walnut Creek: Altamira.
- Olsen, Laurie. 1997. *Made in America: Immigrant Students in Our Public Schools*. New York: The New Press.
- Ogbu, John. 1989. "The individual in collective adaptation: A framework for focusing on academic underperformance and dropping out among involuntary minorities." In L. Weis, E. Farrar, & H. G. Petrie (Eds.), *Dropouts From school: Issues, Dilemmas, and Solutions* (181-204). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Portes Alejandro & Rumbaut, Ruben. 1990. *Immigrant America: A Portrait*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Romanucci-Ross, Lola & De Vos, George (eds.). 1995. *Ethnic Identity: Creation, Conflict, and Accommodation*. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.
- Seller, Maxine. 1977. *To Seek America: A History of Ethnic Life in the United States*. Walnut Creek: Jerome S. Ozer.
- Stevens, Gillian. 1985. "Nativity, Inter-marriage and Mother Tongue Shift." *American Sociological Review* 50, 74-83.
- Takaki, R. (1989). *Strangers From a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans*. New York: Penguin.
- Waters, Mary. 1990. *Ethnic Options: Choosing Identities in America*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Yinger, S. 1980. "Toward the Theory of Assimilation and Discrimination." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 4, 249-264.
- Yoon, I. J. 1993. "The Changing Significance of Ethnic and Class Resources in Immigrant Businesses: The Case of Korean Immigrant Businesses in Chicago." *International Migration Review*, 25, 303-332.



# Counselling for International Students in Western Universities: A Cross-Cultural Examination of Counselling Expectations and Services

---

**Paul D. Snider**

Murdoch University [psnider@central.murdoch.edu.au](mailto:psnider@central.murdoch.edu.au)

*Facing decreased public funding, Australian and United States universities actively recruit full-fee paying students from Asia. However there are questions regarding the impact of the reduced funding upon the development of appropriate counselling services to meet the international students' needs. Tinsley's Expectations about Counselling Scale was employed to quantify the counselling expectations of ethnic Chinese, Australian, and United States university students, and to assess the impact of videos of counselling sessions upon these groups. In follow-up interviews, the participants responded to questions about their attitudes towards university counselling centres, and the counsellor-client interactions depicted on the video. Australian and United States university counsellors also were interviewed about their centres' accommodations to meet international students' needs. Implications for university counsellors and administrators are explored.*

Cross-cultural counselling, international students, Expectations about Counselling Scale, university counselling services, cultural adjustment

## INTRODUCTION

In 1854, Yung Wing graduated from Yale to become the first Chinese national to receive an undergraduate degree from a United States university. Upon his return to China, he established an organisation to provide assistance to Chinese students seeking education in the USA (Bourne, 1975). It is unlikely that he envisioned the current number of Chinese nationals studying overseas or the diversity of destination countries. According to the Xinhua News Agency (1999), in the past twenty years 300,000 Chinese students have studied abroad in some 100 countries. During the 1999-2000 academic year, nearly 93,500 students from the People's Republic of China (PRC), Taiwan, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Singapore attended United States colleges and universities (Institute of International Education, 2000), constituting 19 per cent of the 514,700 international students in that country. A proportionately larger number come to Australia. In 1998, 43,695 students from the above mentioned countries and regions (Australia Education International, 1998) represented 49.5 per cent of the international students enrolled in Australian tertiary institutions.

Universities in Australia and the United States, as well as those in the United Kingdom and Canada, aggressively recruit full-fee paying students from East and Southeast Asia as a means of compensating for reductions in government subsidies. According to the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) (2001), the number of international students, as a proportion of all Australian tertiary students, has steadily increased from 4.8 per cent to 13.7 per cent between 1989 and 2000. Switzerland is the only country with a higher percentage of international students. In 1999 international students paid \$A791 million in fees to attend Australian universities (DETYA, 2001).

During the 1999-2000 academic year, international students, comprising 3.8 per cent of tertiary enrolments, contributed \$12.3 billion to the United States economy, making education its fifth largest service sector export (NAFSA, 2001). The motivation behind the recruitment of international students is the economic rationalist policies of the Australian and United States governments that force universities to adopt a corporate culture. Prior to the adoption of this culture, universities were perceived as unique in that their products and customers were one and the same, i.e., the students were the customers and the products. Today, courses are the products and students are the customers.

Recognising the potential for consumer exploitation, the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AV-CC) established the *Code of Ethical Practice in the Provision of Education of International Students by Australian Higher Education Institutions* (1994). The Code sets forth expected standards relative to recruitment of international students and the support services available to the students upon their arrival on campus. Section 9.2 of the Code states:

Institutions should develop appropriate support services, including professional counselling services, which will: promote the successful adjustment by international students to life and study in Australia; and assist students to resolve problems which could impede successful completion of their study program...”(p. 8).

Although not specifically targeting international students, a recently developed set of international recommendations for the student services sector in higher education addresses the need for counselling services, “to assist and support students with the transition to university life” and “to provide counselling and clinical services to students experiencing psycho-sociological problems that could be potentially disruptive to their successful academic, interpersonal, and campus adjustment” (International Association of Student Affairs and Services Professionals, 2001, p.33). Thus both documents acknowledge the responsibility and obligation of universities to have counselling services available to students.

Although the transition to university life can be stressful for all entering students, international students are likely to face unique adjustment issues. The quality and quantity of adjustment stressors experienced by an international student are directly related to the degree of similarity or difference between the student's home culture and that of the host country (Sheehan & Pearson, 1995). As Jacob (2001) points out, international students reside in the host country only for the duration of their studies; they are often raised in different socio-political circumstances; and they are often perceived as minorities on campuses. Jacob (2001) emphasises the need to distinguish between minority groups in the host countries, such as African-Americans and Aboriginals, and international students. Therefore, it is essential for student support services to: recognise the common and unique needs of international students; identify empirically valid means to address these needs; provide the resources necessary to implement those means; ensure students' awareness of the resources; create ongoing methods of program evaluation; and develop strategies to work collaboratively with other facets of the university involved in the students' lives.

According to Mori (2000), because of the multitude of adjustment issues international students experience, they tend to have more problems than the general student population; however, international students under-utilise counselling services. International students are often mistrustful of counselling and enter into it indirectly, usually as a result of academic, rather than psychosocial difficulties (Jacob, 2001). For ethnic Chinese students particularly, issues of shame and loss of face deter seeking counselling.

Although most United States and Australian universities provide international students with an orientation program describing campus resources, the findings from a 1997 Australian Education International survey of international students indicated that many students were

unaware of the range of services available to them on their campuses. Indeed, Schweitzer's (1996) study of a single urban Australian university revealed that just over half of all students were unaware of the various support services available on their campus; however, at the beginning of their university education, all of the students attended orientation sessions during which the roles of the various services were explained. This general lack of knowledge about support services prompted the Western Australian Technology and Industry Advisor Council (2000) to recommend, "...a need for institutions to more widely publicise their services, especially at orientation and familiarisation sessions, but also routinely through newsletters" (p. 20). However, the students' knowledge of campus services does not necessarily translate into utilisation of those services. This is particularly true of counselling services.

## CURRENT STUDY

### Methodology

The quantitative and qualitative data in the paper represent preliminary findings from a doctoral research project. The goal of the research is to gain a better understanding of the cultural and experiential influences on university students' expectations about the purposes and goals of counselling, the client's role and responsibilities in counselling, and the counsellor's role and responsibilities. Additionally, the paper explores these questions: Has the change in institutional character, from a public service provider to a corporate body, altered the obligations of universities to students in general and to international students in particular? Have the universities ensured that necessary student support services are in place to meet the needs of international students?

### *Defining Participants*

The data were collected from ethnic Chinese international students attending Australian universities, Australian university students, and United States university students. Except for a few United States students studying in Australia as part of a study abroad program, the Australian and United States students were enrolled in their home countries. For the purposes of the research, "ethnic Chinese" is operationally defined as international students from Singapore, People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Indonesia, speaking Mandarin or a Chinese dialect, and/or identifying themselves as Chinese. Within this paper, the terms ethnic Chinese and Chinese are used interchangeably.

Political labels are used to identify the United States and Australian participants. These individuals are citizens or residents of their respective nation-states. (Although it is incorrect to refer to Americans or Australians as constituting an ethnic group, for the sake of simplicity, the rubric "ethnicity" is used for statistical purposes in this study.) However, for the third group, rather than identify them as Singaporeans or Taiwanese who may also be Chinese, they are labelled as Chinese who happen to be from Taiwan. Wei-ming (1996) captures the secondary role nationality plays in Chinese identity by quoting the writing of Pye (1990), " 'China is not just another nation-state in the family of nations,' but rather 'a civilization pretending to be a state'" (p. 17). For Wei-ming (1996), it is the establishment of relationships and participation in social institutions designed to acknowledge and perpetuate the link between the self and Chinese civilisation that gives meaning to the term "Chinese." The selection of these groups for this study is based on each group's likely familiarity with counselling. It is expected that participants from the United States of America are the most familiar with counselling; ethnic Chinese the least familiar; with the Australians' familiarity with counselling occupying a mid-point between the other two groups.

### ***Hypotheses***

A student's familiarity with counselling is likely to impact upon the decision to utilise the services. It is common for international students to be unfamiliar with the concept of counselling (Mori, 2000). Certainly data collected in this study supports this generalisation. A sample of 77 United States college students revealed that 52 per cent had utilised counselling or psychological services either through their educational institution or an outside agency, whereas 33 per cent of 82 Australian university students, and only 17 per cent of 110 ethnic Chinese international students had any previous experience with professional counselling or psychotherapy. It is also likely that the ethnic Chinese students had limited vicarious counselling experiences through the sharing of information with friends or family members who had utilised counselling or psychological services. Although possessing a lower rate of counselling experience than their United States counterparts, the Australian students' actual and vicarious counselling experiences are likely to exceed those of the Chinese students. Consequently it is predicted that the three groups will have different expectations about counselling: the role of the client, the role of the counsellor, and the process and outcome of counselling. Also, it is predicted that increased familiarity with the university counselling service and the process of counselling will increase the likelihood of utilisation by the students and alter their expectations about counselling.

Mori (2000) recommends the use of videotapes as a way of helping international students to feel more comfortable about counselling services. Reviewing research in which various modalities, such as audiotapes, printed materials, verbal instructions, were employed to manipulate clients' expectations about counselling, Tinsley, Bowman, and Ray (1988) concluded that video and audiotapes were the most effective. It is from this background that the presented study is constructed. The present study employs Tinsley's Expectations About Counseling - Brief Form (EAC-B) (Tinsley, 1982) as the pre-test and the post-test, and informational and experiential versions of a video tape as the independent variables.

### ***Expectations about Counselling–Brief Form***

The EAC-B is a rating scale designed to assess an individual's assumptions or anticipations of counselling. The EAC-B's 66 statements constitute 18 scales measuring expectations in five areas of counselling: client attitudes and behaviours (motivation, openness, and responsibility); client characteristics (realism); counsellor attitudes and behaviours (acceptance, confrontation, directiveness, empathy, genuineness, nurturance, and self-disclosure); counsellor characteristics (attractiveness, expertise, tolerance, and trustworthiness); and counselling process and outcome (concreteness, immediacy, and outcome). The realism scale consists of 13 items, the responsibility and immediacy scales have four items, and the remaining scales have three items each. All items are preceded by "I expect to..." or "I expect the counsellor to..." In its original form, participants indicated their levels of expectations on a seven point Likert scale ranging from "not true" to "definitely true". Because the study involved students whose primary language was not English, the Likert scale options were reduced to five (Not true, Slightly true, Somewhat true, Quite true, and Very true). The analysis of data collected during a pilot study of the EAC-B, with 54 ethnic Chinese and 33 Australian university participants, demonstrated sufficiently strong Cronbach reliability coefficients to confirm the instrument's use with these populations. However, the Cronbach alpha for the "motivation" subscale was quite low (Chinese  $\alpha$  0.35; Australian  $\alpha$  0.44), therefore, these items were omitted from the major study. Additionally, of the 13 items comprising the "realism" scale, only seven were deemed appropriate for a university setting. Thus 63 items comprise the EAC-B used in this study.

Further modification of the EAC-B resulted in pre-test and post-test instruments with 37 items each. Some items were unique to each version, while other items, serving as anchor points, were common to both. For example, of the three items comprising the "expertise" subscale, items one and two were in the pre-test version, and items two and three were in the

post-test version. Item two served as an anchor. This modification reduces the potential influence of the pre-test upon the post-test. Also, it reduces the amount of time necessary for participants to complete the instruments; therefore, it decreases the likelihood of participant fatigue and resultant response sets which decreases validity and reliability of the data. Although modification of an instrument in this manner violates the canons of classical test theory, the procedure is similar to that routinely used in modern item response theory, i.e., targeted testing using item banking.

Although the EAC-B is designed to measure individuals' expectations about various aspects of counselling, the type of counselling is not defined. Unless the purpose of the counselling is specified, e.g., career, academic, personal, etc., the interpretations and generalisations drawn from the participants' ratings of the items are ambiguous at best. Although a review of the literature fails to reveal references to research exploring the issue, it is likely that the participants' responses would vary according to the counselling setting. Some international students face the prospect of being unfamiliar with the terminology of counselling. For example, Singapore's public education system refers to school counselling as pastoral care. Consequently, without clarification, international students from Singapore are likely to process the EAC-B items quite differently from United States students. Therefore, it is incumbent upon researchers using the instrument to specify the purpose or type of counselling the respondents are to expect. In the present study, counselling provided by a university counselling centre was identified as the type and setting.

### ***Video Tapes as the Independent Variables***

The videos, designed for viewing by university students during a pre-semester orientation program, use an Australian university campus as a backdrop. The ten-minute informational video identifies and acknowledges adjustment issues common to entering university students and those living away from home for the first time. Examples of the issues include learning the location of campus buildings, meeting people, managing finances, and adjusting to campus housing. After acknowledging a variety of ways employed by students to cope with the adjustment stressors, e.g., talking with friends and meditation, the university counselling centre is offered as a resource. The video provides an overview of the centre, and a university counsellor briefly explains the purpose and mission of the counselling centre. The video concludes with instructions for scheduling appointments.

The experiential video is a duplicate of the informational video, however, a seven-minute mock counselling scene appears immediately following the university counsellor's description of the counselling centre. The setting is an office used for counselling purposes. To portray the scene realistically, a mature age postgraduate psychology student with counselling experience plays the role of the counsellor. An ethnic Chinese postgraduate psychology student in her early 20s plays the role of the client. The scene depicts the initial counselling session. After preliminary greetings and introductions, the counsellor explains the confidential nature of the session. The student proceeds to talk about difficulties adjusting to the university setting and being away from home. The counsellor employs a non-directive approach throughout the abbreviated session.

### ***Research Design Summary***

Students participating in the study were invited to form focus groups to discuss issues raised in the videos. When appropriate, excerpts from that qualitative data are included in this paper as a means of gaining insights not available using quantitative data. Qualitative data was also collected from university counsellors in Australia, the United States, and South Africa. The South African counsellors were interviewed to look for parallels between their cross-cultural adjustments with the end of apartheid and subsequent rapid integration of their universities, and the cross-cultural challenges facing Australian and United States university counsellors. To summarise, the quantitative data for this paper are extracted from the

responses of 54 ethnic Chinese international students, 50 Australian and 77 United States tertiary education students to Tinsley's Expectations About Counselling-Brief form. The EAC-B was administered as a pre-test and a post-test. An informational and an experiential version of a counselling centre videotape served as an intervention. Approximately half of each group of respondents viewed a single version of the videotapes. Additionally, the participants responded to six items designed to test the validity of the videotape.

### **ANALYSIS OF THE DATA**

Using principles of modern latent trait theory, the 66-item EAC-B scale was modified to 37 items each on the pre-test and the post-test. Subsequently, participants' responses on the five-point rating scale were subjected to statistical analysis according to the Rasch unidimensional measurement model using RUMM 2010 software. The subsequent person-location estimates, in logits, for each participant were analysed further according to traditional statistical tests using standard software package SPSS V10. To analyse responses at a broader level and to obtain more reliable measures, subscales were collapsed into their respective broader headings. Tinsley (1982) suggests this technique in the EAC-B instructions. Thus, the Client Attitudes and the Client Characteristics scales provide a measurement of the respondents' expectations of the client's role; the Counsellor Characteristics and the Counsellor Attitudes scales provide a measurement of the counsellor's expected role; and the Characteristics of the Process and the Outcome scales address the expected dynamics of counselling and the subsequent results. The collapsed scales also have higher Cronbach alphas than the earlier expanded scales. The pre-test and post-test data provide the raw material for statistical analysis of comparisons amongst the three groups, and the influences of intervening variables. This paper presents the preliminary results of this study.

Statistical analysis had the following goals: 1) to compare and contrast the pre-test EAC-B responses among the three groups; 2) to compare the post-test ratings with the pre-test ratings to identify changes attributable to the independent variables; 3) to determine the relative influence of the qualitative nature of the intervention upon the participants' EAC-B post-test responses; and 4) to determine the possible relationship among ethnicity, changes in behaviour as measured by the EAC-B, and the characteristics of the intervention. Because of the multiple variables in the design, the data were analysed with a general linear model – repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance and covariance. Time (pre-test and post-test occasions) was identified as the within-subject factor. The multiple dependent variables for each level of the within-subjects design justified a double-multivariate ANOVA; thus, the five EAC-B scales were identified as the dependent variables. The between-subjects factors were ethnicity and the type of intervention (informational and experiential). Multivariate tests (Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, and Hotelling's Trace) determined within-subjects effects to be at statistically significant level for "time" ( $p < 0.01$ ), "time" and "type of intervention" ( $p < 0.05$ ), and "time" and "ethnicity" ( $p < 0.05$ ), with no "time", "ethnicity", and "type of intervention", interaction.

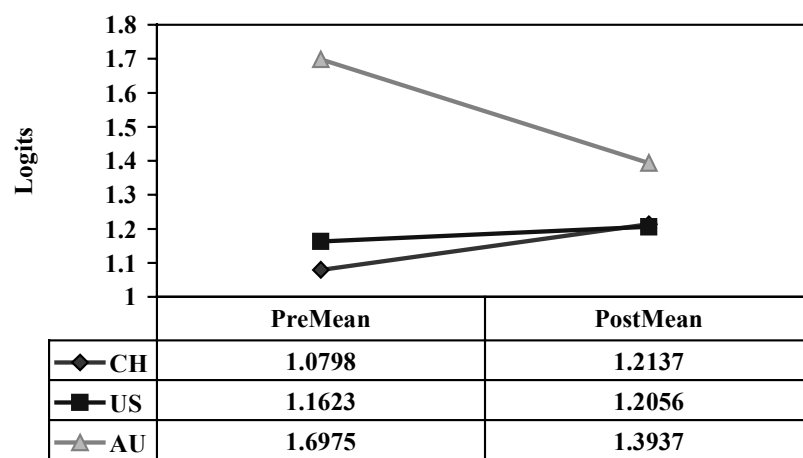
Bonferroni and Scheffé post hoc tests were used to determine the effect of ethnicity on the pre-test and post-test mean scores. The former test is appropriate because the variables of ethnicity and mean scores constitute a nonorthogonal comparison. The latter test is chosen as confirmation of the former and because of its conservative qualities.

## **Expectations about Counselling: Preliminary Findings**

### ***EAC-B Client Attitudes Means***

Seven items compose the Client Attitudes and Behaviours scale used in this study; three items grouped by Tinsley (1982) as "openness", and four items labelled "responsibility". As Figure 1 shows, the ethnic Chinese and the United States respondents' endorsements of the

pre-test items were similarly low and increased only slightly on the post-test. Apparently the videos did not change their expectations. However, compared to the other groups, the Australians' pre-test endorsements were quite high. The Scheffe and Bonferroni post hoc tests confirmed only the Chinese and Australian pre-test mean difference to be significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level. Perhaps further data analysis will explain the Australians' strong pre-test endorsements. The Australians' post-test responses weakened rather dramatically, although not at a statistically significant level. The Americans' mean change is negligible which supports the prediction that their familiarity with counselling will minimise the intervention's effect. Within the Chinese group, the participants' stronger, albeit minor, endorsement of the post-intervention items is possibly attributable indirectly to exposure to the video. For many of the Chinese participants, the video served as an introduction to the counselling centre's staff. This brief and impersonal introduction may be responsible for the strengthened endorsement of these post-test items. However, there was no significant difference among the three groups' post-test means.



**Figure 1. Client Attitudes Means by Groups**

The “responsibility” items are designed to measure the client’s expectations to be an active participant in the counselling process and to assume a partnership role with the counsellor. For example, strongly endorsing “I expect to take responsibility for making my own decisions” and “I expect to work on my concerns outside the counselling interview,” indicates that the respondent foresees the client playing an active role in counselling. Neither version of the intervention for this study addressed either of these issues, thus there was no opportunity for the participants to confirm their prior expectations of the client’s role. The informational video explained the purpose of the counselling centre, and the experiential video portrayed a brief initial counselling session. The counsellor’s expectations of the client were not mentioned in either intervention. The three “openness” items measure the respondent’s expected willingness to self-disclose, e.g., “I expect to openly express my emotions regarding myself and my problems.” Although the informational video did not address these issues, the experiential video did. The student/client described the difficulties adjusting to her new environment, and the accompanying conflicting emotional responses. Responding to another item, “I expect to feel safe enough with the counsellor to really say how I feel,” the Chinese may have been influenced by the ethnicity of both counsellors in the videos. The Chinese respondents participating in post hoc focus groups repeatedly voiced reservations about the counsellors’ abilities to work effectively with Chinese clients. This issue is addressed more extensively later in the paper.

The marked decline of the Australians’ endorsements of Client Attitudes items contradicts the predicted outcome and the professionally desirable outcome. Although the pre-test post-test mean difference is not statistically significant, its direction is nonetheless worrisome.

The issues involving the videos' lack of or limited coverage of the "responsibility" and "openness" items apply equally to all three groups, so this is not a reason for the decline in endorsement from the Australians. A possible explanation is an unanticipated effect of the video in that, almost without exception, the Australians participating in the focus groups voiced criticism towards the way the counsellor appeared when she explained the purpose of the counselling centre. The Australian students' comments covered a range of topics: the walls behind the counsellor were bare, the counsellor was seated behind a desk (in fact, there was no desk), the counsellor looked too relaxed, the counsellor looked too tense, the counsellor was just reading her lines (in fact, she spoke contemporaneously), etc. It is interesting that the Chinese respondents' reservations toward both counsellors were based solely around issues of ethnicity; however, the Australians focused more on issues of presentation. The United States focus group participants rarely made negative comments about the two counsellors. Several referred to the sterile atmosphere of the office from which the counsellor spoke, and one student opined that the counsellor, describing the centre's purpose to a student rather than to the camera, would have improved the effect. Therefore, it is likely that the Australians' attitudes were affected by an unanticipated confounded variable. It is hoped further analysis of the data will shed more light on these results.

### ***EAC-B Client Characteristics Means***

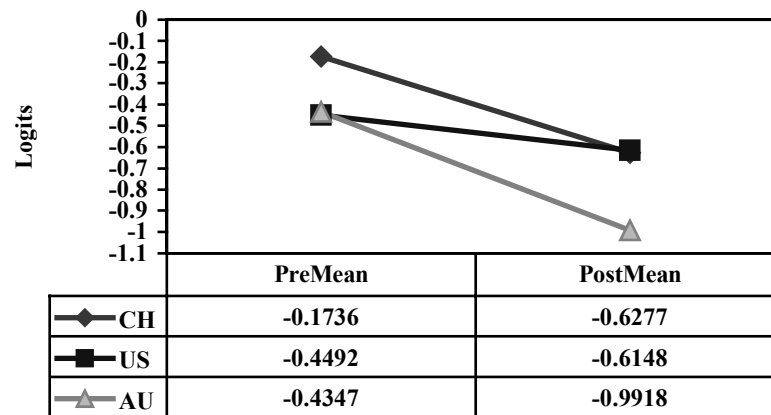
Thirteen items comprise the Client Characteristics scale. Tinsley (1982) places them under the single dimension of "realism." Rather than targeting expected states, such as "I expect to feel safe enough with the counsellor..." found in the Client Attitudes scale, the Client Characteristics items focus on expected behaviours, e.g., "I expect the counsellor to do most of the talking." Based on the pilot study findings and the setting of the research, seven items were included in the major study. As Figure 2 illustrates, the change between the pre-test and post-test means (without factoring in the type of intervention) was statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ) for each of the three groups. The mean differences for the Chinese and the Australians were similar (-0.454 and -0.557 respectively) and larger than the Americans (-0.166). As predicted, based on previous exposure to and familiarity with counselling, the ethnic Chinese and the United States pre-test means were different at a statistically significant level ( $p < 0.05$ ) as calculated by the Scheffe and the Bonferroni post hoc tests. However, the Chinese and United States post-test means were very similar and the post hoc gap between the Americans and the Australians was significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Thus the Chinese and the Australians changed about the same amount in the same direction, and the Americans altered less.

For six of the seven items used in this study, an inverse relationship exists between the reality of the expectation and the degree of endorsement. Therefore, the data show that relative to the items on this scale, the participants' expectations became more realistic. Further, as mentioned in the general description of the EAC-B, context is a critical component for score interpretations. The relationship between "realism" and endorsement direction is dependent upon the expected counselling context. For example, "I expect to take psychological tests" is an item selected for this study. Because it is unlikely that a client in a university counselling centre will be asked to take psychological tests, a strong endorsement of this item indicates an unrealistic expectation. However, a strong endorsement of the item in reference to career counselling is realistic. The probability of testing varies between the two settings.

Figure 2 presents the three lines connecting the pre-test and post-test means for each group is interesting. As predicted, due to the relative lack of direct or indirect exposure to Western counselling, the ethnic Chinese respondents' initial expectations were the least realistic of the groups. However, following the intervention, the ethnic Chinese mean score is nearly the same as the counselling-wise Americans. The Australians' pre-test and post-test mean difference is a bit greater than the Chinese'. With a pre-test mean equal to the United States



sample, the Australians' post-test mean represents the greatest change among the three groups. Because the items comprising this scale refer to expected behaviours rather than affective states, the Australians' reactions to the counsellors may have been less of an influencing variable than in the previous scale.



**Figure 2. Client Characteristics Means by Groups**

### *EAC-B Counsellor Attitudes Means*

The Counsellor Attitudes and Behaviours scale is composed of 21 items subdivided into seven dimensions with three items each. Employing the items one-two pre-test, items two-three post-test split described earlier, all 21 items were used in the current study. As the name of the scale implies, the items refer to the counsellor's interactions with the client. As Figure 3 shows, the three groups' pre and post tests means changed in a negative direction, and the mean differences were statistically significant, although to a less degree for the Americans.

The distance separating the Chinese respondents' means from the other groups is noteworthy. Both the Scheffe and the Bonferroni post hoc tests established the Chinese and United States pre-test means to be statistically different at the  $p < 0.001$  level and in the expected direction, and the Chinese and the Australians at the  $p < 0.05$  level. Those differences were unchanged with the post-test data. Without further analysis, interpretations are unwarranted. The makeup of this scale is rather complex because the realistic expectations of counsellor behaviour in a Western university counselling centre would logically require some items to be reversed scored. For example, a strong endorsement of the statement, "I expect the counsellor to tell me what to do," is unrealistic in terms of the likelihood of actually occurring. However, a strong endorsement of the item, "I expect the counsellor to respect me as a person," is quite realistic. Although there are several apparent reverse-scored items in this scale, Tinsley (1982) EAC-B's instructions make no mention of this. Another issue relative to the items on this scale and this study's interventions centres on the absence of information applicable to these items in the videos. For example, the experiential intervention's seven-minute vignette consists of an initial session between an ethnic Chinese client and a counsellor employing a nondirective modality; therefore, the issue of confrontation is not addressed. However, "I expect the counsellor to make me face up to the differences between what I say and how I behave," is an item on this scale. Certainly attitudes are influenced by a multitude of factors, thus, a rigorous statistical and qualitative analysis of this scale is essential to strengthen the interpretation of the data.

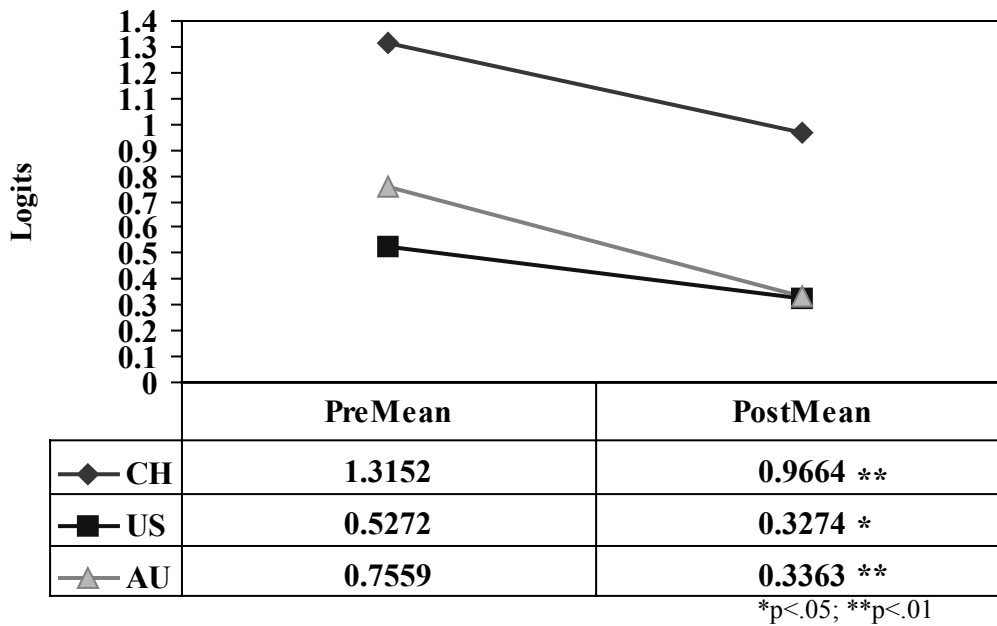


Figure 3. Counsellor Attitude Mean by Groups

#### *EAC-B Counsellor Characteristics Means*

Twelve items, divided equally into four dimensions, compose the EAC-B Counsellor Characteristics scale. The items are designed to measure the respondent's expectations of the counsellor's characterological or personality traits, and the respondent's reactions to those traits, e.g., "I expect the counsellor to be someone I can really trust." For the 12 items to hold together as a unit, endorsement is in one direction. All of the items were used in this study. The Chinese' and Americans' mean changes from the pre-test to the post-test are almost identical in showing increases in the endorsement of items. As Figure 4 illustrates, the lines connecting the two points are nearly parallel. The direction of change for the Australian respondents, in opposition to that of the Americans and Chinese, remains consistent with previously described scales. The Australians' pre and post-tests mean difference of 0.3757 is statistically significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level. The post hoc tests for ethnicity's influence on pre-test and post-test means failed to yield meaningful results for this scale. It is interesting that on this scale and the Client Attitude scale, the Australians' pre-test mean scores were considerably higher than the other groups. Further analysis is warranted to explore a possible relationship between these two scales. As earlier noted, the Australian focus group participants reacted negatively towards a scene in both versions of the intervention; therefore, it is likely that reaction influenced their responses to the items on this scale.

#### *EAC-B Characteristics of Process & Outcome Means*

In the EAC-B's original form, seven items compose the Characteristics of Process scale, and three items make up the Quality of Outcome scale. For the purposes of this study, three items, labelled by Tinsley (1982) as concreteness, from the Characteristics of Process scale and the items in the Outcome scale were combined. The items in these scales relate to the dynamics of the counselling process and the potential benefits of counselling. The decision to exclude the four items, grouped by Tinsley (1982) under the dimension of immediacy, was based on the lack of an anchor item when modifying the EAC-B for this study.

The mean changes for the three groups did not reach a statistically significant level. In reference to trends (Figure 5), the Americans' change in endorsement of the items was marginally greater than the Chinese' (0.077 and 0.068 respectively). The Scheffe and

Bonferroni post hoc MANOVA analysis of the means, using ethnicity as the independent variable, determined the United States and Chinese pre-test means to be statistically different at the  $p < 0.01$  level. The same tests using the post-test means found the Chinese mean scores to differ from the United States and Australian mean scores at the  $p < 0.01$  level of significance.

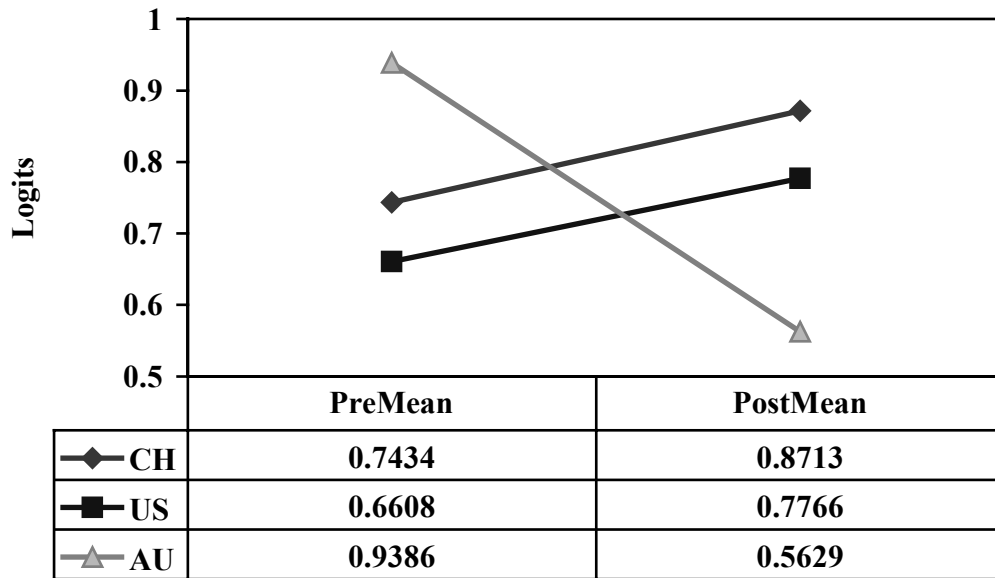


Figure 4. Counsellor Characteristics Means by Groups

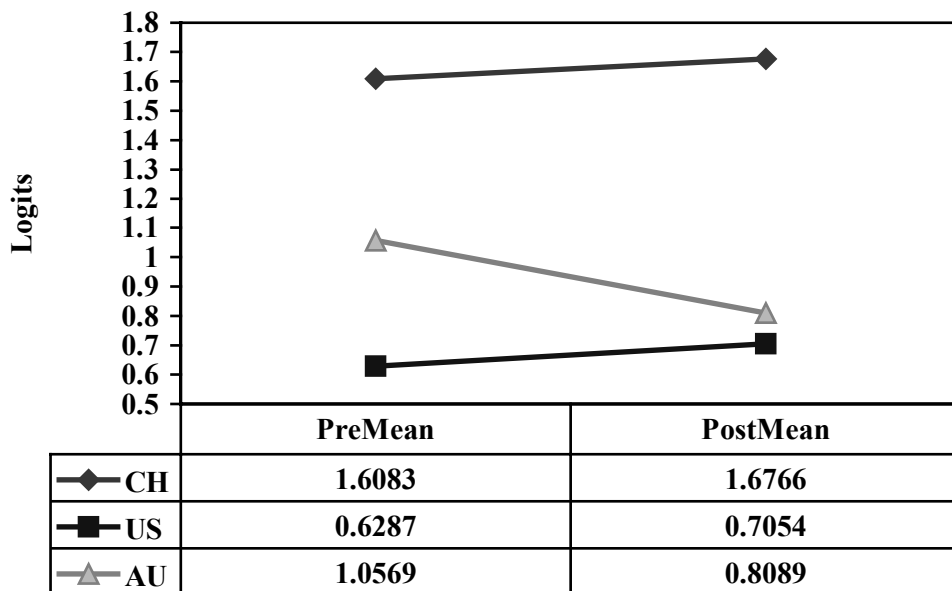


Figure 5. Counselling Process & Outcome Means by Groups

This separation concurs with the predicted effect of the inequity of familiarity with the practice and concept of counselling. The Chinese' stronger endorsement may reflect unrealistic expectations due to limited experience. The middle position also conforms to predictions. As with other EAC-B scales, the effects of the intervention upon the Australians was not predicted nor desired. Although the items on this scale attempt to measure the

respondents' expectations of process and outcome, three of the six items have the heading, "I expect the counsellor to..." It is likely that these items were influenced by the Australians' reaction to the video. It is hoped further analysis will provide a better understanding of these results.

### VIDEO ASSESSMENT ITEMS

The video items consisted of six statements designed to assess the respondents' attitudes towards issues addressed in the videotape. The items were pilot tested to confirm relevance and clarity of wording. Using a six point bipolar Likert scale (strongly disagree and agree, disagree and agree, somewhat disagree and agree), respondents indicated the direction and intensity of their reactions to the statements. Traditional test theory analyses are employed for each video item.

***Item 1: The personal adjustment issues for new students addressed in the video were realistic.***

Referring to Table 1, each group's ratings were similar. The adjustment issues were identical in both versions of the video, thus, whether the participants viewed the informational or experiential versions of the video was immaterial (refer to Table 2). This validates the appropriateness of the adjustment stressors identified in the intervention, and supports the contention that issues such as becoming familiar with the layout of the campus, purchasing books, organising finances, and meeting new people are common to incoming students whether domestic or international. A United States student said, "The first couple of weeks of school can be traumatic. You don't know where to go for what. You don't know who does what." A mature age student thought the adjustment stressors depicted were more appropriate for someone just out of high school, rather than someone who has been living independently for several years. "I'm more concerned with the availability of child care facilities than learning how to balance my check book." A traditional aged student expressed the opinion that the themes were realistic, and went on to say, "[When I entered the university] I wish I had known others were having these problems."

**Table 1. Item 1 Mean Scores and Between Group Mean Differences**

|    | Mean Scores | CH-US Diff. | CH-AU Diff. | US-AU Diff. |
|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| CH | 5.02        |             |             |             |
| US | 4.90        | 0.12        | -0.06       | -0.19       |
| AU | 5.08        |             |             |             |

**Table 2. Item 1 Mean Score by Intervention Type**

| Version    | CH |      | US |       | AU |      |
|------------|----|------|----|-------|----|------|
|            | N  | Mean | N  | Mean  | N  | Mean |
| Infor.     | 25 | 5.12 | 41 | 4.83  | 24 | 5.13 |
| Exper.     | 29 | 4.93 | 35 | 4.97  | 26 | 5.04 |
| Mean diff. |    | 0.19 |    | -0.14 |    | 0.08 |

University counsellors interviewed for this study independently identified "freedom" as a common adjustment issue for international students. Quotes from several of the counsellors serve as representative samples.

*Freedom is a huge adjustment problem. Suddenly you don't have somebody looking over your shoulder. You can get your nose pierced if you want to.*

*Suddenly finding yourself in a culture that values people making their own choices career-wise. Students start to question why they have to major in business simply because they are expected to.*

Counsellors noted another adjustment issue frequently encountered by international students later in their education or upon their return home, but not addressed in the videos. International students can have difficulty readjusting to their home cultures.

*For some students the biggest adjustment problem comes with returning home. Because they are attending uni or graduated from uni, the family and community have expectations which can be quite daunting. They sometimes find themselves expected to make key decisions for the family. Also we encourage them to speak up, to assert themselves, to question. Then they go home and are considered disrespectful and arrogant. That is very difficult.*

*They integrate more or less fully into the local culture and then sometimes they come to therapy with the sort of agenda of 'help me to reintegrate' or 'help me to sustain my allegiance to my original culture and the duties and expectations that are on me from that original culture'.*

Recognising the potential problems of readjustment, the *Code of Ethical Practice in the Provision of Education of International Students by Australian Higher Education Institutions* admonishes universities not to assume “that all international students returning home can do so without difficulty and therefore institutions should provide advice and assistance where possible on re-orientation, and...maintain an ‘after-care’ program” (AV-CC, 1994, p. 9). However, a formalised program designed to help international students readjust to their home culture at the conclusion of the academic year is lacking in the Australian and United States tertiary institutions in this study.

***Item 2: The video provided me with new information about the university counselling centre.***

This statement is quite general thereby affording participants the opportunity to acknowledge exposure to a broad range of new information. The ethnic Chinese’ stronger endorsement (Table 3) of this item than the Americans and Australians is likely due to differences in direct and indirect counselling experiences. Based on the mean scores, regardless of the type of intervention, a Scheffe post hoc analysis determined a statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ) mean difference between the ethnic Chinese and the Americans. Subjecting each group’s ratings on this item to an ANOVA analysis with the version of the video as the independent variable (Table 4), revealed no effect upon the Chinese or Australian participants, however, the United States subjects’ responses to the items were influenced significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) by the nature of the video. These findings are unexpected. It is difficult to identify the factors contributing to the United States participants’ responses. A possible explanation is the mock counselling scene depicting an ethnic Chinese international student talking about adjustment issues or missing her family, for example. Although these United States students are more likely than the Chinese and Australians to have experienced counselling, they are less likely to have had contact with international students. Thus, the new information gained by observing the interaction between the counsellor and this particular client may have contributed to the impact of the video.

**Table 3. Item 2 Mean Scores and Between Group Mean Differences**

|    | Mean Scores | CH-US Diff. | CH-AU Diff. | US-AU Diff. |
|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| CH | 4.61        |             |             |             |
| US | 3.92        | 0.69**      | 0.39        | -0.30       |
| AU | 4.22        |             |             |             |

\*\* $p < 0.01$

The physical location of the centre frequently generated comments regarding privacy. For the Chinese, questions of personal weakness and psychological adjustment reflect poorly on the individual’s family. Perhaps the student’s parents passed on a defective gene, thereby raising questions about the sanity of past generations, or the parents failed in their role as parents. As one ethnic Chinese student in a focus group said, “If my friends see me there [in the counselling centre], they will think badly about my parents.”

**Table 4. Item 2 Mean Score by Intervention Type**

| Version    | CH   |      | US     |      | AU    |      |
|------------|------|------|--------|------|-------|------|
|            | N    | Mean | N      | Mean | N     | Mean |
| Infor.     | 25   | 4.72 | 41     | 3.73 | 24    | 4.08 |
| Exper.     | 29   | 4.52 | 35     | 4.14 | 26    | 4.35 |
| Mean diff. | 0.20 |      | -0.41* |      | -0.26 |      |

\*p&lt;0.05

Contrary to the Chinese, the Australian and United States university students in focus groups never expressed concern for their parents' reputations. In fact, several United States students said their parents would be upset if they were experiencing academic or social problems and failed to use the college's counselling services. However, Australian and United States students were not without reservations. Several voiced concern about friends seeing them entering the counselling centre. "My friends might think I'm crazy", was the way one summed it up. Thus, for the ethnic Chinese students, seeking counselling would cause their parents to lose face. For the United States students, recognising and acting on the need for counselling would please their parent. However, reflecting the values of their individualistic culture, the United States students' source of anxiety was the potential devaluation of the self in the eyes of others, rather than any negative impact upon their parents. The considerations involved in deciding to seek counselling services appear to be culturally influenced.

Countering the argument that students seeking counselling would be seen by friends, it was pointed out that the counselling centre featured in the videos shared a common area with other university health services; therefore, the student's reason for entering the building would be uncertain. Some students responded positively to this arrangement; however, a Chinese student's comment demonstrated the nuances of counselling, "Having the office there makes it look like you have to be really sick if you need counselling." Regardless of location, it is likely that the fear of being seen persists. A university counsellor interviewed for this study described students walking past the office door several times over the course of three or four days before finally entering. The office is in a secluded section of the campus with a minimum of foot traffic thereby ensuring privacy. Nonetheless, the fear of disclosure surely discourages some students from seeking services.

A related concern is confidentiality. Although not mentioned by students in the focus groups, counsellors raised it as an important issue for international students. The following quotes capture the collective sentiments.

*Confidentiality is something I begin early on in the session. Look this is something that stays in this room and you can use this as an opportunity to talk to me. It is not going somewhere else. And that helps because Asian students especially ask, 'What is confidentiality?' 'Who do you report to?'*

*It may be that the issue of confidentiality rarely comes up with other students, but I can just broadly say that it's much more of an issue with Chinese or Asian students. That this information should not get back to their teachers or whatever.*

The first sentence of the last quote is revealing. The Australian and United States students seeking counselling services are already familiar with counselling and the profession's ethical concept of confidentiality; therefore, the counsellor need spend little time addressing it. However, a Chinese international student is likely to require a more detailed explanation of the coverage and exclusions of confidentiality. Chinese students' parents are also likely to have a limited understanding of confidentiality. This was an issue of concern for a counsellor:

*Our rules and our regulations say we are not allowed to disclose anything about the students without their consent. That is a big issue for parents who send their children over here. Sometimes students fail and are excluded after one year. This comes as a complete surprise to the parents. The parents are quite angry that we are not telling them what's going on. But we can't.*

*When we recruit students from different countries, we have an obligation to make that really clear that there isn't the connection between the school and the parents that they are used to. They need to know that the privacy act does not allow us to give parents any information. Parents need to be absolutely clear on this issue so that they can take necessary steps to determine how their children are doing.*

The expectation of confidentiality as an integral component of the counselling is a reflection of the individualistic orientation of Western culture. The focus of confidentiality is different in the Chinese culture; rather than the individual, it is the family. The Chinese tradition of placing the family name before the given name symbolises the relationship between the individual and the family. According to (Ai, 1997), Singapore public schools contact parents on a regular bases and provide a report of their children's progress. Additionally, it is not uncommon for a teacher to phone the parents of absent children. Therefore, Chinese parents sending their children to Western universities are likely to assume a continuation of the teacher-parent dialogue. It is incumbent that representatives of recruiting institutions ensure that the parents of ethnic Chinese international students understand the limitations of shared information.

***Item 3: I would be comfortable talking to the counselling staff in the video.***

This item elicited similar responses from the three groups (Table 5). A 2-way ANOVA confirmed the lack of significant differences among the three groups. Subjecting each group's responses to a 1-way ANOVA, with the video version as the independent variable, it can be seen (Table 6) that the mean scores on the informational video (3.79) and the experiential video (4.12) differ at the  $p < 0.05$  level of significance for the Australians only. Possible explanations for the independent variable's lack of influence on the Chinese and Americans can be found in the following qualitative data.

**Table 5. Item 3 Mean Scores and Between Group Mean Differences**

|    | Mean Scores | CH-US Diff. | CH-AU Diff. | US-AU Diff. |
|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| CH | 3.96        |             |             |             |
| US | 3.90        | 0.06        | -0.23       | -0.16       |
| AU | 4.12        |             |             |             |

**Table 6. Item 3 Mean Score by Intervention Type**

| Version    | CH |      | US |       | AU |        |
|------------|----|------|----|-------|----|--------|
|            | N  | Mean | N  | Mean  | N  | Mean   |
| Infor.     | 25 | 4.08 | 41 | 3.76  | 24 | 3.79   |
| Exper.     | 29 | 3.86 | 35 | 4.06  | 26 | 4.42   |
| Mean diff. |    | 0.22 |    | -0.30 |    | -0.63* |

\* $p < 0.05$

It is important to describe the video presentation of the counselling staff. The informational and experiential versions contain identical brief scenes, with voice over, of the receptionist writing in a diary or appointment book while seated behind a counter. Also, both versions have a 2-3 minute scene of a counsellor explaining the role of the university counselling centre. The counsellor is introduced by voice-over narration. She is middle aged, Western, seated, and looks directly into the camera while talking. Whereas the informational video moves from the counsellor to the receptionist with the voice-over narrator explaining how to make an appointment, the experiential video moves from the counsellor to a mock counselling session with a voice-over transition, "Let's look at a typical counselling session." A middle aged, Western, male counsellor greets an ethnic Chinese student at the door of his office, introduces himself, and gestures for her to sit. He sits opposite her and asks, "What brings you to the counselling centre?" The real-time session lasts approximately 10 minutes. The previously described scene with the receptionist booking appointments follows this.

With few exceptions, ethnic Chinese students in the focus groups voiced negative sentiments about the staff and the settings. The most common theme was the ethnicity of the counsellors. The Chinese students questioned the counsellors' abilities to be effective because, "Only Chinese can understand another Chinese." When questioned if the comment referred to language or ethnicity, both were identified as concerns. One student said, "We don't trust strangers; only family and friends. Not a non-Chinese." To explore the issue of the importance of the counsellor's ethnicity, the students were asked if they would be more likely to go to the counselling centre if the Western counsellor were replaced by a third generation Australian of Chinese ancestry. Although less enthusiastically and fewer in number, the students expressed a preference for the "Chinese" counsellor.

Speight and Vera (1997) explore the actual importance of the similarity between the counsellor and the client. Critically reviewing research in the fields of social psychology and multicultural counselling, Speight and Vera (1997) concluded that studies attempting to demonstrate advantages when the counsellor and client shared obvious similarities such as gender, ethnicity, disability, etc., were susceptible to methodological flaws. The studies often focused on surface similarities, rather than less obvious human dimensions such as values, sense of humour, and social concerns to name a few. Atkinson, Wampold, et al. (1998) examined the counsellor preferences of Asian American university students using a paired comparison method. Paired comparison methods use a preference format in which participants are asked to make choices based on multiple pairs of variables. Their study found that the Asian Americans preferred counsellors who shared their attitudes and values and had similar personalities regardless of ethnicity. Thus, the ethnic Chinese students' expressed preference for a Chinese counsellor may have been different had the counsellor in the video been Chinese, but spoke with an Australian accent or expressed views contrary to their beliefs. This is an area for further research.

Commenting on the language issue, students frequently asked, "If I have trouble speaking English when I feel okay, how can I be expected to speak it when I'm upset?" This is an important question. Numerous studies (Luzio-Lockett, 1998 and Mori, 2000) identify speaking English as a non-native language as a major stressor for international students. Although Australian and United States universities require evidence of English proficiency, instruments such as the TOEFL do not reflect how well a student can interact with native speakers of English. Reflecting on the importance of language fluency in counselling, a counsellor said, "Things from the heart can only be expressed very well in your own language. I find that students struggling with the language don't say what they really want to say because of lack of word power." Other counsellors echoed these sentiments.

Referring directly to the mock counselling session, a Chinese student said the counsellor appeared too cold sitting opposite the client. The student suggested a couch instead of the chairs, with the counsellor sitting next to the client and talking to her like a friend. The student framing the counsellor as a friend is contrary to the majority of research showing that ethnic Chinese clients typically assume hierarchical relationships with counsellors. The counsellor is superior to the client in status. However, this apparent contradiction may be a product of the cultural emphasis on filial piety. Rather than assume the role as an objective professional, the counsellor is expected to be sage-like and avuncular. Thus intimacy and hierarchy exist together.

Counsellors interviewed for this study spoke of these East-West differences in professional boundary expectations. One said, "Asian students see you as their friend. If they go away for a break or a holiday, they always bring you a gift. Most of the things on the shelves in my office are from Chinese clients. They even invite you to weddings, graduation, and family dinners. Sometimes it's awkward. Local students never do that." According to Tsui & Schultz (1985), rather than befriending the counsellor, this behaviour reflects Asian clients' attempts to incorporate the counsellor into their families. This is a strategy designed to



reduce the discomfort likely experienced from talking about one's family members to a stranger.

Another common criticism of the counselling scene was the counsellor's non-directive approach. Exposing a sample of Hong Kong university students to video taped counselling sessions with counsellors using either a direct or non-direct approach, Exum and Lau (1988) found that the students overwhelmingly preferred the former approach. However, it is likely that this preference is not limited to the Chinese students. Fromm (1994) contends that there is a positive relationship between the level of distress and uncertainty experienced by individuals and their likelihood of seeking out others to guide them through the morass. A United States student was probably representative saying, "You heard what's wrong, but he [the counsellor] didn't offer any advice or suggestions."

***Item 4: If I felt the need to talk to someone about a problem, the video has increased the likelihood that I would use the university's counselling services.***

***Item 5: Since seeing the video, if a friend were experiencing a personal problem, I am now more likely to suggest that he/she talk to a university counsellor.***

The type of intervention had no differentially significant impact upon the participants' responses to items 4 and 5 (Tables 7 and 8). However, when ignoring the type of intervention as a variable, between-group differences appeared. Both items produced similar endorsements from the Chinese and Australian students, but responses from the United States students that were significantly different at the  $p < 0.01$  level for item 4 and  $p < 0.05$  level for item 5 (refer to Tables 9 and 10).

**Table 7. Item 4 Mean Score by Intervention Type**

| Version    | CH   |      | US    |      | AU    |      |
|------------|------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
|            | N    | Mean | N     | Mean | N     | Mean |
| Infor.     | 25   | 4.40 | 41    | 3.66 | 24    | 4.50 |
| Exper.     | 29   | 4.31 | 35    | 3.86 | 26    | 4.27 |
| Mean diff. | 0.08 |      | -0.20 |      | -0.27 |      |

**Table 8. Item 5 Mean Score by Intervention Type**

| Version    | CH   |      | US    |      | AU    |      |
|------------|------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
|            | N    | Mean | N     | Mean | N     | Mean |
| Infor.     | 25   | 4.72 | 41    | 3.83 | 24    | 4.38 |
| Exper.     | 29   | 4.28 | 35    | 4.09 | 26    | 4.54 |
| Mean diff. | 0.44 |      | -0.26 |      | -0.16 |      |

**Table 9. Item 4 Mean Scores and Between Group Mean Differences**

|    | Mean Scores | CH-US Diff. | CH-AU Diff. | US-AU Diff. |
|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| CH | 4.35        |             |             |             |
| US | 3.75        | 0.60**      | 0.008       | -0.61**     |
| AU | 4.36        |             |             |             |

\*\* $p < 0.01$

**Table 10. Item 5 Mean Scores and Between Group Mean Differences**

|    | Mean Scores | CH-US Diff. | CH-AU Diff. | US-AU Diff. |
|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| CH | 4.48        |             |             |             |
| US | 3.95        | 0.53*       | 0.02        | -0.51*      |
| AU | 4.46        |             |             |             |

\* $p < 0.05$

Scheffe post hoc analyses of items 4 and 5 confirm significantly different scores between the Americans and the Chinese ( $p < 0.01$ ), and between the Americans and Australians ( $p < 0.01$ ). Because of the Americans' greater familiarity with counselling, it is likely that neither

version of the video increased a student's likelihood of using the university's counselling services or referring a friend to the services. An ANOVA analysis, with the video versions as the independent variable, failed to reveal a significant influence on the respondents' reactions to items 4 and 5. However, performing an ANOVA to explore a relationship between the participants' previous use of counselling or psychological services and their responses to the video items, disclosed a significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) difference between American participants who had and had not used counselling services (see Table 11). The Chinese data were not included in this analysis because so few participants had a history of counselling. As previously stated, prior experience with or knowledge of counselling likely diminishes the impact of the videos.

**Table 11. Item 4 Mean Scores and Prior Counselling**

| Hx Counselling | AU   |      | US     |      |
|----------------|------|------|--------|------|
|                | N    | Mean | N      | Mean |
| No             | 36   | 4.28 | 37     | 4.03 |
| Yes            | 14   | 4.57 | 39     | 3.49 |
| Mean Diff.     | 0.29 |      | -0.54* |      |

\* $p < 0.05$

In reference to qualitative data from focus groups, the ethnic Chinese students continued to express reasons not to seek services. Several voiced concern about the need to make an appointment before seeing a counsellor, "When you have a problem, you want to be able to talk to someone now. If you have to make an appointment, by the time you see the counsellor it may be too late." However, a United States student had the opposite reaction, "I felt good about the fact that it was noted that a convenient appointment would be made. It implied that someone would see you at the earliest possible time and that you wouldn't have to wait a long time." Addressing the immediacy issue as well as privacy, one Chinese student posed the question, "If doctors make house calls, why not counsellors?"

Numerous students from the three groups commented on the appearance of the counselling office in the video. An Australian student thought the office, "...should promote itself as a place where you could go just to talk; not only when you have major problems. The furnishings should be less formal; more inviting." Reacting to the office that served as a setting for the counsellor in the informational video, several students in each of the focus groups described it as sterile and uninviting. During the production of the video, office furnishings were essentially depicted "as is". The students' comments regarding the lack of office decorations identifies an unanticipated consequence of universities' attempts to cut costs.

Although located on a campus of a research university with over 12,000 students, the counselling centre used as a backdrop for the videos employs no full time professional staff. Two years ago, the university's administrators decided to out-source the counselling staff. This resulted in an arrangement with a neighbouring university whereby several of its counsellors split their time between the two campuses. Their professional identity is tied to their home campus. The counsellors have their individual offices on their home campus, and a shared office on the visiting campus. In addition to the expense involved decorating a second office (as well as issues of taste), there is the question of permanency. The arrangement between the two universities is contractual; therefore, its continuation is dependent upon successful periodic negotiations. At the end of the current contract, it is possible that counsellors from another university or private agency will occupy those offices. It is likely that the university counselling centre's offices will become the benefactors of pictures, *objets d'art*, etc., left behind by a succession of contractual counsellors, or will reflect a "one size fits all" style as a result of a university administrator's decision to "put something on the walls." What is important is the realisation that the ambiance of the centre impacts on the students' utilisation of its services.

**Item 6: My expectations of the services of the counselling centre were the same as explained in the video.**

Item 6 generated similar responses from the three groups (Table 12). These findings were unexpected considering the differences between the Chinese and the Americans on earlier items. A possible explanation is the wording of item 6. It requires the respondents to choose a smaller number to reflect a greater magnitude of change. Compared to the previous five items, this one may have been more challenging to respondents speaking English as a second language. However, as already mentioned, a Rasch analysis did not indicate item differential functioning (ethnic bias) for this item. As Table 13 shows, the pre-test and post-test mean difference for each ethnic group is minimal. Further analysis of the effect of independent variables on this item demonstrated a mean difference between the Australians with a history of counselling and those without that was significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level (Table 14) with those with a history of counselling endorsing the statement more, on average. The absence of this variable's effect upon the Americans is expected, considering their direct and indirect exposure to counselling.

**Table 12: Item 6 Mean Scores and Between Group Mean Differences**

|    | Mean Scores | CH-US Diff. | CH-AU Diff. | US-AU Diff. |
|----|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| CH | 4.41        |             |             |             |
| US | 4.34        | .06         | .002        | .07         |
| AU | 4.34        |             |             |             |

**Table 13. Item 6 Mean Score by Intervention Type**

| Version    | CH |      | US |      | AU |       |
|------------|----|------|----|------|----|-------|
|            | N  | Mean | N  | Mean | N  | Mean  |
| Infor.     | 25 | 4.56 | 41 | 4.34 | 24 | 4.25  |
| Exper.     | 29 | 4.28 | 35 | 4.34 | 26 | 4.47  |
| Mean diff. |    | 0.28 |    | 0.00 |    | -0.18 |

**Table 14. Item 6 Mean Scores and Prior Counselling**

| Hx Counselling | AU |       | US |      |
|----------------|----|-------|----|------|
|                | N  | Mean  | N  | Mean |
| No             | 36 | 4.14  | 37 | 4.30 |
| Yes            | 14 | 4.86  | 39 | 4.38 |
| Mean Diff.     |    | 0.72* |    | 0.08 |

\* $p < 0.05$

Comments from focus group participants were diverse. Although all of the participants in this study attended colleges or universities with campus counselling centres, at least one student in each focus group expressed a lack of awareness of the existence of the centre on campus. In one group, nine of 12 students expressed the above sentiment. "I would never have dreamed of looking for such a place," commented a student. A student in another focus group said, "The counselling centre moves every semester. I only knew the centre existed because of a friend." When asked if the counselling centre's location and function were explained during pre-semester orientation, many students described feeling overwhelmed with information and retaining little. A Chinese student said, "[Counselling services] was covered at orientation, but I was nervous going through it. [The video] was giving me more information about what I could get there. They would not be making fun of me or giving me all these tests." Several students knew the counselling centre existed, but were unsure of its range of services, for example, "I would never have thought about going there for these issues. The video didn't trivialise them but I would have known that I had a place to go had I felt the need." Another student expressed regret for misunderstanding the purpose of the counselling centre, "Before I started my studies the first time, had I seen a video like this, I probably would not have turned around and gone home after a couple of weeks."

## **Concerns of the Counsellors**

### ***Limitations and inequalities of services due to budgetary restrictions***

In 1989 Australian universities derived 70 per cent of their income from public sources; by 1998 public subsidies had dropped to just below 52 per cent (DETYA, 2001). The funding mechanisms for higher education in the United States are more complex than the Australian model. Whereas the federal government is the primary source of public funding in Australia, in the United States the burden rests upon the shoulders of each state. Therefore, the funding received by public, state supported colleges and universities will vary among the states. According to Pusser (1999-2000), citing data from the National Science Foundation WebCaspar Database, United States research universities experienced a decline in total state funding between 1989 and 1996. As previously stated, to offset the loss of government subsidies, universities are adopting corporate management styles in regard to the roles of the administrators and the organization of the campuses. One manifestation of the business model is the devolution of the budget. Each of the schools within a university is responsible for generating revenue through the recruitment of domestic and international students, and allocating the revenues within the school to maintain its programs of studies. University-wide services without an income base, such as libraries, learning assistance centres, and student health and counselling services, are experiencing significant losses of financial support. A recent National (Australia) Tertiary Education Industry Union Women's Action Committee (NTEU) Submission to the Senate Inquiry into Higher Education (2001) specifically addresses these issues as they relate to international students.

The large increase in international student numbers also gives rise to complex political and cultural issues within the student population. NTEU emphasises that the problem is not diversity per se, but rather insufficient staff and infrastructure to support these students. The demise of the Commonwealth Staff Development Funds in 1996 and the fact that Government funding for staff development has fallen by more than 50% since then is also significant, as an increasingly diverse student population requires more cross-cultural training than universities have hitherto provided. (p. 2)

University counselling services are affected by the overall reduction in government funds, but more significantly by individual university's administrative decisions relative to the allocation of existing funds. For example, as previously mentioned, the university serving as the setting for the videos used in this research, outsources its counselling services. Two counsellors are in the centre on a daily basis, however, no counsellor is ever at the university for the entire week. The centre's supervisor is on campus for three hours one day a week. Thus, there are 2.3 counsellors for 12,500 students. Unfortunately, this counsellor-to-student ratio is similar to neighbouring universities. For example, a university with three campus locations and a total enrolment of 20,000 has 4.6 counsellors. Another major research university with 14,500 students has only 1.9 full-time-equivalent (FTE) counsellors and sufficient funds to employ a locum 75 days during the year. However, these numbers are in stark contrast to yet another local university with 9.5 FTE counsellors for 18,500 FTE students. Funding priorities vary considerably from institution to institution in Australia. Although all students are potentially affected by the shortages of student service providers, international students may be particularly vulnerable.

Short staffed counselling centres are unable to develop and offer out-reach programs to students. Traditionally, time limited programs focusing on specific topics, such as strategies to combat test anxiety, were offered to students. The programs addressed common concerns in a pragmatic way, and provided an opportunity for counsellors to interact with students outside of a counselling relationship. Several counsellors spoke of the need for out-reach programs but the lack of resources for their implementation. A counsellor said, "We don't do much PR work here. We send out a notice at the beginning of the semester explaining our

services, but that's it. We just don't have the time." One counsellor, talking about serving on a committee with teaching staff, described the benefits and risks of such associations:

*I go to academic board meetings. The more the staff get to know us, the more they feel inclined to ring us and say, 'Look here's a student I'm concerned about. Can I send him over?' That's good, but it's a double-edged sword. We have to make sure our recognition doesn't exceed our staffing.*

Another counsellor voiced concern about university budgets and the inequality of services available to international students:

*The devolution of the budget means some schools are wealthier than others, consequently, they have more money to spend on resources for their international students. An international student studying business will have more resources available to him than if he were studying drama. It is the same as whether you are born in a wealthy suburb or a poor section of town. The resources available to you will vary widely even though you are in the same metropolitan area. These schools have this abundance of money primarily because of full-fee international students. They should share that money with poorer programs.*

The above quote is not to imply that the university lacks a campus-wide student resource centre; however, supplemental resources are dependent upon the financial wealth of particular programs of study.

### **Value Conflict Stress**

A topic that appears to have received little attention is the stress experienced by counsellors working with international students. As noted near the beginning of this paper, Sheehan and Pearson (1995) report that the stress experienced by an international student is directed related to the degree of difference between the home and host cultures. Extending their findings to the stress experienced by counsellors, it is likely that counsellors' levels of stress are related to the degrees of difference between their value systems and those of their clients. Several counsellors clearly described the conflict between those aspects of their training to remain non-judgmental, accepting, unbiased, and objective clinician, and the same training that stressed the importance of helping a client to develop a sense of self that is autonomous, independent, and inner directed.

*How much can I accompany somebody with such a different value system than mine, such as how women are treated? What's expected from women in the family context? That's a hard one. Even to listen to that. The thing is just to support the student and get through those difficult times for the student. But sometimes I feel very helpless ...because this is not my value. And because of their value system, it can sometimes be so difficult for them to succeed that they have to give up and go back. That's what I find the most challenging thing about being a Western counsellor.*

*Sometimes the Asian students become Westernised, which isn't a problem while they're here. But then when it's time to return home, they come here and ask for help to reintegrate into their home culture. Sometimes that's contrary to the therapy you know; the broad therapeutic agenda which may be about individualisation and identity formation. You are accustomed to helping students become self-directed and to develop their own attitudes and their own world view. Then they come and want us to help reverse that. It's very difficult.*

Although international students do not necessarily constitute a difficult population for a counsellor, their issues that involve values in conflict with the counsellor's are sources of frustration and stress. Corey (1991) identifies these experiences as contributing to counsellor burnout. Corey (1991) and Gomersall (1997) recommend the formation of a peer support group in which counsellors can openly share feelings of frustration and learn ways of being more effective. It is essential that the group meet regularly and not on an ad hoc basis (Gomersall, 1997).

## CONCLUSIONS

The push by western nations to reduce, if not eliminate, trade barriers has encouraged greater exchange of goods and services across borders. This means that universities as well as businesses seek to sell their products internationally and to draw international customers. Due to global demographic inequalities, western universities will increasingly compete for international students from Asia. Regardless of the motivating forces behind the recruitment, when a university admits a student for enrolment, the university has the moral obligation to provide a reasonable and acceptable standard of care for the student. This standard of care exceeds that level typically existing between merchant and consumer. Because of the inequities in power between the two parties, the university enters into a fiduciary relationship with its students. According to *Black's Law Dictionary*, a fiduciary relationship is one "in which a person or party is under a duty to act for the benefit of others on matters within the scope of the relationship. The relationship arises when one person places trust in the faithful integrity of another, who as a result gains superiority or influence over the other" (Garner, 1990, p.640). Many western countries have codified the scope and limitations of fiduciary responsibilities, and professional organisations also have addressed the issues through their codes of ethics. The *Code of Ethical Practice in the Provision of Education of International Students by Australian Higher Education Institutions* (AV-CC, 1994) acknowledges this obligation to its international students.

Australian institutions should recognize their on-going responsibilities for the education and welfare of international students. Institutions should ensure that the academic programs, support services and learning environment offered to international students will encourage them to have a positive attitude about Australian education and Australia when they return home at the conclusion of their studies. (p.2)

Although not explicitly stated, it is reasonable to infer that the above listed programs, services, and environment are designed to enhance international students' educational success. The success will be a critical component for the development of a positive attitude about Australian education. Although written for Australian universities, the above quote easily applies to North American and British universities. As a part of their responsibilities, western universities must provide appropriate and adequate counselling services to their international students.

The purpose of this paper was three fold: First, to gain a better understanding of the concept of counselling as understood by three different groups: ethnic Chinese, Australian, and United States university students. Second, to explore a possible means of increasing the likelihood that ethnic Chinese international students would utilise their universities' counselling services. Third, to gain a better understanding of the issues identified by counsellors as enhancing or limiting their abilities to work with ethnic Chinese international students. Based on the participants' quantitative and qualitative responses to the six video items and to the videos in general, and the counsellors' remarks during semi-structured interviews, the following conclusions and recommendations are offered.

A surprisingly large number of students lack an understanding of the services offered by their universities' counselling centres. From the qualitative data, this was apparent for all three groups. As reported, some students were unaware of the centre's existence. All of the students had completed orientation programs designed to acquaint them with their universities' services. Therefore these findings call into question the effectiveness of these programs. Several students made comments regarding feeling overwhelmed by the volume of information delivered during the few days immediately preceding the start of their studies. The data from this study indicates a need for counselling centres to provide follow-up information to students in the form of newsletters, notices in student newspapers, fliers for special programs, etc. Regardless of their format, reminders appear warranted.

It is important for universities to develop and implement some form of reintegration programs for international students. The need for these programs is directly related to the differences between the host culture and the home culture. Counsellors in Australia, the USA and South Africa spontaneously talked about the emotional and moral conflicts experienced by students attempting to bridge two cultures. For some students, acceptance of the host culture's values is a betrayal of their home culture. The timing of the reintegration program is crucial to student participation. Programs offered towards the end of a semester are unlikely to attract many students. Therefore, offering out-reach programs by mid-semester increases the likelihood of success.

For ethnic Chinese students, the data indicate that the counsellor's ethnicity plays an important role in their initial reaction to the counsellor. To repeat the quote of one Chinese participant, "We don't trust strangers." Speight and Vera's (1997) application of attraction rejection theories to studies attempting to demonstrate the advantages of counsellor-client similarities, and the paired comparison studies on the same topic by Atkinson, Wampold et al. (1998) were revealing. Because humans are multidimensional, similarities can exist on several levels. Therefore the counsellor and the client may not share ethnicity, but they may share qualities that are less obvious. Initial interaction is often necessary to disclose those deeper qualities. To accomplish this, it is essential for counsellors to interact with students in settings other than the counselling centre. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Jacob (2001) describes a program in which postgraduate counselling students were paired with international students for a semester. The relationship was not based on issues of counselling; but rather as a means for the counselling students to learn more about other cultures by actually interacting with them, and for the international students to have a resource for acculturation issues. This type of social interaction serves to break down surface barriers that often hinder the development of trust.

This level of involvement may be unrealistic for counsellors at universities, but out-reach programs, speaking to student groups, such as the Singapore Student Association, and generally being seen "out and about" on campus can serve to promote the development of trust between the counsellor and the international student. Several counsellors interviewed for this study were immigrants. When speaking to international students at pre-term orientations or at organisational meetings, these counsellors often tell of the adjustment difficulties they themselves faced, and occasionally, continue to face. According to the counsellors, this self-disclosure serves as a meaningful link for some international students who later seek services from the counselling centres.

For counsellors to engage in out-of-office activities and provide necessary services, universities must allocate adequate resources in terms of money and personnel. The leadership for the development of the infrastructure supporting the needs of international students must come from the very top echelons of the universities. Only if the vice chancellors and presidents recognise their duty of care and take an active stance to translate that duty into services, will the western universities be able to meet their moral obligations to their Asian and other international students.

## REFERENCES

- Ai, J. (1997). Schooling for Singaporeans: The interaction of Singapore culture and values in the school. In J. Tan, S. Gopinathan & H. Kam (Eds.), *Education in Singapore: A Book of Readings* (pp. 75-91). Singapore: Prentice Hall.
- Atkinson, D., Wampold, B., et al. (1998). Asian American preferences for counsellor characteristics: Application of the Bradley-Terry-Luce model to paired comparison data. *Counseling Psychologist*, 26, 101-123.

- Australian Education International. (2001). *Survey of International Students in Australia 1998*. In Australian Education International: Industry Publications [Online]. Available: <http://aei.detya.gov.au/industry/publications/publications.htm> (Accessed June 2001).
- Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee. (1994). *Code of Ethical Practice in the Provision of Education to International Students by Australian Higher Education Institutions*. Canberra: Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee.
- Black's Law Dictionary*. (1990) (B. Garner, Ed.). St. Paul, MN: West Grove.
- Bourne, P. (1975). The Chinese student: Acculturation and mental illness. *Psychiatry*, 38, 269-277.
- Corey, G. (1991). *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*, 4ed. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Commonwealth Department of Education Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA). (2001). In Statistics Relating to Higher Education [Online]. Available: [www.detya.gov.au/highered/statinfo.htm](http://www.detya.gov.au/highered/statinfo.htm) (Accessed June 2001).
- Exum, H., & Lau, E. (1988). Counseling style preference of Chinese college students. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 16, 84-92.
- Fromm, E. (1994). *Escape From Freedom*. New York: Holt.
- Gomersall, J. (1997). Peer group supervision. In G. Shipton (Ed.), *Supervision of Psychotherapy and Counselling* (pp. 107-118). Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Institute of International Education. (2001). Open Doors on the Web. Available: [www.opendoorsweb.org](http://www.opendoorsweb.org) (Accessed June 2001).
- International Association of Student Affairs and Services Professionals. (2001). *The Role of Student Affairs and Services in Higher Education: A Practical Manual for Developing, Implementing, and Assessing Student Affairs Programmes and Services* (R. Ludeman, Ed.). Lake Mills, WI.
- Jacob, E. (2001). Using counselor training and collaborative programming strategies in working with international students. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 29, 73-88.
- Luzio-Lockett, A. (1998). The squeezing effect: The cross-cultural experience of international students. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 26, 209-223.
- Mori, S. (2000). Addressing the mental health concerns of international students. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 78(2), 137-144.
- NAFSA: Association of International Educators. (2001). Public Policy / Data on International Education. Available: [www.nafsa.org/content/PublicPolicy/DataonInternationalEducation/data.htm](http://www.nafsa.org/content/PublicPolicy/DataonInternationalEducation/data.htm) (Accessed June 2001).
- NTEU Women's Action Committee. (2001). *Women's Action Committee Submission to Senate Inquiry* (National Tertiary Education Industry Union No. 25/01). South Melbourne: NTEU National Office.
- Pusser, B. (1999-2000). The role of the state in the provision of higher education in the United States. *Australian University Review*, 42/43, 24-35.
- Pye, L. (1990). China: Erratic state, frustrated society. *Foreign Affairs*, 69, 56-74.
- Schweitzer, R. (1996). Problems and awareness of support services among students at an urban Australian university. *Journal of American College Health*, 45, 73-81.
- Sheehan, O., & Pearson, F. (1995). Asian international and American students' psychosocial development. *Journal of College Student Development*, 36, 522-530.



- Speight, S., & Vera, E. (1997). Similarity and difference in multicultural counseling: Considering the attraction and repulsion hypotheses. *Counseling Psychologist, 25*(2), 280-298.
- Tinsley, H. E. A., Bowman, S. L., & Ray, S. B. (1988). Manipulation of expectancies about counseling and psychotherapy: Review and analysis of expectancy manipulation strategies and results. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 35*, 99-108.
- Tinsley, H. (1982). *Expectations About Counseling - Brief Form*. Unpublished manuscript. University of Florida, Gainesville, FL.
- Tsui, P., & Schultz, G. (1985). Failure of rapport: Why psychotherapeutic engagement fails in the treatment of Asian clients. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 55*, 561-569.
- Wei-Ming, T. (. (1996). *Confucian Tradition in East Asian Modernity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Western Australia State Government (Western Australian Technology & Industry Advisory Council). (2000). *Export of Western Australian Education & Training: Constraints & Opportunities*. Perth: Western Australia State Government.
- Xinhua News Agency. (1999, 22 Nov). China sends total of 300,000 students abroad. *Comtex News. Expanded Academic ASAP International Edition*. Gale Group. [www.comtexnews.com](http://www.comtexnews.com).

### ***Acknowledgements***

Although only one name appears as the author, this paper is the product of a collaborative effort. Thanks to the students and the counsellors who took the time to share their perceptions, ideas, opinions, and experiences. As mentioned in the paper, most of the counselling centres were short staffed and yet all of the counsellors were generous with their time and forthright with their thoughts. Thanks to Irene Styles, my doctoral co-supervisor, for her tireless assistance, support, and enthusiastic search for increased clarity of meaning hidden amongst the fog of data originally generated. And thanks to Jan Currie for her editorial assistance, logistical support, and patience and understanding.

# Local knowledge and value transformation in East Asian mass tutorial schools

**Percy Kwok**

Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong [percykwok@hongkong.com](mailto:percykwok@hongkong.com)

*Based on field trips to some mass tutorial schools from 1998 to 2000 and documentary analysis, a three-layered cultural model of cram schools in East Asian comparative perspective is articulated. The paper focuses on dynamic inter-and intra-layer interactions of some key components of the model, exploring areas such as socio-cognitive modes of examination-oriented learning, impacts of local popular culture, degree of impact of transmitting heritage culture, and the value transformations induced by cram schools. Facing regional trends of launching large-scale educational reforms in East Asia, such a study can help policy-makers understand the tensions between the functioning of daytime and cram schools and thereby realise reform barriers in the 21st century.*

tutorial schools, cram schools, local knowledge, heritage culture, East Asia

## INTRODUCTION

Despite the fact that private supplementary tutoring (or cramming, in the negative value sense that it is related to rote learning) is a huge enterprise in many countries, with far-reaching economic, social and educational implications, it has received little attention in the research literature. Researchers such as Dore (1976, 1997), Hargreaves (1997), Little (1994, 1997) and Noah and Eckstein (1993) did not treat supplementary tutoring as the main theme of their analyses, but indirectly touched upon it, albeit superficially, when investigating primary and secondary education systems and related socio-cultural issues in single-country or cross-societal studies. Many national and international educators or policy-makers (Asiaweek, 1997; Bray, 1999; de Silva, 1994; Foondun, 1992, 1998; Republic of Korea, 1991; The Korea Herald 2001; Yoon, et al. 1997) have commented negatively on the apparently uncontrollable and vigorous growth of private tutoring, which they argue is parasitic on day-time schooling. These researchers or policy-makers generally have not explored the many significant implications for further research and policy analysis. To social theorists, there have hardly been any conceptual linkages between tutoring and their grand theories, or any need to revitalise their theories. In fact, the subtlety of the subject matter lies in the intangible nature of the tutoring services offered, in the hidden scale of household financing (Bray, 1996, 1998) and in the complexity of the multi-faceted relationships between demand or supply patterns and possible social and educational determinants (Kwok, 2001).

## DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Private tutoring is defined here as extra, fee-paying academic teaching or drilling for full-time students studying in regular school instruction programs or syllabuses at primary (grades 1 to 6) and secondary (grades 7 to 12 or 7 to 13) school levels. It is academically-oriented, with monetary transfer from tutees to tutors. The tutoring content and assistance with mastery of cognitive or technical skills are related to the tutees' daytime schooling.

Mass tutoring refers to tutorial lessons involving at least 10 tutees in each class. Note that this paper does not include reference to *yobiko* (full time mass tutorial schools) in Japan. Such schools mostly cater for *ronin*, who are full-time repeaters re-sitting for university entrance examinations.

The study is based on ethnographic research, documentary analysis, participatory observation, and semi-structured interviews with key informants carried out during several field trips to five East Asian cities: Hong Kong, Macau, Seoul, Taipei and Tokyo, from 1998 to 2000. Strictly speaking, the field studies only focused on a few tutorial schools without any intention to make generalisations at societal and national levels. Triangulation of data sources, stakeholders and perspectives was limited, facing visiting time and language constraints (while the author has good mastery of the Cantonese, Mandarin and English languages, his knowledge of Korean and Japanese languages is quite limited).

### LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been more cross- or single-societal (or country) studies on the demand side than on the supply side of tutoring. Past research agendas were often confined to the socio-economic scale of household financing (Falzon and Busuttil, 1988; George, 1992; Lee, 1996) and socio-cultural patterns of demand (Chew and Leong, 1995; de Silva, 1994; Harnisch, 1994; Hussein, 1987; Ukai Russell, 1997; Tseng, 1998; Yoon, et al. 1997), and their possible determinants in some Asian, central European and African countries. The supply mechanism of tutoring has only been investigated in comparative perspective by Bray (1999). Policy-makers and educators (Asiaweek, 1997; Bray, 1998; 1999; de Silva, 1994; Mauritius, 1994, 1997; Nanayakkara and Ranaweera, 1994) report that most countries face considerable difficulty in banning or censoring various types of tutoring and even in controlling its growth. Only a few cultural studies on mass tutorial schools have been undertaken (Rohlen, 1980; Zeng, 1999).

Rohlen (1980) carried out a case study of tutorial or *juku* schools in Japan at individual, family and societal system levels. He observed the institutionalised and franchised market of *juku* with their heavy promotional advertising through the mass media. He speculated an intersection of social and educational factors to account for the growing popularity of *juku* since the late 1960s. The poor quality of daytime schools, and their inability to meet parental demand for higher educational achievement (especially for tertiary entrance), also contributed to the growth of the *juku*. The *juku* therefore became a key to higher social status, especially when tutoring fees became more affordable after the great economic growth of the 1960s and 1970s. Most of the common tutorial schools (called *gakushu juku*) offered pedagogical guidelines for examination preparation or university entrance examinations. Top *juku* were successful because they attracted the best students via competitive entrance examinations and other selection mechanisms. Most *juku* stressed strict discipline and promoted academic diligence for motivating tutees to sit for examinations. Under peer group pressure, parents were willing to afford tutoring fees as they also realised that obtaining higher education could help their children climb the social ladder after graduation. More importantly, *juku* differentiation increasingly became a kind of educational stratification. The higher the household income, the greater the participation rates in *juku*.

Zeng (1999) conducted a penetrating, ethnographic, cross-societal study of mass tutorial schools in three East Asian cities (namely, *juku* in Tokyo; *hakwon* in Seoul; *buxiban* in Taipei). Based on three tutee case studies, he highlighted commonalities and differences in their organisational structures and regional disparities in their growth. With higher demand for mass tutorial schools, geographical distribution was more intense in urban areas than in

rural. He also noted that some crucial socio-cultural and socio-economic characteristics of formal school curricula and features of entrance examinations were related to the high demand for tutoring in the three cities. They included meritocratic drives in university entrance examinations for upward social mobility, cultural and institutional structures of credentialism, and economic affluence of families leading to increasing educational expenditure on schooling children. In particular, he observed that *juku* bridged the curriculum gaps between daytime textbooks and examination questions by providing repetitive drilling graded exercises in the 1990s in Japan.

On evaluation, without doing field studies in other East Asian countries, Rohlen (1980) speculated that social determinants similar to the above were related to the influence of Confucian heritage culture. Zeng (1999) did not go into depth about other socio-cultural features of those tutorial schools and relationships between school features and educational and social systems in the three East Asian contexts studied. In short, both failed to conceptualise a socio-cultural model of East Asian tutorial schools when investigating relationships between local knowledge and transmission of heritage culture.

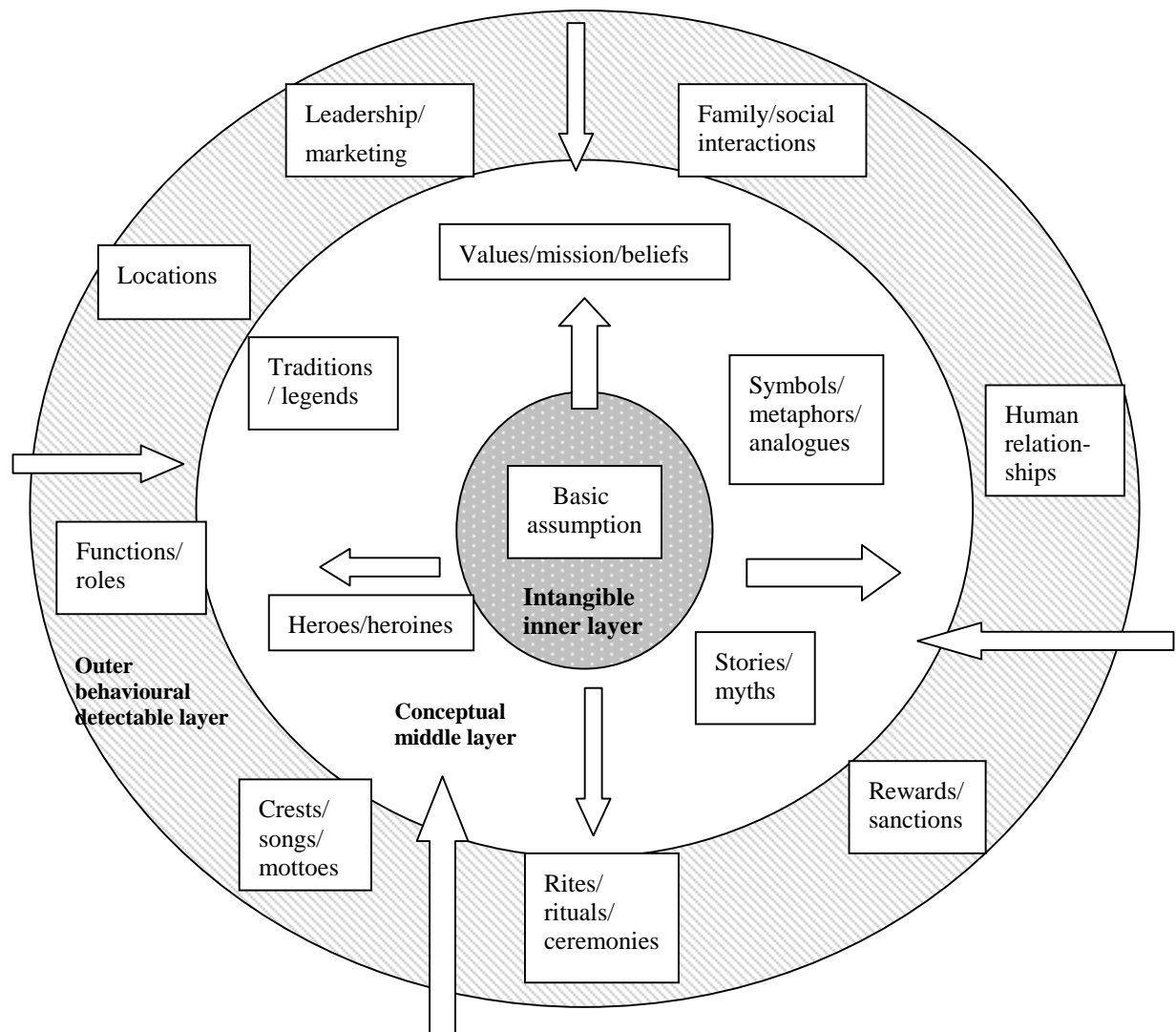
Based on the above literature review, three research agendas are raised when a three-layered cultural model is articulated. The first is to account for those similarities and differences between functioning, infrastructural innovations and popularity of East Asian tutorial schools by conceptualising some descriptive indicators. The second is to pinpoint those socio-cultural features of tutorial schools that reveal distinctive patterns of learning in East Asia in cross-cultural and cross-societal perspective. The last is to pose future challenges to East Asian educational systems in the 21<sup>st</sup> century when local knowledge and value transformation are linked to transmission of heritage culture in tutorial schools.

### **A THREE-LAYERED CULTURAL MODEL OF TUTORIAL SCHOOLS**

A three-layered cultural model is presented in Figure 1. It is articulated from some past cultural studies (Neville, 1995; Owen and Steinhoff, 1989; Schein, 1985). In the outer detectable behaviour layer, several categories are found. They are crests/songs/mottoes; rites/ rituals/ceremonies; rewards/sanctions; human relationships; family/social interactions; leadership or marketing style; geographical locations and functions/roles. The middle conceptual layer contains stories/myths; symbols/metaphors/analogues; values/mission/beliefs; traditions/legends and heroes/heroines. At the inner, intangible level, basic hidden cultural or ideological assumptions are implicitly embedded. External social forces continually act upon and sometimes modify the content structure of the model, as suggested by some anthropologists (Benedict, 1935; Shweder and LeVine, 1984; Spindler, 1997). Dialectical interactions between categories within and across layers result from other internal forces acting upon layers. Such categories may also be under the impact of some outward social forces from time to time. The model is hypothesised to illuminate the organic structure of mass tutorial schools after the filling-up of some ethnographic ‘thick’ descriptions (Geertz, 1973) in each category and their possible inter-and intra-layer interactions.

In the outer observable layer, mass tutorial schools in East Asia played a supplementary role of repeating daytime lesson contents while also helping tutees master related learning skills that school teachers did not teach in daytime lessons. These data were based on participant observations and semi-structured interviews with tutorial school heads and tutors, daytime school principals and teachers, students, tutees, parents. Other relevant literature also was consulted (Harnish, 1994; Kato, 1992; Kawaijuku, 2000; Kim, 2000; Kwok, 2001; Lee, 1996; SEG, 1994; Sorensen, 1994; Tseng, 1998; Ukai Russell, 1997; Yoon, et al. 1997). Concerning school accessibility, geographical locations were usually in public areas with a

convenient transportation system; e.g., near railway, bus or subway stations. There were individual tutorial schools and chains of franchised large-scale tutorial schools. The number of simultaneous tutorial classes ranged from 2 to 30. Most tutees' families were nuclear in size, with an average of 1 or 2 school age children. Reasons for seeking tutoring included insufficient free academic guidance from daytime schooling or from older family members. School peers or older family members recommended tutees to seek mass tutoring or the tutees knew of the promotion of mass tutorial schools through the mass media (e.g., catchy advertisements in open public areas, daily newspapers, internet e-commerce, popular magazines, subway stations and crowded streets).



**Figure 1. A cultural model of East Asian tutorial schools**

Tutorial class size varied from 10 to 50. Class pedagogy was teacher-centred and therefore no different from traditional daytime lessons. Yet tutees had free questioning time and more thematic, intensive learning than in daytime schooling as tutors liked to offer frequent lesson pre-review or revision and to offer graded drilling exercises, suitable to tutee learning needs. At upper secondary levels, tutees were trained to have appropriate examination skills such as good mastery of examination time, effective lesson revision and techniques of choosing and answering the right examination questions. Rewards were given to those tutees with brilliant open examination results or big academic improvements across or within school years. Awards could be a book trophy, monetary scholarships, back-payment of tutoring fees and other material goods such as free sightseeing trips abroad. Some mass tutorial schools in

Hong Kong like to use such bonuses or awarding ceremonies to advertise their tutoring services in daily newspapers and popular magazines. Most mass tutorial schools in Hong Kong, Macau, Seoul, Taipei and Tokyo have distinctive school names or images, related to diligent learning, wisdom and knowledge, academic excellence and glory. In order to nurture an ardent learning culture, some tutorial schools have their weekly pamphlets, monthly or yearly bulletins (Kawaijuku 2000; SEG 1994). The main contents covered prestigious universities' entrance requirements, brilliant students' personal information, bonuses (e.g., discounts to buy daily necessities) given to tutees when taking courses, updated contact information about new courses with telephone hotlines, fax numbers or internet web addresses.

In the middle layer, thick qualitative data were finely categorised and analysed. There were two types of heroes or heroines. Everlasting (or born) heroes or heroines (Deal and Kennedy, 1982:43-48) refer to idol tutors (named *ming shi* - meaning famous teachers - in the Chinese language) who have high tutee participation rates and/or high reputations. They were either dressed in formal style, imitating daytime school teachers, or in casual trendy wear, following tutees' fashions in popular culture. They were either the bosses (or shareholders) or the 'spirits' of the tutorial schools. Without their presence, tutees would have changed their tutoring venues. Idol tutors often earned higher monthly salaries than daytime school teachers. Such heroes or heroines played multi-faceted roles. They were good friends, soothing examination pressure when providing open examination skills, playing jokes to make lessons more interesting or citing teenagers' jargon to draw tutees' attention. They were also academic scholars who had earned Masters or Doctoral degrees and acted like school teachers, partially reinforcing or complementing daytime lessons. To some extent, they provided more care when offering academic guidance or spent a longer time with tutees than tutees' parents. Situational heroes or heroines (Deal and Kennedy, 1982:43-48) were those tutees with brilliant open examination results at upper secondary levels. In Chinese societies like Hong Kong, Macau and Taipei, the special name of *zhuang yuan* was used, referring to those successful candidates who sat for open examinations for recruitment of civil servants in ancient China.

Mass tutees or their parents often held common value beliefs that tutorial lessons were resourceful and that tutors were helpful to supplement daytime school lessons. Review of past examination papers (or even release of some open examination tips) drew tutees' attention. Tutoring was perceived to offer a 'shortcut' to daytime lessons, besides facilitating self-learning. Most tutees, their parents, tutors and tutoring school heads believed that getting higher education was the most potent means for upward social mobility. Repetitive learning and memory recall could, to some extent, enhance tutees' understanding of learning content. Chinese stakeholders deliberately or indirectly liked to cite some Confucian proverbs to depict their learning habits or modes, explain their study motivations, or to describe societal viewpoints about diligence being more important than inborn abilities.

To exemplify the symbolic interactions (Shweder and LeVine, 1984) between and across some components of the cultural model for Chinese tutorial schools in Hong Kong, Macau and Taipei, a symbiotic analysis of a Confucian phrase *wen gu zhi xin* is tabulated in Table 1.

### MULTILEVEL COMPARISONS

For conceptual depictions of organisational structure, pedagogical functioning and innovations, six descriptive indicators have been devised as follows:

*Accessibility* refers to tutees' ease of access when consuming mass tutoring services

*Affordability* is tutees' or their parents' socio-economic power to pay for tutoring fees

*Connectivity* is related to the possible chained multi-level marketing business, or network of franchised large-scale tutorial schools, in one particular city or within and across cities in one particular country

*Insufficiency* is directly correlated with low levels of free academic guidance from daytime schooling or elder family members

*Interactivity* concerns didactic interactions between tutees and tutors in tutorial lessons

*Sustainability* involves the persistence or usefulness of tutorial services, supporting tutees' learning needs during or beyond tutorial lessons, facilitated by ICT.

The following provides a multilevel comparative framework (after Bray and Thomas, 1995) to highlight distinctive socio-cultural characteristics of East Asian tutorial schools.

**Table 1. Symbiotic analysis of the Confucian phrase: *wen gu zhi xin***

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Outward detectable layer</b> | <p><i>i. Pedagogical functions of tutorial lessons</i></p> <p>Tutors devised strategies to repetitively review past lessons (such as past examination papers) through lecture notes and drilling exercises</p> <p><i>ii. Human interactions</i></p> <p>Tutees revised past tutorials or even daytime lessons to make future examination preparations</p>                             |
| <b>Middle conceptual layer</b>  | <p><i>Symbols/metaphors/analogues:</i></p> <p>Meaning of the Confucian phrase: revising past lessons to obtain future knowledge</p>  |
| <b>Inner intangible layer</b>   | <p><i>Basic ideological assumptions</i> held by tutors, tutees and their family members that repetitive learning could enhance deep understanding through memory recall and that diligence was more important than inborn abilities in academic studies This was in line with some past cognitive or cross-cultural research studies on Asian learners (Watkins and Biggs, 1996)</p> |

### **Inward horizontal comparisons in East Asian societies**

Both daytime and tutorial schools provided a teaching and learning environment (mostly happening in classrooms) for students or tutees to learn academic knowledge and related problem-solving skills and assess their learning outcomes through (mock) tests, quizzes and examinations. Both daytime and tutoring East Asian schools often adopted teacher-led pedagogy, affecting interactivity. Students or tutees were accommodated into unified school curricula at primary and secondary levels (Cheng, 1990). There was some 'learning space' for open discussion or students' free explorations in some East Asian classrooms concerning interactivity of tutorial schools (Kato, 1992; Kawajuku, 2000; Kwok, 2001). Yet teacher-led instructions were often adopted to maximise effective time and lesson management when faced with more than 30 students or tutees per class (Bray, 1999; Kwok, 2001; SEG, 1994; Tseng 1998). Norm-referenced summative assessments and bottleneck schooling systems with pressure or tension points at Grade 6, 10 and 12 (or 13) levels were prevalent in most East Asian countries (Bray, 1999; Kwok, 2001; SEG, 1994; Yoon, et. al. 1997; Zeng, 1999).

In order to reduce individual learning differences (concerning interactivity), some mass tutorial schools in Japan deliberately arranged tutorial classes, based on their (half-) yearly academic standards (SEG, 1994). Becoming increasingly popular in Asia and North America, Kumon schools carefully designed worksheets and self-learning packages, fully based on students' individual cognitive levels in individual subjects (Kato, 1992). Field trips

revealed that there were cognitive gaps between examination requirements and what students learn in daytime lessons. Content analysis of some school textbooks and reference books or materials from tutorial schools in Chinese English and Mathematics (published in Hong Kong, Macau, Taipei) showed remarkable differences. Tutorial schools provided more graded drilling exercises or easily understood (often in bullet-point forms) and step-by-step lecture notes and necessary examination skills than daytime lessons, related to open or school examinations and students' varying learning needs. Tutors' presentation skills were better than daytime school teachers', in most mass tutees' perceptions. Some of them sought tutoring mainly because of insufficient learning guidance from daytime schools. To cope with current IT global trends, idol tutors in Hong Kong, Seoul, Taipei and Tokyo liked to use power-point demonstrations using good printing effects in their lecture notes and drilling exercises. Some large-scale tutorial schools even used the internet to answer tutees' questions on a web forum or let them download free soft copies of their reference materials.

### **Inward vertical comparisons in cross-cultural and cross-societal East Asian perspectives**

The drastic growth and popularity of mass tutorial schools was positively correlated with several socio-cultural and socio-economic factors: affordability of standardised mass tutoring fees in a large competitive market; economic affluence; and the nuclear nature of tutees' families (Kim, 2000; Kwok, 2001; Yoon, et al. 1997). Tutoring accessibility was facilitated by heavy promotional advertising through the mass media or in popular culture, by the governments' ineffective censorship or monitoring policies towards tutorial schools, and through the convenient siting of tutorial schools close to convenient public transport systems. Insufficiency referred to bad-quality daytime pedagogy or low daytime school effectiveness (Bray, 1999; George, 1992; Kwok, 2001; Yoon, et al. 1997, Zeng, 1999).

Comparing tutorial schools across societies, geo-political differences were found. Mass tutorial schools were concentrated in some crowded areas in Taipei (e.g., in a 'cram schools street' near the railway station noted by Tseng, 1998) but more scattered in Hong Kong, Macau, Seoul and Tokyo (Harnisch, 1994; Kawaijuku, 2000; Kwok 2001; Yoon, et al. 1997). Segmented markets (Kotler, 1987) on particular tutoring subjects were located in Seoul and Taipei, but more 'comprehensive' tutorial schools (providing wide ranges of tutoring subjects or a variety of tutoring services such as lesson revisions, examination preparations and homework guidance) were found in Hong Kong, Macau and Tokyo (Kawaijuku, 2000; Kwok, 2001; SEG, 1994).

'Kingdoms' of large-scale or franchised tutorial schools (connectivity) were common in Hong Kong and Tokyo because of high living standards, an increasing number of potential mass tutees and adoption of multi-level marketing techniques. To facilitate synchronous mass tutorial lessons in other key cities like Hiroshima and Osaka in Japan, the headquarters in Tokyo used satellites to transmit video mass tutorial lessons (Kawaijuku, 2000). In Hong Kong, to bypass legislative controls, some mass tutorial schools used tactics to carry out video mass tutorial lessons to enlarge the number of tutees at any one time (Kwok, 2001). In Seoul, free helpful academic guidance lessons were broadcast through television channels at nights to replace mass tutorial schools and equalise educational opportunities, aggravated by seeking tutoring (Yoon, et al. 1997). To provide more client-based consultation services after tutorial time for sustainability, some large-scale tutorial schools in Hong Kong, Japan and Taiwan provided a 24-hour on-line web forum for tutees to raise study questions, do on-line drilling exercises or download required soft copies of past lecture notes or other reference materials (Kawaijuku, 2000; Kwok, 2001).



## **Outward cross-cultural/cross-societal comparisons between Asian and non-Asian tutorial schools**

Business-run mass tutorial schools at Grade 10 to 12 levels or Kumon schools are increasingly common in the United States and some provinces of Canada. Roughly speaking, the scale of demand for such schools in North America is believed to be smaller than in most East Asian countries. Probable reasons for such differences were speculated to be less examination-oriented school curricula, existence of alternative means for selecting university freshmen, multi-dimensional assessment involving group projects, smaller income differences between blue and white collar workers (with higher educational qualifications), high ratios of university undergraduate places to high school places, and better educational benefits (in terms of allowances) to every citizen under 18.

### **LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND VALUE TRANSFORMATION**

From a tutee perspective, the emergence of demand for tutoring most likely originated from: awareness of external examinations; societal stresses being internalised by the individual; examination-driven school cultures; meritocratic societies; credential inflation (Dore, 1976, 1997); and Confucian heritage cultural influences in Hong Kong, Macau, Seoul, Taipei and Tokyo (Kwok, 2001; Sorensen, 1994; Ukai Russell, 1997; Zeng, 1999). Under the impact of peer group pressure and mass media or popular culture, some ideological features or socio-cultural conceptions of learning influenced by the 'popular culture' of mass tutoring were articulated in the processes of masking, fragmenting and reuniting educational, self and societal values (Hall, 1977, 1981).

**Masking.** In mass tutees' perceptions, mass tutorial schools provided shortcuts to learning, thorough past examination paper analysis, and even seemingly reliable open examination tips in Hong Kong, Taipei and Tokyo. In particular, they were made to believe by tutors that it was more effective and efficient to learn in tutorial schools than in daytime schools. Such modes of learning and tutoring were generally different from those of teachers in daytime schools. Some school teachers and principals who were interviewed doubted the legitimacy of such pedagogy. To some extent, the reputations of school teachers were replaced by idol tutors in these Chinese societies, the latter being worshipped as *ming shi* (famous teachers).

**Fragmenting.** Idol tutors delineated piecemeal educational processes and outcomes, entirely determined by open examination results. Their marketing styles and pedagogical characteristics reinforced open examination pressure and encouraged students to value the importance of open examinations to their life career. Interview data in field work indicated that some mass tutees even identified personal success through materialistic stimulation like monetary bonuses, tutoring fee exemption after getting academic improvements and good grades in open examinations in Hong Kong, Taipei and Tokyo. Such kinds of learning and tutoring to some extent run against the whole-person education or other educational aims stressed in some daytime schools

**Reuniting.** Integration of materialistic consumption, marketing techniques and technical skills and professional knowledge into a mass tutoring sub-culture reinforced an examination-oriented environment through mass media in Hong Kong, Taipei and Tokyo

As a result, vicious circles of students' misbehaviour or paying less attention to daytime lessons were found after seeking mass tutoring in some extreme cases. 'Moonlighting' daytime school teachers found difficulties in daytime teaching after doing mass tutoring after school, and their daytime students were cared for less well. In-depth case studies and

interview data also revealed that interactions between family members were weakened when school children had heavy demands for tutoring.

With advances in ICT, sources of knowledge not only came from daytime school teachers or mass tutors, but also from other diversified sources; e.g., some resourceful (questions and answers) web fora, online interactive drilling exercises, soft copies of resource materials and user-centred learning computer program tutors, provided by some 'updated' large-scale tutorial schools in Hong Kong, Taipei and Tokyo (Kawaijuku, 2000; Kwok, 2001; Tseng, 1998).

### **TUTORIAL SCHOOLS: FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS AND CHALLENGES**

During the last decade there have been large-scale school and educational reforms initiated at primary and secondary levels in East Asia. National (e.g., Education Commission of Hong Kong, 2000; Republic of China Ministry of Education, 2001; Republic of Korea Ministry of Education 1999; Singapore Ministry of Education, 2001; Japan Ministry of Education, Science, Sports & Culture, 1999) and international (UNICEF, 1998) policy documents on education have shared common goals of:

- expanding educational opportunities by reducing hurdles at grades 6, 10 and 12 (or 13) levels
- fostering continuous life-long or life-wide learning
- increasing quality school education
- promoting paradigmatic shifts from teacher-centred to student-centred learning

However, according to the above socio-cultural studies, the increasing growth of Asian mass tutorial schools cannot easily be hindered due to the persistence of several social phenomena:

- Convenient public transportation, multi-service marketing and a prevalent mass media culture which enhance accessibility and affordability of mass tutoring.
- Emergence of nuclear families which allows educational expenditure focused on 1 or 2 school age children per household, thereby leading to heavy demand for tutoring in response to extra individual learning needs (affordability), or elder family members' heavy daily works or inappropriate educational qualifications (insufficiency).
- Large daytime school class sizes in many East Asian countries which may not easily be reduced because of financial constraints; it therefore may take a long time to achieve quality school education, and especially a complete cultural transformation from teacher-led to student-centred pedagogy, because of unsatisfactory means of catering for students' individual learning needs (insufficiency) and increasingly heavy workloads of daytime school practitioners as a result of recent school reforms.
- Further ICT advances will increase the connectivity of mass tutoring in various geographical locations of a country or city, thus facilitating interactivity and sustainability by providing more interactive, user-friendly web services beyond tutorial lesson times.
- A meritocratic societal drive in Confucian heritage cultures will continue to encourage students to climb up social ladders through education, and accelerating credential inflation will further increase employees' educational qualifications.

## CONCLUSION

The continuing existence of mass tutorial schools poses great challenges to educational systems as they can easily change students' daytime learning attitudes and may distort positive values of daytime teaching and learning. As a result, school education may not easily be effective, as students' fruitful learning outcomes may, to a considerable extent, result from private tutoring. Distinctions between formal and informal learning has been blurred after the emergence of mass tutorial schools. Mass tutoring fees will still occupy a considerable proportion of household financing of education (Bray, 1996, 1998) in those East Asian countries with heavy demands for private tutoring.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author is indebted to Professor Mark Bray for valuable comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

## REFERENCES

- Asiaweek* (1997) Banning tutors. 23 (17), 20.
- Benedict, R. (1935) *Patterns of Culture*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Bray, M. (1996) *Counting The Full Cost: Parental and community financing of education in East Asia*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank in collaboration with UNICEF.
- Bray, M. (1998) Financing education in developing Asia: Patterns, trends and policy implications. Working paper for the study of trends, issues and policies in education. Manila: Asian Development Bank.
- Bray, M. (1999) *The Shadow Education System: Private tutoring and its implications for planners*. Paris: UNESCO / IIEP.
- Bray, M. and Thomas, R. M. (1995) Levels of comparison in educational studies: different insights from different literatures and the value of multilevel analysis. *Harvard Educational Review*, 65 (3), 472-490.
- Cheng, K. M. (1990) The culture of schooling in East Asia. In N. Entwistle (Ed.) *Handbook of Education Ideas and Practice*, 163-173. London: Routledge.
- Chew, S. B. and Leong, Y. C. (Eds.) (1995) *Private Tuition In Malaysia and Sri Lanka: A comparative study*. Kuala Lumpur: Department of Social Foundations in Education, University of Malaya.
- de Silva, W. A. (1994) *Extra-school Tutoring In the Asian Context With Special Reference To Sri Lanka*. Maharagama: Department of Educational Research, National Institute of Education.
- Deal, T and Kennedy, A. (1982) *Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.
- Dore, R. (1976) *The Diploma Disease: Education, Qualification and Development*. London: George Allen & Unwin.
- Dore, R. (1997) Reflections on the diploma disease twenty years later. *Assessment In Education*, 4 (1), 189-206.
- Education Commission of Hong Kong (2000) *Learning For Life Learning Through Life: Reform proposals for the education system in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government Printer.
- Falzon, P. A. and Busuttill, J. (1988) Private tuition in Malta: a hidden educational phenomenon revealed. Unpublished B. Ed. (Hons.) dissertation, University of Malta.
- Foondun, A. R. (1992) *Private tuition in Mauritius: The mad race for a place in a 'five-star' secondary school*. IIEP research and studies programme, monograph 8, Paris: IIEP.
- Foondun, A. R. (1998) *Private tuition: A comparison of tutoring practices at the primary level in Mauritius and some South East Asian countries*. Bangkok: UNICEF East Asia & Pacific Regional Office.
- Geertz, C. (1973) *The Interpretation Of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- George, C. (1992) Time to come out of the shadows. *Straits Times* [Singapore, April 4]

- Hall, S. (1977) Culture, the media and the ideological effect. In J. Curran, M. Gurevitch and J. Woollacott (Eds.) *Mass Communication and Society*. London: Edwin Arnold.
- Hall, S. (1981) Cultural studies: two paradigms. In T. Bennett, G. Martin, S. Boyd-Bowman, C. Mercer and J. Woollacott (Eds.) *Culture, Ideology And Social Process: A Reader*. London: Batsford.
- Hargreaves, E. (1997) The diploma disease in Egypt; learning, teaching and the monster of the secondary school certificate. *Assessment In Education*, 4 (1), 161-176.
- Harnisch, D. L. (1994) Supplemental education in Japan: juku schooling and its implication. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 26 (3), 323-334.
- Hussein, M.G. A. (1987) Private tutoring: a hidden educational problem. *Educational Studies In Mathematics*, 18 (1), 91-96.
- Japan Ministry of Education, Science, Sports, and Culture (1999) [Online, 1 April] <http://www.monbu.go.jp/aramashi/1999eng/e02/e02-2.htm>
- Kato, K. (1992) Another brick in the wall. *Look Japan*, 38 (437), 18-19.
- Kawaijuku (2000) *Message 2000 programs*. Unpublished promotion pamphlet.
- Kim, I. (2000) Private tutoring in Korea: a cultural analysis. Unpublished conference paper presented at CIES 2000, San Antonio, Texas, USA [2000, March 8-12]
- Kotler, P. (1987) *Strategic Marketing For Nonprofit Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.
- Kwok, P. (2001) A multi-level social analysis of demand for private supplementary tutoring at secondary level in Hong Kong. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Hong Kong: The University of Hong Kong.
- Lee, C. (1996) *Children And Private Tuition*. Youth Poll Series 34, Hong Kong: Federation of Youth Groups.
- Little, A. (1994) *The Diploma Disease In Sri Lanka: 1971-1993*. International Centre for Research on Assessment, research working papers; no. 10, London: Institute of Education, University of London.
- Little, A. (Ed.) (1997) The diploma disease twenty years on. Special issue of *Assessment in Education*, 4 (1).
- Mauritius, Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development (1994) *Use And Abuse of Private Tuition*. Port Louis: Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development.
- Mauritius, Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development (1997) *White Paper: Pre-primary, primary and secondary education*. Port Louis: Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development.
- Nanayakkara, G. L. S. and Ranaweera, M. (1994) Impact of private tuition and the educational challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *Economic Review* [The People's Bank, Colombo], 20 (2 & 3), 11-14, 17.
- Neville, M. (1995) School culture and effectiveness in an Asian pluralistic society. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 23 (2), 29-39.
- Noah, H. J. and Eckstein, M. A. (1993) *Secondary School Examinations: International Perspectives on Policies and Practice*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Owen, R. G. and Steinhoff, C. R. (1989) Towards a theory of organisational culture. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 27 (3), 6-16.
- Republic of China Ministry of Education (2001) *Education Statistical Indicators*. Republic of China: Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Education.
- Republic of Korea Ministry of Education (1991) *Educational Development In Korea 1988-1990*. Report for the International Bureau of Education, Geneva: Korean National Commission for UNESCO.
- Republic of Korea Ministry of Education (1999) *Education in Korea 1999-2000 & Education in Korea 2000-2001*.
- Rohlen, T. P. (1980) The juku phenomenon: an exploratory essay. *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 6 (2), 207-242.
- Schein, E. H. (1985) *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- SEG (Dec. 12, 1994) Here to see how juku works. *SEG forum* [Japan], 36, 4-17.
- Shweder, R. A. and LeVine, R. A. (Eds.) (1984) *Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self, and Emotion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Singapore, Ministry of Education (2001) Education in Singapore. <http://www.1.moe.edu.sg/educatio.htm> [On-line, 1 July]
- Sorensen, C. W. (1994) Success and education in South Korea. *Comparative Education Review*, 38 (1), 10-35.
- Spindler, G. D. (Ed.) (1997) *Education and Cultural Process: Anthropological Approaches*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press. Third Edition.
- The Korea Herald* (2001) [On-line] <http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/> [2001, July 31]
- Tseng, J. (1998) Private supplementary tutoring at the senior secondary level in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Unpublished M. Ed. dissertation, The University of Hong Kong.
- Ukai Russell, N. (1997) Lessons from Japanese cram schools. In W. A. Cummings and P. Altbach (Eds.) *The Challenge of Eastern Asian Education: Lessons for America, 153-170*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- UNICEF (1998) *Education for all? MONEE Project Regional Monitoring Report No. 5*, Florence: UNICEF International Child Development Centre.
- Watkins, D. A. and Biggs, J. (Eds.) (1996) *The Chinese Learner: Cultural, Psychology and Contextual Influences*. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre.
- Yoon, J. L., Huh, T.J., Lee, Y. G., Kim, J. R., Kim, D. Y., Kang, T. H. and Kim, E. O. (1997) *Research on the Actual Condition of Extracurricular Lessons*. Seoul: Korean Educational Staff Association [original script in Korean, translated into English by Y. J. Lee]
- Zeng, K. M. (1999) *Dragon Gate: Competitive Examinations and Their Consequences*. London: Cassell.

## A media discourse analysis of racism in South African schools

---

Corene de Wet

Department of Comparative Education, University of the Free State,  
Bloemfontein, Republic of South Africa [dewetnc@hum.uovs.ac.za](mailto:dewetnc@hum.uovs.ac.za)

*The aim of this paper is to establish, by means of a discourse analysis, how and with what purpose in mind, the printed media, accused of perpetuating racism in South African society, report on racism in education, a social relationship that also seems to be constructed in ways that seem racist. In a micro-context, the following discursive themes have been identified in a study of reports on racial violence in South African schools: Black and white parents, learners and other role players deny that they are racists. The violence in South African schools must therefore be attributed to the racist, violent, inhuman, amoral and unreasonable behaviour of the 'other'. And if the 'self' sometimes acts violently against somebody from a different race (the other), it is justifiable force of fact. Discursive themes on the macro-context of institutions and ideologies allude to the role of politics (apartheid and assimilation).*

discourse analysis, racism, education, South Africa

### INTRODUCTION

Voting in the Republic of South Africa's (RSA) first democratic elections, concluded on 27 April 1994, brought to power a government of national unity under a Constitution with a strong and explicit anti-racism stance. In spite of significant social and political transformation in post-apartheid South Africa, racism remains part of the South African social fabric (Stevens 1998).

Presentations to the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC, 1999, 2000a, 2000b), as well as research (see, *inter alia*, Newton, 1989; Van Dijk, 1993a, 1987; Oosthuizen, 1982) and publications by journalists (Mathiane, 2000; Die Volksblad, 1995) emphasise the fundamental role that the mass media play in the reproduction and perpetuation of racism. According to Van Dijk (1993a, 1993b), studies in several countries have repeatedly shown that news on racial affairs usually contains a number of stereotypical themes, namely:

- Immigration, with special emphasis on problems, illegality, large numbers, fraud, and demographic or cultural threats.
- Crime, with special emphasis on 'ethnicised' or 'racialised' crimes such as drug trafficking, mugging, theft, prostitution, hustling, violence or riots.
- Cultural difference, and especially cultural deviance, such as 'backward' habits, religious fundamentalism and social problems in racial relations that are explained in terms of assumed cultural properties of minorities.

- Race relations, such as racial tension, discrimination, racial attacks, and other forms of (right-wing) racism, usually defined as regrettable incidents, and often attributed to the presence or behaviour of minorities themselves.

According to Van Dijk (1997), more neutral or positive topics, such as the everyday lives of minorities or their contributions to the economy or culture (with the exception of popular music), tend to be covered less than for the dominant groups.

Racism is an exceptionally complex concept. It is more than the convictions used by an individual or a group to justify discrimination against others. It is not something outside of the individual or group, but an internalised frame of reference which directs the opinion of the individual or the group about himself or herself or themselves and others. It has a direct influence on their deeds and behaviour (see, *inter alia*, Connolly 1998; Richards 1997). Stevens (1998: 205) defines racism as

the unsupported notion that biological hierarchies exist among humans in the form of distinct "races", and attempts to justify the economic, political and social exploitation of certain social exploitation of certain social groups by others. [...] It is a pervasive social phenomenon which conceals, contradicts and obscures uneven social relations.

Three levels of racism may be identified: individual, institutional and cultural. *Individual racism* is the personal view that members of one racial group are inferior compared to members of another racial group on the basis of physical differences. *Institutional racism* comes into existence through laws, conventions and practices which reflect racial inequality or has it as a result. *Cultural racism* refers to the view that members of another group have a lesser culture or no culture at all (Connolly 1998; Massey 1991; Nieto 1992; Sedlacek and Brooks 1976). Individual and cultural racism are manifest at a personal and individual level. *Institutional racism* is reflected in the policies and practices of an institution.

The aim of this paper is to establish, by means of a discourse analysis, how and with what purpose in mind, the printed media, accused of perpetuating racism in South African society (SAHRC 1999, 2000a, 2000b), report on racism in education, a social relationship that seems to be constructed in ways that seem racist (Bhana 1999).

In order to achieve the above goal, the paper will focus on the following questions:

- How exactly do the print media in South Africa write about racial conflict in an educational context?
- What do such structures and strategies of discourse tell us about underlying racial prejudices (see Van Dijk 1993b)?

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In this paper discourse analysis is employed as an instrument to examine the selected texts. Recent years have witnessed a steady growth and interest in, and a proliferation of writings on, discourse analysis as a method of research (Coulthard, 1985; Renkema, 1993; Sinclair, 1992; Van Dijk, 1993b; Zeeman, 2000). Although historically discourse studies go back to classical rhetoric, most contemporary approaches find their roots between 1965 and 1975 in the new structuralist or formalist approaches to myths, folktales, stories and everyday conversations in anthropology, ethnography, semiotics, literature studies and microsociology (Van Dijk, 1993b). A number of studies undertaken in recent years to research various pertinent social issues, and in particular issues related to ideology, have employed discourse analysis as a research methodology (Duncan, 1996; Lea, 1996; Sonderling, 1998; Stevens, 1998; Van Dijk, 1993b, 1997). The latter emphasises the appropriateness of discourse analysis as a research instrument in studies of prejudice and racism. In his view (Van Dijk,

1997), discourse plays an important role in the production and reproduction of prejudice and racism. It is clear from news reports in the press that people are engaged daily in communication about ethnic minorities and race relations. In this way, they acquire the mental models, the social knowledge, the attitudes, and the ideologies that control their actions, and dialogues with - or about - other racial groups (Stevens, 1998; Van Dijk, 1997; Bax, 1985).

Discourse analysis does not constitute a single unitary approach, but rather a constellation of different approaches (Lea, 1996). To achieve the objectives of this paper, Terre Blache and Durrheim's (1999) research approach was used to perform a discourse analysis on a selection of newspaper articles (see also Zeeman, 2000, for a synopsis of Terre Blache and Durrheim's methods). Terre Blache and Durrheim (1999: 154) define discourse analysis as '... the act of showing how certain discourses are deployed to achieve particular effects in specific contexts'. This definition identifies three different aspects, namely the *discourse* deployed in a text, how a particular *effect* is achieved in a text, and lastly the broader *context* in which the text operates.

### DISCOURSE

Discourses are broad patterns of talk - systems of statements - that are taken up in particular speeches and conversations. Thus, various discourses operate in a particular text; put differently, the text draws on, or is informed by, these discourses. Text refers to written and spoken language, as well as images (Terre Blache and Durrheim, 1999).

There are no hard-and-fast methods for identifying discourses and analysing text. To a large extent, discourse analysis involves a way of reading that is made possible by immersion in a particular culture, which provides us with a rich tapestry of 'ways of speaking' that one may recognise, 'read', and relate to in dialogue context. It is, however, important to extract oneself from living in a culture to reflect on a culture - a discourse analyst must distance him/herself from the text (Terre Blache and Durrheim, 1999).

Terre Blache and Durrheim (1999) identify 'tricks' that may assist the researcher in reflecting on textual activities:

- Look for binary oppositions.
- Identify recurrent terms, phrases and metaphors. Each discourse has a particular way of speaking that includes the content of *what* is said as well as *how* it is said.
- Identify the subjects that are spoken about in the text.
- In most texts there are an author and a listener. An analyst must imagine what kind of people these have to be.

### EFFECTS

Texts are examined for their effects rather than their accuracy; the question is 'What do texts do?', not 'What do texts say?'. Discourses aim to construct particular truths. According to Terre Blache and Durrheim (1999), the authors of texts often want to do a number of things simultaneously: convince the reader that the author of the text is a good person; advance a particular ideology; tell the truth; or motivate the reader to act in a particular way. These aims can be either explicit or implicit.



Discourse analysts may use the above-mentioned tricks as tools to orientate a critical reading of action in texts and show the kind of effects they try to achieve. This involves a skeptical reading of text where the researcher asks:

- Why are these binary oppositions, these terms, phrases and metaphors, and these subjects used?
- What other elements could have been used?
- How were these features of a text used to achieve certain effects?

### CONTEXT

Although a researcher may want to engage in a detailed reading of a single excerpt of text, his/her aim is most often to provide a reading of a larger body of material. The aim of the analyst is then to examine how discourses operate in a body of text, and this aim is achieved by showing how discourses relate to other discourses, and how they function on different occasions. It is therefore important, in addition to engaging in detailed readings of pieces of text, to read many different texts to show patterns of variation and consistency in discourse. Terre Blache and Durrheim (1999) stress that ‘... everything is part of every-thing else, so that isolating a text from its surroundings is of necessity already to misunderstand it’. To understand what a text is doing, it should be placed in context.

Discursive research may be divided heuristically into two categories: one that views the text in a micro-context of conversation and debate and another that perceives it in a macro-context of institutions and ideologies (Terre Blache and Durrheim, 1999).

According to Zeeman (2000), it is impossible for a discourse analyst to be neutral, because he/she is part of a social, cultural and historical context. The analyst is therefore also part of the text's context, and has to account for his/her role relative to the text. Analysts choose certain texts, and decide how to delimit these texts and how to analyse them because they want to achieve certain effects (Terre Blache and Durrheim, 1999). Terre Blache and Durrheim (1999: 11) recommend that the analyst must ‘... try to extract him/herself from living in culture, [but] to reflect on culture’.

### THE CORPUS

The corpus of texts selected for analysis in this paper consists of articles on racism in South African schools which were published in South African newspapers between April 1994 and May 2001. A computer search on 14 May 2001 with a combination of the words *racism* and *education*, indicated that the SABINET's (<http://www.sabinet.co.za>) SA media search option had 1451 newspaper clippings on the above-mentioned theme available.

Given the exceedingly large number of incidents of racism in education reported regularly in newspapers, and given the fact that when employing discourse analysis as a method of research, it is normally considered ideal not to use samples of too large a size (Duncan, 1996), it was decided to analyse only those articles dealing with incidents of racial violence in schools. The reason for focusing on violence, rather than other forms of racism, is that it is this form of racism on which the media appear to concentrate (Afrikaner, 2000a; Mahlangu, 2000; Van de Graaf, 1995; Van Dijk, 1993b).

In this paper no attention will be paid to editorials because their primary function is to interpret and articulate the significance of specific events for their readers (Fowler, 1991; Helleiner and Szuchewycz, 1997). On the other hand news articles should contain reliable,

undistorted and accurate news and strive to be comprehensive and unbiased (see Froneman 1997; *Rapport* 2001).

Before reporting on the analysis of the corpus of texts examined, it is important to note that this paper is neither all encompassing nor exhaustive. Given the relatively large size of the body of newspaper reports included in this paper, only the most striking and dominant discursive themes and patterns relating to racism in South African schools are presented. Secondly, these themes are considered striking or distinctive, not in terms of statistical significance, but because of their relative prominence in the discourses analysed (Duncan 1996).

## **THE DISCOURSES**

In this study the principle articulated by Riggins (1997) and Stevens (1998), that all individuals within a racist society will necessarily express some degree of 'racialisation'<sup>1</sup> within their discourses, will be taken as vantage point when discussing the dominant media discourses on racism in South African schools. The process of 'racialisation' plays a role in the distinction between the 'self' and the 'other'. From the discussion of the different discursive themes identified in the texts, it will become clear that while the 'other' is invariably negatively perceived, the 'self' is positively presented. South Africa is, despite constitutional changes, still racially divided at grassroots level. The 'self' and the 'other' may thus refer either to whites or blacks.

### **Theme 1: Positive self-presentation**

There are few words that elicit a more visceral and defensive response than the accusation of racism (Tatum, 1998). Self-glorification, in comparison with others, is routine in either criticising or denying responsibility with regard to acts of racism (Van Dijk, 1993b, 1997). Within the framework of positive self-presentation, discourses and decisions on racial affairs are premised on principles of humanism, tolerance and equality. However, forces from outside (reality) are seen as an impetus for racial tension, as illustrated by the following two quotations:

The worst of all is the fact that this school was one of the first schools in Pretoria to become fully integrated (De Lange, 1997: 3).

While condemning the school violence in Vryburg, the ANC yesterday said that it would continue to extend a hand of friendship to Afrikaners in finding peaceful solutions to the country's problems (*The Citizen*, 1998: 1).

In the above readings, the 'self' (a journalist [De Lange] commenting on racial violence in a Pretoria school and an ANC spokesperson respectively) is described as doing his/her best to improve race relations; it is, however, the 'other' who is responsible for racial conflict in schools.

### **Theme 2: Negative other-presentation**

An important feature of racism is the notion that hierarchies exist among humans at individual, institutional and cultural levels on the strength of physical and cultural differences. There is thus a clear distinction between the superior 'self' and the inferior 'other'. In the following discussion attention will be paid to the negative portrayal of the 'other'.

---

<sup>1</sup> When an individual becomes part of a particular (racist) society, he/she can also reproduce and perpetuate the dominate ideologies to varying degrees (Stevens, 1998).

### ***Theme 2.1: Blacks/Whites are violent***

In accordance with national and international studies (see Duncan, 1996; Van Dijk, 1997), a dominant theme emerging from the corpus of texts analysed in this study concerns the portrayal of either the black or the white learners as violence prone.

The following is only a selection of extracts from the sample of newspaper articles depicting whites as violent racists (see Anstey and Ledwaba, 1997; Cornelissen 2001; *Die Burger*, 1998; Ledwaba, 1999; Mokwena, 2000; Staff Reporter, 2000; for additional examples):

A [black] pupil [...] partially lost his sight after a vicious attack by three white schoolmates (Pela, 2000: 5).

A 17-year-old black student was almost beaten to death by his white colleagues (Mahlangu, 2000: 4).

In contrast to the aggressiveness of the white learners, the following reading portrays black learners as passive, and peace-loving:

He [a black learner who was beaten by his fellow learners] said on Thursday morning he went to the rugby field to enjoy the morning breeze when he saw one of his friends being manhandled by a group of white boys. When he intervened one of the white boys turned to him and asked: 'Who the hell are you to tell us what not to do' (Mahlangu, 2000: 4).

The media discourse on racism is indicative of the complexity of racial discourse in South Africa. While the excerpts quoted above portray whites negatively, there is also an opposing perspective, namely that blacks are violent racists. These opposing perspectives on the same discourse theme is indicative of the racially divided South African educational milieu. The following quotations portray black learners as out of control and extremely violent youths:

One [white] teacher who allegedly swore at the pupils on a number of occasions was pounced upon by the angry mob, and punched and kicked. The teacher's glasses were smashed in the attack (Bissetty, 1999: 3).

In die aangrensende Huhudi was 'n klein oorlog. Twee polisievoertuie en vier private voertuie is deur woedende inwoners aan die brand gesteeek. Sewentien voorvalle van klipgooiery het voorgekom. Die polisie moes leerlinge uitmekaar jaag wat motoriste met klippe bestook het (*Die Burger*, 1998: 1).<sup>2</sup>

Uit die voorval [referring to racial conflict in Schweizer-Reneke] blyk ook die ingesteldheid tot geweld van die anderskleuriges (*Afrikaner*, 1998: 5).<sup>3</sup>

Dit is die soveelste rasse-aanval aan 'n voormalige Blanke skool waar Swartes Blanke leerlinge aanval. Ernstige beserings is al in die proses opgedoen, alhoewel genadiglik nog geen Blanke leerling gesterf het nie. Daar kan verwag word dat as hierdie rassistiese Swart aanvalle op Blanke leerlinge voortgaan, daar vroeër of later 'n noodlottige voorval moet plaasvind (*Afrikaner*, 2000b: 12).<sup>4</sup>

Typical of the two preceding quotations is the use of over-generalisations and negative stereotyping of blacks as violent racists ('people of colour's inclination towards violence', 'racist blacks' and 'the umpteenth attack of black learners on whites').

<sup>2</sup> In the adjoining Huhudi township a small war broke out. Two police and four private vehicles were set alight. Seventeen cases of stone throwing were reported. The police had to disperse youths who were throwing stones at vehicles.

<sup>3</sup> This incident [referring to racial conflict at Schweizer-Reneke] illustrates people of colour's inclination toward violence.

<sup>4</sup> It is the umpteenth incident of racism in a former white school. Black learners attacked their fellow white learners. Some learners have sustained serious injuries, luckily at this stage, none of the white learners have died. It is inevitable that, if these attacks on white learners continue, it will one day be fatal.

What is very striking about the texts analysed is the remarkable consistency with which words belonging to the lexical register of anger and anarchy are used; e.g., 'flashpoints of tension' (Anstey and Ledwaba, 1997: 5); 'toy-toying' (Anstey and Ledwaba, 1997: 5); 'a few mobbed the officials' (Anstey and Ledwaba, 1997: 5); "'brawl' (*The Star*, 1997: 5); 'pandemonium broke out' (Bissetty, 1999: 3); 'the angry mob' (Bissetty, 1999: 3); 'pupils tried to set alight two schoolrooms' (Bissetty, 1999: 3); 'armed with teargas and rubber bullets' (*City Press*, 1997: 3); 'die dorp is 'n kruitvat' (*Die Burger*, 1998: 1)<sup>5</sup>, and 'all hell broke loose' (Mboyane, 2000: 4).

The differential representation of blacks and whites by the white dominated and more liberal, black orientated newspapers respectively, should be viewed as integrally linked to either the justification function of the ideology of racism or critique against white people who oppose school integration in post-apartheid South Africa (compare Duncan 1996: 174). This differential representation will also be examined in the next section.

### ***Theme 2.2: Blacks/Whites are racists***

A prominent feature of modern racism, according to Duncan (1996), is that '... the victims or targets of racism themselves are currently frequently accused of being racist or, in fact, being the cause of racism'. The following quotation labels blacks in no uncertain terms as racists:

*Rapport* verneem dat die meerderheid kinders by die skool is opgesweep deur die swart personeel en koshuisbeamptes wat veronderstel is om die kinders te beheer. Slagspreuke van apartheid en rassisme is geskreeu, terwyl vergadering gehou is (Coetzee, 1997: 3).<sup>6</sup>

A contradictory perspective is presented by a *City Press* reporter (1997: 3) in his/her covering of the same incident. This newspaper's headline reads: 'Chaos as 100 [black] kids break out of *racist* reformatory'.

In the two preceding quotations we have the same incident, as well as the same discursive theme, namely to label somebody as a racist, but we have two completely different scapegoats. But who are the racists? The black or the white staff members? The aim of discourse analysis is not to discover the truth, but to acknowledge the existence of different and even conflicting interpretations and representations (Zeeman, 2000).

### ***Theme 2.3: Blacks/Whites are inhuman and/or amoral***

In a sub-theme of negative other-representation, whites are not only constituted as violent racists, but also as inhuman. This discursive theme is illustrated by the following selection of quotations extracted from the texts:

[A white father] grabbed me [an eight year old coloured boy] by the neck and butted me with his forehead in my eye. I was bleeding after the incident (Monare, 1999: 1).

Hart [a white boy] got infuriated and dragged him [the black boy] by his tie and punched him twice on the forehead and the ear. All hell broke loose when other blacks tried to defend Tlagae. Hart's white friends joined the fracas; punching and kicking him (Tlagae) on his back [...] Later on Tlagae, who was bleeding profusely as a result of the punch-up, was allegedly dragged by a school prefect to the principal's office with Hart marching alongside (Mboyane, 2000: 4).

The above selection of quotations reduces whites to violent, inhuman racists who should be restrained from acts of violence. Highly emotive words are used to describe the pain and

<sup>5</sup> The town is a melting pot.

<sup>6</sup> *Rapport* learned that the majority of children were incited by black members of the hostel and teaching staff - they were supposed to control the children. Anti-apartheid and racist slogans were shouted during a meeting.

humiliation black learners have suffered at their hands. The description of the fight between Hart and Tlaga is illustrative of overcompleteness in discourses. Seemingly irrelevant, negative information is given in order to dehumanise the actions of the white boys and educators.

A reading of two extremist Afrikaans newspapers, *Die Patriot* and *Afrikaner*, reveals that, as presented in the statements below, black learners are without any moral values:

Hulle [het hulle] oorgegee aan hul welluste deur dagga openlik te gebruik, en ook het van hulle oop en bloot op die gras van die skool seksueel met mekaar verkeer (Van de Graaf, 1995:2).<sup>7</sup>

Talle [wit] meisies [is] al deur swartes lastig geval [...] en heelparty van hulle is al deur die swartes betas. [...] Behalwe die fisiese optrede teen die blanke meisies, word daar ook voortdurend, veral tydens pouses, vulgêre taal teenoor hulle gebesig (*Afrikaner*, 1999: 1)<sup>8</sup>

In the two preceding quotations, black learners are described in harsh, negative lexical style. They reportedly engage in petty crime, sexual misconduct, abuses and harassment, as well as verbal vulgarities and abuses. Black learners are described in derogatory terms as ‘criminals’ and ‘animals’.

### ***Theme 2.4: Whites are unreasonable***

Another important discursive theme which may be discerned in the texts analysed, conveys the message that whites are basically highly unreasonable, and it is because of their unreasonable behaviour that there are so many racial incidents in South African schools. In an article dealing with racism and the violent actions of white parents, one of the white parents is quoted as asking:

I don't know why they [the black learners] must go to white schools. Why can't they go back to Soweto or somewhere else? (Eveleth, 1997: 6)

In response to this question, a black parent is quoted as saying:

If you want better education for your children, you will take them to the best school you can. [...] Those whites who say we must go back to Atteridgeville, Soshanguve and Garankuwa, but what must we do if the schools are full? (Eveleth, 1997: 6).

Through the voices of the parents, opposing perspectives are presented in Eveleth's report, creating the impression that the newspaper article is neutral, but the sound argumentation of the black parent is contrasted with the illogical, unreasonable rhetorical question of the white parent.

## **Theme 3: Denial of racism**

A common feature of media discourse on racism is either the denial of racist attitudes and actions by whites in the former white schools or that these schools are doing their utmost to eradicate racism. Consider, for example, the following two headlines of articles dealing with racial tension in schools:

Edenvale school moves to stamp out any racism (Naidu, 1999: 10).

Groepe moet met mekaar praat, glo leerling-leiers<sup>9</sup> (*Rapport*, 1997: 12).

In several newspaper articles, either the principal, members of governing bodies or community leaders are quoted, saying that the reported incidents of violent clashes between

<sup>7</sup> They gave heed to their basic urges - they smoked marijuana on the school premises. Furthermore they gave way to their sexual urges on the school's playground.

<sup>8</sup> A number of white girls were subjected to sexual harassment and verbal abuse by black learners.

<sup>9</sup> Student leaders believe groups must speak to one another.

white and black learners were not racially motivated (see, for example, *Cape Argus*, 2000: 4; *The Star*, 1997: 6; Thompson, 1998: 1; Waldner, 2000: 1). Below are two examples of such denials:

[The principal] denied that the tension at the school could be described as racial, and said it was normal in any school for children to fight (De Lange, 1997: 3).

[The principal] said suggestions that the incident was racially motivated were 'sensation seeking' (Mboyane, 2000: 4).

Van Dijk (1997: 37) points out that the common strategy of denying racism is to transfer racism as 'popular resentment' to the white lower class. The following excerpts are from the analysed texts:

Elandspoor is in Danville, a working-class Pretoria West suburb which for years has been the target of scorn among well-heeled Pretorians. But if those from the northern suburbs want nothing to do with Danville residents, Danville residents want nothing to do with children from the nearby townships of Atteridgeville - especially those from affluent homes (Anstey and Ledwaba, 1997: 5).

Black students attending school in a working-class Afrikaans suburb of Pretoria West should 'go back to Soweto', said a white parent standing guard outside Elandspoor High School (Eveleth, 1997: 6).

To highlight their stance that not all whites, but the white lower or working class must be held responsible for racial incidents in South African schools, Anstey and Ledwaba (1997: 5) wrote that '... some of the white parents drank beer [and] some were intoxicated'.

The denial of one's own racism may be accompanied by various forms of transfer. These are characterised by other types of discourse; for example, when a newspaper article uses euphemism when writing about racial tension at a school: '... like many wars, it was sparked by a simple incident' (Anstey and Ledwaba, 1997: 5). Furthermore, not all white South Africans reportedly are racists, but only those belonging to the ultra right-wing political parties (*Southern African Report*, 1996; Thompson, 1998) or to gangs (De Lange, 1997). Racism in schools is thus attributed to groups of whites who are not to be taken seriously (Duncan, 1996).

#### **Theme 4: Justification: the force of facts**

Negative actions, or even making derogatory remarks about others, are justified by referring to the 'force of facts'. The lack of discipline, the lack of pro-active response from educators against perpetrators of racism, hate language, and reactive steps in retaliating to verbal or physical abuse, are some of the 'good reasons' used to justify tactics that may be viewed as negative. The aim of such a discourse of justification is to present the speaker and/or writer as free of prejudice or even as a victim of so-called 'reverse prejudice' (Wodak, 1997). In the next section, attention will be paid to a few sub-themes in the discourse of justification.

##### ***Theme 4.1: Lack of discipline***

In the following examples, the quotations not only imply momentary loss of control and hence less responsibility, but also encapsulate excuses for loss of temper and despondency. The incident should thus be seen as a regrettable spot on an otherwise unblemished past of racial tolerance.

White pupils, who did not want to be named, said the teacher told the two Std. 7 pupils to keep quiet during the opening ceremony on Monday. They had cursed at her, 'So we decided to teach her a lesson' (*The Star*, 1997: 6).

Die blanke leerlinge sê dat hulle nie langer die uittartende houding van die swartes gaan duld nie (Afrikaner, 1999: 1).<sup>10</sup>

From the above quotations, it is clear that there is sympathy for white learners and educators who take the law into their own hands - they seemingly had no alternative. Parallel to this 'force of fact' discursive theme, another discursive theme may be identified, namely the negative stereotyping of black learners as undisciplined and unruly.

### ***Theme 4.2: Cultural differences***

According to Lea (1996), modern racial discourses seldom involve the crude pseudo-scientific racism of the nineteenth century (see, *inter alia*, Drew, 1995; Massey, 1991; Richards 1997). Today, reference to the biological basis of race is often cloaked in culturalist arguments. Groups are seen as striving to safeguard their traditions and cultural identity (Van Dijk 1997). The discourse of culturalism will be illustrated in the following extracts in which the emphasis on cultural differences is integrally linked to the justificatory function of the ideology of racism:

Ons is verskillend en ons kom uit verskillende agtergronde. [...] Elke groep het sy eie kultuur (Rapport, 1997: 12)<sup>11</sup>.

Hierdie lokasie-maniere kan nie geduld word nie (Afrikaner, 1998: 5).<sup>12</sup>

Before a black learner was beaten up by his white fellow learners, he was told that Bryanston High School 'was not a township school' (Mokwena, 2000: 2).

Typical of the preceding quotations is the use of over-generalisations; for example, the reference to township manners and conflicting cultures. In these quotations blacks are perceived as threatening to the white's cultural identity. This discursive theme is closely linked to cultural racism, namely that members of another group have a lesser or no culture at all. Institutional racism is thus justified on cultural grounds.

### ***Theme 4.3: Reactive steps***

Another sub-theme in the discourse on the justification of violence is the right to use violence in retaliating against verbal and/or physical abuse - especially hate language. The following are two quotations from the corpus of texts in which the use of hate language against black learners was the justification for violence against their fellow white learners (see Bissetty, 1999: 3; Molakeng, 2000: 2; *The Citizen*, 2000: 9; for additional examples):

He declared that he felt no guilt about the incident [a black pupil who stabbed a white fellow pupil with a pair of scissors]. The twenty year old pupil claimed he was surrounded by a group of white pupils after fellow pupil [...] allegedly confronted him at the schools tuckshop, grabbed him by the neck and said 'Kaffirs moet nie hier koop nie' (Kaffirs must not buy here) (Sylvester, 1999: 5).

On Wednesday a fight broke out on a school bus after white pupils called blacks goetes [sic] (things) (Ledwaba and Sakuneka, 1999:1).

Not only black learners, but also white learners react violently when confronted with hate language:

Hulle [the parents of a white boy who broke a coloured girl's jaw] sê Lee-Andra het hul seun blykbaar voor die bors gestamp, gedreig om hom tussen die bene te skop en sy ma gevloek (Cornelissen, 2001: 7).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The white learners said that they will no longer tolerate the provocative conduct of black learners.

<sup>11</sup> We are different and have different backgrounds. [...] Every group has its own culture.

<sup>12</sup> These township manners cannot be tolerated.

<sup>13</sup> The parents of the boy who broke a coloured girl's jaw, said that the girl had allegedly pushed their boy

In the following quotations, (white) parents are depicted as people who will go to extremes to defend other (white) parents and their children (the self) against acts of aggression by the 'other':

In retaliation [to the fact that black learners kept members of a schools governing body hostage], a large group of angry White parents gathered at the school gates ... and started attacking Black pupils as they entered the grounds (*The Citizen*, 1998: 1).

Gewapen met sambokke, swepe en tuingereedskap het hulle [white parents] besluit om hulle kinders te beskerm (Van de Graaf, 1995: 2)<sup>14</sup>.

In the 'force of facts' discursive theme the 'self' is portrayed as inherently peace-loving, anti-racist, law-abiding learners and parents. However, external factors, for example the lack of discipline and violent behaviour of the 'other', forced them to take steps to defend their own.

### Theme 5: Political discourses

A prominent feature of South African politics is the emphasis on racial differences. The political history of South Africa up to 1994 was dominated by two political themes, namely the justification of apartheid and the fight against apartheid. The constitutional changes in the country did not bring about a change in these conflicting discourses (*The Citizen*, 1999; *The Evening Post*, 1985). The texts analysed abound with statements holding the ANC government's educational policy responsible for the racial conflict in schools:

Right-wing groupings yesterday blamed government policies for the fiction at the school. They sharply criticise the government for refusing to recognise cultural differences in its education policy. The conflict could be defused by allowing culturally-based, mother-tongue education for different groups [...] We call on government to stop exposing the country's youth to conflict for the sake of achieving its political ideals (*The Citizen*, 1997: 3; compare with *Afrikaner*, 1998: 5; Coetzee, 2000: 2; Thompson 1998: 1; for similar argumentation).

In the preceding quotation, the ANC dominated government is accused of *reversed racism*. According to Stevens (1998) the use of this accusation in political discourse may be seen as a defensive manoeuvre not only to deny the inequalities caused by apartheid, but also their own racist prejudice. It is furthermore an attempt to preserve the positive self-image of the group. Stevens (1998) argues that the emphasis on the reversal of discrimination and racism may be seen as an attempt to suggest that 'we are the real victims'.

Another recurring theme in political discourse is that whites are unwilling to accept the political realities of post-apartheid South Africa:

Blacks believe they have every right to be in the school, while whites regard it as a sacred institution of Afrikanerdom (Ledwaba, 1999: 4).

*Sunday World* (1999: 2) goes a step further. The conflict at Kuschke Agricultural School is linked to the apartheid struggle:

Did our parents, relatives and friends, who fought a gallant struggle to protect black dignity in Sharpeville in 1960, die in vain? Was the blood of our children in 1976 spilled for us to continue sustaining racial insults?

The frustrations of black learners, parents and community leaders are reflected in these rhetorical questions. Their 'parents, relatives and friends' have fought against apartheid, but nothing has changed in post-apartheid South Africa - they are still in a subservient position.

---

around, and threatened to kick him between the legs. She also spoke of his mother in derogatory terms.

<sup>14</sup> Armed with sjambokke, whips and garden tools, the white parents decided to defend their children.



The reference to South Africa's legacy of apartheid enables speakers to make evaluations and to assign responsibility and guilt. The aim of such a discourse is to present the speaker as free of prejudice and as a victim of prejudice and discrimination (see Wodak, 1997):

The schisms deliberately created by the apartheid regime by exploiting, in particular, ethnic and tribal differences, cannot be expected to disappear overnight (Thakur, 1997: 5).

The anti-apartheid political discourse not only highlights the perceived unwillingness of some whites to accept the political and educational realities in post-apartheid South Africa, but also the frustration of blacks with the fact that circumstances have not changed at grassroots level.

### **Theme 6: The disempowerment of blacks**

A relatively strong discursive theme is that blacks are still disempowered at grassroots level despite the constitutional changes in South Africa. From the sampled texts, it becomes clear that blacks often perceive themselves as victims of the past, as well as the present:

The victims father, Lasarus Joseph, question the school's understanding of basic human rights. "What are the human rights of a pupil who is assaulted at school in this manner? This is supposed to be a safe environment. [...] This is ridiculous. It is different strokes for different folks because the other boy happens to be white?" (*Cape Argus*, 2000: 4; see Ledwaba, 1999: 4 for the same view).

A concluding remark by Bissetty (1998: 3) reads:

Many of the parents who spoke to the *Daily News* said racism appeared to be rife at the school, with mostly African children bearing the brunt of the discrimination.

A text in the *City Press* (1997: 3) reads:

The [black] children escaped as hordes of policemen stormed the Vikelwa Reformatory School armed with teargas and rubber bullets after demonstrations by black inmates against racism.

Furthermore, it is reported that the police are unwilling to protect black learners:

Swart leiers is ontevrede oor die polisie-optrede en sê hulle het glad nie die swart kinders gehelp toe blanke ouers hulle met sambokke geslaan het nie (De Kock, 1998: 12).<sup>15</sup>

The texts quoted above confirm Stevens's (1998) observation that black people in South Africa express a certain degree of entitlement in post-apartheid South Africa, because there has not been a fundamental change in the circumstances of the majority of people. The texts abound with feelings of resentment and disillusionment.

### **IN CONCLUSION**

If Froneman's (1997: 11) observation that news '... is not merely a mirror of society, but it does present to society a mirror of its concerns and interests' holds true, this discourse analysis has shown that racism is an integral part of the South African educational scene. In micro-context, the following conversations and debates have been identified: Black and white parents, learners and other role players deny that they are racists. The violence in South African schools must therefore be attributed to the racist, violent, inhuman, amoral and unreasonable behaviour of the 'other'. And if the 'self' sometimes acts violently against somebody from a different race (the 'other'), it is justifiable force of fact. Discursive themes on the macro-context of institutions and ideologies revolve around the role of politics (apartheid and assimilation) in racial violence in South African schools.

<sup>15</sup> Black leaders are enraged about police action. According to them the police did nothing to protect the learners when the white parents attacked them with sjamboks.

A relatively large percentage of the selected text focused on the verbal reaction category in the newspaper articles. Not only the 'expert' opinions of group leaders, but also the opinions of learners and parents directly or indirectly involved in the violent clashes were considered. According to Van Dijk (1993b: 114), journalists often use quotations when the '... topic is rather delicate, such as discrimination or prejudice'. A perception may be created that the journalist/editor is neutral. But in the final analysis, it is the journalist/editor's decision to whom he/she is going to give a voice. From the study it has become clear that there are two conflicting perspectives in the media discourse on racism in South African schools. Who is discriminated against, who is racially abused, whose human rights are violated, will depend on who belongs to 'our' people (either black or white). In the analysis of the corpus of texts, little analysis was necessary to identify the perspectives and points of view of journalists who wrote the different newspaper articles and the persons given a voice in these articles. Most of them openly defended their points of view, and severely attacked and marginalised those they opposed.

A media discourse analysis on racism in South African schools presupposes a prior knowledge of South Africa's educational history. Without an insight into the apartheid education system, the apartheid ideology, the ANC's overt and covert political campaigns since its inception at the beginning of the twentieth century, political and educational promises made to blacks and whites before the first democratic election in 1994, it is not always possible to grasp the frustrations and, fears of black and white South Africans with regard to education in post-apartheid South Africa.

#### REFERENCES

- Afrikaner* (1998) HNP veroordeel rasse-onluste by Hoërskool Schweizer-Reneke. 13 Februarie, 5.
- Afrikaner* (1999) Rasse-onluste by Hoërskool Akasia. 30 April, 1.
- Afrikaner* (2000a) Rassevoorvalle by voormalige blanke skole neem drasties toe. 21 Julie, 4.
- Afrikaner* (2000b) Rasse-onluste by Hoërskool Pretoria-Wes. 1 September, 12.
- Anstey, G. AND Ledwaba, L. (1997) School at war. *Sunday Times*, 18 May, 5.
- Bax, M.M.H. (1985) *Oordelen in taal*. Groningen: Wolters-Noordhof.
- Bhana, D. (1999) Education, race and human rights in South Africa. *Perspectives in Education*, 18 (2), 19-30.
- Bissetty, K. (1998) School rocked by allegations of assault, abuse. *The Daily News*, 29 October, 3.
- Bissetty, K. (1999) Pupils run amok after teacher's racist remarks. *The Daily News*, 28 May, 3.
- Cape Argus* (2000) Race insults end in school fights. 30 August, 4.
- City Press* (1997) Chaos as 100 kids break out of racist reformatory. 26 October, 3.
- Coetzee, H. (2000) DA besorg oor rassisme in skole. *Die Burger*, 1 September, 2.
- Coetzee, L. (1997) Polisie gryp in na chaos oor apartheid by skool. *Rapport*, 26 Oktober, 3.
- Connolly, P. (1998) *Racism, gender identities and young children*. London: Routledge.
- Cornelissen, A. (2001) Seun slaan meisie se kakebeen af. *Rapport*, 11 Februarie, 7.
- Coulthard, M. (1985) *An introduction to discourse analysis*. London: Longman.
- De Kock, G. (1998) Kole smeul nog by skool in Vryburg. *Rapport*, 1 Maart, 12.
- De Lange, F. (1997) Police called in as White, Black pupils clash. *The Citizen*, 14 May, 3.
- Die Burger* (1998) Rassespanning bring geweld in Noordwes. 25 Februarie, 1.
- Die Volksblad* (1995) Sy posisie is bemoeilik deur magspel in onderwys, sê Belot. 2 Junie, 1.
- Drew, D. (1995) *Race, education and work: The statistics of inequality*. Hong Kong: Avebury.
- Duncan, N. (1996) Discourses on public violence and the reproduction of racism. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 26 (3), 172-182.
- Eveleth, A. (1997) 'Why can't they go back to Soweto?' *Mail and Guardian*, 1 June, 6.
- Evening Post* (1985) Apartheid education at root of race prejudice. 5 Februarie, 6.

- Fowler, R. (1991) *Language in the news*. London: Routledge.
- Froneman, J.D. (1997) Towards a Christian model for journalism. *Koers*, 62 (1), 1-17.
- Helleiner, J. and Szuchewycz, B. (1997) Discourse of exclusion. In S.H. Riggins (ed.), *The language and politics of exclusion*, 109-130. London: Sage.
- [Http://www.sahrc.org.za/braude\\_media\\_report.PDF](http://www.sahrc.org.za/braude_media_report.PDF). [Consulted on 2000-05-09.]
- [Http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/pr/2000/pr0301d.html](http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/pr/2000/pr0301d.html). [Consulted on 2000-06-19.]
- Lea, S.J. (1996) 'The ism on the end makes it nasty': talking about race with young white South Africans. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 26 (3), 183-190.
- Ledwaba, L. (1999) Its a different and scary world in the classrooms of Vryburg High. *Sunday World*, 7 March, 4.
- Ledwaba, L. and Sakuneka, M. (1999) Apartheid school backlash. *Sunday World*, 29 August, 1.
- Mahlangu, D. (2000) Grim case of racism in Jo'burg school. *City Press*, 11 June, 4.
- Massey, I. (1991) *More than skin deep: developing anti-racist multicultural education in schools*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Mathiane, N. (2000) Media racism reports flawed, academic says. *Business Day*, 7 March, 1-2.
- Mboyane, S. (2000) Boy suffers perforated eardrum in racist attack. *City Press*, 26 November, 4.
- Mokwena, M. (2000) Alleged school racism probed. *The Star*, 19 January, 2.
- Molakeng, S. (2001) Racist attack lands grade 9 girl in hospital. *Sowetan*, 7 February, 2.
- Monare, M. (1999) Parent in race row after pupil (8) 'head-butted'. *Pretoria News*, 14 May, 1.
- Naidu, E. (1999) Edenvale school moves to stamp out racism. *The Star*, 5 March, 10.
- Newton, R. (1989) Roles, rights and responsibilities: whom should the media serve? In S. Biagi (ed.), *Media/reader. Perspectives on mass media industries, effects and issues*, 3-8. Belmont, California: Wadsworth.
- Nieto, S. (1992) *Affirming diversity*. New York: Longman.
- Oosthuizen, T.H. (1982) *Mediaduplisering: 'n teoretiese en empiriese ontleding van mediagebruik*. M.A.-verhandeling. Bloemfontein: UOVS.
- Pela, M. (2000) Racist attack schoolboy to sue, *Sowetan*, 21 August, 5.
- Rapport* (1997) Groepe moet met mekaar praat, glo leerling-leiers. 18 Mei, 12.
- Rapport* (2001) Rapport se redaksionele missie. 6 Mei, 16.
- Renkema, J. (1993) *Discourse studies. An introductory textbook*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Richards, G. (1997) *Race, racism and psychology*. London: Routledge.
- Riggins, S.H. (1997) The rhetoric of othering. In S.H. Riggins (ed.), *The language and politics of exclusion*, 1-30. London: Sage.
- SAHRC (2000a) South African Human Rights Commission inquiry into racism in the media opening statement. [Online]
- SAHRC (2000b) Investigation into racism in the media. Background to the investigation. [Online] [Http://sahrc.org.za/background\\_to\\_the\\_investigation.html](http://sahrc.org.za/background_to_the_investigation.html). [Consulted on 2000-06-19.]
- SAHRC (South African Human Rights Commission) (1999) Investigation into racism in the media. Interm report. [Online]
- Sedlacek, W.E. and Brooks, G.C. (1976) *Racism in American education: a model for change*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.
- Sinclair, J. (1992) Priorities in discourse analysis. In M. Coulthard, M. (ed.), *Advances in spoken discourse analysis*, 79-88. London: Routledge.
- Sonderling, S. (1998) Language as ideology in South African media texts and discursive practice: a need for critical language awareness. *Communicatio*, 24 (2), 11-30.
- Southern African Report* (1999) *Racialism surfaces in North, E Cape provinces*. 2 February, 4.
- Staff Reporter (2000) Baseball bats and knives used in classroom clashes. *Cape Argus*, 30 August, 4.
- Stevens, G. (1998) 'Racialised' discourses: understanding perceptions of threat in post-apartheid South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 28 (4), 204-214.
- Sunday World* (1999) School spits in the face of our democracy. 29 August, 2.

- Sylvester, E. (1999) Trail of Vryburg pupil hears dramatic testimony. *The Star*, 20 August, 5.
- Tatum, B.D. (1998) What do you do when they call you a racist? *NASSP Bulletin*, 82 (602), 43-48.
- Terre Blache, M. and Durrheim, K. (1999) Social constructionist methods. In M. Terre Blache and K. Durrheim K (eds.), *Research in practice. Applied methods for the social sciences*, 147-172. Cape Town: UCT Press.
- Thakur, M. (1997) Teachers have role in lessening racial tensions at school. *The Leader*, 21 March, 5.
- The Citizen* (1997) Police probing charges after race clash. 16 May, 3.
- The Citizen* (1998) Bomb hoax: Vryburg quiet. 26 February, 1.
- The Citizen* (1999) Racism in school is prevalent. 30 November, 8.
- The Citizen* (2000) Probe into racism at Groblersdal school. 21 January, 9.
- The Star* (1997) Black, white pupils in school brawl. 16 May, 6.
- Thompson, D. (1998) 3 bruin leerlinge in hospitaal na aanval deur wit kinders. *Beeld*, 6 Februarie, 1.
- Van de Graaf, H. (1995) Gemengde skole broeineste van onheil. *Patriot*, 24 Februarie, 2.
- Van Dijk, T.A. (1987) *Communicating racism*. London: Sage.
- Van Dijk, T.A. (1993a) *Elite discourse and racism*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Van Dijk, T.A. (1993b) Analyzing racism through discourse analysis. In J.H. Stanfield and R.M. Dennis (eds.), *Race and ethnicity in research methods*, 92-134. London: Sage.
- Van Dijk, T.A. (1997) Political discourse and racism: describing others in Western Parliaments. In S.H. Riggins (ed.), *The language and politics of exclusion*, 31-64. London: Sage.
- Wodak, R. (1997) Das Ausland and anti-semitic discourse: the discursive construction of order. In S.H. Riggins (ed.), *The language and politics of exclusion*, 65-87. London: Sage.
- Zeeman, L. (2000) *'n Diskoers analise: unieke vroue staan op teen gender dilemmas*. Ongepubliseerde D.Cur.-proefskrif. Johannesburg: Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit.

## Educational policy in Africa and the issue(s) of context: The case of Nigeria and South Africa

---

**Olivet I. W. Jagusah**

Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Illinois, USA [cfoij@eiu.edu](mailto:cfoij@eiu.edu)

*This paper will look at the three distinct time and educational policy periods in African education – the pre-colonial, the colonial and the post-colonial – using Nigeria and South Africa as a generic representation of the problematics of education and socio-cultural development in Africa. The central goal of the paper is to point out the fact that practices that are taken for granted as best practices elsewhere in education have little or no place in the educational policy and processes in Africa. Issues such as the role of culture, the role of languages of instruction, the role of indigenous philosophy/gnosis (Mudimbe, 1988), and the role of the community in the education of its youth and citizens, are generally given little consideration. These aspects are usually dismissed as not necessary for the education of African children. This attitude mis-educates rather than educates for personal, national and continental development.*

Cultural foundations, socio-cultural development, South Africa, Nigeria, community, national educational policy

Each centered person becomes an owner not a renter of knowledge.  
*Professor Molefi Kete Asante (1994)*

Only where man feels himself to be heir and successor to the past,  
has he the strength for new beginning.  
*Janheinz Jahn (1958)*

### INTRODUCTION

All scholars of comparative education rightly locate three phases in Nigerian education (Gutek, 1993) which generally can be applied to South African education as well. According to Gutek, Nigerian education, and by application South African, has three main historical periods: the pre-colonial, the colonial, and the post-colonial or independent. The differences between the two countries might be in the intensity with which these three time periods impacted on their particular contexts.

The second and third periods are fairly well studied by outsiders, as well as by African scholars of educational policies and processes. The first period is generally ignored, perhaps due to ambiguous sentiments such as European scholars seemingly seeing no need for it. This is despite their understanding of location theory (Asante, 1994) and its impact on educational achievement. African scholars, who have totally taken on European theories and ideologies, find such studies very discomfoting to their individual ambiguous adventures (Kane, 1963). African educational policies are therefore carried out in a cultural and educational policy and developmental vacuum in terms of African people's everyday lives. I will now take a closer look at the terms culture, education and development, and then relate these terms to educational policy processes in Nigeria and South Africa.

## CULTURE, EDUCATION, AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Worldwide, there has been an increased awareness of the impact of cultural practices on educational achievement that has challenged previous conceptions of education (Pai & Aldler, 1997). Cultural relevance in educational processes is acknowledged by Marxist and neo-Marxist educational scholars (Apple, 1982, 1996; Freire, 1998; Gourix, 1991) as well as some conservative, capitalist and colonial-oriented writers (Ravitch, 1991; Schlesinger, 1992). The same statement can be made about culture and development. It seems, however, that in Africa, the role of culture and its relationship to educational attainment as well as to socio-political and economic developments, is more easily and readily dismissed (Makgoba, 1997). This strange phenomenon is at times very difficult to explain due to the deeply ingrained self-doubt in the African psyche (Wilson, 1993) as has been the case also for African Americans in the USA (Woodson, 1933, 1999). How does one then try to explain the obvious? There is an analytical need to do this so that, in the process, African educators might become more conscious of the damage they are inflicting on their sons and daughters, as has been demonstrated elsewhere (Delpit, 1995).

To address these issues clearly, we will pause here and define the three main terms that will guide this analysis: culture, education and development. First, each term will be considered independently. The three then will be discussed together, especially considering how the first two affect the third.

### Cultural Foundations

While there is no one single definition of culture, functionally there is an overwhelming acceptance that it is ‘... a system of norms and control’, as well as ‘a map’ (Pai & Adler, 1997: 23) that gives a group a sense of direction. This map of, or for, a group of people or a society, is what enables the group to evaluate where it has been, where it is now, and where it hopes to go. A mastery of this ‘system of norms and control’ - this ‘map’ - enables one to connect the past to the present as well as to the future.

Historically, the word ‘culture’ has undergone considerable modification. Among the ancient Greeks the world was viewed in terms of *the cultured* (Greeks in general, but the male aristocrats in particular, since Greek society was a hierarchical society based on class, gender, and slavery) and *the barbarians* (non- Greeks). The Enlightenment thinkers took on the word culture posited on European and non-European races, societies and groups in terms of the ‘civilised’ for the former and the ‘savage’ or ‘primitive’ for the latter (Eze, 1997). Embedded in these two views of culture were the ideas that ‘... the non-Greeks, incapable of culture and lacking the superior rational capacity [the ability to justify one’s behaviour, preferences and mores] for the Athenian-style democratic social organizations lived brutishly and under despotism” (Eze, 1997: 4). As Eze (1997: 4) noted further on the second view:

European Enlightenment thinkers retained the Greek ideal of reason, as well as this reason’s categorical function of discriminating between the cultured (now called ‘the civilized’) and the ‘barbarian’ (the ‘savage’ or the ‘primitive’). It can be argued, in fact, that the enlightenment’s declaration of itself as the ‘Age of Reason’ was predicated upon precisely the assumption that reason [the ability to justify one’s behavior, preferences and mores or to more simply put, the ability to follow a rule] could historically only come to maturity in modern Europe, while the inhabitants of areas outside Europe, who were considered to be of non-European racial and cultural origins, were consistently described and theorized as rationally inferior and savage...

The most fascinating aspect of Eze’s (1997) views is the question of source authority for the cultural and philosophical anthropology of this period: Where did the Greeks and the enlightenment thinkers secure the sources for such categorical (pre)suppositions? Hume

(1711-1776), Kant (1724-1804), and Hegel (1770-1831) blindly quoted each other's fables over and over, so that they became facts (Eze, 1997), or what Mudimbe (1988: 15) called 'epistemological ethnocentrism'. This is despite the fact that Hegel of all of the three, as Eze (1997) pointed out, had more access to factual data and should have disabused those earlier notions about *culture* and *otherness* in his anthropology. This intertextuality (Eze, 1997) could not be questioned. This is because the ideology of justified belief of the Enlightenment period superseded their so-called search for truth. Like one of their followers many years later, Carl Sagan (1983), 'the power of a will to truth' (Mudimbe, 1988: 15) and not professed disinterested scholarship, became their preoccupation. When source authority and interpretive authority conflict, the danger of ideological universalisation is easily realised.

Today, however, even the most mean-spirited European cultural anthropologist and philosopher will not posit the term *culture* in these narrow and prejudiced terms. As Gollnick and Chinn (1998: 4), paraphrasing Goodenough (1987), noted: 'Everyone has a culture'. The previous use of the term culture indicated '... the refined ways of the elite and powerful'. It was also a reference to '[p]eople who were knowledgeable in history, literature and the fine arts'. These categories of people were capable of possessing culture, or '... were said to possess culture' (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998: 4). As Gollnick and Chinn (1998: 4) concluded: '[n]o longer is culture viewed so narrowly'.

Today, anthropologists '... define culture as a way of perceiving, believing, evaluating, and behaving (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998: 4). Culture thus 'provides the blueprint that determines the way we think, feel, and behave in society' (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998: 4). Others have noted that culture is '... in us and all around us, just as the air we breathe' (Erickson, 1997: 33). If these propositions are true then it follows that there are fundamental distortions embedded in our African educational thought, policies, theories and practices about educating ourselves and our children. These distortions thwart the very intentions of what should constitute education - content, processes and results. This is because, apart from culture giving one the 'do's and don'ts of appropriate behaviour within' the society, it also 'imposes order and meaning on our experiences. It allows us to predict how others will behave in certain situations' (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998: 4).

While the above might sound a little simplistic, being unaware of their culture leads people to lack a consciousness of their own 'self' in the educative process, or to be critically unaware of the 'other' in their context (Mudimbe, 1988). To educate (Stanage, 1987) is to bring forth what might be either innate or socialised in the individual to critical consciousness, not to bank the knowledge (Freire, 1998) in such learners. One educated in such an artificial context is only superficially at home with the self and the other, thus making good education impossible either to give or to receive. This is because all good educational theory posits progressively moving from the known to the unknown. Understanding the context of education and its planning within a psycho-social duality (Dewey, 1916, 1964) therefore becomes the key. This duality is not a matter of either/or, but of both, if effective learning and meaningful citizenship are to occur.

Every cultural and educational process, along with its planning, has two key components: it enculturates children of all racial, ethnic and gender groups (Pai & Adler, 1997: 4), and it socialises its young (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998). These two components operate culturally because of four other factors: (i) culture is learned, not biologically determined; the young must of necessity be introduced to their society, both formally or informally; (ii) culture is shared, and therefore embedded in human, technical, and scientific language; (iii) culture is adaptive to the challenges of context; and (iv) culture is dynamic, either taking an evolutionary or a revolutionary path (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998). These components,

characteristics and paths that culture takes are the same as or similar to those taken by educational processes and therefore by policy planning.

What then is education? There are multiple definitions. Some theorists define it as preparation, both formal and informal, for life (Counts, 1932, 1962). Others have taken the view that education is life itself, or is itself life, not preparation for life (Dewey, 1916, 1938, 1939). Like culture, educational processes also target the enculturation and socialisation of the citizenry on both formal and informal levels. The aim of any education system is to prepare individuals to assume mature roles in a given society. At the heart of what is education, or educational, is the issue of whether it should be just about cultural transmission (Strouse, 2000), and more importantly whose culture is to be transmitted (Spring, 1997) In our case, it is whether it should be about cultural transformation, as is the case in Nigeria (Soyinka, 1996) and South Africa today (Makgoba, 1997).

### **THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD**

Nigeria and South Africa experienced contact with Europe to varying degrees and in different time periods. Given that the colonial and post-colonial periods have been extensively studied, my concern here is that of locating the pre-colonial with the issues of planning for effective educational processes.

First, it is important to note that there existed an African educational frame of reference before European contact with the peoples in the areas today called Nigeria and South Africa. Because of the colonial origin and nature of present-day African education, the socio-cultural discourse of African education insists on theorising on traditional Eurocentric functional, conflictual, and associative or assimilationist platforms without engaging with this first phase of African education (Basse, 1999). When an African scholar attempts a different approach it attracts attacks from entrenched colonial and neo-colonial scholarship. This was demonstrated by Mudimbe (1988) and more recently by Spreen (2001) in her review of Basse (1999). The goal of such pseudo-scholarship is always to say: We did not teach you that. Where did you get it from? You must be a fraud because we who know did not approve of such an understanding of your world. This resistance scares African scholars away from pursuing the kind of research that should contribute to improving education. While there are breakthroughs in the literary and African philosophical circles, these are not being applied effectively in the field of educational policy and classroom practice.

### **THE COLONIAL PERIOD**

The colonial period was one of direct involvement of colonial Europe in African affairs. It took different forms. In some colonies like Nigeria it was about exploitation of raw materials for use in Great Britain. Education was a very superficial concern. It was left in the hands of the missionaries most of the time. The missionaries strove for the complete destruction of the African worldview, thus turning Africans into little Englishmen (Chanaiwa, 1980) or into subjects of another European nation. The same could be said about South Africa, except that in this case the colonising community had no intention of ever leaving. The education of the Nigerian as well as the South African was therefore for barbarism (Tabata, 1960); that is, it targeted self-hatred and self-destruction as desirable qualities. The mission-educated Nigerian, as well as the South African, generally referred to as the 'new African', suffered from three forms of ambiguity: of the state, of nationalism, and of class and class consciousness (Marks, 1986). These three adventurous ambiguities came back to becloud the post-independent elite's educational policy, especially in relation to the contextualisation of education in local African cultures.



When African scholars theorise about educational issues, policies and planning in Africa they show little regard for pre-colonial African educative processes (Stanage, 1987). When educated Africans embrace a Jasperian theory of African history and existence, and thereby of education -- i.e., that African culture and ethos cannot survive in the face of European civilisation, and its past is therefore doomed -- we mis-educate our sons and daughters, rather than educate them (Asmal and James, 2001; Jahn, 1989/90).

The Malinowskian-Skokian effect theory (Jahn, 1989/90) of the so-called neo-African culture misses the point as well. This is the view that says the African elite wants to become European at all cost, but eventually realises that legally this is impossible. Such an elite returns with a vengeance to its African ways as a '... psychological retreat before European pressure' (Jahn, 1989/90: 15). This perception also misses the point. These two approaches miss the key cultural questions about the first phase of African education. They still confuse the indigenous knowledge question with their 'epistemological ethnocentrism' (Mudimbe, 1988: 15). While they deal with the conditioned behaviour of the African as he or she confronted Europe, concentrating the discourse on just this impact of Europe on Africa, or on the African reaction alone, does not explain the ease with which these Africans returned to their previous cultural ethos. This characterisation, while serving the 'epistemological ethnocentrism' (Mudimbe, 1988: 15) of the proponents, does not address the question of the African 'gnosis', as Mudimbe (1988) calls it, for lack of a better way to communicate the concept. It is at this juncture that Jahn's 1989/90 analysis and dismissal of these deficit theories of African culture and therefore the first phase of African education will be helpful in discussing our next concern, that of development.

When we talk of development, what do we mean? The word development is synonymous, according to the *Random House College Dictionary*, with other words such as 'expansion, elaboration, growth, evolution; unfolding, maturation'. To develop is to move forward from where one is. Two things, among a host of many others, are presupposed here: one, a beginning; and two, a continuum. Development as a sign of progression has to start somewhere. If any development is not rooted in a specific cultural, ideological, philosophical or metaphysical ethos, its educational processes and outcomes are open to question. It is aiming at nothing. Our human past teaches us what we should avoid and what we should pass on. In the ongoing discourse on African education, these two lessons are totally missing: our past is despised and dismissed and our present and future thereby are jeopardised. The question is: are we destined to be doormats? What causes some of us to return to the past in order to prepare for the future? Is Karl Jaspers' or Malinowski's functionalist theory of African culture, and therefore of education and development, correct? If not, how do we respond to Jahn's inquisition about ourselves as Africans, though these questions were directed to his European contemporaries? According to Jahn (1989/90: 15):

Could this [African] renewal, this [African] rationalization of tradition, in fact be the crucial period in African development, which is making it possible for the Africans to assert themselves, and to escape the fate, assigned to them by Jaspers and Malinowski, of 'becoming tools'? In other words, is that nationalism, though unhealthy for European rule, perhaps not so 'unhealthy' at all for the Africans - considering that it has already begun to bring about the emergence of independent African states? We ask what the Africans are thinking, what they are planning, what they believe, how they can survive the crisis, why the historical process fails to conform to the predicted pattern - but we pay no attention to the rational revival of the African tradition by African intelligence, or else we dismiss it as the drug of psychological self-intoxication, as 'Skokian.'

If development is about progress, and if progress is about a starting point and a continuum, then development in Africa is heading the way of its antonymous path: deterioration, disintegration if not outright stasis. This is because development in Africa seems to be

context-proof, be this spiritual, economic, social, political, intellectual or cultural. Development in Africa is always cast in deficit terms: what the African is not and should become, instead of what s/he is and wishes to become. This is because education in Africa from the colonial to the present aims at the production of the 'half-educated man' (MacMichael, 1934) who, according to Collins et. al (2000: 190), '... had sufficient knowledge to lead his people from their educational traditions but did not know whether to take them'.

Nigerian and South African education that is developmental calls for bringing together the first phase of Nigerian (Gutek, 1993) and South African (Makgoba, 1997) education so that it will begin to address developmental issues of Africa origin. This analysis will not, however, specifically address African philosophy of education as the key issue, but will concentrate on how culture affects education, how education in turn affects development, and how these should be tied to educational policy concerns in Nigeria and South Africa.

Educational practice is either about cultural transmission (Strouse, 2000) or cultural transformation (Makgoba, 1997). Be such transmission or transformation of certain skills or a body of knowledge, the end result is to make one a good person and an effective member of one's society. The individuals so equipped have the power to transform themselves and their societies. The lack of a transformative theorisation (Strouse, 2000), however, leads to a deficit educational orientation, as is the case in Africa (Bassey, 1999), and more particularly in Nigeria and South Africa, because the individuals so educated are located at the periphery of their centre(s). As Asmal and James (2001: 186) note:

Black Africans had to overcome the burden of Bantu education ... rested on a racist anthropology designed to generate cheap labor for what remained a colonially organized economy. Colored and Indians students were also treated as presumptively subordinate minorities. Though apartheid has been dismantled, its effects are still evident in a population that is desperately undereducated and, in many respects, *miseducated*.

These undereducated and miseducated individuals suffer from a lack of centredness (Asante, 1987, 1994), Asante (1994: 53-4) noting that:

The primary view held by Afrocentrists is that the most rewarding results of any analysis of culture [must or should be] derived from a centered place position, usually defined as the *place* from which all concepts, ideas, purposes, and visions radiate. Determining place, therefore, becomes one of the central tasks of the Africological scholar. Marginal positions or marginalized theorists [theories] of aesthetics are consequently called into severe question in regard to their efficacy.

One of the difficulties that African education faces is its lack of extensive resources to research into the processes of how we locate ourselves in the educative process. Sponsored research is not interested in that. As the World Bank and IMF have re-established their colonial hold on nations like Nigeria, less and less funding is made available for the kinds of research that will make indigenous knowledge part and parcel of the educative process. For the above reason, Africans are assumed students all the time (Jahn, 1989/90). While referring specifically to African aesthetics, Asante's (1994: 54) comments that '... part of the difficulty in assessing the African aesthetics in a scholarly and critical manner has been the dislocation of Africa and Africans for the past five hundred years' and also that 'the traditions of the African aesthetics in the West have been discontinuous, corrupted, and distorted'. To Asante (1994: 54), therefore, this dislocation '... has meant that the African aesthetic sensibility has had to assert itself under adverse circumstances'. These same comments hold for African education. Sometimes, because of five hundred years or more of misinformation, African education finds it too difficult to look at newer ways to solve African educational and developmental needs. As Jahn (1989/90:17) noted,

The Africa presented by the ethnologist is a legend in which we used to believe. The African tradition as it appears in the light of neo-African culture may also be a legend - but it is a legend

in which African intelligence believes. And it is their perfect right to declare authentic, correct and true those components of their past which they believe to be so. In the same way a Christian, asked about the nature of Christianity, will point to the gospel teaching 'Love thy neighbour' and not to the Inquisition. ... For several centuries Africa has had to suffer under the conception of the African past formed by Europe. As long as this was so, that European conception was 'true,' that is to say, effective. But the present and future on the other hand will be determined by the conception that African intelligence forms out of the African past.

Jahn's analysis will surprise many today as purely post-modernist questioning of grand narratives as sources of meaning creation. But that is precisely what Eze (1997: 7) was referring to as the source of European cultural 'intertextuality' on Africa. Development that is intrinsic is therefore the kind of development Africa needs: bottom-up, not top-down development based on a 'one size fits all' ideology (Gutek, 1993) like that of the IMF/World Bank (Samoff, 1999). Intellectually, such development can be achieved more easily through African intertextuality, due to their existential rootedness in the context. African intellectuals in general, but educators in particular, are called upon to exemplify this intertextual project.

The possibility of this intertextuality is what Jahn (1989/90) called neo-African culture. According to Jahn (1989/90: 18), '[N]eo-African culture appears as an unbroken extension, as the legitimate heir of tradition. Only where man feels himself to be the heir and successor to the past has he the strength for a new beginning'. The literary disciplines and their theoreticians (Eze, Mudimbe, Asante, p'Bitek, Wa Thiong'o, Achebe, Makgoba, Soyinka and a host of others) are way ahead of the educators. Much of their works have yet to inform educational practices and policies on the continent.

Socio-culturally, what do schools do? The answer to that question depends on what a given society wants to enculturate and socialise its citizens to do. It is also a question of what mandate the society hands over to its teachers to execute. If it is for active participation in the critique of such a society, more critical, constructivist and sometimes conflictual approaches will be preferred. The goal here will be that of helping learners come to terms with issues of legitimisation and reproduction of inequalities in society (Bowels, 2001; Strouse, 2001), as hidden curricula in schools and society (Apple, 1996; Giroux, 1991) are excised. This is usually the Marxist and neo-Marxist approach to schooling. If, however, the goal is to locate the individual in his or her place in society, a more functionalist approach will be needed. If socialising but not much transmission is the goal, then a progressivist and interactionist approach is the goal. Under very normal circumstances, these three approaches can solve the educative dilemma.

But what schools actually do in places like Nigeria and South Africa, based on the historicity of Bantu and colonial education and their current neo-colonial African representatives, is cultural transmission of a particular class orientation (Marks, 1986) without critical approaches (Bassey, 1999). This is because Bantu and colonial education was specifically about cultural imperialism (Carnoy, 1974) and class transplantation (Gutek, 1993). The differences were only those of degree of such imperialism and transplantation. The Nigerian and South African neo-colonialist still defined education in these narrow terms. Generally, Nigerian and South African educators, like their counterparts all over the continent, still view their jobs in terms of being gatekeepers - weeding out the undesirables, with multiples of meaningless examinations (Gutek, 1993) which even their colonial masters might have left behind.

The key element in this kind of education, as is the case with Native Americans in North America, is first about the process of deculturalisation (Spring, 1997). This is the process whereby the natives are culturally impoverished, made to hate themselves, and made to feel

that only that which is metaphysically, epistemologically, axiologically, (i.e., ethically and aesthetically) other, or outside of themselves, is worthy of respect and thereby of being learned (Asante, 1994). This deculturalisation goes as far as asking students to change their names, dress code and/or religious beliefs; punishing students for speaking their native language within the school premises; and pressuring students to avoid eating local delicacies or using African names. It has gotten to the point that some 'educated Africans' will not let their children speak any African language as a reinforcement of the school's conditioning mission. This simple linguistic act alone cuts these young ones off from a wealth of cultural capital needed for all contextual, personal and societal development.

The second process involved in Nigerian and South African education, like any other subordinate group, is that of acculturation (Pai & Aldler, 1997). This is when the desired values are administered to the students. The students here, as in the case of Nigeria and South Africa, will be required to spend an inordinate amount of time acquiring European languages and knowledges at the expense of real critical academics. Some of these European languages, like Afrikaans, are basically useless outside of their immediate context; i.e., South Africa. The most important aspect of education, that is, the enculturation (Pai & Aldler, 1997) of the Nigerian and South African student, will be left unattended. This is because the first phase of African education, the pre-colonial phase, which should have tied the students to their respective communities as a basis for critique and reform, are eliminated or easily dismissed (Makgoba, 1996, 1997). This makes educated Africans good for every other community but the African community. The educated Africans are total strangers to their own African context. This is educating for export, not for home development. In the field of technical knowledge, the educated African is given modules and textbooks based on little of what they are familiar with. Neither is there any room or provision for practical demonstration in the immediacy of such a context.

Education that is developmental will have to be education that is transformational (Bassey, 1999; Makgoba, 1996, 1997), not simply transmission- and reformation-oriented, more so when the culture to be transmitted does not contribute to the impoverishment of the everyday life of the learner or his/her community. Such an education should, first and foremost, emphasise a child's centredness in his or her learning context (Asante, 1994). This is of importance today because even within the colonialist camp it is accepted that all of our knowledge is socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The African child needs to understand the African context very well if such a child is ever to contribute to moving such a context forward. The child needs to formally study in African language in actually to acquire the sensibility of his or her people in its totality. In this way African education, like its counterparts elsewhere in the world, will be teaching African children '... to see the world from the perspective of African cultures' (Spring, 2000: 191, citing Asante, 1994). The key concern of this kind of pedagogical approach, sometimes called Afrocentric pedagogy (Spring, 2000), or Afrocentricity (Asante, 1994), is the concept of 'African centredness' (Spring, 2000: 191). While mindful of the multiple perspectives of Africa as demonstrated in Asante's works (1994), how is centredness related to the issue of development?

Development does not take place in a vacuum. If one's education is about perpetual dislocation or peripheralisation of the self, then such an education will be a deficit education, if not outright mis-education (Asante, 1994; Asmal & James, 2001; Woodson, 1993/99). It is neither life (Dewey, 1916), nor does it prepare one for future living (Counts, 1932). This life-centred perspective also overcomes or avoids what Kujufu called 'the seasoning' effect (Spring, 2000:199), this being the method by which Africans worldwide are made to be subordinate to Europeans. The first approach this method uses is to make the

slave, the colonised or the neo-colonised obey by ‘... instilling fear of the owner through threats of death and torture for disobedience’ (Spring, 2000: 199).

In the postcolonial sphere, these threats are about the withdrawal of economic life sources administered by those colonial institutions (World Bank, IMF, etc.) set up to maintain colonial agendas that continue to sap the life out of Africa as in the slave and colonial days. As Samoff (1999: 427) has accurately observed about the IMF/World Bank use of the structural adjustment tool in Africa: ‘[c]olonial rule was, among other things, a general strategy for integrating Africa into the global political economy on terms set largely in Europe. Formally managed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, structural adjustment plays a similar role.’ The second aspect of seasoning is that of making the slave, the colonised or the neo-colonised ‘loyal to the master’, even when the master is not physically present. The master’s economic blueprint, which such a master will never even think of implementing at home, will be shoved down the throats of the slave, the colonised or the neo-colonised, using a neo-colonised general or politician as is the case of Nigeria. As Eiseman (1989: 110) noted about the World Bank report on African education of 1989, ‘The World Bank strategies for African education take virtually no notice of the educational literature of the African countries, as a perusal of citations and references in the report will indicate. African education researchers will feel justly slighted’.

As Kuti (2000) pointed out, an African leader is always found to implement such a report, given the culture of bribery and the view that anything foreign must be good for the nation. While the South African leadership speaks of a gradual dismantling of apartheid to avoid white flight, their assimilationist concerns seem more at the heart of the situation than fairness. As Samoff (199: 404) has noted about the post-apartheid South Africa situation and some of the cosmetic solutions advanced by those in authority:

Clearly, repealing discriminatory laws will not in itself achieve equality of access any time soon. Nor would the discriminatory elements embedded in curriculum, pedagogy, and examinations disappear of their own accord ... to define equity as equality distracts attention from injustice instead of exploring and addressing the links between discrimination and injustice.

The third aspect is that of making the African slave, colonised and neo-colonised believe ‘in the superiority of the white race over the black race’. Everything humanly or divinely good is from the white race. Their gods are the only ones that can save, their currency the only real currency acceptable, their facts, no matter how distorted, the only acceptable facts. Then, the final aspect becomes very easy: the slaves, colonised, and neo-colonised thoroughly hate themselves. African men and women will forbid their children from speaking any African language. The Africans, like the African slaves, ‘hate Africa, and lose pride in their heritage’ (Spring, 2000:199).

The question of development is also viewed entirely as a question of material acquisition, through whatever means. Education becomes commodified and is viewed only as a gateway to stealing. No moral imperatives are considered (Freire, 1998). Teaching and learning to transgress boundaries (hooks, 1994), and to become creative for the larger good of humanity, are dismissed (Ihonvbere, 1998). There are no longer conscious efforts to make a distinction between wants and needs. The soul is sacrificed for the material.

The question of centredness (Asante, 1994; Spring, 1997) addresses this gap. Afrocentric pedagogy, particularly from Asante’s (1994) point of view, places the child in a holistic learning context. Spring (2000) pointed out the holistic approach to economics in Asante’s Afrocentric pedagogy as well. According to Spring (2000), Afrocentric pedagogy is a demonstration to the students that ‘[T]he stability of the economic system resulted in the stability of the political system and social system’. This was the case with analysing the

ancient Ghana empire, a history topic, for example. Such an approach is a good example of holistic learning, not just an 'epistemological ethnocentrism' (Mudimbe, 1988) aimed at creating deficit feelings in the learner and a sense of superiority to those who can memorise large bodies of facts contained in outdated textbooks. Asante's approach to educating Black children, also encourages what some authors call 'personal witnessing' by allowing the students to 'reflect' on what is learned as well as 'testify' or share with others what one knows. It is through this dual process that one really knows, based on the feedback one has received from those one is sharing with.

There are some philosophical issues that make centring one's students very important. As philosophy of education derives its existence from philosophy of life, the praxis of harmonising our *weltanschauung* of holistic teaching and learning calls on us to take a much closer view of what is going on in the field of African philosophy and religions. Adesanya (cited by Jahn, 1989/90) commented on the existing coherence in African philosophical conceptions, thus pointing to the work ahead for African educators if they are to make African cultures, educational processes and development come together. According to Adesanya, as cited by Jahn (1989/90: 97):

This [African/Yoruba philosophy] is not simply a 'coherence of facts and faith' he writes, 'nor of reason and traditional beliefs, nor of reason and contingent facts, but a coherence or compatibility among all the disciplines. A medical theory, e.g., which contradicted a theological conclusion was rejected as absurd and vice versa. This demand for a mutual compatibility among all the disciplines considered as a system was the main weapon of Yoruba thinking. God might be banished from Greek thought without any harm being done to the logical architecture of it, but this cannot be done in the case of the Yoruba. In medieval thought, science could be dismissed at pleasure, but this is impossible in the case of the Yoruba thought, since faith and reason are mutually dependent. In modern times, God even has no place in scientific thinking. This was impossible to the Yoruba since from the Oloдумаре an architectonic of knowledge was built in which the finger of God is manifest in the most rudimentary elements of nature. Philosophy, theology, politics, social theory, land law, medicine, psychology, birth and burial, all find themselves logically concatenated in a system so tight that to subtract one item from the whole is to paralyse the structure of the whole'.

While Adesanya was speaking specifically about the 'ethnophilosophy' of the Yorubas, as Jahn (1989/90: 97) noted, this is '... presumably also for the whole of traditional thinking in Africa, for African philosophy as such'.

### THE POST-COLONIAL PERIOD

The question since legal 'independence' becomes: What then can Nigerian and South African educators do to change the tides? Africans' indigenous cultural solutions to Africa's educational policy, developmental needs and problems have to come to terms with the results of Africans' previous 'seasoning' for self-debasement, be it Bantu education or just indirect rule and its legacy, as is the sorry case of Nigeria today (Soyinka, 1996). In the cases of Nigeria and South Africa, the militaries (Ihonvbere, 1998; Onwumehili, 1998) and returning liberation armies have institutionalised this debasement by their brute forms of governing or existing.

The World Bank and the IMF cannot help us if we cannot help ourselves (Jagusah & Dimah, 1999; Dimah & Jagusah, 2000). This is because these institutions and their reference point do not fit the African situation (Makgoba, 1997). As Mabokela and King (2001: xviii) noted about post-1994 South Africa: 'This new vision requires reconstituting all spheres of South African society. This includes the education sector'. Neither does globalisation in places where there are 'No Teacher Guide, No Textbooks, No Chairs' (Samoff, 1999: 393) solve the problems. As Mudimbe (1988: 1) rightly observed, colonialism and colonisation basically mean '... organisation, arrangement ... meaning to cultivate or to design. ... But it

can be admitted that the colonists (those settling a region), as well as the colonialists (those exploiting a territory by dominating a local majority), have all tended to organise and transform non-European areas into fundamentally European constructs’.

Many naïve African intellectuals hold to the view that the colonialists are gone, yet they do not give heed to the ‘colonising structures and marginality’ left behind that still influences the African ‘discourse of power and the knowledge of otherness’ (Mudimbe, 1988:1). In fairness, this kind of discourse is carried on more by the Africanist scholars of the cold war era. African philosophy and Afrocentric or African-centered scholarship since the 1980s in North America, for instance, has gone beyond the ethnocentricity debate to clear formulations of some of these issues. The fact is that such a discourse has yet to reach continental African ears due to the nature and the marginality as well as the politics of sponsored research in North America and Europe whereby only the research that debases Africa is sponsored. Also, mostly, white investigators are considered qualified, with a few African Americans or other blacks with similar views to whites that are sponsored to do such research. While this has hindered much of this research from reaching where it is most needed, individuals like Makgoba in South Africa are carrying on personal works at heavy personal emotional and intellectual cost that might change things in the near future.

Globalisation, just like the IMF/World Bank, while serving the neo-colonialism of today, still does not address the metaphysical concerns of what it means to be a African in the world and to be educated as such (Makgoba, 1996, 1997). African development will therefore wait for its socio-cultural motif and philosophy not only to acquire its identity (Masolo, 1995), but to apply itself equally in defining Africa’s educational goals, processes and outcomes. As the old adage of all meaningful educational theorising and best practices posits, moving from ‘the known to the unknown’ is the best way to go about educating. At the present, this is not so in the intertextuality of African culture, education, and therefore development. To reject such a cardinal principle is to place our educational and developmental needs in a state of perpetual dis-equilibration.

## REFERENCES

- Apple, M. (1982) *Culture and economic reproduction in education. Essays on class, ideology and the state*. Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Apple, M. (1996) *Cultural politics and education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Asante, M. K. (1987) *The Afrocentric idea*. Philadelphia: Temple UP.
- Asante, M. K. (1994a) *Classical Africa*. Maywood: Peoples Publishing Group.
- Asante, M. K. (1994b) Location theory and African aesthetics. In K. Welsh-Asante. *The African aesthetic-keeper of the traditions*. Westport: Praeger.
- Asmal, R. & James, W. (2001) Education and democracy in South Africa today. *Daedalus*, 130 (1), 185-204.
- Bassegy, M. (1999) *Western education and political domination in Africa: a study in critical and dialogical pedagogy*. London: Bergin & Gravey.
- Berger, P. & Luckmann, T. (1966) *The social construction of reality: a treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. NY: Anchor.
- Bowels, S. (2000). Unequal education and the reproduction of social divisions of labor. In J. H. Strouse (ed.) *Exploring socio-cultural themes in education: readings in social foundations*. Columbus: Merrill/ Prentice Hall.
- Carnoy, M. (1974). *Education as cultural imperialism*. New York: David McKay.

- Chanaiwa, D. (1980). African humanism in Southern Africa: the utopian, traditionalists, and colonialists worlds of mission educated elite. In A. T. Mugomba & M. Nyaggah (eds.) *Independence without freedom: the political economy of colonial education in Southern Africa*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIC.
- Collins R. O et. al. (1994) *Historical problems of imperial Africa*. Princeton: Markus Wiener.
- Counts, G. (1932) *Dare the school build a new social order?* New York: John Day.
- Counts, G. (1962). *Education and the foundations of human freedom*. Pittsburgh: Univ. of Pittsburgh Press.
- Delpit, L. (1995). *Other people's children: cultural conflict in the classroom*. NY: New Press.
- Dewey, J. (1916/64). *Democracy and education: an introduction to the philosophy of education*. NY: Macmillan.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. NY: Macmillan.
- Dewey, J. (1939). *Freedom and culture*. NY: Putnam.
- Dimah, A. & Jagusah, O. (2000) *Contours of structural adjustment programs and its implications on Nigerian education system – A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Comparative and International Education Society, San Antonio, March, 8-12*.
- Eiseman, T. (1989) Educational reconstruction in Africa *Comparative Education Review*, 33 (1), 110-116.
- Erickson, F. (1997) Culture in society and in educational practices. In J. A. Banks & C. A. M. Banks (eds.) *Multicultural education: issues and perspectives* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Needham Heights: Allyn & Bacon.
- Eze, E. (1997) *Post-colonial African philosophy: a critical reader* Malden: Blackwell.
- Eze, E. (1997) *Race and the enlightenment: a reader*. Malden: Blackwell.
- Freire, P. (1998) *Teachers as cultural workers: letters to those who dare to teach*. Boulder: Westview.
- Giroux, H. (1991) *Postmodernism, feminism, and cultural politics*. NY: SUNY Press.
- Gollnick D. & Chinn, P. (1998) *Multicultural education in a pluralist society*. Columbus: Merrill.
- Goodenough, W. (1987). Multiculturalism as the normal human experience. In E.M. Eddy & W. L. Patridge (eds.) *Applied anthropology in America*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) NY: Columbia UP.
- Gutek, G. (1993) *American education in a global society: internationalizing teacher education*. Prospect Heights: Waveland.
- hooks, b. (1994) *Teaching to transgress: education as the practice of freedom*. NY: Routledge.
- Ihonvbere, J. (1998) Nigerian militarization and perpetual transition. In J-G Gros (ed) *Democratization in late twentieth century Africa: coping with uncertainty*. London: Bergin & Garvey.
- Jagusah, O. & Dimah, A. (1999) The ethics of exclusion as it relates to K-12 education in Nigeria. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the MidWest Comparative and International Education Society in conjunction with the Midwest Philosophy of Education Society, Loyola University, Chicago, November, 5-6.
- Jahn, J. (1989/90). *MUNTU: African culture and the western world*. NY: Grove Weidenfeld.
- Kane, C. (1963) *Ambiguous adventure*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Kuti, F. (2000) *Suffering and smiling*. California: MCA Music of America.
- Mabokela, R & King, K. (eds.) (2001) *Apartheid no more: case studies of Southern African universities in the process of transformation*. London: Bergin & Garvey.
- MacMichael, H. (1934) Education and its results. In R. O. Collins et. al. (eds) (1994) *Historical problems of imperial Africa*. Princeton: Markus Wiener.
- Makgoba M. (1996). Makgoba writes: let's make this an African campus. *Mail & Guardian*, Nov. 17.



- Makgoba M. (1997). *MOKOKO: the Makgoba affair: a reflection on transformation*. Florida Hills: Vivlia.
- Marks, S. (1996) *The ambiguities of dependency in Southern Africa: class, nationalism, and the state in 20<sup>th</sup> century Natal*. Baltimore: John Hopkins UP.
- Masolo, D. (1994) *African philosophy in search of identity*. Bloomington: Indiana UP.
- Mudimbe, V. Y. (1988) *The Invention of Africa: gnosis, philosophy and the order of knowledge* Bloomington: Indiana U. P.
- Ndebele, N. (1994) *South African literature and culture: rediscovery of the ordinary*. NY: Manchester UP.
- Onwumehili, C. (1998) *African democratization and military coups*. Westport: Praeger.
- Pai, Y. & Adler, S. (1997) *Cultural foundations of education*. Columbus: Prentice Hall.
- Ravitch, D. (1991) Multiculturalism: e pluribus plures. *The American Scholar*, 59(3), 337-356.
- Sagan, C. (1983) *Broca's brain: reflections on the romance of science*. NY: Ballantine.
- Samoff, J. (1999) No teacher guide, no textbooks, no chairs: contending with crisis in African education. In R. F. Arnove & C. A. Torres (eds.) *Comparative education: the dialectic of the global and the local*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Schlesinger, A. (1992) *The disuniting of America*. NY: Norton.
- Soyinka, W. (1996) *The open sore of a continent*. NY: Oxford UP.
- Spreen, C. (2001) Book review. Western education and political domination in Africa by M. O. Bassey. *Comparative Education Review*, 45(1), 57-59.
- Spring, J. (1997) *Deculturalization and the struggle for equality: a brief history of the education of dominated groups in the United States*. NY: McGraw Hill.
- Spring, J. (2000) *The intersection of cultures: multicultural education in the United States and the global economy*. NY: McGraw Hill.
- Stanage, S. (1987) *Adult education and phenomenological research: new directions for theory, practice, and research*. Malabar: Krieger.
- Strouse, J. (2000) *Exploring socio-cultural themes in education: readings in social foundations*. Columbus: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Wesh-Asante, K. (ed) (1994) *The African aesthetic: keeper of the traditions*. Westport: Praeger.
- Wilson, A. (1993) *The falsification of the Afrikan consciousness*. NY: AWIS.
- Woodson, C. (1933/99) *The mis-education of the Negro*. Trenton: African World Press.

## Losing cultural diversity in Europe?

---

**Tomeu Quetgles-Pons**

University of the Balearic Islands, Mallorca [tomeu.quetgles@uib.es](mailto:tomeu.quetgles@uib.es)

*The paper deals with the evolution and present situation of some European languages, whose speakers have become minorities in their own homeland, and are threatened with extinction. The factors that have led these languages to their present status are explored. Special attention is paid to the role school systems have played and still play to replace those indigenous or historical languages with State official languages. New issues like immigration and globalisation are considered in order to discover their effects, positive or negative, in the conservation of those languages and the cultures related to them. These European experiences could be compared with those from other regions around the world and be used as a warning of the danger of losing cultural diversity through the extinction of indigenous or historical languages.*

Language, language extinction, transmission, education, globalisation

### **INTRODUCTION: DOES GLOBALISATION INCREASE CULTURAL DIVERSITY?**

The word 'multiculturalism' may come from the experience of the coexistence in the same territory of different cultures, some of them having their origin far away. Both negative and positive sides, conflict or mutual enrichment emerging from that coexistence, are important subjects of theory and research. In developed countries the presence of an increasing number of immigrants may, on one hand, displease part of the indigenous population, which then develops xenophobic and even racist attitudes, but on the other, as a reaction, some other people may see natural and cultural interbreeding as a positive evolution. In genetics the advantages of hybrids are well known. In some cases, tolerance, as a positive attitude towards alien people and cultures, may have been surpassed by a true interest in the discovery and the enjoyment of what is different. The interests in exotic food or in world music are good examples of the assimilation of alien cultural values. From this point of view it might be easy to think that, just as genetic exchange between individuals from different populations is not only possible, but also advantageous, when dealing with cultures everything likewise can be mixed. The vision of a world where populations have lived and still live apart, separated by geographical distances and all sort of barriers, natural and cultural (economic, social, political, religious, linguistic) is replaced by the image of the 'global village'.

It looks as though, after centuries and millennia where the forces of genetic and cultural fission haven been predominant, there has been a change now in the opposite direction and we are going towards genetic and cultural fusion, hybridisation and interbreeding. This is a very simple image indeed, but we will try to analyse it, instead of just putting it aside.

## GENES AND LANGUAGES

### A Sequence of Fissions

The departing point is the awareness of the natural and cultural differences among the populations in the world. Our first question is whether those differences are the result of differentiation processes from a common origin. Nobody will discuss that a general process of differentiation has taken place, nevertheless, on the issue about the origin of modern humans, controversy is guaranteed. Some anthropologists support the 'multi-regional or polycentric model'; others prefer the 'rapid-replacement' model. According to the former, the modern Africans, Europeans, Asians and Australians have come from the respective African, European, Asian and Australian *homo erectus*; for the latter, all modern humans have come from the African *homo erectus* and rapidly replaced the descendants of the others.<sup>1</sup>

On the question of place of origin, the archaeological field is divided. A number of paleoanthropologists believe that modern humans originated in Africa, from which they spread to the rest of the world beginning about kya. This is in agreement with the genetic data.<sup>2</sup>

The second question concerns the factors of differentiation that may have been operating since that common origin. Mutation, by the production of new alleles and even new genes, gives the raw material for changes, but the persistence of those changes depends on the natural selection and the random genetic drift. Useful mutations are transmitted to the next generation throughout natural selection, whereas the dysfunctional are eliminated. Whereas natural selection operates for the adaptation of the individual to his or her environment, genetic drift has no direction as it operates at random: the genes received by the new generation are a random sample of the old generation genes. Its consequences are a differentiation between the sub-populations, a trend towards an inner homogeneity in each of them and an augmentation of homozygots. Those consequences increase with time and the degree of isolation of each population: the small and the endogamic a population is, the more powerful and noticeable are the effects of genetic drift.

Therefore, small and isolated populations become more and more genetically distinct from one another.<sup>3</sup> Populations, nevertheless, as distinct as they may have become, can be linked by migrations, meaning, on one side, the import of new genes and, therefore, a possible neutralisation of genetic drift consequences; on the other side, through the colonisation of new territories, the chance to start a new population that may over time become distinct from the originating one, not only as a consequence of genetic drift, but also through the natural selection of those genes being better adapted to the new environment.

With all the populations coming from a common origin, no matter how far it can be, and looking at the impressive diversity among them at present, it is not surprising that the image of the tree is a favourite metaphor to show the genetic evolution of humankind.

The belief in some common ancestors of humankind is a very old one, perhaps not as old as those hypothetical ancestors. Side by side, there is another belief, at least in the Biblical tradition, in a common primitive language, which had been fragmented as a consequence of God's punishment. How many languages are there in the world? In a recent classification<sup>4</sup> 4,736 different languages are listed. Diversity seems to be guaranteed!

---

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Stringer, 1989.

<sup>2</sup> Cavalli-Sforza et al., 1994, p. 155.

<sup>3</sup> "Throughout the Paleolithic, population numbers remained small, leaving greater chance for random genetic drift to produce considerable diversification." (Idem p. 156).

<sup>4</sup> Vid. Ruhlen, 1987.

The nineteenth century produced not only the theory of the evolution of species, but also research into the evolution of languages: from a 'backwards' process starting with the study of present similarities between languages and groups of languages, ancient common proto-languages were suggested. The generation of romance languages from Latin has been a quite recent process: the language spoken in Italy in the *Quattrocento* was simply called *volgare*, i.e., the language spoken by normal people, as opposed to Latin, the language of culture, being taught at schools and used at universities. Every other language having evolved from Latin was given the same name in each of those new *vulgair* languages. Using the example of Latin and the new romance languages, similar relationships were established between groups of modern languages and their respective proto-languages: proto-germanic, proto-slavic and so on, the difference with Latin being that those new proto-languages were not so well known because they had never been written.

At a higher level, new relationships were suggested among those groups of languages and the existence was suggested of an older proto-proto-language, Indo-European, being the ancestor of most groups of languages from India to Western Europe. The place where the Indo-European was born is still a matter of controversy. Following similar methods, almost all languages of the world have been classified into 17 families,<sup>5</sup> Indo-European being just one of those. Pushing the research a little further, the existence of superfamilies has been suggested, but no single common origin of languages has been deduced yet:

The real difficulty is that human language evolves so fast that the differentiation between presently extant languages is extreme, and it is difficult to establish similarities between them.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, Greenberg, in a lecture given in 1976 at Stanford University, was the first to suggest one universal root: 'tik', meaning 'one', 'finger' (index finger, usually) or 'hand'. The research for new universal roots was launched and has never stopped.<sup>7</sup>

With major difficulties and even more controversies than those in the field of paleoanthropological research, the classifications of languages are adopting the tree shape. They may not reach a common trunk, but they are able to show consecutive levels of ramification, showing the common origins of languages and groups of languages and the distances having appeared among them. So we have genetic trees of human populations and trees of human languages, but even more striking than the existence of both trees is the correlation between them.<sup>8 9</sup>

### Correspondence between trees

The hypothesis of a strong correlation between peoples and languages helped to select the sample of populations around the world to classify the genetic material for the study of the

---

<sup>5</sup> Idem.

<sup>6</sup> Cavalli-Sforza et al., 1994, 96.

<sup>7</sup> Bengtson & Ruhlen 1993.

<sup>8</sup> "The central question is, why should there be any congruence between genetic and linguistic evolution? The main reason is that the two evolutions, in principle, follow the same history, which can be represented, in a simplified or sometimes oversimplified way, as a sequence of fissions. In two or more populations that have separated, there begins a process of differentiation of both genes and languages (...) The average rates and modes of change can be quite different for genes and languages (and indeed they are). Of course, it is reasonable to expect that later events, like language replacements and/or gene substitutions, may blur the picture; but our conclusion was that they do not blur it entirely. (Cavalli-Sforza et al., 1994, 380-381).

<sup>9</sup> "There are in fact good a priori reasons why cultural and genetic pools have close similarities: both genetic and cultural contacts take place by the same routes; they respond to the same geographic and ecological barriers; and they also can influence each other, in the sense of mutual reinforcement. (...) Important correlations are thus created between genetic pools on one side and sociocultural pools on the other." (Idem, 23-24).

history and geography of human genes. If both trees, the genetic and the linguistic, come from the same process of fissions, what should strike us is not the correspondence between them, but the fact that the correspondence is not perfect.

The first reason for this partial lack of correspondence is that the linguistic tree is not as complete as the genetic one, because languages evolve very fast, as compared to genetic evolution, and they do not leave fossil vestiges behind them, but for a few cases where it is possible to go back to ancient writings. In a short period of time the changes brought about by language evolution may cause serious troubles of intercommunication between old and modern versions of the same language<sup>10</sup>, and modern languages generated from the same old language. Similarities fade out and it becomes more and more difficult to find out the common origin.<sup>11</sup> Cavalli-Sforza compares the processes of creating new languages and new species:

Languages evolve much faster than genes; two languages may become mutually unintelligible in a thousand years or less because of progressive differentiation. Formally, this is similar to the origin of two different species in biology. Speciation involves the loss of interfertility, in some measure the genetic equivalent of the loss of communication, but speciation takes on the order of a million years.<sup>12</sup>

The second reason is that the present populations whose genes have been used to study the genetic tree are not just the result of a pure fission process; all through the history and the prehistory there have been important interactions between populations. Those interactions have brought about their own genetic and linguistic consequences: *gene replacement* and *language replacement*.

On the genetic side, neighbouring populations may have substantially changed their genetic maps by interbreeding.<sup>13</sup> This interrelationship might be compared to a fusion process, as the opposite to a fission process. Nevertheless, on the linguistic side, language replacement can hardly mean any kind of fusion, but simply replacement of one language by another:

Languages tend to behave more like a unit, and be replaced as a whole, if at all. One can, and usually does, notice contributions to the lexicon from neighbours, but the structure of language is more stable, and certain specific groups of words are more highly conserved.

It is also possible that extensive gene replacement has occurred through prolonged contact and gene flow from neighbours, without language change.<sup>14</sup>

### **Relationship between gene replacement and language replacement**

A population can interrelate with others in many different ways, from individual migration to collective expansion. It is useful to establish a difference between the expansion of nomads and farmers. The former, due to their essential mobility, can travel easily; their way of life gives them clear advantages in case of a violent confrontation with farmers, but the demographic and cultural effects of their interrelation tend to be quite superficial and

---

<sup>10</sup> “Los romanos no entenderían las lenguas que descienden del latín y hoy se hablan en Europa.” (Cavalli-Sforza, 1996, p. 141).

<sup>11</sup> “The real difficulty is that human language evolves so fast that the differentiation between presently extant languages is extreme, and it is difficult to establish similarities between them.” (Cavalli-Sforza et al., 1994, p. 96).

<sup>12</sup> Idem p. 23-24.

<sup>13</sup> “In general, the gene pool tends to reflect rather faithfully the numerical contribution from the two parental groups. Thus genetically intermediate populations can be generated, with all possible degrees of admixture.” Idem, p. 99.

<sup>14</sup> Cavalli-Sforza et al., 1994, p. 99.

transitional.<sup>15</sup> The latter, when they increase in their homeland, must expand to the nearer cultivable lands in order to increase the production; their expansion often takes the shape of a series of waves and its effects, both demographic and cultural, are usually more permanent.

The genetic effect of a demic expansion depends above all on the numerical relationship between immigrants and natives. The expanding population may replace totally or partially the genoma of the native population and may spread its language, replacing eventually the indigenous one, especially when demographic and cultural advantages are clear. Greenberg<sup>16</sup> showed that Bantu languages expanded alongside agriculture from a nucleus between Cameroon and Nigeria, and Renfrew<sup>17</sup> suggested the hypothesis that neolithic farmers expanding from present day Turkey spread Indoeuropean languages.

The expansion of genes and languages together, being very natural, is not the only kind of expansion. There can be language replacement without gene replacement and vice versa. At present, Hungarians have less than 10% of genes of Uralic origin, but Hungarian is an Uralic language: Magyar invaders might be a minority (20%) as compared to the indigenous population (80%), but being stronger and better organised, they managed to impose their language.<sup>18</sup>

One more example is that the genetic effect brought about by Turkish conquerors might not have been very important, but Greek was totally replaced by Turkish, an Altaic language, as a consequence of the fall of Constantinople.<sup>19</sup>

In both cases of language replacement without a parallel gene replacement, it seems that

the genetic changes accompanying the replacement of a language, usually by invasion followed by imposition of the language of the new masters may be difficult to detect genetically because the new masters are often numerically a small fraction of the whole population they dominate (...) Moreover, a language can be replaced by an entirely different one in as little as three generations as a result of political events leading to domination by a new people.<sup>20</sup>

It becomes clear, then, that languages can be replaced through processes neither demographic nor democratic.

### **Gene transmission and language transmission**

Genetic transmission proceeds from parents to offspring always; cultural transmission, instead, may use many different ways.

Cultural transmission from parents to children is, certainly, a process very close to genetic transmission. Some people call this kind of process 'vertical'. The traditional way of language transmission goes from parents to children, from mother to children mostly, hence 'the mother tongue'. No wonder that language transmission proceeds alongside genetic transmission: not only the language, but also any other cultural feature being transmitted

---

<sup>15</sup> "In a Europe weakened by the crisis of the Roman Empire, the Visigots rapidly moved from the Ukraine to Rumania and then to France, Spain and Africa, but their kingdoms left few genetic or linguistic traces. The barbarian invasions that were responsible for the end of the Western Roman Empire probably had little genetic effect on the genetic structure of the European populations." (Idem, p. 110-111).

<sup>16</sup> Greenberg (1955, 1963)

<sup>17</sup> Renfrew (1987)

<sup>18</sup> Vid. Cavalli-Sforza et al., 1994, p. 119-120.

<sup>19</sup> "en Turquía (el lugar más alejado conquistado de forma duradera por los nómadas del este asiático) no se encuentra huellas genéticas claras de los conquistadores de origen mongol, pero los análisis realizados hasta ahora no son suficientes." (p. 128).

<sup>20</sup> Cavalli-Sforza et al., 1994 p. 23-24.

basically from parents to children, as happens in non-proselytising religions. The transmission of cultural traits seems to mimic the pattern of historical variation of genes.

The intervention of 'non vertical' mechanisms of cultural transmission may decrease the correlation between cultural and genetic features. In every process of language replacement we can always find the powerful intervention of some 'non vertical' mechanisms which may eventually cause a 'mutation' in the 'vertical' transmission, as happens when the language a generation pass on to their children is not the one they received from their parents.

It is quite obvious that one cannot transmit a language he or she does not speak. A monolingual can only transmit one language, the one he or she speaks. Therefore in an isolated monolingual population, with no interrelationship with any other population, its language can evolve, but it can never be replaced by a foreign language. Any process of language replacement requires consequently the dissolution of the monolingualism of the people whose language is about to be replaced.

We have seen that immigration is perhaps the most natural way to put in contact two populations and two languages; but, whereas genes mix easily, languages are not so easy to mix into a new language. It is fairly easy to borrow words and sounds, but almost impossible to fuse two different linguistic systems into a new one. Whereas genetic mix tends to reproduce exactly the proportions of ancestral populations, languages do not mix themselves as easy as genes. Instead, genetically mixed populations tend to keep only one of the two languages of the ancestral populations.<sup>21</sup>

When parents speak different languages, the children can easily learn both, if each of them speak his or her own language; but it is not as easy for those children, becoming parents, to pass on both languages to their own offspring. We know that the proportion of speakers of each language in a generation has a very important role in the transmission of each language, but this role may be not the decisive one. The chance a language has to be transmitted into the next generation does not depend only on the number or the proportion of speakers of the former generation. Non demographic factors may start or accelerate processes of language replacement. I would like now to pay specific attention to those factors and their incidence.

## LANGUAGE REPLACEMENT

### Non demographic factors in language replacement

When two speakers (A and B), each with a different language (LA and LB), want to communicate verbally, they have the following alternatives:

1. Using (speaking/writing and understanding/reading) the same language:
  - being the language of only one of them (LA, for example);
  - being the language of neither of them (LC, for example).
2. Using different languages.

In the first situation, at least one of the speakers must be able to use the other's language; in the second, the speaker does not need to use the other's language, but both must be able to use a third language which is not theirs; finally, in the third situation, each speaker needs only a passive knowledge of the other's language. Among these three situations, only the first allows one, and only one, of them to be completely monolingual; the other speaker must have learnt to use, actively and passively, the other's language. This is the most unbalanced

---

<sup>21</sup> Vid Cavalli-Sforza et al., 1994, p. 148-149.

relationship between speakers with different languages: the most unbalanced yet the most common. The point is: who must learn the other's language?

A powerful reason to have to learn a foreign language is being oneself a foreigner in a foreign territory whose population speaks that language, especially when one is alone and cannot communicate with anybody else. The traveller, and especially the immigrant, would benefit from learning the language spoken by the naturals. At the end of the day, this situation would correspond to an extremely unbalanced demographic relationship, which could become less unbalanced as more immigrants come with the same language. When those immigrant pools get stronger and maybe self-sufficient, the need to use the language of the naturals decreases. It may happen that the immigrants outnumber natives.

There may be chain reaction immigrations: people leaving their territory under the pressure of a foreign population, may themselves press on the population of the territory they reach. Just to give an example,

the conquest by the Norman William the Conqueror in 1066 (...) was to be significant, though the conventional Scottish view of Scottish history has paid little attention to it. For one thing, it sent hordes of English, and English-speaking refugees fleeing from the North of England into Scotland. With them they brought their language, their particular local version of English. All languages vary from region to region, and theirs was much different from that of London and the South. It was an older form of English, and it established itself in the Lowlands of Scotland.<sup>22</sup>

It was this development that produced, eventually, the Highland-Lowland divide in Scotland. By the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, John of Fordoun was writing of the "two languages spoken among the Scots, the Scottish and the Teutonic (i.e. Gaelic and Scots)". The last King of Scots to speak Gaelic was probably James IV (1488-1513).<sup>23</sup>

In order to prove that population figures are not the most important factor in language replacement, it is necessary to make the difference between immigrants and conquerors. We have already seen that some conqueror peoples (Magyars, Turks), even if there were outnumbered by the indigenous population, imposed their languages. What it is more important here is the relation of power, of dominance. When the conquerors become the rulers, the dominated population do learn their language, sooner or later. The establishment of the foreign power can stimulate the immigration of more people from the same origin and with the same language, which will diminish, even more, the native language.

The panorama of languages around the world is very complex indeed, not because of languages themselves, but for the intrusion of others factors being alien to the original realities of peoples and their languages. If linguistic reality is complex, that is because of peoples overrunning others, of conquests and colonisations. The linguistic reality is but the consequence of domination relationships; just to show that the history of mankind is, unfortunately, a history of inequalities and humiliations.<sup>24</sup>

Emigration means displacement to an outer territory; conquest means converting an outer territory into an inner one. That former foreign territory becomes part of the conqueror's ownership. Some European Union member states include territories that were conquered or annexed not so long time ago. We are not interested in politics itself, but on the effects of domination on language replacement.

### **Non demographic language replacement**

Very often domination comes from victory at war. We would like to mention but a few cases related to countries of Western Europe. The county of Toulouse was annexed by the French

---

<sup>22</sup> Hanley, 1986, p. 17.

<sup>23</sup> Grant & Docherty, 1992, p. 145.

<sup>24</sup> Tusón, 1999, p. 88.



crown after the ‘crusade’ against the Cathars (1209-1244); Avignon was given to the papacy at the same time, but after several attempts (1663, 1668, 1768, 1774) it was eventually (1790) annexed by the French crown. After the War of Hundred Years (1337-1453), the French crown annexed Guyenne (1453). The southern part of the kingdom of Navarre was conquered (1512) and annexed (1515) by the kingdom of Castille. Rosselló, Conflent and Upper Cerdanya (i.e., the part of Catalonia at the northern side of the Pyrenees) were given to France (1659) after a long war between Castille and France in which Catalonia was involved. The kingdom of France, again after several attempts, annexed the principality of Orange (1713) and the county of Nice. At the end of the international war for the succession to the last Spanish Habsburg (1702-1714), the kingdoms of Aragon, Valencia, Mallorca and the principality of Catalonia were annexed by the kingdom of Castille. That annexation was justified in a royal decree (1707) for

the crime of rebellion (...) of the population, (...) the fair right of conquest, the attributes of royal sovereignty and (...) and the usefulness of reducing all the kingdoms of Spain under the uniformity of the same laws, usages, customs, courts (...) which must be those of Castille, so universally praised.<sup>25</sup>

Sometimes territories were exchanged more or less peacefully between monarchs: Charles V gave Bourgogne to the crown of France, when François I gave up his claims in Italy (1529).

A good marriage has proven to be as effective as a war: some pretty large territories haven been given as dowries, like Provence. When its count Raymond Berenguer V died without a male heir, his daughter Beatrice brought the county as a dowry when she married Charles d’Anjou (1246). From then, through the Anjou family, the kings of France became also counts of Provence. Claude de Bretagne, heiress of the duchy of Brittany, married the king of France (1514), François I, who a few years later persuaded her and the États de Bretagne to accept the Act of Union (1532), according to which the duchy of Brittany was annexed ‘perpetually’ by the French crown.

Another way for a territory to lose independence is when its leader or its king becomes the king of another kingdom. This is the ‘united kingdom’ way. When a Welsh nobleman called Henry Tudor, after defeating Richard III at Bosworth Field, was crowned king of England (1485), it looked as though Wales, after a long history of hostility with England since the Norman conquest (1066), might improve its political status; it went the other way round actually. The Act of Union (1536) meant for Wales the total loss of independence: Welsh representatives joined the English parliament.

In 1603 James VI of Scotland, as the heir of his Aunt Elizabeth I, was crowned king of England. Instead of ruling his two kingdoms from Edinburgh he moved south to London. One century later (1707) the Treaty of Union incorporated the Scottish parliament into the Westminster parliament.

When Henry III of France died (1584), Henry III of Navarre, king of the last independent Occitan kingdom and head of Huguenots, became the heir of the French crown. He was recognised by the États généraux (1589) when he was converted to Catholicism. Then Henry, III of Navarre and IV of France decreed the union of both crowns. The compilation of Navarre laws was passed in 1608 and was ratified by Louis XIII in 1611, but the population complained against a reduction of their freedom. Nevertheless the compilation was written in Bearnais, which stood as official language until the French revolution (1789).

---

<sup>25</sup> “delicte de rebel·lió i la manca al jurament de llurs habitants (...) el just dret de conquesta, l’atribut de la sobirania règia i (...) la conveniència de reduir tots els regnes d’Espanya a la uniformitat d’unes mateixes lleis, usos, costums, tribunals (...) que hauran de ser els de Castella, tan lloables en tot l’univers.” (Primer Decret de Nova Planta, 1707).

Conquests, dowries, acts of union: there is still another way of annexing a territory: just buying it! We can give one example at least: Humbert II, before dying with an heir, sold the Dauphiné (1339) to Charles V, king of France.

Once different territories and their inhabitants have passed under the ownership of a single monarch, the attempts of centralisation and 'uniformisation' would start immediately. In a few cases, the reaction brought about by those attempts succeeded in recovering independence, as in the case of Portugal, after a long war with Castille (1640-1668). All those annexations, no matter which way, were brought about without asking at all the populations living in those territories. They were just subjects.

### **Becoming a minority in the own homeland**

Those annexations, besides being non democratic, share one more feature: the annexed territories and their populations become smaller, in relation to the others, not only in size and number, but also in political and cultural status. The main factor of that cultural 'minoritisation' was the imposition of the conqueror's language.

The advent of a foreign dynasty may introduce or push forward the use of its own language. That is exactly what happened in Catalonia with the Castilian dynasty of Trastamara. In some cases, a queen speaking a foreign language has proved to be very instrumental to put aside the use of the natural language:

It took Malcolm III (Canmore or Big-head) three years to get himself elected High-King, (...) he later married Margaret of England, who had fled to Scotland after the Norman Conquest. It was to be a fateful step. It was under her influence that Norman French began to replace Gaelic at Court and English and Norman clerics were brought in to high office in the Church, which was induced to change from the Celtic to the Roman rite. Malcolm's sons continued this policy after his death, after a brief Celtic reaction under his brother Domhnall Bàn (Shakespeare's Donalbain).<sup>26</sup>

Most times, especially as a consequence of a war, it is not enough to make a foreign language more fashionable and spread it from the court, but to make the language of the winners the official one for every public use. The victory of Isabella at the Castilian civil war started the 'taming and castration of Galicia'<sup>27</sup> in retaliation for the opposition of Galician church and nobility. Many of its members fled to Portugal; those who stayed were sent to fight the Moors in Granada; their castles were demolished and the abbeys were put under the rule of their Castilian counterparts; Castilian Inquisition was introduced and the clerks were enforced to write everything in Castilian. Galician language was relegated to the family use in the countryside.

In 1539 François I of France issued the edict of Villers-Cotterêts banning the public use of any language but *vulgaire françois*. People still discuss whether his aim was to put an end to Latin or to prevent the use of the other languages spoken in the different territories own by the French crown: Occitan, Breton, Basque. The aim can be discussed, but the effects are absolutely clear: the decadence of those languages and their reduction to rural and oral *patois*.

Back to Spain, almost two centuries later, when the Bourbon pretender, with the support of the kingdom of Castille, won the Succession war (1702-1714) he suppressed the regimes of the kingdoms of Aragon, Mallorca, Valencia and the principality of Catalonia, supporters of the Habsburg pretender. Consequently the Catalan language, which had never ceased to be

<sup>26</sup> Grant & Docherty, 1992, pp 147-148.

<sup>27</sup> "la doma y castración de Galicia" (Jerónimo de Zurita).

the official language of Catalan speaking countries institutions, was replaced by Castilian language. It may have been some kind of a reaction against that imposition, as years later (1768), Charles III issued a new royal decree enforcing the use of Castilian as the only official language in public administration and school education.

It was not enough to humiliate those old European native languages by preventing them from improving their situation or by getting them back to the status of oral, familiar and rural languages. The next step would be to prevent their speakers from being monolingual. Just to give an example, let us see what happened in Scotland:

The highland clans, many of them remained Catholic, were regarded as disaffected in politics and religion, and their whole way of life, language included, as a threat to the stability of the state. The language was increasingly referred to as 'Irish' (...) This may have been an attempt to define Gaelic as an alien language (...) It is at this point that we find the *Scottish* state taking active measures against Scotland's oldest language, and using education as one of its main instruments. An act of Privy Council of James VI (1616) concerning the establishment everywhere of the 'trew religioun' declares that "the vulgar Inglishe tounge shall be universallie plantit, and the Irishe language, which is one of the cheif and principall causis of the continewance of barbaritie and incivilitie amongis the inhabitants of the Heylandis and Islandis, shall be abolisheit and removit". Since, the Act went on, there was no means so powerful as schools for this "princilie porpois", a school should be established in every parish "where convenient means may be found for enterteyning a schoole."<sup>28</sup>

From a majority point of view, 'minority' languages were associated with barbarity, incivility and even heresy.

In Protestant countries the main aim of basic education was twofold: teaching people to read the Bible and to learn the dominant language, the one into which the Bible had been conveniently translated. In protestant countries there were translations into German (Luther 1522), English (Tyndale 1523, Coverdale 1535 and 'King James' 1611), Danish (Vinter & Mikkelsen 1524, 'Christian III' 1550), Swedish (1526, 'Gustav Vasa' 1541), Dutch (van Liesveldt 1526), Swyzerdeutsch (1530), French (Olivetanus 1535, Calvin 1546), Icelandic (Thorlaksson 1584), but there were no translations into Gaelic, Frisian, Norwegian, as these territories were under foreign rule. There was no Scots translation:

There was no Scots version (of the English Bible); there was no need, since the two languages were mutually comprehensible to a large extent, rather like the modern Scandinavian languages. But this began to reinforce the tendency, begun by the removal of the Court, to regard English as the language of power, authority and culture.<sup>29</sup>

What makes an astonishing exception to the rule is the translation into Welsh by Bishop William Morgan (1588), which certainly helped to improve the status of Welsh as a written language.

In the Catholic countries there were versions into their dominant languages only to counteract a former Protestant translation, but there was no any interest at all to encourage people to read the Bible. In fact it was forbidden. Catholic 'religious instruction' was mostly based on sermons, very often in the mother tongue of the congregation, together with paintings, images and processions. This was 'audio-visual' teaching based on 'baroque technologies' as opposed to the literacy strategies of the Reformation.

<sup>28</sup> Grant & Docherty, 1992, p 149.

<sup>29</sup> Grant & Docherty, 1992, pp 153-154

## Language replacement and school

Public schools systems only started in the nineteenth century in most Western European countries. Only their dominant languages were compulsory as a subject and as the medium of instruction. Minority languages were forgotten or forbidden. Many minority languages speakers can tell stories about being punished or humiliated for speaking their mother tongue. New generations from minority backgrounds learned not only to speak, but also to write, the dominant language. Many parents decided not to pass their mother tongue on to their children, but rather the dominant language they themselves had learnt at school, being persuaded that this would offer better chances to their children. Compulsory education, conscription in the state army, and emigration from rural and peripheral homelands, also decreased the number of minority languages speakers.

### Still alive!

In fact, what is really amazing is that minority languages like (more or less from North to South of Western Europe) Saami, Gaelic, Irish, Welsh, Breton, Frisian, Basque, Galician, Rotoromanic, Occitan and Catalan, can still be alive. Until when?

The Enlightenment tolerated religious denominations other than the established one in most European countries. Minority languages did not benefit from the same tolerance. Citizens might adopt different religious denominations, but they must all speak the same language, the official language of the state. No wonder we ended up with the naive vision of those simple associations between states and languages: France – French, Spain – Spanish (it used to be called ‘Castilian’), England (meaning Britain or U.K.) – English, and so on. These dominant languages are exactly the official languages at the European Union level in our days. This means, in fact, that the European Union accepts the loss of cultural or, at least, linguistic diversity operated across the centuries by its member states.

It is true that the European Union funds the *European Bureau of Lesser Used Languages*, meaning all the European languages which do not have the status of being the only official language in any member state. Nevertheless it must be said that some mainly oral dialects of state official languages are placed just at the same level of the old languages which were replaced centuries ago.

It is also true that more recently a new category of languages, called *Less Widely Taught Languages*, has been created by the European institutions. These are all the official languages of member states, except English, German and French. The former are supposed to be less widely taught abroad, than the latter. It is clear, therefore, that some governments of European States are far more concerned with the teaching of their official language abroad, than with the survival of the other languages historically spoken in the territories presently under their rule, which sometimes can only be taught at primary and secondary school as optional subjects. 2001 is the European Year of Languages, but looking at the list of projects funded by the European Union, it has proved to be very difficult to find any ‘minority languages’ in it.

Nevertheless, in the last decades the awareness of the threat of extinction has helped the present speakers of languages subject to replacement to become more active in order to avoid being the last speakers of their own language. In some countries ‘minority languages’ are still only offered as optional subjects (France), but bilingual education and immersion programs, are a reality in other countries, especially those where some devolution started in the last quarter of the twentieth century: Spain (Basque Country, Catalonia, Galicia, Valencia and the Balearic Islands), in the United Kingdom (Wales, Scotland). Belgium is probably in advance having created new federal structures based on linguistic communities

(Flemish, French and German-speaking), each of those communities having its own Ministry of Education with full powers over its school system.

In Spain, since the restitution of a democratic parliament and the passing of a new constitution (1978), there is a language (according to the Spanish Constitution its name should be Castilian) being the official one at state level and other languages (Basque, Catalan, Galician) being co-official in their own territories. Castilian language is compulsory in all Spanish schools; Catalan, Basque or Galician are also compulsory in the schools of their respective territories. The experience of the last twenty years proves that the knowledge of these three languages has improved, especially when they are used as medium of instruction, but their social use has not, at least significantly. Learning a language at school does not mean necessarily its use in the local context. The present situation of Irish in Ireland is there to prove it.

The last big issue is emigration from other countries, both from inside and outside Europe. Which language do immigrants learn when they are faced with two co-official languages? The answer is very simple: the dominant one. What happens is that more foreign languages are heard down the street in our cities, but it becomes more and more difficult to hear the historical language of that place. It may be that some languages are spoken in more different places around the world, but some other languages are threatened with extinction in their own homelands, even in the European Union. Is it possible to recover democratically what was lost non-democratically?

### CONCLUSION: A UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF LINGUISTIC RIGHTS<sup>30</sup>

If the present situation in the European Union is mostly the consequence of non-democratic domination mechanisms having operated at the country level, what will happen when they operate at a global level? Is it naïve to ask for linguistic rights, for any kind of rights, in a world driven by market forces? Populations should have the right to keep their historical or pre-historical languages. Individuals should have the same right to stay monolingual in their linguistic community as well as many chances to become multilingual, in order both to protect and to be open to cultural diversity.

### REFERENCES

- Bengston, J. D. & Ruhlen, M. (in press). Global etymologies. In *On the origin of languages: studies in linguistic taxonomy*. M. Ruhlen (ed.) Stanford UP.
- Cavalli-Sforza, L. L., Menozzi, P. & Piazza, A. (1994) *The history and geography of human genes*. Princeton UP.
- Cavalli-Sforza, L. L. (1996) *Genes, pueblos y lenguas*. Barcelona: Crítica.
- Conferència Mundial de Drets Lingüístics (1996) Declaració universal de drets lingüístics. Barcelona.
- Grant, N. & Docherty, F. J. (1992) Language policy and education: some Scottish-Catalan comparisons. *Comparative Education*, 28 (2).
- Greenberg, J. H. (1955) *Studies in African linguistic classification*. Bradford: Compass.
- Greenberg, J. H. (1963) *The languages of Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana UP.
- Hanley, C. (1986) *History of Scotland*. London : Bison Books.
- Jones, S., Martin, R. & Pilbeam D. (eds.) (1992) *The Cambridge encyclopedia of human evolution*. Cambridge UP.
- Ruhlen, M. (1987) *A guide to the world's languages*. Stanford UP.
- Stringer, C. B. (1989) Neanderthals, their contemporaries, and modern human origins. In *Hominidae*. G. Giacobini (ed.) pp. 351-355. Milan: Jaca Book.
- Tusón, J. (1998) *Històries naturals de la paraula*. Barcelona: Editorial Empúries.
- Tusón, J. (1999) *Mal de llengües*. Barcelona: Editorial Empúries.

<sup>30</sup> Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights. Barcelona 1996.

## The impact of university education on conceptions of learning: A Chinese study

---

**Kam-cheung Wong**

University of Hong Kong [kcwong@hkucc.hku.hk](mailto:kcwong@hkucc.hku.hk)

**Qiufang Wen**

University of Nanjing [wenfq@public1.ptt.js.cn](mailto:wenfq@public1.ptt.js.cn)

*The study seeks to understand the conceptions of learning held by Chinese students in Hong Kong and Nanjing, and in particular how these conceptions are affected by students' university education. In defining conceptions of learning, the six categories of learning developed by Marton et al (1993, 1996) were adopted. The findings of the study show that despite similarities, the Chinese learners in Hong Kong and Nanjing were indeed different in their conceptions of learning. The Nanjing University students were not only more homogeneous in their views but were more sophisticated than their counterparts from the University of Hong Kong. This is contrary to the assumption in many empirical cross-cultural studies that Chinese learners from different places are homogeneous. The study also established that university education has some adverse impacts on the conceptions of learning of students, a concern that requires more understanding with additional data and analysis.*

conceptions of learning, Chinese learners, cross-cultural studies of learning,  
university education, Hong Kong

### THE PARADOX OF THE CHINESE LEARNER

A large volume of cross-cultural studies on learning in general and on Chinese learners in particular has been published in the past two decades. It has been demonstrated empirically that the way in which learners can handle learning situations is contingent on what learning means to them (Marton and Booth, 1997). There seem to be systematic cultural differences in how learning is conceptualised (Saljo, 1979). These systematic cultural differences may be partially accounted for by differences in academic achievement. A series of cross-cultural studies carried out recently (Cortazzi and Jin, 2001; Kember, 1996; Lee, 1996; Marton, Dall'Alba and Tse, 1996; Marton, Watkins and Tang, 1997; Marton, Wen and Nagle, in press; Mok et al, 2001; Torney-Purta, 1990; Watkins, 1996; Watkins and Biggs, 1996, 2001; Wong, 1998, 2001) show that the superiority of Chinese learners observed frequently is due both to the cultural emphasis on schooling and their different views of what it takes to learn.

Watkins and Biggs (2001) summarised the issue from two perspectives. First, students from Confucian-heritage cultures (CHC) such as China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Korea and Japan, are taught in classroom conditions that, in terms of western standards, cannot be conducive to good learning: large classes, expository methods, relentless norm-referenced assessment, and harsh classroom climate. Yet CHC students out-perform western students, at least in science and mathematics, and have deeper and more meaning-oriented, approaches to learning. Second, a particular aspect of this paradox is the relationship

between memorising and understanding. CHC students are perceived as passive role learners, yet show high levels of understanding.

The Chinese have a long cultural tradition and the language has a great impact on how the Chinese learn. Unlike English, which is a phonetic language with words indicating sounds but not meaning, the Chinese language is ideographic with visual properties. A Chinese character is the basic unit of a word which carries meaning but not sound, and each character is monosyllabic (Marton and Wen, 1999; Smith, 1975).

A feature of the Chinese language lies in its need for two characters to form a compound, which increasingly replaces the character as the basic unit of a word. It has been found that pairs of combining monosyllables make the reading of Chinese musical and easy to memorise. Many Chinese poems were written in rhymes by combining monosyllables and unified forms. Memorisation with chanting was developed into a distinct feature by traditional scholars in learning Chinese (Ip, 2000). Today, in schools in mainland China, particular in the primary and junior forms, chanting (reading in chorus) is still a common feature.

Research findings show that Chinese readers are able to adopt varied perspectives in reading a text. For them the dichotomy in learning lies between mechanical memorisation and memorisation with understanding, not between memorisation and understanding as is so often assumed by western scholars. Initial empirical findings also indicate that the Chinese are able to intertwine memorisation and understanding (Marton, Dall'Alba and Tse, 1996; Wen and Marton, 1993).

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework of the present study is based on the learning framework established by Marton et al (1993, 1996) who saw learning as:

- A. Increasing one's knowledge
- B. Memorising and reproducing
- C. Applying
- D. Understanding
- E. Seeing something in a different way
- F. Changing as a person (Marton et al, 1996: 70)

According to Marton et al (1996), conceptions D to F are concerned with the constitution of meaning, while A to C do not have this emphasis. D to F are closely related to understanding with A to C less so. These six categories could be seen as having a hierarchy from least to most sophisticated, with A to C representing essentially a quantitative view of learning, while D to F focus on the constitution of meaning, and therefore may be viewed as qualitative (Biggs and Watkins, 2001). Furthermore, conception B is limited to a memorisation view of learning which is narrow. Marton et al (1996) suggested using conception B as a testing ground for Chinese learners. If Chinese learners are indeed rote learners, one might expect a high incidence of this conception among them.

### METHODOLOGY

In order to understand the possible impact of university education on students' conceptions of learning the design will involve both Year One and Year Three students. In order to address the assumption that Chinese from different places are homogeneous in their conceptions, the study will involve students from two Chinese cities, Hong Kong and

Nanjing. Hence the study has two comparative aspects: changes in time (as a function of studying at university) and differences in place.

The nature of the inquiry does not require a representative sample for analysis. Hong Kong University (HKU) and Nanjing University (NJU) are both major comprehensive state universities. To further reduce complexity, the choice of university students was confined to Humanities faculties.

The study seeks to understand the influence of secondary school education on the conceptions of learning of the students and the impact of university education. The timing of the questionnaire surveys was set when the first year students entered the university and then at the beginning of their third year of education at both universities.

### **The questionnaire**

Largely based on the six categories of conceptions of learning of Marton et al (1993, 1996), as well as the local situation in Hong Kong and Nanjing, a self-composed questionnaire in Chinese was designed. A pilot test was conducted using the cohort of 1997 involving some 50 university students each from Hong Kong and Nanjing in order to review the content of the questionnaire. Subsequently, the wording of a few items was revised for clarity and consistency, and two items were deleted. The final conceptions that we investigated are:

1. Learning is like putting things in one's pocket. At the beginning there is little knowledge in the pocket. With time passing by, the amount of knowledge in the pocket increases.
2. The aim of learning is to remember the content of textbooks word by word, sentence by sentence.
3. Learning is being able to reproduce what teachers have taught.
4. The key to learn a subject well is to understand the content of textbooks.
5. Learning is the ability to apply knowledge and skills to practice.
6. If you have really grasped the knowledge of a subject, you should be able to apply the knowledge to solve problems.
7. 'Learning for application' is an important purpose of learning.
8. If you haven't learned what you planned to learn, the action involved in the process should still be regarded as learning.
9. If you haven't remembered what you planned to learn, the action involved in the process should still be regarded as learning.
10. If you haven't understood what you planned to learn, the action involved in the process should still be regarded as learning.
11. Learning is being able to grasp a way of perceiving a problem from a new perspective.
12. Learning should improve the quality of a whole person.
13. The key to learning is whether you can perceive the outside world through what you have learned.
14. If the emphasis is only placed on understanding, but not on remembering, you cannot learn what you've planned to learn.
15. If you encounter something you do not understand but can remember, you can understand it gradually later.
16. You can remember things you have understood without deliberate effort.



Each of the sixteen items was represented on a Likert-type scale where students were asked to indicate preferences from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The grouping of the questions follows the categories of learning of Marton et al (1996):

Items 1 to 3: Increasing one's knowledge, memorising and reproducing

Items 5 to 7: Learning as applying

Items 8 to 10: Learning as a process

Items 11 to 13: Seeing things in different ways and improving oneself

Items 4 and 14 to 16: Memorisation and understanding

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In Fall 1998 the questionnaire survey was conducted during the first day of registering first year students at HKU. There were some 1221 first year students in the Humanities Faculties. Since it was not possible to differentiate the students, all of them were distributed a questionnaire and 1098 students returned it completed, a response rate of 90 per cent. Two years later the same questionnaire was sent to those who responded to the 1998 survey. The students were asked to send back the completed questionnaire to the research team using an enclosed pre-paid reply envelope. Those who did not return the questionnaire after two weeks were sent a follow-up reminder with the questionnaire again attached. Another follow-up reminder was sent to those who did not respond. The final number of students returning their completed questionnaire stood at 533.

At NJU, the students were approached to answer the questionnaire while they were attending classes in early September, 1998. A total of 837 students completed the questionnaire. Two years later the same procedure was followed as at HKU, with 622 students of the original 837 returning the questionnaires. Although the students came from different departments of the two universities, once they had attempted the questionnaire they were grouped under one institution for analysis. No attempt was made to separate them into different departments for purposes of analysis.

Table 1 shows the demographics characteristics of students in the two universities. Significantly more females than males completed the questionnaire at HKU (83.1%) than at NJU (49.0%). This may partly be due to the fact that, since 1995, there have been increasingly more females than males (52% vs 48%) entering tertiary institutions in Hong Kong. By 2000 the difference had risen to 55 per cent vs 45 per cent. The percentage of females in Humanities Faculties was even higher. This is not the same situation in NJU where there are still more males than females.

**Table 1. Demographic characteristics by University**

|                     | HKU |        | NJU |        | P-value |
|---------------------|-----|--------|-----|--------|---------|
|                     | N   | (%)    | N   | (%)    |         |
| Student gender      |     |        |     |        | <0.001  |
| Male                | 90  | (16.9) | 317 | (51.0) |         |
| Female              | 443 | (83.1) | 305 | (49.0) |         |
| Mother's education  |     |        |     |        | <0.001  |
| University or above | 20  | (3.8)  | 341 | (54.8) |         |
| Form 3-5            | 150 | (28.1) | 155 | (24.9) |         |
| Form 1-3            | 174 | (32.6) | 73  | (11.7) |         |
| Primary or below    | 189 | (35.5) | 53  | (8.5)  |         |
| Father's education  |     |        |     |        | <0.001  |
| University or above | 67  | (12.6) | 235 | (37.8) |         |
| Form 3-5            | 153 | (28.7) | 157 | (25.2) |         |
| Form 1-3            | 176 | (33.0) | 114 | (18.3) |         |
| Primary or below    | 137 | (25.7) | 116 | (18.6) |         |

Another interesting phenomenon is the higher education attainment of the parents in NJU. Some 54.8 per cent of the mothers of the NJU students had attained university education, compared to only 3.8 per cent of their counterparts at HKU. The difference with fathers' education was less marked but still significant, with 37.8 per cent of the NJU fathers obtaining university education compared to only 12.6 per cent at HKU. Perhaps it is not surprising given that NJU ranks third in the hierarchy of university in China, coming after Tsinghua and Peking Universities in Beijing. NJU is one of the few most elitist universities.

### Conceptions of learning: an analysis of item scores

Item scores for conceptions of learning held by students on entry to university are shown in Table 2, which records the mean scores in rank order for 1998. A student with a higher score was more likely to agree with the statement than one with a lower score (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree).

**Table 2. Mean scores of conceptions of learning in rank order for students on entry in 1998**

|     | HKU Mean |      |     | NJU Mean |      |
|-----|----------|------|-----|----------|------|
|     | 1998     | 2000 |     | 1998     | 2000 |
| B5  | 4.21     | 4.16 | B7  | 4.49     | 4.17 |
| B12 | 4.17     | 4.09 | B5  | 4.41     | 4.08 |
| B1  | 4.03     | 4.05 | B6  | 4.33     | 4.08 |
| B13 | 3.94     | 3.85 | B10 | 4.31     | 4.20 |
| B6  | 3.92     | 3.86 | B11 | 3.84     | 3.81 |
| B7  | 3.91     | 3.80 | B13 | 3.73     | 3.69 |
| B4  | 3.79     | 3.66 | B4  | 3.43     | 3.07 |
| B11 | 3.74     | 3.70 | B8  | 3.37     | 3.51 |
| B8  | 3.63     | 3.71 | B14 | 3.36     | 3.13 |
| B16 | 3.35     | 3.31 | B1  | 3.30     | 3.45 |
| B14 | 3.17     | 3.23 | B9  | 3.01     | 3.30 |
| B9  | 3.14     | 3.44 | B10 | 2.86     | 3.04 |

Table 2 shows that HKU and NJU students had a different pattern of conceptions of learning. The highest mean scores of conceptions of learning of HKU students were for items B5, B12 and B1, followed by B13, B6 and B7 whereas at NJU the highest mean items were B7, B5, B6 and B12, followed by B11 and B13. On the other end, the lowest mean scores for HKU in 1998 were B2, B10 and B3, followed by B15 and B9 whereas at NJU the lowest mean scores were for items B2, B3, and B15, followed by B16 and B10.

The highest mean scores of the HKU students suggest they oscillated among the different conceptions of learning, from learning as applying (B5) to the more sophisticated views of learning as improving the person (B12), to the view of learning as increasing knowledge (B1). In other words the HKU students seemed to have more diverse conceptions of learning. The NJU students' views on learning exhibited a clearer pattern. The highest mean scores of NJU students showed that they most valued learning as applying (B7, B5 and B6), following by learning as seeing things differently and improving oneself (B12, B11 and B13).

When examined from the lowest mean scores, students from both HKU and NJU expressed similar dislike of the ideas that learning is remembering the contents of textbooks (B2) and that learning is reproducing what the teachers have taught (B3). Again, the NJU students were clearer in their choice as they gave these two items the lowest scores. The next lowest scores for NJU students were given to B15 and B16 which showed that they did not think

memorisation alone was sufficient for learning (B15), or that one could remember things without deliberate effort, even with understanding.

In summary, on entering university, the NJU students were more homogenous in their conceptions of learning and exhibited a clearer pattern of beliefs, while the HKU students were more diverse. At the item score level the NJU students most valued learning as applying, followed by learning as improving oneself and seeing things differently. While the HKU students held similar priorities, the results were less clear-cut. Neither group agreed with the narrower conceptions of learning as memorising and reproducing, although the NJU students seemed less forceful in expressing this view. These findings support the conclusion that Chinese learners from different places are far from homogeneous.

### Factor analysis

Factor analysis was employed to explore the factor structure of student conceptions of learning using SPSS. The Hong Kong data were analysed first, and then used as the anchor point for comparison. The initial factors were extracted by principal components analysis with an eigenvalue greater than one, and were rotated by oblimin rotation. The analysis resulted in a six-factor solution. However this was not a satisfactory solution since item B15 formed a factor by itself, and B1, when joined with other items, caused difficulty in interpretation. Similar difficulty was encountered with the NJU data. The factor analysis was re-run after removing these two items. The analysis then yielded a five-factor solution, accounting for 53.9 per cent of the total variance, as shown in Table 3. To be consistent with the Hong Kong sample, items B1 and B15 were excluded from the factor analysis of the Nanjing data, which then yielded the same five-factor solution as the Hong Kong data, these factors accounting for 55.9 per cent of the total variance. The five-factor solution was then accepted for the analysis.

**Table 3. Factor analysis of conceptions of learning for the 1998 data**

|          |   |     | HKU            |             |                         | NJU            |             |                         |
|----------|---|-----|----------------|-------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------------------|
|          |   |     | Factor loading | Eigen-value | Reliability coefficient | Factor loading | Eigen-value | Reliability coefficient |
| Factor 1 | Memorising, reproducing and understanding       | B2  | 0.626          | 1.285       | 0.3135                  | 0.740          | 1.872       | 0.2857                  |
|          |   | B3  | 0.671          |             |                         | 0.697          |             |                         |
|          |   | B4  | 0.603          |             |                         | 0.516          |             |                         |
| Factor 2 | Applying  | B5  | 0.707          | 2.473       | 0.6095                  | 0.694          | 2.290       | 0.6720                  |
|          |   | B6  | 0.691          |             |                         | 0.815          |             |                         |
|          |   | B7  | 0.738          |             |                         | 0.816          |             |                         |
| Factor 3 | Learning Process                                | B8  | 0.756          | 1.679       | 0.5606                  | 0.780          | 1.872       | 0.6649                  |
|          |   | B9  | 0.797          |             |                         | 0.803          |             |                         |
|          |   | B10 | 0.641          |             |                         | 0.747          |             |                         |
| Factor 4 | Seeing things differently and improving oneself | B11 | 0.667          | 1.096       | 0.4993                  | 0.707          | 1.185       | 0.4580                  |
|          |   | B12 | 0.721          |             |                         | 0.372          |             |                         |
|          |   | B13 | 0.646          |             |                         | 0.729          |             |                         |
| Factor 5 | Memorisation and understanding                  | B14 | -0.859         | 1.008       | 0.1457                  | -0.711         | 1.114       | 0.2269                  |
|          |   | B16 | 0.386          |             |                         | 0.678          |             |                         |

Table 3 also reports the reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) and Eigenvalue for each scale. The reliabilities of Factors 1 and 5 in both the HKU and NJU data were quite low. This indicates the possible different direction of students' responses to the questions in these two factors (B2, B3 and B4 in Factor 1; B14 and B16 in Factor 5). The negative sign of B14 in the loading of Factor 5 gives further indication of this. The size of the Eigenvalue shows that Factor 2 explained most variance, followed by Factors 3 and 1.

The five factors generated by the factor analysis were matched against the conceptions of learning established by Marton et al (1993, 1996), as shown in Table 4. Factor 1, which includes items B2, B3 and B4, is an interesting combination. Items B2 and B3 refer to a narrow conception of learning, confining it to remembering the content of textbooks and reproducing what teachers have taught. But B4 is different. It refers to learning as understanding of textbook content and therefore is more sophisticated in its conception of learning than B2 and B3. In the item score analysis, we have seen already that the HKU and NJU students did not agree with B2 and B3, but accepted B4. Marton et al (1996) discovered that, for Chinese learners, memorisation and understanding were not separate entities. The Chinese learners memorised with understanding. This is a long established Chinese tradition. This factor also suggests an intertwining of memorisation with understand, thus demonstrating continuity of tradition and supporting the Marton et al (1996) findings.

**Table 4. The five factors of conceptions of learning**

---

|  |
|--|
| <b>Factor 1: Learning as Dependent on Textbooks and Teachers</b>   |
| B2. Learning is to remember the content of textbooks word by word, sentence by sentence.   |
| B3. Learning is to reproduce what teachers have taught.  |
| B4. The key to learn a subject well is to understand the content of textbooks.   |
| <b>Factor 2: Learning as Applying</b>  |
| B5. Learning is to apply knowledge and skills to practice.   |
| B6. If you have really grasped the knowledge of a subject, you should be able to apply the knowledge to solve problems.            |
| B7. 'Learning for application' is an important purpose of learning.  |
| <b>Factor 3: Learning Process</b>  |
| B8. If you haven't learned what you planned to learn, the action involved in the process should still be regarded as learning.     |
| B9. If you haven't remembered what you planned to learn, the action involved in the process should still be regarded as learning.  |
| B10. If you haven't understood what you planned to learn, the action involved in the process should still be regarded as learning. |
| <b>Factor 4: Learning as seeing thing differently and improving oneself</b>  |
| B11. Learning is to grasp a way of perceiving a problem from a new perspective.  |
| B12. Learning is to improve the quality of a whole person.   |
| B13. The key to learning is whether you can perceive the outside world through what you have learned.                              |
| <b>Factor 5: Memorisation and understanding</b>  |
| B14. If the emphasis is only placed on understanding, but not on remembering, you cannot learn what you've planned to learn.       |
| B16. You can remember things you have understood without deliberate efforts.   |

---

Further reference to Table 4 shows that Factor 2 includes B5, B6 and B7 which reflect a view of learning as applying, an intermediate concept in the hierarchy of learning suggested by Merton et al. Factor 3 (B8, B9 and B10) refers to learning processes. Students from both HKU and NJU regarded learning processes as important to learning outcomes. Factor 4 consists of items B11, B12 and B13 which touch on the more sophisticated conceptions of learning as seeing things differently (B11, B13) and improving oneself (B12). Factor 5 includes items B14 and B16 which indicates slightly different orientation in the conception of learning. B14 emphasises the importance of memorisation, while B16 the importance of understanding. The structure of items B14 and B16 put them in opposing positions.

The factor structure of conceptions of learning based on the 1998 data were further confirmed by EQS using the 2000 data. The comparative fit indices for the HKU and NJU data were 0.950 and 0.944 respectively, which are both greater than 0.9. This indicates a considerable fit of the factor model to the 2000 data. The reliability coefficients for the five factors are shown in Table 5. The reliability of all the factors was generally improved when compared with the 1998 data, except for Factor 5.

**Table 5. Reliability analysis of the five factors in the 2000 data**

|          |   | Reliability coefficient |        |
|----------|---|-------------------------|--------|
|          |   | HKU                     | NJU    |
| Factor 1 | Memorising, reproducing and understanding       | 0.4425                  | 0.4275 |
| Factor 2 | Applying  | 0.6329                  | 0.7273 |
| Factor 3 | Learning processes                              | 0.6153                  | 0.7283 |
| Factor 4 | Seeing things differently and improving oneself | 0.5826                  | 0.6911 |
| Factor 5 | Memorisation and understanding                  | 0.2587                  | 0.1443 |

Table 6 shows a comparison between the years 1998 and 2000 for each university. At HKU, significant differences in Factors 2, 3 and 4 were found. On Factor 2, learning as applying, and Factor 4, learning as seeing things differently and improving oneself, the mean scores in 2000 were lower. The two years of university education appear to have had an adverse effect on how HKU students perceived these aspects of learning. On Factor 3, learning process, the mean scores were significantly higher, the HKU students appearing to regard learning more as a process than as a learning outcome as they progressed through university.

For NJU, significant differences in Factors 2, 3 and 5 were found. On Factors 3 and 5, there was an increase of mean scores in favour of both, but on Factor 2 the mean scores decreased. This implies that NJU students expressed more support for learning processes and learning as memorisation and understanding, but less support for the idea of learning as applying. Compared with HKU, the NJU students seemed to suffer less adverse effects on their conceptions of learning.

The differences between the two universities in 1998 and 2000 are exhibited in Table 7. The differences for Factor 1, learning as remembering and reproducing, and Factor 2, learning as applying, were significant in both 1998 and 2000 between HKU and NJU. This suggests that HKU students differed genuinely from those at NJU in these two conceptions of learning.

**Table 6. Factor scores for conceptions of learning between years**

|          | HKU  |        |      |        |         | NJU  |        |      |        |         |
|----------|------|--------|------|--------|---------|------|--------|------|--------|---------|
|          | 1998 |        | 2000 |        | p-value | 1998 |        | 2000 |        | p-value |
|          | Mean | (SD)   | Mean | (SD)   |         | Mean | (SD)   | Mean | (SD)   |         |
| Factor 1 | 2.77 | (0.58) | 2.79 | (0.62) | NS      | 2.30 | (0.57) | 2.27 | (0.64) | NS      |
| Factor 2 | 4.01 | (0.59) | 3.94 | (0.61) | <0.05   | 4.41 | (0.60) | 4.11 | (0.72) | <0.001  |
| Factor 3 | 3.13 | (0.64) | 3.29 | (0.67) | <0.001  | 3.08 | (0.74) | 3.29 | (0.78) | <0.001  |
| Factor 4 | 3.95 | (0.46) | 3.88 | (0.52) | <0.01   | 3.96 | (0.58) | 3.90 | (0.65) | NS      |
| Factor 5 | 3.09 | (0.71) | 3.04 | (0.75) | NS      | 2.72 | (0.79) | 3.00 | (0.78) | <0.001  |

<sup>NS</sup>Not significant at 0.05 level

But the low mean scores on Factor 1 for students of HKU and NJU suggests that neither group of students agreed with these conceptions of learning. However, between the students of the two places, the NJU students appear to have agreed less. Another difference in conceptions of learning between HKU and NJU students is shown in Factor 2, learning as applying. The NJU students embraced this conception significantly more than the HKU students in both 1998 and 2000. For Factor 5, learning as memorisation and understanding,

there was a significant difference in mean scores between HKU and NJU students in 1998. In 2000, however, there was only a rise of mean scores for NJU students on this factor. The gap became narrower and the significant difference disappeared in 2000.

**Table 7. Factor scores for conceptions of learning between universities**

|          | 1998 |        |      |        |         | 2000 |        |      |        |         |
|----------|------|--------|------|--------|---------|------|--------|------|--------|---------|
|          | HKU  |        | NJU  |        | p-value | HKU  |        | NJU  |        | p-value |
|          | Mean | (SD)   | Mean | (SD)   |         | Mean | (SD)   | Mean | (SD)   |         |
| Factor 1 | 2.77 | (0.58) | 2.30 | (0.57) | <0.001  | 2.79 | (0.62) | 2.27 | (0.64) | <0.001  |
| Factor 2 | 4.01 | (0.59) | 4.41 | (0.60) | <0.001  | 3.94 | (0.61) | 4.11 | (0.72) | <0.001  |
| Factor 3 | 3.13 | (0.64) | 3.08 | (0.74) | NS      | 3.29 | (0.67) | 3.29 | (0.78) | NS      |
| Factor 4 | 3.95 | (0.46) | 3.96 | (0.58) | NS      | 3.88 | (0.52) | 3.90 | (0.65) | NS      |
| Factor 5 | 3.09 | (0.71) | 2.72 | (0.79) | <0.001  | 3.04 | (0.75) | 3.00 | (0.78) | NS      |

<sup>NS</sup>Not significant at 0,05 level

The two years of university education seem to have had both positive and adverse effects on some students in their conceptions of learning. At the factor level, students at both HKU and NJU valued learning as a process even though the learning outcomes might not be forthcoming. Their views in relation to this factor rose significantly after two years of university education. But there was a clear adverse effect of university education on some conceptions of learning. After two years of university education, the HKU students became significantly less supportive of the more sophisticated learning conceptions of seeing things differently and improving oneself. Also affected was the conception of learning as applying. Both HKU and NJU students significantly reduced their acceptance of this view in 2000.

## CONCLUSIONS

Using the six categories of conceptions of learning established by Marton et al (1993; 1996) as a reference point, this study sought to understand differences between students' beliefs and conceptions on learning and how these differences are affected by their experiences of university education

At the time of entering university, the students at NJU had acquired a clearer and more consistent pattern of conceptions of learning than their counterparts at HKU. Their views on learning as applying were very prominent, and they also valued highly the more sophisticated conceptions of learning, namely learning as seeing things differently and improving oneself. Students of both universities rejected a 'memorising and reproducing' conception of learning, but the NJU students as a whole rejected this view more strongly. What is disturbing is the finding that the HKU students retreated from these more sophisticated conceptions of learning after two years of university education. A less alarming but significant finding is that students from both HKU and NJU retreated from a conception of learning as applying after two years of university education. These findings warrant further investigation into the life and learning experiences of Chinese students in different university settings.

## REFERENCES

- Biggs, J.B. and Watkins, D.A. (2001). Insights into teaching the Chinese learner. In D.A. Watkins and J.B. Biggs (eds) *The Chinese learner: cultural, psychological and contextual influences*, HK: CERC and ACER: 276-300.
- Cheng, K.M. and Wong, K.C. (1996). School effectiveness in East Asia: concepts, origins and implications, *Journal of Educational Administration*. 34 (5): 32-49.
- Cortazzi M. and Jin, L. (2001) Large classes in China: 'Good' teachers and interaction. In David, A. and Biggs, J.B. (eds) *Teaching the Chinese learner: psychological and pedagogical perspectives*. HK: CERC: 115-134.

- Ip J.Y. (2000). *The poems of Han and Ye period*. Taipei, Laureate Literary Company.
- Kember, D. (1996). The intention to both memorize and understand: another approach to learning? *Higher Education*. 31: 341-354.
- Kember D. and Gow, L. (1991). A challenge to the anecdotal stereotype of the Asian learner. *Studies in Higher Education*. 16 (2): 117-128.
- Lee, W. O. (1996). The cultural context for Chinese learners: conceptions of learning in the Confucian tradition. In D.A. Watkins and J.B. Biggs (eds). *The Chinese learner: cultural, psychological and contextual influences*. HK: CERC and ACER: 25-42.
- Marton, F. (1994). Phenomenography. In T. Husen and T. N. Postlethwaite (eds) *The international encyclopedia of education*. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Marton, F., Dall'Alba, G. and Beatty, E. (1993). Conceptions of learning. *International Journal of Educational Research*. 19: 277-300.
- Marton, F., Dall'Alba, G. and Tse, L.K. (1996). Memorizing and understanding: the keys to paradox? In D.A. Watkins and J.B. Biggs (eds). *The Chinese learner: cultural, psychological and contextual influences*. HK: CERC and ACER: 69-84.
- Marton, F., Wen, Q. and Nagle, A. (1996). Views on learning in different cultures: comparing patterns in China and Uruguay. *Anales de psicologia*, 12(2): 123-132.
- Marton, F. and Booth, S. (1997). *Learning and awareness*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates.
- Marton, F., Watkins, D.A. and Tang, C. (1997). Discontinuities and continuities in the experience of learning: an interview study of high school students in Hong Kong. *Learning and Instruction*, 7: 21-48.
- Marton, F. and Wen, Q. (1999). The cultural roots of Chinese conceptions of learning. Unpublished ms.
- Mok, I., Chik, P.M., Ko, P.Y., Kwan, T., Lo, M.L., Marton, F., Ng, D.F.P., Pang, M.F. Runesson, U. and Szeto, L.H. (2001). Solving the paradox of the Chinese teacher? In David, A. and Biggs, J.B. (eds) *Teaching the Chinese learner: psychological and pedagogical perspectives*. HK: CERC: 161-180.
- Saljo, R. (1979). Learning in the learner's perspective I: Some common-sense conceptions. Reports from the Department of Education, University of Goteborg, No. 76.
- Schmidt, W., et al. (1996). *A summary of characterizing pedagogical flow: An investigation of mathematics and science teaching in six countries*. London: Kluwer.
- Smith, R.J. (1975). *China's cultural heritage: The Qing Dynasty, 1644-1912*. SF: Westview Press.
- Tang, C. (1996). Collaborative learning: the latent dimensions in Chinese students' learning, in D.A. Watkins and J.B. Biggs (eds). *The Chinese learner: cultural, psychological and contextual influences*. HK: CERC and ACER: 183-204.
- Torney-Purta, J. (1990). International comparative research in education: its role in educational improvement in the US. *Educational Researcher*, 19: 32-35.
- Watkins, D. (1996). Learning theories and approaches to research: a cross-cultural perspective. In D.A. Watkins and J.B. Biggs (eds). *The Chinese learner: cultural, psychological and contextual influences*, HK: CERC and ACER: 3-24.
- Watkins, D. A. and Biggs, J.B. (eds). (1996) *The Chinese learner: cultural, psychological and contextual influences*, HK: CERC and ACER.
- Watkins, D. A. and Biggs, J.B. (2001). The paradox of the Chinese learner and beyond. In D.A. Watkins, and J.B. Biggs (eds). *Teaching the Chinese learner: psychological and pedagogical perspectives*. HK: CERC: 3-26.
- Watkins, D. A. and Biggs, J.B. (eds). (2001) *Teaching the Chinese learner: psychological and pedagogical perspectives*. HK: CERC.
- Wen, Q. and Marton, F. (1993). Chinese views on the relation between memorization and understanding. Paper presented at the 5th European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction Conference in Aix en Provence.
- Wong, K.C. (1998). Culture and moral leadership in education. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 73 (2): 106-125.
- Wong, K. C. (2001). Culture and educational leadership. In Wong, K.C. and Colin, E. (eds) *Leadership for quality schooling: international perspectives*. London: Routledge/ Falmer: 36-53.