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Teaching and Learning History in Primary Schools: Pedagogical Shifts, Complexities and Opportunities

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Abstract: From 2011 the teaching and learning of History will be expanded into all primary schools (Kindergarten – Year 6) throughout Australia under a National Curriculum, including the formal preschool/kindergarten year. History as one of four core subjects will replace current studies of society and environment curriculum taught in primary schools across. The curriculum implementation process will involve a cultural and pedagogical shift as primary teachers make adjustments to the discipline of History. This article begins with an outline of the current curriculum context. An analysis of the New South Wales Human Society and Its Environment and the Australian Curriculum: History Draft Consultation documents follows. The findings indicate that the History Draft Consultation lacks clear guidance for teachers and has a number of shortcomings compared to the NSW HSIE syllabus. There are opportunities, however, for primary teachers because of the broad similarities of content knowledge in both documents and the embedded historical concepts in the NSW syllabus document.

Keywords: History, Primary Education, Pedagogical Strategies, Discipline Knowledge, Curriculum Implementation

The National History Curriculum Context in Australia

BEGINNING IN 2011 in Australia, all states and territories will phase in the new National curriculum. The National curriculum is a major initiative in Australian education. The funding arrangement for independent and government schools will be dependent upon compliance with this curriculum, and the teaching and learning of History will be mandatory for all school learners from K-10, with an elective component for years 11-12. As one of four core subjects making up the new curriculum, History will be given greater importance in Australian schools than ever before (Reitano & Bourke, 2009).

The History curriculum is one of the four core subjects along with English, Mathematics and Science that will be implemented in the first phase of the National curriculum in 2011. The History curriculum initiative, however, raises particular concerns as it is premised on a different view of curriculum content and discipline knowledge in primary education to that currently held. English, Mathematics and Science currently exist as stand alone Key Learning Areas in all States of Australia, whereas History does not. There was a time when History was a stand-alone subject in Australian schools. From the 1980s, however, in most states of Australia it was incorporated into a broad field generally referred to as studies of society and environment and thus reduced to one strand. ‘Studies of society and environment’ is used here as a generic identifier for syllabuses in different educational jurisdictions in Aus-

tralia, for example, Human and Society and Its Environment (HSIE) K-6 (New South Wales); Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE)(Queensland); Humanities (Victoria).

Scholars such as Fullan (2007) suggest there is much to examine in new curriculum implementation. The focus of this paper is to investigate the first draft of the National Curriculum document - the curriculum as plan(ned). This article continues with a review of the literature pertinent to this topic. The literature review was necessary for generating the questions, which have guided an analysis of the current Human and Society and Its Environment (HSIE) syllabus and the proposed National History curriculum document. The purpose of this paper is to examine primary curriculum materials so as to provide insights about past and current understandings of SOSE/HSIE and History teaching and learning. The State of New South Wales (NSW) was selected for analysis as two of the three authors of this paper work in this State, and two of the three authors have teacher education program experience of the HSIE curriculum.

The Human Society and Its Environment Syllabus (New South Wales Board of Studies, 2003) and the Australian curriculum: History (K-10) (Draft consultation version 1.0.1, 2010) have been analysed using content analysis. In particular, we examined the proposed Australian Curriculum: History guided by two main questions:

1. What are the discipline knowledge possibilities and issues for Primary school educators?
2. What are the classroom pedagogical possibilities and issues for Primary school educators?

Following the findings of the analysis, the article concludes with suggestions of future research possibilities.

Literature Review

Historical Literacies and the Politicised Nature of Curriculum

In the development of the new National History Curriculum, debates have included discussions about what constitutes “significant” knowledge and, hence, what is worthy of selection for study over other possible areas of content. Certainly framers of the first draft have had to reach a decision on that central issue. The content – what is to be taught – can be as at least as important as the methods outlined for teaching. The choices that are enshrined in curriculum reflect the assumptions of our society, or of those sections of our society empowered to decide such matters.

Doherty (2008) demonstrates that school curriculum must be understood as complex and multidimensional so as to ensure rich analyses and discussions about consumption and enactment. In relation to History curriculum and History syllabus documents, Doherty describes the selection and legitimization of certain knowledge as what, as a nation, we are to remember, and what, as a nation, we are to forget.

The Draft Consultation version 1.01 of the Australia Curriculum: History (K-10) clearly states the importance of students developing historical literacies in the study of History. According to Taylor (2005, p. 39), “historical literacy is about social and political empowerment.” History teaching in schools is an examination of past events through the development of specific historical literacies. What we teach and how we teach about our past especially in terms of the sensitive issue of indigenous peoples is of special importance in Australia in

the twenty-first century. There are inherent difficulties of knowing the past, especially about what constitutes historical knowledge, that is, what actually happened in the past, what historians claim they know about the past, what teachers of History know about the past, and what students know about the past. Furthermore, the people who made it no longer exist, so there is no opportunity to interview or check answers. Small pieces of evidence remain, however, that represents a fraction of what really existed. As Hoodless (2008) notes, studying the past is like looking through a keyhole – “We can focus on the detail, even in great depth, but we see only a tiny part of the whole fabric of society and life at that time” (p. 3).

The language of History contains the specialist terminology of the past, the language of historical time, and the language of historical process (Husbands, 2001). The classroom is not the ideal setting for students to reconstruct and understand the past and its populations since “it lacks the colour of the theatre, the dusty atmosphere of the archive or the architectural brilliance of the castle” (Husbands, 2001, p. 88). The words of teachers, students, actors of the past, documents, videos, Internet, and textbooks, then, become the principal means of developing historical understanding. Researchers such as Taylor (2005) argue that History teachers should use their curriculum outcomes to establish literacy benchmarks in developing historical literacy. Taylor, for example, identifies the following attributes: events of the past; narratives of the past; research skills; historical concepts; ICT understandings; making connections; contention and contestability; representational expressions; moral judgement; applied science in History; historical explanation; and language of History. For further studies on historical literacies see Seixas (1996); Clemitshaw (2002); Taylor & Young (2004); Hoepfer (2006); Hoodless (2008).

Questions arising from this aspect of the review, which are pertinent to any examination of History curriculum, include: What is History? What knowledge is selected and legitimised in the History curriculum? What is the language of learning in History? (knowledge and understanding, skills, values, outcomes, indicators). To what extent is the past, present, and/or future emphasised in History? What is the place of History in the school curriculum? Should History be taught as a discipline or should it be taught as a strand within the SOSE/HSIE curriculum? How are students to be engaged in History?

Pedagogical Approaches in the History Classroom

A review of the literature highlighted the strong links between the pedagogical approaches employed by the History teacher and historical literacy outcomes of learners. At a broad level, elements of historical literacy indicate strong links to what Marsh (2008) called the social reconstructionist approach to teaching and learning, where the focus is on social change, inquiry-based learning, links to the real world experiences of students, and integrated multi-disciplinary approaches.

Inquiry-based learning, for example, is a way of learning and teaching that allows the natural curiosities of students to engage in thinking that is logical, rational, and sustainable. There is an emphasis on the active role of the learner in developing understanding and making sense of information. Allied to this process of learning is the importance of collaborative learning among the students and the teacher in which all are actively engaged in formulating questions and addressing complex issues. Most recent History syllabuses usually emphasise the ‘inquiry’ approach. The following are the products of inquiry learning: Understanding (facts, concepts, generalizations); thinking processes (knowledge, comprehension,

application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation); research skills; social skills; and affective processes (University of New England, Faculty of the Professions, School of Education, 2010).

Effective History teachers are capable of facilitating inquiry-based learning in their classrooms, and typically they will have deep content knowledge, and the wisdom of practice that allows the natural curiosities of students to engage in thinking that is logical, rational, and sustainable (Gudmundsdottir and Shulman, 1987). Studies in expertise in teaching by researchers indicate significant differences between the effective and novice teacher. For example, Sanders, Borko and Lockard (1993) found that experienced secondary teachers teaching outside their field, often resorted to behaviour similar to that of novice teachers – more time was spent on planning and preparation, and less on topic importance, content knowledge structure and student background knowledge. Despite reliance on their pedagogical knowledge from other content areas, they had difficulty in dealing with content specific student ideas.

Wilson, Shulman & Richert (1987), for example, found in their study that some secondary novice teachers could see beyond survival and behaviour management, and seek to generate representations of subject matter that would facilitate understanding in their students. One of their teachers planned to introduce Julius Caesar with the theme of moral conflict. He used the scenario of the first officer on the *Starship Enterprise* (an airship in a popular science fiction television series) having to grapple with the decision of arresting the Captain of the airship, just as Caesar's closest supporters were in a dilemma as to what to do with their leader. The secondary novice teacher transformed his understanding of empathy – an element of historical literacy (Hoepper, 2006) - into an activity that tapped into the interests and intellectual understanding of his students.

Questions arising from this aspect of the review include: What are the pedagogical implications of teaching History? What processes and conceptual knowledge exist in History curriculum at a primary and early childhood level?

Teacher Identity

Identity formation is an ongoing process of evaluation of one's lived experiences (Kerby, 1991). As Cooper and Olson (1996) note, through self-evaluation, one's identity is continually informed, formed, and reformed as individuals develop over time and through interaction with others. When change is apparent, teachers feel threatened because change will impact on their self-image and, consequently, their personal identity. They will often develop strategies to protect themselves against being forced to see themselves in another way (Nias, 1989). Nevertheless, teachers can further develop, adjust, or even dramatically change their self-image.

The idea of teacher identity is key in understanding teachers' abilities to embrace change. Teacher identity should be not seen as one fixed identity but as unstable and fragile and indeed, a 'story' about 'self' where the individual is continually integrating events that occur in the external world and sorting them into the individual's biography. There are inevitable tensions at play in the narrative as the teacher struggles to create a professional self as a result of integration and conflict of ideas (Alsup, 2006). The professional and personal knowledge is shown in teaching practice and can be understood in teachers' own stories as they seek to find out who they are.

The nature of pedagogical content knowledge, content knowledge, and curriculum knowledge in History teaching are powerful contributing factors that currently shape secondary history teacher identity (Tambyah, 2009). Connelly and Clandinin (1999) state that teachers' professional knowledge is the "personal practical knowledge" held by "teachers as knowers: knowers of themselves, of their situations, of children, of subject matter, of teaching, of learning" (p. 1). It is generally agreed that teachers require a deep understanding of the subject area, that is, an understanding that is characterized by a knowledge of many concepts and their relationships (Shulman, 1987).

Bennett and Carre (1993), argue that teacher education programs should allow for self-diagnosis and evaluation of subject matter knowledge. Bennett and Carre furthermore argue for independent learning units in case of insufficient subject matter knowledge because of the critical importance for teachers to possess this knowledge so that they can change programs, develop elective tasks, explain things at a high quality level, and diagnose students' understandings and misconceptions adequately. Researchers such as Zeichner (1983) and Schon (1987) stress the importance of reflection as a means of learning because it helps teachers to develop consistent and adequate knowledge structures that systematically and progressively guide their actions in practice.

According to Sachs (2005) the professional identity of teachers is also about how they understand their own individual experience and how they act and identify with various groups in context the culture of the school. The culture of a school includes the understandings and values shared by the school community, which lead to a specific way of working (Nias, 1989). Relevant parts of a school culture are: expectations of the teachers, students, parent and citizens association; curriculum operations and the physical and material environment (Duffee & Aikenhead, 1992).

Another factor in the professional identity of teachers is their experience in the classroom. In contrast to the novice, the experienced teacher seems to have developed rich, well-organized knowledge bases that allows them to easily draw on their past experiences (Calderhead, 1996). Classroom experience will determine how effectively (1) a teacher monitors classroom events; (2) the degree of conscious effort involved in classroom performance; (3) the degree to which performance is guided by personal experience and the degree to which the teacher can predict events accurately; and (4) the teacher's focus, as student work and academic tasks become the major organizing framework of teaching (Kagan, 1992).

A question arising from this aspect of the review includes: What is the identity of a History teacher? And what will that mean for primary and early childhood teachers?

Perceived Capabilities of Learners

The earliest examinations of children's cognitive development within the context of History indicated that History as a school subject lacked meaning for students until the age of fourteen (von Heyking, 2004). It is a popular misconception that History becomes more abstract as the level of study rises. More recent scholars such as von Heyking write that, History is not about abstractions and the subject does not progress from the concrete to the abstract. Rather, History is about the concrete reality of people in the past and the only change that occurs as the level of study rises is a maturation from a simple understanding of the concrete to a more sophisticated understanding of the same concrete realities.

Seixas (1996, cited in von Heyking, 2004) stresses, for example, that children in early childhood experience traces of the past in the natural and built landscapes of their everyday lives, in the remnants of the past, in the language and symbols of their sociocultural histories, including the institutions for care and education in which they attend. Moreover, children experience many accounts of the past on television and film, in books, in family stories and in commemorations. Cooper (1995, p. 1) also writes of the numerous ways in which pre-school children become implicitly aware of the past:

...the past is a dimension of children's social and physical environment and they interact with it from birth. They hear and use the vocabulary of time and change: old, new, yesterday, tomorrow, last year, before you were born, when mummy was little, a long time ago, once upon a time. They ask questions about the sequence and causes of events: when did we move here? Why? What happened in the story next? Children encounter different interpretations of past times in nursery rhymes and fairy stories, family anecdotes, theme parks, films and pantomime. They encounter historical sources: old photographs, a baby book, an ornament, a statue, a church, maybe a closed-down factory or a derelict cinema being replaced by new roads and flats. They ask questions: who is in the photograph, or who is that statue? Why did the factory close?

Recent studies such as those discussed in this section focus attention on the critical importance of the pedagogical approaches and appropriate contexts offered to children to engage and scaffold their historical thinking skills, literacies and developing understandings. A question arising from this aspect of the review includes: What are the expected learning capabilities of learners throughout primary education in regard to History?

Critical discourse analysis (Gee, 1999; Luke, 2002) guided our study of the written language and contents of the current HSIE NSW syllabus and the Australian Curriculum: History. While it is recognised that, "analysis of texts should not be artificially isolated from analysis of institutional and discursive practices within which texts are embedded" (Fairclough, p. 9), we offer this analysis as a first layer to offer beginning insights which may provoke further research possibilities. Firstly, the authors individually analysed the curricula. Secondly, the authors then shared their observations and wonderings with each other. Our individual findings were confirmed and disconfirmed with further analysis related to the questions, which evolved from, and outlined in, the literature review.

An initial analysis of the new Australian Curriculum: History (K-10) in its draft form also uncovered issues and new opportunities compared to the current HSIE Syllabus in several ways. These aspects are discussed in further detail in the following section.

Discipline Knowledge: Possibilities and Issues for Primary School Educators

Early childhood and primary teachers will now be called upon to work as teachers of History with new demands in terms of disciplinary knowledge. In the current syllabus, History exists as one strand of the four HSIE strands. History content focuses on the strand "Change and Continuity" (Significant Events and People; and Time and Change). The syllabus states that historical knowledge is developed through studying Change and Continuity. Successive cohorts of primary school teachers have been educated in courses, which build content and

skills in three other Strands: Cultures, Environments, and Social Systems and Structures. Primary pre-service teachers enter the profession with generally a breadth of subject matter knowledge across numerous topics in HSIE, with one element being History. Secondary pre-service teachers generally enter the profession from undergraduate degrees inclusive of study in the discipline of History.

As is argued by Shulman (1986, 1987, 2005), content knowledge is a prerequisite to pedagogical content knowledge, which is at the heart of effective teaching. Consequently, distinguishing History as a discrete curriculum in 2011 is a cultural and pedagogical *shift* for the current primary teaching population. More significantly, it is a cultural and pedagogical *change* for early childhood educators (kindergarten teachers) for whom History is an entirely new curriculum area.

A comparison of the content knowledge of the current HSIE syllabus (Change and Continuity) and the Australia Curriculum: History (K-10) found that while the majority of the content is similar for each year level, there are new terms and the introduction of newly introduced subject matter. For example, “new Australian” is outlined in the proposed Australia Curriculum: History (K-10) and presents a problematic term. If there are “new” Australians, who are “old” Australians? Who are Australians? At what point does a “new” Australian become “not new” or lose their tag? Sorry Day - which represents the former Prime Minister’s formal apology and the acknowledgement of past injustices to Australia’s indigenous peoples - is a significant new introduction and is listed together with Anzac Day, suggesting the same level of importance.

von Heyking (2004) writes that, History teaching in primary schools should include opportunities for learners to make a difference in the future of their communities. von Heyking stresses that this is one reason why History is not only appropriate for elementary children; it is essential. Past, present and future are a focus in the current HSIE syllabus. For example, the Rationale states, the future wellbeing of human society and its environment depends upon the quality of people’s interactions with each other and with their cultural, social and physical environments as they strive to meet each other’s needs. The Australia Curriculum: History (K-10) also highlights History learning as inclusive of the future in the Rationale: Historical study... “is interpretive by nature, promotes debate and encourages thinking about human values, including present and future challenges” (p. 1). In addition, it is stated in that the Curriculum focus is to: “...develop a concept of time as present, past and future”.

A focus on global perspectives and global connections exists in both the HSIE syllabus and the Australia Curriculum: History (K-10). For example, in the proposed curriculum, it is stated that, “while building from immediate experience towards more abstract understanding, will provide learning opportunities that allow for relevant national and global connections to be made to personal, family and local History” (p. 4). As a nation developing and evolving politically, economically, socially and educationally, the bodies of knowledge Australia values within these domains also changes. In Australia we “have grown up in a society which has historically acted as if the only really important ideas, cultures, beliefs and norms are those with their origins in Western Europe and latterly North America ...” (Asia Education Foundation, 2000, p. 5). A shift in focus exists from aboriginal, citizenship, environmental, gender, global, multicultural and work perspectives *incorporated* in the 3 objectives of the current HSIE syllabus, to *explicit* cross-curricular dimensions – listed as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia, and Sustainable Patterns of Living in the Content Descriptions and Elaborations of the Historical

Knowledge and Understanding Strand in the proposed Australian Curriculum: History (K-10). Teaching and learning is to now recognize Torres Strait Islanders as distinct cultural groups.

The introduction of Asia studies reflects the former Prime Minister's commitment to educating Australians for a world in which the Asian region plays a major role. As the Commonwealth of Australia (2006) reports, for Australia, the countries of the Asian region are of critical importance due to being the country's closest neighbours and major trading partners. Countries of the Asia region also "represent the cultural heritage of a growing number of Australians and their rich traditional and contemporary cultures provide opportunities for our social, creative and intellectual development" (p.2).

As a consequence of new subject knowledge, primary school educators will need to develop additional subject matter knowledge in continuing to provide socially-just, culturally-relevant and anti-bias education which may be so different from their own experiences. Genishi and Lin Goodwin (2008) demonstrate the inextricable link between teachers' understandings and representations and the nature and reach of curricula. A particular concern for teacher professional learning lies in the following questions, which are grounded in the idea that, who teachers are and what they view as important, can serve to limit or expand educational opportunities for learners. Will our teachers have the space and support to begin to explore who they are, and who they are in the lives of children, and what assumptions and biases they bring with them? Will there be opportunities to reflect upon and examine biases, assumptions, and stereotypes?

Specific values and attitudes are not listed or outlined in the new Australia Curriculum: History (K-10). Such an absence can be interpreted as providing possibilities for examining a range of values and attitudes as an inquiry process rather than a doctrine of values and attitudes that each individual learner must achieve as outcomes. On the other hand, with no guidance, will teachers tackle the big issues of social justice, intercultural understanding, ecological sustainability, democratic processes, beliefs and moral codes? In addition, if there is no specific guidance on approaches to such issues, students may not have the opportunities to identify, clarify, apply, analyse and evaluate their own values and attitudes and those of others.

The concept of Historical Imagination is absent in both documents. Lerner (cited in von Heyking, 2004) states that historical study which has meaning for young learners, "demands imagination and empathy, so that we can fathom worlds unlike our own, contexts far from those we know, ways of thinking and feeling that are alien to us. We must enter past worlds with curiosity and respect." von Heyking explains that previous curricula conceptions of History have viewed the facilitation of empathy in children with people of the past as an "affective" outcome, yet Historians and those who engage in research in History teaching and learning argue that empathy is an active process through which learners consider what is known about the context in the evidence at hand about time, place and relationships, and bridge it with what may be inferred. As von Heyking (2004) advocates, "it is in fact what defines the discipline of History within the humanities rather than the positivistic sciences: it is the creative leap that must often be made from the documentary evidence available to historians." Empathy is an historical understanding/knowledge in the proposed Australia Curriculum: History (K-10), rather than a skill. This suggests that an active process approach to empathy has been overlooked.

Distinguishing History as a discrete curriculum in 2011 may initially and simplistically call for an adjustment in teacher's pedagogical content knowledge. However, an understanding of the complex nature of curriculum implementation processes, especially across a whole sector, indicates the problematic nature of such an implementation. The following sections outline possibilities and issues for classroom pedagogy within the current HSIE syllabus and the draft of the Australia Curriculum: History (K-10).

Classroom Pedagogy: Possibilities and Issues for Primary School Educators

This section on classroom pedagogy includes discussion of the outcomes or achievement standards so as to provide insight into the kinds of classroom approaches suggested for students to obtain these.

In the current HSIE syllabus, teachers and learners are directed to engage in HSIE for two hours per week. At present, there is no time allocation identified for the Australian Curriculum: History (K-10). Primary teachers may see this as an opportunity to embed History in the other three core subjects of Mathematics, Science and English – an interdisciplinary approach. Teachers may also see this as an opportunity to engage in History as little as possible.

This minimal level of guidance for teachers continues with the Achievement Standards in the proposed Australian Curriculum: History (K-10). Stated outcomes are broad and labelled "Achievement Standards" - there is no definition of what an 'achievement standard' is and how it relates to the two strands of Knowledge and Understanding, and Skills.

The proposed Australian Curriculum: History (K-10) focuses on grade groupings of K-2, 3-6, 7-10 and provides a brief overview of what students will do and what the History curriculum promotes. The curriculum structure, implications for teaching and learning, general capabilities, cross-curricular dimensions, and links to other learning areas, are provided for Year 7 to 10 only. What guidance is there for the primary years?

In the HSIE syllabus, the learning capabilities of learners is presented first in a broad way as *Foundations Statements*, then as *Learning Outcomes* and then as *Indicators*. Stated outcomes are specific and in being this way, provide long lists of indicators. The definition provided for indicators is: "A statement of the behaviour that students might display as they work toward the achievement of the syllabus outcomes". The indicators are examples only to assist teachers and they may develop or modify indicators as appropriate.

The Content Overview in the HSIE syllabus details *Implications for Teaching and Learning*, which guides what students have the opportunity to do **and** what teachers will do. There is no specific guidance for implications of teaching and learning in the proposed Australian Curriculum: History as in the current HSIE syllabus. Teaching strategies are not explicitly outlined. However, stated in the Implications for Teaching and Learning is the following guidance: "In the teaching of History there should not be an artificial separation of content and process nor a focus on historical method at the expense of historical knowledge" (p. 4).

Outlined in the *Content Descriptions*, there is no mention of, or examples provided, for students learning together across grade level groupings – rather than having the focus on age, the proposed curriculum lacks guidance for teachers in terms of multi-age learning, interest areas and project topics, for example.

The current HSIE syllabus outlines eight skills as part of an inquiry process and provides descriptions of what these may look like in “meaningful research related to social and environmental issues” (p. 12). This *inquiry process* is discussed as one of 3 skills, along with *acquiring information* and *civic participation*. In the proposed Australian Curriculum, a diagram for History Organisation outlines the following skills: Comprehension and Communication; Perspective and Interpretations; Analysis and Use of Sources; Historical Questions and Research, with Historical Inquiry embedded in the *Content Strands*. Guidance provided for Historical Inquiry includes research and questions, and analysis and use of sources. For example, broad inquiry questions are provided in the Preface of each Year level *Content Descriptions*. Overall, the current HSIE syllabus supports a general inquiry process, while the proposed curriculum will require teachers to move from a non-discipline specific inquiry process to a Historical Inquiry process, in particular emphasizing a skills and inquiry based model of teaching.

Historical understanding is not viewed as unique, whereas in the proposed Australian Curriculum: History (K-10), 7 capabilities are listed as inherent to discipline of History and so are explicitly included in the content descriptions: evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, significance, empathy, perspectives, and contestability. There is a broad *Achievement Standard* given in each Year level, which outlines Knowledge and Understanding and Skills, however, it does not clearly identify these in a way that reflects the 7 History Capabilities or the continuity across Year groupings.

As previously highlighted, the Inquiry Process in the current HSIE syllabus is one of 3 skills: Acquiring Information, Inquiry Process and Social and Civic Participation. Various historical understandings can be extracted from the elaborations of each skill. For example, Acquiring Information involves using a variety of sources such as the internet, email, reference texts, artefacts, original sources, archives, computer technology, telecommunications, people and the media. There are numerous examples in the current syllabus of historical literacies in the Outcomes and Indicators. An analysis of the historical understandings and skills currently required of teachers and learners suggests that teachers have the foundational pedagogical skills and content knowledge to make the transition from HSIE teacher to History teacher.

Programming and assessment guidelines and examples are provided in the HSIE syllabus, yet no particular strategies are highlighted for the History strand. Assessment is not mentioned in the Australian Curriculum: History (K-10).

The new National Curriculum initiative calls on primary teachers to forego previously well established interdisciplinary understandings that underpin, for example, in Queensland's Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE), and in New South Wales the Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) curriculum. The ‘old’ integrated pedagogical demands of SOSE/HSIE will need to be reconsidered in the light of the ‘new’ pedagogical demands of History as a core subject. The NSW Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) K – 6 Syllabus is organized into interrelated content strands, one of which is ‘Change and Continuity’ – a fundamental concept of History and, according to the statements in the Overview of the Syllabus, no one strand can be properly investigated without consideration of its connection with the other strands. In this respect, it may be argued that the primary HSIE teacher has an advantage over the secondary school History teacher in that they are expected to have an integrated knowledge base. Additionally, primary teachers are expected to have the content and pedagogical skills to teach most or all of the Key Learning Areas in the Primary school

as opposed to the Secondary School teacher who may have two or three major teaching areas. Primary school teachers are required to utilise creative curriculum knowledge and approaches to uncover multiple syllabuses over one year. Secondary school teachers work with discrete subject knowledge. The repertoire of a Primary school teacher, along with expectations to integrate knowledge and pedagogical skills in HSIE and other curriculum areas, may ultimately be seen as advantage - not a deficit – when seeking to incorporate History as a core subject in primary schools.

Conclusion: Future Research Possibilities

Supported by fellow postmodern and poststructuralist scholars such as Pinar (1997), Grumet (1995) and Davis and Sumara (2000), Aoki (1991) argues that school curriculum is not simply a technical document specifying content to be covered, outlining prescribed learning outcomes, detailing teaching strategies and stipulating assessment procedures. Aoki recognizes that curriculum is not static, not an unmoving form that teachers can systematically implement or students can passively receive. Curriculum is the lived experience of teachers and students as they engage together in the learning process. Aoki's work alerts us to our responsibility to ask questions and seek understanding about the nature of the educational experience for school communities and to engage in Fullan's (2007) ideas about implementation. While it is recognised that, "analysis of texts should not be artificially isolated from analysis of institutional and discursive practices within which texts are embedded" (Fairclough, p. 9), we provide this analysis as a first layer to offer beginning insights into potential implications.

In 2011 and beyond, Primary school teachers will be called upon to re-identify as History teachers. They will be aligned professionally with secondary History teachers. A central interest is in the contribution the new National curriculum initiative makes to the discipline of History itself. Disciplines are themselves responsive to those who work within their boundaries, therefore, History as a core subject placed in a National primary curriculum, and implemented in primary school contexts, has implications for the disciplinarity of History. History teaching in the primary school offers opportunities to learn from primary children and teachers engaging with History, and of primary teachers' knowledge and understandings about the cognitive capacities of young children to think historically. Professional subject associations and professional development/learning organisations responsible for teacher learning (including pre-service) will need to incorporate primary History teaching and primary History teachers.

The analysis and discussion reported in this paper highlights opportunities for future research located in this area of curriculum implementation and pedagogical shift. Research opportunities include:

- Mapping the extensions to the disciplinarity of History provoked by primary school History teaching and learning;
- Documenting best practice and inform new signature pedagogy in curriculum change and in pedagogical content knowledge, and
- Identifying the possibilities and the constraints around professional learning and development for History teachers.

In accordance with Peters (2009), we believe the role of education must no longer be a site of discourse transmission but re-envisioned as a site for discourse analysis. The teaching of History by primary teachers and the learning of History by primary students involve curriculum and pedagogical intersections and advances, which are largely uncharted in Australia. The many layers of the new History (National) Curriculum context - such as policy, school management and leadership, curriculum implementation, classroom practice, teacher identity, children's and families' experiences - can be better explored through careful examination of the political, economic, social, cultural, macro and micro contexts of curriculum implementation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 39).

The authors await the final draft of the Australian curriculum: History (K-10). Currently, this article is presented so as to join the conversation on the teaching and learning of History in primary schools.

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