Theses: Doctorates and Masters

Theses

2013

The reality of reform : teachers reflecting on curriculum reform in Western Australia

Jessica Lyle
Edith Cowan University

Edith Cowan University

Copyright Warning

USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

The Reality of Reform: Teachers Reflecting on Curriculum Reform in Western Australia

Jessica Lyle B. Ed. (Primary)

This thesis is presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of
Master of Education

School of Education
Faculty of Education and the Arts
Edith Cowan University

Abstract

Australia is implementing its first national curriculum, the Australian Curriculum, after many years of debate regarding the validity and practicality of such an undertaking. Although it is widely accepted that "the effects of education policies and programs depend chiefly on what teachers make of them" (Cohen & Ball, 1990, p. 233), little is known about teachers' perceptions of the Australian Curriculum or their prior experiences of mandatory curriculum reform as they begin engaging with this unique reform. To provide a means of exploring these perceptions and experiences, 18 teachers, four Head of Learning Areas (HOLAs) and the principal from a regional high school in Western Australia (WA) were asked to reflect on their experiences with curriculum change in general, and the Australian Curriculum in particular. This occurred at different points throughout 2011/12 giving an insight into 'what they will make of' the Australian Curriculum.

Four lenses of typical experiences and perceptions emerged during the study. These lenses are presented as four composite narratives that show the depth and breadth of the curriculum reform experience for the participants. Results indicated that the participants were yet to experience mandated curriculum reform in WA they perceived to be successful. Dispositions towards reform were both being effected by such past experiences and affecting reactions to current experiences. Peer support was demonstrated to be a safety net for the participants in the absence of clear guidelines and resources. Additional to those absent needs, the participants conveyed a need for greater prescription accompanying the AC in this clime of frequent and increasingly accountability focused mandated reform.

Declaration

In accordance with the regulations for presenting theses and other work for higher degrees, I hereby certify that this thesis does not to the best of my knowledge and belief:

(i) Incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;

(ii) Contain any material previously written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or

(iii) Contain any defamatory material.

I also grant permission for the Library at Edith Cowan University to make duplicate copies of my thesis as required.

Signature

Date _30/7/13_

Acknowledgements

Not surprisingly, this document did not flow smoothly into the form you see now, it took perseverance and support.

Foremost in providing that support were my supervisors Jan Gray and Christine Cunningham. I would like to thank Christine for her energy and legendary status as she was always available to help me, with even the most ridiculous of questions. I would also like to thank Jan for her calm guidance and the ability to envision what the end result should look like, and how best to get there.

My partner Lyall has had to suffer through my tantrums, late nights and busy weekends while I focused my energy on this thesis. Not only do I feel sorry for him, I am also deeply indebted and hope he will endure my next project with the same sardonic demeanour.

I would also like to thank my family for their support and encouragement, in particular my mother Sally Perkins. It is handy having a mother who is a closet genius ("I thought an IQ of 150 was normal") with a Bachelor of Arts (English) degree when faced with the monstrous task of editing, particularly those chapters written under the influence of morning sickness.

Rhonda Oliver was my first supervisor and instrumental in getting the ball rolling and the shaping of my initial literature review. I also enjoyed and benefited greatly from my time at Sally Knowles' South West Campus writing retreat late in 2012 and the support of my fellow South West Post Grad Group members.

 'Team relief' also warrant a mention here (as do the rest of my colleagues and students) as without their support, teaching would have lost its appeal to me long ago. It is hard to surpass the mentoring I received from Russell and Jonathon in important concepts like 'the way things really are' and 'what's the point?' and I feel unbelievably fortunate to work where I do.

Jonathon Dobbs, you are sorely missed by so many.

Table of Contents

List of Figures and Tables

Glossary

As many of the terms used are context specific to Western Australia and Australia, and others have conflicting meanings in different fields (or even the same fields), it is necessary to outline their meanings as they were applied in this study;

Australian Curriculum (AC)

The AC is Australia's first national curriculum, originally spanning English, history, mathematics and science from years K-10 which were published in 2011. Additional subject areas and senior secondary curriculum is to be (and have been) added progressively since 2011. State education bodies are responsible for the implementation of the AC.

Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Agency (ACARA)

ACARA was created in May 2009 by the federal Labor government under Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. It carried on from the initial work by the interim national curriculum board, creating the AC based on agreements made between the state and federal education ministers during their meeting in Melbourne in 2008. It also took over responsibility for the national standardised testing program – NAPLAN and created the My School website where these test results are published along with other demographic information.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)

AITSL is another body created by the federal Labor government. AITSL is responsible for accrediting teacher training programs and national teaching standards. Teachers will be assessed according to the standards created by AITSL.

Courses of Study (CoS)

CoS are a series of Western Australian senior secondary curriculum units developed during the era of outcomes based education. CoS allow for a variety

of pathways into university and were also designed to be more flexible and practical given the large numbers of non-university bound students staying on to complete years 11 and 12. These will gradually be replaced by new AC compatible units.

Curriculum Framework (CF)

The CF was a K-10 curriculum package influenced by Outcomes Based Education ideology. The framework and resulting assessment and reporting strategies were criticised by many teachers and members of the public for being difficult to work with and understand. The CF is currently being replaced with the AC in phases in WA schools.

Horizon

1) A horizon is an individual's perspective when experiencing a phenomenon. A person's horizon contains their reaction to a phenomenon. Horizons are not fixed and are often reassessed, causing new horizons to be made (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2008).

2) A horizon is a reduced excerpt from a participant's data that outlines all the participant believes about a particular aspect of the studied phenomenon.

Intuitive Inquiry

Intuitive Inquiry is a hermeneutic research approach developed by Rosemarie Anderson, informed by complimentary ideologies by Gadamer and Moustakas. Intuitive Inquiry involves five iterative cycles of interpretation (Anderson & Braud, 2011).

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

NAPLAN is an Australian annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN consists of reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy tests.

National Curriculum (NC)

The United Kingdom's (UK's) national curriculum was named the National Curriculum. When present in the thesis with capitals or as an acronym (NC), the UK's national curriculum is implied.

Outcomes Based Education (OBE)

OBE was a popular ideology in the 1980s-90s which advocated a shift from a heavily academic content focused curriculum, to process (skills and capabilities) focused curriculum.

Teacher Development Schools (TDS)

TDS are schools chosen to provide peer support to other teachers in Western Australia in a particular learning area.

Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA)

The TRBWA is the body responsible for registration, discipline and accreditation of teachers in Western Australia. It replaced the Western Australian College of Teaching in December 2012. The TRBWA's board members are appointed by the Minister for Education.

Unit Curriculum (UC)

Unit Curriculum was developed to meet the changing needs of senior secondary students in WA during a period of high youth unemployment for those students who were not university bound (Tully, 2002).

Western Australian College of Teaching (WACOT)

WACOT was the first teacher registration board in WA, established in 2004 and replaced by the TRBWA in 2012. Its dual purpose was to both register teachers and promote the teaching profession in WA. Unlike the TRBWA whose board members are solely appointed by the Minister for Education, WACOT's board of 19 had ten positions filled by election by registered teachers.

Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE)

WACE is a certificate received by senior secondary students after they complete two years of study in senior secondary units. The certificate is recognised nationally.

Cycle One Clarifying the Research Topic

In intuitive inquiry, in order to clarify and refine the identification of a topic of study, the intuitive inquirer selects a text or image that repeatedly attracts or claims his attention and relates in a general – and sometimes initially ambiguous way– to his research interests. A thorough examination of the extant literature follows, but only after the researcher's topic or question has been precisely stated at the end of Cycle 1. (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 31)
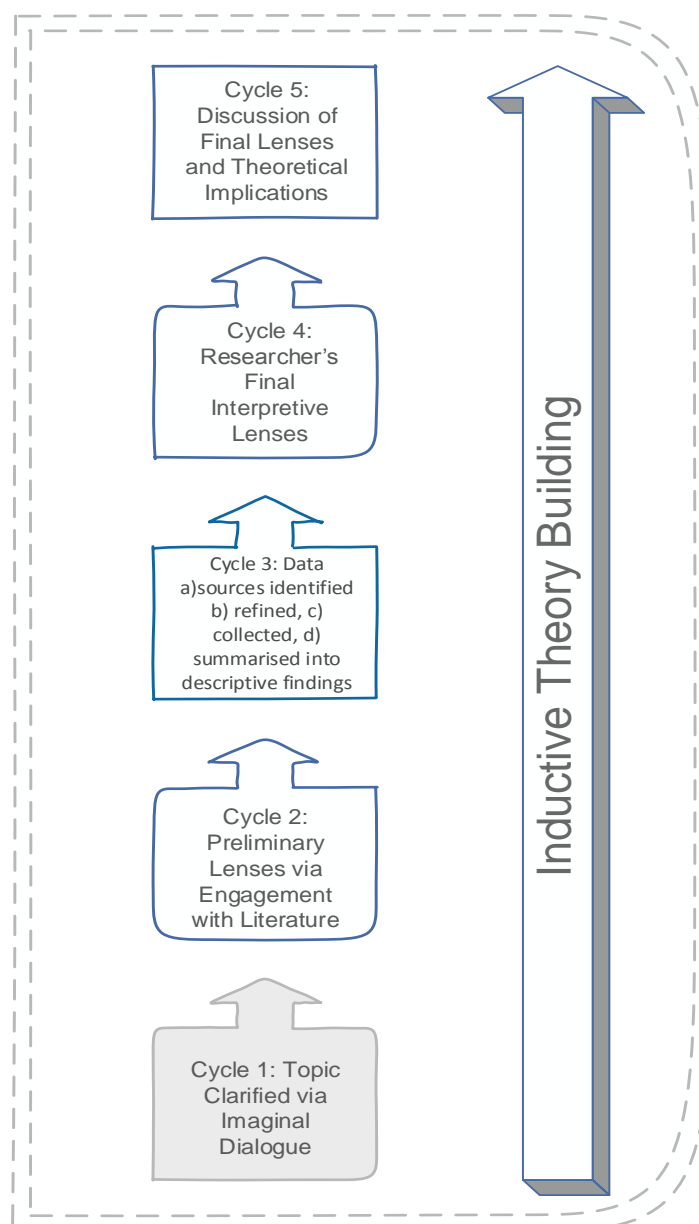
Figure 1.1: Intuitive Inquiry Process, Cycle One (adapted from Anderson & Braud (2011))

Chapter I   Introduction

"The Reality of Reform: Teachers Reflecting on Curriculum Reform in Western Australia," comes at a time when the field of Australian education is being transformed from state controlled provision, to unprecedented uniformity; through the introduction of the Australian Curriculum. The Australian Curriculum is the country's first national curriculum and has been long awaited by some and long disputed by others (Hughes, 1990; Thomson, 2008). Regardless of the stance key stakeholders have in regards to the validity and practicality of a national curriculum in Australia, one issue is not debatable; the culmination of this initiative rests largely on those who are mandated to implement it – classroom teachers (Cohen & Ball, 1990). Classroom teachers are the medium through which the Australian Curriculum will be passed on to students. Many factors can alter a teacher's interpretation of a mandated reform, including systemic issues (Hoyle & Wallace, 2007; Seddon, 2001), burnout (Pyhältö, Pietarinen, & Salmela-Aro, 2011) or how ideologically aligned the rationale of the reform is with a teacher's values and practices (Bee Bee, 2008; Chan, 2010; Turley, 2005).

This thesis focuses on teacher's implementation of the Australian Curriculum being influenced by two over-arching factors; their perceptions of the reform and their experiences with it and past reforms. It was beyond the scope of this study to look in to the curriculum reform experiences of teachers from all states and territories in Australia with their separate systemic influences and practices. Therefore, Western Australian teachers' perceptions and experiences are the sole focus of this research.

 The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to necessary background information; firstly contextual to Western Australia (WA) and then clarifying the problem addressed, the use of a modified Intuitive Inquiry approach to research that problem and finally the specific research aims and questions.

Context

In Australia, the State, Territory and Federal Ministers of Education meet several times a year as the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs or MCEECDYA. On 5 December 2008 MCEECDYA released the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians,* which is commonly referred to as simply the Melbourne Declaration. This document sets out the intended direction of Australian education for the following 10 years and was negotiated by the MCEECDYA after public consultation (MCEECDYA, 2009). The Melbourne Declaration supersedes both the Hobart and Adelaide Declarations, which also produced common education goals for all Australian schools, the first steps towards a national curriculum (McGaw, 2010).

At the commencement of this project in 2010, new curricula for English, maths, science and history had been drafted for K-10 and ACARA –the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Agency, assured that they would be available for national implementation (McGaw, 2010) in 2011. McGaw, the Chair of ACARA also explained that MCEECYDA agreed the "nature and timing of implementation is a matter for individual jurisdictions and schools as long as there is substantial implementation in all schools by the end of 2013" (McGaw, 2010, para. 5).

In Term One 2011, the Western Australian Education Minister Elizabeth Constable, wrote to schools to clarify WA's expected implementation process. She stated that the "formal three-year implementation period will commence in 2012 when the total curriculum package for the first phase of the national curriculum has been approved by the MCEECDYA" (2011, para. 6). This was a reflection of the recommendations made to Minister Constable by Andrich (2009) in his report on the implementation of the Curriculum Framework, the largest of the previous recent curriculum reforms here in WA. Andrich asserted that it was imperative not to force teachers to implement curriculum reform without adequate resources after the poorly supported Curriculum Framework.

Constable went on to outline her hopes for the implementation process; that teachers along with other stake holders would create inter-school and intra-

school professional learning communities that would devise the required implementation programs and share resources with resource poor peers (2011). Teachers then, are expected to be the key-stones in the Australian Curriculum (AC) implementation process. Knowing that "the effects of education policies and programs depend chiefly on what teachers make of them" (Cohen & Ball, 1990, p. 233) it is vital to be aware of WA teachers' experiences and perceptions as they began to interact with and implement this reform.

This section outlined the intended implementation process at the start of the data gathering period. It gave a brief indication of the prior circumstances that may influence WA teachers' responses to another curriculum reform, and the necessity to explore these teacher responses as they will have a marked impact on the outcome of the AC. The following sections outline the specific research aims and questions with a brief discussion of the chosen methodology- Intuitive Inquiry.

Theoretical Framework

Zeidler states that the purpose of a theoretical framework is to answer two essential questions that will direct and contain the proposed study: "what is the problem and why is your approach a feasible solution?" (cited in Kemoni, 2008, p. 105). Mears (2009) elaborates on choosing a feasible approach to productively address the given problem by outlining three points for consideration; the research purpose, questions and the personal disposition of the reader. This section looks at the problem addressed, the purpose for addressing it and the approach taken to address it. The approach taken is then justified through an explanation of its ability to answer the problem in a way that suits both the research purpose and the researcher's disposition.

The Problem and Purpose

Curriculum reform is the source of much angst for many teachers (Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000; Day, Elliot, & Kington, 2005; Hargreaves & Reynolds, 1989), for seemingly little gain (Bee Bee, 2008; Cuban, 1990; Hargreaves & Reynolds, 1989; Maxwell & Cohen, 1985). Cohen and Ball (1990) propose that policies are filtered

by teachers' values, knowledge and experiences, thus rendering them an interpretation only.

As previously demonstrated, the curriculum change history in Western Australia has been particularly fast-paced and widely criticised in the last decade. It is naive to think that a federal initiative as an alternative to state mandated reform will wipe the slate clean for Western Australian teachers. By focusing on the curriculum reform experiences of those teachers and their perceptions of the Australian Curriculum, an insight can be gained into how Cohen and Ball's (1990) filters (values and experiences, and to a lesser extent, knowledge) will affect the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. Thus the problem tackled in this study is gathering and analysing these values and experiences for the purpose of illuminating their affects for decision makers and other stakeholders.

Is Intuitive Inquiry a Feasible Solution?

Gathering and analysing an in-depth account of varied personal perceptions and experiences of curriculum reform is not achievable through quantitative means. A qualitative method needed to be chosen that would allow teacher values, perceptions and experiences to come to life, so the vivid, lived experiences of the participants could illuminate thinking on the problem. Phenomenology, then interpretive phenomenology, then hermeneutics and heuristics were all likely candidates given their propensity to develop these types of findings for this study (Drummond, McLafferty, Hendry, & Pringle, 2011; Fairfield, 2010; Gadamer, 2000a; Glendinning, 2007; Husserl & Paul Vandevelde, 1996; Moloney, 1992; Moustakas, 1994; Wojnar & Swanson, 2007), and were all at times present in the research proposal.

Finally, I came across Intuitive Inquiry, first coined by Anderson (2011) and discovered it closely resembled the journey I was already on. Intuitive Inquiry is rooted in hermeneutical processes as can be seen in its five iterative cycles. In brief the cycles are One: choosing a topic, Two: preparing a list of preliminary interpretative lenses through reflection and reading, Three: gather data and present it in a form that presents the 'voices' in the texts, Four: present a set of interpretative lenses that have changed through engagement with the data and

Five: integrate the Cycle Four lenses with relevant literature and discuss the implications (Anderson & Braud, 2011).

These cycles encourage the use of intuition along with reflection and dialogue over time to draw conclusions or build theory. Intuition, I learned, can be a tool despite its 'irrationality'.

> Carl Jung (1933) presents intuition as an "irrational" function—not because intuition is unreliable but because intuitive insights often elude our attempts to understand their character or origins. Intuitions often feel palpable as distinct perceptions into the nature of things; sometimes we can discern their triggers and how they support or even confound life decisions. But, more often, the occurrence of an intuition seems elusive, unrepeatable by will, and understandable conceptually only after a period of reflection and discernment. (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 246)

For me, as an intuitive personality type who prefers to receive and analyse data in all facets of life in an intuitive way (Rushton, Morgan, & Richard, 2007), this process was a natural system to uncover answers to the problem that had presented itself, so natural in fact, that I had begun to follow it innately.

Although it is important for a method to be congruent with a researcher's beliefs about knowledge and learning, this was not the only merit for choosing Intuitive Inquiry. This approach also allows me to clearly show delineation between initial understandings of the topic and how these have changed after undertaking data analysis, hence signalling personal growth through the research process. More importantly, this approach allows for the descriptive presentation of data with the potential to generate theory "based on the development of [the researcher's] understanding of the topic in the five cycles" (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 256).

Further than the presentation of the teachers' filters to implementing reform, it is necessary to provide the historical, social and political context of which those filters are a by-product. To do this I have grounded Intuitive Inquiry with an adaptation of Gadamer's hermeneutical (2004) philosophy. Gadamer (2004) was a firm believer that nothing should be undertaken without first giving a comprehensive history of the phenomenon to be studied. Situated research, creating meanings with co-researchers and recognising that the researcher has

pre-conceived ideas (horizons) that will change over the course of the study are three areas of Gadamer's teachings that have been applied to this study.

Taken together, Intuitive Inquiry, applied through a framework adapted from Gadamer's philosophy regarding truth and method, is an approach that will be able to divulge teachers' values, experiences and perceptions of the AC as well as situate those filters in the context that created them. This modified approach to Intuitive Inquiry can adequately explore teachers' perceptions and experiences of curriculum reform. It also suits the research purpose of presenting how these perceptions and experiences will influence the implementation of the AC to key stakeholders while allowing for the researcher's personal, intuitive disposition. This combination of matching the needs of the problem, purpose and personal disposition of the researcher makes this approach a sound solution for addressing the problem.

Each stage of the thesis falls into one or more cycles of Intuitive Inquiry. These cycles will be explained as they occur in the manuscript. It must be noted however that Intuitive Inquiry is an iterative approach; even though the thesis is presented conventionally, in linear form, the research process was not linear.

Research Aims

The first cycle of Intuitive Inquiry involves the engagement and dialogue with, and the reflection on, a specific text along with the researcher's past experiences to form the research aims and question (Anderson & Braud, 2011). I undertook this process naively before deciding on an appropriate method and as such had two focus texts; *Curriculum History* and Andrich's review of the Curriculum Framework for the Western Australian Education Minister (Andrich, 2009).

In brief, I discovered from *Curriculum History* that curriculum reform has been an ongoing process from the time the term 'curriculum' was first conceptualised and usually there was an underlying political, social or religious agenda; not simply how to educate students in the nest way possible (Hamilton, 1990). From Andrich, it was clear that curriculum reform implementation in Western Australia had been mismanaged in the past and that teachers would be in need of clearer

direction, rationales and resources if they were to engage with the Australian Curriculum favourably (2009).

Therefore, taking into account the initial problem of exploring teachers perceptions and experiences with curriculum reform and how they might influence the implementation of the AC, and my lenses as they were at the end of Cycle One, the aims of this study are based around assisting myself, my colleagues, policymakers and other stakeholders to develop their understandings of this phenomenon. Specifically, my intentions were to:

1. Enrich my personal understanding of teacher's lived experiences of non-voluntary curriculum reform in general, and the current reform –the Australian Curriculum, in particular.

2. Help the participants reach new understandings and perspectives of the above phenomenon, and

3. Illuminate for other education stakeholders the areas of interest for practitioners as they are preparing to implement mandatory curriculum reform.

Research Question

The above aims led to the following research question, with three specific subsidiary questions to guide data collection which ensures a well-rounded perspective of the experience is sourced:

What are teacher's perceptions and experiences of mandated curriculum reform, with particular reference to the Australian Curriculum?

Subsidiary Questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of the participants with regards to mandatory curriculum change?

2. What are the experiences and perceptions of the participants regarding the Australian Curriculum?

3. What factors do the participants consider would help or hinder them to implement the Australian Curriculum?

Summary

Australia is embarking on a new era of mandated curriculum reform with the inception of its first national curriculum. In WA, curriculum reform has been problematic in recent years (Andrich, 2009; Berlach & McNaught, 2007; O'Neill, 2007). Globally, curriculum reform is known to cause a variety of issues for teachers (Hargreaves, 1998b), whilst often being unsuccessful (Cuban, 1990; Sahlberg, 2012). In this climate, it is imperative to study WA teachers' experiences with past reforms along with their reactions to the present initiative, if we are to understand what issues are influencing their implementation practices. As teachers actively filter mandated curriculum reforms (Cohen & Ball, 1990), understanding these issues will allow improvements in the way WA teachers respond to the AC and future mandated curriculum reform.

This chapter has introduced the focus of this thesis; WA teachers' experiences with curriculum reform and their perceptions of the AC. This was followed by contextual information outlining the AC implementation process in Western Australia to situate the research. The specific problem to be addressed was then clarified and a justification for the modified Intuitive Inquiry approach as one best suited to elicit the required data to address to problem was made. The chapter ends with clearly defined aims and research questions. The following chapter contains the literature review, preceded by an explanation of Cycle Two of the modified Intuitive Inquiry process which influenced its creation. The remaining chapters are comprised of a chapter on data collection and analysis, several findings chapters and a discussion of pertinent implications.

Cycle Two   Developing the Preliminary
Interpretive Lenses

Structurally, Cycle 2 involves a three-part process. First [A], the intuitive inquirer familiarizes herself with the… texts …relevant to her topic …Second [B], the researcher identifies from among the literature … a unique set of texts for her Cycle 2 imaginal dialogue. Third [C], based on ongoing imaginal dialogue with these newly selected texts, the researcher prepares a list of preliminary interpretative lenses that express her understanding of the topic prior to data collection. (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 40)
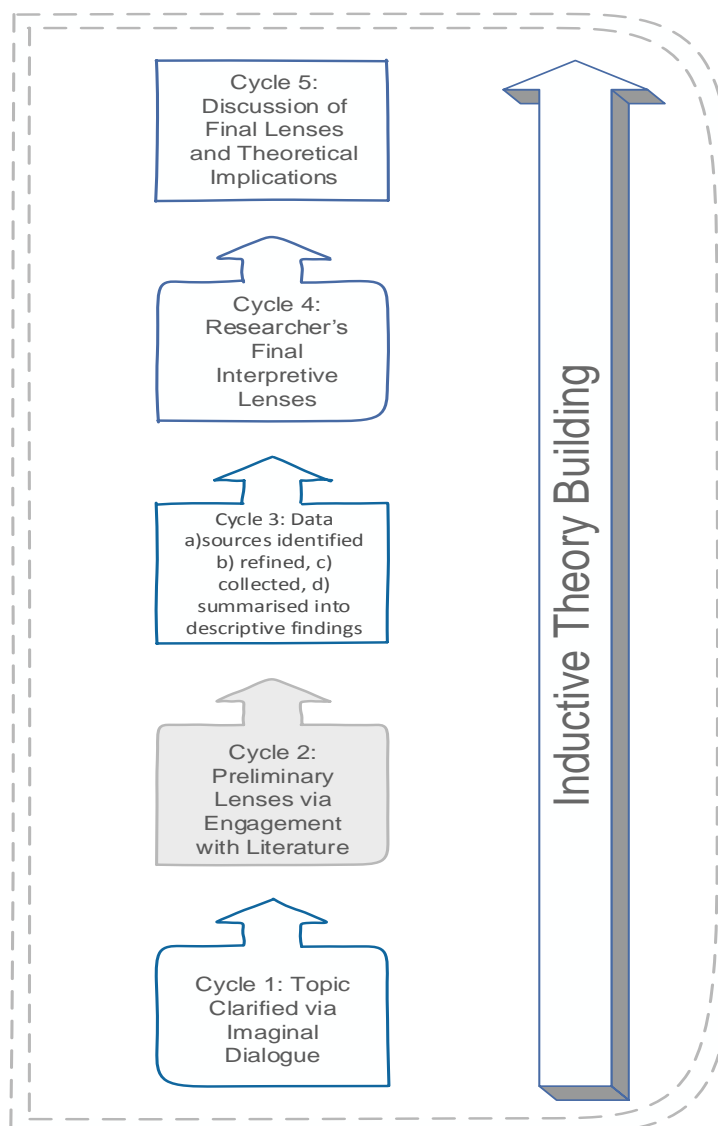
Figure 2.1: **Intuitive Inquiry Process, Cycle Two (adapted from Anderson & Braud (2011))**

Chapter II   Developing the Preliminary
Interpretive Lenses

During Cycle Two of Intuitive Inquiry, the researcher draws on their initial dialogue with their catalyst text used to create the research question in Cycle One, and broadens their reading and intuitive reflection to encompass the relevant research and concept papers for their chosen topic (Anderson & Braud, 2011). After this intense period of reading, which includes hermeneutical dialogue with chosen texts and reflecting on personal experiences, the researcher prepares a list of 'preliminary interpretive lenses' that convey the scope of their understanding before data collection occurs (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 40). This Cycle is an integral part of Intuitive Inquiry as it demonstrates the inquirer's knowledge and horizons prior to being influenced by the data collected, allowing for a representation of personal growth in later cycles.

Cycle Two was a three part process and each part (A-C) is presented in this chapter. This starts with a modified version of the initial literature review written during Part A: familiarisation with the empirical literature (Anderson & Braud, 2011). The literature review presented in Part A, is by necessity a modified version of the original, as the findings of this study dictated the need to include different types of information than were initially considered important. Part B was concerned with choosing focus texts from those originally examined to create the initial literature review (Anderson & Braud, 2011). Part C entailed engaging in hermeneutic dialogue with these focus texts (Anderson & Braud, 2011) and creating a type of subjective statement (Priessle, 2008) referred to as an interpretive lens, outlining my understanding of the topic before commencing my research in earnest.

The Cycle Two lenses are designed to be compared to the interpretive lenses created after data collection, the Cycle Four lenses. This demonstrates growth in subjective understanding over the course of the study, as well as outlining personal bias. A summary of Part C, the preliminary interpretive lenses, are also included in Cycle Four to allow for easy comparison.

Part A: Familiarisation with Relevant Literature

The first section of this chapter is a presentation of Part A of the Cycle Two process: becoming familiar with the relevant empirical research and concept papers (Anderson & Braud, 2011) regarding teachers' perceptions of and experiences with mandated curriculum reform. This section reads like a traditional literature review which gives an insight into the recent climate of mandatory curriculum reform nationally, and in Western Australia (WA), and indicates known affective areas on the ways teachers perceive, experience and thus implement mandated curriculum reform.

Mandated Curriculum Reform in Australia

This section of the literature review outlines the climate of mandated curriculum reform in Australia, and in particular WA. It outlines new public management, public choice theory and the alternative whole of government approach ideologies behind the most recent mandated reforms. The impact of the grand notion of 'globalisation' on these ideologies is also discussed along with the use of accountability to achieve new public management aims. Relevant WA policies and reforms are then outlined along with the creation of the Australian Curriculum (AC) and its variations from current WA curriculum. The purpose of this section is to provide background regarding the types of reforms and their related issues, which WA teachers have faced previously and their related issues, to better understand their experiences of mandated curriculum reform and how they are positioned to react to present and future reforms.

New Public Management

> Managerialism, which is also termed "corporate managerialism", "new public management", and "economic rationalism", was introduced into the public sector in many countries following the oil shock of the 1970s. Simply, managerialism entails the introduction of private sector practices into the public sector and the removal of public goods and services to the private sector. (Kimber & Ehrich, 2010, p. 180)

According to Goldspink (2007), new public management (NPM) has been influencing coercive education policies in Australia and many other OECD

countries since the 1980s. A neoliberal ideology, NPM views individuals as competing in a global market, which changed the focus of education as a right of national citizenship, to free market choice in education provision (Goldspink, 2007). NPM incorporates ideas from public choice theory and relies on the notion of globalisation as a rationalisation and the use of accountability procedures to ensure its success (Goldspink, 2007; Kimber & Ehrich, 2010; Lorenz, 2012).

Public Choice Theory

> The political arena is approached as a 'market-place' in which individuals make political choices on the same basis as neoclassical economists argue they do economic choices; that is, on the basis of self-interest. The theory characterizes bureaucrats and politicians as self-seeking and budget maximizing; concerned to act for themselves rather than for citizens (Brennan, 1996; Udehn, 1996). (Goldspink, 2007, p. 31) 31

New public management is influenced by public choice theory's assumption that the privatisation of education will increase efficiency through increased performance focused accountability, which will then strengthen customer satisfaction (Kimber & Ehrich, 2010) and deliver better education value for money (Lorenz, 2012). It also assumes customer driven education policies will better prepare individuals for free market globalised citizenry (Lorenz, 2012). Because this theory disinherits education from a social capital and emphasises the rights of the individual to market competition, Goldspink (2007) believes that public choice theory should be viewed as a hostile ideology, in direct conflict with contemporary goals (see MCEETYA, 2008 for an example) for education which favour social equity and collaboration.

Globalisation

Today, national curricula are viewed by many as a critical medium for preparing for globalisation. For example, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Agency (ACARA) which is the government body responsible for both Australia's national curriculum and standardised testing program, aims to "prepare young people for their participation in a changing and increasingly

globalised world" (ACARA, 2010). However, as Alexander states, there are two alternate ways in which the creators of a national curriculum can view globalisation. Firstly, they can see the world as a competitive arena (much the same as NPM and public choice theory) where individual choice and free markets are preferable, or alternatively they can use a more international viewpoint where education "can serve to unite rather than divide" (cited in Thomson, 2008, p. 14). White (2005) points out that different people within the same field have different perceptions of globalisation. The trouble is that it is often not made clear which type of globalisation preparation curriculum writers have in mind.

In Australia, globalisation was a key rationale for the national curriculum as outlined by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, who was in power at its conception. Thomson (2008), describes how Prime Minister Rudd indicated a need for globalised curriculum to aid the creation of a competitive workforce for the world of tomorrow and this reasoning has been echoed by ACARA (2010b). This reasoning suggests a NPM view of globalisation influenced current Australian curriculum policy. This suggestion is augmented by current trends in accountability in Australian education where performative assessment is on the rise (Kimber & Ehrich, 2010). NPM, then, is still influencing Australian educational policy, approximately 30 years on from its original application to the public sector.

Accountability

Public choice theory as a subset of NPM requires the use of performative/output focused accountability measures (Goldspink, 2007; Kimber & Ehrich, 2010; Lorenz, 2012). In the education setting, the increase of this type of accountability has a number of repercussions. It has been suggested that parents (voters) appreciate performative accountability measures placed on both teachers and students (Hughes, 1990). This is because the curriculum to be taught is supposedly clear and supported by frequent reports on student achievement (Hughes, 1990). However, Kimber and Ehrich (2010) argue that market driven accountability is detrimental for parents and society at large as it claims to

improve schools through free market choice, ignoring that this freedom of choice is limited to the area parents reside and their income.

Teachers, however find performativity based output measures are ill equipped to indicate student or teacher achievement (Goldspink, 2007; Thomson, 2008). The current shift in Australia to increased accountability and classroom evaluation (Day, et al., 2005) is a sign of what Hargreaves and Reynolds (1989) call 'Decomprehensivization,' signalled by reduced funding, increased state control and the reform having the aim of quality, not equality. Goldspink (2007) explains how these factors indicate that this form of accountability is coercive instead of focused on performance enhancement.

Outcomes

The application of business management principles to education provision initially seemed a promising way to reduce the inefficiencies of the largely bureaucratic education systems in Australia, which often seemed impervious to reform (Goldspink, 2007). However, it was soon evident that education systems are not as responsive to private sector style technical and administrative change procedures as the private sector (Lorenz, 2012).

New public management created issues in Australian education in the 1980s and 1990s which continue to permeate the field today. The main outcomes of the application of NPM principles to Australian education have been to increase the administrative workload of teachers and school leaders (Day, et al., 2005; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007; Goldspink, 2007) whilst possibly improving the operational efficiency of schools and teachers (Goldspink, 2007; Kimber & Ehrich, 2010). NPM has been blamed for the industrialisation (Goldspink, 2007) and deprofessionalisation (Kimber & Ehrich, 2010) of teachers, and is quintessentially at odds with post-modern educational theory (Goldspink, 2007). In WA, the application of NPM in the education sector has seen many unreasonably complex decisions that have been unmanageable at the school level (Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007) further adding stress to an already compromised education system.

New public management is now largely discredited as a legitimate ideology to base educational policy on (Christensen & Lægreid, 2007; Goldspink, 2007; Kimber & Ehrich, 2010; Lorenz, 2012). Christensen and Lægreid (2007) feel that the general dissatisfaction with the outcomes of NPM, even amongst politicians, will lead to a new era of collaboration and value-based management that re-establishes a unified culture combatting the current feelings of disloyalty and mistrust in the public sector. Whether this whole of government approach prevails is yet to be seen. However, the unification of some areas of education provision under the federal government body, ACARA (2011), seem to suggest that it is at least possible.

Western Australia's Curriculum Journey

Mirroring the national scene, the state of WA has had a turbulent three decades of mandated curriculum reform with frequent curriculum changes. Table 2.1 summarises the curriculum reform timeline in WA from the 1980s to 2013, including policies that guided state curriculum decisions.

Table 2.1

Curriculum Reform Policy and Packages in Western Australia 1970-2013

Curriculum Reform or Policy	Purpose	Outcome
1980 **Course Coordinating Committee established**	To inquire into non-academic students staying on in senior secondary school due to lack of employment opportunities. (Tully, 2002)	Recommended creating a unit to work with schools (late 1980-1983) to develop appropriate curricula and liaison programs within communities to better enable these students to find employment.
The Beazley Inquiry 1983	Government wanted to test the adequacy of most aspects of WA's education system in 12 months	Recommended that advanced, intermediate and basic levels in the Achievement Certificate subjects be dismantled and that the emphasis on 'core' subjects eased as this reflected poorly on basic level students who completed 'optional' subjects.
McGaw Report	A subcommittee of the Beazley Inquiry.	Emphasis of secondary education was "…no longer to prepare students for matriculation but to cater for the majority

		average student" (Tully, 2002, p. 119).
Unit Curriculum **1980-1998**	Unit Curriculum was developed to meet the changing needs of senior secondary students.	A shift from putting the acquisition of academic knowledge first, to equally valuing the acquisition of skills (Tully, 2002).
Outcomes Based Education (OBE)	OBE was designed in line with NPM theories to allow students freedom to be taught and assessed in line with their talents and abilities.	WA curriculum and assessment models influenced by this ideology –included the years K-10 CF and its assessment guide (the Student Outcome Statements (SOS)), along with the years 11-12 CoS, delivered in several phases (Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Education and Health Standing Committee, 2006).
Curriculum Framework (CF) **1999-2014**	The CF outlined broad concepts to be covered from K-10. It was underpinned by core values and mapped progression of key skills and understandings.	The CF and its accompanying SOS were criticised as being too nebulous making it hard to follow, allowing for huge variations in implementation and increasing teacher workload (Andrich, 2009).
Courses of Study (CoS) **2005-**	The Western Australian Certificate of Education CoS were designed to allow traditionally non-university pathway subjects to contribute to a tertiary entrance score (TES).	Implementation was undermined by poor management including not giving teachers enough time to prepare, providing a detailed syllabus, realising the practicalities of giving a TES based on school work, providing adequate support whilst changing content (Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Constable, Hames, & Waldron, 2005; Education and Health Standing Committee, 2006; Kessell; Tognolini, 2006).
Australian Curriculum (AC) 2013-	Developed to meet Melbourne Declaration's common goals for education (ACARA, 2010).	This curriculum reform is presently in its initial implementation stage.

The effects of NPM on curriculum reform in WA can be seen in Table 2.1. This ideology has been influential from as early as the 1980s through the Beazley inquiry and McGaw report (Tully, 2002) where, according to the Education Department of Western Australia (EDWA), they proposed a secondary education "…designed to meet 'the changing needs and expectations of individuals and the community to the end of this century and probably beyond'" (Tully, 2002, p.

119). These goals of changing curriculum to match the changing needs of society, are reflections of both the globalisation of society and the need to cater for individual students in a free market public sector (Goldspink, 2007), ideologies closely associated with NPM.

The development of outcomes based education (OBE) was not novel to WA (Kessell, 2006), or even Australia, and was the format of choice for curriculum provision amongst NPM influenced education systems in the OECD and beyond (Berlach & McNaught, 2007). OBE based reforms in other Australian states experienced more success than those in WA (Kessell, 2006) due to the implementation process of both the CF and CoS in WA (Andrich, 2009; Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Constable, et al., 2005; Education and Health Standing Committee, 2006).

Some of the issues with OBE in WA included change fatigue, dissatisfaction and exhaustion for some teachers created by continuous curriculum change and increased workload over the course of a decade (Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Education and Health Standing Committee, 2006; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007). Unfortunately, these negative changes occurred at a time that performative accountability measures popular in NPM were already increasing teachers' workloads (Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007). Concurrently, whilst teachers workloads were being increased exponentially, there was a recognised lack of appropriate support, training and resources available to them (Education and Health Standing Committee, 2006; O'Neill, 2007), and time lines for implementation were often unrealistic (Constable, et al., 2005; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007). It is little wonder that evaluation of both the CF and the Curriculum Improvement Program (CIP) (which was to rectify issues with Courses of Study) indicated that teachers were in general negative about the implementation processes of these reforms (Andrich, 2009; Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007).

These issues indicate that WA teachers have recently experienced a series of mandated curriculum reforms known to have been negatively received and

fraught with problems. The effect of this background on WA teachers' perceptions of and experiences with mandated curriculum reform in general, and the AC in particular, will be discussed in terms of the participants' responses in later chapters.

The Creation of the Australian Curriculum

Federation left education provision in Australia fragmented and under state control. There were many pushes for centralisation of education that failed before the AC was created, and at times it appeared that a national curriculum in Australia was an impossibility (Seddon, 2001) or at least undesirable (Marsh & Prideaux, 1993). The movement towards a national approach to curriculum began in 1989, when Australia's education ministers met in Hobart, creating a policy that outlined common student outcomes which the states agreed to meet (McGaw, 2010). The resulting agreement is referred to as the Hobart Declaration.

The following table (2.2) outlines this and similar national policy that has allowed for the creation of the AC. The information has been adapted from McGaw's (2010) outline of the same, and additional sources are noted in the table where appropriate.

Table 2.2

Policy and Actions leading to the Creation of the Australian Curriculum

Policy/Practice	Summary
The Hobart Declaration 1989	Common Agreed National Goals for Schooling were created. Curriculum development based on these goals ensued.
The Adelaide Declaration 1999	State, territory and Commonwealth Ministers of Education agreed to continue developing curriculum and associated nationally recognised assessment.
The Statements of Learning 2003	The ministerial council agreed that Statements of Learning be created for English, mathematics, science and civics and citizenship for greater national consistency. They described essential skills, knowledge, understandings and capacities to be attained by the end of Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.
National Assessment Program –Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)	Statements of Learning paved the way for standardised national assessment of these objectives at the start of term 2 for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.
Interim National Curriculum Board April 2008	The iNCB was created to begin national curriculum development, paving the way for ACARA.
Public AC Consultation Nov 2008- Feb 2009	Framing papers for the national curriculum in English, mathematics, science and history, created by the iNCB, were opened for consultation.
The Melbourne Declaration 2008	The Ministerial Council agreed to develop a national curriculum to provide a high quality of life for all Australians by helping them to become competitive in a global economy (MCEETYA, 2008).
Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Agency (ACARA) created May 2009	ACARA's board includes representatives from each state and territory and the Catholic and independent school systems. Shape papers for English, mathematics, science and history were released along with the Overarching Shape of the AC paper, based on feedback on the iNCB's framing papers.
Drafting and consultation and revision on the AC for History, English, Maths and Science (K-10) May 2009-Dec 2010	Phase One of the AC involved creating K-10 curriculum in English, mathematics, science and history from the shape papers. This involved periods of revision, public and stakeholder consultation (but not all teachers directly). Drafts were trialled by some schools and expert panels provided feedback. Public awareness advertising occurred to direct teachers and concerned public to engage in feedback procedures.
AC for Core areas published Oct 2011	Implementation currently in progress.

As can be seen in Table 2.2, momentum towards the establishment of an Australian national curriculum built slowly from the initial foundations of The Hobart Declaration in 1989. In 2008, a federal Labor government was elected with significant support within the state governments on an election promise to introduce a national curriculum (Rudd & Smith, 2007). This allowed Labor to reach agreements regarding the creation of national education policy, that were not possible under previous governments with less comprehensive control (Seddon, 2001). The Labor government created the national bodies: Australian Curriculum and Reporting Agency (ACARA), and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) within the same governing period. ACARA then instigated the MySchool website and the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), concerned with the standardised testing of students and accountability of schools (ACARA, 2011) in true to New Public Management (NPM) form. These uniquely national bodies and practices will continue to direct education in Australia into the future.

Table 2.2 also indicates that only four Learning Areas (LAs), English, mathematics, science and history, were initially shaped then opened for consultation and eventually created into draft curricula. The curricula for each of these Phase One LAs were expected to be released as functioning documents at the end of 2010. However, they were not formally approved by the states until October 2011. In the meantime a second phase of curriculum development was underway. Languages, Geography and the Arts were drafted and shaped next. After this "Australian education ministers have agreed that subsequent curriculum development will focus on … health and physical education, information and communications technology, design and technology, economics, business, and civics and citizenship" (ACARA, p. 1). The long debated national curriculum is undoubtedly here to stay for some time.

The following subsections seek to answer the questions: why is the concept of national curricula still so enticing to many Australians and what will be different about the AC for WA teachers? These areas are important to discuss given that they will affect WA teachers perceptions of and experiences with the AC, possibly influencing the outcomes of this study.

Why have an Australian national curriculum?

Australia is a unique country with features that would make a national curriculum appealing to many. For example, for the approximately 70,000 to 80,000 (Manzo, 2009, p. 22; O'Kelly, 2007) students a year who cross state borders, the gaps experienced in their education could be reduced. However, as the AC does not have prescribed times to teach certain content, this justification may not be as straightforward as it appears (O'Kelly, 2007). The current varied curriculum between states is being "blamed for regional disparities and achievement gaps" (Manzo, 2009, p. 22) and also being used as a rationale for a united system. However, this does not take into account the sharp socio-economic divide or differing cultural backgrounds between regions (Thomson, 2008) in Australia which could be affecting student outcomes. Attempts have been made to close social divides in the UK through national curricula, although this has been less than successful to date (Thomson, 2008).

The rationale for the creation of the AC given by federal and state ministers in the Melbourne Declaration, and later by the ACARA board, has idealistic and global politically positive connotations. These include the proposed uniformity of provision already discussed, accountability and globalisation (ACARA, 2010; MCEETYA, 2008), implying that NPM ideologies are still influencing curriculum reform in Australia (Goldspink, 2007; Kimber & Ehrich, 2010; Lorenz, 2012).

What will be different about the AC for WA teachers?

The AC involves a number of changes for WA teachers. The incorporation of new subject matter (as Cross Curriculum Priorities) and new skills (General Capabilities) across all subjects will challenge some teachers who are not trained to deliver these understandings and skills.,

For example, Australia's Aboriginal history, business relations with Asia, Australia's multicultural population and education for sustainability are stated as necessary knowledge sets for Australia's development (ACARA, 2010). Whilst some teachers in WA incorporated some of the above subjects into their curriculum previously, all teachers will now be expected to incorporate all of the

above into their day to day teaching with the introduction of the Cross Curriculum Priorities. The justification of inclusion of these aspects in curriculum, and stakeholders' combined reactions to these reasons (see Bachelard & Stark, 2010 for an indication of early public opinion), will influence the WA teacher perceptions of the AC, whilst the issue of whether appropriate resources and support are available for this new subject matter will influence teacher experiences with the AC.

ACARA states it has designed the AC to address the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs' (MCEETYA) ideals as presented in The Melbourne Declaration (ACARA, 2009). The design purportedly takes into account globalisation, socio–economic differences and traits that MCEETYA agreed were necessary to develop in future citizens, seen in the outlining of essential skills, knowledge and capabilities to meet this end (ACARA, 2009). This is to be achieved by supplementing the finite subjects with seven 'general capabilities' and three cross-curriculum dimensions. The general capabilities consist of: literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology, critical and creative thinking, intercultural understanding, ethical behaviour and personal and social competence.

The three cross curriculum dimensions and many of the general capabilities were previously taught within the broad learning area 'Society and Environment'. Now they are to be focused on in more depth throughout all learning areas as they are seen as essential knowledge for 21st Century living (meeting NPM's needs of globalisation). Most non-Society and Environment teachers are not trained to deliver Society and Environment content or values. How then, will ACARA allow for successful provision of these dimensions?

The concept of essential knowledge is also far from unproblematic. As White points out, the issue of globalisation is fraught with misunderstanding as many educationalists have differing views of the phenomenon (2004). The many people involved in the creation of the national curriculum are likely to have different understandings of the needs presented by 'globalisation'. There is "…considerable debate about the effects of a globalised and 'evidence-based'

approach to school policy and management on the substantive work of schools and on what is now prioritised in relation to curriculum" (Yates & Collins, 2010, p. 90). It is still unclear how the seven general capabilities and cross curricula dimensions will be assessed, so their future is indistinct.

The LA which was previously called Society and Environment (S&E) in WA has also undergone significant internal changes. Previously this LA was taught in a combined cross-curricula method, however the AC sees it divided into its constituent parts (with the exception of Economics): History, Geography, and Civics and Citizenship. These LAs are now to be taught as finite subjects for the first time in Western Australia (WA). The reshuffling of S&E has thus caused extra training requirements across the whole high school staff and a significant alteration of the content delivered by S&E staff. It is possible these alterations affected teacher perceptions of the AC, due to an increased workload brought on by the need to learn new content, informing some of the findings of this study.

Mandated Curriculum Reform Summary

It is widely acknowledged that WA teachers have experienced a period of turbulent upheaval due to continuous curriculum change, that has been on the most part, poorly implemented (Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Constable, et al., 2005; Education and Health Standing Committee, 2006; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007; Kessell; O'Neill, 2007). This history of curriculum reform in WA has created a number of issues for WA teachers; mistrust, change fatigue, an increased workload whilst at the same time increasing accountability and reducing available resources and support. It is with these experiences that WA teachers are now examining the AC, assessing its potential benefits and problems. This history has had a direct impact on the participant responses in this study and will be discussed in more detail in the Chapters to come.

Factors Affecting Education Reform

> There is …no shortage of evidence that educational change is a difficult process, or of ways that change can be undermined. Changes may be poorly conceptualized; poorly researched; too ambitious; too fast or too slow; the changes may not be pursued in isolation; commitment may not be sustained over time; parents may be

opposed; and leaders may be too controlling or ineffectual. (Earl & Katz, 2000, p. 97)

As Earl and Katz (2000) describe, educational reform can be wrought with strife. The possible ineffectiveness of mandated education reform implementation for a variety of reasons is widely accepted (Cohen & Ball, 1990; Earl & Katz, 2000; Smith & Lovat, 2003) as are the negative effects of poor change management on staff morale and commitment (Cole, 2010; Hayes, 2010). Therefore, it is important to understand the reasons why reforms often fail and how this can affect teachers before undertaking research into teachers' perceptions of, and experiences with implementing mandated curriculum reform.

Curriculum reform is part of the larger subset; educational reform (Smith & Lovat, 2003), in this section examples of factors known to influence the whole set –educational reform- will be included, as each type of education reform has commonalities, or more increasingly concurrence (Bailey, 2000; Bernerth, Walker, & Harris, 2011) with curriculum reform. This section presents an overview of education reform before reviewing how teacher disposition and other known factors either enhance or restrict reform implementation. These subsections are generalised and pertinent to reform in many countries, however in Australia, these reform implementation factors are shaped by the overarching management style currently in place.

Education Reform

Educational reform is not a new phenomenon with the most notable advocate for reform, John Dewey, beginning his work in the late 1800's (Bailey, 2000). Despite over 100 years of reform effort, little radical change has endured, schooling is very similar now to schooling in Dewey's time (Bailey, 2000). This is because education in most countries is managed by a bureaucracy and as Cuban and Deal state (cited in Bailey, 2000, p. 133) "bureaucratic change processes tend to simply recreate themselves". Such change as does happen, is filtered through past reforms and it is common to find vestiges of past (often ideologically incompatible) reforms in action, along with several new ideologically mismatched strategies being implemented (Wood, 2007).

These conflicts of interest in any school reform process are augmented by the decision making bureaucrats' assumptions about the roles, responsibilities and efficacy of teachers (Wood, 2007), which fail to take into account teacher perceptions and experiences. Most educational reform processes are dynamic involving feelings, perceptions, resources, supports and conflict (Smith & Lovat, 2003). Reform consists of three phases; initiation, persuasion and implementation (Burgess, Robertson, & Patterson, 2010) and different feelings, perceptions, supports and conflicts are possible at each stage (Hayes, 2010). The way these phases are managed range from top-down, to down-up styles, each with their own benefits (Smith & Lovat, 2003).

The change management style currently used in education reform in Australia is top-down –political and coercive (Smith & Lovat, 2003) and heavily influenced by the discredited NPM theory (Goldspink, 2007; Kimber & Ehrich, 2010). Coercive management can be useful in bringing about rapid lip service change, but it is not effective in changing people's perceptions or feelings and therefore does not lead to the ultimate goal, institutionalised change (Smith & Lovat, 2003). The dominant culture of the school can affect the implementation of a policy (Harris & Jones, 2010). Between the system and the individual school there are factors that can improve the likelihood of institutionalisation of an innovation or add further barriers to its occurrence.

Disposition and Reform

Given the teacher perceptions and experiences focus of this thesis, this subsection discusses teacher disposition as a factor that can either enhance or impede education reform implementation. This subsection outlines the definition of disposition used in this thesis, the importance of teacher disposition to reform (Commitment, Motivation and Good Will) and the effects change management of education reform can have on disposition (Teachers as Change Agents, Autonomy, Change Fatigue and Burnout).

Recently, research into the disposition of educators has focused on disposition as a tool for performance improvement (Nixon, Dam, & Packard, 2010; Notar, Riley, Taylor, Thornburg, & Cargill, 2009). This is due to a number of teacher

accreditation and accountability measures introduced in America that focus on teacher disposition as a measurable factor that determines teacher proficiency (Dottin, 2009; Nixon, et al., 2010; Notar, et al., 2009; Thornton, 2006). From the resulting literature, it is apparent that a universal definition of disposition is still forthcoming (Dottin, 2009). Larry Freeman (2007) ascertained that the alternative terms temperament, traits and habits were being used instead of 'disposition' (Dottin, 2009, p. 83). These alternatives, and the American trend to monitor their existence as part of standardising teacher performance (Thornton, 2006), indicate that research into teacher disposition and its affective abilities is as yet inadequate.

In terms of teacher disposition towards mandated curriculum reform, a holistic cognitive-development view of disposition has been applied in this thesis. Borrowing from Thornton, dispositions are

> …habits of mind including both cognitive and affective attributes that filter one's knowledge, skills, and beliefs and impact the action one takes... They are manifested within relationships as meaning-making occurs with others and they are evidenced through interactions in the form of discourse. (Thornton, 2006, p. 62, italics removed)

This definition echoes Ritchhart's (2001) view on dispositions as a collection of cognitive tendencies that encapsulate "…not only what one can do, one's abilities, but also what one is disposed to do. Thus dispositions address the often-noticed gap between our abilities and our actions" (in Thornton, 2006, p. 54). Additionally, dispositions are not fixed, Dewey (1938) believed that through our actions we change the world around us, and through these learning experiences, future behaviour is conditioned (in Dottin, 2009). Dewey (1938) called these changes habits, which are an acquired predisposition to act (in Dottin, 2009).

To teachers' experiences of mandated curriculum reform, the role of disposition has a number of pertinent attributes. According to Dewey, (in Dottin, 2009) teachers can be predisposed to respond to reforms in certain ways due to past reforms. Also current reforms are filtered through a teacher's cognitive and affective core (Thornton, 2006), which then impact their decisions. The following

Disposition subsections focus on areas which are known to influence this cognitive/affective core of teachers, with varying impacts on their performance.

Commitment, Motivation and Good Will

> [Under current new public management influenced reforms] where the relationship between policy and outcomes is unclear, the separation of policy from delivery limits the possibility for harvesting institutional intelligence about 'what works' and may lead to a reduction in the quality of policy and programme effectiveness by reducing the institutional capacity for learning. Perhaps most concerning is its negative potential impact on trust, and, as a consequence, teacher commitment and morale. (Goldspink, 2007, p. 35)

Commitment, motivation and goodwill are aspects of a teachers' disposition that whilst being internal can be affected by experiences (Goldspink, 2007; Thornton, 2006). Currently trends show these attributes in teachers deteriorating over time for a variety of reasons, alongside those outlined above by Goldspink (2007).

There are a variety of internal and external influences on teacher commitment including work/political context (i.e. through deprofessionalisation or decrease in autonomy) (Goldspink, 2007), personal context (age, home life, (Bailey, 2000)). Fraser, Draper and Taylor (cited in Day, et al., 2005, p. 564) found that commitment appears to diminish over time, the loss of which is "…particularly problematic in relation not only to retention but also effectiveness of experienced teachers in …Australian classrooms" suggesting that teacher commitment is a resource requiring nurturing and feeding. Smith and Lovat (2003) concur, believing commitment to be essential to successful change in schools. As do Harris and Jones (2010) who found those with greater commitment more likely to achieve significant and pervasive change at a classroom level and possibly influential on the system. Improving or maintaining teacher commitment through sound management of the external factors in this age of deprofessionalisation and deficit (in the teacher) based professional development courses, does not appear to be a priority for education bureaucracies (Bailey, 2000). Perhaps it should be given the proven effects of high, sustained teacher commitment.

Motivation can be internal or external, with internal motivation being widely accepted as most beneficial to job satisfaction and performance. In recent years, efforts to motivate the implementation of curriculum reform have been external and increasingly coercive internationally, causing suspicion and anxiety (Wood, 2007). In Australia this move is reflected in the introduction of standardised testing and discussion of introducing pay per performance for Australian teachers (Creagh, 2012; Ferrari & Maher, 2010). This type of coercive motivation is useful in bringing about quick change but not institutionalised, paradigm shifting change in teachers (Smith & Lovat, 2003). Bringing about lasting change requires this paradigm shift as policies are filtered by teachers according to their pedagogical beliefs and academic knowledge about their subjects (Cohen & Ball, 1990). Without changing these foundations, little lasting change will occur.

Intrinsic motivation is not an infinite resource. When reforms appear to promote little gain whilst incurring an excessive workload without external support, teachers internal motivation wanes (Carey, 1988). In his paper based on personal experiences with mandated reform Turley states that it is the "…intersection of time, workload and mandate that affects the intensity and quality of the effort to implement current mandates …" (Turley, 2005, p. 138). In this situation teachers can become frustrated or confused, impeding their uptake of a new policy, whereas others will pick and choose only aspects of the reform that will fit into their normal practice (Earl & Katz, 2000).

De-professionalisation, Autonomy and Self-Efficacy

One of the main criticisms levelled at national curricula, and perhaps the most pertinent to this research, is the 'deprofessionalisation' of teachers. Yates and Collins (2010), and Whitty (2010), explain that because of the increasing precedent of procedural knowledge being taught above all else (in preparation for globalisation), learning for the prestige of being (academically) knowledgeable, is slowly being prescribed out of school systems. As a consequence of this loss of academic knowledge the status of education and teachers is being diminished. The decline of public perception of teachers in WA is a known contributor to teacher attrition rates in the state (Education

Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007). This receding status is exacerbated by taking away of teachers' responsibility for curriculum planning and pedagogy during mandated prescribed curriculum reform.

What is unclear is the affect that this 'de-professionalising' (Cullingford & Oliver, 2001, p. viii; Goodson, 1994) has on a teacher's ability to implement curriculum changes, and specifically the implementation of Australia's national curriculum. It is accepted that people dealing with workplace change are vulnerable (Smith & Lovat, 2003) and that "Educational changes very often challenge teachers' perceptions of themselves and their own competencies, challenges which may affect their own self-concept and esteem" (Smith & Lovat, 2003, p. 210). Further, teachers are known to internalise other forms of work stress as a negative reflection of their abilities which is paramount to personal failure (McCormick & Barnett, 2011). Therefore teachers trying to implement changes in this era of de-professionalisation, especially those who find these changes stressful or difficult to cope with, are at greater contextual risk of having their perception of self-efficacy diminished.

Perceived self-efficacy is important in any field. In education, research has shown teachers with a greater sense of self-efficacy are more innovative and committed to the profession (they serve for longer) (Harris & Jones, 2010). Self-efficacy could thus be a factor in determining job satisfaction. Autonomy, which is in decline in the teaching profession as part of the deprofessionalisation phenomenon, is also known to be positively related to job satisfaction amongst the well-educated (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009). Deci and Ryan (2008) go as far as to say that autonomy is a basic human need for optimal functioning.

This combination of an environment where teachers are being actively deprofessionalised, where their autonomy is diminishing and their perceived self-efficacy is affected, has a compound effect. "Teachers who gradually perceive themselves as less autonomously motivated and effacious in accomplishing their classroom tasks, even as they perceive greater pressure to do so, are more likely to be more exhausted at the end of the school year" (Fernet, Guay, Senécal, & Austin, 2012, p. 522). This exhaustion is linked to both

change fatigue and burnout which have further implications for the health of individual teachers, the profession and outcomes for students. These long term negative changes in a teacher's disposition are both affected by and affect mandated curriculum reform.

Change Fatigue

The concept of change fatigue is commonly used in Western Australian teacher rhetoric (see Andrich, 2009 for examples; Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007), likely owing to the number of reforms implemented in the last 20 years. Very little research has been published on the phenomenon of change fatigue and its effects on teachers implementing mandated curriculum reform, although it seems to be gaining popularity. Change fatigue, being tired of change, adaptive failure, future shock and innovation fatigue are all terms used to describe the same process. Over time workers become less able or enthusiastic (Bernerth, et al., 2011; Graham, 1997) to implement changes as a result of depleting their personal resources to deal with such changes (Bernerth, et al., 2011) through having to do so too often.

Out of all of the factors affecting teacher perceptions and predispositions towards reforms, change fatigue is the one most pertinent to all Western Australian classrooms. It is the silent killer of mandatory reforms, an unknown and under researched (Bernerth, et al., 2011) combatant that does not draw attention to itself like burnout. A teacher working in Western Australia for 10 years has gone through an extraordinary amount of educational change; change fatigue needs to be seriously considered in any examination of teacher perceptions of, and experiences with, change management, job satisfaction and burnout. It would be very difficult for any professional to work through so many changes and retain a positive disposition to future mandated reforms (Bernerth, et al., 2011; Burgess, et al., 2010; Cuban, 1990; Graham, 1997; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009).

Burnout

Burnout is a term used to explain a range of symptoms including emotional and physical exhaustion, cynicism and diminishing feelings of personal efficacy (Chang, 2009; Maslach, Leiter, & Schaufeli, 2009; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Pyhältö, et al., 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009); cynicism and reduced perceived efficacy being the symptoms that separate burnout from normal work stress (Pyhältö, et al., 2011). Whilst the symptoms of exhaustion and cynicism are the hallmarks of burnout (Pyhältö, et al., 2011), teachers suffering from burnout experience a myriad of symptoms, that can be caused by a number of factors.

Leiter and Maslach (2011, p. 3) describe burnout as the "… biggest occupational hazard of the twenty-first century. It's a phenomenon that has been increasing everywhere…poisoning the increasingly alienated, disillusioned, even angry relationship people today have with the world of work." Although the phenomenon appeared first in the social sciences literature (Chang, 2009), and is experienced in many other fields (Maslach, et al., 2009; Maslach, et al., 2001), it is suggested that teachers are more prone to burnout than other professionals (Chang, 2009; Pyhältö, et al., 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009). This predisposition is thought to be based on the above average level of stress teachers face (Pyhältö, et al., 2011) -a significant known contributing factor, combined with emotionally draining, complex work situations (Maslach & Leiter cited in Pyhältö, et al., 2011), an increase in teacher accountability (including time pressure and heavy workload) whilst at the same time systemic and parental support in schools appears to be decreasing globally (Pyhältö, et al., 2011).

The development of burnout in the teaching profession is popularly thought of as a gradual process in response to the above stressors (Fernet, et al., 2012; Pyhältö, et al., 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009). However, the concept of burnout as an end stage of a process is contradicted by Chang (2009) in her detailed review of teacher burnout literature. Chang (2009) suggests that burnout is most likely to occur in mid-career teachers and can be overcome with appropriate, revitalising professional development as well as fostering an awareness of habitual thinking patterns and their effect of heightening the dimensions associated with burnout.

To teachers, the working environment is complex and dynamic (Pyhältö, et al., 2011) which leads to a myriad of interacting factors potentially influencing burnout. In an effort to categorise burnout factors from a wide range of past research, Chang (2009) divided the possible factors examined by others, into three overarching categories. She describes these categories as individual factors (age, coping strategies etc.), organisational factors (class size, work demands etc.) and transactional factors. The transactional factors are those that occur in the cross over between the individual and organisational factors. The individual factors encompass the individual's disposition towards reform. In recent years educational research into teacher burnout has focused largely on the transactional factors (Chang, 2009) as is reflected in a number of studies (see Fernet, et al., 2012; Pyhältö, et al., 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009).

This focus of this thesis is to present teacher perceptions of and experiences with, mandated curriculum reform in Western Australia. Although the exact number of teachers in Western Australia experiencing burnout is unknown, it is conceivable that it is high given the current teacher attrition rate (Day, et al., 2005; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007) and the increasing nature of job-demands (Toffler cited in Smith & Lovat, 2003). Teacher dispositions play a significant role in the eventual exhibition or avoidance of burnout. Given the myriad of factors outlined in this section which could be negatively affecting WA teachers' disposition towards implementing mandated curriculum reform, the probability of burnout influencing results needs to be considered when examining teacher perceptions of the AC.
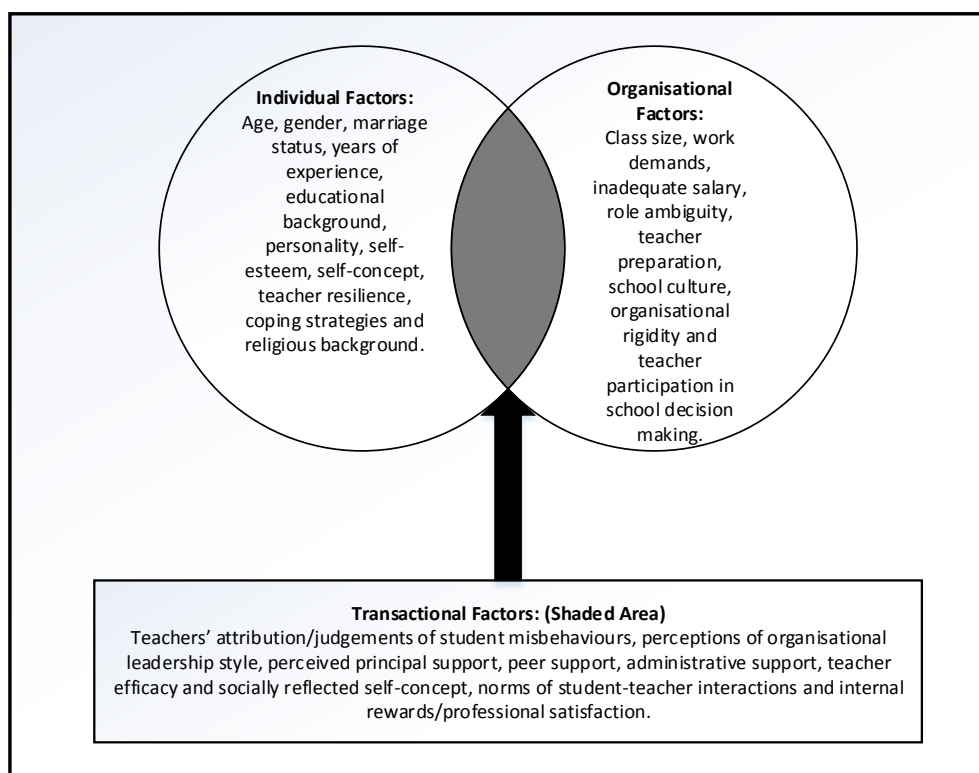
Figure 2.2: **The movement from individual and organisational factors to transactional factors (Chang, 2009)**

If it is taken as given that the three burnout dimensions (depersonalisation, reduced perceived self-efficacy and exhaustion) are an individual's response to their work environment, then it is feasible that the above burnout factors (organisational, individual and transactional) will elicit different responses from each individual, given their personal coping strategies and circumstances. Thus, what could prompt burnout in one teacher could be manageable by the next (Chang, 2009).

Known Factors that Enhance School Reform

The disposition section focused on the internal processes that affect the way an individual reacts to change in the workplace. This section focuses on the external or systematic factors that are known to enhance school reform. The first of the following contributing elements discussed in this sub-section (rationale, communication, professional learning communities, effective leadership, and autonomy) are those which have been proven to positively affect institutionalised change or change teachers' values and attitudes towards a desired change; increasing the previously discussed internal factors;

34

commitment and motivation. Commitment and motivation are the most powerful contributors to effective reform, as without these no institutionalised changes will take place (Hayes, 2010; Smith & Lovat, 2003). Whilst the elements outlined here are by no means exhaustive, a lack of any one element can lead to failed implementation. That is not to say that the inclusion of all these elements is a guarantee either. They simply bolster teachers understanding of, belief in or happiness to work with, education reform.

Rationale

The rationale for change is an important factor in the success of the initiative as each person needs to understand the change (and the need for change) in the same way and this takes time and resources (Smith & Lovat, 2003). A rationale is an important avenue of the initiation phase where people create their first impressions of a reform (Burgess, et al., 2010). Successful rationales are created in collaboration with staff as "…people may disagree about a proposed solution, not because of the solution but because of a difference in perception about the problem for which the solution is proposed" (Smith & Lovat, 2003, p. 209). This need for all staff members to have a common understanding of the problem and input into the proposed solution is essential to positive and common perceptions of the reform being created within the staff. The assumption that all staff should be able to recognise the need for change without being involved in the process is flawed. It is based on the assumption that human beings only require a logical argument to change our ways, but this view omits that human perceptions are subjective and that we operate to further our own interests (Smith & Lovat, 2003).

While it is true that many authors (Hughes, 1990; Joan, 2010; Kerin & Comber, 2008; Manzo, 2009; McRae, 1989; Thomson, 2008) have deliberated on the usefulness of an Australian national curriculum, it is unclear if WA teachers have been given a clear rationale of the educational benefits of this reform in comparison to the one they are already implementing, by their employer. The national body ACARA (2010) released a one page rationale, *Why have an Australian Curriculum?* This is available on their website, but has not been

actively disseminated to teaching staff. What is clear is that WA high school teachers have had little input into the initiation phase of this reform, which means that it is unlikely they all have a common understanding of the need to reform or a common understanding of why the AC is an appropriate solution.

Communication

One of the most effective ways to successfully review the change process and sidestep possible people management issues, (your workforce not understanding the need for change, for example) is good communication (Hayes, 2010; Smith & Lovat, 2003). Communication is important from the outset as "…shared mental models need to be fluid and open to modification if they are to provide an effective basis for assessing the environment and planning action" (Hayes, 2010, p. 308). Also, there needs to be multiple channels of communication between those involved in the change process. "Poor communication breeds suspicion and the breaking down of group cohesion…" (Smith & Lovat, 2003, p. 211). This implies that best practice includes a give and take of ideas between internal stakeholders to influence ongoing action. Fear of negative feedback and negative views of employee's commitment to implement change can lead to an organisation developing 'employee proof' structures and processes, including centralised decision making and a lack of feedback avenues (Cohen & Ball, 1990). Currently in WA there are no formal feedback structures for teachers to comment on educational policy, apart from the online consultation carried out by ACARA regarding the AC.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Training is a key issue in the management of mandatory education reform. It is one thing to develop an insightful and detailed assessment or curriculum reform and quite another to realise the reform in its entirety in practice. As previously discussed, teachers filter instructional policies through their established practice and previous experiences, beliefs, and knowledge, making implementation unique for each person (Cohen & Ball, 1990) and not necessarily that which was intended (Bee Bee, 2008).

An effective way to ensure everyone on staff has the same understanding of a reform is the use of a collaborative style of professional development; the Professional Learning Community (PLC). PLC's are a well-researched, high output form of professional development (Burgess, et al., 2010; Harris & Jones, 2010). "Collaborative teacher-led learning within a centre has become a key indicator of effective educational environments that support the engagement of teachers in meaningful change" (Burgess, et al., 2010, p. 52). The PLC model is unique in its proven ability to build the capacity to change in participants (Harris & Jones, 2010) by transforming their attitudes and beliefs (Burgess, et al., 2010) or serving as a network that supports participants, expands their professional roles and perceived self-efficacy (Harris & Jones, 2010) all of which lead to improved teacher efficiency carrying out reforms. These benefits come at a price though, there are a number of management and contextual factors that need to work to sustain a PLC. In America and Canada PLC's are facilitated by a trained and paid specialist (Burgess, et al., 2010). AITSL has opted for the less successful option of online self-paced learning networks (Niesz, 2007; Trust, 2012) for curriculum reform leaders.

Leadership

> …at the heart of school capacity are principals focused on the development of teachers' knowledge and skills, professional community, program coherence and technical resources (Fullan, 2002, p. 16).

Leadership during times of reform requires a special skill set. Creating sustained school change requires the ability to work collaboratively, to delegate and to create an engaging school atmosphere (Ylimaki & Jacobson, 2013). Of these skills, collaboration, indeed, creating a collaborative leadership team, has been found to be highly successful in promoting educational reform (Gano-Phillips et al., 2011). In WA, principals are also expected to play a mentoring role (Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007). Effective leadership during educational reform encourages both active participation in change and can help to sustain reform initiatives over time, an area which is often problematic (Harris & Jones, 2010). School leaders are currently experiencing increased accountability

pressures (Ylimaki & Jacobson, 2013) and administrative duties, both of which detract from the time they can spend working with teachers towards meaningful change (Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007), increasing their need to be effective collaborative leaders.

Barriers to Successful Reform

The preceding elements known to contribute to successful education reform, can also be viewed as barriers to reform, or indicative of the likelihood of reform failure in their absence. The remaining barriers to educational reform discussed in this section include systemic hindrances, teachers as simultaneous change agents and targets, lack of time, resources and workload and value adding. Although not an exhaustive list, these barriers are well known external or systemic contributors to education reform failure.

Systemic Influences

Institutional change is hampered by a number of barriers whilst paradoxically being a barrier to change in and of itself. Andersen (2007, p. 42) explains that policies are shaped within the possibilities of the institution's rules and norms, steering "…individual choices in certain directions and thus both restrict[ing] and mak[ing] action possible." There are a number of ways that the current institution of education affects teachers' abilities to successfully implement mandated curriculum reform.

As a by-product of the industrial era teachers are by and large still working in separate classrooms, and separate departments (Smith & Lovat, 2003). Collaboration and co-operation; essential strategies that build group cohesion and induce effective change (Smith & Lovat, 2003) are actively discouraged by such divisions. Also, most organisations produce a tangible product, the success of which can be measured in terms of profits; education is not like this (Smith & Lovat, 2003) making it difficult to identify or celebrate the successes teachers achieve through changing their practice. These issues are compounded by the nature of schools, which are usually part of a centrally controlled system which makes multiple concurrent demands for change (Smith & Lovat, 2003), draining

the resources of schools and teachers to meet requirements of each change adequately.

Additionally, it has been proposed that reforms are unable to impact school practices long term as school culture is ultimately self-replicating (Mangez, 2010). One possible explanation for this is that schools are part of a system driven by capitalist ideology and schools only work to perpetuate this ideology (Cuban, 1990). "Some reforms are for display, not fundamental change. Other reforms that strengthen prevailing beliefs do get implemented…" (Cuban, 1990, p. 10). Politically, differing from the prevailing model is undesirable as questions could be raised as to the credibility of the approach from opponents (Cuban, 1990), thus strengthening the conditions for the institution to replicate itself.

The system also actively discourages interference by teachers in educational reform. Apart from their normal avenues as a citizen, and perhaps their union membership, WA teachers have no opportunity to influence education policies as they are being created. They have no voice in altering the organisation or in suggesting improvements for the behaviours they are required to change (in this case, the content they teach and how they assess student learning). The current climate of political education reform seems to aim to teacher proof education by not giving teachers a voice, and using assessment and teacher standards to make sure they exhibit the desired behaviour.

Teachers as Agents and Targets of Change

> …success per se is largely determined by what teachers think about the intended changes….If teachers fail to find any sense or meaning in an intended reform… the change will most likely not succeed. Change managers attempting to implement a radically different educational model, without first clearly thinking through the implications for classroom practice, are likely to encounter a collision of paradigms and with it, create system-wide insecurity and instability. (Berlach & McNaught, 2007, p. 5)

Change agents traditionally work with those who are required to implement changes on behalf of the agency requiring the change. They use a number of skills to realise the required changes; providing solutions, finding resources,

being a catalyst and negotiating, facilitating and providing feedback on the change process (Smith & Lovat, 2003). Whilst Smith and Lovat (2003) argue that curriculum consultants are the change agents of the education system, it can be seen that teachers are required to do much of the change agent's role themselves or in peer groups. In particular, finding practical solutions and resources for implementing curriculum change is seen to be increasingly left to teachers. As Cohen and Ball (1990) assert: teachers are both the targets and agents of change in mandatory reforms. This is problematic, teachers being relied on to be change agents requires teachers to have the disposition, skills and authority to do so.

Disposition towards change can be affected by a number of factors already discussed like change ownership, believing in the necessity of the reform and a feeling of autonomy and respect during the reform process (Berlach & McNaught, 2007). A lack of ownership of the change will not invite a teacher to take it on-board (Harris & Jones, 2010; Smith & Lovat, 2003). A sound rationale is just as essential to teacher impressions of a reform. "Having the right reforms is not sufficient; there has to be a basis for changing professional practice and for ensuring that schools and teachers drive that change" (Harris & Jones, 2010, p. 173). Reforms that have a well communicated rationale which mirrors a teacher's belief about what is necessary, are more likely to be enacted by that teacher (Bailey, 2000). Unfortunately even with a sound rationale and a high sense of ownership, teacher disposition towards implementing mandated reforms can be soured simply through the mandated, coercive nature of such reforms (Berlach & McNaught, 2007). It is not helpful that many reforms often marginalise teachers leading to its inevitable failure (Bailey, 2000).

Teacher disposition involves two factors; their desire to enact a change and their ability (or skills) to do so (Dottin, 2009). In terms of skills and abilities, these are often the factors that are marginalised by mandated NPM influenced reforms (Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Goldspink, 2007) and at the same time are what makes teachers the targets for change. Teacher authority to enact a mandated reform is an external influence on their ability to act as a change agent. A teacher who is inspired by a reform and thus intrinsically motivated to engage with it, still

meets external systemic barriers during implementation (Bailey, 2000), as the system itself acts to hinder change (Cuban, 1990). Not having the authority to make structural changes within the system hinders teachers from realising the potential in reform, frustrating the teacher (Bailey, 2000) and having ongoing effects on their disposition towards mandated reform. This mismatch between desire and ability to implement mandated reform occurs through poor change management as the policymakers and teachers often have little common understanding of what is important and what is possible in terms of educational reform (Bailey, 2000; Constable, et al., 2005; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007; Goldspink, 2007; Kimber & Ehrich, 2010).

Time, Resources, Workload

The available time, internal (disposition) and external (materials, peer support etc.) resources during times of change influence the ability of employees to enact desired changes. When workload becomes an issue, time and resources are usually found to be lacking causing barriers to the implementation of a mandated reform. The following subsection outlines in more detail how (lack of) time and resources can become barriers to change along with how perceived workload affects change implementation.

The issue of time becomes increasingly contentious in coercive mandated changes and creates real work and home life issues for teachers, affecting their ability to successfully implement mandated curriculum reforms. Burgess et al. (2010, p. 53), found that during periods of change, time "…is a consistent concern across all educational settings where teachers attempt to find time to undertake professional development…or to engage with the initiative in the initiation stage." This situation occurred as the teachers who participated in the study already felt they were working at full capacity when new changes were mandated, and were thus unable to take part in necessary activities to meet their increasing obligations (Burgess, et al., 2010). Day et al. (2005) and Turley (2005) expand on this situation by explaining that mandates are increasing the amount of time teachers need to spend on administrative tasks. This either

hinders them from the student centred areas of their role (Day, et al., 2005) or begins to encroach on their personal lives (Turley, 2005) or both.

Resources are another issue which can affect workload and thus the uptake of any particular mandated reform. In Western Australia it has been advised by Andrich (2009) in his report on the implementation of the Curriculum Framework (CF), that the national curriculum is not to be implemented without adequate resourcing, (including in particular a concrete syllabus) taking into account the difficulties that occurred during the last whole-scale curriculum reform in WA, the CF. The lack of externally provided, adequate resources influenced the implementation of the CF; the workload involved in the implementation, particularly for schools with high staff turn overs and less on-site resources than others had an exponentially high workload rate attached to the implementation.

Value Adding and Quality Assurance

> …we cannot separate 'reform' from issues of power. How is power over teachers being asserted …? What power can – and should – teachers claim to define and to control their own profession? At the heart of the …[issue lies] a set of assumptions about the economic, instrumental, and vocational roles of education, as a service industry producing future workers to competency specifications, and subject to the same regulation and managerial controls as any other industry. (Graham, 1997, p. 163)

Value adding and quality assurance are business techniques which aim to make employees responsible for their measurable work outputs. In the government sector these ideas are useful to 'prove' how valuable a particular policy, and thus policymaker, has been. In terms of teaching, value adding and quality assurance simply comes down to accountability. Although accountability has its uses (particularly for enforcing fast but superficial uptake of reforms (Bee Bee, 2008; Smith & Lovat, 2003) and increasing competition between teachers and schools as a way to improve efficiency (Andersen, 2007; Cuban, 1990), for teachers it is a barrier to reform implementation for a variety of reasons.

First, it is not possible to reduce the roles of teachers and the learning achieved by students in their care into a finite number of academic objectives and then

adequately test for these (Eyvind, Knut-Andreas, & Are, 2012; Graham, 1997). By distilling the output of teaching into objectives that can be measured, many important outcomes of education like the ability to think independently and creatively, art appreciation and aesthetics, social skills and hygiene are unmeasurable and thus overlooked. This increases the pressure to focus on those outputs of teaching that teachers are held accountable for (Graham, 1997), which neglects to understand the whole story in terms of the effect a teacher or school has had on a student.

This situation gives rise to the propensity of 'teaching to tests'. Those areas which are objectively measurable and are included in standardised testing (the results of which are now published in Australia on the My School (2011) website making the results high stakes) are more likely to be given extra attention by teachers (Cohen & Ball, 1990). This dictates the areas of a curriculum reform which will be implemented with care and attention and this happens at the detriment of other areas. Graham (1997, p. 173) believes that the culmination of ongoing reduction of education to measurable objectives is "…determined by technical rationality and dehumanised thinking about education…" which will eventually lead to the accountability system collapsing. To teachers, this form of control over curriculum decisions militates against all they know regarding best practice (Millard cited in Thomson, 2008) creating further resistance to the accountability system.

Factors Affecting Education Reform Summary

With such a variety of interdependent factors that influence effective education reform, it is little wonder that reforms often fail to live up to their namesake. Currently, mandated curriculum reform does little to alter the beliefs or practices of teachers (Smith & Lovat, 2003). At the heart of the issue is winning over teachers' minds through sound, best practice based, reform management: because without this, very little progress will be made.

The AC is a reform that spans both state and national arenas. It involves a large scale, reorganising of education in Australia, with national standards of teaching (AITSL, 2013), Independent Public Schools having greater control over their day

to day administration (WADoE, 2013), a new national curriculum, assessment and reporting body to access for information (ACARA) which is responsible for a national standardised testing regime, and also, in WA, the necessity to change the starting year for high school and full time primary education (DoEWA, 2013). For teachers, what they teach and how they assess student achievement, the foundation of their role, is being mandatorily altered. The current climate is rife with organisational change for teachers to navigate whilst implementing a curriculum policy that is targeted at significantly altering their work behaviours (Cohen & Ball, 1990).

Conceptual Framework

The following section brings together Part A of Cycle Two by illustrating the links made between the two sections; Mandated Curriculum Reform in Australia and Factors Affecting Education Reform. The following diagram, Figure 2.3, demonstrates the conceptual framework that underpins this thesis.

Affective Factors

Disposition
Commitment
Motivation
Goodwill

Mistrust and unjustified increased workload

?

Deprofessionalisation
Autonomy
Self Efficacy

OBE and NPM influenced reforms actively deprofessionalised teachers and reduced their autonomy

WA Reform 1980s-2010

Increased federal control

The Australian Curriculum (2010)

Professional Learning Communities
Leadership

Lacked detail, communication centred on after the fact complaints

Some experienced change anxiety and exhaustion

One page rationale and media releases main info. source

Rationale
Communication

NPM and OBE caused increased accountability, workload and curriculum planning

Change Fatigue
Burnout

NAPLAN/AITSL

Systemic influences

Teachers as change agents and change targets

Time, resources and workload
Value adding and quality assurance

Figure 2.3: **Conceptual Web Outlining the Interplay between Affective Reform Factors, Past WA Curriculum Reform and the Australian Curriculum**

Education reform is an intensively studied area and factors that shape teacher reactions to mandated curriculum reforms are well documented. The interconnectedness of these factors with curriculum reform management and implementation in Australia is not always clear. Figure 2.3 outlines the connections made between the affective factors discussed in Part A, and the implementation of past and present reform.

As can be seen in Figure 2.3, WA teachers have experienced mandated curriculum reforms that have lacked a detailed rationale, lacked appropriate resources and support, were potentially deprofessionalising due to their nature, were acknowledged to potentially create mistrust of their employers and increased their accountability and workload (Andrich, 2009; Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Constable, et al., 2005; Education and Health Standing Committee, 2006; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007; Kessell; O'Neill, 2007; Tognolini, 2006). Taken together, these myriad of factors have had a negative impact on past mandated curriculum reforms and it is likely that they have also influenced the disposition of WA teachers towards reform. The question remains, how badly has this past affected the dispositions of practising teachers and is it influencing their reactions to the AC?

Figure 2.3 outlines areas that were already influencing the implementation of the AC at the outset of this study. Two areas were closely related to NPM influenced policy, involving greater accountability and less teacher autonomy. Additionally, rationale and communication could already be seen as an issue for the AC's implementation; a one page rationale and media statements as a source of teacher education about a new reform are indicative of a system that does not value communication with employees. As this study unfolds, further affective areas and issues surrounding the implementation of the AC are discovered and discussed in Chapter VII, leading to recommendations being made in Chapter VII.

Part B: Choosing the Focus Texts

Focus texts were chosen from those initially reviewed in Cycle Two (Part A), for their ability to encompass the scope of my understanding of the research topic before data collection. The literature review presented in the final version of my thesis is markedly different to the history focused proposal version, which was influenced by Gadamer's (2004) ideals of giving a full historical description of a topic before beginning research. Unfortunately word limit issues required the cutting of the curriculum reform history section among others as they were not pertinent to the research findings (as will become clearer in Cycle Four). Thus the following topics are not necessarily represented in the literature review presented in this thesis.

The topics I initially considered and their related focus texts were:

- Curriculum reform history (ancient to grammar schools)- (Hamilton, 1990),
- Modern curriculum reform - (Scott, 2007)
- WA's curriculum reform problems -(Andrich, 2009)
- Teachers' perceptions of reforms -(Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000)
- A rationale for the Australian national curriculum - (ACARA, 2010).

The information from these texts, my background knowledge and prior experiences were combined to create the preliminary lenses in part C of the Cycle Two process.

Part C: Creating the Preliminary Lenses

Part C involves engaging in hermeneutical dialogue with the above focus texts, which entails a deep level of engagement with, and reflection on, each text and its links to my personal experiences and background knowledge (Anderson & Braud, 2011). In Intuitive Inquiry this hermeneutical communication is designed to lead the researcher to developing a set of preliminary lenses which convey the scope of the subjective pre-understandings the researcher has developed before data collection (Anderson & Braud, 2011). After a long period of reflection the following lenses emerged.

Table 2.3

Preliminary Lenses

Preliminary Lens	Outline
Questioning the Usefulness of National Curricula	National curricula appear useful, particularly for newly qualified teachers, however in practice best education provision may not occur.
Curriculum Reform for Accountability and Quality Adding	National curricula allow for objectifying and standardising education, making comparative high stakes testing easier, to improve the policy maker's standing with the public.
Curriculum Reform for Grand Notions	Millennialism, knowledge society and globalisation are all 'grand notions' which alter society's perception of what is needed from education and this impacts on what is mandated to be taught.
Deprofessionalisation	Teachers are increasingly having their autonomy reduced, leading to deprofessionalisation with associated negative effects on teacher commitment/morale and the perception of teachers in society.
Cycles of Change	Experienced teachers can often be heard expressing the belief that changes are cyclic and eventually we will end up where we started.
Poor WA Reform History	Curriculum reform has been mishandled in the past, particularly the last K-12 reform, negatively influencing perceptions of any future reforms.

The following subsections expand and describe each of the initial lenses summarised in Table 2.3.

Questioning the Usefulness of National Curricula

Using the UK's prescriptive 'National Curriculum' (NC) from 2004-2008, highlighted many pros and cons of this system in comparison to the largely vague CF I had been trained to use in WA. The rigid content and pedagogy of the NC was helpful to me as newly qualified, foreign, teacher who certainly had no idea about subjects like Tudor history before being required to teach it to students across West Sussex. Additionally, during periods of relief teaching, the NC was

useful to me as classroom structures and routines were similar, as were content and pedagogy across schools. This indicated that a national curriculum can improve teaching, particularly consistency of teaching, by giving the less experienced and substitute teachers more guidance than is traditional in WA.

However, this objective led (Scott, 2007) curriculum later stifled my teaching as a full time class teacher. Plainly put, it was boring. There was no challenge to teaching it and it did not require me to actively learn new information to create lessons and resources. There was a reduced scope for me to influence the topics taught in line with my own strengths and interests or those of my students. It was easy to plan and prepare, particularly because of the large online database of teacher and government created plans and resources for each Learning Area (I had a great social life in the UK as a result) but I was often left wondering; If I was beginning to be bored by the set content and pedagogy, what was the probable effect on my students? Further, my concerns began to rest on what happened to the things we teach that cannot be objectified, like values and social skills (Scott, 2007)? This thinking led to me questioning the validity of the NC, it is hard to decide what is more important, teacher sanity or student interest and social skills.

The national curriculum designed for use throughout Australia, the Australian Curriculum (AC) appears to me to be less prescriptive in both content and pedagogy to the UK's NC. The AC's stated purpose is to prepare Australians to be competitive in a globalised world (ACARA, 2010). This purpose raises its own set of issues in regards to both accountability and the ability of such a grand notion as globalisation to affect curriculum provision (see the following two lenses for more thoughts on these issues).

Curriculum Reform for Accountability and Quality Adding

My experiences with the NC led me to believe that politically motivated accountability was its main purpose (Scott, 2007). Accountability in the guise of 'quality adding' by proving increased performance was prevalent in every aspect of classroom life, right down to the required, interactive, objective based displays that each class was responsible for outside their classroom. For every

lesson there was a learning objective which children wrote at the top of their page and at the end of the lesson I was required to comment on and take note of whether that objective had been met. This system allowed for easy and highly comparable assessment between classes and schools, which seemed to allude to ease of accountability being a motive behind the development a national curriculum (Scott, 2007), but to what end?

The accountability measures seem to be designed to show progress in politically desirable areas through the use of testing. Some countries use accountability measures more than others to this end. Publishing standardised testing results and pay for 'performance' are two strategies that were being used, or being proposed in different states in Australia to create the illusion of progress or 'quality adding' during the implementation period of the AC. Teaching standards have also recently been created for Australia by the newly formed Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) and teachers will be assessed according to these under the guise of professional development. I feel that these measures are an example of the government using accountability measures to convince the public they are being active in promoting quality teaching, without actually investing any money or resources to improve teaching.

Apart from using accountability in conjunction with a national curriculum for political gain, a national curriculum gives the government a large amount of control over education by dictating what should be taught. Through standardised testing, the government is able to enforce particular aspects of the curriculum it believes important. In Australia, this is a step further from the old federal tactic of tying educational funding to areas that would do the most political good (libraries, science labs etc.). Now they have disposed of the funding 'carrot' and are relying on the accountability 'stick' to promote their own interests.

In the midst of these 'stick' accountability measures the WA College of Teaching (WACOT), a registration board whose edict was to uphold and support the teaching profession was disbanded. Teachers elected the WACOT members and had influence over its policies. It has been replaced by a state education minister elected Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA) whose

mandate is to serve the interests of students (see TRBWA). I feel that this mixture of accountability (stick), reduced voice and support (stick), with the use of a mandated (stick) national curriculum, is designed to coerce teachers to jump through particular hoops for the benefit of politicians, not to enhance education provision. The influence of this coercion on teachers' opinion of reform is likely to be negative.

Curriculum Reform for Grand Notions

According to Hamilton (1990), since the creation of an ordered curriculum, large shifts have occurred in content due to different grand notion impetuses. For example, the natural sciences were developed by Sir Francis Bacon (Hamilton, 1990; McKnight, 2007) and his peers in response to the millennialism notion (Hamilton, 1990). In Europe at the time people had been facing long decades of war, starvation and plague. Many believed that the apocalypse was at hand. This belief gave rise to the notion of millennialism, that unlocking as much knowledge as possible from *nature* would hasten the end of the apocalypse (Hamilton, 1990). This was in direct contrast to the previous belief that knowledge could only be gleaned from studying biblical texts. Curriculum was altered at this time to allow for natural inquiry in opposition to studying theological texts to uncover knowledge (Hamilton, 1990).

In recent years popular grand notions have included the 'knowledge society', 'sustainability' and 'globalisation'. In the knowledge society everyone has access to vast amounts of information, so the skills needing to be learnt now are critical viewing of this knowledge, and the ability to adapt to a high rate of change. Sustainability is becoming increasingly popular in this era of climate change and economic downturn. Sustainable environments, economies and workplaces are attractive on paper and have turned into something of a catchphrase instead of a commitment. In terms of globalisation, the world is 'shrinking' to humans through our increased ability to travel and communicate due to the internet and cheaper transport. Global markets and global citizenry are ideas attached to globalisation that education now 'needs' to prepare students for. These grand notions influence curriculum policy today as they reflect society's views of what

their current environment involves and thus what skills and knowledge are required to operate in that environment.

The one page rationale provided by ACARA (2010) for the Australian Curriculum (AC) asserts that a national curriculum will allow each student to "prosper in society, compete in a globalised world and thrive in the information-rich workplaces of the future." This assertion reflects the influence these grand notions have had on the political drive for the AC to be created and the content therein. The inclusion of three Cross Curriculum Priorities in the AC, (one of which in particular focuses on Asia, to increase student awareness of our main trading partners and neighbours, and another which makes sustainability a priority across learning areas) reflects the permeation of these grand notions on curriculum development.

Whilst I personally believe that students do need to be prepared to meet the needs these three grand notions create, the problem with grand notions influencing policy is that they become both a given and a catchphrase. This creates a situation where policymakers can use the notions in their wording to impress voters, without actually giving much thought into the practicalities that teaching for these notions create. The very idea of every teacher including the three cross curriculum priorities in their lessons without appropriate training, or assessment/reporting to ensure that it actually occurs, reflects the catchphrase usage of these notions in the AC. It seems to me they are included to make it sound good to parents, not to thoughtfully and practically ensure that students gain required skills and knowledge.

Deprofessionalisation

I believe national curriculum is synonymous with deprofessionalisation. It implies teachers cannot make sound judgements about the requirements of their students (Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000). How can this lack of trust in teachers lead to anything other than the demoralisation of the profession? It is not a large jump to see that people who are not trusted to complete their job capably, are likely to feel negatively about themselves and towards those that then complete the task. If those who complete the task fail to do so in a manner the teachers

deem fit then cynicism will follow. Given the adverse reactions of many WA teachers to the last K-12 reform, the Curriculum Framework (Andrich, 2009), it is very likely that a poorly written or implemented national curriculum in Australia will produce these feelings of demoralisation and cynicism.

Another aspect of the deprofessionalising nature of a national curriculum is the perception of teachers in the eyes of others, not just how teachers perceive themselves or their employers. If society is led to believe that the national curriculum is necessary to ensure every child is receiving consistent and sound educational provision (ACARA, 2010), it implies that in some areas teaching has been substandard, thus necessitating federal government intervention. If parents' and students' respect for the teaching profession is lessened, it makes it harder for teachers to do their job, as it requires parents and students to respect their judgement.

Cycles of Change

After discussing my proposal idea with my peers, I came to believe most teachers feel curriculum changes come and go in a large cycle, and that eventually the ideologies that underpin each one will come back into fashion. Ultimately this belief makes the engagement in each change pointless. And I must admit to seeing some evidence of this view point in changes, particularly to reading and writing instruction, since I graduated. This perception is problematic as each typically requires personal effort to produce new resources and learn new content, instruction and assessment methods (Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000). Over my teaching career, many WA teachers have intimated to me, that there is no point in following through on specific policies. These peers were not committed to expending the personal effort required for each change and actively dissuaded others from doing so. This situation is not so hard to understand in light of Andrich's (2009) finding that WA teachers are tired of change. The implications for WA education of this seemingly prevalent non engagement with curriculum reform seem bleak.

Poor WA Reform History

Andrich (2009) has shown that WA's previous K-12 mandated curriculum reform, the CF was poorly implemented. The CF entailed a large shift in both pedagogy and assessment which was not well supported or even properly finalised before implementation (Andrich, 2009). During my time as a pre-service teacher, the CF was beginning to be implemented in schools. It took until my final year at university to be given sound guidance in planning and assessing this curriculum package after years of confusion on this issue. At that time, teachers in schools were asking me my advice on planning for the CF. It was also around that time I was told to ignore the rich CF document and focus my planning around the Student Outcome Statements (SOS) as this is what I needed to assess. The SOS overview booklet was less than half the size of the CF. It is not difficult to guess what I did. From the start of my teaching career, it was clear that curriculum implementation was not well guided or simple in Western Australia.

Cycle Two Conclusion

The above lenses outline my understanding of how teachers experience and perceive mandated curriculum reform, at the onset of this study. My experience teaching the NC in the UK heavily influenced my mindset moving into data collection as I had some deeply embedded ideas about what national curricula are useful for and also the likely political motivations and associated repercussions regarding the creation of a national curriculum in Australia. The following Cycle pertains to the processes followed to source, collect and summarise data pertinent to the research aims and question.

Cycle Three   Data Collection and Presentation

In Cycle 3, the researcher (a) identifies the best source(s) of data for the research topic, (b) develops criteria for the selection of data from among these sources, (c) collects the data, and (d) presents a summary report of data in as descriptive manner as possible. (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 45)
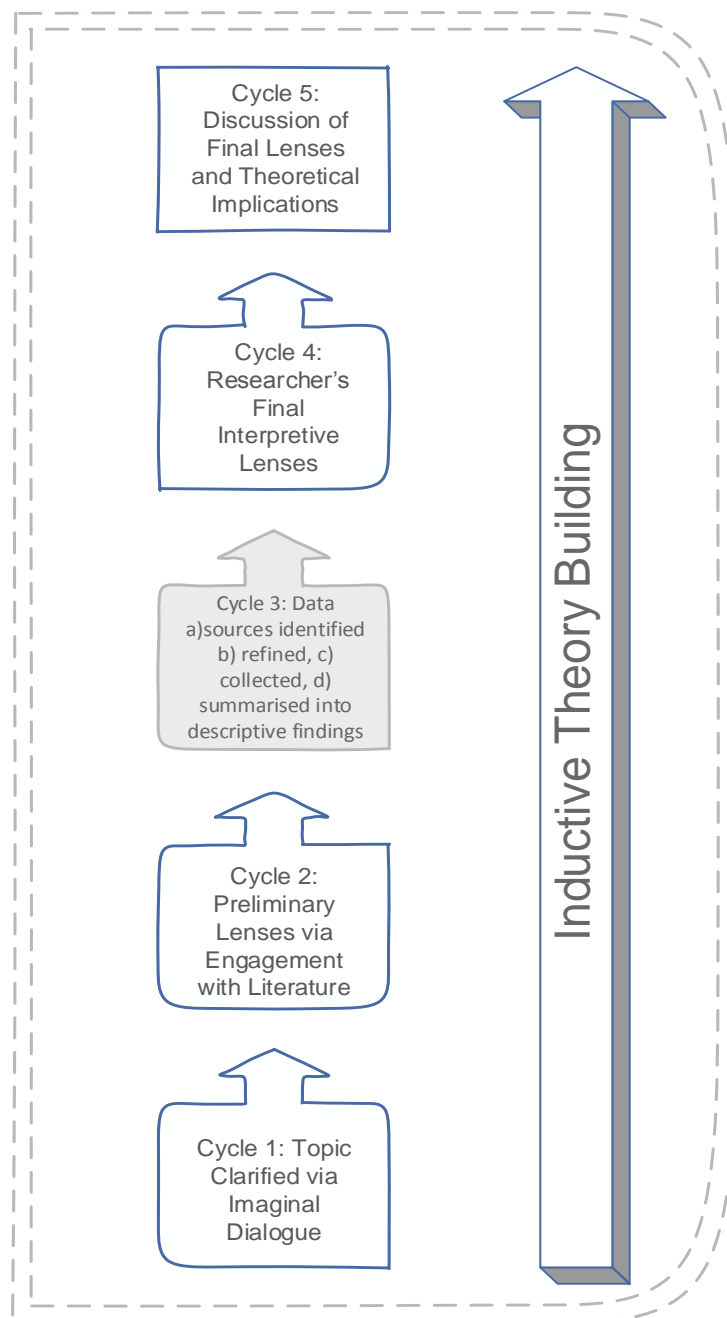
Figure 3.1: **Intuitive Inquiry Process, Cycle Three (adapted from Anderson and Braud (2011))**

Chapter III   Data Collection and Summary

Chapters Three, Four and Five constitute the third cycle of this study. Cycle Three is concerned with the collection, summary and presentation of data relevant to the research topic. This chapter explains steps A-D of this cycle, regarding how data sources were chosen and refined, how data was collected and how data was summarised for presentation. The following two chapters then present the summarised data.

Intuitive Inquiry is a structured method while at the same time allowing for flexibility in data procurement and analysis. There are no rigid rules on appropriate data, and data analysis can follow a variety of complimentary methods (Anderson & Braud, 2011). To ensure data collection was authentic within this flexible frame, the modified Intuitive Inquiry approach applied was underpinned by Gadamer's (2004) complimentary philosophy on research and also drew on the modified Van Kaam data analysis method (Moustakas, 1994). This chapter aims to accessibly describe the procedures followed in each step of the data procurement and presentation process.

Part A: Identifying Data Sources

The first step in Cycle Three involves identifying appropriate data sources to gather sufficient relevant data (Anderson & Braud, 2011). As a practicing teacher, the most readily available source of suitable information were my peers. Given that I work in a large high school, the number of possible participants was acceptable for a qualitative study to be enacted. This section outlines the research site and its usefulness as a data source along with how participants were recruited.

The Research Site

The research site was a regional Western Australian (WA) high school, with roughly 1000 students in years 8-12. It is one of several high schools in the immediate area, having a slightly below average Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) score of 967 (My School, 2011), making it second closest to average out of the other high schools in the area. This makes the

target school one of the easier to teach in schools in the vicinity. The staffing population is ageing with only one new graduate and a handful of teachers under 30 at the time of data collection. These factors made the high school a suitable place to source data; it was less likely that alternative factors of the teacher experience (i.e. extremely poor student behaviour) would be negative enough to cloud their responses, and most participants would have worked through at least one major curriculum reform during their career.

Participant Selection, Recruitment and Access

Initially, only English and maths teachers were asked to participate. These Learning Areas (LAs) were chosen out of the four Phase One Learning Areas of the Australian Curriculum (AC) - English, Maths, History and Science which were published during the data collection period. English and Maths were chosen because the ACs Cross Curriculum Priorities required to be addressed in each LA were traditionally Science or Society and Environment (S&E) based. This new content could potentially add extra pressure to English and Maths teachers as they have an additional pressure to learn an alien set of subject matter to aid implementation. This added dimension to their current roles made these teachers the most likely to experience the full effect of the mandated curriculum reform.

Permission was granted to place a flyer asking for participants was placed in the staffroom and an email was sent explaining the study and led to the recruitment of three English teachers and one Math teacher. This limited number of applicants required recruitment to be opened up to the other possible LAs –S&E and Science. This time the emails sent to potential participants started with a personal paragraph directed at the individual being invited to take part, particularly when the individual had already expressed their point of view regarding the AC to me in personal conversations. The English and Maths teachers, who had yet to reply, were also asked again to participate. This resulted in 19 teachers volunteering to take part, of which only 18 gave data to the study. Please see Table 3.1 in Part C: The Grey Area, for a breakdown of teachers by LA, age and which data collection rounds they participated in.

During the interviews (the second data collection round) it became apparent that systemic information was needed to refine emerging themes in the data. As such the Head of Learning Areas (HOLAs) for the four target LAs were invited to take part, along with the Principal. They all agreed. Demographic information for these participants was not collected due to their late recruitment in the study. The addition of leader-participants brought the total number of participants to 23, which at the time was 30% of the full time equivalent teaching population at the school (My School, 2011).

Part B: Data Collection Criteria

This section outlines the criteria used to guide data collection within the target school. At the same time as this review occurred, ethics permission was granted to collect two written pieces of data and an interview from each participant. Permission was also granted to collect information from staff meetings, professional development days and whole school emails regarding the implementation of the AC. Potentially masses of data could have been collected with these permissions. Decisions needed to be made to limit this mass to a workable amount for a Master's thesis whilst still thoroughly addressing the research questions.

Part C: Data Collection

Guiding the data collection was an important consideration for this first foray into research. Along with Anderson and Braud's (2011) views on maintaining the integrity of qualitative data, Gadamer's (2004) philosophies on data collection and analysis were reviewed and embedded during this study. As Gadamer's philosophy is a foundation of Intuitive Inquiry (Anderson & Braud, 2011) this addition to the method was uncomplicated. This section outlines how Gadamer's philosophy aided data collection, how validation was achieved, and describes the three data collection rounds in detail.

Philosophy

Gadamer was a hermeneutical philosopher, his works centred on what learning and knowledge are and how they occur, rather than a strict process of scientific

inquiry (Gadamer, 2000b, 2002, 2004; Sammel, 2003). In traditional hermeneutics, each text has a definite meaning, due to the truth that existed at the time of the text being created; traditional hermeneutic researchers aim to recreate this truth. To Gadamer however, meaning is not concrete (Sammel, 2003). Gadamer believed meaning to be "…always temporal, situational, progressive, and shared through interactions, implying it is limitless with possibilities, and open to interpretation and reinterpretation" (cited in Sammel, 2003, p. 158). This limitless recreation of truth through dialogue and reflection is synonymous with Intuitive Inquiry (Anderson & Braud, 2011).

Gadamer believed this flexibility of meaning was largely due to context. People from different eras or political situations are bound to view a text differently, but the differences do not make the understandings any less 'true' (Gadamer, 2004). A researcher then, has to be aware of a text's context and that their engagement with the text will only result in an interpretation of what was originally meant, nothing more is possible. During research, understanding can be expanded by actively engaging in dialogue with participants. The resulting conscious interplay between conversers and their topic can create shared meaning through the 'fusing of horizons' (lenses) which are filtered through each participants' social and individual histories (Sammel, 2003). When done skilfully it is possible to bring out in to the open during conversation that which was only subconscious to both the participant and the researcher (Gadamer, 2004), arriving at an intersubjective truth of the researched phenomenon.

The semi-structured interview questions, along with those asked in the curriculum change history emails, which can be found in Appendix I and II, were designed to aid in this skilful extraction of subconscious understanding regarding experienced mandated curriculum reform. They were written in such a way as to maximise opportunity for background knowledge, feelings and inner thoughts to be shared.

Gadamer's views on what truth is, and how it is created, also require a specific research milieu to take place. Situated research, creating meaning with co-researchers and the role of the researcher are all areas that were taken into

consideration to guide data collection. The following descriptions of these elements were synthesised from a number of Gadamer's works or their corresponding critiques and analysis (Anderson & Braud, 2011; Gadamer, 2000a, 2002, 2004; Krajewski, 2004; Moustakas, 1994; Sammel, 2003) and include an explanation of how they were applied during the study.

Situated Research

Gadamer believed that nothing should be started without gaining a full history of the subject. This includes critiquing the socio-political traditions surrounding the phenomenon. In this study, Cycle Two was concerned with reviewing the relevant literature and presenting preliminary lenses (personal horizons) regarding the research topic. These lenses were presented in Chapter II along with the literature review. Review of these lenses will briefly outline the political and social history of national curricula as understood subjectively by me prior to data collection.

Creating meaning with co-researchers

From this educated position, data collection then involved creating meaning intersubjectively with the participants, situated within the historical horizon. Gadamer's beliefs about the creation of meaning were at the forefront of the interview process. Particularly that dialogue has the potential to create shared meaning through the 'fusing of horizons' (Gadamer, 2004) if the researcher remains open to such an event, that the interpretations of each participant in dialogue are anchored in their social and historical histories and that meaning is limitless and is open to interpretation and reinterpretation. These principles also served well when interpreting the originally written data and the interview transcripts, in conjunction with the Intuitive Inquiry approach of engaging in hermeneutical dialogue with written texts (Anderson & Braud, 2011).

Role of the researcher

The role of the researcher is essential to this form of inquiry. During the interviews I focused on remaining open to change and bringing the unconscious forward so participants articulated their everyday surmises and experiences which could otherwise have been overlooked. Additionally, Gadamer sees

researchers as co-learners who seek to be educated by the co-researchers. This desire to be educated through participation in this study is reflected in its first research aim, the success of which is discussed in Chapter VI, along with a presentation of my understandings prior to and after data collection.

These aspects of Gadamer's hermeneutical philosophy have been incorporated into the research design of Cycle Three with the express belief that they will ground the research and make it accessible to others. If truth shimmers and grows (Gadamer, 2004), research is less about capturing knowledge in a distinct period of time and more about presenting the truth for others to engage with and take away what they will (Gadamer, 2004).

The Grey Area

> Objective reality can never be captured. Triangulation is not a tool or a strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 4)

As Denzin and Lincoln (2003) and Gadamer (2000a, 2002, 2004) suggest, validation is a misnomer in terms of qualitative research. Truth in the grey qualitative arena is intersubjective and to borrow the phrase from van Niekerk and Savin-Baden, happens in "spaces of mediation" (2010, p. 29). Thus the aim of the research design was to create the largest and most comprehensive 'spaces' possible whilst ensuring that the 'mediation' was done on just terms. In terms of this study, triangulation involved collecting as much data as possible during each round and collecting data at different points, increasing the available 'space' for mediation.

Spaces

Whilst it is true that for the researcher "…our biographies, positions and practices affect how we see and practice truths in qualitative research" (van Niekerk & Savin-Baden, 2010, p. 29) this was equally true of the participants. Being guided by Gadamer's (2004) beliefs about the creating of knowledge between two people and by collecting data during different time periods, the participants were able to convey their biographies and experiences allowing a large 'space' within which data was considered applicable. This conscious effort

to acquire situated examples and understandings, which Savin-Baden and Major (2010) dub the only expectation for a qualitative study, reflects the quality and credibility of the study. Every effort was made to gain the teacher-participants' history with curriculum reform, their values and practices relating to the phenomenon. In this manner, it is possible to capture the entirety of their experience and not just an aspect of the curriculum reform 'space'.

Mediation

According to Gadamer (2004), the essence of a hermeneutical conversation is one where the subconscious beliefs and understandings the conversationists have about the phenomenon are brought to life. The very act of discussing them makes them come into the open. This interplay or mediation between the people talking, their history and experiences with a subject creates new ideas and understandings for both people participating in the dialogue. As a researcher it was important to facilitate the dialogue carefully so that it was focused on the phenomenon and underlying beliefs were brought to light. It was also important to recognise that however carefully I opened myself to this mediation of ideas, my interpretations inevitably impacted what I learnt from the dialogue.

In the scientific field of knowledge generation, steps need to be taken to ensure the trustworthiness of this interpretation. As Mears suggests

> …when the intention of the research is to uncover the deeper meanings of an experience, what life impacts were felt, what personal significance the event held…then the question of reliability rests with the question of the authority of the narrator, the internal consistency of the story being told, and how well the account agrees with the narratives of others. (2009, p. 26)

In this study, internal consistency was achieved in two ways; firstly, the data is presented later in this Cycle, in such a way that the voices of the participants themselves are still heard, so that the reader can judge the initial findings for themselves. Secondly, the same data was presented to the research participants without any of the reflections made in this cycle, for them to read and comment on at their leisure. The reported resonance between the initial findings and their beliefs and experiences gives credibility to the findings. This technique is explored further under 'Procedures for Data Collection'.

The following subsections describe the data collection process and indicates which participants contributed data to which collection round. At all times during data collection Gadamer's (2004) philosophy of building knowledge through the merging of horizons during conversation, discovering the context of the phenomenon and the role of the researcher in bringing the unconscious knowings to the surface were incorporated in to the process.

The data collection points occurred three times during 2011 and once in 2012. In 2011, the 19 teacher participants were asked to fill in their Curriculum Change Histories (see Appendix I). Next, all of the participants were interviewed and finally at the end of the school year all participants were invited to comment on the implementation progress they had made. In 2012, all of the participants were sent a copy of the Initial Findings for comment. The following table displays the participants and which data collection rounds they participated in:

Table 3.1

Participation in Data Collection Rounds

Subject	Curriculum Change History 2011	Interview 2011	End of Year 2011	Comment on Findings 2012
English	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
English	Yes	Yes	No	No
Maths	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
English	Yes	Yes	No	No
Maths	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A left
English	Yes	Yes	No	No
S&E	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Science	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
S&E	Yes	Yes	No	No
English	Yes	Yes	No	No
Science	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A Left
English	No	Yes	No	N/A deceased
Science	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Science	Yes	Yes	No	No
Science	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
S&E	No	No	No	No
S&E	Yes	Yes	No	No
Science	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
English	Yes	Yes	No	N/A Left
English HOLA	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maths HOLA	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes
S&E HOLA	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes
Science HOLA	N/A	Yes	Yes	No
Principal	N/A	Yes	No	No
24/24	18/19	23/24	11/24	7/24

As can be seen in Table 3.1, 24 participants agreed to take part, however only 23 participated in the second data collection round, the interview, which was the main source of data for the project. The rest of this section takes a closer look at each data collection (the Curriculum Change History, Interview, End of Year and Comment on Findings) round in more detail.

Collection Round One: Curriculum Change History

The curriculum change history construct was created to gain demographic information and an insight into the participant's curriculum reform experiences before the main data collection round; the interview. The construct can be viewed at Appendix I. Only the teachers (not HOLAs or the principal) were asked to participate in this data collection round. The data collected during this round that is demographic in nature can be seen in Table 3.2 Curriculum Change History.

Table 3.2

Curriculum Change History

Subject	Age Range	Teaching years	Teaching Qualification	Currently Studying?	Other states, countries, settings?	Curricula Taught
English	40-49	10	Dip. Ed.	Yes	No	Outcomes Based Education (OBE), Courses of Study (CoS)
English	30-39	5.5	Dip. Ed.		UK	Curriculum Framework (CF), OBE, CoS
Maths	50-59	25	B.Ed.		No	Unit Curriculum, CF, OBE, CoS
English	50-59	22	Dip. Ed.	Yes	Prison	Unit Curriculum, CF OBE, CoS
Maths	50-59	17	Dip. Ed.		No	Unit Curriculum, CF, OBE, CoS
English	NR	30	Dip. Ed		Canada, S&E	No Response (NR)
S&E	50-59	35	Dip. Ed.		NZ, QLD, Primary	NR
Science	30-39	10	Dip. Ed.		No	OBE, CoS
S&E	20-29	6	B.A. (Ed)		No	Upper school –CoS
English	40-49	20	Grad. Dip.		Canada, Youth Officer, Deputy	CF and OBE
Science	40-49	24	Grad. Dip		No	Unit Curriculum, OBE
English	NR	1	NR		NR	(New graduate)
Science	40-49	14	B.Ed.		India, Dubai	NR
Science	30-39	10	Grad. Dip.		TDC Co-ordinator, SA, QLD	NR
Science	40-49	5.5	Grad. Dip		No	OBE and TEE courses
S&E	NR	NR	NR		NR	NR
S&E	40-49	21	Dip. Ed.		No	Unit Curriculum, CF, OBE
Science	40-49	20	B. Ed (Hons)	Yes	Canada	Unit Curriculum, CF, OBE,
English	40-49	16	B.A. Ed (Primary)		Primary, Deputy, Professional Learning Centre	CF, OBE, CoS

At the conclusion of the first round of data collection it was apparent that the participant sample had a wealth of experience implementing curriculum reform. It was also apparent that many participants had experience teaching within other education systems. This broader understanding of how curriculum reforms can be implemented, outside of the WA reform experience meant that many

participants would be able to shed a different light on to curriculum reform issues.

Collection Round Two: Interviews

The interviews undertaken with teachers in the second data collection round were devised to gain the experiences and perceptions of the participants regarding curriculum reform in general and the Australian Curriculum in particular. As such semi-structured interviews took place, each teacher being asked the same three questions:

1. How do you feel about curriculum reform and why do you feel that way?
2. What interactions, if any, have you had with the Australian Curriculum?
3. Are there any factors that you feel will help or hinder you to implement the Australian Curriculum?

These questions were a starting point only, to ensure that situated data was secured from each conversation.

The interviews with the Head of Learning Areas and Principal were more systemic in focus. This participant group were asked:

1. What interaction have you had with the Australian Curriculum, if any?
2. Are you aware of any PD or resources available to help you implement the AC?
3. Are there any issues affecting your department's ability to implement the AC?

Taken together the two types of interviews were designed to cover a wide range of factors influencing teachers' perceptions of curriculum reform.

The interviews took place during Term Three in 2011 when, to many Western Australian teachers, the Australian Curriculum was still on the periphery of their professional radar. Interview data is usually the predominant data source in Intuitive Inquiry (Anderson & Braud, 2011) and in this study it was intended as Mears (2009) suggests, to allow the stories of personal experience to create a powerful entry point into the phenomenon, at a time when the participants were in general just starting their journey with the new reform.

Collection Round Three: End of Year Comments

As 2011 drew to a close, teachers and Head of Learning Areas had a better understanding of the implementation procedures, resources and issues regarding the Australian Curriculum than they did in their interviews earlier in the year. Transcription of the interviews was taking place during this time. The participants were asked to comment on their ongoing implementation efforts and any issues or successes they were having, see Appendix III for an example email. These questions were not influenced by data analysis, just practicality. The 11 participants who responded either by email or interview can be seen in Table 3.1. The data from this collection round was added to the participants' case file and included in the data analysis procedures outlined in the following subsection.

Resonance

> If what is discovered about an experience of one person (or group of persons) also applies to another person (or group of persons), as revealed by the latter's resonance with or mirroring of those findings, then this similar response affirms the findings' validity. (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 297)

To ensure that the following method for summarising and presenting the data reflected the phenomenon accurately for the participants, each participant was given a hardcopy of the data summaries (in the form of four composites, without any researcher reflections which are included in this thesis) and asked to give feedback on authenticity and their personal reactions (Anderson & Braud, 2011). This technique is prominent in Intuitive Inquiry where resonance is a key indicator of the success of the research project to adequately describe the phenomenon experienced by the participants to others (Anderson & Braud, 2011). At the same time, checking for resonance internally is an integral part of the chosen data analysis method (Moustakas, 1994). This process of determining resonance is described in more detail in the following subsection, Part D: Resonance. Please see Table 3.1 for the participants who contributed to this collection round.

Part D: Presenting the Findings

As outlined by Anderson (2011), this part of Cycle Three requires data to be thoughtfully summarised and presented. This presentation needs to be carried out remembering that the overall purpose of Cycle Three is to "…invite readers to come to their own conclusions about the data prior to reading the researcher's interpretations presented in Cycle [Four]" (Anderson, 2011, 49). A balance must be found between presenting the data in a way that is accessible and as descriptive as possible that refraining from forcing the researchers' learning on the reader before they have had the opportunity to engage with, and reflect on, the information apparent in the data. Anderson warns us that in finding this balance it must be acknowledged that "…some measure of interpretation is implicit in any analytic procedure" (2001, p. 49). The purpose of Cycle Three, for me then, was to find a way to present the data in an organised and engaging manner before conclusions are drawn and recommendations made.

Chapter III thus acts as a prelude to Chapters Four and Five where the data is finally presented. The remainder of this chapter explains the processes undertaken in summarising the data and the choices made regarding its subsequent presentation in those chapters. The information presented has been divided into two subsections; summarising the data and presenting the data.

Summarising the Data

This section outlines how data reduction and initial analysis transpired. I kept notes on my data analysis process and thoughts as 'memos' and stored these in my NVivo database along with the interview transcripts. I found using memos a beneficial process just as Peters and Wester (2007) describe, as it forces reflection and the making explicit of the resulting ideas while they are still fresh. I have referred back to my memos to explain the choices I made during data analysis. Where memos are used directly in this subsection, they will be in italics.

Before analysing the data, the interviews first had to be transcribed. Transcription was not carried out verbatim. Um's and Ah's along with repetitive words; 'and, and' etc., were not included in the transcriptions. Whole

transcriptions were checked through for accuracy twice, and any words not able to be transcribed were marked as such. Information that was of a personal off-topic nature was not transcribed.

The transcriptions were stored with the other data collected from each participant as full individual sets. The following data analysis procedure (steps 1-4) was applied to each set.

Moustaka's Modified Van Kaam Method

This subsection starts with a justification for the chosen data analysis method, relying heavily on the works of those who have underpinned this study (Gadamer, Moustakas and Anderson). It goes on to outline each step in the analysis process as they were applied to this study.

In her most recent guide to Intuitive Inquiry research Anderson (2011) supports the use of Moustakas' analysis methods in Intuitive Inquiry. This is because Moustakas' hermeneutical phenomenology and subsequent data analysis methods are epistemologically matched to the semi-derivative Intuitive Inquiry approach Anderson (2011) has created. At the start of this cycle I decided to employ Moustakas' modified Van Kaam method (Moustakas, 1994) enjoying the examples given that richly describe the lived experience of the focus phenomenon for the participants.

Furthering my admiration for the method, Moustakas (1994) believes that the use of Ricouer's criteria is sufficient to assess the quality of an analysis. He relates Ricouer's four criteria as being 1) a fixation on meaning, 2) involving dissociation at some point from the intention of the subject, 3) to interpret the texts as an interconnected whole 4) allowing for multiple interpretations. It is possible to see reflections of these four criteria in Moustakas' modified van Kaam method. Anderson's Inductive Inquiry approach does not specify a data analysis procedure, but does insist on one that allows for the readers to interpret the data for themselves. Drawing on the work of Moustakas (1994) and Anderson (2011) it became apparent that the modified Van Kaam Method was a suitable choice.

Whilst working harmoniously with the Intuitive Inquiry approach, Moustakas' method did not completely match my needs. Problems arose which are discussed in detail in Presenting the Data. In brief, changes to the method were made to increase the anonymity of the participants and to better present the data in a way that represents the experiences of all the participants whilst still allowing the reader to come to their own conclusions (Anderson & Braud, 2011). The data analysis method described as follows is by necessity then, an adaption of Moustakas' already modified van Kaam method. Please see Moustakas' (1994) *Phenomenological Research Methods* for further information on his original adaptation.

1) Listing and Preliminary Grouping

Once all of the data from the first three rounds was collected and transcribed it was entered into NVivo. The data from each participant was stored at the same case node which made it easy to select all of the data from that participant and paste it into a Word file for Moustakas' first step in the modified van Kaam Method, 'Listing and Preliminary Grouping (Moustakas, 1994).'

When all of the individual case data was easily accessible in one document, I began the first step of listing and grouping the data. I have included an excerpt from my journal to explain the process in more detail:

I have just gone through P1's data, reading it over carefully once and then coding it at the P1 Horizons node. At the 'P1 Horizons' node I tried to 'list every expression relevant to the experience' (Horizonalization) (Moustakas, 1994). While doing this I constantly referred back to the research questions to keep in mind the scope [space] *of the experience being studied and made sure to include all relevant (to the participant) comments and not let my selection of these comments be shaped by my own views. This actually proved harder then I originally thought, I had to go over the data several times to ensure I had done this right and made several corrections where I had omitted data … that the participant was obviously very enthusiastic about that I originally dismissed as irrelevant.*

At the end of this step I had a list of all of the expressions relevant to the experience for each participant. These lists had been checked carefully for accuracy and the influence of researcher bias.

2) Reduction and Elimination

The purpose of this step is to reduce the data so it is concise whilst still covering all aspects of the phenomenon expressed by the participant (Moustakas, 1994). To do this each horizon needs to be checked to see if it contains a "moment of the experience that is a necessary and sufficient constituent for understanding it" and if it is "possible to abstract and label it" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 121). Next, "overlapping, repetitive and vague expressions are also eliminated or presented in more exact descriptive terms. The horizons that remain are the invariant constituents of the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 121). This analysis is still carried out at the individual participant level.

I carried out the reduction and elimination by copying and pasting the non-repetitive phrases in to an internal document in NVivo ('horizons by research Q') and ordered them by grouping them with linked phrases under the appropriate research question. Normally there would be only one research Q. I chose to order [the horizons] *by research question at this point while the data was firmly grounded in the participants own phrases to ensure future abstraction did not lose the meanings of the participant's experiences and perceptions.*

3) Clustering and Thematizing the Invariant Constituents

I then clustered the horizons and assigned them thematic labels [like 'networking works' or 'tired of change'] *thus arriving at the invariant constituents of the experience.*

4) Final Identification of the Invariant Constituents and Themes

These invariant constituents and themes were then checked against the original data to ensure they were either expressed explicitly or are compatible with the complete transcript. Those invariant constituents not meeting these criteria were deleted.

At the end of these four steps, I was left with the horizons for each participant for each research question in a condensed form, missing repetition and vague description.

Steps 5 and 6

It is customary in steps 5 and 6 to develop both an Individual Textural Description and an Individual Textural-Structural Description of the experience from their invariant constituents, themes and imaginative variation (Moustakas, 1994). After completing the first four Individual Textural Descriptions, I realised that although they were engaging, there were two issues hindering their inclusion in the thesis; they made the participants highly identifiable to the other participants, which was problematic given that some had expressed their concern at this during interviews and, it would not be feasible to include them all in the thesis due to word limit constraints. Instead I moved on to step 7, developing a composite description from the individual descriptions.

7) Develop a Composite Description of the Experience

Taking the invariant constituents, I re-read through the data several times. Although there were many themes overlapping between participants, a call for more direction from leadership for example, the feelings and contexts attached to these comments were often markedly different. The range of feelings expressed by the participants towards mandated curriculum reform was the first indicator that a group textural-structural composite description (the end point of Moustakas' Van Kaam method that exemplifies the essence of the phenomenon for all participants (Moustakas, 1994)) was not adequate and that a different approach was needed. The divided nature of the participant's responses were strongly conveyed and needed to be honoured without the dilution that would occur finding a middle ground experience description.

I decided to sort the labelled invariant constituents (in their theme clusters) by underpinning emotion. Starting with the basics negative, positive and on the fence, this seemed to be an easily accessible way to divide the data before writing a group composite, so that the group composite could adequately reflect

the range feelings and experiences expressed in regards to mandated curriculum reform. The basic categories evolved into apathy, cynicism, realist and positive (from the teacher data) and then a leadership category using the leadership data from teachers and the HOLAs and principal. The fine line between apathy and cynicism proved problematic and as such these two categories were merged. The final categories became The Cynic, The Realist, The Enthusiast and The Leader.

The invariant constituents from each participant were then sorted under the 3 interview questions within each category. The reduction and elimination step was carried out again as there were many overlaps in the data once combined. What was left were invariant constituents for each category that were ordered by interview question. While roughly already in theme clusters (as many themes were overlapping between participants) these were further refined. What was left were four separate documents containing the full range of perceptions and experiences for each of the four 'categories' of response types that had been reduced and refined leaving the essence of the experience of that group behind.

The data for each group was then paraphrased and extended using imaginative variation to develop four Composite Descriptions of the experiences which outline the lived experience of the target phenomenon for a number of participants. The four dispositions evident in the data thus became the four composites that embody the reduced data relevant to that particular mindset. The composites are as follows;

- **The Cynic**, contains the overtly critical or apathetic invariant constituents from the teacher-participant interviews.

- **The Realist,** contains the pragmatic or realist invariant constituents from the teacher participant interviews.

- **The Enthusiast,** contains the positive and enthusiastic invariant constituents from the teacher-participant interviews.

- **The Leader,** combines the invariant constituents from the teacher-leader participants.

Taken together the four composites present the full range of horizons (personal meanings) expressed in regards to the research questions by the participants. In the traditional modified Van Kaam method, this expression would have only

taken the form of one composite (Moustakas, 1994). According to Wertz, Nosek, McNiesh and Marlow (2011) the use of the composite narrative allows for a successful blending of the textural (felt sense of) and structural (themes and boundaries) aspects of the phenomenon, in a form that the reader can access easily and understand on both of these levels.

Resonance

To ensure that the participant's views had been represented, the four composites were then sent to the participants for comment. Apart from the formal feedback received (see Table 3.1 for numbers), a number of the participants commented in passing during discussions at school, stressing their relief that many other people were feeling so negative and that they knew who a particular composite was, thinking that they were actual people, not a created experience drawing on many people's experiences. The way these composites reflected real people and engaged the participants validates the use of the data in this way (Anderson & Braud, 2011). Only minor revisions needed to be made to the composites based on participant suggestion. The insights and suggestions given during the participant feedback process are incorporated in the summary of composite extracts where pertinent.

Presenting the Data

The presentation of data in Chapter IV and V is not designed to be a high level analysis. Intuitive Inquiry requires that data is presented with limited researcher interpretation at first, so the reader can draw their own conclusions (Anderson & Braud, 2011). Anderson stresses that the data presentation should be as devoid of interpretation as possible, describing the process as a "'low-hovering' over the data and relaying what you see… (2011, p. 49)" however, she also accepts that there can be no data analysis without interpretation (Anderson, 2011). Therefore, it needs to be acknowledged that the composite data as it is presented in the following chapters has been refined, categorised and paraphrased before being presented thematically.

Whilst many themes were present across several composites (e.g. the need for better guidance, or the usefulness of networks), the experiences and perceptions

conveyed ultimately came down to intra-and interpersonal factors. Thus the first findings chapter 'Disposition and Mandated Curriculum Reform' presents the internal, individual factors that influence the perception and experience of reform; the participants' disposition and coping skills. The second findings chapter 'Perceived Effectiveness of Reform Management' presents data relating to how reforms have affected the participants, focusing on their past and present interactions with mandated reforms, ending with suggestions of which external factors could help or hinder them to implement the current mandated reform, the Australian Curriculum.

In both chapters a description of each theme is then followed by the related excerpts from each composite. Where applicable these excerpts are headed by a related verbatim quote from a participant, acting to retain as much authenticity as possible whilst presenting the summarised data. After each composite excerpt a brief summary ensues, picking out salient points and intimating pertinent feedback from the participants regarding the composites. At the end of each theme a brief reflection ties together the summaries and flags important information that will be unpicked in the discussion chapter.

Chapter IV   Disposition and Mandated Curriculum Reform

> A disposition is more than an attitude, but rather a summary of actions and tendencies that have been observed over time. … they are intentional and consequent of reflection … [Acts] chosen in a particular context and at a specific time... Or conversely, a disposition may include failing to act or to employ the knowledge or skill that the teacher possesses. (Nixon, et al., 2010, p. 212)

Taken together, a teacher's mindset and abilities form their disposition. The choices they make based on this disposition creates the inevitable implementation gap between policy and practice.

Data presented in this chapter relates to participant dispositions and their subsequent repercussions for reform. The data comprises of both participant interview quotes and excerpts from the composites described in *Summarising the Data* in Chapter III. This chapter has been divided into the two parts of disposition: mindset and abilities. Abilities in this chapter centres only on the Personal Coping Strategies (PCS) described by the participants, as data was not collected on the range and depth of abilities possessed by the participants. Each section starts with a brief description of the theme, then the data is presented and summarised. The summaries include my subjective knowledge of the participants and the research context where necessary. The sections end with a brief analysis which is expanded on in conjunction with information from the following chapter, Perceived Efficacy of Reform Management, in Chapter VII Discussion.

The verbatim and composite data selected for this chapter relate to the first two research questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of the participants with regards to mandated curriculum reform? (RQ1)

2. What are the experiences and perceptions of the participants regarding the Australian Curriculum (AC)? (RQ2).

Feelings described in the disposition section, and the reactions described in the personal coping strategies section, reflect the topic of RQ1; the lived experiences

of past reforms. Examples of experiences with the AC are described in 'Personal Coping Strategies' inform and the answer to RQ2.

Mindset

> ...Ritchhart (2001) views dispositions as a collection of cognitive tendencies that capture one's patterns of thinking...'dispositions concern not only what one can do, one's abilities, but also what one is disposed to do. Thus dispositions address the often-noticed gap between our abilities and our actions.' (Thornton, 2006, p. 54)

Teacher mindsets influence their engagement with curriculum reform (Cohen & Ball, 1990). Distinct mindsets became apparent during initial data analysis which led to the development of four composites, instead of one group composite embodying the lived experience of mandated curriculum reform for all participants. The following excerpts from the four composites express the mindsets of the participants towards the concept of mandated curriculum reform. Reading these excerpts one after the other allows us to reflect on the affect disposition has on the lived experience of mandated curriculum reform.

Composite One: the Cynic

> I do feel like that a lot of it is politically driven; I do believe that we are puppets to the government of the day. (P9, Q1)

Curriculum reform is mandated, so it happens regardless of how I feel. The changes are so frequent now that it is frustrating; the waste, the money, the stress is all for nothing as in a few years it will be thrown out and I will have to start all over again. On top of this, the affect of curriculum reform on outcomes for my students is negligible. So, it feels like I am in a constant state of flux with no real results.

I do recognise that reform is inevitable, but I am suspicious of the underlying agenda to new reforms. The sad truth is that after a few years in the system, I recognised that curriculum reform is political. It is driven by people who build their careers from it. When a new 'flavour of the day' is promoted, it is just a political stunt; governments have to look like they are doing something to aid education. That's why there's never much thought put into the implementation of reforms, the focus is always on appearing to be doing something. They make out

that there is something wrong with the system and that they are being proactive by reforming it.

There seems to be a conservative drive lately to surround ourselves with that which makes us Australian in this global age, and I don't feel that this is an appropriate way to choose relevant curriculum content. Australia is large, with distinct regions so the (Australian Curriculum) AC goes against the grain of what I have been told is best practice –developing the curriculum to suit the needs of my students, in their particular context. Funnily enough too, most of the changes seem to reflect what is being done over East at the moment.

When you think about it, the main reasons given for a national curriculum are null and void when you take in to account that the times of the year to address certain topics aren't mandated. You can move states four times and cover 'rocks' four times, so it doesn't really aid those students who do move around. Even if they mandate the scope and sequence, I still don't believe it is warranted; only a minority of students move interstate.

A lot of time and money, and the efforts of the best consultants that Australia has to offer, has gone in to developing this new curriculum. It had the potential to be inspiring, but it is just mediocre. There is real potential here that the curriculum will be reduced into test practice; they have misjudged the achievable breadth that can be done in depth.

It is just like the disappointment Courses of Study (CoS) turned out to be. I was hopeful that CoS might change things. I thought we might finally broach new topics within my learning area, instead of teaching exactly what I learnt whilst I was in high school. They had this great opportunity to improve the status quo and initially they did come up with these radical changes I was hoping for. But then all of the old boys went 'oh my god we can't possibly do that' and we have ended up with a syllabus not that much different from what we started with.

◆◆◆◆

The Cynics have a negative world view and describe mandated curriculum reform with words like; *frustrating, sad, waste, mediocre, conservative* and *disappointment*. They are cynical, suspicious of motive and aware of many possible limitations to reform. Current negative experiences are immediately related to previous trials: *It is just like the disappointment CoS turned out to be.* Although the Cynics are still hopeful, with each new reform there is a sense futility and powerlessness to bring about successful change -*it happens regardless of how I feel*.

When being interviewed the extreme Cynics were nervous of being overheard, in some cases even of being seen with me at other times, fearful that their attitude might be discovered. After reading the composites during the validation stage many participants who chose not to give formal feedback, still found me in quiet corners of the playground to mention how surprised they were at all the negativity surrounding these reforms and that they did not realise so many people felt that (same) way. Their relief was evident in these remarks.

Composite Two: the Realist

> I think it's a case of it happens and it's almost like it's within my psyche, and I think psyche is the wrong word, it's almost like, it's an acceptance that it happens regularly, as it probably should, as the world changes. I'm sure there are many teachers here that would like things to stay the same as they were, but they're not. (P17, Q1)

Curriculum reform is a necessary part of life. As society changes we need to change with it, but people seek a Holy Grail in curriculum reform and it is just doesn't exist. They are looking for the perfect curriculum that will solve everyone's problems. Even if such a curriculum were possible, it would take several years of research and planning for a successful implementation and by then, it would be time to change again as society would have moved on.

I think that the most recent reforms have been all about making education work for everyone. Teachers are being asked to take into account every child's needs and are being given the flexibility to allow students to achieve in non-traditional ways. Which is great in theory but incredibly time consuming in practice. As an

organised person I find these types of oversights by our leadership really frustrating. This open-ended nature is what has kept me on the back foot since I came back to teaching in Western Australia (WA). I guess I am looking forward to the National Curriculum, maybe I will be able to catch up on things.

There are some aspects of this new reform that I appreciate. The increased consistency of content and standards between states is one. I also like the focus on History in the Society and Environment (S&E) Learning Area, I think that it has been rather neglected in past reforms. And lastly, the national curriculum is becoming an impetus to use electronic resources like eBooks and interactive whiteboards in classrooms, is bringing Australian teaching into the 21st century.

<div align="center">♦♦♦♦</div>

The pragmatic Realists temper disappointments with successes. They register the highs and lows whilst at the same time realising perfection is not possible-*people seek a Holy Grail in curriculum reform and it just doesn't exist.* To the Realists, change is *necessary* but it is still *frustrating* and *time consuming*, with very few overt benefits. Whilst being interviewed the realists were happy to explain their ideals for mandated reform, what could and should be achieved, but they always linked these ideals back to the realities of the systemic constraints they work within.

Composite Three: the Enthusiast

> …new people [ministers] coming in and they have new ideas, and they want change to take place and they want education to improve… I often get things out of it, it actually improves the way I go about particularly assessing students. (P7, Q,1)

Curriculum reform is essential. It allows us to keep up with changes as society evolves. It shouldn't be about our personal likes and freedom as teachers, but what is best for the kids. Those who aren't happy about where this change is leading us need to take some time to get their heads around it and embrace it, for their kids' sake.

Personally, I like a lot of the new focus areas that are coming to light in different Learning Areas (LAs) under the AC. Hopefully, they will continue to include new

content that is more relevant and throw out anything redundant. I am looking forward to sinking my teeth into all the new stuff. It should be interesting; change is the spice of life! It also seems they are allowing us some flexibility within the curriculum to suit our situation, which I think is great.

I also feel that with recent changes here in WA there is a strong movement towards consistency and accountability. This is important as I have known peers who twisted the vague guidelines of past reforms to teach whatever they liked! I am also aware of colleagues who have been getting away with substandard teaching for a while now. Frankly, I am sick of being the one who has to fix up their students when they come to me the following year. I hope that accountability continues to be a focus area in the future. I know a lot of people baulk at the idea of common teaching tasks and assessments, but at some stage we are going to need to all get on the same page.

It feels like we have been through a lot of curriculum change, perhaps too much change in the last 20 years, but I really do think that the overall benefits have outweighed the teacher frustration and stress involved. I know that I am a better teacher today because of it.

<div align="center">◆◆◆◆</div>

The Enthusiasts use terms like *essential*, *importance*, *new*, *great* and *better* to describe their feelings about curriculum reform. They acknowledge that the change is frustrating but believe that the benefits outweigh their personal discomforts. There is an underlying belief about the need for collegiality and professionalism expressed here; i.e. we all need to be on the same page/ yes it may be hard but we have to do it for our students. The Enthusiasts believes change is necessary and they are personally, *change is the spice of life,* and professionally, *I know that I am a better teacher today because of it*, motivated to implement mandated curriculum reform.

Composite Four: the Leader

> There is logic to the Australian Curriculum I guess you know that this is the medicine we need to make us better. (P20, Q2)

I think that most teachers see the AC as a logical step for the nation to take. Most countries have a national curriculum don't they? So this reform makes our country seem more professional and unified. However, I don't think that they have been 'sold' on the model we have been presented with.

Currently they are asking a lot of people who already have workload issues, especially given that they do not have ownership of this new reform. Teachers who have been around a long time, of my generation, they have been through three reforms like that. You can't blame them for looking at the AC and asking 'how many changes do you need, and how different is it this one anyway?'

◆◆◆◆

The Leaders believe their staff simultaneously accept and resent the national curriculum. To their staff, the AC is wonderful in theory; however, the increased workload it will insert into their lives is inescapable. For the Leaders, positive dispositions towards reform can be created or improved through a sense of ownership and delivery of a sound rationale. These convince staff of the necessity of change and allow them the influence to ensure it will be worth their effort. The Leaders' disposition mirrors the Realists'; hopeful but tempered with the systematic realities of organisational change.

Reflection

Research Question One draws attention to the lived experiences of curriculum reform. The composite excerpts present a mixed bag of conflicting emotions attached to the mandated curriculum reform experience. Feelings of frustration and exploitation many of the participants felt as a result of recurring, unsuccessful and uncaring change became apparent. Excitement and hope were expressed at other times at the thought of something new and perhaps better. For some the experience was a necessary exercise in futility; we have to do it to keep up, but it is not going to work. These underlying currents of perception and emotion permeate lived curriculum reform experiences for the participants.

In regards to RQ2 the composites paint a telling picture of disposition affecting the perception of new reforms. To the Cynics, the AC is politically motivated,

disappointing and misguided. The Realists, Enthusiasts and Leaders see different positives in the reform; in some way aspects that align with their values and attitudes are being promoted in this innovation. The implementation gap resulting from these dispositions is perhaps predictable, and certainly will vary between each disposition type. The relationship between disposition, experience and perceptions of new mandated curriculum reform will be discussed further in the Discussion. The following section, Personal Coping Strategies, centres on the participants' ability and strategies to cope with change necessitated by mandated curriculum reform.

Personal Coping Strategies

> The epistemological grounding for the idea that dispositions (i.e., habits of mind) are not a state of possession, but a state of performance is found in John Dewey's transactional theory of knowing (Biesta, 2007). According to Dewey, we undergo the consequences of our doing; our acting on the world and we change as a result. [The resulting experience] … conditions further behaviour. (Dottin, 2009, p. 85)

'Personal Coping Strategies' presents data revealing coping strategies the participants have developed through their interactions with mandated curriculum reform. To Dottin (2009), these coping strategies are an integral part of an individual's disposition; disposition being the sum of the professional's ability and their likelihood to perform to that ability through personal choice. This section focuses solely on the decisions made by the participants when reacting to curriculum reform.

Either previous reforms (RQ1) or the current reform, the AC (RQ2) present the context for the reactions expressed by the participants. Each composite gives data to this section and a pertinent verbatim quote precedes each composite excerpt. A summary of the excerpt linking any subjective or necessary contextual information withheld from the composites, follows the excerpts. At the end of this section reflections on the summaries as a whole are presented, examining the composite data in relation to the research questions and raising ideas to be explored in the Discussion.

Composite One: the Cynic

> …lots of old teachers, none of whom wanted to know anything about curriculum change at all. Because they liked how it was, it was all set up and they didn't want to change their thinking. And I must confess, I just went along with that because I thought 'well what we are doing works'… So none of us were interested at all in the curriculum framework. (P11, Q1)

I never really bothered with the Framework. I had a quick look at it, saw it was all values stuff and seeing as that is already embedded in what I do, I didn't bother with it. When the Outcomes were released I had to focus on them, as that's what I needed to assess, that's the part that had a large impact on my life. I know a lot of other people who ignored both the Framework and Outcomes completely, or at least did so for a number of years. For them it was a case of what they were doing already worked, so why change?

Some form of the AC will be implemented, but if the way I feel now is any guide it will only be a shadow of what it was designed to be. I for one, am just too tired and too busy to care about it.

<p style="text-align:center">♦♦♦♦</p>

The Cynics require sanctions before they will allow a mandated reform to encroach on their working process. *When the Outcomes were released I had to focus on them, as that's what I needed to assess.* Until then a reform is an inconvenience, especially if the need for change is not obvious - *already embedded in what I do* [so] *I didn't bother with it.* The Cynics cope with mandated reform by ignoring it as much as possible. They justify that choice through their personal exhaustion and inability to find energy to change - *just too tired and too busy to care about it,* along with their belief that the change is unfounded - *why change*? The avoidance strategies exhibited here keep the Cynics safe from further disappointment and what Toffler calls 'future shock' (Hayes, 2010).

Composite Two: the Realist

> I had a lot of trouble just interpreting it [the Curriculum Framework], so I had to get help from other people… And it's hard

to distinguish what a say a high level 3 to a medium or low level 3, it got so hard and I was doing a lot more work I think... I was so glad when they actually did get rid of it and then we went back to doing percentages and so forth. But in the back of my mind I was still thinking ok what kind of level would they be? (P8, Q1)

I can see how the change to the Framework was a good reform to do. But it was such a big shift, you know, it was from one end of the spectrum to the other and teachers weren't equipped to deal with that change. I learnt quickly that the more help you sought the more you got, no-one was going to hand this to us on a platter.

Now that I have learnt to change with the tides I find reform easier to deal with. I just go with it and everything works out eventually. In my experience there are three different types of people when it comes to curriculum reform the blockers, the people who do it just to get it done, and then the people who embrace reform and use it to further their career. I guess I fall in to the middle category; it's a lot easier to just get on with it, do the bits that make sense and whatever you need to cover for assessments, and forget about the rest.

There's always the struggle, the problem when you change systems is everything takes so much longer because you just can't subconsciously do things any more. The hardest changes involved in curriculum reform are assessment based, mainly because I have to completely alter the way I mark. It takes so much longer to mark because I already have ingrained ideas about the value of an assessment piece, but these ideals have now changed. Even the marking system has changed.

When things first started coming out for the AC, you know, the draft documents, I printed them off and had a good look through them. I started matching up in my mind what texts I could use, where, and have been keeping a look out for useful resources. I wanted to start trying to align my programs to the new curriculum, but I couldn't as it was still in draft form. Now that was over a year ago and things have changed since then, even the name of it has changed. I guess that is a sign of the feedback process working, not that I have any firsthand experience of it.

Apart from having a look through it and unpicking it a little in staff meetings, I haven't had much to do with the AC. I don't have any spare time right now. It is a case of this reform not being in the desperately urgent pile yet, so it's just not on my radar. Obviously in reality it is something I need to make a priority, but it's going to have to wait until the holidays, when hopefully I will have adequate time to work through it.

◆◆◆◆

The Realists seem to have a foot in both camps, explaining that they just get on with it because it makes life easier, and then contradicting themselves in their purposeful selection of which elements to implement. There were also some underpinning frustrations that a lack of guidance was causing barriers to implementation (through wasting time), which is discussed more in the following chapter. The Realists' 'just do it' strategy ultimately seems to rely on the goodwill of the participant. This system requires them to find extra time to learn the new system. The Realists have created a safety net against poor implementation processes by relying on their own initiative to see themselves through.

Composite Three: the Enthusiast

> The way I learn is that I don't just do it, I need to understand the theory behind it…If I don't have that knowledge base behind me, then I don't take it on because I don't have ownership. So if someone says to me here's a reform go for it, I need to know why, who set it up, what it does and what is the theory behind it? (P19, Q1)

Curriculum reform pushes me to develop professionally. It causes me to revisit what I teach, branch out and teach things from a new perspective and I find it actually refreshes my enthusiasm for teaching -variety is the spice of life! To me, each change is an opportunity. I often enjoy researching it, gaining understanding of it and running with it and through this process I develop a sort of ownership of what I am doing.

The area that curriculum reform has had the most impact on my teaching is assessment. I no longer just copy old exam or test questions when creating new assessments. I really look at what it is that I need to assess and find or make an

appropriate question, especially with skill related knowledge. I also put more care into the weighting I give specific questions. This in turn helps me to create more appropriate lessons and give constructive feedback to my students.

◆◆◆◆

The Enthusiasts embrace reform. They have created a work around to the inadequacies of coercive, top-down reform by finding alternative ways gaining ownership - *I often enjoy researching it, gaining understanding of it and running with it and through this process I develop a sort of ownership of what I am doing.* The Enthusiasts are unique in their ability to derive a sense of control through this fashioned ownership. It appears that they find enough autonomous satisfaction from researching the reform and implementing it with success, to remain intrinsically motivated in the same situation that is extremely stressful for the Cynics and an annoyance for the Realists.

The disposition of the Enthusiasts allows them to enjoy the new learning and improved teaching that comes through curriculum reform. These people exhibit the personality traits and strategies of life-long learners, who Cole (2010) describes as both rare and necessary to implement organisational change effectively.

Composite Four: the Leader

> I said … 'we need time to program before we teach this'. …because I knew that unless they became really aware of what they were teaching and why they were teaching it, that they would never own what they were doing. And then also they would not have, unless they started engaging in professional discussion with one another, they would not understand, what the teacher doing this course, in this level, requires in relation to what they're doing at their level. (P4, Q1)

We will eventually have a very crowded timetable, the content has the potential to be massive and it is likely to force people to prioritise and place skills teaching at the forefront of what they do. I believe that getting the main message across is going to be far more realistic and valuable than trying to get loads of facts into disinterested 13 year olds.

In my area it is fortunate that two teachers have got stuck into planning and making common assessments and resources for the whole LA to deliver to their year 8s next year, based on the AC. It is simply convenient that those teachers with the drive to make these changes, have some spare time now as their upper school classes have gone. Now if they hadn't taken it upon themselves to do that work, how would it have been done?

The implementation process is not going to happen overnight and although there are some things put in place to help teachers along the way, many of the changes are going to rely on the good will of the profession. The 'make it work' attitude of the profession is perhaps our keenest resource but it also makes us vulnerable to exploitation. More and more of these changes seem to rely on the good will of teachers to make them happen. It needs to be noted that it is not a bottomless reservoir, the constant use of it will end in teacher burnout. I think a key aspect of the AC is that by being online it can be in a constant state of flux. Perhaps this is a model that we keep and improve over time, ending the three - four year cycle of continuous large scale reform.

So it turns out that this is a typical transition; it's like there's a lot of serendipity involved. It will just happen because it always does.

◆◆◆◆

For the Leaders, personal drive, *The 'make it work' attitude of the profession is perhaps our keenest resource,* becomes essential when discussing the implementation of mandated curriculum reform. The notion of peer support surfaces here, as an additional safety net to personal drive. Peer support seems essential to the leader however it is clear there is a struggle to maintain opportunities to collaborate. The Leaders acknowledge the importance of these two resources in any implementation attempt for the teacher-participant.

The Leaders comment that serendipity is the mainstay strategy of the Education Department and its assortment of agencies in charge of educational reform, in ensuring reform happens. There is a feeling here that teachers will achieve what they are asked because they are forced to, not because of best practice reform

management or a burning desire to do so. The Leaders believe that the teachers are being wrongly coerced, and that eventually the wellspring of goodwill will run dry.

Reflection

In terms of RQ1, the lived experiences of previous mandated curriculum reforms, the different coping strategies shared by the participants paint very different pictures of what it is like to be coerced into change. At least four coping styles are described; 'ignoring it by the Cynics', 'do the bare minimum' by the Realists, 'embrace it' by the Enthusiasts and 'leave it up to serendipity' by the employer (as perceived by the Leaders). These different coping styles rely on personal drive, and at times peer support. Throughout the composites peer support and strong personal drive (motivation) are often mentioned as aspects that help the participants to cope with change. So whilst the lived experiences of mandated curriculum reform vary, the importance of both peer support and intrinsic motivation should not be overlooked by those who wish to induce successful change implementation.

Resistant coping strategies are the most problematic of those described in terms of RQ2 –perceptions of the AC. In management theory, resistance to change is thought to be a natural human protective reaction to an organisational change. This is because change is often perceived to be about to cause personal loss or discomfort (Cole, 2010; Hayes, 2010). Given that change resistance is natural, it becomes apparent that more could be done to avoid the reactions exhibited by the Cynics.

Conclusion

There is a variety of mindsets exist within the case study school, and that reforms were experienced differently by different people. Disposition is described as both a person's beliefs and their chosen actions, and that these beliefs and choices are re-evaluated when problems arise (Dottin, 2009; Notar, et al., 2009). The experience of previous reforms can therefore play a part in the current dispositions of the participants, which appears to be reflected in the composite data.

However, many of the participants have very similar working lengths and history (see Table 3.1 for the related demographic information) meaning that experiences with past reforms may not be the key factor, or the only factor in creating these dispositions. This would suggest that although experiences with reforms can alter a person's disposition towards change, these experiences are not a silo factor. A participant's disposition towards curriculum reform is a dynamic paradigm affected by the individual's personal values as well as their salient experiences.

In any case, it is apparent that the different dispositions to reform will influence how the participants go on to interact with and implement the reform. It is feasible to inductively reason that those who do not see the need for a reform will not implement it to the best of their ability, whilst those who are aligned with the purpose of the reform are happier to implement it. The lived experiences of mandated curriculum reform (RQ1) presented in this chapter have been overwhelmingly negative, with even the enthusiast alluding to personal frustration. These experiences seem to be flowing over to the way teachers perceive and interact with the AC (RQ2), influencing their choices, curbing their hope for a workable system. Is there a way to improve the disposition of teachers towards the AC, and what would this improvement achieve?

Many of the issues described in the chosen data are directly related to the management of the reforms the participants have worked with. This external factor holds great power over teachers; effective reform management intrinsically motivates, guides and supports. Effective reform management foresees problems and acts accordingly. The perception of effective reform management is the focus of the following chapter; it deals exclusively with the external forces that influence teachers' experiences of mandated curriculum reform.

Chapter V Perceived Effectiveness of Reform Management

> As many educational theorists have pointed out, it would be foolish to suggest that the faithful implementation of a specific education policy and its recommendations is somehow automatically ensured by the mere production of a policy document or statement prescribing such intended policy. (Ahearn, 1994, p. 14)

When mandated curriculum reform policy is created, it requires effective change management to ensure successful implementation. Each education reform entails a new working process, (Smith & Lovat, 2003) possibly contrary to current practices or values held dear by the targets of the reform; the teachers. Thus as Ahearn (1994) suggests, the required shift from the old process to the new does not simply occur, it requires strong leadership and effective organisational change strategies.

Chapter V is dedicated to perceived effectiveness of reform management. This involves an examination of the interactions between the participants' experiences of past reform management and their beliefs about the implementation of the current mandated curriculum reform; the Australian Curriculum (AC). The composite excerpts presented in this chapter have been separated into three subthemes; Past Reforms, the Australian Curriculum and Suggestions. Each of these sections starts with a brief description of the theme and pertinent research questions, then the data (both verbatim and composite) is presented and summarised. The summaries include my subjective knowledge of the participants and the research context. The sections end with a brief analysis which is expanded on in conjunction with information from the previous chapter, Disposition and Mandated Curriculum Reform, in Cycle Five.

Past Reforms

This subsection examines previous mandated reforms, conveying the participants' perceptions of their management. This directly relates to the first research question (RQ1):

1. What are the lived experiences of the participants with regards to mandated curriculum reform?

The leaders interviewed were not asked about previous reforms, only the AC and conditions that were helping or hindering their department to implement it; so there is no leadership contribution to this section.

Composite One: the Cynic

> Look at lower school from Unit Curriculum to the Curriculum Framework, there's been all of this implementation, implementation, but actually, I don't know if it ever did get implemented. Because…our employer doesn't do a good job at that, saying this is the way it is. It is so airy fairy our education system. (P18, Q1)

When I was training to be a teacher they had to teach us how to use the old curriculum, because they didn't know what the new curriculum would be. So when I started teaching I had to learn what I was supposed to be doing on the run. Often lately people have had to do the same, without the peer support that I had back then, as their peers aren't sure of what is going on either. I find this 'normal' lack of planning and guidance on behalf of the Department disturbing… how hard is it to let the universities know what the future teachers need to know, or us for that matter?

Early on in my career, I taught overseas as part of the school's teacher exchange program. The curriculum is very prescribed and structured in [country]. It is well resourced with set textbooks that have the links, tests, worksheets and OHPs that you need, right there ready to go. It was very easy for me to pick it up and run with it. For the person who came here, it was a nightmare. Just like the half a term here when I got back, where I had to teach outside my subject area. The Curriculum Framework (CF) was so airy fairy; I spent all of my time clarifying what I was meant to do. Then I had a limited amount of time left over to prepare 'quality' resources. It was a horrible experience and I really feel sorry for the exchange teacher who taught my classes.

Around week four (of Term One) when Courses of Study (CoS) was new, my HOLA [Head of Learning Area] came to me and told me I had to take a new Year 11 CoS

class, on top of a teaching load that I had already been pressured into taking on. I tried to refuse; saying that I didn't have a program and that I wouldn't be able to do it, but he told me I had no choice. That was the most stressful year that year; I had 2 year 12 classes, a year 8 and a year 10 class whilst pioneering the Year 11 CoS. I even asked the principal for help, but he couldn't believe that I was under so much stress over programs. I just wanted to know what I was meant to be teaching and have the resources ready beforehand. How else can you teach effectively? Instead, I spent the year feeling like I was skating around on thin ice, changing direction when I had to, and just waiting for the ice to crack.

I feel that the more recent reforms have been written by people who aren't teachers and there's no recourse for me to say 'excuse me, but this isn't practical'. The CF and Outcomes were so interpretative that it was extremely hard to work out what you were meant to be doing. The Curriculum Council and their gurus were no help. Everyone within my department had a different answer to my questions and then the Curriculum Council wouldn't even reply to my questions to give me some clarification. The Curriculum Council and central office may say they are supportive, but I can't think of a single time that they have given me useful assistance.

Now combine that kind of interpretive issue with the completely left of centre, impractical resources put together for CoS and you can see my problem. God, even the assistance we were given made more work for us.

That's what the main issue is with these reforms, their implementation. Most of them have been based on relatively sound surmises. They have meant well. But, the extraordinarily poor implementation practices of the Department has led to them being twisted into convoluting nightmares for teachers who then no longer care what the aim of the reform was.

♦♦♦♦

The Cynics have a lot to be cynical about, there's the lack of guidance, poor resources, leadership being unhelpful - *he couldn't believe that I was under so much stress over programs* and a feeling of not being able to influence reforms -

there's no recourse for me to say 'excuse me, but this isn't practical'. Peer support is available to the Cynics though the positive aspects of this support appears to be undermined by poor guidance *-Everyone within my department had a different answer to my questions*. Many of the Cynics have experienced curriculum in another country that meets their ideals of being a complete, ready to go package which may indicate why they feel so critical of local reforms.

The stress involved in these experiences is palatable - *convoluting nightmares for teachers who then no longer care what the aim of the reform was* and it is difficult to imagine people who now perceive curriculum reform management like this, the *'normal'* poor practices, being able to view future reforms positively. These people feel let down by their employers, in many cases before they even began teaching - *When I was training to be a teacher they had to teach us how to use the old curriculum, because they didn't know what the new curriculum would be.*

Composite Two: the Realist

> There is also unfortunately seemingly an acceptance …that you are going to need to be, teachers, pushers/movers/implementers … [which is] another way to say; you can count on not much help. (P17, Q 1)

> Hard work, as generally little support and time is provided. You rely very much on support of colleagues at the grass roots level. (P10, Q1)

There have been CoS assessment issues I have had to deal with that aren't easy to accept. For example, last year they decided to introduce a new question type into the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) exam for my subject. I only found out about it by chance during a Professional Development (PD) at the start of the year. Then when we were trying to work out what weighting to give it in our mid-year exam during moderation, it was really hard as we weren't told what weighting it would have in the WACE exam. All we had were three sample questions so we picked one and had a guess at the weighting. I know that with all these changes it is normal that it takes time to get used to doing things the new way, it just seems like it is always unnecessary assessment issues that hold me back.

Another area that lacks forethought is the current CoS program being implemented at all, given they knew a national curriculum was in the wings. It's not even a good reform! Now we have a mix of Year 11 and 12 students in some classes. The Year 11s are completely out of depth in my 3A/B class whereas the Year 12s finish 3-4 weeks earlier than the Year 11s, so they need to get through assessments much faster. None of these students want to go at the same pace and my subject area doesn't lend itself well to student centred learning.

As an organised person I find these types of oversights by our leadership really frustrating. It seems like we are constantly implementing, but never getting a chance to say how we feel about what we are doing, or given any research or reasons as to why it is better to what we were doing before. This speaks of the lack of insight and understanding inherent in the Curriculum Council. They have managed to end the careers of many good teachers and put plenty of grey hairs on others. When are they going to learn that implementing changes on the run just doesn't work?

<div align="center">♦♦♦♦</div>

To the Realists, previous changes have been managed poorly and then not learnt from. This is frustrating to the Realists as they like to be organised, they feel that any sensible person could do better. Examples of management issues they have raised include; lack of feedback opportunity, lack of rationale, management not understanding the effects of their actions, lack of direction and assessment issues that accompany curriculum reform (usually because of a combination of the previous issues). The Realists link these issues to teacher stress and abandonment of the profession - *managed to end the careers of many good teachers and put plenty of grey hairs on others*.

Composite Three: the Enthusiast

> …they wanted to do a major change [in another state]. So, they… put it out for consultation but without any implementation date, and then once they got their 'this is what it is going to look like' then they started, 'okay in two years' time we are going to bring it in with year ten'… So it was a much more gradual change. But they had all the information for us to see. (P14, Q1)

I believe the most successful reform that I have experienced was in [another state]. There was a nice big budget which allowed schools to release staff to go and learn about it. I only remember one session where people were worried about what was going on, but that stopped during the meeting as the information we needed was coming through.

I was lucky enough to have access to curriculum writers during the CF implementation. This was a useful network on both sides as I was able to hear their ideas about the curriculum, why they were doing the things they were and give them feedback and advice to help make things more practical. I would prefer to have this kind of input into future reforms.

There have been merits to the previous reforms here in WA. In particular, I liked the old Unit Curriculum as it was scaffolded, it kind of spiralled up and students were able to build on previous learning in subsequent years. It was also a very supportive environment, teaching Unit Curriculum at the start of my career. It was prescriptive and well-resourced and allowed me to develop my teaching style as I did not have to spend as much time on planning and preparation.

$$\blacklozenge\blacklozenge\blacklozenge\blacklozenge$$

The Enthusiasts are hard pressed to find examples of successful previous reforms in WA, their favoured implementation process happened in another state. They do see merit in parts of previous reforms though, the resourced and 'sensible' Unit Curriculum for example. The issue of feedback is again mentioned, but here in contrast the Enthusiasts have managed to network and develop avenues whereby they can influence this process. The Enthusiasts' lived experiences of previous reforms are not wholly positive, however they have experienced well managed reforms elsewhere and they have worked to overcome the deficiencies of past WA reforms.

Reflections

After interviewing the participants it became apparent that none had experienced mandated curriculum reform implementation in WA that they perceived to be implemented practically, in a supportive manner. To the

participants, the implementation processes of the past were the biggest downfall of each reform; even if the reform was sound, it would inevitably fail due to the poor implementation practices of the Education Department. This perception that their employers are negligent, unorganised or uncaring which leads to implementation failure, is perhaps an unfair assessment, due to the high probability of failure attached to each organisational change.

The past positive experience with educational reform described by the Enthusiast occurred in another state. It had many of the textbook aspects of a successful organisational change as it had clear guidelines, was funded, communicated well, open for feedback and the teachers implementing it were aware of what was needed from them and why. It is possible to manage educational reforms without creating negative dispositions towards reforms using these well-known organisational change techniques.

The Australian Curriculum

This section focuses on the participants' perceptions of, and experiences with the implementation of the AC (RQ2). This current mandated curriculum reform is unique in Australia as it is a federal initiative. After many experiences with seemingly unsuccessful state reforms, the AC has potential to be implemented in a different manner due to federal influence on the process, and may side-step the negative dispositions towards state based reforms many of the participants have developed. The composite excerpts presented in this section outline the experiences the participants are having with this reform, the following section then makes suggestions about factors that would help or hinder them implement the reform as we move forward (RQ3).

Composite One: the Cynic

> I am a very efficient type of person. And these things bother me and frustrate me a lot. That if it was me, this is what I would do and I would make it official and let's get on the same page and lets do this and na, it's disappointing really. (P18, Q2)

The most obvious problem with implementing the AC is the current disparity between the education systems of the states and territories. Until this is

nationalised, with the same school entry and leaving age, with the same funding and resourcing across the board, the national curriculum is doomed to fail. Just think of the history of federation. The national curriculum is the railway company trying to get its train across country, which initially meant changing trains several times to account for the different railway gauges in each state. I still don't think there's a national gauge!

A lot of time and money, and the efforts of the best consultants that Australia has to offer, has gone in to developing this new curriculum. It had the potential to be inspiring, but it is just mediocre. We are following in the footsteps of nations like America who have proven that what we are about to do won't work. Why aren't we modelling our system on Finland's, on sound research? It is all about accountability. They wouldn't dream of endorsing NAPLAN type testing in Finland. These changes are going to force us to move back to pigeon holing kids into TEE and non-TEE so that they can be seen as performing well. It is about controlling where these kids go so that their test results don't make anyone look bad. Instead, if we are really serious about improving standards, it's time to follow the Finnish.

Unsurprisingly, the implementation process is being communicated badly, with no guidance. I believe it is being rushed; we aren't being given the opportunity to test it and give feedback. There's been zero time allocated to me to work on new programs. Even now in November [2011] there has been no indication of how we are to assess it, and after the Outcomes I know that assessment could well be the biggest contributor to my workload. How pathetic is it that they haven't even made that part up yet?

I guess it is possible that teachers within my learning area, our school and even the state, could pull together and create a bank of practical resources like Constable expects us to. Sure, we can forget years of having to protect our own interests and our learning area's interests in the war of the budget. Sure, there's no such thing as league tables and competition between independent schools. …Sure all of my peers have the time and the energy to reinvent the wheel. The only reason I have even seen the AC is because of the book publishers and

proactive people in my department. Heaven knows what information is out there
for teachers in other departments.

<p align="center">♦♦♦♦</p>

The Cynics' perceptions of the AC suggest they are unsatisfied by the reform. They feel the AC is not reaching its potential and is falling victim to similar problems of previous reforms; feedback and guidance issues, a lack of foresight and understanding about teachers' roles, a lack of communication or a rationale based on 'sound' research (in fact the AC seems to be a backwards step to some Cynics). The self-fulfilling prophecy of the Cynics' negative disposition towards reform and their previous lived experiences seems to be in play. The Cynics believe they will have to rely on themselves and their peers for implementation to happen at all. This is problematic given the Cynics believe there is no rationale for the energy expenditure required.

Perhaps the most telling statement in these excerpts in terms of the Cynics' reactions to the AC, is the comparison between the first Australian national curriculum and the effort involved in the first national train journey. The AC is filtered and changed by each State's existing and different system, just as the first train journey would have required a different train for each stage as the States had different railway gauges. Where was the foresight in the railway planning? Where is the federal influence in the AC rollout? Until some common sense (at least in the Cynics' view) filters into the implementation process they are unlikely engage with this reform.

Composite Two: the Realist

> I think it's necessary and there's lots of things that needed to be addressed. How well it's going to be done, well that's the 100 000 dollar question. We still haven't seen good evidence of what the national curriculum will be. I have been looking at what's coming out and there is revision still happening. (P6, Q2)

It is obvious that a lot of the content in the new Year 7 curriculum has been
influenced by that which is taught in the Eastern states at the moment. The
problem with that is that our Year 7s are still taught in primary school and have a

different starting age to those over East. So the debate is do we cause huge organisational issues and move our 7s to high school [yes, this is what is now occurring in 2014] *where the teachers are trained to deliver more complex curriculum and have the facilities to do so? Or do we leave them in primary school for as long as possible so they can grow in a nurturing environment? I guess that it would make sense to make all of the year 7s across the country the same age and at the same stage in schooling. Nationalisation of teacher registration and training would also be ideal if we are going to make the most of this. Even having access to the same DET [Department of Education and Training] portal would aid resource sharing.*

If curriculum was a drug, it would have to go through so many testing procedures before it could be given to a person, even on a trial basis. What we see now is that curriculum is being produced and inadequately tested and then being inflicted on students by teachers who have many concerns about what they are doing. It is about time that they threw the whole system out and started again. I know that it won't happen because of the financial and social implications of any large changes to the education system. If we could just start again, keeping it simple, realistic and actually meeting the needs of today's society and not Victorian England's, that might just work.

The best thing this new reform has going for it is that it is a federal initiative, because let's face it; WA just doesn't implement curriculum reform well. Unfortunately, a lot of what we are seeing so far is the same as what we are used to over here, broad guidelines, lots of promises but very light on nuts and bolts stuff that would actually be useful. So although I support the idea of a national curriculum in principle, I'm waiting to see how it goes. I hope I am not naïve in thinking that if changes are required once we start, that we are more likely to be provided with time and support with a national rollout. I have this sinking feeling that when everything fizzles out and the focus has been shifted on to some new shiny innovation, we will say the same thing about this reform as we have about many others.

♦♦♦♦

The AC is not living up to the Realists' expectations, leading the Realists to wish for more research before reforms are put into place. To the Realists this research and adequate testing would inevitably result in a hugely expensive rethinking of the entire education system and its related curriculum and assessment processes. The AC has not revolutionised education enough for the Realists, without revolution there is no point each reform is just a rehash of previous ideas, which are not meeting current needs. Ever practical, the Realists realise the only solution to poor reforms is impossible - *I know that it won't happen because of the financial and social implications of any large changes to the education system.*

The Realists are having a similar experience with the implementation management of the AC as the Cynics. They perceive it to have similar issues to past poorly implemented reforms in WA. The Realists want it to work but they feel, as the Cynics do –that nationalisation of the system is the only way this will happen. The Realists are holding on to the belief that the national rollout may mean more support but judge themselves naïve for this hope.

Composite Three: the Enthusiast

> So I think, curriculum reform will bring together Australia, I think it's really good ...I don't know to what extent, I guess it's because schools are state governed and this is federally, how it all going to mesh, be put together. I think at least with the Australian Curriculum, the liberal party are behind it as well, so I don't think it's going to all, change. (P14, Q2)

The key ingredient to implementing the Australian Curriculum is collegial support. I am lucky as we have good teachers here, they know what they are doing and they like to share. In our department we have divided up the year 8 topics to be covered and each of the year 8 teachers are responsible for developing plans and common assessments for their topic. We are meeting after school every week to discuss our progress. This has really helped to keep the workload down. We have also met up with the Year 7 teachers of our feeder primary schools and asked them to teach the introduction material we need the students to know before they come to us in Year 8. If we keep working together, this implementation

should run very smoothly. I am glad that we have already started and that it is turning out to be easy.

It is fair to say that I have learnt most of what I know about the current curriculum through working with my peers in this way and through my involvement in our local teachers' association. Our association is really proactive, we organise PDs when we identify areas of need and I feel well informed and on top of my game through the information and advice I receive as a result of my membership. We also get a lot of preparation time and PD at this school, compared to other places that I have worked, this really helps a lot.

Although I did not have any input into the AC I can see that people have. When I first started looking at the AC it seemed to be a bit of a nightmare. There were a crazy amount of dot points to be covered in my learning area, many of which made no practical contribution to advancing students understanding of a topic. So, the feedback procedure must have been successful as it flows a lot better now.

◆◆◆◆

The Enthusiasts' positive experiences of the AC generally come down to collegiality. They are working within their departments successfully to implement the changes, and in this supportive environment they have developed an understanding of what is required of them and they feel that their colleagues are also engaged. Outside teaching networks have also been instrumental in developing the enthusiasts' working knowledge of the reform. One particular participant stressed that this point be made clearer after reading the composites during the resonance feedback data collection round. To people in his department, the local teachers' association has been highly proactive in organising guest speakers and workshops based on the AC and the main source of working knowledge that participant has of the AC.

The Enthusiasts can also see the influence of other teachers on the final draft of the AC as it has changed. The Enthusiasts require their peers to be engaged with reforms and they perceive that this is occurring with the AC. Apart from this

collegiality and the fact there is a feedback process, the Enthusiasts do not mention how they perceive the management of this mandated curriculum reform. It is possible their personal networks are so strong they negate the need for effective reform management.

Composite Four: the Leader

> …one of the beauties of Australian Curriculum is all of a sudden we have this massive resource that we haven't had before. When every state was doing their own thing, it's a bit like you know in smaller schools in WA somewhere if you're implementing change you are on your own and that is bloody hard… (P20, Q2)

I think many teachers are finding the implementation of this change frustrating, particularly as for many, all they know of the AC is what they have been able to glean from the ACARA website. The department has provided close to nothing, and most teachers just don't have the time to go hunting for further information. If you look through NSW teacher association websites, they have actually been holding forums to discuss and give formal feedback on the AC; we haven't had anything like that here. I feel that there is a danger that we will be left behind. If you look at the national proposed implementation timeline, WA is one of the few states that hasn't even got a proposed timeline. It's fairly typical of the [Western Australian Education] department, even when we are actively looking for support/resources to get the ball rolling, there's just nothing.

It is true that the school has been given a token amount of money to use towards implementing the reform, but $7,500 doesn't really mean much to a school our size. It's not even enough to cover a relief teacher for everyone to release them to go on a course or prepare materials. There's no fair way to distribute the funding to each person who is implementing the reform right now. And of course there's the worrying factor that negotiations for pay is happening co-currently. It seems a bit of an underhanded way to say 'look this stuff is going to be good for you' and push it through.

Luckily, textbook providers are falling over themselves to be helpful. They are on a marketing drive and we are receiving a lot of junk mail. So we are kind of relying a little on them at this stage, we are already seeing example programs

and scopes and sequences from them. The downside of this is that although we have seen some draft texts, months ago, it is only now in November that the first fully published texts are becoming available. Luckily now that we have just finished fitting projectors in most classrooms, we may be able to get away with using a lot of the free resources available online. There's a lot of stuff around, it's just a matter of having the time to wade through it all and find quality resources. It makes it hard to get organised.

Of course the main avenue for teacher education about any changes is traditionally professional development. Unfortunately opportunities for professional development on implementing the AC in our department have been few and far between, if it wasn't for our local learning area network and AISWA [Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia], they would be none existent just quietly. I know that there has been some funding and courses made available to the TDS [Teacher Development School] coordinators in [another subject], but from what I gather, it's a token amount. All of the PD we have had access to has focused on mapping the new curriculum to what we cover already, and has been lacking in rationale or even gritty detail of how we are to get things done.

In my area it is fortunate that two teachers have got stuck into planning and making common assessments and resources for the whole learning area to deliver to their Year 8s next year, based on the AC. With restrictions in the way funding can be allocated, it is unlikely we would have been able to pay them to complete the work (for all our benefit) in their own time.

So it turns out that this is a typical transition; find it out for yourself, and hope that everyone else finds out the same things at the same time and just get on with it. We will be able to put something in place, you know, teachers just tend to make things work.

<div align="center">♦♦♦♦</div>

The Leaders' perceptions of the AC are tied up with their perceptions of its management. The downsides to the reform so far for the Leaders are the: lack of

guidance/communication, token funding and no PD being available. That is not to say that nothing positive is happening: teacher networks and active people in departments are stepping up to the challenge and whilst Department support is lacking, book publishers are being very helpful. The reflection of similar themes to the teacher-composites in the Leaders' composite suggests that the management issues described are due to higher management.

Reflections

The above section presented data conveying the participant's perceptions of the efficacy of the AC reform management. This data relates to the external forces on (RQ2) 'What are the experiences and perceptions of the participants regarding the Australian Curriculum?' Summaries of the experiences, perceptions and related reactions of the participants according to disposition have been made. This subsection brings these experiences together, looking at how the external factors are influencing the experience of the AC implementation for the participants as a whole, raising issues to be analysed further in the Discussion.

Throughout the composites a number of issues were raised relating to the content of the reform and the way it is being measured, many of which were shared across the composites. Those issues are as follows:

- The AC is not meeting their expectations, it is missing its potential of being something new and different, hope is dwindling.
- There is still an inherent lack of guidance and communication –which includes rationale being provided and feedback sought, much like previous WA reforms.
- There is a lack of necessary support – both in time, professional development and resources.
- Collegiality is by necessity being a support safety net, due to no other avenues being present.
- Some of the proposed Year 7 content is impossible to deliver in a primary school setting with limited equipment and subject trained teachers

- To many, nationalisation of education is perceived as being imperative to success of a national curriculum.

These issues add up to a negative experience of reform, the AC is not meeting their expectations and implementation of past reforms has not been improved on, despite federal support. If it was not for the inherent collegiality in the professionalism of the participants there would be very little implementation occurring. The issues the participants are describing have occurred through poor change management processes, which will be outlined further in the Discussion.

Suggestions

The third research question (RQ3) involves the factors the participants believe will help or hinder them to implement the AC, and these factors have been presented here as 'suggestions'. These suggestions build on the experiences the participants have already had with the AC and the perceptions they now hold of this reform (RQ2 related answers). This section follows the same format as the previous sections; each composite excerpt starts with a verbatim quote from the individual data and is followed by a summary. After the data has been presented and summarised the section ends with my reflections on the data, raising issues for scrutiny in Cycle Five.

Composite One: the Cynic

> … you've got these bad experiences with curriculum here in WA, so you hope there's not going to be a repeat of what is going on in schools here. Which is just as I said you know, vague descriptions of what we're meant be teaching, no resources, no assigned text book [and a] 'go with your heart' kind of attitude. (P9, Q3)

In terms of suggestions, teacher frustration has to be dealt with if they want this thing to work. For that to happen we need a number of things; a clear rationale on why this is better than what has come before, the implementation needs to be kept simple through clear guidelines written in plain English, practical resources and regular useful assistance, the curriculum needs to be prescriptive enough that important things can't be left out on a whim. We also need more relevant professional development but I don't think it should stop there; this is the perfect

time for the up skilling of teachers maybe through some kind of program that pays them to go to university during the holidays.

In the end, there is no way to make up for the lack of ownership I feel with this new shift but if they would at least listen to me about the things that aren't working, then it would be more like a partnership.

◆◆◆

The Cynics raise issues regarding the management of the AC's implementation again here: lack of ownership, lack of guidance etc. However, there are some out of the box suggestions here; for example regaining ownership by having a say in what comes next or being paid to go to university during the holidays to up-skill. Even in their disenchanted state, the Cynics still display hope for improvement in the future.

Composite Two: the Realist

> I don't think it's, well, advertised isn't exactly the right word, but I don't think teachers know about it, or are on-board about it [the AC]. I think a few of our staff would say "what are you talking about?" because they don't know. I suppose, professionally you have a responsibility to try to keep up, but at the same time there has not been a great deal of stuff coming out, and they certainly haven't been handing out curriculum for people to feedback on. (P6, Q3)

With the AC, there is a definite need for even some vague guidelines as to how they want this thing to run, more specifics on what it is that I need to do. I guess it is too late now, but they really needed to be definite about what they wanted us to do and when, before they introduced it. Jumping into this change, with no planning and an obviously political agenda, it just doesn't get people on-board.

I'd definitely like to see the resourcing of this curriculum go up a notch too. I feel like the text book publishers are missing out on an opportunity to develop quality resources for a national market. If the publishers could achieve something useful like text books where everything is laid out for you, including relevant URLs, PowerPoint presentations and worksheets, teachers would be a lot more able to accommodate these changes. Even some solid work samples from ACARA that we

can use to show the students what they need to aim for, or being given the opportunity to see how it is successfully working in other schools, would give us a heads up.

Another factor that may affect the implementation is these new Teacher Development Schools (TDS). Although how two schools are supposed to give guidance and support to every school in the state for one learning area is beyond me. I know the TDS person for my learning area, she is very capable, but how is she going to deal with a hundred people calling her asking for clarification or resources?

♦♦♦♦

The Realists also quote their perceptions of negative aspects of the reform as factors that are likely to hinder its implementation in the future; lack of guidance and forethought in particular seem to be key sticking points for the pragmatic realists. Their suggestions for more prescription are also pragmatic as prescription ensures a uniformity of resources that could then be readily shared, which is not guaranteed otherwise, regardless if it is a national curriculum. Factors the Realists believe are possibly helpful are the TDS, and the student textbook publishers. Both have a vested interest in ensuring teachers have access to quality resources and support. With the lack of direction and resources coming from ACARA the TDS may have their work cut out for them.

Composite Four: the Leader

> Why did, why did courses of study run into such a hole? Why did outcome-based education? Not because they were intrinsically bad, they weren't. But what we never did and what we haven't done, is really getting our heads around actually getting teachers to understand what it is we [propose to] do. (P20, Q3)

What worries me in particular is that there has been no communication on how we are to assess this thing. So what we are basically going to be doing is implementing this new curriculum but assessing it against our existing assessment frameworks. There are obvious problems with that approach and it is going to make the transition messier then it has to be. You can kind of see how it

might all work together, but it does need clearer leadership from the department. We need to know what we should be reporting on and how it should be done.

One of the beauties of a national curriculum is that all of a sudden we are going to have a huge resource bank that we didn't have before. It has always been hard implementing changes in WA, it is a bit like implementing change in a smaller school, we just don't have the resources available. If you are implementing a change on your own, it is really hard, if you are implementing a change with little or no training and no time or resources, it is even harder. At least now we are all in it together and can share with and learn from each other.

There is a great opportunity here to develop national online networks and the implementation process will only be true to the intentions of the reform if we work together as a country to make it happen. Online networks are by far the easiest way to do this. I think teachers will be motivated to participate by the promise of resource and idea sharing but in my experience, online networks are often most useful just to seek immediate answers to even the most stupid sounding of questions.

The most recent industrial agreement has stipulated that whole school staff meetings will increase from 2 a term to 5. Now anyone who has worked in a high school knows just how ineffective a full staff meeting can be. It is true that this reform will require huge amounts of collaboration time; I am just hoping that the extra meetings can be held in smaller, more focused collaborative partnerships that can produce what we need them to. If they aren't purposeful and productive then they will very quickly collapse.

◆◆◆◆

The Leaders' suggestions to improve the implementation of the AC are centred on the issues raised in the earlier section; planning and sound guidance. The fall-back position to these management factors not developing is collegial support. The Leaders mention several variations of this theme; online networks and collaborative staff meetings for example, which could enhance the productivity of this support safety net.

Reflections

The suggestions the participants have made to help them implement the AC relate to RQ3 and build on the issues raised when discussing their perceptions of the reform in RQ2. There is a significant want within the participants to have better leadership from their employer in terms of planning, guidance and communication. There is also a realisation that peer support may be their only alternative to sufficient management, thus they offer several suggestions for the improvement of peer support networks. There is also a perceived need expressed by some of the participants for further training in light of the new content and processes inherent in the new reform. This need differs from the internal, find it out yourself strategies, expressed by the composites in the previous chapter: here the participants want management to understand their need and supply them with time and resources to learn. Whether any or all of these suggestions ever come to pass, the striking resemblance to the issues the participants raise and the issues that permeate failing organisational change became apparent over the course of this data presentation.

Conclusion

> Perhaps the main reason that change fails in many organisations is that the majority of employees first find out about it at the try-out phase in the change cycle. When the majority of employees have not experienced and understood the pressures for change and grasped the need to change, and have not participated in developing the change (Phases 1-3), it's hardly surprising they don't welcome it and implement it enthusiastically… [it] invites resentment and resistance. (Cole, 2010, p. 713)

The AC is preceded by a long line of curriculum reform in WA, making it a new stage in an unplanned continuous improvement cycle (Cole, 2010). This process of change is viewed negatively by those who have experienced it. Even the Enthusiasts who embrace and learn from curriculum reform have found fault in the implementation processes of past reforms in WA. The perceived efficacy of reform implementation in WA is actually one of inefficacy, of leaving things to serendipity, and this perception of failure is in danger of being passed on to the potentially different (federal) AC initiative.

The AC appears to have some positive attributes lacking in its predecessors in terms of perceived efficacy of reform management. Some participants believe that the change is a logical step. Some have seen evidence of thoughtful feedback influencing the final product. However, in general the perceptions of the federal AC (RQ2) are fraught with the same change management issues as the previous WA reforms. These issues are compounded now there is a perceived need for nationalisation of provision thrown into the mix. The saving grace to this whole cycle of unsuccessful implementation could come from several quarters: the resources developed for this national implementation could be outstanding given the increased market, national teaching networks are now possible, meaning the sharing of teacher created resources is now much more likely and last but not least, there is a sense of relief for many that the AC could bring stability to the teaching profession for a long period of time.

Cycle Four   Developing the Final Interpretive Lenses

In Cycle 4 the intuitive inquirer refines and transforms the preliminary interpretive lenses developed in Cycle 2 in light of his engagement with the data gathered in Cycle 3. ... reflecting the researchers' more developed and nuanced understanding of the topic at the conclusion of the study. (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 53)
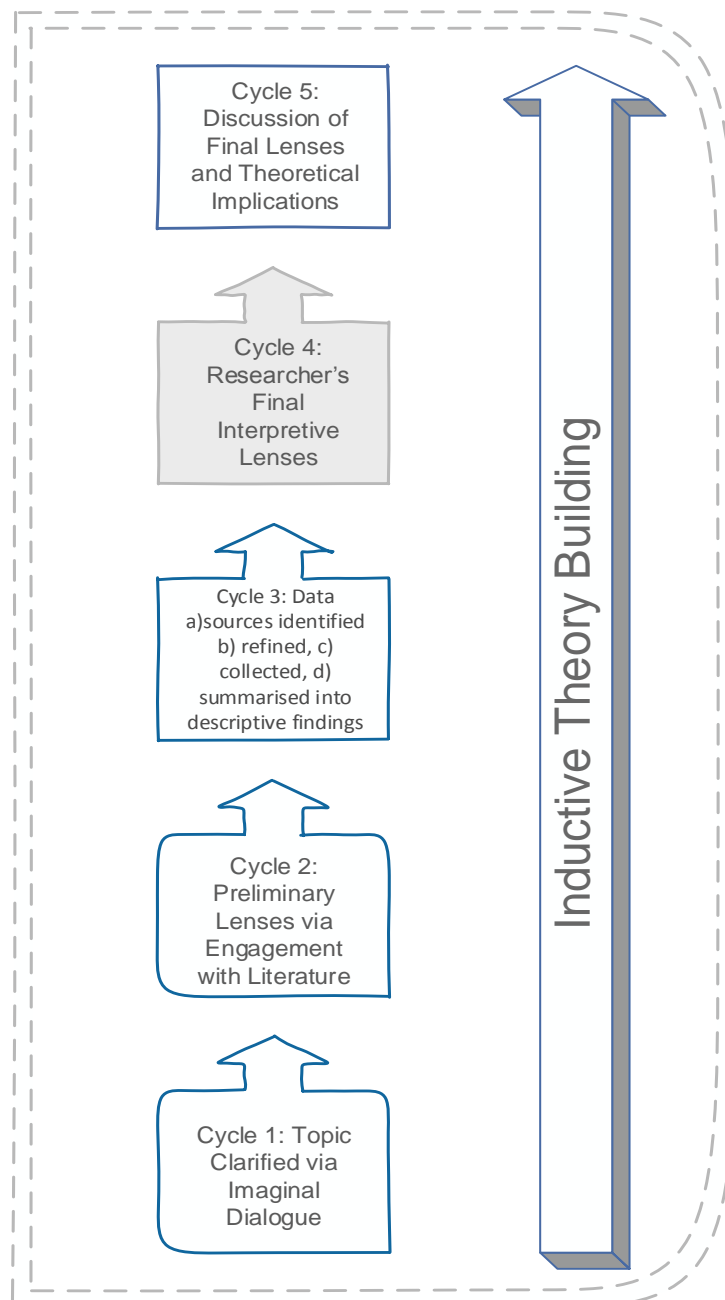
Figure 4.1: Intuitive Inquiry Process, Cycle Four (adapted from Anderson and Braud (2011))

Chapter VI The Interpretive Lenses

Presenting two sets of lenses developed at different cycles of the study, "mitigate[s] against circularity, that is, reiterating what the researcher believed from the start" and "reflect[s] the researcher's more developed and nuanced understanding of the topic at the conclusion …" (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 53). Together these lenses show my subjective growth in relation to the topic and also serve as a subjectivity statement (Priessle, 2008) allowing others to plainly view my personal lenses during the research process and make inferences as to the effects on my research findings in the chapters to follow (Anderson & Braud, 2011; Priessle, 2008). This is an integral part of Intuitive Inquiry as "… a postmodern method averring the constructed nature of reality…Reality does not exist apart from the embodied participation of being a specific human being with a particular physiology, history, personality, and culture but is interpretative and intersubjective" (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 64). This interpretative and intersubjective view of reality calls for the researcher to identify but not separate their subjective understandings for scrutiny whilst remaining open to changes as new data is uncovered and accommodated (Anderson & Braud, 2011).

Along with being a fundamental part of Intuitive Inquiry, the growth of my personal understanding conveyed through comparison of the Cycle Two and Cycle Four lenses is also evidence regarding my first research aim; to enrich my personal understanding of teacher's lived experiences of mandated curriculum reform in general, and the current reform, the Australian Curriculum (AC), in particular. In this way, the Cycle Two and Four interpretive lenses reflect personal growth (and therefore success) in terms of my chosen method (Anderson & Braud, 2011) and first study aim to enrich my personal understanding of the studied phenomenon.

To accommodate this dual purpose, this chapter has three sections. The first section relates to my preliminary interpretive lenses (Cycle Two Lenses). This involves a summary of the Cycle Two preliminary lenses found in Chapter II, Part C. The second section conveys the Cycle Four interpretive lenses. First it

describes the Cycle Four lens development process, the lenses are then presented in a table, outlining which lenses are new and those which have grown from the preliminary Cycle Two lenses. The final Cycle Four interpretive lenses are then described in detail along with how these lenses have changed or grown through the incorporation of participant data gathered in Cycle Three. The final section is a reflection of my accomplishments in terms of the first research aim; the enrichment of my personal understanding of the researched phenomenon.

Cycle Two

The three part process of Cycle Two occurred during the writing of the initial literature review and the resulting preliminary lenses were presented in Chapter II Developing the Preliminary Lenses. Table 6.1 summarises each of these preliminary lenses.

Table 6.1

Preliminary Lenses

Preliminary Lens	Outline
Questioning the Usefulness of National Curricula	National curricula appear useful, particularly for newly qualified teachers, however in practice best education provision may not occur.
Curriculum Reform for Accountability and Quality Adding	National curricula allow for objectifying and standardising education, making comparative high stakes testing easier, to improve the policy maker's standing with the public.
Curriculum Reform for Grand Notions	Millennialism, knowledge society and globalisation are all 'grand notions' which alter society's perception of what is needed from education and this impacts on what is mandated to be taught.
Deprofessionalisation	Teachers are increasingly having their autonomy reduced, leading to deprofessionalisation with associated negative effects on teacher commitment/morale and the perception of teachers in society.
Cycles of Change	Experienced teachers can often be heard expressing the belief that changes are cyclic and eventually we will end up where we started.
Poor WA Reform History	Curriculum reform has been mishandled in the past, particularly the last K-12 reform, negatively influencing perceptions of any future reforms.

Influenced by Gadamer's (2004) philosophy of giving a full account of the historical and social context of a phenomenon before studying it further, these preliminary lenses were focused on understanding the context of mandated curriculum reform in throughout history and in Australia before moving forward. Unsurprisingly then, the Cycle Four lenses, influenced by the data summary and presentation process of Cycle Three, have a very different focus.

Cycle Four

The Cycle Two lenses described in Chapter II and summarised in Table 6.1, evolved from reflecting on my personal experiences with mandated curriculum reform in relation to the chosen focus texts, with a contextual focus. During the data collection and analysis process, other areas of importance surfaced and became the backbone of this thesis. I soon began to realise during Cycle Three, the informal discussions and advice I had received regarding curriculum reform were largely rhetorical, as many informal discussions are, leaving my preliminary lenses quite naive and one sided. When talking to the participants about curriculum reform in a formal way, a broader, more nuanced picture of their perceptions and experiences became apparent. The following section outlines my understanding of the research topic after Cycle Three when this refined understanding was incorporated into my interpretive lenses.

This shift in understanding is expected in Intuitive Inquiry (Anderson & Braud, 2011) and is acknowledged as a natural transition by others. Priessle (2008, p. 846) for example, explains that researcher's "…subjectivity statements [a basic form of interpretive lens] change over time as people accumulate new experiences and become transformed by their own inquiries". The purpose of this section is to present the final interpretive lenses created after data collection in such a way that the degree of shift in my understanding by this stage of the study is obvious to the reader.

The Final Interpretive Lenses

The following subsection presents my interpretive lenses at the end of Cycle Four. The interpretive lenses are intuitive and reflect my responses to the gathered data and the Cycle Three process of analysing that data for

presentation. It is anticipated that the reader will have made similar but also similarly personally nuanced changes in their understanding of the topic during the course of reading this thesis. The incorporation of these lenses before the findings and discussion chapters allows readers to be aware of the possible influence of my lenses on these chapters, as Anderson and Braud (2011) proclaim; Intuitive Inquiry is an honest approach to research.

In this section, interpretive lenses that were not represented in the preliminary lenses are labelled as 'new'. These completely new lenses are my reaction to the data and further reading and they correct oversights in my initial understanding of the research question. The interpretive lenses that have grown from a preliminary lens are called 'change' lenses. These changes occurred when my understanding of the context surrounding such a lens evolved. The interpretive lenses are as follows:

Table 6.2

The Final Interpretive Lenses

Lens Type	Lens Name	Description
Change	Autonomy versus Prescription	The participants welcomed prescription over autonomy contrary to current literature.
	Ineffective Change Management	WA has a poor history of mandated curriculum reform implementation due to poor change management practices. These practices influence disposition and the preconceptions of future reforms.
	Change Fatigue/Burnout	Change fatigue and burnout elements where exhibited by many of the participants. Not enough is known about the interactions between these phenomena and the outcomes for teachers.
New	Disposition	Disposition affects how reforms are perceived and enacted and poor experiences with reforms can influence disposition.
	Collegiality as a Safety Net	Peer support was the only reliable avenue for advice and resources for many of the participants.
	Hope	Throughout the Cycle Three process, the participants continued to express their hopes for improvements to their experiences of mandated curriculum reform in the future.

By this cycle, even though significant change in understanding occurred, there were still only six lenses to present. This is because the first three lenses in Table 6.2 have developed from multiple preliminary lenses into more encompassing ideas. This development involved an amalgamation of relevant information from the preliminary lenses with the information presented in the data. In this process, some of the original information in the preliminary lenses became less important and do not play a part in the final lenses. The last three lenses in Table 6.2 are new; developing from fresh information received during data collection, analysis and further reading. Whilst growing from these information sources, the lenses remain highly subjective, which is consistent with the purpose of this cycle (Anderson & Braud, 2011). Each of the interpretive lenses and their development will now be described in more detail.

Autonomy versus Prescription (Change Lens)

At the end of Cycle Two I believed that lack of autonomy as a result of national curricula would lead to deprofessionalisation. I also recounted my view that the prescription embedded in the UK's NC was useful as it saved time, even if it was boring to me (and probably my students), leading to a moral debate over what was more important. Those two preliminary lenses; Deprofessionalisation and Questioning the Usefulness of National Curricula, planted the seeds for the following change lens –Autonomy versus Prescription.

There is an established need for autonomy for people to be motivated and committed to their profession (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009). This need for autonomy seems to be in direct contrast to the participants' requests for more prescription in the current mandated reform. Prescription was seen by many as a way to reduce workload by enabling quality national resource banks and support networks to develop. The desire for prescription seems to run counter to the literature on autonomy and job satisfaction.

This contrary situation has arisen in the wake of the recent K-10 CF reform - well known for its lack of usability due to unclear statements and content (Andrich, 2009), and perpetuated by the Courses of Study (CoS) reform in high school. The participants found CoS similarly vague and under supported. In this historical

context, it is unsurprising that WA teachers want more prescription in the current reform. Their request points to the fine line between the need for professional integrity and the need for an achievable workload. Workload issues were seemingly the most pressing concern for the participants when they viewed the AC for potential issues. This concern is not WA teacher specific during the initiation phase of a change, but a natural reaction (Hayes, 2010) already documented in another Australian setting (Burgess, et al., 2010). The people who create mandated curriculum reforms may find that implementation occurs more easily if this natural reaction is taken into account.

Ineffective Change Management (Change Lens)

At the end of Cycle Two I was aware that there is a poor reform history in WA and my peers were often quite cynical in regards to new reforms. The preliminary lenses Cycles of Change and Poor WA Reform History, inform the following change lens which focuses on the reason behind the cynicism and the poor history: ineffective change management.

In the recent past there has been a trend in Australia to manage education as if it were a private sector organisation (Goldspink, 2007). The idea is that competition between public schools will improve efficiency and provision (Caro, 2003). This trend includes increasing competition between schools with independent school statuses for staff and extra funding, and the creation of the *My School* website (2011) where school testing results and other information is made public for the purpose of comparison (ACARA, 2013). This 'new public management' which rests on an out dated and much disputed 'public choice' theory (Goldspink, 2007) was developed in the 1980s and is now largely discredited (Day, et al., 2005).

In this pseudo-privatisation of education, organisational change is being carried out in a manner that does not reflect best practise change management (Hayes, 2010). Organisational change management involves a number of elements that need careful planning and implementation if any large change is to be successful. These elements include: a sound rationale, staff ownership, adequate guidance, resources, support, time, two way communication and feedback (Cole, 2010;

Hayes, 2010). The participant sample highlighted all of these necessary elements for successful change, explaining they have not been present in recent educational reforms in WA and are not all present in the currently mandated AC. In this way it is possible to predict that the AC will not be implemented well, as lacking even one of these elements in private organisations indicates probable change failure (Cole, 2010; Hayes, 2010) and there lacking has seemingly not gone unnoticed.

Change Fatigue and Burnout (Change Lens)

This change lens grew from my initial awareness of the cynicism and tiredness present in my peers during Cycle Two. This awareness was expressed in the Cycles of Change and Poor WA Reform History preliminary lenses and has been refined to this final focus on the overlapping phenomena Change Fatigue and Burnout, of which tiredness and cynicism are symptoms.

Change fatigue relates to a person being gradually worn down, reducing their energy and enthusiasm for change (Bernerth, et al., 2011). Change fatigue occurs for a number of reasons including too many successive changes, changes that are too frequent or intensive and changes that are poorly implemented. The resulting fatigue ultimately alters an individual's disposition towards change, making them less able to cope with changes in the future (Bernerth, et al., 2011). Symptoms of change fatigue are exhaustion, cynicism and a decrease in motivation or commitment (Bernerth, et al., 2011). Many participants described experiences where they just did not have enough energy to engage in the new reform or that they were so busy right now that they would not be able to engage, until the need reached the 'emergency' stage. One particular participant even said that she was due for retirement soon so she was just not interested in the national curriculum. This was after explaining how she felt her current efforts in CoS had not even finished its gestation period and it was about to be thrown out. It is not surprising that the participants seemed to be exhibiting symptoms of change fatigue in this situation where changes are happening so fast that they have not seen through the previous one.

The feelings of tiredness and cynicism were not exhibited by a minority of the participants as one might expect of such a serious condition. When creating the composites for Cycle Three, The Cynic composite had more reduced data to work with than the other three composites, meaning many participants were possibly exhibiting symptoms of change fatigue. However, burnout is a term for the end stages of work related energy depletion which has the same symptoms as change fatigue, along with a few more; its three main dimensions are exhaustion, cynicism and alienation (Maslach, et al., 2001). It is possible that studies of change fatigue and burnout have overlooked a direct relationship between the two or have misdiagnosed one for the other.

This similarity has made it difficult to draw firm conclusions from the cynical and apathetic nature of many comments made by the participants during data collection. On one hand, it is very probable that teachers in WA have some inclination towards change fatigue given the high change rate in the last 20 years and the poor implementation record of such changes in WA (Andrich, 2009; Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Bernerth, et al., 2011; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007). It is to be expected that the cynicism, apathy and frustration voiced by the participants are likely to be related to change fatigue. However, it cannot be overlooked that they are also elements of burnout. I feel that change fatigue is prevalent in the sample and that change fatigue is likely to lead to burnout, not coincide with it. Without empirically testing the participants for both change fatigue and burnout it is impossible to draw firm conclusions about the sample and further study needs to be made into this area as a whole.

It was not until reading around this issue when confronted by a largely negative data set that I realised that burnout was a recognised and diagnosable condition (Fernet, et al., 2012; Maslach, et al., 2009; Maslach, et al., 2001). Further reflection on the issue led me to realise that I had exhibited the three burnout dimensions during my particularly difficult first year out. How many other teachers are dealing with this issue without knowing what it is? It was a very unpleasant experience which has left me with the opinion that if burnout is also prevalent in the profession, which seems possible, that it should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Disposition (New Lens)

This new lens emerged from the experience of creating the composites for Cycle Three where I categorised participant responses via disposition. Four main dispositions became apparent, the Cynic, Realist, Enthusiast and Leader. Each of these disposition types viewed and reacted to change differently. What started out as a way of clearly presenting the data in an engaging manner, led me to discover the influence disposition plays in teacher perceptions of and experiences with mandated curriculum reform.

Disposition is the term for the pattern of thinking people develop through their past experiences, which influences how they view and react to change and other stimuli (Dottin, 2009). People with different dispositions towards mandated curriculum reform, need different interaction with these reforms if they are to implement them with commitment and enthusiasm. Teachers are known to be highly resistant to change and their personal values and beliefs strongly influence what they practice (Cohen & Ball, 1990). In WA's climate of poor reform history this resistant disposition seems to be worsened through poor reform interactions experiences to mismanaged implementation, leading to assertively resistant (The Cynic) or at times passively resistant (The Realist) participants.

Collegiality as a Safety Net (New Lens)

This new lens was a surprising addition to my understanding of the research topic as it seemed contrary to my reading on how teachers coped with reforms - shut the classroom door and keep doing things the way you like (Heineke & Cameron, 2013; Kuehn, 2005). This isolationist view of teachers was heavily contradicted by the participants. Even the most cynical, uninterested, participant expressed the usefulness of peer support when dealing with mandated curriculum reform.

It became apparent that in the WA milieu of poor change management collegial support was a factor that all the participants relied on to various degrees to allow them to cope. For many participants, their colleagues were the only respected source of adequate training and resources. Outside agencies which are tasked with providing these resources were often denigrated during the

interviews. It appears that in WA, teachers have to rely on each other (and themselves) to work out what they are meant to be doing, and how best to accomplish it, because there is no other useful avenue. Collegial support is now a natural option for teacher development as opposed to the old fashioned view of teachers happily closing the classroom door to allow free agency.

Hope (New Lens)

Perhaps most surprising to me of all was the persistent theme of hope throughout each of the data sets. Despite dispositions being turned sour through mismanagement, frustrations, change fatigue or burnout, there was an underlying feeling of hope. Hope that things could improve with a national effort, hope that this time we could get it right, and hope that this change would be the last major change for a time, given bi-partisan support for a national curriculum. Although some expressed the likelihood of this hope being misguided (the cynics could not quite let go of their pessimism), it was still there. The presence of hope alludes to the possibility of improvement in disposition and outcomes for future mandated curriculum reforms. All is not lost.

Cycle Four Summary

One of the four distinctive features of Intuitive Inquiry is Auspicious Bewilderment or "…being completely taken by surprise by insights I did not anticipate" (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 63). When reflecting on the data and my previous lenses I became aware of two such instances of insights which were completely surprising to me. I was not aware of how much teachers relied on each other for resources and support and I certainly was not expecting to hear the Realists' balanced view of reform with hope for the future. Cycle Four was a journey of personal growth for me and these surprising insights spurred me to new themes in my findings and discussion chapters.

First Research Aim

To enrich my personal understanding of teacher's lived experiences of mandated curriculum reform in general, and the current reform, the Australian Curriculum, in particular.

This chapter has presented my personal learning journey as the data unfolded new ideas and perspectives over the course of the study. This demonstrates my achievements in response to the first research aim (above), the inclusion of which is also an integral part of Intuitive Inquiry (Anderson & Braud, 2011). "Through an intersubjective engagement with self and the understandings of others, the intuitive inquirer invites transformation into her life and the lives of those in the study and those who read the findings" (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 61). Through the interpretive lens cycles it has been possible to map and demonstrate the growth of my personal understandings.

Initially my understandings of curriculum reform were based on personal experiences and interactions with colleagues. The cynicism and apathy that I was exposed to prior to this study was apparently the result of many years of feeling frustrated about seemingly unsuccessful reform. My peers seemed to feel teachers are less valued and living their lives at the whim of employers who seem to not care about them. These sentiments lead to the development of the 'Deprofessionalisation' preliminary lens. Many teachers expressed the notion 'if it was me doing curriculum reform I would…' Others expressed the cyclic nature of reform and how things come and go as fashions dictates, leading to the development of the 'Cycles of Change' lens. This implied each reform had little to offer in comparison to the previous one, leading to the 'Poor WA Reform History' lens. During my initial literature review this notion of why do reforms then occur, influenced my reading and it was heavily historically based leading to the preliminary lenses 'Questioning the Usefulness of National Curricula', 'Curriculum Reform for Accountability and Quality Adding' and 'Curriculum Reform for Grand Notions'.

After data had been collected and summarised in Cycle Three, the above preliminary lenses no longer fit the shape and texture of my subjective understandings regarding teacher's perceptions and experiences with mandated curriculum reform. New insights resting on hope and collegiality as a safety net emerged during the participant interviews, leading to two completely new lenses. The summarising process followed in Cycle Three also highlighted the prevalence of different types of dispositions towards reform and led to thinking

about the influence of disposition on perceptions and experiences and also the effect of experiences on disposition, creating another completely new lens. Ideas about the usefulness of reform, poor WA reform history, cycles of change and deprofessionalisation from the preliminary lenses grew and were refined to more apt lenses regarding autonomy and prescription, ineffective change management, and change fatigue and burnout.

These lenses in particular (along with disposition) seem to be the most significant in terms of the participants' ongoing interactions with the new reform, the AC. The purpose for reforms (included in the preliminary lenses as accountability and grand notions) became less important during Cycle Three as most participants stated in interview that curriculum reform needs to happen, in general their concerns largely rested with how it happens. Those preliminary lenses were thus not present in Cycle Four.

The changes that occurred to the Cycle Two lenses during the course of data collection and presentation in Cycle Three are extensive. These changes reflect my personal growth and I feel that my understanding of teacher's experiences of mandated curriculum reform in general, and the Australian Curriculum in particular, have been enriched and refined through this process.

Conclusion

> …for the sake of healthy functioning, we ignore or are unaware of how the many ways our personal histories, biology, and culture shape how we perceive and understand our life worlds. In intuitive inquiry, the researcher attempts to discern and acknowledge these lenses as best he can by becoming aware of them in relationship to the research topic." (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 44)
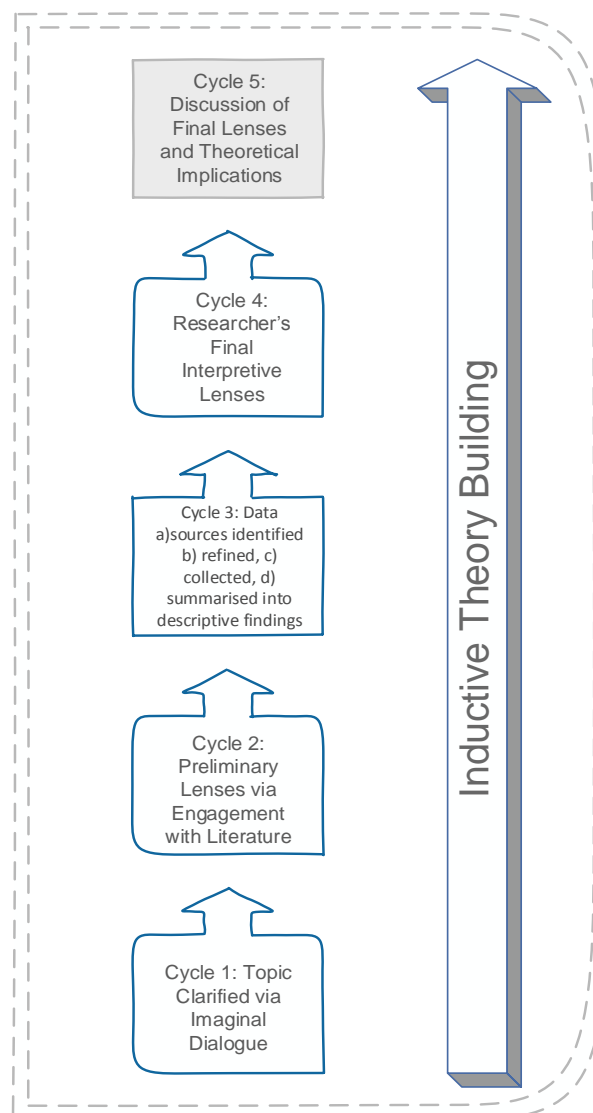
Through the Intuitive Inquiry process my subjective understanding has grown to encompass how teachers deal with frequent reform, the reasons (psychological and external) why reforms usually fail (Cole, 2010; Cuban, 1990; Hayes, 2010), and the effects of frequent curriculum reform on teachers. As such, the lenses presented in Cycle Four are markedly different from the preliminary Cycle Two lenses. The evidence of this change in understanding is not only presented in this chapter but is reflected in the literature review presented in Cycle Two, Part A, as

it was not practical to include the redundant areas of the original review created in Cycle Two, due to word limit constraints. I now realise that many teachers welcome reform or at the very least realise that curriculum reform is important to keep up with changes in society.

The process of developing the interpretive lenses allowed me to organise my thinking on the issues relating to teacher experiences and perceptions of mandated curriculum reform. The interrelated issues of disposition and effective change management became the most pressing areas for this research in terms of needing to give a voice to the participants' lived experiences and perceptions of mandated curriculum reform. The following findings chapters focus on these areas, outlining key issues and forwarding their suggestions to improve their professional lives as they face future changes.

Cycle Five Theoretical and Practical Implications

Based on working the hermeneutic processes of Cycles 1 through 4, in Cycle 5, the intuitive inquirer presents authoritative theoretical speculations and theory related to the topic of study…the researcher must determine what is valuable about the study and what is not…and determine what can now be said about the research topic, including what she feels is still undisclosed. (Anderson & Braud, 2011, pp. 58-59)

***Figure 5.1*: Intuitive Inquiry Process, Cycle Five (adapted from Anderson & Braud (2011))**

Chapter VII Discussion

This chapter develops theories initiated in earlier cycles through the integration of relevant literature with the initial findings described in Chapters IV and V. First the overarching research question: What are teacher's perceptions and experiences of mandated curriculum reform, with particular reference to the Australian Curriculum? is explored through a discussion of the findings in relation to each of the subsidiary questions. This is followed by a discussion of the implications of these findings for the Australian Curriculum (AC) and the implementation of future mandated curriculum reforms. The following chapter concludes the thesis by reflecting on the limitations of this study, implications for future research and the level of achievement regarding the research aims.

Findings

The findings are presented in three subsections that collate and extend the analysis from chapters IV and V in terms of the three subsidiary research questions. This division is necessary for two reasons. Firstly, to bring together the information gained through data analysis for each question and to give a better understanding of the participants' experience of the phenomenon as a whole. This avoids separating the overarching themes, disposition and perceived effectiveness of change management, which were presented as separate chapters in Cycle Three. Secondly it allows for a deeper analysis of the themes discovered in Cycle Three whilst hanging the findings in relevant literature. The following three subsections discuss participants' lived experiences with change, participants' experiences with the AC and factors that can, or are, influencing the implementation of the AC. These subsections lead on to the conclusion of this chapter which outlines what can now be said regarding the subsidiary research questions and what is novel about the findings presented in this study.

The Repercussions of Previous Experiences with Mandatory Reform in WA

The focus of Research Question One (RQ1) was participants' lived experiences of mandated curriculum reform. The data presented in Chapters IV and V relating

to the participants' past reform experiences has been summarised in Figures 7.1 and 7.2, and Table 7.1, which follow in this section. The main issues arising from these summaries are then analysed in terms of relevant literature. This is an extension of the Cycle Three low level analysis, moving away from describing the experiences of the participants as faithfully as possible, to inductive theory building (Anderson & Braud, 2011).

At the end of Cycle Three, it was apparent that mandated curriculum reform in Western Australia (WA) has adversely affected the participants, whilst some had experienced curriculum reform they felt to be successful in other settings. Figure 7.1 shows the experiences and perceptions participants reported relating to mandated curriculum reform in WA and elsewhere. The adverse effect of the serendipity approach to reform management experienced in WA is made clear, as are the factors teachers appreciated about reforms in other countries and states.
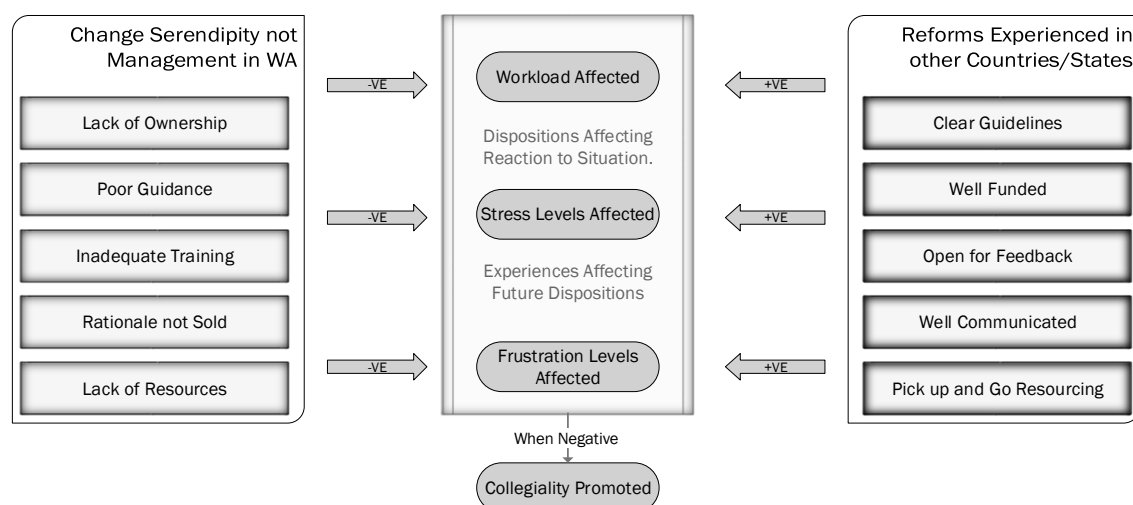
Figure 7.1: Curriculum Reform Experiences of the Participants and their Reported Effects

The participants' feelings of frustration and the necessity of collegiality as a way to minimise the stress and workload impact of serendipitous curriculum reform, can clearly be seen and are the issues the participants described the most often during data collection.

Whilst Figure 7.1 shows implied relationships between reform management and disposition, Figure 7.2 shows the effects of serendipitous curriculum reform management on the participants over time.
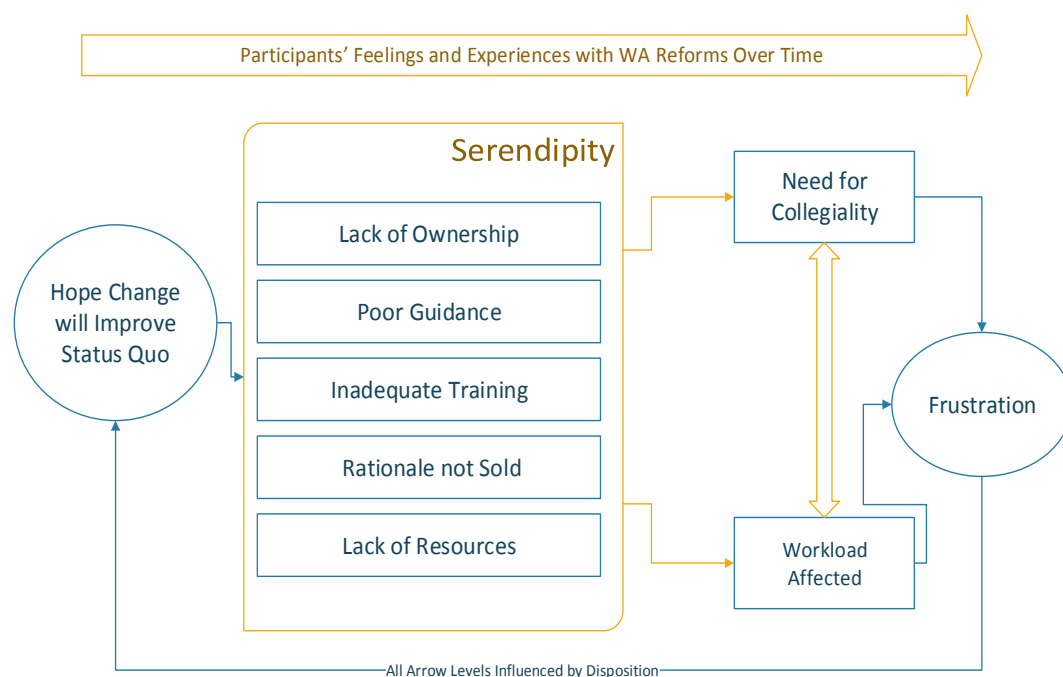
Figure 7.2: *E*ffects of Serendipitous Management on Participants

With each new reform there was an initial 'hope' period which then led to the realities of the situation, frustrations and then more hope at the thought of a further change. Not all dispositions were as heavily affected by this cycle but each expressed different times of hope and frustration. The continual cycle of change and disappointment in those changes, is likely to be affecting the health of the profession in WA and has ongoing repercussions for future reforms.

Table 7.1 outlines the main statements made in my reflections across Chapters Four and Five which pertain to RQ1.

Table 7.1

Analysis relating to RQ1 from previous cycles

Section of Cycle Three	Cycle Three Analysis relating to RQ1: What are the lived experiences of the participants with mandatory curriculum reform?
Mindset	A mixed bag of conflicting emotions: frustration, futility, exploitation, excitement and hope.
Personal Coping Strategies	Range of reactions present from ignoring it to being actively involved. The availability of peer support and resources temper the experiences and natural reactions of the participants.
Chapter 4 Conclusion	Reforms are experienced differently by different people.
Chapter 4 Conclusion	Past experiences affect people's disposition during present changes along with a number of other factors.
Past Reforms	No participants had experienced mandatory curriculum reform in WA that they felt was successful, some started with the Unit Curriculum which they valued for its resourced nature.
Past Reforms	Poor implementation practices have led to a loss of faith or trust in leadership.
Past Reforms	Successful change was experienced outside of WA –it is possible for top down change to work.

Looking through the above data summaries, a number of issues relating to the participants' past experiences with mandated curriculum reform (RQ1) become clear. These issues include; ineffective change management and disposition, change frequency, coping strategies, peer support as a safety net and whether successful reform is possible in WA. These form the basis of my following response to RQ1, as after working through Cycles Three and Four, this is what I feel is important to be discussed about the topic (Anderson & Braud, 2011).

Ineffective Change Management and Disposition

> It is the intersection of time, workload and mandate that affects the intensity and quality of the effort to implement current mandates and also affects willingness to engage in reform efforts called for in future mandates. (Turley, 2005, p. 138)

After interviewing the participants it became apparent that none perceived the implementation of mandated curriculum reform in WA as successful, practical, or supported. This position is reflected in government reports and concept papers published in recent years focusing on curriculum or educational policy in WA (Andrich, 2009; Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Constable, 2011; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007). Effective change management is crucial for the success of such large scale reforms (Hayes, 2010) for a myriad of reasons. The most crucial could be the effect of change on teacher identity. Change makes people vulnerable and in need of support (Cole, 2010; Hayes, 2010; Tovey, Uren, & Sheldon, 2010). To teachers, educational reform additionally challenges their perception of self-efficacy and this can then alter their self-esteem and job performance (Smith & Lovat, 2003). Mismanaged mandated curriculum reform has the potential to unsteady the foundations of a teacher's self-worth whilst simultaneously asking them to meet new targets without adequate guidance. It is no wonder then that the participants described feelings of frustration, stress, apathy and cynicism as a result of the reform process. According to Hargreaves (1998a), emotions play a fundamental role in how teachers change, and the emotional dimension to change is usually ignored or underplayed by those responsible for education reform.

Cynicism, which can occur as a result of poor change management (Wood, 2007) is a particularly damaging emotion in regards to reform. Reichers et al (2011) actually term it 'change cynicism' which represents feelings combining "… pessimism about the likelihood of successful change with the blame of those responsible for change as incompetent, lazy, or both" (cited in Bernerth, et al., 2011, p. 323). This cynicism also grows by feeling betrayed by employers, where past programs are thrown out after teachers have committed large amount of their time to making them work (Bailey, 2000) and then being asked to implement new programs without being given adequate resources, a rationale or demonstrated benefits for students. These underlying causes of change cynicism are clearly seen at work in the participant responses reflected in Figures 7.1 and 7.2 and are likely to account for the comparatively large amount of (cynical and apathetic) data that contributed to the Cynic composite.

According to Cole (2010) continuous change (like the rapid succession of curriculum reform in WA) has six phases; pressures for change, the perceived need for change, proposed new ways, try out, modify and concretise. Each of these phases relies on two-way communication and staff input to be successful (Cole, 2010). Given the past experiences of reform for the participants (RQ1), it is apparent upper management is navigating these stages unsuccessfully.

The lack of participant input into the first two stages (perceived need and proposed new ways) (Cole, 2010) negates them for those participants (Goldspink, 2007). Only the influential Enthusiasts had strong enough networks to feedback on the Curriculum Framework (CF) at the writing stage. The 'try it out' stage is seen as a farce when teachers are not given enough training, resources or direction to confidently sample a reform (Berlach & McNaught, 2007). Modifying seems to be a natural state for the participants. To keep asking questions, keep talking it over with your peers, keep making it work, perhaps finally coming to an understanding of what it is you are meant to be doing, or at the very least get rid of extraneous content you do not have the time to cover anyway. There has been no scope for these everyday teacher 'modifications' to feed back in to the parent policy and change it where necessary outside of the trial school scenarios (Goldspink, 2007). The concretise stage is also problematic: for some participants it was never reached before they are required to move on.

These experiences created feelings of frustration and stress (see Figure 7.1). As these experiences were not unique but continuous (see Figure 7.2) it is not surprising that many of the participants described the souring of their disposition towards mandated curriculum reform. This souring of disposition is not a unique phenomenon (Goldspink, 2007). Day, Elliot and Kington (2005, p. 566) observed that teachers over 45 years of age often "...find continuing commitment to classroom teaching problematic partly for reasons of time, energy and health, and because they have become emotionally exhausted or 'disenchanted'". This disenchantment, with its affiliates mistrust (Goldspink, 2007) change cynicism, apathy and exhaustion (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009), seems prevalent in the participant responses. Such a paradigm shift could have dire consequences for WA teachers. The current system of change is leeching their intrinsic motivation

(Bernerth, et al., 2011) to delve into new ideas, wearing down at the core of a good teacher: the desire to learn, grow and help others to do the same.

Not only has this situation resulted in disenchantment in the profession, each mandated curriculum reform has lost the opportunity to take advantage of the initial excitement period that can be created around a well rationalised and communicated change (Cole, 2010; Hayes, 2010). This loss compounds a negative view of curriculum reform. "Mandated change directs teachers rather than engaging them" (Bailey, 2000, p. 113). So exhausted (Bernerth, et al., 2011; Day, et al., 2005), disenchanted (Day, et al., 2005), demoralized (Bailey, 2000) and suspicious (Wood, 2007) teachers are being created through change management practices in WA. This is regardless of the widely held belief that the most important factor in successful change in schools is commitment from all those involved in the implementation (most prominently, the teachers) (Smith & Lovat, 2003).

Past mandated curriculum reforms failed to take advantage of the teacher as both agent and target for change by first inducing them to see the change as negative and then curbing their professional motivation. Harris and Jones (2010) assert that teacher commitment to making changes can alter not only their classrooms significantly but the system they work within. Are these faulty mandatory implementation practices designed to keep teachers in their place?

Change Fatigue

> An additional factor that may be involved in the declining positive attitudes is the presence of the underlying phenomenon of innovation fatigue (Graham, 1997). Though this could be partially explained by the declining rate of provision for training, the steady decrease in positive attitudes seems to indicate the negative influence of the arrival of a second and then a third initiative within a 19-month period. (Burgess, et al., 2010, p. 58)

The phenomenon described by Burgess, Robertson and Patterson (2010) is occurring frequently globally as mandated education reforms are occurring markedly more rapidly (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009). WA is no exception, which can be seen in the curriculum histories of the participants (see Table 3.1 in Chapter III). Teachers who have been practising over 17 years have worked with four

curriculum packages; whereas a teacher who has been practicing for only 5.5 years has worked with three. This situation is problematic as change fatigue is a further known contributor to poor performance and initiative engagement, as teachers endeavour to ignore or resist changes they are not able to cope with (Wood, 2007) when their adaptive resources to deal with change bottom out through over use. Exhaustion is the end result of this process (Bernerth, et al., 2011).

Within the sample population, even though many had worked for similar lengths of time, the effects of change fatigue was varied. The extremely cynical and apathetic data formed the Cynic composite. Given the literature surrounding this topic it would be possible to assume that this apathy and cynicism is a direct result, or the only possible effect of poor mandated curriculum reform management in WA. However, the differing levels of cynicism within teachers of the same experience, that occurred within the sample leading to the necessity to divide the data into four composites suggests otherwise. It seems that disposition is both affected by and affects a person's response to this situation.

Coping Strategies

> [Teachers find themselves] in the throes of trying to understand what has to change, why it should change and how they can respond to the forces for change without compromising their personal and professional integrity..." (Earl & Katz, 2000, p. 108)

Earl and Katz (2000, p. 98) suggest that teachers translate "... various policies into practical ideas and find ways to make them fit in their classroom and school". This translation was varied amongst the participants who described a range of coping styles when faced with mandated curriculum reform. These styles were simplified in the composites as 'ignore it' (Cynics), 'bare minimum' (Realists), 'embrace it' (Enthusiasts) and 'serendipity' (Leaders). As the sample was largely homogeneous, this alludes to the interaction between disposition and prior experiences in developing coping strategies as described by the participants. Those with positive mandated curriculum reform experiences in other arenas, were seemingly predisposed to react to future changes positively, actively translating policies to the best of their ability. Teachers who had largely taught in

WA, were seemingly predisposed to ignore or resist changes. One coping strategy that was employed across all of the composites was the use of peer support as a safety net.

Peer Support as a Safety Net

While literature exists explaining the possible usefulness of professional learning communities in achieving successful professional development for teachers (where both paradigm shifts and behaviours are altered) (Harris & Jones, 2010; Nicastro, 1997; Wood, 2007), the phenomenon of peers as a safety net described by the participants is less prevalent in literature. Nias (1998) goes as far as describing collegiality as a survival skill for beginning teachers and as an extension activity for experienced practitioners, however this rendition lacks the reliance on peer support intimated by the participants. Given the proven positive rewards garnered from collegiality, and the current environment in WA where teachers feel they have been facing changes they are ill equipped for with little guidance or consultation from their employers (Andrich, 2009; Cody, 2007; Holden, 2006), it is not surprising that peer support was mentioned as a coping strategy across all of the composites. Peer support being the only resource available to the participants, apart from their own personal drive to address changes.

The school leaderships' reliance on the existence of peer support within their departments outlines just how important peer support (and serendipity) is to the implementation of mandated curriculum reform in WA; it has been normalised and is now expected. In this manner the school leadership is continuing on the serendipitous management style of the department management. Possibly through naivety, a lack of resources to do otherwise (which was mentioned by a number of leader-participants), or because at the end of the day teachers will get it done, they always have in the past.

Is Successful Mandated Curriculum Reform Possible?

The implementation of mandated curriculum reform has a number of inbuilt barriers. Lack of ownership, deprofessionalisation, the use of the wrong drivers, and change frequency all play their part in undermining mandated reforms

(Bailey, 2000; Cole, 2010; Harris & Jones, 2010; Hayes, 2010; Smith & Lovat, 2003) with a variety of repercussions for teachers and the implementation of the proposed reform.

The necessity for feeling ownership of proposed changes is well documented in organisational change theory (Cole, 2010; Hayes, 2010) and education reform literature (Harris & Jones, 2010; Smith & Lovat, 2003). This type of ownership is inherently lacking in coercive, policy driven reform, which mitigates against the well documented need for teachers to believe in and drive changes for them to work (Harris & Jones, 2010; Smith & Lovat, 2003). The only participants who demonstrated feelings of ownership over WA reforms were those who had direct access to the curriculum writers, or those who were disposed to make it their own through extensive research and effort. There are consequences of depriving teachers of ownership over curriculum reform. Policy makers are often not aware of the realities of the classroom, making their decisions difficult to implement, as they are either unrealistic or opposed to teachers' beliefs and attitudes (Bailey, 2000). Allowing teachers input into reforms at the design stage would help to eliminate this issue.

The inherently deprofessionalising nature of such reforms (Bailey, 2000) also needs to be considered. Mandated curriculum reform tends to rely on Fullan's 'wrong drivers' (silo thinking, technology, individualism and accountability) to ensure implementation. This is opposed to focussing on the 'right drivers' (systems thinking, pedagogy, collegiality and professionalism) to exact mandated goals (cited in Sahlberg, 2012). The wrong drivers work to coerce teachers into faithful implementation as if they are performing discrete objectifiable tasks. The right drivers take into account teacher experience and agency. The right drivers treat teachers as professionals and value their inputs. The right drivers are not able to be measured and also run the risk of teachers undermining an inappropriate reform.

The recurring nature of policy driven reforms (Cuban, 1990) increases the frequency of change experienced by teachers. This occurs as each political party wishes to be seen as being innovative in their education platform. In WA state

driven changes are now running alongside federally mandated curriculum reform. The rate of change experienced in schools today is known to hinder teachers from adjusting their practices to suit required changes (Bernerth, et al., 2011) and in WA teachers are now facing changes from multiple avenues.

Is successful mandated curriculum reform possible in WA? One participant described the process of a large educational reform in another Australian state they perceived to be successful, it included many of the aspects of a successful organisational change (Cole, 2010; Hayes, 2010) whilst still being a top-down, coercive policy. If such a change is possible in an Australian politically motivated milieu, through sound management then it stands to reason that applying the same practices to future policies in WA would increase the chances of success. Andrich (2009) in his extensive review of the CF, one of the past WA reforms, mentions the necessity of many of the elements described as successful by the participant; communication, guidelines, a descriptive timeline and resources. In literature, as in the participant experiences, these vital elements have been missing from WA mandated curriculum reform. Overcoming the past decade of negative experiences (and dispositions) as a result of these deficiencies may be the largest hurdle in future WA mandated curriculum reform.

Teachers Experiences and Perceptions of the Australian Curriculum

Research Question Two (RQ2) focuses on the participants' interactions with, and perceptions of the AC. This section collates the information pertinent to RQ2 presented in Cycle Three, from across Chapters IV and V. These experiences are then linked to and augmented by relevant literature. This is an extension of the Cycle Three low level analysis, which moves away from describing the experiences of the participants to formulating theory as to why these experiences occurred and their likely outcome.

The following table (Table 7.2) outlines the main statements made in the reflections across Chapters Four and Five which pertain to RQ2.

Table 7.2

Summary of Reflections Pertinent to RQ2

Section	What are the experiences and perceptions of the participants regarding the Australian Curriculum?
Mindset	Different dispositions result in differing perceptions of the AC, ranging from suspicious to innovative.
Personal Coping Strategies	The natural resistance to change strategies described by some participants are the most problematic for the implementation of the AC.
Chapter IV Conclusion	Past reform experiences in WA have been negative for most, influencing how participants view and interact with the AC.
Past Reforms	Feelings of frustration and loss of faith in leadership from past reforms creates a mindset that is distrusting of new reforms.
The Australian Curriculum	Not reaching its potential.
Chapter V Conclusion	The AC is being viewed with more hope than previous reforms given its national market.
Chapter V Conclusion	Some participants are looking to the AC to bring stability to their professional lives.

As can be seen in Table 7.2, the issues surrounding the implementation of the AC have been influenced by previous reforms. Disposition is again prominent here as it was in the consideration of RQ1, with participant perceptions and resistance being key factors in the participants' responses. The availability of resources is an additional factor influencing reactions towards this reform at the time of data collection. The following subsections; perceptions, resistance and resources analyse these issues.

Perceptions

As theorised in the previous section the repercussions of previous experiences with mandated curriculum reforms; a negatively interrelated combination of participant disposition, perceived efficacy of change management and change fatigue are affecting teachers' perceptions of mandated curriculum reforms. The AC is no exception to this cycle. For example, the cynicism towards the motivation and chances of success of the AC described by the Cynics can be attributed to change cynicism (the result of poor previous change management), natural demeanour, one of the hallmarks of burnout or a combination of these. Further study is required into these factors to discover causal relationships and map the dynamic process of perception in terms of mandated reforms.

Almost every teacher-participant described the reform experience as frustrating! These feelings have been previously documented amongst the WA teaching pool (Berlach & McNaught, 2007) and they are reflected in the anecdotes of others regarding poorly managed reform in other systems (Nicastro, 1997; Sizer, 1997). The participants of this study felt that there was a good opportunity here (AC) to develop a workable system, but the current reform rollout seemed to be like previous implementation processes, compounding their frustration. From the composite data it is clear that previous experiences shape current dispositions and that current experiences and dispositions work together to create current reactions (Burgess, et al., 2010). Given the poor history of mandated curriculum reform in WA (Andrich, 2009; Berlach & McNaught, 2007), it is not surprising that the general view of the AC was at first hopeful, which then gave way to suspicion, futility or resignation. These feelings have been mirrored in other educational settings in the current climate of frequent politically motivated reform (see Eide (2001) for an account of curriculum reform resignation).

Resistance

Resistant coping strategies are a natural reaction to change (Cole, 2010; Hayes, 2010) and point to the reasons why politically mandated education reforms are considered to be largely ineffectual (Cohen & Ball, 1990). Day et al (2005) outline an intentional manoeuvring procedure where teachers actively work within enforced boundaries to enact changes as they see fit, not as they are dictated by policy. Smith and Lovat (2003) explain that reforms are also passively resisted by organisations, which have a tendency to revert to the status quo. In terms of the individual and curriculum reform, this means modification that does occur is usually temporary as teacher beliefs "…were never fundamentally challenged or changed in the implementation, [so] teachers' practices will revert to the way they were before the change was initiated" (2003, p. 203). This individual reversion is supported in organisations which tend to find their way back to their initial equilibrium without management intervention.

Ineffective implementation procedures along with negative disposition towards reform are seemingly highly influential in creating resistance strategies amongst the participants. It is possible that witnessing these resistant coping strategies in

their peers have caused some participants to welcome the increased accountability accompanying this reform. They believe that consistency is in the best interests of their students and has been missing from WA curriculum for some time. Resistance to the AC, its causes and its effects on the profession are predictable given the available literature surrounding educational change management.

Resources

Not all departments were experiencing overt resistance to the AC. One department was holding weekly meetings where tasks required to implement the AC the following year were discussed and divided. Another department was relying on the unofficial work of two members to write and resource the needed programs. During this period, WA teachers were advised via email that their personal efforts would be the basis from which resources were generated for the AC (Constable, 2011), galvanising the feeling demonstrated by the participants in the composites that teachers only had themselves and each other to rely on for help during the initial implementation of the AC.

Apart from peer support, text books were the only additional source of information available to departments before implementation began, and even these were not available until late in term four. The TDS (DET, 2013) initiative did not start to support other schools until the year after data collection, which was ineffectual for those who had begun programing for the following year. These experiences with the AC led to a number of recommendations made by the participants as to which factors could help or hinder them with their ongoing implementation of this unique reform.

Factors Affecting the Implementation of the AC

Research Question Three (RQ3) focuses on the factors the participants felt were influencing their uptake of the AC. This subsection collates the information pertinent to RQ3 presented previously. These experiences are then analysed in terms of current relevant literature. This is an extension of the Cycle Three process, where the suggestions of the participants relating to future reforms

were forwarded and summarised. This section generates theory as to why the issues and needs presented have occurred.

The following table (Table 7.3) outlines the participant data relating to factors that are or would help or hinder them to implement the AC along with my insights pertaining to these factors from Cycles Three and Four.

Table 7.3

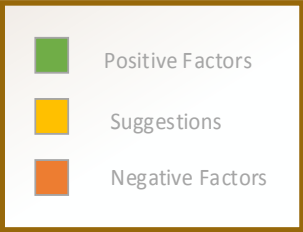*Summary of Suggestions and Influences Affecting the AC's Implementation*

Australian Curriculum Implementation Factors and Suggestions		
	Participant Reflections	Cycle Three and Four Reflections
Implementation	Clear rationale Simple guidelines Useful resources Prescriptive curriculum Paid up-skilling of teachers Simple guidelines Assessment guidelines needed Communication needed Lack of ownership Teacher frustrations Political motivations affecting disposition Rushed reform TDS not adequate Leadership Lacking Not well planned Peer support may be only avenue	■ Positive Factors ■ Suggestions ■ Negative Factors Dispositions negatively influenced by prior serendipitous change management Poor organisational change is contributing to many of the participant suggestions Peer support may still be a safety net
Concurrent Changes	Increase in mandated staff meeting time allows for more collaboration Teacher frustrations Rushed reform Political motivations affecting disposition	Change cynicism, fatigue and burnout seem to be present in participant data. These will influence the AC. TRB and other regulatory measures being introduced during a period when support is needed.
Nationalisation	More resources are available Opportunity to develop national networks Useful resources Prescriptive curriculum	The AC is matching the beliefs and attitudes of many Hope: could strengthen the profession nationally and resources are likely to be of better quality Being a federal initiative means a more positive view of the AC than prior reforms

Table 7.3 relays a large number of suggestions and influences, these suggestions and influences have been categorised as; implementation, concurrent changes and nationalisation. The following subsections explore these over-arching categories in more detail.

Implementation Issues

The implementation issues described by the participants have already been partially covered; there is a lack of guidance/communication, there are few resources and fewer training opportunities available and some aspects that are required to implement the AC (assessment details for example) had not been developed by ACARA or WA's Department of Education (DoE) by the end of the data collection period. The culmination of these implementation issues leads to the use of collegiality as a safety net and the wearing down of the personal reserves of teachers to adapt to change which mirrors the participants' experiences with past WA reforms (Andrich, 2009; Berlach & McNaught, 2007) (see also Figures 7.1 and 7.2). Collegial support is being promoted by leadership in the composites and by the DoE (Constable, 2011) as the foundation of the implementation effort. To teachers, this simply means another round of groping around in the dark trying to work things out for themselves.

From the composites it is clear that the AC is not living up to initial expectations. Hope is dwindling that Australia's first national curriculum will be implemented better in comparison to past state reforms. This is alarming as not much seems to have changed from previous mandated reform implementation in WA, which means that known prior issues (Andrich, 2009) have not been taken under consideration. The participant suggestions in this category are in line with those made by Andrich (2009) in his review of the CF and are also largely represented in organisational change or education reform literature (Bailey, 2000; Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000; Christensen & Lægreid, 2007; Cohen & Ball, 1990; Cole, 2010; Day, et al., 2005; Hayes, 2010).

The notable exclusion from the predictable suggestions and negative implementation factors is the call for greater prescription in the curriculum. This is an important finding in this study as it is contrary to current theory (Chang,

2009; Day, et al., 2005; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Fernet, et al., 2012; Sizer, 1997; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009) of the importance of autonomy to teachers (and employees in general). Given the past experiences of the participants with serendipitous change management in WA, the after effect of new public management style policies, it is possible that this call for prescription is a reflection of the negative state of the participants' dispositions towards future mandated curriculum reform. They have requested prescription which will further regulate and deprofessionalise teachers, as they are so worn down by previous reform policies that have been very difficult to decipher on the ground (Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007).

Berlach and McNaught (2007) warned of this phenomenon in their article regarding the poor foundations and implementation of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) policies. They relayed the frustration, confusion and irritation surrounding unpicking OBE to make it workable, leading to significant teacher dissatisfaction and the necessity of clear content guidelines to alleviate work stress for teachers. A minority report into past changes in senior schooling curriculum in WA (Constable, et al., 2005) indicated that even at that time WA teachers were crying out for greater prescription. This was contrary to popular trends in other Australian states working with OBE curricula, as they had substantial coexisting syllabi, unlike the vague descriptors available in WA (Kessell). Poor understanding of the role of teachers and poor implementation practices caused this stress (Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Constable, et al., 2005). As the participants have recognised, a simple way to alleviate that stress for WA teachers is to present them with an easy to use, extensively resourced, prescribed curriculum as it would take away a large part of the workload stress they were under with previous reforms (Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007) and perhaps go some way towards easing their negative dispositions towards future reforms.

Concurrent Changes

Another influence on the current workload of the participants, leading to the call for prescription and resources for the AC is the amount of concurrent changes to education state wide and nationally. Table 7.4 outlines includes changes that

were occurring between 2009- 2012 and lists the known changes to be faced from 2013 onwards (please see Appendix IV for Table 7.4). This is important as 2013 is the first official year for the implementation of the AC in WA. The data collection period occurred from Semester Two 2011 and Semester One 2012.

As can be seen from Table 7.4 the data collection period fell in the midst of a reshuffling of state-federal education responsibilities for assessment, curriculum, reporting and teacher's professional standards which necessitate further changes in both arenas over the coming years. This snapshot of systemic change outlines how frequent large changes are to education in WA at the moment, which may influence teacher dispositions towards education reform (Bailey, 2000; Earl & Katz, 2000). The IPS initiative, the introduction of the TRBWA and the slow release of WA assessment outlines being changes that are directly influencing WA teachers today, risking this souring of disposition.

Some participants felt that the introduction of the notion of 'independent schools,' where schools can apply for the right to govern their own budget within restrictions (WADoE, 2013), has created an arena of competition between like schools in a district. These participants likened this competition to the inter-department 'war of the budget' where teachers felt they had to compete with other Learning Areas for funding. During the lifespan of this research the *My School* (ACARA, 2013) website was created by ACARA to make information about schools including socio-economic status, finances and standardised testing scores (ACARA, 2013) readily available. The publishing of standardised testing results increases competition between schools (Sahlberg, 2008). National performance standards for teachers were also introduced (AITSL, 2013), possibly paving the way for pay for performance schemes (Creagh; Ferrari & Maher). In conjunction these concurrent changes could foreseeably promote an atmosphere of being in direct competition with colleagues. This is in contrast with the participants' communicated need to collaborate to survive constant reform. This possible increase in competition could undermine the collegiality safety net currently relied on by many participants.

Implementing a new curriculum in the midst of these changes would be daunting enough, however it must be remembered that some senior secondary WACE CoS units were created and implemented in upper school whilst the AC appeared a real possibility (Rudd & Smith, 2007) causing confusion amongst WA teachers (Sutherland, 2012). According to Cody (2007) even those Learning Area's whose changes were implemented prior to the announcement of the intention of creating a national curriculum, have caused change anxiety in WA teachers augmented by poor implementation. She ends with the sentiment that "the damage to the English teaching community will take some healing. I do remain optimistic, however …our fraternity will prevail" (Cody, 2007, p. 51) reflecting the hope with which the participants face the current reform.

Now, one year after the target school has begun implementing the AC for its year 8s, the Premier has just announced that the WACE CoS are faulty and inadequate, and promoted further changes to upper school curriculum which will bring it in line with the proposed senior secondary AC (Barnett announces high school reform). This completely ignores the culminative impact of successive curriculum reforms (Burgess, et al., 2010). The same body responsible for releasing the WA version of the AC and modifying the CoS is now also in charge of releasing assessment and reporting guidelines. Until recently (May 2013) teachers were still expecting information on how to assess the AC with some trepidation as past experience tells them that assessment changes have the most significant impact on their workload and job satisfaction. Assessment guidelines for WA schools have just been released (SCSA, 2013a), a year and a term after many participants began to implement the AC.

These changes and deficits have occurred alongside the disbanding of the participants' teaching association, the Western Australian College of Teaching (WACOT) through government policy. WACOT was replaced by the Teacher Registration Board of WA (TRBWA) whose mandate is to register teachers, uphold teacher standards and accreditation whilst serving students best interests (TRBWA). The concurrent federal policy to create the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to promote the standing and skills of the profession, could possibly provide an alternative avenue for support, however it

seems likely that this national body will be accountability driven with its focus on setting standards and assessing teachers against these standards (AITSL, 2013).

This mix of creating standards for teachers and high stakes testing for students is paradoxical when compared to WA's poor reform implementation. Sizer (1997, p. 22) in his narrative approach to describing a teacher's reactions to a similar situation in America, deems this situation paradoxical as "…the crusade for high-standard academic work by students is driven by low-standard policies and thread bare practices." Frustration is a key theme in his fictional composite teacher's responses to such changes (Sizer, 1997) indicating that the concurrent changes experienced by the participants of this study, will do little to allay their already frustrated state and negative disposition towards reform.

Nationalisation

The perceived possible benefits of a national curriculum described in Chapters IV and V, are partly related to the possibility of this reform being implemented more effectively than previous WA reforms, as it was created by a national body. Participants also mentioned the likelihood of increased resources being available online, the strengthening of national teachers associations and the ability for teachers to now move interstate more easily. These benefits were underpinned by a belief that the AC was more 'professional' in nature–making Australia seem unified and proactive. These highlights of a national curriculum reform are likely to be bolstered by the 2007 Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce's (in WA) findings which outlined the need to strengthen state-federal co-ordination of teacher support mechanisms to help retain teaching staff. Taken together, these benefits of nationalisation are strengths that could be built on to improve the implementation of the AC and thus go some way to improving WA teachers' dispositions towards mandated curriculum reform.

Many participants pointed out the impossible nature of delivering the proposed year seven AC in primary schools and the disparity between states and schooling ages. The WA DoE has made some progress in this area since data collection, announcing that year seven students will be taught in high schools from 2015 (DoEWA, 2013). This will create another concurrent change for teachers to work

through whilst implementing the AC; however it could also improve resource access through increasing the similarity between curriculum provision in each state. Further similarities participants stressed the need for, was the stipulation of times of the year to teach AC content (or else those students who do move states could spend two terms covering the same content) and the usefulness of nationalising teacher registration in this era of the mobile workforce.

By introducing a national curriculum the federal government has created an environment where new national partnerships can be created, where quality resources will have a larger market and national teaching organisations will be of more support to their members. Simultaneously it has created the need for the nationalisation of schooling ages, teaching areas, sequences and processes, professional development and possibly teacher registration. While education provision is still under state control this range of nationalisation will be problematic at best. Already state initiatives in WA to control and adapt the AC – through SCSA (2013a) indicate a 'different railway gauge' approach to implementing Australia's first national curriculum.

Conclusion

In terms of RQ1, 'What are the lived experiences of the participants with mandatory curriculum reform?' the participants' prior experiences of mandated curriculum reform ranged from frustrating to engaging, with positive examples being largely from other states and countries and positive effects largely relating to improved professional knowledge of assessment.

The participant reactions to these experiences included resistance, relying on peers and embracing the reforms. The interrelated nature between this range of reaction, prior experience, and teacher disposition has been discussed, outlining the need for reforms to be managed in such a way that they take past experiences and dispositions into account. This is imperative, as teacher experiences of past reforms are influencing their perceptions of the current reform, the AC and will conceivably continue to negatively affect mandated curriculum reform implementation until they are addressed.

In terms of RQ2, 'What are the experiences and perceptions of the participants regarding the Australian Curriculum?' the participants' experiences and interactions with the AC were predictable based on previous changes and change literature. Many hoped that the AC would be significantly different however over the course of data collection it appeared that its rollout was all too familiar.

From the experiences described in RQ1, it is unsurprising that peer support was the most readily available resource to those who wished to begin programming for implementation. Guidance from the WA education department appears to be as lacking as it was in previous reforms (Andrich, 2009). The differences between guidance and communication levels between states became apparent late into data collection where ACARA released a timeline for implementation table, which showed deadlines and further information for each state: WA was left blank. With such poor communication and guidance regarding the reform, few other resources available and a rationale and PD not forthcoming, real and lasting changes on behalf of teachers to faithfully implement this mandated reform is unlikely. The third research question gave the participants scope to outline which areas would help improve (or hinder) this implementation.

Research Question Three 'What factors do the participants consider would help or hinder them to implement the Australian Curriculum?' centres on the factors affecting the implementation of the AC. As with past reforms, the participants were quick to point out a myriad of problems with the implementation process of the AC in WA which they felt were hindering them from engaging with the reform. At the same time, teachers were having to deal with a number of other education reforms, which for the most part add to the pressure they are under whilst adapting to the new curriculum, or take away from the support network available to them. The dichotomy of the national curriculum –the need for some processes to be nationalised for implementation to occur which are unlikely to eventuate, and the availability of national collegial support and a national market for those who create resources- both assists and sets back teachers who wish to make the required changes.

Given the increasing change rate in education and teachers' past and present frustrating experiences with mandated curriculum reform in WA, policy makers need to alter their practices in regards to how such reforms are communicated and implemented if they want to increase the job satisfaction and productivity of their workforce, and in some cases simply retain their workforce. As the current environment of top-down coercive change is unlikely to end, with plans for future curriculum reform already being discussed, schools themselves need to develop a system that allows teachers to cope with continuous change effectively at the ground level, with the view of changing the system from the bottom up.

Chapter VIII   Implications and Limitations

> The future is not some place that we are going but one that we are
> creating (Maliszewski, Tong, Chiu, & Huh, 2008, p. 5).

This final chapter concludes the thesis by reflecting on its implications for future

practice and research, evaluating the method used and evaluating the study in

terms of the research aims. The implications for future practice are drawn from

the issues highlighted in the discussion chapter. This is followed by a frank

reflection of the advantages and disadvantages of the method followed.

Implications for future research first outlines the limitations of the study and

areas of need to address both these limitations along with issues uncovered in

this thesis which were outside the scope of a Master's thesis to examine. The

final section evaluates the thesis in terms of the research aims two and three, as

the first research aim was discussed in Chapter VI. These remaining research

aims pertain to raising awareness of issues relating to mandated curriculum

reform for the participants and wider stakeholders. Taken together these

subsections work to evaluate the study and the field of mandated education

reform in Western Australia (WA) at the conclusion of this research.

Implications for Future Practice

> Everything has been said before, but since nobody listens, we have to
> keep going back and begin again (Gide cited in Cuban, 1990, p. 3).

Hargreaves (1989) supports Gide's sentiments, despairing that educational

reform continues to be substandard despite there being an extensive knowledge

base of factors that enhance or challenge reform implementation. Hargreaves

(1989, p. 720) feels this failure is largely caused through mismanagement which

can take a variety of shapes;

> Failing to provide enough information, failing to involve a
> representative cross-section of employees in planning the changes
> and trying to railroad the change through despite resistance and
> misgivings ... Asking people to meet the same or increased goals
> without providing the necessary resources for them to implement

> the change properly (people, money, time, facilities, training, etc.)
> [are] clear danger signal[s] that change efforts will fail.

Many of these clear danger signals are apparent in the participant responses and have been highlighted as their areas of concern for the AC and future reforms. The presence of these danger signals in WA mandated curriculum reform, over time, points to poor management that knowingly runs counter to best practice literature. Mismanagement of mandated curriculum reform implementation needs serious consideration if future reforms are to avoid the cycle of hope and frustration conveyed in this study.

The values and attitudes behind the prevailing 'serendipity' management style is a related issue that is more sinister in its appearance in this research. Here, many participants felt that the responsible government bodies (and school leadership) were not just making poor management decisions, they were wilfully avoiding making the best practice choices as teachers will still 'get the job done'. Teachers have to, they are held hostage by their concern for their students (Fullan, 1993) and more increasingly by the accountability measures being used to ensure their compliance (Chan, 2010; Day, et al., 2005; Yates & Collins, 2010).

Given the concurrent changes WA teachers are now facing, which involve future curriculum alterations, poorly fleshed out assessment guides and the development of the Teacher Registration Board of WA (TRBWA), Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Agency (ACARA) and Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), all of which have different accountability responsibilities for teacher standards and performance (see Table 7.4), this attitude seems to be accepted as normal. Perhaps indicating the true reason behind Hargreaves (in Earl & Katz, 2000) and Gide's (cited in Cuban, 1990, p. 3) assertion that despite all the research available on the phenomenon, poorly implemented education reform is prevalent and will prevail. It prevails because the serendipity approach uses a free resource, teachers' work ethic. It prevails because teachers will make it work at the expense of other areas of their life (Turley, 2005).

The negative impact of working in this environment for teachers is not unstudied. Day et al (2005) explain that in this era of new management where

governments rely on teachers in schools to implement significant reforms (Ahearn, 1994; Day, et al., 2005), teachers can be left demoralised and isolated in the face of required changes. Fullan (2002) explains that teachers' working conditions and morale need to be improved if they are to be able to put in the energy and capacity to implement successful reforms. A method of 'capacity building' as Harris and Jones (2010) refer to it, is needed if teachers are going to be asked to implement these changes with little external support. In this study, collaboration was highlighted for its contribution to the participants' coping strategies. By building on this seemingly natural resource it may be possible to help those suffering (or in danger of suffering) from burnout, change fatigue, demoralisation or other disposition problems, to become re-energised about implementing mandated curriculum reform.

Prescription is another tool that could aid WA teachers struggling with the culmination of poorly managed changes. Although this request by the large majority of participants runs counter to current research on autonomy, job satisfaction and performance (Barrick & Mount, 1993; Chang, 2009; Day, et al., 2005; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Fernet, et al., 2012; Sizer, 1997; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009), it appears that the workload stress situation is so dire in WA after successive mismanaged reforms that this request is a necessity. This request is also not unique, Andrich (2009) outlined the need for clearer and more detailed curriculum with suitable resources in his report on the implementation of the last K-10 reform.

Hope was an underlying factor in each of the participant data sets. Hope that a new reform could be well implemented and alleviate problems the participant currently faced, hope that content the participant believed important would now be incorporated, or even hope that the reform would increase their professional skill base and content knowledge. Sadly, a flawed system with known implementation issues that has already been criticised (Andrich, 2009; Berlach & McNaught, 2007; Day, et al., 2005; Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce, 2007; O'Neill, 2007) is being perpetuated regardless of such hope. It is apparent that many of the recommendations made by the participants are not novel, and are heavily entrenched in best practice change management literature (Bailey,

2000; Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000; Bee Bee, 2008; Christensen & Lægreid, 2007; Cohen & Ball, 1990; Cole, 2010; Day, et al., 2005; Fullan, 2010; Hayes, 2010; Kimber & Ehrich, 2010; King, 2001; Sizer, 1997). Every further failure to listen to teachers and such research brings us closer to the day when that hope experienced at the initiation of a mandated curriculum reform no longer exists.

Implications for Future Research

There are a number of possibilities for future research inherent in the findings of this study. It is apparent that there are research opportunities based on information discussed in this Cycle, along with opportunities which have been missed here due the limited scope of this study.

Research Based on Recommendations for Practice

There is an abundance of research based literature on what does not work in educational reform. However, it is more difficult to find participant stories of reform implementation that they perceived as effective. Only one of the participants described such a situation and this happened in another Australian state. Research into reforms that are perceived to be successful by those implementing them at the ground level, may help to pin point areas of strength nationally and also give concrete examples of how successful reform can work in Australia for WA stakeholders.

The issue of collegiality as a resource has been explored by others as a natural human instinct for enhancing learning, personal and professional growth, and harmonious workplace relations (Hipp, Huffman, Pankake, & Olivier, 2008; Kilbane, 2009; Maliszewski, et al., 2008; Nelson, LeBard, & Waters, 2010; Nias, 1998). However, the rendition of collegiality as a safety net in response to poorly managed reform in this thesis appears to be unique. The repercussions of this trend in the focus school have not been fully ascertained and would benefit from further exploration.

The need for more prescription in mandated curriculum packages was another surprising trend in the data. Older participants remembered the Unit Curriculum with fondness due to its well-resourced and straightforward prescriptiveness.

Those who had taught in other countries really appreciated the high level of resourcing that accompanied the clear cut, and often national, curricula they found there. It is possible that this was a direct reaction to comparing other curricula with the poorly written (vague), resourced and communicated Curriculum Framework (CF). It is also possible that the overall trend requesting prescription and resources is a result of a larger cycle of increasingly frequent changes (Chan, 2010) in all areas of teaching influencing teachers to the point where they would prefer a reduced workload to autonomy. It is also possible that this phenomenon is only WA based due to the poor past experiences with reform here. These are all avenues needing research to confirm how this situation has occurred, and if it will be an ongoing issue in this state and other arenas.

During initial data analysis in Cycle Three, it became apparent that many participants were exhibiting signs of either burnout or change fatigue. It is difficult to determine which, as they have similar markers. Links were made by participants between mandated reform experiences and feelings of cynicism and exhaustion, which are signs of both syndromes. According to Chang (2009, p. 1994) these emotions could be affected by disposition, as "…habitual patterns in teachers' judgement about student behaviour and other teaching tasks may contribute significantly to teachers' repeated experience of distinct unpleasant emotions …" and in this thesis it is postulated that the repeated negative experiences also in turn influence disposition. The interrelated nature between change fatigue, burnout, reform management and disposition (or subsets of these) have been suggested in this thesis but requires further, focused, research to build on the foundations laid here.

Scope Issues

As a M.Ed. thesis, it was outside of the scope of this study to interview teachers from a range of high school types across WA. This means that generalisations ("WA teachers") made in the discussion chapter are based on a small sample of the WA teaching population and may not be truly representative of high school teachers in WA as a whole. Conversely, the teachers interviewed had a variety of teaching experiences, teaching in other states, countries, settings and schools

with different resources and contexts than the target school. I would argue that this wealth of different experience outside of their current place of employment allows these teachers and leaders to comment on the experiences of other WA teachers with clarity and insight. A larger scale investigation, involving teachers in a variety of high school contexts, with a larger range of teaching experience would enable confirmation of the claims made here.

Evaluation of the Method

This thesis followed an adapted Intuitive Inquiry approach. Intuitive Inquiry was chosen for a number of reasons, chiefly; it enabled me to adequately address the research questions, it resembled the process I was already following and it offered a convincing way to convey the thoughts and feelings of the participants. The method does also have weaknesses which involve the presentation of the data, the structuring of this thesis within the five Cycles of Intuitive Inquiry and the transformative potential of the approach given the topic and data collection methods. Both the strengths and weaknesses of this approach in terms of this particular study have contributed to the final thesis and need recognition. This is in keeping with the Intuitive Inquiry requirement to tell the entire truth regarding the course of the project (Anderson & Braud, 2011)

The Research Question and Aims

I had already chosen the research question and aims before settling on Intuitive Inquiry as a suitable method. Luckily, I had already loosely followed the early steps of Intuitive Inquiry intuitively. One of the aspects that drew me to this method is the focus on discovery for transformation. The combination of my already developed research question and research aims had such a discovery and transformative basis. The research question was broadly phenomenological, seeking to discover the participants' lived experience of mandated curriculum reform. In conjunction, the first, second and third aims focused on improving my own, the participants' and other stakeholders' understanding of the topic respectively. Intuitive Inquiry was an effective medium to undertake such research as its aims mirrored my own (Anderson & Braud, 2011). Because of this

match in underlying aims, the Intuitive Inquiry process enabled achievements in terms of the research question and aims to be clear and visible.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Moustakas' (1994) modified van Kaam method was an appropriate choice for this study. It allowed for the data to be reduced and then presented in such a way that was in line with my original 'lived experience' intentions, whilst allowing for the data to presented in a raw enough format to qualify for the Cycle Three processes of Intuitive Inquiry (Anderson & Braud, 2011). Not that this was an easy balance, the already modified data analysis method needed to be altered due to the scope of this study; the individual textural and structural descriptions were omitted from Cycle Three due to word limit constraints. Whilst these individual data sets more accurately embody the desired data presentation in Cycle Three (as they are less processed and more emotive), each description ran from one to two pages making them highly identifiable to other participants and thus not applicable for the resonance data collection round, and an unreasonable length for inclusion in a Masters study. These issues resulted in the choice to use the group composites to convey the horizons of the participants without identifying them.

Presentation of the Cycles

Intuitive Inquiry for all of its subjectivity is at times restrictive in its rigid format. The data presentation issue in Cycle Three was only one of a number of hurdles that Intuitive Inquiry presented in terms of structuring the thesis. The most difficult issue surrounded the presentation of Cycle Two. Whilst the Cycle Two lenses accurately reflect my understandings prior to data collection, they are markedly different to the information presented in the literature review. This is because the literature review has changed as my understandings have changed. It is not a snapshot in time like the Cycle Two lenses. It was not feasible to include the original and final literature review so the Cycle Two lenses, the main part of the Cycle Two process are presented after an updated literature review which creates inconsistency when reading through the cycles.

These problems aside, the process of writing the Cycle Two and Four lenses allowed me to deepen my reflection of the issues presented, improving my understanding of the topic. At the same time, the presentation of the two sets of lenses allows for comparison, highlighting the areas of growth in my understanding and thus enabling me to easily convey the achievement of my first research aim.

Writing in Your Own Voice and Embodied Writing

> Scientific reports are easier to read and understand and more interesting when researchers write in their own distinctive writer's voice. (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 64)

Intuitive Inquiry demands an emotional response from its reader. Such a resonance between reader and topic, while desirable to me, was hard to achieve. This was partly due to the necessity of writing a formal, well researched, informative piece to ensure the achievement of what I felt to be the most important research aim, the aim that focuses on illuminating areas of need for policymakers and wider stakeholders so that this research could ultimately be of some benefit. This desire to write formally and largely in the third person strays from the traditional first person, reflective approach used in Intuitive Inquiry. Some measure of liveliness and emotiveness was no doubt lost.

The second area that could have been improved using this method was the use of embodied writing techniques described by Anderson (in Anderson & Braud, 2011) to increase the emotive nature of the composites. This would have kept the composites more in keeping with Intuitive Inquiry ideals. The very choice to use only the composites and not the individual descriptions made this difficult. Individual descriptions give a deeper insight into an individual's emotions when faced with a specific experience. This strong connection between cause and effect could have created a more profound emotional response in the reader.

This being said, Anderson (in Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 64) outlines that a research report resulting from Intuitive Inquiry should;

> … (a) impart the distinctive feelings and experiences that the researcher brought to the topic, (b) convey what she feels important and inspiring about the findings, (c) speculate about the possibilities

and visions for the future implicit in her findings, and (d) be written in a manner that invites sympathetic resonance…

I feel that this report has achieved these targets, albeit some more pleasingly than others. Targets A, B and C have certainly been conveyed whilst D has occurred at least in part, if the results from the resonance round of data collection are any indication.

Transformative Ability

Traditionally, an Intuitive Inquirer will choose a topic of great personal importance to them, usually a topic that hinges on some past hurt. A "…researcher's intuitive style tends to settle along the 'fault lines' or wounds in the personality of the researcher…" (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 25). The researcher then finds healing through the process of understanding their wounds better. I felt no such compunction in my choice of topic. It simply interested me. I was surprised to discover then, part way through data collection that burnout was a measurable affliction with concrete warning signs. More surprising still was that I exhibited some of them, along with most of my participants. Perhaps I was intuitively exploring "…those aspects of their personalities that seek healing either within themselves or within the culture at large, or both" (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 26). Whilst I am not convinced on the matter, it certainly gave me pause for thought.

The transformative aspect of this approach is designed to be palatable. It is difficult to create an emotional piece about such a dry topic as mandated curriculum reform. However, I do feel that others reading this thesis will come away with an understanding of what the phenomenon feels like to the participants. I also feel that practising teachers outside of the sample would be able to read the composites and view themselves and their colleagues in them. This resonance with the experiences of others is what allows intersubjective engagement to occur which "... invites transformation into …the lives of those in the study and those who read the findings" (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 61).

It may be true that "…there are as many [intuitive] styles as there are people…" (Anderson & Braud, 2011, p. 54). The style presented in this particular study was both enhanced and constrained by the method chosen and the restrictions

surrounding a Master's thesis. The study managed to work within these restrictions to present a deep understanding of the research topic, added new insights to an already large field of study and was successful in terms of the research aims that guided it from the outset.

Evaluation Against the Research Aims

This section continues to evaluate the study against the initial research aims. Research Aim One was discussed as part of the lens formation process in Chapter VI and the evaluation of the method used also considered the achievement of the research aims. Research Aims Two and Three are formally discussed here. Information used in this evaluation is anecdotal evidence from interviews and other discussions with the participants, subjective understandings developed in Cycles Two and Four and a personal view of the findings and their implications presented in this Cycle.

Second Research Aim

To help the participants reach new understandings and perspectives of the focus phenomenon.

This research aim was met in two ways; through the data collection process, and through the initial analysis verification process.

Teachers are very busy people, a known factor in the problems involved in sourcing quality data from this sample type. When it comes to reforms, a common coping strategy is to ignore it until it becomes impossible not to, or at least to put it on the 'to do' list until more time is available. The very act of agreeing to take part in this study prompted many of the participants to look into the AC for the first time, so that they would be better informed during their interview. Others in this situation did not make this effort to research the AC and came into the interview mostly 'blind'. In either case, participation was a catalyst to a number of participants increasing their understanding of the current reform, the AC.

After the four composites were developed in Cycle Three they were sent to each participant for feedback. Verbal and written feedback received showed that the perspectives of others regarding the phenomenon were of high interest to the participants that responded. Some expressed relief that others felt the same way and others marvelled at the overall negative impressions of reforms held by their peers. By accessing the perspectives of others the participants were able to reflect on their own feelings and areas they feel are most pertinent to the phenomenon.

Third Research Aim

To illuminate for other education stakeholders the areas of interest for practitioners as they are preparing to implement mandatory curriculum reform.

Whereas Cycle Three allowed the participants to share their perspectives and understandings and reflect on those of others, Cycle Five brings this initial sharing and reflection of into focus for education stakeholders. Within Cycle Five, Chapter VII first anchored the research findings in literature used this to convey best practice recommendations for future mandatory reforms. Chapter VIII divided the resulting implications into those concerned with state level changes and changes that could be undertaken in schools to improve the implementation of future mandated curriculum reforms.

In its entirety, Cycle Five is applicable to a wide audience including education leaders, other researchers, practitioners and policy makers. Cycle Five makes a number of suggestions to these audiences for implementation improvement, based on the areas of need outlined by the participants. The breadth of the recommendations made indicates that this research aim became increasingly pertinent to the resulting shape of the study –recommendations illuminating areas of need (not simply interest) were well founded according to both the research data and related literature.

Conclusion

This thesis outlines the achievements of the study in terms of all three research aims. My personal understanding has grown over the course of the study, as

demonstrated in Cycle Four, accomplishing the first research aim. The participants were able to share their own and reflect on others understandings and perspectives of mandated curriculum reform in Cycle Three, with the study actually acting as a catalyst to learn more about the current reform. This participant interaction with the data and the topic achieved the second research aim. Research aim three was achieved in Cycle Five with the recommendations for stakeholders based on participant data and best practice literature. Each research aim was met and served a purpose in shaping this final thesis alongside the chosen method.

In regards to experimentation and innovation in education, Maxwell and Cohen (1985) referred to Australia as the frozen continent, due to the inflexible regulations of the state and federal bureaucracies involved. With the introduction of a national curriculum in Australia, the debate over the appropriateness of a national curriculum has become a side issue. As Australian education moves forward, it is time to break through restraining politics and focus on improving education throughout the country. In Western Australia this may be more difficult than other states given the poor history of mandated curriculum reform and the current dispositions of teachers. My thesis suggests that WA teachers are relying on their peers to support their forays into curriculum implementation. They would appreciate a clearer, more prescriptive curriculum to work with, one that is better resourced and also has clear assessment guidelines. These requests could go a long way towards smoothing over teacher frustrations built up over a long period of disappointing reform.

References

ACARA. (May 2010). *Australian curriculum frequently asked questions.* Retrieved 24 September, 2010, from http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/AC_FAQs_Senior_Sec_v1_201005 13_Background_FINAL.pdf

ACARA. (2009). *Curriculum.* Retrieved 8th August, 2010, from http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum.html

ACARA. (2010, March 2010). Why have an Australian curriculum? *Australian Curriculum Information Sheet* Retrieved 15th October, 2010, from http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/Why_have_an_Australian_Curricul um.pdf

ACARA. (2011). *About us.* Retrieved 18 May, 2013, from http://www.acara.edu.au/about_us/about_us.html

ACARA. (2013). *My School.* Retrieved 18 May, 2013, from http://www.myschool.edu.au/

Ahearn, C. (1994). Changing vocational education ideologies 1983-1993: From Kangan to the construction of a competency-based training system. In D. L. Smith (Ed.), *Australian curriculum reform: action and reaction* (pp. 14-27). ACT: Australia: Australian Curriculum Studies Association in association with Social Science Press.

AITSL. (2013). *About us: Objectives.* Retrieved 18 May, 2013, from http://www.aitsl.edu.au/about-us/objectives.html

Andersen, V. N. (2007). Transparency and openness: A reform or education policy? *Scandinavian Political Studies, 30*(1), 38-60. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9477.2007.00172.x

Anderson, R., & Braud, W. (2011). *Tranforming self and others through research: Transpersonal research methods and skills for the human sciences and humanities*. Albany, New York: State University of New York.

Andrich, D. (2009). Review of the Curriculum Framework for curriculum, assessment and reporting purposes in Western Australian schools, with particular reference

to years Kindergarten to Year 10. Retrieved from
http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/internet/Publications/Reports/General_Rep
orts

Bachelard, M., & Stark, J. (2010, February 28). Back-to-basics approach for Australia's
classrooms, *The Age*. Retrieved from
http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/backtobasics-approach-for-
australias-classrooms-20100227-pa8t.html

Bailey, B. (2000). The impact of mandated change on teachers. In N. Basica & A.
Hargreaves (Eds.), *The sharp edge of educational change: teaching, leading and
the realities of reform* (pp. 112-128). New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Barnett announces high school reform. (January 21, 2013). *The West Australian*.
Retrieved from http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/a/-
/breaking/15895384/barnett-announces-high-school-reform/

Barrick, M. R., & Mount, M. K. (1993). Autonomy as a moderator of the relationships
between the big five personality dimensions and job performance. *Journal of
Applied Psychology, 78*(1), 111-118. doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.78.1.111

Bascia, N., & Hargreaves, A. (Eds.). (2000). *The sharp edge of educational change:
Teaching, leading, and the realities of reform*. London: Routledge Falmer.

Bee Bee, S. (2008). Surface or deep change? How is a curriculum change implemented
at ground level? *The International Journal of Educational Management, 22*(1),
90. Retrieved from doi:10.1108/09513540810844585

Berlach, R. G., & McNaught, K. (2007). Outcomes based education? Rethinking the
provision of compulsory education in Western Australia. *Issues in Educational
Research, 17*(1), 1-8. Retrieved from
http://search.informit.com.au.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/fullText;dn=160710;res=AEI
PT

Bernerth, J. B., Walker, H. J., & Harris, S. G. (2011). Change fatigue: Development and
initial validation of a new measure. *Work & Stress, 25*(4), 321-337. doi:
10.1080/02678373.2011.634280

Burgess, J., Robertson, G., & Patterson, C. (2010). Curriculum implementation:
Decisions of early childhood teachers. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood,
35*(3), 51. Retrieved from
http://search.informit.com.au.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/documentSummary;dn=007
970207122396;res=IELHSS

Carey, J. (1988). *Leadership in curriculum - The instructional leader*. Armidale, NSW: ACAE Publications.

Caro, J. (2003). *Hey politicians, leave those teachers alone*. Retrieved from http://www.abc.net.au/unleashed/4565396.html

Chan, J. K.-S. (2010). Teachers' responses to curriculum policy implementation: Colonial constraints for curriculum reform. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice, 9*(2), 93. Retrieved from doi:10.1007/s10671-010-9082-5

Chang, M.-L. (2009). An appraisal perspective of teacher burnout: Examining the emotional work of teachers. *Educational Psychology Review, 21*(3), 193-218. doi: 10.1007/s10648-009-9106-y

Christensen, T., & Lægreid, P. (2007). The whole-of-government approach to public sector reform. *Public Administration Review*, 1059-1166. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4624667

Cody, W. (2007). Curriculum reform anxiety: How WA English went from the fact to the fire. *Teacher: The National Education Magazine,* (Aug 2007), 50-51. Retrieved from http://search.informit.com.au.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/documentSummary;dn=687406982870680;res=IELHSS

Cohen, D. K., & Ball, D. L. (1990). Policy and practice: An overview. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 12*(3), 233-239. Retrieved from doi:10.3102/01623737012003233

Cole, K. (2010). *Management: Theory and practice*. Frenchs Forest, N.S.W: Pearson Education.

Constable, E. (2011). *Australian Curriculum implementation in Western Australian schools*. Perth, Western Australia: The Department of Education. Retrieved from http://www.det.wa.edu.au/curriculumsupport/detcms/school-support-programs/curriculum-support/news-items/australian-curriculum-implementation-in-western-australian-schools.en?oid=NewsItem-id-11407957.

Constable, E., Hames, K., & Waldron, T. (2005). Changes to the post compulsory curriculum in Western Australia by Education and Health Standing Committee [29 June 2006] MINORITY REPORT. Retrieved from http://www.platowa.com/documents/PI_Minority_Report.html.

Creagh, S. (2012, 3 December). Australia risks repeating US mistakes on teacher bonus pay: Expert, *The Conversation*. Retrieved from https://theconversation.com/australia-risks-repeating-us-mistakes-on-teacher-bonus-pay-expert-11118

Cuban, L. (1990). Reforming again, again, and again. *Educational Researcher, 19*(1), 3-13. doi: 10.3102/0013189x019001003

Day, C., Elliot, B., & Kington, A. (2005). Reform, standards and teacher identity: Challenges of sustaining commitment. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 21*(5), 563-577. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2005.03.001

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Self-determination theory: A macrotheory of human motivation, development, and health. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne, 49*(3), 182-185. Retrieved from doi:10.1037/a0012801

DEEWR. (2012). *Australian Baccalaureate.* Retrieved 18 May, 2013, from https://deewr.gov.au/australian-baccalaureate

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2003). *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

DET. (2013). *Teacher development schools.* Retrieved 20th June, 2013, from http://det.wa.edu.au/professionallearning/detcms/professionallearning/professional-learning-website/for-teachers/teacher-development-schools-.en?oid=MultiPartArticle-id-13755786

DoEWA. (2013). *Year 7 students move to secondary school.* Retrieved 19 May, 2013, from http://det.wa.edu.au/schoolsandyou/detcms/schoolsandyou/schools-and-you/pre-primary-and-year-7/pre-primary-and-year-7.en?page=2&tab=Main

Dottin, E. S. (2009). Professional judgment and dispositions in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*(1), 83-88. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2008.06.005

Drummond, J., McLafferty, E., Hendry, C., & Pringle, J. (2011). Interpretative phenomenological analysis: A discussion and critique. *Nurse Researcher, 18*(3), 20-24. Retrieved from http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/ps/i.do?action=interpret&id=GALE%7CA255085958&v=2.1&u=cowan&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w&authCount=1

Earl, L., & Katz, S. (2000). Changing classroom assessment: Teachers' struggles. In N. Basica & A. Hargreaves (Eds.), *The sharp edge of educational change: Teaching, leading and the realities of reform* (pp. 97-111). New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Education and Health Standing Committee. (2006). *Changes to the post compulsory curriculum in Western Australia*. (3). State Law Publisher, WA: Legislative Assembly, Parliament of Western Australia. Retrieved from http://platowa.com/documents/PI_Final_Report_29-6-2006.pdf.

Education Workforce Initiatives Taskforce. (2007). Twomey report: "If you think education is expensive…. Retrieved from http://www.platowa.com/documents/DET/Twomey_Report.pdf.

Eide, P. A. (2001). Coping with change: Educational reform in literacy practice. *Primary Voices K-6, 9*(3), 15-20. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/docview/221711287

Eyvind, E., Knut-Andreas, C., & Are, T. (2012). The strength of accountability and teachers' organisational citizenship behaviour. *Journal of Educational Administration, 50*(5), 612-628. doi: 10.1108/09578231211249844

Fairfield, P. (2010). Education, dialogue and hermeneutics.   Retrieved from http://site.ebrary.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/lib/ecu/docDetail.action?docID=10432522

Fernet, C., Guay, F., Senécal, C., & Austin, S. (2012). Predicting intraindividual changes in teacher burnout: The role of perceived school environment and motivational factors. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 28*(4), 514-525. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2011.11.013

Ferrari, J., & Maher, S. (2010, August 10). Julia Gillard's cash bonus for top teachers, *The Australian*. Retrieved from http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/julia-gillards-cash-bonus-for-top-teachers/story-fn59niix-1225903189735

Fullan, M. (1993). Why teachers must become change agents. *Educational Leadership, 50*(6), 12-17. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/docview/224850060

Fullan, M. (2002). The change leader. *Educational Leadership, 59*(8), 16-20. Retrieved from http://ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eue&AN=507763520&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Fullan, M. (2010). The awesome power of the principal. *Principal, 89*(4), 10-12.

Gadamer, H.-G. (2000a). *The beginning of philosophy* (R. Coltman, Trans.). GB: Continuum.

Gadamer, H.-G. (2000b). Subjectivity and intersubjectivity, subject and person. *Continental philosophy review, 33*(3), 275-387. Retrieved from doi:10.1023/A:1010086224341

Gadamer, H.-G. (2002). The beginning of knowledge. Retrieved from http://0-site.ebrary.com.library.ecu.edu.au/lib/ecu/Doc?id=10224673

Gadamer, H.-G. (2004). *Truth and method* (J. Weinsheimer & D. G. Marshall, Trans. 2nd ed.). London: Continuum.

Gano-Phillips, S., Barnett, R., W. , Kelsch, A., Hawthorne, J., Mitchell, N., D., & Jonson, J. (2011). Rethinking the role of leadership in general education reform. *The Journal of General Education, 60*(2), 65-83. doi: 10.5325/jgeneeduc.60.2.0065

Glendinning, S. (2007). *In the name of phenomenology*. New York: Routledge.

Goldspink, C. (2007). Rethinking educational reform: A loosely coupled and complex systems perspective. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, Vol 35(1)*, 27-50. Retrieved from doi:10.1177/1741143207068219

Graham, J. (1997). The national curriculum for teacher training: Playing politics or promoting professionalism? *Journal of In-Service Education, 23*(2), 163-177. doi: 10.1080/13674589700200014

Hamilton, D. (1990). *Curriculum history*. Geelong, Australia: Deakin University.

Hargreaves, A. (1989). *Curriculum and assessment reform*. Milton Keynes [England]: Open University Press.

Hargreaves, A. (1998a). The emotions of teaching and educational change. In A. Hargreaves, A. Lieberman, M. Fullan & D. Hopkins (Eds.), *International handbook of educational change* (Vol. 5., pp. 558-570). Boston [Mass.]: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Hargreaves, A. (1998b). *International handbook of educational change* (Vol. 5.). Boston [Mass.]: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Hargreaves, A., & Reynolds, D. (Eds.). (1989). *Education policies: Controversies and critiques*. New York: The Falmer Press.

Harris, A., & Jones, M. (2010). Professional learning communities and system improvement. *Improving Schools, 13*(2), 172-181. doi: 10.1177/1365480210376487

Hayes, J. (2010). *The theory and practice of change management* (3rd ed.). China: Palgrave MacMillan.

Heineke, A., J. , & Cameron, Q. (2013). Closing the classroom door and the achievement gap: Teach for America alumni teachers' appropriation of Arizona language policy. *Education and Urban Society, 45*(4), 483. Retrieved from doi:10.1177/0013124511413123

Hipp, K. K., Huffman, J. B., Pankake, A. M., & Olivier, D. F. (2008). Sustaining professional learning communities: Case studies. *Journal of Educational Change, 9*(2), 173-195. doi: 10.1007/s10833-007-9060-8

Holden, S. (2006). As-new curriculum: What offers? *Teacher: The National Education Magazine,* (Aug 2006), 22. Retrieved from http://search.informit.com.au.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/fullText;dn=200042986641200;res=IELHSS

Hoyle, E., & Wallace, M. (2007). Educational reform: An ironic perspective. *35*(1), 9. Retrieved from doi:10.1177/1741143207071383

Hughes, P. W. (1990). *A national curriculum, promise or warning?* (Vol. no. 14.). Curtin, ACT: Australian College of Education.

Husserl, E. R., & Paul Vandevelde, P. (1996). Key to Husserl's Ideas I. In A. Tallon (Series Ed.) Marquette studies in philosophy, Vol. 10.   Retrieved from http://site.ebrary.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/lib/ecu/docDetail.action?docID=2001893

Joan, L. (2010). National curriculum launched on wrong footing. *Education, 91*(Newspaper Article). Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/docview/392211225

Kemoni, H. N. (2008). Theoretical framework and literature review in graduate records management research. *African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science, 18*(2), 103-115. Retrieved from

http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA191012936&v=2.1&u=cowan&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w

Kerin, R., & Comber, B. (2008). A national English curriculum for all Australian youth: Making it work for teachers and students everywhere. *English in Australia, 43*(3), 21. Retrieved from http://search.informit.com.au.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/documentSummary;dn=599472305313099;res=IELHSS

Kessell, S. (2006, 21 May). Let's call a spade a spade, *The Sunday Times*. Retrieved from http://www.platowa.com/Breaking_News/2006/2006_05_22.html

Kilbane, J. F. (2009). Factors in sustaining professional learning community. *NASSP Bulletin, 93*(3), 184-205. Retrieved from doi:10.1177/0192636509358923

Kimber, M., & Ehrich, L. C. (2010). The democratic deficit and school-based management in Australia. *Journal of Educational Administration, 49*(2), 179-197. Retrieved from doi:10.1108/09578231111116725

King, C. (2001). The response of teachers to new subject areas in a national science curriculum: The case of the earth science component. *Science Education, 85*(6), 636. Retrieved from doi:10.1002/sce.1030

Krajewski, B. (2004). Gadamer's repercussions: Reconsidering philosophical hermeneutics. Retrieved from http://site.ebrary.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/lib/ecu/docDetail.action?docID=10058551

Kuehn, L. (2005). Control of teachers' work through surveillance. *Our Schools, Our Selves, 14*(3), 45. Retrieved from http://ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/docview/204859608?accountid=10675

Leech, N. L., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2008). Horizonalization. In L. M. Given (Ed.), The sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods (pp. 401-402). doi: 10.4135/9781412963909.n201

Lorenz, C. (2012). If you're so smart, why are you under surveillance? Universities, neoliberalism, and new public management. *Critical Inquiry, 38*(3), 599-629. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/664553

Maliszewski, D., Tong, S., Chiu, J., & Huh, M. J. (2008). A professional learning community journey. *Partnership : the Canadian Journal of Library and*

Information Practice and Research, 3(1). Retrieved from
http://ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.ecu.e
du.au/docview/235959700?accountid=10675

Mangez, E. (2010). Global knowledge-based policy in fragmented societies: the case of
curriculum reform in French-speaking Belgium. *European Journal of Education,
45*(1), 60-73. Retrieved from doi:10.1111/j.1465-3435.2009.01415.x

Manzo, K. (2009). National curriculum inching forward. *Education Week, 28*(29), 22-24.
Retrieved from
http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA198996791
&v=2.1&u=cowan&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w

Marsh, C., & Prideaux, D. (1993). Curriculum responses to changes in the management
of education: Centre to site based and decentralised management. In D. L.
Smith & Australian Curriculum Studies Association (Eds.), *Australian curriculum
reform: action and reaction* (pp. 28-39). Belconnen, A.C.T: Australian
Curriculum Studies Association in association with Social Science Press.

Maslach, C., Leiter, M. P., & Schaufeli, W. (2009). Measuring burnoutThe Oxford
handbook of organizational well being. Oxford Handbooks Online: Oxford
University Press. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199211913.003.0005

Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job Burnout. *Annual Review of
Psychology, 52*(1), 397-422. doi: 10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.397

Maxwell, T., & Cohen, D. (1985). *Blocked at the entrance: Context, cases and
commentary on curriculum change*. Armidale, N.S.W: Entrance Publications.

McCormick, J., & Barnett, K. (2011). Teachers' attributions for stress and their
relationships with burnout. *International Journal of Educational Management,
25*(3), 278-293. doi: 10.1108/09513541111120114

MCEECDYA. (2009). Melbourne declaration. Retrieved 24/07/12, from
http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/mceecdya/melbourne_declaration,25979.html

MCEETYA. (2008). Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians.
Retrieved 1st August, 2010, from
http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/National_Declaration_on_th
e_Educational_Goals_for_Young_Australians.pdf

McGaw, B. (2010). Statement from ACARA Chair Professor Barry McGaw for release 23
September 9.30am Retrieved January 5, 2011, from

http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/Statement_from_ACARA_Chair_Professor_Barry_McGaw.pdf

McKnight, S., A. (2007). Religion and Francis Bacon's scientific utopianism. *Zygon, 42*(2), 463-486. Retrieved from doi:10.1111/j.1467-9744.2007.00463.x

McRae, D. (1989). Imagining the Australian curriculum. *5.*(Report). Retrieved from http://library.ecu.edu.au/record=b1079464

Moloney, R. (1992). Stages in Ricoeur's hermeneutics. *Irish Theological Quarterly, 58*(2), 118-128. Retrieved from doi:10.1177/002114009205800203

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications Ltd.

My School. (2011). *School Profile.* Retrieved 7th August, 2012, from http://www.myschool.edu.au/MainPages/SchoolProfileRep.aspx

Nelson, T. H., LeBard, L., & Waters, C. (2010). How to create a professional learning community. *Science and Children, 47*(9), 36-40. Retrieved from http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA236729870&v=2.1&u=cowan&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w

Nias, J. (1998). Why teachers need their colleagues: A developmental perspective. In A. Hargreaves, A. Lieberman, M. Fullan & D. Hopkins (Eds.), *International handbook of educational change* (Vol. 5., pp. 1257-1271). Boston [Mass.]: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Nicastro, G. (1997). School reform: A reflective essay. *The English Journal, 86*(5), 54-56. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/docview/237279899

Niesz, T. (2007). Why Teacher Networks (Can) Work. *The Phi Delta Kappan, 88*(8), 605-610. Retrieved from http://ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/docview/218490772?accountid=10675

Nixon, A., Dam, M., & Packard, A. (2010). Teacher dispositions and contract non-renewal. *Planning and Changing, 41*(3/4), 210-219. Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/detail?accno=EJ952382

Notar, C. E., Riley, G. W., Taylor, P. W., Thornburg, R. A., & Cargill, R. L. (2009). Dispositions: Ability and assessment. *International Journal of Education, 1*(1). Retrieved from http://www.macrothink.org/journal/index.php/ije/article/view/133

O'Kelly, G. (2007). Debate confuses national curriculum with national standards. *Eureka Street, 17*(6), 10-12. Retrieved from http://search.informit.com.au.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/documentSummary;dn=390881878267685;res=IELLCC

O'Neill, S. (2007). *Clearing the way in teaching and learning: Support for teachers*. Department of Education and Training. Retrieved from http://platowa.com/documents/DET/2007-03-23_CIP2memo.pdf.

Peters, V., & Wester, F. (2007). How qualitative data analysis software may support the qualitative analysis process. *Quality & Quantity, 41*, 635-659. Retrieved from doi:10.1007/s11135-006-9016-8

Priessle, J. (2008). Subjectivity statement. In L. M. Given (Ed.), The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods. (pp. 845-846). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781412963909

Pyhältö, K., Pietarinen, J., & Salmela-Aro, K. (2011). Teacher–working-environment fit as a framework for burnout experienced by Finnish teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 27*(7), 1101-1110. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2011.05.006

Rudd, K., & Smith, S. (2007). *New directions for our schools: Establishing a National Curriculum to improve our children's educational outcomes*. http://platowa.com/documents/Federal_ALP_2007/National_Curricullum_Feb_2007.pdf: Federal Australian Labor Party.

Rushton, S., Morgan, J., & Richard, M. (2007). Teacher's Myers-Briggs personality profiles: Identifying effective teacher personality traits. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 23*(4), 432-441. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2006.12.011

Sahlberg, P. (2008). Rethinking accountability in a knowledge society. *Journal of Educational Change, 11*, 45-61. Retrieved from doi:10.1007/s10833-008-9098-2

Sahlberg, P. (2012). A model lesson: Finland shows us what equal opportunity looks like. *American Educator, Spring*, 20-27, 40. Retrieved from http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA297041003&v=2.1&u=cowan&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w

Sammel, A. (2003). An invitation to dialogue: Gadamer, hermeneutic phenomenology, and critical environmental education. *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education, 8*(Spring), 155-168. Retrieved from http://cjee.lakeheadu.ca/index.php/cjee/article/view/244

Savin-Baden, M., & Major, C. H. (2010). New approaches to qualitative research: Wisdom and uncertainty. Retrieved from http://www.eblib.com

Scott, D. (2007). *Critical essays on major curriculum theorists*. New York: Routledge.

SCSA. (2013a, 03/05/2013). *Background: Curriculum and assessment outline (consultation version).* Retrieved 18 May, 2013, from http://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/Background

SCSA. (2013b). *WACE 2016.* Retrieved 18 May, 2013, from http://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/internet/Senior_Secondary/The_WACE/WACE_2016

Seddon, T. (2001). National curriculum in Australia? A matter of politics, powerful knowledge and the regulation of learning. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society, 9*(3), 307. Retrieved from doi:10.1080/14681360100200127

Sizer, T. R. (1997). Horace's frustration, Horace's hope. *The English Journal, 86*(5), 20-24. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/820438

Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2009). Does school context matter? Relations with teacher burnout and job satisfaction. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*(3), 518-524. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2008.12.006

Smith, D. L., & Lovat, T. J. (2003). *Curriculum: action on reflection* (4th ed.). Tuggerah, NSW: Social science press.

Sutherland, A. (2012). *Principles for designing an effective, post-compulsory music curriculum suitable for Western Australia.* ECU, Theses: Doctorates and Masters. Retrieved from http://ro.ecu.edu.au/theses/542 (Paper 542)

Thomson, P. (2008). Lessons for Australia?: Learning from England's curriculum 'black box'. *English in Australia, 43*(3), 13. Retrieved from http://search.informit.com.au.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/documentSummary;dn=599360507485550;res=IELHSS

Thornton, H. (2006). Dispositions in action: Do dispositions make a difference in practice? *Teacher Education Quarterly, 33*(2), 53-68. Retrieved from http://ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/docview/222854777?accountid=10675

Tognolini, J. (2006). Meeting the challenge of assessing in a standards based education system. http://platowa.com/documents/Tognolini%20Report.pdf: Curriculum Council.

Tovey, M. D., Uren, M.-A. L., & Sheldon, N. E. (2010). *Managing performance improvement* (3rd ed.). Frenchs Forest, NSW: Pearson.

TRBWA. (n.d.). *Overview of TRBWA.* Retrieved 10th April, 2013, from http://www.trb.wa.gov.au/about-us/about-the-trbwa/overview-of-trbwa/

Trust, T. (2012). Professional learning networks designed for teacher learning. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education, 28*(4), 133-138. Retrieved from http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA292992627&v=2.1&u=cowan&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w

Tully, K. (2002). State secondary education in Western Australia 1912-1972. *Education Research and Perspectives, 29*(2), 1-141.

Turley, S. (2005). Professional lives of teacher educators in an era of mandated reform. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 32*(4), 137. Retrieved from http://ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/docview/222855272?accountid=10675

van Niekerk, L., & Savin-Baden, M. (2010). Relocating truths in the qualitative research paradigm. In M. Savin-Baden & C. Howell (Eds.), *New approaches to qualitative research* (pp. 28-36). Hoboken: Wisdom and Uncert Routledge.

WADoE. (2013). Overview of the independent public schools initiative. *Independent public schools: unlock your school's future.* Retrieved 18 May, 2013, from http://www.det.wa.edu.au/independentpublicschools/detcms/navigation/information-for-parents-and-communities/overview-of-the-independent-public-schools-initiative/?oid=Category-id-11366864

Wertz, M. S., Nosek, M., McNiesh, S., & Marlow, E. (2011). The composite first person narrative: Texture, structure, and meaning in writing phenomenological descriptions. *International journal of qualitative studies on health and well-being, 6*(2), 1-10. Retrieved from doi:10.3402/qhw.v6i2.5882

White, S. (2004). Educating toward future globalization: A new societal myth and pedagogic motif. *Educational Foundations, 18*(1). Retrieved from http://ezproxy.ecu.edu.au/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/205235246?accountid=10675

Whitty, G. (2010). Revisiting school knowledge: Some sociological perspectives on new school curricula. *European Journal of Education, Vol. 45*(No. 1, Part 1), 28-45. Retrieved from doi:10.1111/j.1465-3435.2009.01422.x

Wikipedia. (2013a). *Curriculum Council of Western Australia.* Retrieved 18 May, 2013, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curriculum_Council_of_Western_Australia

Wikipedia. (2013b, February 10). *School Curriculum and Standards Authority.* Retrieved 18 May, 2013, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School_Curriculum_and_Standards_Authority

Wojnar, D. M., & Swanson, K. M. (2007). Phenomenology: An exploration. *Journal of Holistic Nursing, 25*(3), 172-180. Retrieved from doi:10.1177/0898010106295172

Wood, D. (2007). Professional learning communities: Teachers, knowledge, and knowing. *Theory into Practice, 46*(4), 281-290. Retrieved from doi:10.1080/00405840701593865

Yates, L., & Collins, C. (2010). The absence of knowledge in Australian curriculum reforms. *European Journal of Education, 45*(1), 89. Retrieved from doi:10.1111/j.1465-3435.2009.01417.x

Ylimaki, R., & Jacobson, S. (2013). School leadership practice and preparation: Comparative perspectives on organizational learning (OL), instructional leadership (IL) and culturally responsive practices (CRP). *Journal of Educational Administration, 51*(1), 6. Retrieved from doi:10.1108/09578231311291404

Appendix I   Curriculum Change History Email

Dear   ,

Could you please fill out this brief personal history form? Please leave any questions you do not wish to answer.

How old are you?   20-29   30-39   40-49   50-59   60-69 (delete as appropriate)

What learning area/s do you teach?

Where did you train (Country/State/University)?

How long have you been teaching?

What qualifications do you hold/are you working towards?

Have you ever held a position in district office or in a different education setting (if yes, please give details)?

Which curriculum were you trained to use during your initial teacher training (if known)?

Have you needed to deliver a different curriculum to that which you were trained in? If yes please state the reason –moving country, curriculum reform etc.

What are your thoughts on any curriculum changes you have had to respond to so far (if any)?

What are your thoughts on the changes occurring/needed to prepare for the Australian Curriculum?

 Thank you for your time,

Appendix II   Interview Questions

The semi-structured interviews with the teacher participants were based on the following three questions:

1. How do you feel about curriculum reform and why do you feel that way?
2. What interactions, if any, have you had with the Australian Curriculum?
3. Are there any factors that you feel will help or hinder you to implement the Australian Curriculum?

These questions were a starting point only, to ensure that situated data was secured from each conversation.

The interviews with the Head of Learning Areas and Principal were more systemic in focus. This participant group were asked:

1. What interaction have you had with the Australian Curriculum, if any?
2. Are you aware of any PD or resources available to help you implement the AC?
3. Are there any issues affecting your department's ability to implement the AC?

Taken together the two types of interviews were designed to cover a wide range of factors influencing teachers' perceptions of and experiences with curriculum reform as per the research questions.

Appendix II   End of Year Email

What interactions, if any, have you had with the Australian Curriculum? Or, where are you at with the implementation of the Australian Curriculum? (If more applicable).

Are there any factors that are helping or hindering you in the implementation of the Australian Curriculum? (PD, resources etc.)

Are there any other comments you would like to make, or issues you would like to discuss?

Appendix III   Resonance Email

Dear   ,

Thank you again for taking part in my research.

Your data was reduced and sorted into four categories along with that of the other participants. The data in these four categories were then written up as four fictional interviews, which are meant to represent the experience of curriculum reform and the implementation of the Australian Curriculum for all of the participants.

Could you please have a quick read of these, see if one resonates for you, and if so, why? Any other feedback would be appreciated, including your thoughts and feelings on the composites and whether your viewpoint/s has/have been sufficiently included.

I have already drafted the chapter that will be informed by this feedback. As such I need your thoughts by Friday the 7th of September for them to be included in the chapter. The research will be more genuine with this feedback from you.

Feel free to leave your response in my pigeon hole or email me on…

Thanks again

Appendix IV   Concurrent Changes

Table 7.4

State and national education reforms from 2009 onwards

Change And Year	Summary	Effect
2009 – Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Agency (ACARA) **Federal**	ACARA is responsible for (Nationally): • K-12 curriculum –the AC. • Assessment program aligned to the national curriculum -NAPLAN • Data collection and reporting - NAPLAN • Reporting on schools and broader national achievement –NAPLAN via My Schools website. (ACARA, 2011)	Enabled the federal government to create the AC and the My Schools website. Provided a wider audience for NAPLAN results.
2010- Independent Public Schools **WA**	From 2010 schools were able to apply to become an Independent Public School, gaining increased autonomy over finances and day-to-day decisions. An Independent School undergoes 3-yearly WADoE reviews which assess the school in terms of its forward plan created by the school in conjunction with the school board (WADoE, 2013).	Schools can determine their staffing and budget needs in alignment with their desired operational goals. The school board has more power in an IPS. IP Schools are reviewed more frequently and are more accountable.
Jan 2010- My School **Federal**	My School is a website created by ACARA to allow the public to compare like schools in a district. The comparison is based on NAPLAN results, financial information and information regarding the socio-economic and other demographics of students attending each school.	My School is sold as a tool for the community to "understand what is going on inside classrooms" and "to inform and bolster any number of arguments and policy discussions" (ACARA, 2013).However, the information presented is only garnered from school finances, demographics and standardised testing.
Teacher Development Schools (TDS)	The TDS initiative builds on and formalises teacher networks and learning communities, helping teachers to provide realistic peer support for others. TDS have been chosen to	TDS provide practical support to other WA schools and receive extra funding and training to assist them in this endeavour.

WA	provide support for the AC and some senior secondary courses across all phases of learning (DET).	
Dec 2012- Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA) **WA**	The TRBWA is now responsible for registration of teachers it replaced the Western Australian College of Teaching (WACOT) through a new Act in 2012. Its decreed purpose is to screen and register eligible teachers, to undertake disciplinary measures when needed and to accredit teacher training programs. The TRB will also be publishing professional standards for teachers (concurrent with those produced by AITSL) (TRBWA).	Ministerially approved TRB members now have the power to make arbitrary decisions about teacher conduct and registration. Teachers in WA no longer have a professional body that represents their interests.
Jan 2010- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) **Federal**	The Institute's role is to: •develop and maintain professional standards for teaching and school leadership •implement national accreditation of teachers based on these standards •foster professional development for teachers and school leaders through professional standards, professional learning and accreditation of pre-service teacher education courses •undertake and engage with international research and innovative developments in best practice •administer annual national awards for teachers and school leaders •work collaboratively with school systems and key stakeholders • assessing skilled migration to Australia as teacher (AITSL, 2013).	The Institute was created as a body to promote the profession and improve teaching standards. The development of assessed teaching standards will allow future reforms like pay for performance and add to the current workload of teachers.
Curriculum Council (CC) Disbanded 1997-2012 **WA**	The CC was in charge of curriculum policy and exams in WA from 1997 until it was disbanded in 2012 after a number of serious errors regarding exams. It was replaced by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (Wikipedia, 2013a). The CC developed the CF reform that widely disgruntled WA teachers.	Many participants recounted examples of poor management by the CC. The disbandment of the body may have improved teacher dispositions. Not tested as outside of data collection period.
School	The responsibilities of the Authority;	The Authority is a clean slate

Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) 2012- **WA**	•set assessment standards for the certification of student achievement, •develop an outline of curriculum and assessment in schools that sets out what learning students are expected to acquire, •developing and accrediting courses for schools, •maintaining a database of student participation in education and training during their school years and student achievement during those years. (Wikipedia)	for curriculum and assessment management in WA. Currently (2013) the AC as modified for WA schools is now available through the Authority website.
The Australian Baccalaureate **Federal**	Proposal for Australian secondary students to be able to achieve an Australian Baccalaureate which will give them an internationally recognised graduation certificate. This will be made possible in line with the implementation of the senior secondary AC in English, mathematics, science and history (DEEWR, 2012).	The possibility of an internationally recognised qualification upon gaining a WACE certificate would be appealing to many students. However, this will entail adding extra curriculum and workload for participating teachers and students.
released by SCSA May 2013 Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline **WA**	The Outline includes: •the F- 10 English, mathematics, history and science AC content •the F- 10 English, mathematics, history and science AC achievement standards "The Outline will become the source of K-10 curriculum for all WA students. It will provide comprehensive information that schools can use to plan student learning programs, assess student progress and report to parents" (SCSA, 2013a).	Although responsible for assessment of the AC (which has not to date been provided for by ACARA) the outline only provides a handful of assessment guides. Which are to "s show a range of [non prescriptive] approaches to assessment… The content is provided as a starting point …" (SCSA, 2013a).This is problematic as assessment of past curriculum reforms was a large factor in participants' negative views of those reforms –increases workload and little guidance is provided.
2015 Year 7s to Move to high school **WA**	Announced in 2012. To provide adequate physical and human resources to teach Year 7s the more demanding AC (DoEWA, 2013).	High school teachers will need to expand their behaviour management skill set for younger students.
2016	New standards for the WACE proposed	By 2016 it is expected that

Announced 2012

Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE)

WA | after feedback from stakeholders. This involves changing the senior secondary course structure and the requirements to achieve a WACE. These changes will include 15 courses adapted from the "...senior secondary Australian Curriculum for Western Australian requirements" (SCSA, 2013b). | some senior secondary AC courses will be implemented in WA schools through the medium of the SCSA. |

Appendix V   Participant Information Letter

Dear

The Australian Curriculum:
Preparing for its implementation

My name is Jessica Lyle and I am writing to you on behalf of Edith Cowan University. I am conducting a research project that aims to investigate regional secondary teachers' experiences and perceptions of the preparation to implement the Australian Curriculum in maths and English.

The project is being conducted as part of a Master of Education degree at Edith Cowan University.

I would like to invite you to take part in the project. This is because you work in one of the learning areas where curriculum documents are already developed. Your school is the only site in Western Australia approached for this project.

What does participating in the research involve?
You are invited to participate by being involved in up to two semi-formal, individual interviews which will take between 20-30 minutes each and giving a written (1 page maximum) response to two separate emails during the data collection period.

Do I have to take part?
No. Participating in this research project is entirely voluntary. This decision should always be made completely freely. All decisions made will be respected by members of the research team without question.

What if I wanted to change my initial decision?
If you wish to participate, the decision will need to be made by 8th May 2011 for you to be included in the project.

Once a decision is made to participate, you can change your mind at any time.

Your data can be withdrawn from the study up to and including the 1st of September 2011.

There will be no consequences relating to any decision you make regarding participation, other than those already described in this letter. These decisions will not affect your relationship with Jessica Lyle or Edith Cowan University.

What will happen to the information I give, and is privacy and confidentiality assured?
Information that identifies anyone will be removed from the data collected. The data is then stored securely in a password protected file on my home computer and a hard copy will be kept in a locked filing cabinet on my premises and can only be accessed by me. The data will be transferred to Edith Cowan University after the completion of the study where it will be stored for a minimum period of 5 years, after which it will be destroyed. This will be achieved by deleting the data from the hard drive and shredding the backup copies.

Participant privacy and the confidentiality of information disclosed by participants, is assured at all times, except in circumstances where the research team is legally required to disclose that information.

The data will be used only for this project, and will not be used in any extended or future research without first obtaining explicit written consent from you.

It is intended that the findings of this study will be used to write a thesis and possibly be published in a journal. A summary of the research findings will also be made available upon completion of the project. You will receive a copy by email and expect it to become available in December 2011.

Is this research approved?
The research has been approved by Edith Cowan University and has met the policy requirements of the Department of Education.

Who do I contact if I wish to discuss the project further?
If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study with a member of the research team, please contact me on the number provided below. If you wish to speak with an independent person about how the project is being conducted or was conducted, please contact:

Kim Gifkins
Research Ethics Officer
Tel: (+61 8) 6304 2170
Fax: (+61 8) 6304 5044
Email: research.ethics@ecu.edu.au

How do I become involved?
If you have had all questions about the project answered to your satisfaction, and are willing to become involved, please complete the **Consent Form** on the next page.

This information letter is for you to keep.

Jessica Lyle
Research Student
Edith Cowan University

Appendix VI   Participant Consent Form

- I have read and understood the information letter about the project, or have had it explained to me in language I understand.

- I have taken up the invitation to ask any questions I may have had, and am satisfied with the answers I received.

- I understand that participation in the project is entirely voluntarily.

- I am willing to become involved in the project, as described.

- I understand I am free to withdraw that participation at any time without affecting my relationship with Jessica Lyle or Edith Cowan University.

- Data from my participation can be withdrawn from the study up to and including the 1st of September 2011.

- I give permission for my contribution to this research to be used as the basis of a thesis and possibly published in a journal, provided that I or the school is not identified in any way.

- I understand that I can request a summary of findings once the research has been completed.

Name of Participant (printed):

Signature of Participant: Date: /   /