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**TEACHER DEVELOPMENT:  
CURRICULAR PROBLEMS AND PARADIGM POSSIBILITIES**

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This paper attempts to analyse sections of Fielding's 'non-deterministic' model of teacher development from a curriculum perspective. The need for such an analysis is obvious, since there has been a spate of reports on teacher education in recent years; Auchmuty (1980) at the national level and Correy (1980) at the State (N.S.W.) level, to name just two. An implicit assumption of these reports is that there is a need to know what teacher development is, how it is being conducted in institutions, if it can be improved and if so, how. Such reports often suffer a similar fate; the rhetoric in them rapidly wanes. Fielding's attempt to construct a model of teacher development conceivably might provide one of those conceptual frameworks which official reports seem notoriously unable to suggest. At any rate, his model seems worth an attempt at critical analysis. In analysing the model I have used the notion of a paradigm shift (Kuhn 1974), coupled with an underlying curriculum perspective.

Charlton (1976:73) suggests that any curriculum devised from theoretical principles must include a section which helps sensitise the developer first to his own past and then to the past of others. Fielding's paper begins by pinpointing earlier attempts to formulate a framework for understanding the process of teacher development. As it stood, the earlier attempt was theoretically strong enough to warrant further development and this Fielding has done, using elements of personal construct theory as a basis for the 'revised' model.

Within his 'sensitising' section, Fielding highlights a weakness of the earlier model. This weakness is concerned with a particular way of applying functionalist social theory. I will return to this notion later when this paper centres on the concept of 'paradigm shift' as a source of explanation. The second point I wish to mention here is concerned with the notion of 'model' and with what constitute useful models in respect of the themes discussed in Fielding's paper.

Kerr (1983:19) defines a model as "a representation of an object, concept, process or relationship, developed for one of a variety of different

purposes." He then defines a number of models, of which **three** are applied characteristically in educational theorising: **conceptual**, **procedural** and **theoretical**. What do such models do? Kerr identifies several applications. Models provide a framework in which to analyse and interpret data; models often make possible the treatment of concepts that are typically abstract in nature; and models can be hypothesis generators, leading to further theoretical development and insight. In my view, these applications are likely outcomes of Fielding's approach to model building.

**General Analysis**

The suggestion that there is some ideal minimum of development of teachers that incorporates three role integrations (the earlier model) implies that, by necessity, there has been a selection of pre-determined criteria defining 'teaching'. In more urgent need of consideration is the implication that Integration 2 is a necessary prerequisite of Integration 3 — urgent in the sense that the revised model is argued to be an 'open-ended' one. Indeed, this implication fits neatly into the pattern of sequential thinking regarding the general nature and purposes of traditional training programmes. But Fielding argues against this implication in his recent version of the model. In the present paper, he argues that there is nothing that is necessarily sequential at all in respect of the idea of development. On the contrary, the major assertion is that the student is to retain a high level of decision-making autonomy regarding his own curriculum.

The notion of autonomy sits uneasily within the current framework of teacher training in Australia. More will be said of this later. Suffice it to say at this juncture that the notion of autonomy is strengthened if the rider is added that there is a need to incorporate into teacher education curricula the realistic possibility of 'informed choice' as distinct from 'forced choice', which apparently constituted the weakness (according to Fielding) of the earlier model. Examination of the revised model does not preclude this proviso. If I understand him correctly, Fielding now rejects those premises of functionalist social theory which lead to the conclusion that within the school system there already exists a neat arrangement of roles and functions to be adopted by the neophyte if he is to become a 'successful' teacher. For its part, the training institution decides on these 'pre-determined' roles and functions, develops courses geared to their requirements, and regards itself as successful to the extent that its graduates adopt these roles and functions in their teaching work.

When one examines contemporary approaches to teacher training it is clear that they fit neatly into the promotional track within the school system. The learning and playing of pre-determined roles, then, is a necessary precursor to career advancement. On the other hand, a role invented by the student teacher for himself, although it may be personally satisfying, may be completely at odds with the nature of the occupational environment in the school system. Indeed, it may equally be at odds with the over-arching value system supported by the training institution. As things stand, deterministic curricula seem well entrenched and the possibilities for 'non-deterministic' models of the kind put forward by Fielding begin to require thinking which is akin to a paradigm shift.

### The Curricular Orientation

In terms of a curricular orientation, two aspects of Fielding's model may provide a suitable format. First, the suggestion is made that 'professional role integration ought to be understood to lie with individuals not the institution'. Second, Fielding argues that the institution should create the circumstances which foster such integration. These suggestions can be employed in deriving a set of curricular assumptions that would need to be preserved within the framework of a corresponding curriculum design. The assumptions are:

1. The student will be 'self-selecting' in choosing a particular training environment.
2. The student will come into a training programme with knowledge sufficient to be able to choose, develop and integrate self-selected, professionally-related roles.
3. The trainers will have the skills, understandings and desire to organise and conduct individualised training programmes.
4. The training institution will be flexible enough in its structure and organisation to permit experimentation with respect to programme styles.
5. Employing authorities will accept graduates from those innovative programmes developed according to the above.

How does the model cope with these assumptions?

Under the first assumption, a necessary prerequisite is that the student enters the curricular structure with sufficient knowledge and maturity to self-select teaching as a career. How realistic is this? Provided the student has been counselled prior to selecting teaching I see no particular problem. That counselling would be based on the premise that during the training period the student would be able to accept the responsibility for his own professional development, given that the training institution provides an adequate resource base to support this development.

The second assumption is accounted for by Fielding in his adoption of elements of personal construct psychology. Here, Fielding views the development of 'self' as an all-embracing, psychologically healthy phenomenon, with 'parts' of the self identified in an adaptive sense as intrinsic to the process of social and psychological development. In this sense, the need for personalised diversity of experience becomes crucial to the development of an acceptable presentation of self in a variety of role-related situations having, as their primary referent, the activity of teaching. Fielding next turns to the concept of role and the idea of stages of development. Thus it appears that the way is open for incrementally-based curricular activity as a means by which role integration can be assured.

This conclusion is, of course, false. Rather, Fielding suggests that, within the premises of the model, sequence may be used as an analytical tool but that the reality of experience should be such as to avoid any necessary appeal to sequence. Whilst it is difficult to conceptualise a training programme which is 'unsequenced', the point is, it seems to me, that it matters little whether the programme is viewed as incrementally-designed or based on randomly-selected (appropriate) curricular contents. What really matters is the holistic notion of a 'developmentally-based' programme, be this development progressive, regressive (to an earlier stage) or some combination of the two. In Fielding's words, 'it is conceivable also that development may be accompanied by the abandonment or temporary suppression of an earlier role'. According to this and other aspects of the model, the student would need to make his own 'readiness' decisions to select those programme elements best fitted to his particular stage of development. If the third curriculum assumption is satisfied, the student would have an adequate base of support from the training staff in the programme to assist him in making such readiness decisions. In reference to the notion of individualisation, this curriculum strategy would take the form of encouraging the student to learn how to recover

personally significant data from the bank of data available within the training programme as a whole.

Under the fourth assumption, Fielding could be introducing an administrative nightmare! But this possibility is minimised in the context of paradigmatic shift which I consider in the next section.

According to the fifth assumption, the major difficulty would be to convince employing authorities that graduates of the proposed innovative programme are indeed employable (and these would represent teachers of quite a different ilk compared with graduates of traditional, orthodox programmes). Indeed, this difficulty may well be seen as insurmountable. However, a brief review of earlier practices in school systems may suggest differently. In the late 1960s and early 1970s New South Wales had a massive shortfall in the supply of 'suitably' qualified teachers for the State's schools. The number of teachers entering the training programmes was small and the rate of resignations was at an all time high. In order to fill the gap, teachers were imported from a number of other countries and from a diversity of training programmes. One may draw the conclusion that so far as employing authorities are concerned, it is political and economic concerns which take precedence over educational ones.

### A Paradigm Shift

Lewis (1946:14) has suggested that the task of modern educators, 'is not to cut down jungles, but to irrigate deserts'. Charlton (1976:74), referring to the contribution that a historian could make on changing the curriculum, suggested the basic premise of such a debate 'is that the previous curriculum has been overtaken by the course of events, and that it is out of date and is therefore in need of renewal'. The task of renewal, he suggests, is of a different level of magnitude than merely making more efficient the methods of the past. In these ideas lies much of the difficulty, I believe, one feels in coming to grips with Fielding's model. He does seem to be suggesting what is in essence a new paradigm or way of viewing the phenomenon of teacher development. Perhaps much of the discomfort felt about Fielding's model may be relieved by adopting Kuhnian spectacles. Kuhn (1974:10) defines a paradigm as a set of assumptions which explain the world to us and help predict its behaviour. In suggesting that a paradigm shift is necessary in order to come to terms with Fielding's model, I am also mindful of the warning offered by Lewis (1946:55) that, 'if you see through everything, then everything is transparent. But a

wholly transparent world is an invisible world. To "see through" all things is the same as not to see'. Nonetheless, perhaps by adopting the proposition that Fielding's model represents a potential paradigm shift in respect of the way we think about the education of the teacher, we may understand the model more explicitly.

In order to understand Fielding's approach, it is necessary to realise that the source of development is not institutionally-provided curriculum content but content generated in order to meet the 'felt needs' of individual students. Such a shift has been attained within the Australian school system, at least in theory. The content of learning has, as Dewey would have said, been psychologised for the learner. If this principle were to be applied to the process of teacher development, then the resolution of professionally-related needs of students would be the dominating curricular experience. The neophyte teacher would be largely responsible for his own programme; course lecturers would assume supportive roles (that is, would serve to assist the student in developing those roles self-selected by the student as the most appropriate from his [the student's] professional development point of view).

Whilst I agree that student needs, interests and dispositions are of central importance as a basis for a new model of teacher development, one could be forgiven for feeling uneasy as an administrator if freedom of choice within the curriculum framework were to become the basis for experience in teacher education. Again the notion of paradigm shift is important. Within the new framework, the basic sequential organisation of courses, degree structures, programme units, examination schedules, etc., could all come unstuck. Administrative inconvenience, however, can never be appealed to as a good reason for avoiding change. What needs to be understood is that administration is itself a support structure and exists to provide solutions to needs that, in the present context, are of an educational kind. It is not a question of what cannot be done, administratively speaking, but rather what has to be done in order to ensure that educational priorities take precedence.

As a corollary, the curricular requirements of Fielding's model seriously question the power position of institutional administrations as directing agencies in institutional affairs. Once again I can only say that if the model is seen to carry curricular validity over the above that validity possessed

by traditional approaches to teacher education, then administrative procedures will need to be developed which can guarantee that the model has a real chance of effective implementation.

The disciplining constraints (1-8) suggested by Fielding typify the curricular problems associated with the notion of paradigm shift implied by the model. If I were to superimpose an analysis over the constraints like an overhead transparency to represent the present paradigmatic thinking, certain key change points would be highlighted. These change points would identify areas of potential mismatch between the two paradigms. Such areas of mismatch can be examined in the form of oppositional couples. Some of the more significant couples which, I think, illustrate the essential aspects of the paradigm shift alluded to are:

Old Paradigm	New Paradigm
Institutional command	Individual demand
Institutional direction	Institutional support
Institutional content	Individually-determined content
Sequenced programming	Progressive and individualised programming
Hierarchical structure	Open-ended structure
Deterministic curriculum	Non-deterministic curriculum
Random development	Orderly (self-selected) development

The essential thrust of the paradigm shift, it seems to me, is twofold. First, there is a rejection of functionalism as a set of principles underpinning the experience of teacher education; and secondly there is a particular stress placed on the individualistic nature of the experience of becoming and being a teacher.

### The Stages

In describing the stages of development, Fielding is yet to translate what he perceives to be the generalised experience of students and (later) teachers into terms which would fit the new paradigm. His difficulty is one of transforming a description of what *is* the case into what *should be* the case under the new paradigm. Perhaps he comes close to making this more explicit in his description of Stage 2. Indeed, Stage 2 as described makes little sense when examined under the old paradigm. Specifically, under an administratively oriented approach (that is, one which requires

students to acquire a body of pre-determined content) 'a personally-approved definition of successful teaching' has little meaning. This is not to say, of course, that such a definition may not be attained for a given student. However, the old paradigm cannot cope with the assertion that externally-rewarded teaching has little relevance to the student in this stage. Under the new paradigm, it seems to me that students would have a greatly improved opportunity to design for themselves such a personally-approved definition and hence an increased sense of urgency in learning how to translate that definition into long term practice.

A further idea which is implicit in the description of Stage 2 is that accountability becomes a shared responsibility between the student and the institution during the initial training period and between the teacher and the profession at large during full-time practice. Shared accountability for professional conduct is a principle much easier to sustain when, for instance, the student chooses the context in which he feels adequate to display and successfully practise his talents, rather than in more traditional contexts in which he is enjoined to perform supervised professional tasks even if he is not ready to do so. Cohen (1971:338) argues for a responsiveness to the needs and interests of students in curriculum matters. In doing so, he warns that in any rational curriculum activity both teaching staff and students need to be clear about their respective spheres of involvement. In terms of the teacher training experience (and again this is implicit in Fielding's model) the total curriculum would need to be designed jointly by student teachers, teachers and teacher training staff. Unless this planning precept is adopted, it is difficult to see how student teachers could develop through the stages with the minimum of difficulty.

Stage 3 is concerned with the development of practitioner skills and techniques that become the badge of successful teaching under an inspectorial system. Such skills and techniques, however, may have little to do with the concept of teaching as an activity to enthuse others to learn. From my experience, many teachers do get locked into this stage of development, a consequence, I believe, of the impact of the 'old' paradigm on the view of what constitutes the essence of the teacher role. The career structure of teaching, especially in New South Wales, appears to support this view, by rewarding administrative ability more richly than the possession of educational knowledge and teaching skill. Unfortunately, the later stages of Fielding's model appear not to be of much career significance so far as promotional prospects are concerned in a number of school systems.

Fielding's suggested Stage 4, on the other hand, may carry the potential as a basis for professional advancement based on the notion of child as person and having the status of educational client. Stages 5 and 6 seem to me to be reached only by few teachers. Clearly, Fielding will need to accumulate a great deal of research data in order to discover (a) if teachers do in fact identify major developmental turning points in their past experience, and (b) if such turning points are, in fact, generalisable to a significant percentage of practising teachers.

### Concluding Remarks

Millicent Poole, in her presidential address to the Australian Association for Research in Education (1980), quoting Mondfrans and others (1977) suggested that much of the subject matter of educational research is 'stochastic' or 'indeterminate' in character. She further warned that a major challenge to educational research in the 1980s would be to cope with what could be major schisms in methodological paradigms. In my view this warning is timely; that is, we may well be in a condition in education in which present experience either does not fit with past theoretical explanations or, in keeping with the suggestions made in this paper, is suggesting to us that earlier paradigms have exhausted their capacity to explain to us the form and structure of our 'educational world' and to provide us with the means of predicting its behaviour. Before endorsing any new theoretical framework, however (and this is, of course, the direction Fielding's paper points towards) it is necessary to remain open-minded about the possibility of other theoretical positions which may, as it were, lie just around the corner and which may potentially be of greater explanatory power. Chambers (1983:40) warns about this very problem, by reminding us that theory builders must avoid becoming so enmeshed in their underlying concepts, principles and explanations that they develop a blinkered vision which effectively blinds them to the possibilities that might emerge from further analysis. Fielding does, however, indicate his understanding of these difficulties and manages to convey to us his view as to the tentative nature of his model.

From a personal point of view, I have few reservations about Fielding's model as a stage in the process of developing new theory. I have used the notion of paradigm shift as a methodological device to come to grips with a number of the model's obvious departures from traditional concepts of teacher education. I have found that by doing so I have been able to reduce the level of discomfort I think one naturally experiences when

attempting to analyse innovatory educational ideas. I have concluded that it is not possible to squeeze the assumptions of Fielding's model into traditional views (models if you like) about the nature of the experience of becoming a teacher. To this extent, Fielding is breaking new ground and seems to me to be groping towards a new paradigm. Perhaps what Fielding still needs to do is embodied in the words of John Dewey (1969:32), which, while they were spoken about another context, seem to me to be equally applicable to that being examined here: 'The mind of man is being habituated to a new method and ideal: There is but one sure road to access to truth — the road to patient, co-operative inquiry operating by means of observation, experiment, record and controlled reflection'.

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