Teachers’ Perspectives on the
Implementation of Expectations-Based Curricula

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Abstract

This qualitative study examines teachers' experiences implementing new standardized curricula in Ontario schools. This new curricula contained several policy changes and an expectations based format which directed what knowledge and skills students were to demonstrate in each subject. This level of specificity of subject-content served to control teachers in relation to curricula; however, data suggested that at the same time, teachers had enormous flexibility in terms of pedagogy. Four secondary teachers who were implementing a Grade 10 course in the 2000-2001 school year participated in the study. The qualitative framework supported the researcher's emphasis on examining the participants' perspectives on the implementation of expectation-based curricula. Data collected included transcripts from interviews conducted with teacher participants and a representative of the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, field notes, and a research journal.

Many of the factors often cited in the literature as influencing implementation practices were found to have affected the participants' experiences of curriculum implementation: time, professional development, and teachers' beliefs, particularly concerning students. In addition, the format of the policy documents proved to both control and free teachers during the implementation process. Participants believed that the number of specific expectations did not provide them an opportunity to add content to the curriculum; at the same time, teachers also noted that the general format of the policy document allowed them to direct instruction to match students' needs and their own teaching preferences. Alignment between teachers' beliefs about education and their
understanding of the new curriculum affected the ways in which many participants adapted during the implementation process.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

When I began researching this thesis, I was an M. Ed student who had moved into the program directly following my undergraduate work, without any teaching experience. I came to my research with an abstract interest in curriculum, with no practical frame of reference. This proved to be challenging as I struggled to match my general interest in curriculum with some purpose discovered in the literature. I did not succeed. What I finally happened upon was a suggestion from a practicing teacher that I take a look at the implementation of the new curriculum in Ontario. Across the province, the government had been implementing new programs and course expectations from K-12 since 1995. In the 2000-2001 school year, teachers were preparing to implement the grade 10 expectations. This was an ideal opportunity, particularly as it involved teacher planning and implementation. I began to look for participants, relevant literature, and my own personal focus within the potential research parameters.

From the onset of my research, I was most interested in coming to an understanding of curriculum. I hoped that by reading the literature, I could synthesize the information in various articles and come to some conclusion. This, I felt, would help me to assess education on the whole, since curriculum is arguably the foundation upon which education is built. I did not, however, see a fit for implementation and my interests. As a result, I shifted my own interest to suit the circumstances and began focusing on implementation. I decided that I would look at how teachers implemented the new curriculum, a reality across the province, and make some practical recommendations which might benefit educators.
and theorists. Of course, all of this narrowly missed the connection between curriculum and implementation.

In the final analysis, this research examined the experiences of implementation as narrated by participants. The data were compared with literature on implementation and curriculum. The results revealed comparisons between implementation as it is described in the literature and as participants described it. In particular, the effect of the format of the policy documents, with detailed expectations of the knowledge and skills students must demonstrate during implementation, was examined. Definitions of curriculum were examined in light of implementation in order to find the place of the curriculum-as-lived in teachers' implementation, practice, and discourse. Finally, I examined the data for personal relevance in order to inform my own teaching.

**Change: An Issue of Control**

The curriculum is an important component of schools, education, and learning. In many ways, it informs, guides, and becomes what is taught and learned in classrooms (Goodlad, 1988; Steller, 1983). For this reason, curriculum often becomes the focus of change--in efforts to "reform" education--and an object of contention, as interested parties--parents, society, businesses, and others--vie for control of what and how students learn (Klein, 1990). At the same time, the process of change, by its very nature, is tumultuous for those involved (Fullan, 1992, 2001). In education, change can be a tiring, difficult process as new administrators and governments seek to leave their mark through policy and curriculum "innovations" (Fullan, 1992, 2001; Fullan & Park, 1981).
In the middle of these struggles is the teacher, who, as the gatekeeper of curriculum in the classroom, is often held accountable for the success of new curricula (Fullan, 2001). Whether a curriculum is controlled by government, textbook publishers, or other interest groups, it must ultimately be implemented by teachers. It is the teacher who must juggle the pressures of control and change which are external to the school system as well as the internal struggles with resources and institutional barriers. "Since all the decisions made [about curricula]... are generally channeled through the teacher in order to be made operative, the instructional level of decision making is especially influential" (Klein, 1990, p. 29). Teachers have a considerable level of control within the classroom over curricular issues (Fullan, 2001; Fullan and Park, 1981). They are the ultimate curriculum decision makers, whether they choose to follow government guidelines, board policy, or their own educational orientations. At the same time, there are many pressures and constraints which are external and internal to the school environment and which influence teachers' decision making in varying degrees.

In the current educational climate in Ontario, these pressures and constraints are many. Since its election into office in 1995, the provincial Conservative government has been making sweeping changes to the education system in Ontario. At the time of this study, September 2000 - June 2001, grade 10 teachers were involved in the latest phase of change. Public and Catholic grade 10 teachers across the province had to implement new curricula as prescribed by the Ministry in Ontario. Of primary consideration here are the new curriculum documents, which, while titled "specific expectations," present mostly broad knowledge and skill expectations for the content which students must meet. The
format of these documents meant a new and unfamiliar process of curriculum planning and implementation. Teachers had to decide how to create a complete curriculum out of these policy documents or whether to use the new textbooks and/or profiles. Teachers would have to manage the perceived pressure to follow such "authoritative" resources because of the push from the government, through funding for new textbooks and course profiles, and traditionally accepted expertise by many teachers of textbooks and more concrete curriculum documents such as the profiles (Ben-Peretz, 1990). In order to prepare for these and other developments, teachers were afforded only the summer prior to implementation to attend voluntary summer institutes, become familiar with the policy documents, profiles, and new textbooks, and prepare for implementation in September of 2000.

The participants in this study all worked in a board which, at the time, had no integrated curriculum policies regarding the new curriculum. Due to budget constraints, the board did not have the resources for even one part-time consultant or other expert who could become familiar with the new curriculum, its policies, and possible procedures, and in turn advise staff. As policy within the school, these teachers were all selected by their department head to develop unit and lesson plans prior to implementation and to prepare a final document containing this information to be submitted to the principal the following school year and to be shared with other teachers. Participants were also dealing with the added pressure of teaching an extra half-course load for the first time, while continuing all extracurricular activities.
The New Curriculum in Secondary Schools: The Ministry’s Design

According to a representative of the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, henceforth referred to as the Ministry, and various articles on the Ministry’s web site (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 2003), the new curriculum is a major shift in focus in education aimed at modernizing Ontario’s curricula. The shift is a reaction to changing needs in society which indicate a need to update the knowledge and skills students are taught in Ontario’s schools. The new curriculum, from K-12, is meant to be more relevant and promote higher standards of achievement while standardizing what is taught at each grade level throughout the province. Since the Progressive Conservative government first came to power in 1995, education has been a major focus for change. Through the Ministry, the government has made a near dizzying number of changes. The curriculum has been changed for every grade from K-12. In addition, secondary school had been reduced from 5 to 4 years, new forms of assessment and reporting, new standardized report cards, a teacher advisory program for all students from grades 7 to 12, increased teaching time for secondary teachers, and much more were introduced. In the 2000-2001 school year, the grade 10 curriculum, which provided new expectations for every grade 10 course in addition to other new policies, was being implemented for the first time.

The new curriculum, the Ministry representative stated, is a shift to a destination-related approach to learning. Previously, students in secondary schools in Ontario were divided into basic, general, and advanced streams. As of the 1999-2000 school year for grade 9, and progressing consecutively in following years, grade 9 and 10 are divided into applied and academic streams and grades 11 and 12 into workplace, college, university,
and college/university streams. The emphasis has been changed from how well students perform academically to where they plan to go directly following high school.

Along with changing the streams of the curriculum, a number of other new facets have been added. At the end of each unit and at the end of the semester, students are expected to complete a culminating activity which creatively demonstrates what they have learned. Teachers are no longer supposed to take marks off for late assignments. Evaluation is to include a large number of formative projects and a few summative pieces. Assessment is divided into the categories of knowledge, skills, understanding, application, and communication. Performance is assessed using rubrics, or achievement charts, and using four levels of performance, with level 3 being what is expected of the student and level 4 being exceptional. All of these policies were included in the new curriculum; however, they were not all being implemented completely at the same time. The Ministry gave school boards leeway to focus more on certain aspects of the new curriculum. Each school board had to submit to the Ministry for approval their plan for implementation; boards had to work on meeting an accepted level of implementation while emphasizing certain areas of the new curriculum in the first year and meeting the remaining aspects of the new curriculum in the following year. The teachers in this study, for example, were not expected to use the five new categories named above for assessment until the 2001-2002 school year.

Finally, the format of the curriculum plan, outlining what specific material must be taught in classrooms, also represents a shift from the past. According to the Ministry representative, previous curriculum was identified by what teachers should teach--the
content—whereas now the curriculum is identified by what students have to learn: the outcome of teaching. Rather than looking at curriculum in terms of units of study, the current policy documents, which contain the curriculum plan, present specific knowledge and skill expectations which students must achieve. Teachers are encouraged to plan using the design-down process, a word and process defined by the Ministry. Rather than selecting a topic or theme first, they start with the expectations and group several complementary expectations together, think about how students could demonstrate that they have achieved those expectations, plan teaching and learning strategies and specific lesson plans, and finally group all of this information and work together by theme.

For teachers within Ontario, this is a major shift, especially because the burden of planning from the expectations of the policy documents has been placed primarily on their shoulders. Most teachers in the past received binders with course material developed by whoever taught the course before them. Course material was something which they adapted out of old material to suit their needs and educational beliefs; they generally did not know what was in the Ministry guidelines themselves. With the new curriculum, the expectations of the Ministry and the guidelines are at the forefront of change. It is a shift aimed at modernizing and standardizing the curriculum as well as holding teachers accountable for educational outcomes.

In order to facilitate the implementation of the new curriculum, a number of steps were taken. Beginning in the 1998-1999 school year, one year prior to beginning grade 9 implementation, the government allocated funding to boards so that they could begin preparing for implementation in whatever way they felt was beneficial. Documents
outlining new diploma requirements and other foundational information were prepared and distributed, Ontario Ministry of Education and Training (1999b, 1999c). In consultation with staff at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT), the first set of training materials was developed. These materials included processes aimed at building collaborative teams in schools, called School Implementation Teams (SITs), material to help teachers gain an understanding of the context of reform, strategies for successful reform, and so forth. District Steering Committees (DSCs) were formed to provide training for the SITs. The Ministry provided funding for the SITs, which comprised a principal and four teachers. The SITs were then responsible for training the remaining staff within their schools.

The Ministry provided a vast network of committees and support staff in order to facilitate the training required for implementation of the new curriculum. The Ministry worked in consultation with a provincial committee of partners representing a diverse range of people and chaired by the Deputy Minister of Education and Dr. Michael Fullan of OISE/UT, which provided strategic direction for implementation. The Ministry appointed a project manager in charge of implementation of secondary school reform, who oversaw a project team made up of six English-language and four French-language Education Officers. The education officers worked out of six district offices across the province to coordinate any aspects of implementation which required direct training and support, and trained the DSC. Finally, the project manager also worked with school subject associations to prepare materials and supports, such as course profiles and summer institutes, to assist teachers with implementation.
Supports which directly affected teachers were provided in a number of formats. In terms of professional development, summer institutes were provided across the province by the Ontario Teachers’ Federation and funded by the Ministry. These institutes were meant to help teachers learn about the new curricula, ask questions, and begin planning their materials with other teachers. In addition, throughout the school year, the SITs were trained on various topics and then returned to their schools to train their colleagues.

In addition to the training, a number of resources were also made available. Funding was provided for new textbooks for each new course. Publishers were required to get their textbooks approved by the Ministry; therefore, textbooks were written specifically to meet the expectations of the new curriculum, and most included the expectations from the policy documents within each chapter. A curriculum planner CD-ROM was being adapted from the lower grades for use in planning the new curriculum. The CD contained the expectations for each course and a lesson format to develop plans using the policy document expectations. Exemplars were being written in order to help teachers become familiar with the new marking scheme with levels 1 through 4, and the development of rubrics. Also, *Curriculum Update* newsletters containing information about implementation were circulated periodically throughout the implementation process and provided examples of best and successful practices with implementation and sources for further information and resource support.

In addition to the policy document, every grade 10 course had an accompanying profile. Profiles are documents funded by the Ministry which have been written by groups of teachers across the province for every subject. Both the Catholic and public boards have
written separate profiles. Each subject, except religion, has two profiles which are available to teachers. These documents are a detailed collection of daily lesson plans divided into units, broken down into time requirements, resource needs, and possible sources of further information for teachers to use as reference in teaching the new courses. These profiles presented a model for how the new curriculum could be taught. They are a model written "for teachers by teachers" (Catholic District School Board Writing Partnership, 2000a, 2000b), in a format which provided daily lessons broken down into units with specific time-lines, and all of the expectations from the policy documents. These profiles are not mandated, as are the policy documents: "This is not a mandated approach to the teaching of the course. It may be used in its entirety, in part, or adapted" (Catholic District School Board Writing Partnership, 2000).

A Closer Look

This is a study of 4 teachers' experiences implementing the new standardized grade 10 Ontario provincial curriculum. The provincial mandate included new content to be taught in classrooms across Ontario. Teachers were provided policy documents, also commonly referred to as Ministry or curriculum guidelines, which outlined the expectations for all public and Catholic school subjects except religion. These are broad documents which divide each subject into strands and every strand into overall and specific expectations of knowledge and skills which teachers are required to teach their students. For example, the new grade 10 Civics course is divided into three strands: Informed Citizenship, Purposeful Citizenship, and Active Citizenship. Looking closely at the
shortest strand, Active Citizenship, teachers are provided these four overall expectations:

- demonstrate an ability to research questions and issues of civic importance, and to think critically and creatively about these issues and questions;
- demonstrate an ability to apply decision-making and conflict-resolution procedures and skills to cases of civic importance;
- demonstrate an ability to collaborate effectively when participating in group enquiries and community activities;
- demonstrate a knowledge of different types of citizenship participation and involvement. (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999a, p. 52)

Furthermore, teachers must include within this strand 14 specific expectations which fall under the headings: Inquiry Skills, Decision Making and Conflict Resolution, Collaboration, and Citizenship Participation and Community Involvement. These specific expectations provide a lot of general details such as:

- demonstrate an ability to organize information effectively (e.g., using summaries, notes timelines, visual organizers, maps, comparison organizers);
- analyze approaches to decision making and conflict resolution that can affect their own lives. (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999a, p. 52)

These expectations provide teachers with a mandate for what they must teach: some very broad-based skills and some very specific content-based expectations, but absolutely no direction on how to teach those expectations. As a result, teachers have little freedom to choose course content because of the volume of expectations, but considerable freedom regarding pedagogy.
Finally, there are a number of other policy changes new to secondary curriculum being made at the same time as the new policy documents, which will affect implementation of those documents. Briefly, these changes are: a new standard report card across the province, new forms of assessment and reporting, achievement charts, a policy not allowing late marks to be taken off assignments no matter when they are handed in, culminating activities at the end of units and the semester, and an increased teaching load for teachers in secondary schools. In addition, there are curriculum supports which the Ministry provided: exemplars which provide "samples of student work... that illustrate achievement at each of the levels" (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999a, p. 56); assessment videos, which, like exemplars, present sample work which is critiqued on the video and assessed using an achievement chart; electronic curriculum planner, an electronic program to guide teachers through the design-down planning process. While this study focuses on the substantive changes to course content, these other factors influence the implementation of the former and, therefore, fall within the scope of this study. In particular, participants focused on culminating activities, the no-late-marks policy, and achievement charts.

Culminating activities are projects which come at the end of every unit to assess the accumulated knowledge of all the learning that has occurred through a method other than a standard pencil and paper test. In addition, another culminating activity is to be given at the end of the semester to represent the work of the entire course. These activities are meant to be a more creative application of learning than traditional tests, with options for presentation and format. The no-late-marks policy directs teachers to accept assignments at
any time in the semester without subtracting a late penalty on the mark. In fact, teachers are expected to accept assignments even at the end of the semester, without penalty.

The new assessment policy includes achievement charts, more commonly referred to by teachers as rubrics (see Appendix C for a sample); this policy promotes two changes for teachers: the use of rubrics and the system of grading by levels. I refer to the two together because that is mainly how the participants viewed them. The rubrics themselves, as the Ministry has developed them for use in Ontario, are charts to be given to students along with assignments so that course expectations are very clear. Teachers are to follow the marking scheme outlined in the rubric. "The achievement chart provides a standard province-wide method for teachers to use in assessing and evaluating their students' achievement" (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999a, p. 56). The achievement chart is divided into four categories: Knowledge/Understanding, Thinking/Inquiry, Communication, and Application. The use of achievement charts is meant to guide teacher planning and assessment and to help students assess their own work and plan for improvement. "To ensure consistency in assessment and reporting across the province, the ministry will provide samples of student work that reflect achievement based on the provincial standard, and other resources based on the achievement charts" (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, p. 56). The achievement chart shows what is expected for each aspect of an assignment and essentially what quality of work fits into a level 1, 2, 3 or 4. The levels are the grades which students receive as opposed to the more traditional number, letter, or percent grade. Level 3 is the expectation of what a student should achieve. Level 4 is exceeding the expectation, while 1 and 2 indicate work which needs
improvement. The level R is reserved for students who require “remediation.”

The Research

The purpose of this research was to examine stories of 4 participants as they narrated their experiences implementing the new curriculum. The following questions were explored in relation to participants’ narratives. One, how did implementation compare, particularly in light of the format of the policy documents, with what is known about implementation from the literature? I examined what aspects of the implementation process mirrored or differed from what is discussed in the literature. Particular focus was placed on an examination of the control exerted by the specific curriculum expectations and the pedagogical freedom of the same curriculum.

Two, several questions were asked about curriculum and the various conceptions of curriculum portrayed by relevant factors. For example, what curricular conceptions are implicit in the format of the policy documents, and how did those conceptions affect implementation? I examined both the definitions of curriculum participants outlined and their curricular conceptions revealed through their interviews. Finally, the lived curriculum, in particular, is considered in light of curricular conceptions and implementation. The factors affecting teacher understandings and practices regarding the lived curriculum are discussed.

Finally, I hoped to gain a better understanding of curriculum, what it is, and how it relates to other elements in the educational process. As a practicing teacher, I wanted to see how the parts related to develop a better understanding in order to inform my own practice.
Particularly as a new teacher in elementary school, I have had to rationalize the sometimes necessary use of prepackaged materials because of my lack of subject knowledge or time to plan a more engaging and satisfying curriculum. I hoped, by examining the experiences of participants and reading the literature, to learn more about best practices and strategies for becoming an effective curriculum planner while learning more about curriculum and pedagogy.

Definitions of Terms

What follows is a list of definitions of key terms as they are used and adapted for use in this thesis.

*Achievement charts:* also commonly called rubrics, charts which are used for grading assignments and providing students with an explanation of the categories to be graded and the expectations for each level per category.

*Course profile:* Course profiles are documents which have been funded by the Ministry and written, one for each grade 10 subject, by both the public and Catholic school boards respectively. The profiles provide a detailed curriculum document—with units, lessons, time required for units and lessons, learning and assessment strategies—which have been written by teachers and provided as reference materials for teachers as they implement the mandated Policy Documents (Catholic District School Board Writing Partnership, 2000a, 2000b).

*Culminating activities:* creative activities mandated for the end of every unit and course which test students' knowledge of the skills and content taught in a final project.
Curricular landscape: A curricular landscape is the combination of differently defined curricula, in varying degrees, to create a unique curriculum experience. For example, the way in which teachers use the curriculum-as-plan to shape the curriculum-as-lived creates a unique curricular landscape (Aoki, 1993).

Curriculum-as-lived: The curriculum-as-lived is the contextualized experience of creating a curriculum through the interaction of teacher, students, and environment (Aoki, 1993; Combleth, 1988; Zaret, 1986).

Curriculum-as-plan: The curriculum-as-plan is any document or plan for how the curriculum should be taught in class and/or a guide for what students should learn in the course of instruction (Aoki, 1993).

Exemplar: a collection of "samples of student work... that illustrates achievement at each of the levels" (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999a, p. 56) of assessment used in achievement charts.

Hidden or implicit curriculum: learning which is not specifically planned but which students learn through the culture, structure, words, and actions of those working in the educational setting and the educational setting itself (McCutcheon, 1988).

Mandated curriculum: The mandated curriculum is the policy document which the government, through the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, has developed and expects teachers to implement from a fidelity and mutual adaptation perspective.

Mutual adaptation: Mutual adaptation is an implementation process which recognizes that, during the process of implementation, elements of the planned curriculum will have to be adapted by teachers, school administration, and the Board in order to meet
the needs and demands of specific situations and students (Snyder, Bolin, and Zumwalt, 1992).

*Policy document:* Policy documents are the curriculum guides which the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training have provided for all grade 10 courses and which outline the aspects of the curriculum which teachers are expected to implement.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to explore the questions, concerns, and interests expressed as the goals of this study, I examined a large body of literature. I had to look into definitions and understandings of curriculum, research and theory regarding implementation, and literature about pedagogy and teacher planning. On the whole, the literature can be overwhelming in its scope. The field of curriculum itself is so vast that I spent many hours sifting through library and on-line catalogues in order to find the most relevant literature. A cursory glance at such important books as Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman (1995) or Jackson (1992), shows the scope and number of related topics. Relevancy in itself posed a problem when sorting through literature; while the focus of my study was primarily implementation, the research focus also relates to change literature, literature on curriculum theory, and pedagogy. I felt that either my review of the literature would never end or I would be providing only a cursory view of the literature because it would be impossible to represent the entire spectrum of related research and theory. What I have provided is a synopsis of what I feel are some of the central ideas and studies found in the literature. As a result of the split between theoretical discussions and research studies, I have divided this chapter into two sections. The first section examines theories related to curriculum, pedagogy, and implementation and change literature. A general outline of pedagogical theory is presented; finally, in the second section of this chapter, I look at implementation research studies in order to compare what is found in the literature with data I collected.
Curriculum: What It Is

Traditional definitions of curriculum tend to portray it as a course of study, such as all of the courses offered, both required and optional, by a high school, or a plan for learning, such as course materials which provide lessons and activities for teaching a given subject or topic (Eisner, 1985; Steller, 1983). Simply put, in this way curriculum is conceptualized as the planned educational experiences or learning of students within schools. Aoki (1993) calls this the curriculum-as-plan. Most educators and members of society adhere to this limited conception of curriculum (Jackson, 1992). The curriculum, however, is more than just a plan outlining what students will learn within the school system. Such a narrow definition carries with it a number of negative prescriptions.

For one, the curriculum-as-plan is normally the product of curriculum developers who work outside the context of the classroom and a board of education’s specific milieu to create a generalized document. This document is further imbued with the values and interests of its external developers (Aoki, 1993) and infused with a specialized language used by curriculum developers and not normally shared by the teachers who must, and are often expected to, uncritically implement the plan (Combleth, 1988; Zaret, 1986). This approach to curriculum does not take into consideration the full context of implementation. It assumes that teachers will be willing to uncritically accept the developers’ plan and that a general plan will be appropriate for every classroom. A view of curriculum-as-a plan separates teachers from the planning of classroom learning (Aoki; Clandinin & Connelly, 1992; Doyle, 1992) and takes curricular decision making out of their hands, even though they are ultimately held accountable for educational outcomes (Griffin, 1990; Klein, 1990).
When a demanding set of curricular goals is prescribed to teachers by administration or by a governing body, teachers must struggle to find a place to teach concepts and material which they may feel are more relevant to their students; this can cause many teachers to feel guilty or even to fear the consequences of not covering the mandated curriculum.

No matter how scripted a curriculum plan, or how faithfully a teacher does try to implement it, no document can contain and control all of the learning which takes place within a classroom (Cornbleth, 1988; Zaret, 1986). The curriculum-as-plan is just that: a plan. It provides a framework for instruction and classroom activities. It is one element in the curriculum. It is useful to speak of a curriculum plan because it would be very difficult to teach without at least some preplanned preparation which often is written down in some form. This would include policy documents, textbooks, lesson plans, overheads, hand-outs, and so forth. Any vehicle for learning which is prepared beforehand in writing is an aspect of the curriculum, which I shall henceforth refer to as a curriculum plan. Curriculum plans are the most concrete facet of the whole curriculum.

In addition to plans, the curriculum is formed by elements which are, in light of the plan, "hidden." "The hidden curriculum can be thought of as bearing two characteristics (1) it is not intended, and (2) it is transmitted through the everyday, normal goings-on in schools" (McCutcheon, 1988, p. 188). The hidden curriculum provokes learning which is not explicit in the planned instruction. There are many ways in which the hidden curriculum manifests itself in student learning. "For example, through the hidden curriculum, students may receive stereotypical messages about minority and ethnic groups, and male and female roles, due to messages implicit in a teacher's actions, everyday
occurrences in the schools, or from textbooks" (McCutcheon, p. 188). School policies, the actions and interactions of teachers and students, what is taught and left out of the curriculum are just some of the elements which influence curricular experiences.

The hidden curriculum includes institutional policies, or ways in which information is represented in curriculum plans, in addition to the actual lived-out interactions between students and those around them. For example, textbooks which depict pictures of white males in roles of authority send cultural, gender, and power messages not necessarily planned as part of the curriculum. Similarly, a teacher who always chooses males to lead groups or teams sends a similar gender-biased message without necessarily meaning to. Both planned and lived-out actions affect learning in "hidden" ways. Ultimately, however, both the curriculum-as-planned and the hidden curriculum are merely aspects of the curriculum. It may, at times, be useful to isolate them in order to discuss how they affect learning, but they are parts of the whole curriculum.

Considering the central role of teachers in the learning process, the hidden curriculum has an enormous effect on what students learn. McLuhan said, "the medium is the message," and in the classroom, teachers are the medium through which knowledge is often transmitted and translated. It stands to reason, then, that the teachers themselves, how they act, how they teach, and how they represent their own beliefs, teaches students. For this reason, it is important to examine the orientations toward curriculum held by teachers, as their beliefs are a filter through which the curriculum is presented. Of course, an examination of teachers captures only one facet of the hidden curriculum, but it is useful to focus on this one aspect as a point of analysis in this research: research which is built
largely on the self-narrated experiences of teachers with implementation of the government’s curriculum plan.

What is the curriculum, then? The curriculum is all of the learning which takes place for an individual, whether planned, hidden, or otherwise. For the purpose of this study, the working definition of curriculum, based mainly on Aoki (1993), is the experience of learning. The curriculum is what is taught, and how that what is taught. The curriculum-as-plan is a resource, like any other, for informing, guiding, and preparing the curriculum (Zaret, 1986). The curriculum itself, however, is the actual lived experience, which may mirror the document very closely but which in most cases is filled with spontaneous interruptions and alternative paths for learning and instruction. The curriculum is the experience which is lived out during learning and instruction (Aoki, 1993; Combleth, 1988; Feldman & Kropf, 1999; Goodlad, 1988; Zaret, 1986). The processes which are undergone and the actions which take place that lead to learning are the curriculum. In a school context, this means that the interactions which take place among teachers, their students, and their classroom environment make up the curriculum (Combleth; Davis, Sumara, & Keiren, 1996). Every school, every teacher, and every class enacts a different curriculum. Aoki refers to this as a multiplicity of curricular landscapes. No teacher will create the same curriculum during the course of his/her teaching, because every new class, every new group of students, will enact a unique curricular landscape. This curriculum, which Aoki (1993) refers to as the curriculum-as-lived, is an ongoing social activity which is influenced by elements within and beyond the classroom. It is "all of the [learning] experiences that children have in schools - planned, unplanned, enacted, or hidden"
(Feldman & Kropf, p. 244). What students learn and how they learn it is the simplest way to define curriculum.

These definitions of curriculum are useful terms for framing some of the topics which will be discussed within this thesis. A curriculum plan, it should be made clear, is a term which will be used to apply to documents which provide material for instruction and planning. It is not the curriculum. It is any one of many forms of written material which contain information about what can be taught in the classroom—that is, textbook, profile, policy document, lesson plans. The lived curriculum refers to the actual learning and teaching experiences which take place in the context of the classroom. These experiences may be based on a curriculum plan but inevitably involve other factors and influences. The curriculum, as a term on its own and as I personally define it, is the experience of learning; anything which contributes to learning, for a student, a teacher, or anyone else, is part of the curriculum.

As a curriculum is planned and lived out, it is subject to the influences of those who have planned it and who live it out. While there are many elements which impact the curriculum, two are of principal interest in this study. One, the Ministry has planned the policy documents and thus imbued them with their own goals and interests. Two, the participants in the study planned the daily lessons and were responsible for the implementation of the curriculum, and therefore also had a considerable impact on the curriculum. Whether Ministry officials and teachers have shared or conflicting goals can have considerable effect on what students learn.

Ideally, the curriculum meets the needs of every student. Unfortunately, with the
institutional structure of public education, the demands of all the stakeholders involved in education, and the accountability of teachers to all of those stakeholders, the needs of the students are given a low priority. No curriculum plan can speak to every student's needs, interests, and strengths. Therefore, in public education, without dramatically altering the system itself, a curriculum plan needs to be developed which serves as the basis from which a lived curriculum is negotiated. Generally, a suitable plan cannot be developed without knowing the context, which includes students. Once the students are known, their interests, strengths and weaknesses, and their needs, then what is to be taught can be prepared, with the expectation that only certain elements of the plan will be used as the students and teachers continue to negotiate learning, and thus the curriculum, together, in ways that are relevant to those involved. This is extremely difficult to do in classrooms with 20-30 students, with government mandating a curriculum plan, and teacher accountability to parents, governments, and administration rather than student needs.

**Pedagogy: What's Best for the Students**

Given the format of the policy documents, another essential element in implementation will be the *how*, or the pedagogy, of implementation. As I say this I realize that I am defining pedagogy as relating to teaching and perhaps should not use it so simplistically. According to Van Manen (1999), the term "pedagogy" has become a "fashion word" in educational discourses, and the word's meaning has been eroded in the process. "It appears that the term pedagogy is often simply used as a buzz-word that has replaced the terms teaching, instruction, or curriculum" (p. 15). According to its
etymology, the word refers specifically to the science of educating children.

The question is whether whatever I do is appropriate for this or that child or for these children. Indeed, the practice of pedagogy may be defined as constantly distinguishing more appropriate from less appropriate ways of being and interacting with young people. (Van Manen, 1999, p. 19)

From this definition I am led to ask, how are curriculum and pedagogy different? Clearly they relate in many ways. They are both concerned with learning: what is learned and how it is learned. What may be different is that curriculum is what is learned and the actual process of learning, whereas pedagogy is (a) related specifically to children and (b) the act of critically assessing or evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum as it relates to educating children. Pedagogy means more than just teaching. It involves the assessment and attempted improvement of teaching practices. So where does pedagogy fit into implementation and this study?

Teachers involved in implementing curricula cannot help but be involved in pedagogical assessment. As participants implement the new curriculum, they will invariably be involved in judging that curriculum. At the same time, they will be developing plans from the expectations for teaching and will invariably be judging those plans as well. As implementation proceeds, participants will be evaluating all aspects of student learning for effectiveness, for a fit between their orientations and those of the policy documents, and for ways to improve the curriculum. Therefore, it would be impossible to separate pedagogy from the implementation process. In fact, it will be a key ingredient in how the curriculum is implemented. The question becomes, how do teachers
approach pedagogy: distinguishing more appropriate from less appropriate ways of
teaching children? What tools, skills, characteristics, and/or experiences are required for
teachers to be most effective?

What teachers know, particularly about the content of the subject they are teaching, is an important factor in how they develop what and how they teach. A. Chen and Ennis (1995) refer to subject content knowledge as concepts, principles, and skills of a subject area. Teachers need to know the content knowledge of the subjects they are teaching; subject content knowledge is an important determiner in how teachers frame their curriculum. Powell (1996) found that participants’ “breadth and depth of content knowledge influenced how they viewed their classroom curricula and influenced their self-confidence to teach the content” (p. 157). The two participants in his study who were not subject knowledge experts relied very heavily on the textbook and prescribed curriculum and were very nervous and self-conscious about teaching a subject which they did not know a lot about.

If a teacher does not know what to teach or is insecure about a subject, attention must be paid to matters of content. This can exacerbate both problems of management and problems of pedagogy. It is difficult to be pedagogically graceful when you are lost in unfamiliar territory. (Eisner, 1999, p. 404)

On the other hand, the two teachers who knew a lot about their content were able to spend more time and energy on other concerns, because they did not have to learn material as they planned. What is more, according to Doyle (1992),

teachers’ content knowledge itself becomes transformed into a unified framework
or theory of the content as school curriculum. A teacher’s theory of the content facilitates planning and enables him or her eventually to lift the curriculum away from texts and materials to give it independent existence. (p. 499)

Before teachers can concern themselves with how best to teach material, or what material to teach, even, they must have a framework for understanding the subject content knowledge. In short, how well teachers know the subject content will affect implementation, as teachers with more subject content knowledge will be better prepared to assess and alter what is taught.

Once the teacher has a good understanding of subject content knowledge, it becomes necessary to be able to represent that knowledge in different ways. A. Chen and Ennis (1995) refer to pedagogical content knowledge as representations of content knowledge. This becomes important when teaching a group of diverse students with different learning styles and needs.

Having a solid subject content knowledge base is not enough for a teacher. He or she must possess a substantial pedagogical content knowledge repertoire consisting of representations such as analogies, metaphors, examples, pictorial and physical representations, and practices and drills to communicate effectively the subject content knowledge to the student. (Wilson et al., 1987, in Chen & Ennis, 1995, p. 398)

The teacher must have knowledge of a number of different ways to convey and represent the content knowledge to students. Subject content knowledge becomes important again as a base of knowledge in order for a teacher to be able to offer multiple representations of
that knowledge. During implementation, what teachers plan and how they assess, adapt, and alter the curriculum will be influenced by their pedagogical content knowledge.

Closely related to these two forms of knowledge is a third: personal practical knowledge. Connelly and Clandinin (1988), who have written extensively on this topic, refer to it as “the teacher’s past experience, in the teacher’s present mind and body, and in the future plans and actions.” (quoted in Connelly, Clandinin, & He, 1997, p. 666).

Connelly et al. view teacher knowledge as the sum total of teachers’ experiences, not only in school, but in their entire lives. For example, they illustrated through one teacher’s narrative how her personal life outside of the classroom influenced her curriculum making for and within the classroom. Personal practical knowledge means that teachers bring to their curricula all of their experiences, past, present, and yet to come. Teachers approach curriculum development and lesson planning from a repertoire of past experience and knowledge and build learning around activities which will motivate students to want to learn (Donmoyer, 1995; Hargreaves, 1997). Cassidy and Lawrence (2000), in a study of early childhood educators, found that teachers did, in fact, base their decisions on past experiences rather than on theories they may have learned.

It is interesting that the few influences that teachers were able to cite [when asked to explain why they had done certain things in the classroom] were overwhelmingly attributed to experience rather than education, even though most of the teachers had formal education well beyond the high school level. ( pp. 202-203)

The whole experience of the teacher, then, combined with his/her knowledge of content and pedagogy, which will also be informed by and be a part of the teacher’s personal
practical knowledge, informs the teacher’s pedagogical practice.

Finally, implementation will be affected by the decisions teachers make about the students they are teaching (A. Chen & Ennis, 1995; Feldman & Kropf, 1999; Powell, 1996). Powell found that beginning teachers had only loosely planned their first few weeks of school because they did not know their students and could not anticipate what would work best. Furthermore, once the year had gotten underway, Powell found that the teachers adjusted their curriculum-making because of their students. “[The] teachers found that they had to make their lesson plans more appropriate for students in terms of content delivery, instructional momentum, pacing, and level of academic expectations” (p. 159). Hargreaves and Moore (2000) also found that “teachers were highly sensitive to the life dilemmas that their students were facing. They tried to design curriculum that could tap into their students’ personal experiences and interpersonal relationships in ways that were relevant and meaningful” (p. 101). Hargreaves (1997) has also noted that when teachers plan, they “start with knowledge and feelings about their students, with their intuitive understanding about what is likely to excite and engage those students” (p. 13). Knowledge of students, then, becomes the final important factor in pedagogical decision making during implementation. Student concerns will dominate a great many of the implementation decisions which teachers make.

While these factors in teacher decision making have been placed under a heading of pedagogy, they are not specifically pedagogical. It would be just as easy to place these topics under a heading of factors affecting implementation, or under teacher curriculum decision making. Ultimately, these are elements of teacher knowledge which inform how
participants are likely to plan for, implement, and teach the new curriculum. I have placed them under this heading because pedagogy is traditionally viewed as an examination of how teachers teach. Teaching invariably includes curriculum, however. And as this research examines the implementation of curriculum, all of these parts of the educational process (pedagogy, curriculum, planning, teaching, implementation) are closely linked.

**Research Findings**

In 2000, Datnow, Borman, and Stringfield conducted a study which closely parallels many of the conditions of my research and highlights many of the important and recurring issues in curriculum implementation. The research team examined the implementation of The Core Knowledge Sequence within four U.S. elementary schools. The sequence, much like the Ministry policy documents, provides the “core sequence” of topics to be taught in every grade. The Core Knowledge Sequence provides content specificity without specific instruction on implementation. “The Core Knowledge Foundation strongly encourages schools to teach all topics in sequence, thus emphasizing fidelity... [but] does not have a strict plan for implementation or for instructional practice” (Datnow et al., p. 171). This approach, they found, had a number of advantages and disadvantages.

One advantage of The Core Knowledge Sequence was that the lack of specific instruction on how content should be implemented allowed teachers to become active members of the process. A repeated refrain in the implementation literature is that the teacher must gain a sense of ownership when adopting a new curriculum and must accept
and understand the purpose of the change (Chi-chung, Yun-peng, Ngai-ying, 1999; Fullan, 2001; Kimpston, 1985; McLaughlin, 1976; Pratt, 1980; Saint-Laurent & Giasson, 1999; J.H. Young, 1988). It should be obvious that a teacher, or anyone, will not adapt or show enthusiasm when working with materials which they do not understand or agree with philosophically. Personal interests and preferences of teachers for particular curricular elements, such as content or teaching style, are important factors in implementation (Ben-Peretz, 1990; Feldman & Kropf, 1999; Hargreaves, 1997). As they implement curricula which they have not developed, teachers must struggle with the desire to teach what they know and enjoy versus what has been prescribed. In addition, teachers’ personal philosophies toward teaching will affect their decisions.

As several of the teachers talked about this point, it became clear that they teach what they know and they teach what interests them. Although they did not state this conclusion explicitly, the teachers clearly preferred to teach what they knew how to teach. (Feldman & Kropf, 1999, p. 253)

Teachers naturally want to use the material which they enjoy and which they know. Therefore, if the goals and procedure for implementing a change are unclear or philosophically at odds with the teacher’s own beliefs, the teacher cannot or will not faithfully implement it or adapt to it (Chi-Chung, Yun-Peng, Ngai-Ying, 1999; Fullan, 2001; Pratt, 1980; Saint-Laurent & Giasson, 1999). In the case of The Core Knowledge Sequence, Datnow et al. (2000) hypothesized that implementation was successful because teachers had a great deal of freedom in how the core topics were implemented, because the planning of that implementation created a sense of ownership, and because the program
focused on changing the content and not the instructional procedures--the whats versus the hows: traditionally viewed as curriculum versus pedagogy. The largest philosophical clashes seem to occur when teachers are asked to change "how" they deliver content within the classroom. Since core knowledge focuses on what to teach, teachers are free to choose the how. In fact, Datnow et al. were surprised to find that, rather than feeling controlled by the content requirements, "the majority of teachers welcomed the idea of implementing a preestablished, highly specified curriculum" (p. 187). Even though a large body of literature argues for freeing teachers from the tyranny and control of the curriculum-as-plan (Ben-Peretz, 1990; Connelly & Clandinin, 1992; Cornbleth, 1988; Doyle, 1992; Zaret, 1986), this evidence supports studies by Johnston, Allington, Guice, and Brooks, (1998) and Muncey, Payne, and White (1999), which found that teachers actually welcomed and sought an authoritative source to guide their planning.

These findings align with a more recent trend in the literature which argues for shared decision making and control from both internal and external forces within schools (Goodson, 2000) or top-down, bottom-up approaches to change (Fullan, 1994). Changes which are driven solely by forces outside of the school, like the Ministry for example, cause teachers to often resent and resist the change. Rather than being initiators of change, Goodson argues, teachers become alienated by and resentful of imposed changes. What is needed for successful change, both Fullan (1999) and Goodson have argued, is an approach which is supported from above and driven by the teachers and administration, school-by-school, from below. The Core Knowledge Sequence provided external advice but was largely contextualized and shaped by teachers. Datnow et al. (2000) found that this meant
that teachers, in the process of planning daily lessons, gained a sense of ownership over the curriculum. This sense of ownership translated into increased commitment and enthusiasm. Like The Core Knowledge Sequence, teachers in my study had expectations which were prescribed, but also had the freedom to plan instruction which may foster a sense of ownership, thereby avoiding problems of clarity and matching philosophy, and generating some commitment and enthusiasm. On the other hand, the curriculum change is driven, not just supported, from above and involves many new initiatives beyond the curriculum expectations.

An important factor in top-down, bottom-up collaboration and the success of change in general is the support which teachers are provided within their environment and by administration (Armstrong, 1989; S.H.L. Chen & Chung, 2000; Fullan, 2001, 1992; Lewis & Wray, 2001; Smith et al., 1993). Despite a popular belief that teachers work in isolation, able to do whatever they wish behind the closed classroom door, the school environment can have an enormous effect on how teachers implement change (Carless; Johnston, McCormick, Steckler, & McLeroy, 1998; Muncey et al.). In the case of mandated change, the support of other teachers and administration can generate enthusiasm; however, if there is little encouragement, interest, or agreement for a reform, teachers will resist it. In the same way, administrative support is a key factor in promoting change, motivating the teacher, and helping to facilitate implementation through support, encouragement, and incentive (Armstrong; Carless; Fullan, 2001, 1992). "Supportive administrators help locate and provide resources for implementation, answer questions about how a curriculum was intended to be taught, help with scheduling problems [and so forth]" (Smith et al., p. 349).
If the principal shows an interest in how implementation is proceeding, in how teachers are coping, and in supporting the process, then researchers have found that teachers are more motivated to make and to continue making changes (Datnow et al., 2000; Fullan, 2001; Smith et al.). In addition, McNeil (1988) found that many teachers work according to the expectations of administration and do not go beyond what is necessary to satisfy the "requirements of the job." Therefore, the overall atmosphere of the school, and even the parents and community outside the school, can have a positive or negative effect on how a teacher implements curriculum change.

Another important indicator of implementation success involving teachers is how much time is available (Kimpston, 1985; Werner, 1988). According to Adelman and Walking-Eagle (1997), teachers need time to learn and practice the proposed change, introduce and institutionalize it over time with reasonable goals, and reflect on the process. Implementation of new curricula is not a process whereby teachers can quickly read over the materials and then be ready to use them in class. What is more, when curriculum development or planning is involved, the amount of time teachers need increases tremendously. "Time pressures are particularly acute when reform agendas include an expectation that teachers will create curriculum" (p. 96). Teachers who must plan topics and activities for their curriculum, as opposed to following a curriculum plan which someone else has prepared, must have time to not only analyze and synthesize the externally planned documents, but also write their own planned curriculum in which they adapt the curriculum to their own style and experiences. Werner conducted a study in which he found that the need for enough time to understand, adapt, and implement curriculum can become a
stressful concern for teachers. Teachers become aware of time as a commodity and begin to implement their curriculum according to what they value and have the time to do. In this way, time begins to govern part of the implementation process. Particularly when teachers are working with very detailed and specific curriculum plans, they start to make decisions about what to use and what to leave out in the time that is available.

In my study, teachers need enough time to plan how they will implement the curriculum expectations. Datnow et al. (2000) found that teachers spent "considerable time planning lessons, gathering materials, particularly in the first 1 to 2 years of implementation" (p. 187). They noted that the "burdensome amount of time required by teachers in planning was a hindrance to implementation in some schools" (p. 188). The extra time needed for planning could mean that participants are unable to plan for instruction and rely more heavily on the course profiles and textbooks or use past material rather than faithfully adopting the expectations. Whether due to time constraints or otherwise, there is evidence that textbooks play a large role in teacher planning (Ben-Peretz, 1990; A. Chen & Ennis, 1995; Powell, 1996). According to Ben-Peretz, "the choice and use of textbooks, or other kinds of curriculum materials, seem to constitute the major curricular function of teachers" (p. 1). Several studies have been conducted which support this view of textbook planning (Chen & Ennis, 1995; Powell). On the other hand, according to Doyle (1992), the studies which he reviewed "strongly suggest that textbooks, even highly structured basal reading programs, do not define the experienced curriculum but, rather, are used by teachers as resources in service of their own curricula" (p. 496). What is clear from both of these perspectives is that a lot of teachers do rely heavily on texts
during their curriculum development, and whether it is to supplement or direct their curriculum likely varies from teacher to teacher. This may be particularly relevant during the implementation of the new curriculum with its time constraints, content expectations, and lack of plans.

The final factor in implementation success which I examine here can be pivotal in circumventing many of the pitfalls of other factors discussed above. Perhaps for this reason, many researchers have noted the importance of professional development from the beginnings of implementation research. Repeated studies have found that professional development improves teachers’ knowledge about proposed changes and their willingness to participate (Armstrong, 1989; S.H.L. Chen & Chung, 2000; Chi-Chung et al., 1999; Fullan, 1992; Kimpston, 1985; Pratt, 1980). Teachers need the understanding of what a change proposes, and requires, and the opportunity to collaborate and share their experiences with other teachers at workshops and conferences. First, in-services and workshops provide those responsible for the change an opportunity to explain their goals and the philosophy underpinning their initiatives and train the teachers in any areas where they might be unfamiliar or unprepared for implementation (Armstrong; Fullan; Pratt). Many teachers do not have the background or training for planning and adapting and need professional development in those areas (Chi-Chung et al.; Fullan; Kimpston). Professional development also affords the opportunity to avoid problems of clarity and philosophy which cause teachers to omit elements of the change. In addition, it provides a format for encouraging and motivating teachers (Pratt). Second, professional development is an excellent format for providing teachers with the resources they will need for change.
Particularly in cases involving new content, teachers need access to resources of information for instruction and for activities. Workshops and in-services can be vehicles through which teachers share and gain these resources. Finally, professional development can provide teachers the time which is so valuable during any change initiative. Workshops and in-services allow teachers time to share and reflect on their experiences and can be used for planning. In their study, Datnow et al. (2000) noted that professional development was not a requirement of The Core Knowledge Sequence, but that those schools that received professional development had staff that were well supported, more prepared, and linked to a national support network. Teachers in my study also had optional opportunities for professional development available in the summer prior to implementation and were provided some in-services during the year.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I have looked at three aspects of the curriculum related to this study: hidden curriculum, curriculum-as-lived, and curriculum-as-planned; I explained that curriculum itself, without being broken down into separate elements, is the experience of learning: anything that is learned and the way in which something is learned. I examined pedagogy as the study of the best ways to interact with students; teachers examine their practice through their beliefs about students, their subject content, pedagogical content, and personal practical knowledge. Finally, I examined some of the major factors which are repeatedly reported in the literature as affecting implementation: teacher freedom, beliefs, and ownership, top-down, bottom-up collaboration, a supportive environment, time, teacher
reliance on texts and other resources when planning, and professional development. While there are other factors noted in the literature, these factors seem particularly relevant to the case which I am researching.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

I came to this research from what I considered to be, at the least, an underrepresented population: I was a Master of education student who had never done any actual teaching. When I began looking for a research question, I felt that my lack of teaching experience was a definite limitation; I had no experience with the practical and believed that my difficulty finding a research question was a result of my lack of classroom experience. I spent almost 6 months and one topic change searching for the final focus of my study. In the end, a natural setting presented itself in the form of the implementation of the new curriculum in Ontario’s secondary schools. Implementation of the Grade 10 curricula was an opportunity for qualitative research. As a result, I chose to interview 4 teachers and explore implementation and curriculum in light of their experiences.

Methodology and Methods

Since my research involved the experiences of teachers, I chose to take an interpretative approach using qualitative methods. The data are the result of the experiences which participants related interpreted in light of the literature I have read and analysis of relevant documents. Merriam (1998) refers to a basic or generic qualitative study in which the researcher seeks "to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, or the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved" (p. 11). In this thesis, I have examined the process of implementation, looking for the existence and participants’ understanding of the curriculum-as-lived, hoping to learn from their perspectives.
I wanted to learn about the curricular experiences of teachers by listening to their stories. Qualitative, as opposed to quantitative, methods are most appropriate when conducting interpretive inquiry because they are geared toward understanding, observing, and experiencing, as much as possible, natural events. Qualitative research methods are used to describe and understand, rather than isolate and control, phenomena (Creswell, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Merriam, 1988; Stake, 1995). Its emphasis is detailed description of events at a particular place and time, so that events can be understood and shared with others. “Qualitative research tries to establish an empathetic understanding for the reader, through description, sometimes thick description, conveying to the reader what experience itself would convey” (Stake, p. 39). I have endeavored to provide enough description to present the reader with a clear understanding of the research design, process, and analysis so that the results can be fairly judged for their limitations and merits. The data include interviews and transcripts and documents: policy documents and course profiles; field notes, and the researcher’s journal.

Participants

Participants were found by networking; a mutual acquaintance found 4 teachers who agreed to participate in the study: Karen, Nora, John, and Sara. Teachers participating were implementing subjects from the grade 10 curriculum in the 2000-2001 school year and planning it in the previous summer. I decided to focus on a small number of participants so that a detailed examination of their experiences could be carried out. I met with each person individually at the end of the 1999-2000 school year, explaining the purpose of the research
and what I hoped they would contribute, and I provided them with copies of the information letter and consent form used in my Ethics proposal. Participants also received a confidential questionnaire which was used to gather some relevant personal information (see Appendix B). All of the participants seemed quite eager and willing to participate, except perhaps Sara, who was most likely distracted by some personal interests at the time. I also explained that there was no obligation to participate and that they did not have to answer any questions they were uncomfortable with and that they could terminate participation at any time without an explanation. It was agreed with all participants that I would call them in August to set up our first interview.

Karen was the most experienced of the group. She had 20 years of teaching experience at the time of the research. She had worked on curriculum teams in the past and had implemented the new curriculum, grade 9 geography, in the previous year with another teacher. At the same time, she was teaching four courses out of four for half of one semester, coaching two teams, and was a member of two committees. She was married with three children who were involved in national level competition. Karen was working with Sara on the grade 10 applied history course. She was not teaching the course herself until the second semester.

Nora also had a lot of experience, having taught for 15 years. She was a part-time teacher who taught two courses a semester. She was implementing civics, a brand new course which was also only half a semester in length—the first of its kind. During implementation, she worked closely with another teacher, Amanda, who helped make changes and add resources to the course. Nora developed the course on her own. Married
with two young children, Nora coached one sport and was a member of a committee. Her children were involved in four out-of-school weekly activities. She had some past experience developing curriculum during the destreaming of grade 9 geography under the NDP government in the mid-1990s and developed materials for two OAC history courses.

John was the only male in the group, and was in his second year of teaching. In his early 30's, John had worked previously in a government position revising policy documents, briefings, and so forth. John was implementing the grade 10 religion course, which was not a Ministry course. The policy documents and profiles were developed by the Institute for Studies in Catholic Education. John worked alone to develop the course plan, but three other teachers implemented and adapted the course during the year. John had a Master’s degree in theology and education and spent time involved with his church. At the time of this research, his daughter was only a few months old. For personal reasons, John was teaching a regular six out of eight courses, and not six and one half like Karen and Sara.

Sara was also in her second year of teaching, but in her mid 20's, this was her first career. She was planning the grade 10 applied history with Karen. Sara’s only related experience was attending the summer institute. During the year, she was teaching six and one half out of eight courses, coached one sport, and was on a committee. She also played a sport outside of school. Recently married, she had no children.

**Interviews**

Three sets of interviews were conducted at intervals throughout the school year. The first set of interviews were all held on the same day in September. This initial interview was
to collect data about the planning process which participants had been engaged in over the course of the summer. In addition, this interview was to collect teachers’ impressions about implementation at the very beginning of the process. Nora was not interviewed at this time as she was unavailable. The second set of interviews was conducted over the course of 2 days at the end of March. The purpose of this interview was to discuss the process of implementation as it had proceeded in the first semester. For this reason, I did not interview Karen again, since she was implementing her course only in the second semester. When Nora was interviewed, we covered both the first and second interview schedules. The final interviews were all conducted on different days near the end of June and covered any topics which had been missed in previous discussions and the final process of implementation in the last semester.

In total, 10 interviews were conducted. Each interview ran for approximately one hour, and was conducted in the school. Both John and Sara were interviewed three times. As noted above, since Karen did not implement in the first semester, she was not interviewed again until June. At this time, we conducted a double interview, almost 2 hours in length. This interview covered some of the material from the first interview since the tape from that interview had been destroyed, and the questions which other interviewees were asked during the second and third interviews. In total, Karen’s interview time, like John and Sara’s, was approximately 3 hours in length. Finally, two interviews were conducted with Nora. Due to extraordinary circumstances unforeseen at the time, I was unable to meet with Nora at the time of the first interview. As a result, the March and June interviews with Nora were both longer in order to cover all of the scheduled questions. In total, Nora’s interview
time was just under 3 hours. Although only two interviews were held with Nora and Karen, these interviews were longer than the scheduled one hour and covered all of the interview questions asked in the three planned interviews.

Interviewing was the primary form of data collection, while a personal journal, fieldnotes, relevant documents, and the interview with the Ministry representative provided a secondary source of data. The interview allows the researcher to learn about experiences which have not been observed or recorded and to develop understandings about the interviewee’s opinion and perspective on topics (Merriman, 1988; Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). The interview can be used to explore "what is important in the minds of informants: their meanings, perspectives, and definitions; how they view, categorize, and experience the world" (Taylor & Bogdan, p. 88). I used the interviews for both of these purposes: to learn about events during implementation which I could not observe, and to understand participant perspectives on those events (Taylor & Bogdan).

In my first interviews, I used a long list of questions as the interview schedule (see Appendix A). This meant that I was very focused on going through all of my questions in each interview and getting the information which I wanted. It is this that the novice interviewer finds difficult: where do I go from here? Interviewers in training tend to feel anxious and so tend to be over-controlling - not attending to the interviewee, working relentlessly from a list of questions in their head. (Gillham, 2000, p. 3)

During interviews, I found it difficult to listen to what was being said because I was busy preparing to ask the next question, doggedly pursuing what I wanted to hear. I exerted a lot
of control in the interview, seeking what I felt were the "right answers" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). I was very uncomfortable with this approach throughout my first three interviews, but since they were all scheduled on the same day--another issue to be discussed later--I did not have time to reflect on alternative approaches. I would later adopt the approach recommended by Gilham (2000) and similar to others (Creswell, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Merriam, 1988). With this approach, a list of four or five major questions is prepared and accompanied by several one-word prompts. With this format, the major questions can be asked of everyone, ensuring that the necessary common elements are discussed and the prompts can cue other possible areas when necessary (i.e., if conversation slows or stops). This format also frees the interviewer from concentrating on questions which must be asked and makes it possible to listen and react and allows participants more freedom to tell their stories (Gillham).

There is ample literature on different ways to conduct an interview and to develop and prepare interview questions and why one approach is better than another (Gillham, 2000; Holstein & Gubrium, 1995; Merriam, 1988). These distinctions, despite having read numerous sources on the subject beforehand, seemed unimportant to me prior to my first interview. I was going to ask the relevant questions of interviewees; what more did I need to know? I envisioned the interview as a conversation between participants and me, like any casual discussion. I have always been naturally good at listening to and reading people, and so assumed that my research would just mean that a tape-recorder was added to the mix.

The way to construct a disastrous interview or questionnaire is just to sit down and knock out a set of questions off the top of your head... . The resulting data are not
only poor but often virtually impossible to analyze. (Gillham, p. 21)

While the questions which I had prepared were numerous and I kept the interview rigidly on course, the data were still very useful. Participants were able to explain their beliefs about curriculum and implementation, described their planning and preparation for the implementation process, and so forth. What I learned from my first set of interviews, the hard way, was that I needed a new approach to interviewing and preparing the interview schedule which promoted freedom from the interview schedule so that participants could tell their stories.

Gillham (2000) placed the different types of interviews on a continuum from less to more structured. It moves from listening to and conducting "natural" conversations to multiple-choice or structured questionnaire interviews. A researcher has to decide which methods will elicit the necessary information and whether those methods are valid and unbiased (Gillham). When conducting interviews to gain insight into the experiences and beliefs of participants, as I did, the interview has to be flexible; there must be enough structure so that the desired information is elicited from participants, but it has to be unstructured enough to allow participants to tell their stories and take the interview where it needs to go. In order to ensure a proper mix of structure and freedom, the interview schedule and the interviewer’s technique become key elements (Creswell, 1998; Gillham; Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

In the interviews, I took on a role of active participant. According to some researchers, the interviewer needs to be an impartial party, really not a participant at all, in order to ensure that his or her opinions do not "taint" the interviewee’s answers (Gillham,
The belief is that the interviewee holds a store of knowledge which the interviewer can access by asking good questions, and that to participate by offering opinions would be to bias that information (Gillham). I, on the other hand, agree with an alternate view, that meaning is created within the context of the interview and that it cannot be tainted because there is no pure "vessel" of knowledge (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995).

Bias is a meaningful concept only if the subject is seen to possess a preformed, pure informational commodity that the interview process might somehow contaminate. But if interview responses are seen as products of interpretive practice, they are neither preformed, nor ever pure. (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 18)

The interviewer and interviewee negotiate and create meaning together, and the interviewer suggests possible vantage points from which to consider ideas. The role of the interviewer is to prompt the interviewee to think about a subject from multiple perspectives. "With the interviewer's help, the respondent activates different aspects of his or her stock of knowledge" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 33). The active participation of the interviewer actually helps to gain a well-rounded and well-considered version of the interviewee's experiences.

Inevitably, throughout the course of the research there were a number of events and elements which proved to limit the data and the results. Not least among these limitations was my own position as a novice researcher with a great deal to learn, sometimes the hard way. In interviews, for example, I had assumed that my natural ability to listen well and read nonverbal cues would be all that I needed to conduct successful interviews, and certainly those skills helped (Gillham, 2000); however, I could have benefited from other
advice. Many researchers recommend that you test your interview questions in a setting similar to the one in which the actual interviews will take place (Gillham). This certainly would have helped me to see the flaws in technique and interview schedule much sooner. Guba and Lincoln (1981) recommend the use of probing questions, to clarify information and obtain more detail. Finally, Gillham noted that interviews require a lot of concentration and so should be spaced out. Unfortunately, because I was so far from the interviewees and did not have a lot of free time for travel, on two occasions I had to conduct three interviews in 2 days or less. I did find, too, that even by the second interview, and definitely by the third, it was harder to focus or to generate the same interest and enthusiasm for probing, listening, and exploring actively with the interviewee.

There were several other limitations which related to interviewing. One, all of the first three interviews were held on the same day. The limit of my own stamina became obvious by the third interview, at which time I was quite tired.

Interviews require a lot of concentration and you will find them a rather wearing business. So space them out. One every two days is about right. This will mean that you can transcribe as you go: and you will find that each interview is relatively fresh in your memory. This makes listening to the tape a lot easier. (Gillham, 2000, p. 56) Nonetheless, it was a very successful interview and generated a great deal of information. John was a keen participant, prone to extensive elaboration and explanation, and thus very easy to interview.

Two, the first interviews were held in the staff room. This proved problematic in several ways. The participants, who chose the setting, would have been aware of the
presence of coworkers and therefore not as willing to contribute any sensitive information. Looking back at my own notes on the experience, I felt that it turned out to be a rather effective, casual discussion.

Karen took out some work she was marking and started organizing and looking it over. She had said, "hello," when she first got in. "Hi, how are you?" That type of thing. She looked really busy, or like she had a lot to do, and I almost felt like I was going to have to impose on her—or as if she wasn't planning to be interviewed. So I sort of sat there, waiting patiently while she relaxed, got comfortable, and organized everything. After a short while she asked me, "So, what do you want to know?" It was at that point that I realized that I was going to have to do the interview in the room with everyone there...

I think the interview went just fine. We were both relaxed—and although people were talking around us—or even talking to us at times—it was okay because everything seemed so natural that way—as if we were just having a conversation quietly, together, in the staff room. (Field note, September 22, 2001)

Confidentiality, which did not seem to concern participants, was also an issue with an interview in the staff room. Finally, the quality of the tape recording was affected by background noise, making it difficult to make out some of the conversation. Learning from this experience, I conducted all of the following interviews in a private room, usually the teacher's classroom.

Three, related to recording, after the first set of interviews, in part because the tape was eaten in my first interview, I employed a second tape recorder in interviews. The
additional recorder stopped after only 15 minutes, at which time the tape needed to be flipped or replaced. I used this second recorder because the tapes fit a transcription machine which I was using. What I gained in transcription time, however, certainly came at a cost, as the tape-recorder had to be handled at least four times during every interview. The presence of the recorder was difficult to forget and was even a subject for discussion in at least one interview with each participant. While Sara was the only participant who seemed at all uncomfortable with the interview process, repeatedly asking if she was giving the information I wanted, there can be no doubt that the presence of the tape-recorder was noted by and affected participants during interviews.

Power Relations in the Interview and Ethical Concerns

Besides the technical concerns of the interview, ethical issues of power and control need to be considered. There is a power dynamic that exists between the interviewer and the interviewee (Tilley, 1998). According to Young and Tardif (1992), the interviewee has the power to decide how much or how little to disclose, but once the knowledge is given, ethically it is the interviewer who has the burden of deciding how to present and interpret the information. The researcher is left with a burdensome power, deciding how participants are represented in the written documents (Tilley). In the final analysis, the presentation of the data will shape how participants are viewed by the reader; the researcher is responsible for ensuring that participants are presented in as accurate a manner as possible, and most certainly in a manner which will not implicate or bring distress to the interviewee.

In order to help ensure that the data provided by participants and my initial analysis
of that data were trustworthy, member checks were conducted. A member check was conducted by passing back to participants a copy of each transcript for every interview conducted (Creswell, 1998; Gillham, 2000; Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

In a process called "member checking," the actor is requested to examine rough drafts of writing where the actions or words of the actor are featured, sometimes when first written up but usually when no further data will be collected from him or her. The actor is asked to review the material for accuracy and palatability. The actor may be encouraged to provide alternative language or interpretation but is not promised that that version will appear in the final report. (Stake, 1995, p. 115)

In addition to the transcripts, I also provided participants with a synopsis of each interview. These synopses included a summary of what had been said in interviews, along with my interpretations and initial themes. This provided participants not only an opportunity to check what they had said in interviews in order to comment on, rephrase, revisit, or correct any data, but also how I was interpreting their narrative. A limitation of the study would be the lack of response from members regarding transcripts and summaries. Except for the Ministry representative, participants did not have any changes or comments to make regarding their interviews. On the other hand, this could be interpreted as indicating their agreement with the transcripts and initial analysis.

To ensure anonymity, I chose pseudonyms to replace actual names in order to protect the identity of participants. The only people who would be able to recognize participants would be those within the very school where interviewees work; the subject matter of the research is such that it should not bring any negative backlash from colleagues
or school administration. Prior to the first interviews and throughout the research process, participants were informed and reminded of their rights to not answer questions and to terminate participation at any time without question. In addition, participants were provided with documentation outlining the research, their role, and their ethical rights of participation, as per my Ethics proposal (see Appendix D for Ethics Board approval).

**Researcher Positioning**

It is interesting to consider my position within the research, particularly in relation to the interviewees. For one, I was coming to the interviews as a researcher with very little experience as a teacher. I was a candidate in a preservice teacher education program in the same year that I was conducting the interviews. I was a student teacher, slowly gaining more experience, just as I was gaining experience as a researcher. How did this impact interviews? Naturally, different participants related to my position in different ways. Sara, a newer teacher, was sympathetic to and very interested in sharing and comparing my experiences as a student teacher. At the same time, she seemed quite leery, uncertain how to reconcile or approach me as researcher. She continually checked to be certain that she was answering my questions "properly" and often sought clarification of questions.

In direct contrast, John most clearly identified with me as a beginning researcher. He himself had two Master's degrees and was very interested in the "academic" purpose and growth of the research and my own education. Nora, like Sara, seemed very cautious about many of my questions, as if, as an academic, I was asking things which did not make sense practically. Once a question was clarified or scrutinized, however, Nora was very quick and
eager to answer with great detail. She seemed to regard me cautiously, at least in part because of my role as a young researcher with little teaching experience. Karen was very open and welcoming. She related to me in an almost motherly way, accepting me as a young student teacher and researcher. Her own children are of a similar age to me, and one was entering teacher's college in the following year. Karen seemed quite willing to simply answer the questions I asked openly, without concern for my motives or the value of my questions or my position as a beginning teacher and researcher.

A second issue with regard to my position as researcher was my relation to the interviewees. While participants were gathered through a mutual acquaintance, I did have a prior relationship with 2, and certainly a knowledge of all 4 teachers. This too had some effect on the research process. For example, Sara and I knew each other quite socially outside of the research, and she seemed quite uncertain how to measure her prior knowledge of me versus a quite different presentation and relationship as researcher and participant. There was a sense from Karen, at least initially, that she was participating only for my benefit and the contact who asked her to participate. This meant that she had no vested interest in the study and perhaps did not contribute as much as would have been possible otherwise. By the last interview, however, she was very keen and focused.

Data Sources

In addition to the primary source of interview data discussed above, several secondary sources informed this paper: document collection, journals, field notes, and an interview with a representative of the Ministry. Documents relevant to and included in the
research were course policy documents and profiles. The policy documents were analyzed to examine the Ministry's mandated curriculum and the philosophical underpinnings therein. Similarly, the course profiles were examined to see how teachers in the province translated the expectations found in the policy documents into more specific units of study and lesson plans. All of these documents were financed and published by the Ministry of Education.

According to Freeman (1998), journals are "regular dated accounts of... activities... including personal philosophies, feelings, reactions, reflections, observations [and] explanations" (p. 93). Throughout the research process, I kept a written record of my progress and thoughts. As B. Young and Tardif (1992) have noted, the personal account of the research journey, which is captured in part within the journal, is becoming a popular complement to the research itself. Why I chose to do the research I did and what I have learned from it are elements of the research itself. In this way, the journal is a valuable source of data as well as a place to reflect on the research and consider initial and emerging themes.

The field from which my notes were taken encompasses the experiences surrounding the interviews. As a source of data, field notes are an inevitably selective representation of events, thoughts, and the texture and atmosphere around the interview experience (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2000). I wrote field notes generally the day after interviews took place and recorded anything which I felt might be significant for later analysis: how a person may have responded to a specific question, or a participant's demeanor overall during an interview, and so forth. Writing the field notes was a "first opportunity... to develop initial interpretations and analyses" (Emerson et al., p. 361). In presenting excerpts from field
notes, I tried to keep the text as close as possible to the original words and edited only for clarity (Emerson et al.).

The interview with the Ministry representative provided an opportunity to learn about the implementation process as it was planned and initially intended.

I think it would be valuable to interview someone with the Ministry, or who was involved with developing the policy documents, in order to find out what their vision of implementation was. How did those involved with planning and development envision the implementation process? (Journal entry, January 20, 2001)

This interview provided detailed information outlining how implementation was planned and initially launched by the Ministry and provided an opportunity to come to an understanding of the whole process. Beginning in May of 2001, I contacted the Ministry via e-mail on their web page, asking to talk to someone about the implementation of the grade 10 curriculum. In June, I spoke with a representative for the first time. I explained the goals of my research and my interest in interviewing a Ministry representative to discuss the goals and process of implementation as laid out by the Ministry. We agreed to an interview over the phone on Friday, June 15, at 2:00 p.m. In preparation for that interview, I sent an email with the interview schedule and ethics forms. I also asked to change the date of the interview to Monday, so that I could, should she be willing, get equipment to record over the phone. At this point, realizing that I had assumed she would be willing to be taped, I outlined why I wanted to tape, and how she was under no obligation at all to answer any questions or be taped. She responded via e-mail, asking that I not record our conversation, and that I show her my notes after the interview. This interview was then conducted on
Monday, June 18, over the phone. At first, the interview was scheduled over the phone because it was the most convenient long distance method. I did decide later that an interview conducted in person would be more effective; by that time, however, I had learned that the interviewee did not wish to have the interview recorded, and so went ahead with the phone interview. The phone interview was an acceptable, if not ideal, means of obtaining the information in which I was interested: details about the goals, intentions, and process of implementation from the point of view of the Ministry. Following the conversation, I typed out and e-mailed my notes, which were then edited and returned to me.

**Transcripts**

Transcripts, "written representation of verbal recordings" (Freeman, 1998, p. 94), or verbal communications, were used to analyze data gleaned from interviews with participants and the Ministry representative. I personally transcribed each interview recording so that I did not leave any interpretation to another person and could try to convey the tone of the recording as accurately as is possible. It is naturally impossible to transfer all that is the recording, with tones, humour, and so forth, and transcripts can provide only a partial representation of the interview (Tilley, in press, p. 5). Nonetheless, I tried to capture as much as possible by recording every detail which I could hear, adding all of the "urs" and "ums" which make verbal speech so cumbersome in a written form. While transcribing, there is a temptation to interpret and analyze by commenting on participants' words directly on the transcript, but I refrained from making any comments except to mark change in volume, laughter, and other objectively identifiable shifts. I did use transcripts to develop
future interview questions, performing cursory analyses of the data to discover promising leads and areas which required deeper probing in interviews. In addition, I made summaries of the transcripts, with my initial interpretations, to return to participants along with an actual copy of each transcript so that the documents and my interpretations could be checked for accuracy.

There are two circumstances of note where I wrote up information gleaned from interviews which were not recorded. The first instance was following my very first interview, which was with Karen. Following that interview, I discovered that the tape had been destroyed by the recorder and contained none of the data from our discussion.

After the interview was done, I looked at the tape and found that it had been eaten! When I straightened it out, the tape had actually been severed. Which can be fixed—but worse than that, it looked like only about 5 minutes had been taped--so even if I fixed it, there wasn’t much to recover. (Field note, September 22, 2001)

Instead of later transcribing the recording, I had to immediately sit down and record everything which I could remember from the interview. I went question by question on my interview schedule and wrote out what I could recall Karen saying in response to each question. Although this meant that a significant amount of data were lost, particularly specifics about what she said and how, I believe that I was able to capture the main concepts behind what she said. According to Stake (1995), just listening and not tape-recording conversations but writing out the main points afterwards is an effective way of recording data. "Getting the exact words of the respondent is usually not very important, it is what they mean that is important. A good interviewer can reconstruct the account and submit it to
the respondent for accuracy and stylistic improvement" (Stake, 1995, p. 66). While I do not agree that it is a better format than tape-recording, I do believe it was effective enough to capture the main concepts and useful data, nonetheless.

The second instance involved my interview with the Ministry representative, who had requested that I not record the conversation. Instead, while we talked on the phone, I wrote out notes that were as detailed as possible. Following the conversation, I looked over the notes and added any details which were missed or necessary for clarification. These notes were later typed out and e-mailed to the interviewee, who emailed them back a few days later with some minor changes: reordering, rewording, or adding additional details.

**Data Analysis**

Once all the interviews had been taped and transcribed, I began the more formal analysis process. While transcribing and preparing summaries and interview schedules, I had read through each transcript twice, made notes on the back pages, and underlined key sections. Next, I read through each transcript a third time, writing notes in the margins to summarize the main ideas. This gave me an overall sense of what the transcripts contained. I then used the marginalia to write summaries of each transcript to give to participants along with full copies of the transcript for membership checks (Gillham, 2000).

According to Gillham (2000), the process of analysis is one of "identifying those key, substantive points" and "putting them into categories" (p. 59). He recommended reading once through the transcripts, marking off those substantive points, and later, after an interval, going through highlighted sections deriving categories from them. "Go through the
transcripts, assigning each substantive statement (where possible) to a category. Statements you can't assign have to be dealt with separately: 'unclassifiable' but not unimportant" (Gillham, p. 64). I began to develop codes which I applied to highlighted sections of the text. As analysis continued, I developed computer files to separate data into like categories.

Once a preliminary set of categories has been developed, certain systematic checks should be made. The utility of a category set is a function of the internal homogeneity among items classified in any particular category and of the external heterogeneity among categories. If a given category is to be defensible as encompassing a single concept, all the items within it ought to "look alike"... .

Similarly, differences among categories ought to be bold and clear. The existence of a large amount of unassignable or overlapping data is good evidence that some basic fault exists in the category system. (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, p. 93)

I revised and revisited my codes and categories several times over the course of analysis.

Even while writing the final drafts of this document, I continued to shift and sort the data so that the categories made sense in relation to the data.

While there are checks for the process of developing categories, it is a subjective process.

They [categories] are not "objective" any more than human values are "objective," and different people may arrive at different categories. But the essential argument is whether the categories make sense to the reader as a way of organizing and presenting the content of the interviews. (Gillham, 2000, p. 70)

In addition, "the set should be reproducible by another competent judge" (Guba & Lincoln,
This was an important point for me to bear in mind as I laboured to complete the analyses. It can become quite a consuming venture trying to pick every crust which might be a trail that leads to some important information essential to my write-up. I tried hard to be certain that I covered every crumb of detail possible to present a thorough and valuable document and represent participants respectfully.

Having read through each transcript three times and made a summary of key points, I felt familiar enough and prepared to begin developing categories. I began by developing a complex set of codes to categorize the data. I then went back to the transcripts and marked off the data with initials representing a given code set. In this way, I divided up all of the transcripts, adding any codes that appeared as I went through the data a fourth time. I then cut and pasted pieces of the transcripts, placing data into new files based on the categories which I had devised. I also developed profiles of each individual, taking the main topics which had emerged and summarizing each participant’s comments and actions as they applied to a given topic.

As I examined the material, I looked for repetition of themes and ideas within a single transcript, within each of a single participant’s transcripts, and across the entire set of transcripts; I looked for people’s stories and metaphors,

When you are looking for underlying meanings and themes, it can be useful to pick out and analyze stories. Stories, as we use the term, are refined versions of events that may have been condensed or altered to make a point indirectly. (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 231)

I examined details which were unique from participant to participant, and anything which
interviewees spoke excitedly, or quietly, or even evasively about. By carefully drawing out and examining these elements, I tried to understand what was important to participants.

After trying a number of different codes by which to separate the data, I narrowed the information into seven themes, each of which contained a number of subthemes. I then created computer files which contained all this information. "The development of an adequate category system cannot be accomplished in one step. Early accumulations of data give rise to a preliminary set of categories that can be tested, refined, and extended in later iterations in the field" (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, p. 94). Around this time, I also developed individual and group profiles of the research material. Each participant's views and experiences were divided up into categories. It took me some time to be able to move from just generally dividing up the data to creating more meaningful themes. Finally, I took all of these categories and focused the information into broad areas of process and procedure. For example, the planning which participants did, the implementation of teachers' plans, and the implementation of the other policies.

The final separation of data into categories came with the writing of the final drafts of this document. As I revised the material and added additional material, I discovered that some of the headings which I had used were not mutually exclusive and were simply general discussions of aspects of the new curriculum. I then decided to look again at the material and decide upon final thematic units for discussion. The result was to look at (a) control, (b) freedom within the format of the new curriculum, (c) students as a factor of implementation change and decision making, (d) teachers' beliefs and the effect of philosophical agreement and variance during implementation, (e) professional development,
(f) time, and finally, (g) colleague interaction, as final elements affecting implementation.

In addition to analyzing and coding transcripts, I looked closely at the other texts used for analysis: policy documents, course profiles, field notes, and my personal journal. Conducted after transcript analysis, I read through these documents and highlighted sections of the text which related to the subjects which had emerged from transcript analysis. I also made note of text which might be useful in and of itself; for example, sections of my journal did not apply to the analysis of participants’ experiences but did relate to my personal journey during the research.

Limitations

A general limitation of the research was the removal of participant observations and a focus group discussion from the research plan. Unfortunately, neither of these sources of data proved possible, as time and circumstance did not permit them. While these would have added valuable data, triangulation of data through my personal journal, field notes, and document and transcript analysis is still possible.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This chapter is divided into three major sections. First, I discuss the format of the policy documents and the course profiles and examine how the form of these documents affected implementation. The mandated expectations exert curricular control over what teachers do in the classroom, while at the same time leaving pedagogical decision making in the hands of teachers. Second, I look at teachers’ beliefs and orientations about curriculum and implementation and how those beliefs affected implementation despite and in concert with the inherent freedom and control of the policy documents; also, I consider how teachers’ beliefs about curriculum, teaching, and students affected implementation of other aspects of the new curriculum. Finally, I look more generally at other factors which had an impact on implementation: the need for professional development to clarify aspects of the curriculum, inform teachers’ planning, and so forth; the time needed to plan for, become familiar with, and reflect on the new curriculum; and finally, the level of colleague input and support fostered by the shared expectations of the policy documents.

Form: Freedom and Control

The new curriculum is based on a distinct and narrow conception of curriculum. The format of the policy documents, with its lists of expectations, is an end-results-based view of curriculum, designed in a way which steers all educational processes and outcomes towards meeting the specified expectations. This format prescribes certain roles for teachers and students in the classroom and narrows their curricular experiences because of the
mandate to meet certain goals (Eisner, 1969; Hlebowitsh, 1990). In the document, *Ontario Secondary Schools Grades 9 to 12: Program and Diploma Requirements* (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999b), the government has described curriculum as "the plan for student learning outlined in Ministry curriculum policy documents and implemented in classroom programs through the use of a wide range of resources" (p. 79). This is a definition of curriculum-as-plan. This definition should immediately raise flags, as it places teachers in a role as technicians, transmitting the curriculum which has already been planned (Hlebowitsh). In addition, the new curriculum emphasizes student assessment, putting pressure on teachers and students to measure up to provincial "standards." Despite the influence of this conception of curriculum, the format of the policy documents left the pedagogical decision making completely in the hands of teachers, which, in effect, did give teachers some curriculum decision making power. In the next section, I first examine how the format of the policy documents controlled teachers, and second, I look at where teachers did have opportunities to make curricular decisions.

**The Language and Format of Control**

The language of the policy documents very clearly spells out what students are expected to know and do, and therefore, what teachers are expected to teach. The expectations for every strand begin with, "By the end of the course, students will:" (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999a, p. 38). This header is then followed by the overall and specific expectations which begin with verbs such as "explain," "compare," "investigate," "identify," "describe," "demonstrate," and so forth (Ontario Ministry of Education and
Training, 1999a, pp. 38-39). The government has very specifically chosen what is to be taught in the classroom and presented the content in terms of expectations which can serve a twofold purpose: they fit into the agenda of assessment by presenting measurable outcomes, and secondly, particularly because of the fanfare with which these documents have been presented to the public, including on-line public access, teachers are being held accountable to these expectations. There is no doubt that the Ministry is controlling the curriculum-as-plan.

In order to support implementation of the policy documents, the government provided several resources which are very closely aligned with the expectations and which continue to control the curriculum: summer institutes, new textbooks in core courses, and course profiles. Each of these resources hinges on the use and manipulation of expectations to ensure that they are faithfully implemented within classrooms. Textbooks which were funded for the civics and history courses had to be approved by the Ministry. In this way, the Ministry was able to ensure that only textbooks which adhered to the new expectations would be purchased for use in classrooms. While there were a few choices and some variation as to how certain topics were covered, all of the approved textbooks outline what expectations they meet, and therefore align with the Ministry's curricular agenda.

The summer institutes, voluntary 3-day workshops funded by the government and run by teachers, were offered to teachers during the summer prior to implementation. The goal of the institutes was to prepare teachers to implement the new curriculum. Teachers were introduced to the design-down model of planning and given an opportunity to meet with other teachers at the institute to begin that planning. While the teachers are free to plan
pedagogical matters, the Ministry even envisions teacher-planning in a manner which begins with and grows out of the course expectations. The design-down model espouses planning by taking expectations first and then developing lessons and units and so forth. This is at odds with the often creative, artistic way in which teachers plan and react when teaching (Eisner, 1969). When planning, teachers generally prefer to begin with activities and lessons which they feel will capture the interest of their students, not with expectations (Eisner, 1967; Powell, 1996).

The course profiles were developed with expectations as the foundation. The profiles provide lessons which are meant to cover all of the expectations over the course of a semester. These documents include a breakdown of the entire course, units, and each lesson. The breakdowns all begin by listing the expectations which are covered. The expectations become the main focus, as they stand out at the beginning of every unit and lesson. While they are not mandated, the profiles are an alluring finished product. For a teacher who is new or not familiar with the subject or pressed for time, a complete course such as the profiles offer would surely become an important resource, if not the curriculum. A teacher could use the profile to teach a course and know that he/she would be meeting all of the expectations. Both the textbooks and the profiles have the potential to further control the role of teachers in the educational process (Ben-Peretz, 1990).

What the format of the policy documents, the teacher training at summer institutes, and the policy documents serve to do is further direct teachers to think, plan, and act in a manner which centers around the expectations which have been decided by the government's chosen curriculum developers. The format of the policy documents and the
resources which were provided to aid teachers in implementation are, at least in part, aimed at controlling what is taught in the classroom. An important question becomes, how did teachers implement in light of this control and how much were teachers really controlled? Unfortunately, this two-part question cannot be answered without consideration of many of the other factors involved in and which affected implementation. For example, while looking at how much teachers relied on the course profiles during planning, it would be simplistic to make a judgement about control without first considering teachers’ level of experience, their content knowledge, their personal philosophies about curriculum, and other relevant factors. As a result, I discuss the level of control and teachers’ implementation later, once other factors in the implementation process have been considered.

**Designing-Down The Expected Road?**

Throughout the planning and implementation process, teachers relied a great deal on the public and particularly the Catholic course profiles. The profile offered teachers the security of having the course planned, a resource from which to draw ideas, and perhaps a sense of obligation to follow what others had developed on behalf of the Ministry. There was a tension between how teachers spoke about and used the course profiles. While they used it freely as a resource and claimed that it was simply that, they also would not deviate far from it. Karen, in looking ahead to planning a grade 11 course in the next school year, would not pick a text or begin planning until she had seen the profiles. "Now, the profiles are only suggestions, you don’t have to follow the profiles, but they certainly make it easier
if you know an idea of what... the Ministry writing team feels should be important" (Karen, Interview 2). Deferring to the authority of the course profiles, every teacher initially copied the units found in those documents. Part way into the first semester, however, both Nora and John had decided to condense their last two units.

When I planned the course I never thought about [lost days]. I took the amount of days that they said were supposed to be focused on each unit and I planned it that way. And then once we started implementing it, that first segment of that semester, that’s when we started playing around with, okay, we’re losing days here, what are we gonna cut. And we ended up cutting a unit. (Nora, Interview 1)

Karen and her partner did not even plan the last unit of the grade 9 geography course. Nonetheless, the format of the profile impacted what and how the participants planned.

Sara found the profile frustrating because less time was spent on certain topics than she would have liked.

What’s frustrating is that in the book it will have all these expectations for the great depression, and they cover it in a day in the profile, or 2 days in the profile. I have a ton of... When I was in teacher’s college, I did a 2 week unit on the great depression. So we covered all of the expectations and had this great unit that’s 2 days in the profile. (Sara, Interview 1)

At the same time, she noted that she would still teach it her way. "I’m not gonna stop it just because... that’s a profile, it’s written by other teachers" (Sara, Interview 1). Mainly, participants used the profile to provide the framework from which they began planning. They took and adapted lessons and activities which they liked, and left others out.
But [the people at the summer institute] told us that we were not bound by those so I started thinking, I'm looking at them and thinking, okay, there's so much it could be a full course. So then I just started thinking what I wanted it to look like. What I thought was most important. And I kind of made it my own. (Nora, Interview 1)

While they did not feel bound by the profile, there is no question that it was a focal point and foundation of their planning.

During both planning and implementation there was a definite tension between the perceived need to cover the government expectations and teachers’ desires to plan in their own way, to meet students’ needs, and so forth. While only Sara and Nora attended summer institutes and therefore were the only ones directly taught the design-down model, Karen learned about the model from colleagues with whom she planned the grade 9 geography course in the previous year. All 4 participants loosely followed the planning model and also used the course profiles in their planning.

Participants began their planning by adopting the number and theme of the units used in the Catholic course profiles. This very simple initial factor proved to be rather important to teachers in their planning process.

I mean, I could go write the whole [course] based on [the textbook] and then be way off base from what [the developers of the profile] think. So I'm not going to touch it until I at least see at least one chapter, with an overview of, "okay, these are the units we want, and here's one chapter done." So I have an idea of what they want. I'm not going to spend any time on it until they do it. (Karen, Interview 2)

As teachers continued with the planning and implementation process, the course profiles
and policy documents continued at center stage of teacher planning. After determining the number and theme of units, all four participants progressed in the same manner. Their next step involved dividing all of the expectations into the units in which they fit.

Based on the profiles we got our unit headings. What we wanted. And then we went through the Ministry guidelines and we said, "okay, this looks like it could be in unit one, unit two," we divided that all up, of what that should be and then went from there. So then we had all the expectations in what we felt, we felt should be in each unit and then we wrote it up from that. (Karen, Interview 2)

While no participant stated that he/she used the profiles to decide which expectations fit into which unit, it is very likely that they did so. All of the unit overviews in every course profile list the overall and specific expectations which are covered in that unit. Once participants had divided up the expectations into units, they began to deviate from the design-down planning process.

Rather than planning lessons from expectations, participants first took their old material and matched it to the expectations. From there, participants searched for and gathered new materials for teaching the remaining expectations.

We sat down and we took all the resources that we had, um, from, the old course. And as we went into the unit we said, "okay, these are the things we have," and as we wrote it kind of day-to-day, then we just took what we had from the old course and put it in and figured out, "okay, what do we have to create," and the creation part of resources for the new part didn’t really come until we actually got into the course. (Karen, Interview 2)
Participants did not give up their old material because the Ministry mandated a new curriculum and a process for planning. Instead, the teachers found ways to adapt what they had used in the past to meet the needs of the new curriculum. This is consistent with findings that teachers construct a new curricular landscape by merging the familiar with the unfamiliar (Shkedi, 1998) or adapting curricula to match their own pedagogical and curricular beliefs (McLaughlin, 1976; Powell, 1996).

Only once participants did not have old material which could cover expectations did they try to find resources and develop lessons to teach the remaining expectations. On the whole, the planning was a two-fold process: one, fitting expectations into old material, and two, developing new material to cover the remaining new content, topics, or expectations. These two actions demonstrated the teachers first meeting expectations by using lessons with which they were comfortable and then planning using the design-down model. With both formats, however, the planning process was controlled by the need to meet expectations. Over the Christmas break, Sara went over her entire course plan, checking to make sure she had covered all of the expectations. Karen and her partner went back over the grade 9 course after they had taught it to see that they had covered most of the expectations. John went through a process of translating expectations into definitions. All of the teachers put in extra time making certain that they had covered all of the expectations in one form or another in their lesson plans. Karen may have been the only participant who did so half-heartedly, but did so nonetheless. The format of the policy documents and the course profiles and the directive that teachers design-down while planning did not control the entire planning process for teachers but certainly did limit and dictate parts of it. Participants were
very aware of how they were “expected” to plan, and struggled with that expectation.

Ownership Despite Control

While much of the implementation process and format of documents and resources exerted control over teachers, limiting their curricular input, the expectations format of the policy documents did provide teachers an opportunity to make some decisions which gave them a sense of ownership in the process and even some curricular control. This is a very important part of ensuring the cooperation and commitment of teachers to long-term sustainable change (Datnow et al., 2000; Fullan, 1992; Kimpston, 1985; McLaughlin, 1976; Pratt, 1980; Saint-Laurent & Giasson, 1999). The format of the policy documents is such that a teacher would not take the document and teach directly from it. It is a list of expectations outlining what skills and knowledge students must meet. As such, teachers must either use preproduced materials, such as textbooks or the course profiles, or prepare their own curriculum plan for instruction.

The planning process seemed to generate enthusiasm for and commitment to the implementation process. Participants spoke with excitement about their curriculum plans at all stages of development and implementation. In the planning stages, teachers were excited about what their courses would look like. During implementation, participants were keen to perfect and adapt their plans to meet their personal and classroom needs. This process of planning fostered a sense of ownership among participants which did in fact increase their interest, commitment, and enthusiasm throughout the whole process, as in the Datnow et al. (2000) study. This was particularly so because teachers felt they had a great deal of freedom
during the process. Despite the number of expectations governing what had to be taught, teachers were free to shape how expectations were taught and even what expectations were emphasized. The process of building lessons out of the Ministry expectations and from different sources, particularly the profiles, put the teachers in a creative role in control of pedagogical decision making.

All 4 participants took full advantage of the open format of the new curriculum expectations. Nora, for example, stated that she was very excited about the new civics course which she was planning because it gave her an opportunity to teach both politics and law. She elaborated:

I think it’s really important that kids learn a lot about the Young Offender’s Act and their legal rights and how the system works. And, in the way the government’s written it out, it’s a smidgen of law; where we have it, there’s a unit. (Nora, Interview 1)

She also noted that this course would bring in some of the politics, which she felt was not a very popular course any longer. With these ideas in mind, she said that she “just started thinking what I wanted it to look like. What I thought was important, and I kind of made it my own” (Nora, Interview 1). The open format of the new curriculum’s expectations gave her the opportunity to emphasize elements of the course, such as law and politics, which were important to her. She felt that other civics teachers in the province were not doing the same thing. At the summer institute, she said, other teachers were planning an easier version of the civics course. “They wanted it to be, in my mind, airy-fairy, anybody could pass it” (Nora, Interview 1). So she developed the course in the manner in which “a history teacher
would want to do it” (Nora, Interview 1).

The other teachers also felt that they were able to gear their courses to suit their teaching styles and personal preferences. According to Sara, “the way [the policy documents are] written, they’re very general. You can adapt them to any kind of teaching style or any kind of activity” (Sara, Interview 1). Karen geared the curriculum to her own teaching style. On the other hand, John noted that while teachers have some freedom to implement as they wish, you have to use discretion when planning:

I mean, one uses some discretion and some discernment, some things fit into the expectation, the provincial expectations, that’s, that’s fine. If you had to twist provincial expectations to get it in, then that would be, I mean you’re pushing it. You have to use some judgement. (John, Interview 1)

For John, planning the religion course revolved around several main themes: meeting the Ministry’s expectations, guiding the students to grow in their relationship with God, and treating the discipline and subject of religion with a seriousness and academic rigor which he felt is often not.

Both John and Nora discussed feeling a sense of obligation throughout the development and implementation process. Despite the government’s mandate and a sense of obligation to teach the expectations found within the policy documents, teachers did manage to develop courses with which they were very satisfied. All 4 participants were able to teach the expectations and at the same time personalize their courses. They gained a sense of ownership because they were able to teach the policy documents in ways which they found personally fulfilling, including meeting the needs of students, and which suited their
teaching styles. So while the policy documents controlled what was taught, teachers were significantly engaged in the implementation process as they planned and adapted the lessons they would use to teach the expectations, to be excited about the process, and to continue to improve their lessons. This mirrors the findings in the research (Datnow et al., 2000; McLaughlin, 1976; Saint-Laurent & Giasson, 1999), which has found that teacher participation in the process improves implementation success and continuation in the process.

**An Expectation to Meet Students’ Needs?**

During planning and implementation, participants struggled to balance their sense of duty to students and to the government. Nora said it quite clearly when she stated:

I had an obligation as an employee of the government to teach the information that they deemed was important. And... I had to present it in a way that the kids would be interested in it and have a desire to learn about and succeed and that kind of thing. I think it’s a combination of the two. I owe something to the government, and I owe something to my students. (Nora, Interview 1)

While trying to remain true to the curriculum policy documents, participants’ greatest concern was their students. Most adaptations which teachers made to their own lesson plans during and after implementation were because of student ability, interest level, and behaviour. All of the teachers emphasized that they did not change what they taught, just how: curriculum versus pedagogy; while this is an unnatural split, pedagogy being a curricular change, the false division of teaching elements proved to be quite beneficial in
terms of teacher satisfaction during the implementation process. While the mandate of the curriculum policy document proved to frustrate or restrict teachers at times, participants were happy overall with the sense of freedom to control the pedagogical elements necessary for meeting student needs. Reacting to student needs is a major factor in teacher planning and decision making (A. Chen & Ennis, 1995; Feldman & Kropf, 1999; Hargreaves & Moore, 2000; Powell, 1996), and therefore an important factor in implementation. Participants were able to balance their sense of duty to the Ministry and to students because they could adapt the pedagogy to their students’ needs and still meet the expectations required by the Ministry.

Both Karen and Nora talked at great length about having to modify lessons, especially assignments and activities, for weaker students. This was very problematic for Nora, whose course was open. An “open” course is open to all students, whether their stream is academic or applied and therefore has a mix of students with a wide range of academic ability. Nora found that she would have students who could not read past a grade 3 level mixed with extremely academic students, and so she did a lot of modifying so that assignments could meet the needs of all her pupils without embarrassing those who could not perform as well.

In my class, I have eight kids who are at a grade 3 reading level. So I’ve got problems. I’ve got really, really weak identified kids who normally aren’t even in a general class. They’re basic. And then I have some strong academic kids. So I have had to modify that assignment because the... I don’t really want the bright kids to see how weak they [other students] are. Discussion is from the one side of the room
already, and when they present their things it's just gonna be so obvious. So I really modify the assignment for everybody. (Nora, Interview 1)

Sara also made some changes because she did not feel that students could handle certain activities. "I would say I changed quite a bit of it. Or added stuff where I knew that they couldn't do, added different activities, because they couldn't do it" (Sara, Interview 2). For example, rather than have students do research and make time lines, she would provide the information and have them place it on a chart. She also adapted lessons from the text and profile to better suit her students' abilities.

And the terminology part of it we had to change, because the stuff in the "Spotlight Canada" teachers' manual was way above their heads. The language in it is too complex for them. Like it would say things like "losses to territories", instead of "loss of land". Whereas "loss of land" they get, territories they don't get. (Sara, Interview 2)

Pedagogically, Sara, Karen, and Nora felt that it was necessary to alter the presentation of the expectations which they had planned to meet their estimation of students' needs.

John, on the other hand, talked about planning specifically for students who were keen and would go beyond the baseline material.

The process I go through, I try to identify the core things I need to get across in a lesson. I structure that lesson to include those core things. Which is sort of a simple... simple, simple lesson plan. From there I like to, just personally, I like to elaborate on those things so that, especially students who are gifted or just have a keen interest in the subject, can do something more than just get the main product
I'm selling. They can get the value-added, if you will, of the course. So you add things like reflections on particular issues, engaging material that is the core curriculum material and also that leaves room for discussions, and that sort of thing.

(John, Interview 1)

John’s strong belief that religion is a course as important and academically challenging as maths and sciences seems to play a role in how he approached implementation. While the other participants, when they believed it was necessary, adapted lessons and assignments for special needs students, John held to a baseline level of learning that he would not alter. John believed that the material could not be simplified beyond a certain point and so did not adapt in the same manner as the other participants.

So the idea that we should translate it into a simplified kind of spoon-fed version, some are sympathetic to that, I’m not. Um, although it has to be intelligible to them. So there’s that tension. There’s always that tension. And that’s a good reason to have different people with different backgrounds involved. (John, Interview 2)

While the other 3 participants emphasized adapting to meet the needs of weaker students, John focused on not adapting at the expense of the core expectations which students need to meet. Although participants described placing different emphases, all of the participants did adapt during implementation for the purpose of meeting the needs of students, whether above or below average. Adaptation of course material did not put teachers’ sense of duty to the Ministry and their students at odds, because it required a pedagogical change and did not affect the core expectations.

Similarly, the other ways in which teachers adapted their lessons during
implementation did not affect the expectations. Participants were very conscious of planning activities and lessons that students would find relevant and fun and learn from at the same time. After a lesson, they adapted for future implementation based on students’ reactions, and sometimes even during a lesson. Karen said that sometimes she would change what she was doing in the middle of class because students may not have seemed interested.

Like there are times when I’ll start doing something and the way that the kids are reacting to it I’ll say, "oh, they don’t want to do it this way" so I’ll create it right there. I’ll change it right there and, you know, we’ll do it differently." (Karen, Interview 2)

Sara altered material which she felt students could not relate to or did not seem to enjoy. She removed a Billy Joel song because none of the students liked it.

I took out... "We didn’t start the fire" with Billy Joel, because the kids are like, "this is stupid." They didn’t like the song, and they didn’t understand any of it anyways.

And so [Karen and I] took that out and we switched it. (Sara, Interview 2)

John noted that one assignment he gave out which was very effective for presenting the material was very popular with the students. Since the activity was both lauded by the class and a good teaching tool, he wanted to work more activities of the same style into his course.

Without going into lengthy detail, it was a great success. The kids loved it. They got the principles that [the other grade 10 religion teachers and I] were trying to get across. They did well on those parts of the exam, and the technique, the method of instruction, was just, went over with great applause. And, uh, many of them, dozens,
literally dozens of them, came up and said "please try to do this again." We didn’t have time, it was too late in the semester. But I would like to take their suggestions. (John, Interview 2)

Similarly, Nora worked very hard at finding examples and resources with younger, hip people to present concepts in her civics course because she believed it was more relevant to the students that way. John found that he had to change some of his discussions because students were not talking. He planned lessons with a 45-minute discussion period on various issues, but students were talking for only 5 minutes. If students did not relate to or enjoy lessons, participants adapted their lessons to meet those needs while still teaching the mandated expectations.

Another student-related factor during implementation was behaviour and classroom management. This factor may relate in degree with teaching experience. Karen, who had the most experience, did not relate any behavioural adaptations. Nora, who also had been teaching for many years, noted that her concerns were a result of the open format of the class. She found that in some classes, the mix of students was so varied that many of the academic students were being rude, even vicious, to students who struggled. As a result, Nora adapted some of her lessons. "The second time around I didn’t have that, they were completely insensitive to the weaker kids, so consequently our discussions, I stopped doing it. Because it was just vicious" (Nora, Interview 1). Similarly, Sara had a larger class size the first time teaching the course and found that they were a rowdier class; as a result, she did not feel that she could do some of the activities with them because they could not be expected to behave.
You know, I could do some things with my class this semester that I could never do with my class last semester. They're a lot brighter students this semester, and the ones that aren't, there are other kids that help them. Whereas last semester, they were all just, they were always into something. I spent most of my time managing the class instead of teaching them because they were always at each other, where this semester I don't really have that problem. (Sara, Interview 2)

She would not use some of the more fun activities, such as skits, with students who were not behaving very well.

I can do, like, there's a lot of fun things you can do, but if they don't act properly or they don't listen to each other when they speak, you shouldn't do those things. Like, you can't do skits with a class that treat each other terribly. Um, you know you have alternative activities, they do seat work instead of group work. (Sara, Interview 2)

John noted that one group just would not participate in discussions.

I mean, there were 30-minute discussions plugged into the curriculum, and after a minute I'd be saying, I'd've thrown out four ideas, and they'd be just staring at each other and afraid to speak. Finally they said, "why do we get more work than the other class?" I said, "because you aren't talking. If you're not talking about it I don't know if you know it." (John, Interview 2)

John also noted that it would be ideal to have alternate lesson plans for days when kids are "just bananas." Though not stated explicitly, John must have had to modify or somehow handle discipline problems in ways which affected implementation, if he considered their behaviour to be "bananas" at times. Every participant except Karen noted having to make
adaptations to their lessons because of student behaviour. The determining factor here is a teacher’s pedagogical content knowledge. Karen, who did not mention behaviour and having to adapt for it, likely had a knowledge of pedagogy which helped her to either avoid or easily adapt to similar issues as faced by the other participants, indicating that such issues either never came up or were not worth mentioning. Nora did not seem to be used to dealing with such a diverse range of learning ability, and so noted the difficulty of an open course. John yearned for alternate lessons because he did not yet have a pedagogical content knowledge which allowed him to easily adapt to unplanned situations.

Perhaps the most poignant evidence that students factored heavily into teacher decision-making and implementation was that the participants largely based the success of their curriculum plans and implementation in general on the reactions and academic achievement of students.

I think it’s been successful. [It’s] kind of exciting when they know all about it, and they’re rhyming off things, and you know they seem... seem to enjoy it. I think a lot of it, if the kids in the class liked history, I think, I think its been successful. (Sara Interview 3)

John even gave questionnaires to students so that he could find out what aspects of the course worked well for them. "I always give students feedback questionnaires at the end, and, uh, they loved that, even at the end of the course they remembered it. And they noted that. The, uh, the feedback’s useful" (John, Interview 2).

Participants developed their curricula with the interests of students in mind and later adapted based on students’ likes, abilities, and behaviours. Clearly, when teachers
implement, their students become a pivotal factor in how they do so. As Sara stated, "I think you have to adapt [the curriculum] to you and to your students. I might, for instance, one year teach 2 weeks on WW I and the next year do a week if they don’t like it" (Sara, Interview 1). Any curriculum change which teachers are going to implement needs to allow for adaptation in response to teachers’ beliefs about students. The expectations-based format of the new curriculum allowed teachers to do this. As long as teachers included the expected knowledge and skills, they had the freedom to adapt how, what format for presentation, what activities, how much they emphasized a subject, or how long they spent on any topic. The degree of pedagogical content knowledge which a teacher possessed also factored into the implementation process, as teachers had to deal with classroom management and feeling unprepared for the need to sometimes adapt on the spot. The key issue seemed to be that implementation did not require teachers to make any philosophical changes in their approach to teaching. With the policy documents, participants did not have to struggle with teaching techniques, tools, or materials which they were leery about or with which they did not agree.

**Philosophical Adaptations**

While participants were largely able to reconcile their sense of duty to the Ministry and to their students as a result of the format of the policy documents, the participants’ personal beliefs and philosophy about education did influence implementation of other aspects of the new curriculum. Where participants’ beliefs coincided with the perceived views of the Ministry, teachers implemented in accordance with Ministry expectations for
the most part; at the same time, participants struggled with elements of the new curriculum, such as achievement charts and the no-late-marks policy when their philosophies deviated. The mandated curriculum, as has been said, is a curriculum-as-plan. The inherent philosophy is that the expectations in the policy documents are the core elements of the educational process which teachers must implement. There is no place for teachers to decide what should be taught. Furthermore, the emphasis on assessment of observable expectations indicates that the government espouses a technological view of curriculum. Looking at what teachers said about curriculum, their beliefs, and how they described their teaching and implementation of the new curriculum, comparisons can be made between their overall views and those of the Ministry about curriculum and implementation. The contradictions which are revealed through participants’ statements and the ways in which their approaches to implementation, curriculum beliefs, and impressions of the new curriculum overlap and contrast are revealing.

John, for example, felt very strongly about his discipline: religion. He spoke at great length about the “human element” in teaching. John explained that while you plan lessons and have to have some baseline for delivery, you also have to recognize and allow for the human element.

And that’s something you have to remember when you’re preparing this stuff. It has to maintain the integrity of the expectations. But, I mean, if it doesn’t have, if it’s not useful, to our human condition, our varied human character, as teachers, or whatever, different students, different classes, uh, it’s not helpful. We’re not robots. They want robots, hire robots. Build a robot, don’t hire me. (John, Interview 2)
Similarly, John said that, particularly in his discipline, there are things which cannot be objectively measured. "In terms of the area of religion, uh, there are many things that are not measurable, um, just can't be measurable, uhh, by nature of the discipline" (John, Interview 3). This type of thinking is quite in line with enacting a lived curricular landscape and would seem to put John quite at odds with a curriculum geared toward standardized content and assessment. On the other hand, comments reveal that John was, in fact, quite aligned with a view of curriculum-as-plan, with its control of curriculum and an emphasis on achievement and assessment.

For example, John noted that it is quite necessary and good to have someone choose the common elements which should form the core of the curriculum.

I mean, somebody obviously has to decide if there is going to be continuity which there is now somebody has to make a decision what is going to be the common cause, what is going to be the common content? Somebody's got to do that. And it's fine to have a panel of people who have lots of experience in various thing doing that. So there is that ingredient. And that's the foundation. You build from that. And that's fine. That's fine, you know. Give me the instructions. Give me the things you really need us to have. (John, Interview 1)

Furthermore, he was quite unsympathetic to the idea of wanting the freedom to creatively develop curriculum. When I asked, "So you didn't have a problem with your role in any of this?" John responded:

No, I think people who are first and foremost creative minds and not concrete thinkers or whatever, it might be frustrating for them. People who are particularly,
first and foremost, independent, it would be a struggle for them. I think, I mean, it’s cooperative, right? You have to be independent enough to do something and be creative enough to do something new and interesting. And you have to be willing to co-operate to meet certain expectations. If we want to write our own thing, this is not the jurisdiction in which to do it. Go somewhere else. Or get another job. Or teach university. Whatever. (John, Interview 1)

John’s view of curriculum planning fit with his definition of curriculum, which involved defining the core concepts to be taught. He said that with curriculum, “you have the central elements, the nucleus, and then the other two levels beyond that [application and extension]” (John, Interview 1). John went even further and took the core elements, the expectations mandated in the policy documents, and distilled those into definitions which could be tested.

Generally what I’ve found happens, the expectation will say something like "by the end of this lesson student will be able to understand and articulate that the trinity is the Father, Son, and Holy spirit and it is a model for human relationships." I will translate that into definitions that the students need to know, terms that the students need to know. You can discuss that, play with it, do whatever type of application activity you want to, but once you’ve put those into terms and definitions that are key for a test purpose, I mean, in the end, most things are tested in that kind of way. You either have it or don’t you. And can you apply it in a new way? (John, Interview 2)

John philosophically approached the curriculum with a view of meeting the needs of the
highest achieving students and objectively testing students, despite his assertions to the contrary. He was very unsympathetic to the concept of modifying expectations beyond a certain level of academic rigour at the expense of special needs students.

But at the same time, uh, there’s no point in my being here if they’re going to walk away with some milquetoast garbage. They’re either going to learn about faith, the history of the Christian faith, or we’re wasting our time. We’re wasting our time. So the idea that we should translate it into a simplified kind of spoon-fed version, some are sympathetic to that, I’m not. Um, although it has to be intelligible to them.

(John, Interview 2)

When his plans did not work in class, he adapted the work into a format to gather marks. Ultimately, it seemed that John’s beliefs matched very closely with the government’s in terms of what curriculum is and how students should be tested.

I think what they’re trying to do, uh, they’re trying to define expectations, what they actually want the kids to know, and measure their progress against those, so it’s a desire to make educational, the educational process, uh, objectively measurable, uhh, as I have said in previous interviews, that’s generally something I agree with. (John, Interview 3)

This made it very easy for John to work in the environment and context provided by the government, despite the elements of control. He placed the expectations first and other concerns second in planning, because he agreed with that approach. Like the government, he took a curriculum-as-plan, technological approach toward curriculum. According to Eisner (1985), an orientation toward curriculum as technology
conceives of curriculum planning as being essentially a technical undertaking, a question of relating means to ends once the ends have been formulated. It is argued that schools should be purposive; they should have meaningful goals, and it should be possible to determine - indeed measure - the extent to which they have been achieved. (p. 80)

John shared the Ministry’s emphasis on objectively measuring purposive educational goals.

Similarly, John had no problem implementing culminating activities because he considered them a useful assessment tool which allowed students to do something creative. We [who are teaching grade 10 religion have] made [culminating activities] standardized, worth 15 marks each time. And it’s just, it’s just an application of everything they’ve learned from the unit. They generally get a choice of say, of, the 15 things we did, that we’ve done, pick 8, focus on them, present them. They can either... One’s artistic, one’s written, one’s, uh, oral. One’s research. I mean, it’s not that radically, that, a departure, it’s just a little more clarified. I find it very useful.

It’s, uh, it’s a good review before a test. (John, Interview 2)

Culminating activities fit into John’s overall philosophy of the need to assess students on the core concepts being taught to them. He had little trouble implementing the use of rubrics or achievement charts. However, he did feel that he had a greater freedom to adapt achievement charts for use than other participants. John’s was the only course which was not governed by the Ministry, and so, while he felt that his department had the same sense of accountability from administration as teachers within other departments, he was not as bound to the new policies. For example, John was told at a seminar put on by the Institute
for Catholic Education (ICE) that he could use rubrics whenever he found them useful.

The most helpful thing I found about the rubrics, I think ICE did, these regional things for the religion curriculum, and the most helpful thing that was ever said was, "use rubrics when they’re appropriate, and use other things where they’re appropriate." (John, Interview 2)

For John, then, the rubric was a tool he could use when he felt the need, and which he also felt free to adapt. And he did use them, "because nobody said, ‘you must use them every time.’ And where they’re appropriate, I try to think in those terms. And they’re useful terms. They’re useful terms" (John, Interview 2). John would often divide assignments into sections and give 4 to 8 marks for each section.

Oh, I use the 1, 2, 3, 4, but I don’t necessarily give them values of 1, 2, 3, 4. I mean I’ve used 1, 2, 3, and 4 with each category, but here in knowledge and understanding I’ve put up to 8, so it’s 2, 4, 6, and 8" (John, Interview 2)

In the end, this meant that students received a grade out of the cumulated marks, and therefore, received a traditional mark out of 20, for example. At the same time, when he did not agree with government policy, he did not hesitate to deviate.

The one aspect of the new curriculum where John’s philosophical beliefs clashed with the government’s was the late policy.

The one thing that I must say about the new curriculum that is tremendously frustrating is this open-ended idea that there is no, uh, due dates, or that you can’t penalize for lateness. Uh, in our department, we’re obviously trying to teach principles of character in addition to academic knowledge and skills. Uh, and that
just ruins it. It just ruins it... I think there's real value in the daily, 10% off a day kind of penalty. (John, Interview 2)

He felt that there was value in penalizing students for handing work in late. As a result, he did not follow the government mandate on this matter and penalized students for late assignments. While John and the Ministry both placed great emphasis on assessment, the difference in philosophical approaches regarding the late policy caused John to state that "there are serious questions about methods of evaluation under the new curriculum plan. I philosophically understand where they're coming from, but they're wrong. Laughs. They're wrong" (John, Interview 2). Philosophical agreement was a key factor in implementation for John. The three policies; culminating activities, achievement charts, and late policy, illustrate this fact: John fully implemented the culminating activities, adapted achievement charts to suit his needs and his purposes, and refused to implement the late policy. The degree of philosophical agreement seemed to correlate with the level of faithful implementation and adaptation.

Of all the participants, Nora was the most excited about the course she was going to be teaching. Nora continually referred to the course as being “good.” The new course was a chance for her to incorporate two subjects which she really enjoyed teaching and felt students should know: law and politics.

And I was excited about it... I saw it as a great way to take some of the politics stuff, that course is dying, but it's fantastic, and roll it into this course... I think it's really important that kids learn a lot about the Young Offender’s Act and their legal rights, and how the system works. And, in the way the government’s written it out, it's a
While outlining what expectations must be taught, Nora felt free to direct those expectations in ways which met her own content goals. As a result, she was quite excited about the result. Nora also viewed curriculum as being separate from pedagogy and implementation. "I mean, it starts from the document and it moves finally, I guess, to the day-to-day lesson. But it's all the curriculum... Well the methodology and pedagogy, that's not the curriculum. But the actual information and the skills" (Nora, Interview 1). Her excitement about being able to create the course in a way which fit her own goals and her belief in curriculum as a separate element in the teaching process made it natural for Nora to have succeeded in the implementation process with little philosophical conflict. While not viewing curriculum as technological, her primary interest was educating students with core concepts, in her case law and politics. This is an academic rationalist approach toward curriculum, which Eisner (1985) describes as an orientation which "argues that the major function of the school is to foster the intellectual growth of the student in those subject matters most worthy of study" (p. 66). Since she was able to achieve her own curricular goals, by teaching the subjects which interested her, in ways which she felt were relevant to the students, she had no reason to question or come into conflict with the Ministry's orientation.

The one place where Nora's beliefs conflicted with Ministry curricula was assessment. Nora's belief about the new assessment was that it was not what parents and students wanted, not what they understood, and therefore wrong. Rather than viewed as an improvement, Nora saw the new assessment as a disservice to everyone involved: teachers, parents, and students. She believed that all of those involved still thought in terms of
percentages and that it did not make sense to change a format of assessment that had been used for so long and with which everyone was familiar. This conflict with her own beliefs caused Nora to struggle with implementation, ultimately making adaptations so that what she did do was more familiar to her. She compromised by implementing a hybrid of the new and the old, making the new more familiar by adapting it to her realm of experience.

Similarly, Sara implemented according to Ministry guidelines. Of all the participants, Sara was the most concerned with, and controlled by, the need to meet government expectations. She typed up lessons with the expectations right on them. At the end of the first term, she went back through all of her lessons to make certain she had covered every expectation. “I would have liked to add some stuff about, uh, the Korean war, Suez crisis, do that more in depth, because the kids really liked the war aspect of this year” (Sara, Interview 3). She compromised her own desires and student interest to meet Ministry expectations. She was also the only participant to mention that she did not agree with the focus of expectations.

I don’t know, I know you’re, I know economics is now a part of the Canadian World Studies department, but... trading partners? I thought the focus of history is to build national pride. If that’s the case, we should be looking at culture and, you know, our sports and... .(Sara, Interview 3)

Despite being concerned with content, Sara still did not alter or add what she felt was more appropriate content because she felt that she had to cover the expectations. This may have been because of her beliefs about curriculum. When asked what was different about the new curriculum, she really identified only changes to the content of the course.
I never had a curriculum for the first [course]. For last year, like for the 10 general, when I taught that, I never had a curriculum. I never even thought, I just used the course binder. So I just followed the binder. So everything was new about the new curriculum to me... But, I mean, from changes from last year to this year, from the, uh, history from last year to this year. ‘Cause you, well, ‘cause you took the Government and Law unit out and added 1945 on into the curriculum, that was new. But it’s not really new. It’s just really we added an extra half course, because you could teach more than what you could before. (Sara, Interview 3)

She did not even view past course binders as curriculum. To Sara, the policy documents were the guiding element in teaching, the authoritative master to be followed, even if she disagreed with them. Since the curriculum controls the educational experience and the policy documents are “the curriculum,” Sara may have felt that she had little choice but to follow the expectations.

A lot of Sara’s deference to the authority of Ministry documents likely stemmed from her lack of subject content, pedagogical content, and personal practical knowledge. Sara wished for even more government control. “It would have been easier if they said, ‘unit one, cover these expectations, unit two, cover these.’ That would have been a lot easier” (Sara, Interview 1). This is likely a result of her inexperience in teaching and planning. Sara was the only participant to talk about difficulty organizing and tracking student work, attendance, and so forth.

You know, you look at books, first section, appendix, and then how many lates, and when I’m supposed to call their parents, and then, you know, your marks, and then
your learning skills, and then the homework checks. And then, you know, their textbook list, and then I have another section where I write down who I called and when I did it. And then tap... It's just, and they don't teach you that in teachers' college. (Sara, Interview 2)

She also had the most difficulty dealing with classroom management. For a teacher still struggling to get a grasp of administrative duties and classroom management, less work required during planning would be better. This may also account for why she did not work in some of the changes which she wanted to make in order to cater to student interest. The amount of time she spent going over lessons to make certain that expectations were covered reveals a degree of curriculum control.

On the other hand, Sara did reveal an awareness of the curriculum-as-lived in some of her comments. As she talked about kids being a factor in implementation, she revealed an awareness of the way in which the curriculum can fluctuate based on the interest level of students, rather than taking a static view of how a topic should be covered. "I think you have to adapt [a topic] to you and to your students. I might, for instance, one year teach 2 weeks on WW I and the next year do a week if they don't like it." (Sara, Interview 1). This type of thinking reveals a level of adaptation and change based on the lived experience. Sara also noted that the expectations were general enough for adapting to any teaching style. While not aware of this as curricular freedom explicitly, it is revealing. For Sara, experience may be the biggest factor in how she chose to implement the new curriculum. While she was aware of student needs and interests and the need to adapt in the classroom to meet those needs, she felt very obligated to cover the expectations first and foremost. As Sara
gains more knowledge of content, pedagogy, and personal practical experience, this will very likely change.

Of all of the teachers, Karen was the least concerned about meeting the expectations of the government. Her main goal was to teach the students something valuable. At the same time, while she defined curriculum in a traditional sense, she, of all the participants, was foremost in describing practices demonstrating a curriculum-as-lived. Karen said,

And the creation part of resources for the new part didn’t really come until we actually got into the course. [Right.] sometimes it’s hard to decide what you want to create until you’ve actually kind of got there to see what, and were still evolving, we’ve still changed it. (Karen, Interview 2)

Contextual planning, in light of students, is an important element in enacting a curriculum-as-lived.

But what you find when you get in the classroom, you just do the, you know, you do the thing that you think works and you do the thing that you feel that the kids are benefiting from and you do this other stuff when push comes to shove.... And it never comes to that. (Karen, Interview 2)

While she may have had a curriculum plan, Karen’s foremost concern was meeting student needs, and so she was concerned with what worked in class: in the lived environment. She even made changes while in class.

And even sometimes you change it in the middle of a class. Like, there are times when I’ll start doing something and the way that the kids are reacting to it I’ll say, "oh they don’t want to do it this way, so I’ll create it right there. I’ll change it right
there and you know we’ll do it differently. (Karen, Interview 2)

As a result of her view of curriculum, Karen was not concerned with meeting all of the expectations.

So it doesn’t bother me if you don’t get it done, what are they going to do, fire [you]? You know what I mean? It’s not important. Don’t stress over it. [Sara and I] have got most of the course done. We’ve done a good job of what we’re doing. The course is just too long... so we’re not stressing about it. (Karen, Interview 2)

Karen’s primary goal was to meet student needs. For this reason, she felt it was more important to pursue student interest than to cover all of the expectations. She felt that experience was an important factor in this belief. She described how the more familiar you are with material-- read, the more content knowledge you have--the more you will deviate from it. As an example, she cited her own reliance on Sara’s lesson plans, which she was following very closely.

Do I use these sheets? The ones that we made up? Umm, I use them now because I’ve never taught the course before. So for me this is good, but I don’t look, I don’t look at [the policy document]. [The course binder with lesson plans is] done. It’s done, and, yeah, and I could look it up and see, and I am assuming, I mean if I was really conscientious, I would first time through, I would go and make sure that these all fit the expectations of what we’re supposed to be doing, but I don’t care. (Karen, Interview 2)

Once familiar with the material, Karen believed that a teacher would then branch off to meet student needs. Karen was unequivocal in her belief that curriculum expectations
were secondary. She said,

The board... they've got certain deadlines that they've said, okay, you're gonna have to have this and this and this. And of course everyone, or most people, are pushing it right to the limit because, we're not comfortable to switch over there yet because we haven't had enough practice. (Karen, Interview 2)

In planning and implementing the grade 9 geography course in the 1999-2000 school year, Karen and her partner worked opposite the manner of the design-down model: They developed lessons and later went back and matched them with expectations. While she did check to see if expectations were covered, Karen did not make it a big priority. “I don't know, if somebody from the Ministry came down they'd probably say, you're not doing it right. Well, tough luck” (Karen, Interview 2). Most revealing of all, Karen made it quite clear where her priorities lay. “If the Ministry wants something that they feel should be done and we don’t feel [the students] can do it, we won’t do it. Or we’ll do it some other way” (Karen, Interview 2). Karen’s emphasis on student needs resulted in implementation which only loosely followed the curriculum policy documents. In order to create a curriculum-as-lived, Karen felt that she had to deviate from lesson plans and not cover all of the units planned in the profile. Did she cover the expectations? She thought she may have, but could not say for sure. The needs of students can’t always be met when too many detailed expectations must be followed. In meeting student needs, Karen had to deviate from the government expectations.

Throughout the implementation process, the views and beliefs of teachers were an important factor. Both Eisner (1985) and Ornstein (1999), among others, noted the degree of
influence teachers’ philosophies have on the educational process. The experiences of participants in this study illustrate the degree to which this is true. Where teacher and Ministry beliefs about curriculum aligned, implementation was most faithful to the original goals of the Ministry; however, the more philosophies diverged, the more implementation involved adaptation, or sometimes even refusal to implement. At some points, teachers had to make philosophical judgements without full knowledge of the purpose and procedures of a change. The late policy, for example, was not fully understood by any of the participants. Professional development could have been better carried out, providing teachers with a better understanding of the philosophical underpinnings driving various elements in the change process.

Professional Development

Professional development is a key factor in any attempt at change. Teachers need to be informed about and prepared for understanding and making those changes. In this study, professional development, or the lack of it, played a large role in participants’ experiences implementing the new curriculum. As detailed above, teachers struggled with understanding and implementation of the policies which are part of the new curriculum. The experiences of participants with professional development were all very different. John, once again because religion is not a Ministry-governed course, received very different training than the other teachers. A lot of the professional development he received was organized and facilitated by the ICE. For example, he received different information about rubric use from the information provided to other participants. Also, because of his department’s unique
situation, John erroneously believed that there were no summer institutes provided for religion. The in-servicing provided by the board was the same for religion as other departments, but John did not comment on the effectiveness of this professional development. Effectiveness of the professional development itself is a further ingredient which can affect implementation. While participants did receive some in-services and had the opportunity to attend the summer institutes, participants did not find any of this professional development particularly helpful.

Karen was the representative for her department, Canadian and World Studies, on the school improvement teams. This meant that she received special 3-day training so that she could return to her school and teach the rest of her department about the topics, such as assessment and evaluation and exemplars. Karen found this training to be very valuable and well done. She also noted that one of the most rewarding aspects of the training was meeting people, mostly consultants, from other boards and getting ideas from them. "That’s what the best part is, is just listening to what other people have, how they, how they’ve approached it after the first, you know" (Karen, Interview 2). Nora wished that everyone could have had the same training as Karen. She found that the train-the-trainer sessions, because of the extent of change in the province, resulted in too much discussion around different topics.

A little bit of direction, but not very much. Not the amount that I would have expected considering all of the changes that they are making, so the in-servicing in general wasn’t.... Personally, I didn’t find it very effective, and I know they were trying to save money... they would send one or two people off to a workshop, they’d
do the workshop, they'd come back, and they would supposedly teach it to us, which they did and, you know, did a fine job, but personally I would have found it much more useful to have a PD day and going to a workshop myself, and going through it myself, and I know they were trying to save money, and I'm sure they did save a lot, but, at the same time, at 2:00 in the afternoon, when I'm thinking of my watch, I've got to pick the kids up by 4:30, its hard to focus, and another problem is there's just too much change, every time we got into one of those meetings, it ended up being either gripe sessions, or everybody off on different tangents. (Nora, Interview 2)

Nora was also surprised that they did not receive more professional development, considering the scope of change. Nora and Sara were the only two participants to attend the summer institutes, and neither one found them very helpful. Both said that the personnel at the institutes could not answer their questions. It would have been really nice if they knew what they were talking about. Really nice. If they knew what they were talking about. And they couldn't answer the basic questions that we had. Which was one that assignment question. They couldn’t answer it. And they couldn’t even answer how we were supposed to set up our evaluations. They didn’t know. And consequently, we developed a way, an evaluation process, that we’re having to change. Which is frustrating. (Nora, Interview 1)

In fact, they were given some incorrect information.

I mean, nothing was ever clear after any of [the in-services]. You know, at the summer institutes we asked them, because we were trying to decide on the course
hand-out that you would give to the students at the beginning, and they said that you could, you didn’t have to break it down into knowledge, understanding, thinking, and inquiry, communication and, uh, application... you didn’t have to do that... so we didn’t, and then they came back this year and told us we have to, so I don’t think anyone knows what is supposed to be done. (Sara, Interview 3)

Overall, they did not find the summer professional development helpful.

All of the teachers were left feeling uncertain about several aspects of the new curriculum. This was most evident with the late policy, which none of the teachers were comfortable with or fully understood. Teachers had questions about the goals of the policy—which allows students to hand in work at any point in the semester without facing a penalty—and the exact format of it. Nora, for example, was afraid that if some work was handed back, other students would copy it. She believed that you either have to enforce lates or not hand work back, and you need to hand work back so students can learn from it.

How can you hand back an assignment and then take an assignment in? The kid can copy it. Cheating, it is openly allowing cheating. So either we never hand anything back, which is, how can the kids learn, or we open ourselves up to, like, massive cheating. So ours is right now... you can hand it in until we give the assignment back, without any penalty, but once we give the assignment back, you’ll get zero and you cannot hand it in. We probably won’t be allowed to do that. I don’t know. And that’s what I’d really like the government to tell us. Is that really what they want us to do? (Nora, Interview 1)

Nora and Karen mentioned that the board was in the process of writing up policy for all of
the teachers to follow.

So, our, the board hasn't really come up with a policy yet, they're still playing with it. So until they do, um, History and Geography have come up with a policy, starting next year. Well, we've kind of implemented it now, but it's down in writing next year. That when we give the kids their, the first day when you give them all the stuff, that we will accept anything until we hand that thing back. And once we've handed it back, too bad. (Karen, Interview 2)

This policy was informally being followed by the History and Geography department during implementation. Although everyone except John was a member of this department, everyone except Karen expressed great confusion and difficulty trying to understand and implement the policy.

The other teachers were not sure exactly what the policy required and how to set deadlines and enforce them. Nora was very frustrated with the lack of guidance on the subject. She noted that the moderators at the summer institute could not explain the policy and that other teachers she had spoken with were unsure about the policy. She also believed that the policy was philosophically wrong, particularly because she felt that most teachers give extensions or alternate assignments when truly necessary in any case. Sara stated that implementing the late policy had been a nightmare. She was not at all sure how to handle the change and tried several techniques ranging from last-call due dates, not accepting assignments after she handed them back, not accepting after the end of the unit, and so forth.

I don't know what to do... I don't know what works. I've tried the end-of-the-unit
thing, then you have the problems with the cheating by copying. Um, I’ve tried the
handing the marks back, don’t mark after I’ve handed stuff back. I used to mark
things quickly and have it sitting in my folder, and I’d rather give it back right away.
And then, so I’ve tried it, and I’m trying that last call thing right now. (Sara,
Interview 2)

Like Nora, she said that all of the teachers were implementing this policy differently.

Similarly, Sara, Nora, and Karen all expressed difficulty implementing rubrics and
struggled to do so because they felt they had to. Karen was unfamiliar with the language
used in the rubrics and had to rely on the models in the profile when writing them. “I’ve
gotta have my little book in front of me saying, okay, this is the word for ones, and, you
know” (Karen, Interview 2). Sara tried to be as faithful to the intent of rubric and level
assessment as possible, but was not sure how to average out different grades on an
assignment.

And, like, it’s really hard to mark with it because if they say consistently they’re a
level 3 and then they’re 3, 4, 2, and 1, you don’t know where to put them. Some
people add up 4, 2, 3, and 1 and then get a mark out of 24. And then they work out
to be almost the same as the 70-79. (Sara, Interview 2)

Nora and her teaching partner felt uncomfortable using rubrics and found it a lot to take on
while implementing everything else. "[Amanda and I] were trying to do rubrics at the same
time, which I think was a little too much to take on" (Nora, Interview 1). With her partner,
Nora began using a synthesis of percentages and levels. "We have on our rubrics 1, 2, 3, and
4 and we also have the percentages that fall into that because the kids still think, and their
parents still think in percentages. And I still think in percentages" (Nora, Interview 1). John also felt that parents would not like the level format of assessment.

[Parents] want a hard number. So in terms of evaluating based on rubrics, it’s really good. No problems. In terms of reporting marks, the parents, completely based on rubrics, I think, there’ll be blood in the streets. [He laughs.] You know, people will get upset. (John, Interview 2)

As a result of these beliefs, participants adapted the rubrics so that they felt like they were implementing what the Ministry wanted in a way that was as useful as possible to their context and which did not completely contradict their own philosophies about assessment. On the whole, participants struggled to understand how to use the rubrics, to find time to adapt to the format and get used to using that assessment tool, and philosophically come to terms with the format.

The teachers were controlled by the curriculum: They had to implement certain policies, struggled to adapt and implement in a manner that agreed with their own philosophical beliefs, and also had to figure out the purpose and process of implementing some aspects of the new curricula. More effective professional development would have at least provided teachers with a clearer understanding of policies. From there, they could have judged the new curricula against their own values and been more able to make informed decisions where their beliefs conflicted with the control of the curriculum. Sara, Karen, and Nora were not sure how to use the rubrics; all 4 participants were not certain about the exact measures of the late policy; some of the teachers expressed concern about the upcoming new assessment and evaluation to be implemented the following year; none of the teachers
were really sure how to begin planning their courses. "The first one was onerous because we didn’t know what we were doing, and then last year with Stephanie it got easier" (Karen, Interview 2). The overall lack of confidence and uncertainty with parts of the new curriculum can in some measure be attributed to a need for more professional development which would have addressed the purpose and scope of these changes. The lack of understanding caused greater difficulty, stress, and consumption of time than would have been necessary given more effective professional development. Just as Datnow et al. (2000) found that greater implementation success correlated with more professional development, and other research has described the benefits of professional development, participants in this study certainly felt the ill effects of a lack of effective professional development.

In addition to providing clarity and understanding, further professional development could have been used to help prepare teachers for the task of planning lessons from the expectations in the curriculum documents. While summer institutes were offered, participants had to attend these workshops on their own time in the summer. Furthermore, those participants who attended the institutes felt that this professional development was not very helpful. Successful professional development requires meaningful development which speaks to teachers’ needs and concerns prior to and during change. Participants did not feel that they received such effective professional development.

**Too Much At Once: Time as a Factor**

An inevitable problem with the new curriculum was the scope of its ambitious changes. While the Ministry representative outlined the manner in which boards could
target areas of change, teachers were nonetheless feeling overwhelmed with too much change at once. In addition, rather than being able to look forward to time in subsequent years to continue implementation, some participants were looking ahead with frustration and concern to more assessment changes or another course to plan. One of the results of the abundance of changes for teachers was a view of time as a precious commodity, much as described by participants in Werner’s (1988) study.

Time factored into implementation in two main ways: one, the amount of classroom teaching time in the semester, and two, the amount of time available outside of teaching time for planning and marking and so forth. Every teacher planned detailed lessons for day-to-day instruction. Inevitably, loss of time through assemblies, sick days, and so forth meant that plans had to be altered. According to John, he planned detailed daily lessons with the full expectation of having to adapt them for loss of teaching time.

I planned almost to the day. Almost to the minute. Well certainly to the day, almost to the minute. Um, with the full expectation that a chunk of this will go out the window because of circumstances. Uh, we have a liturgy one day [so you lose class time.] Are you going to have that lesson overlap the next day? Are you going to condense it? Do you only give one of the assignments instead of two? And that’s fine. That’s the process of implementing, right? (John, Interview 1)

In fact, this process of implementation as described by John, overlapping, condensing, cutting out, and so forth, is exactly how all of the teachers coped with the loss of teaching time.

The main strategy for coping with lost time was to condense and cut out parts of the
original plan. For example, Sara would remove activities which were meant to reinforce learning when time became scarce. She had to condense her last unit because she was running out of time.

Well, we lost over a week last semester. Snow days and things like that, so I ended up condensing the last unit. The last unit especially. And some things I just couldn’t, I had the lesson plans but I couldn’t teach them because I didn’t have time. Instead of making them [the students] do the work, I just give them the information... I’d put it on the board or put it on the overhead or hand it out to them, the information. Or, and I’d cut out extra activities to reenforce it, just get rid of those because I didn’t have time... (Sara, Interview 2)

She did not teach some of her lessons because there just wasn’t time. Mostly, though, she would alter her presentation, hand out the information rather than have students research it, or remove activities. She noted that these are temporary changes which she made as she went along; the curriculum plan itself is not altered. Similarly, Nora said that she sometimes would drop a lesson or remove a discussion from her lesson. Also, she would assign homework to get students caught up, because she did not normally give out homework to classes which were open or less than academic.

[To make up for lost time I give] homework. Because it’s open, you don’t give a lot of homework.... We do that or sometimes we drop a lesson or we take a discussion and throw it out, which I hate, but sometimes you have to do that. (Nora, Interview 1)

Principally, then, the teachers adapted to the circumstances by removing, shifting, and
altering how they taught, but, once again, tried to remain faithful to the core of what they taught.

Several participants also found that they had to manage the volume of expectations versus the amount of time in the semester. Both Nora and John initially followed the number of units outlined in the Catholic course profiles: five for both civics and religion. During the course of implementation, they found that there was just not enough time to teach five units.

Certainly time factors can be limiting. Uh, we found last semester that unit one was very long, very long, and units four and five were kind of done in a hurry-up way and we had to slice things out. So, slicing them out, one thing we did do, and it was, in a way, I guess, going back to the original profile, it took the original expectations and we shuffled them around. We moved them. So rather than having, say, 15 lessons between two units, we had 8. But, in those 8, we tried to cover all the expectations of the 15. And that was fine. And that could be done. I mean there are certain expectations that lend themselves to one another. (John, Interview 2)

Karen, on the other hand, simply did not plan lessons for the last unit of her geography course, knowing that there would not be enough time to teach it. The difference in the two approaches is that Karen was quite likely not teaching all of the expectations. This is the only instance where the teacher was not completely faithful to the contents of the policy documents during implementation.

An element of varying concern among participants was the amount of time outside of classroom teaching time to plan and mark. The planning process necessitated that
teachers prepare for implementation over the course of the summer. Furthermore, 2 teachers had to teach four courses out of four for one quarter of the school year. At the same time, John chose a cut in pay to not teach four out of four, for personal reasons, while Nora was a part-time teacher and therefore taught only two courses a semester. This meant that teachers had very different demands on their time outside of classroom teaching time. In addition, Nora had two small children and John a new-born at home, while Sara and Karen were involved in a lot of extracurricular activities. In short, everyone had demands on their personal time which limited how much was available to spend on implementation and planning. Participants reacted to the demands on their personal time differently.

John was not concerned with the need to plan during the summer and felt very strongly that it was part of his job to do so. "Well, you know, some people are sucky-babies and don’t feel they should have to do anything outside the school day. If you don’t love it, don’t do it. Do something else" (John, Interview 1). Furthermore, he noted that his love of the discipline of religion and the desire to help students grow in their relationship with God made it worth his personal time.

The devotion to doing something like this is because I love the subject. It’s very dear to me. I mean, it’s, teaching religion is not simply an academic discipline. It’s a discipline that cuts into the very heart of life. So to do a good job at it is not simply, “I want the kids to learn some stuff,” which is true, but I want them to grow in their relationship with God. (John, Interview 1)

Karen, on the other hand, was more in line with other participants. She felt that it was unfair to ask teachers to give up so much of their free time.
[Planning the course is] a pain because there's no time for it. Here it is June already, I've got to have this course ready for September, and we haven't even seen the profiles. Sooo, obviously, when am I going to be doing it? Over the summer. I mean it bothers me. I don't mind working over the summer a little bit above, but it bothers me based on the assumption that you will do it over the summer. (Karen, Interview 2)

The burden of planning was particularly great for Karen as she had been involved in planning and implementing a course three years in a row: the 1999-2000, 2000-2001, and 2001-2002 school years. Implementation did require participants to invest a certain amount of personal time. Whether teachers overtly recognized the fact or not, there was only so much free time which they could invest in the process; this fact most assuredly affected how much teachers changed and how much they simply would make do with. This was particularly evident with other areas of the new curriculum, such as rubrics and culminating activities. Time pressure was also quite acute for Sara and Karen while they taught four out of four courses.

Both Karen and Sara had to teach four courses out of four for half a semester and commented on the effect which that had on their teaching and implementing of the new curriculum. Karen had been prepared to make some changes to improve some of her geography course, but found that once she was teaching four she did not have the time or the energy to do so. Having the extra course and the planning and marking to go along with it, even for half a semester, Karen and Sara said was a terrible drain of time and energy. In addition, both of these teachers were coaching extracurricular sports while teaching four
courses. Karen said that the only changes made while teaching four were to simplify things.

[My partner and I] were ready to change our exam but we were both just too tired. I did my four at the beginning of this term and [my partner] is doing her four right now. We don’t have any energy. I found that’s something that, when you’re doing your four, you don’t do changes unless you’re simplifying things--to simplify the marking. You don’t ask for as many things in, or you’ll have it brought in, and its just complete or not complete. Like a lot of times... I won’t mark it for accuracy. I’m assuming if they went to look up the stupid answers they better be right, and we’ll do a general review of any questions that I thought were controversial or they might have problems with, and I’ll go over it and I’ll mark it, I’ll mark it for its completeness but, you know, 5 marks a page just, you know, because you don’t have time for detail, so that’s one of the big factors.... (Karen, Interview 2)

She would give fewer assignments and mark only complete or incomplete. Sara also did not make any changes and found it was enough work to keep up with the marking. She did say that she was glad that the four came at the end of the second semester because she didn’t know how she would have handled it first semester.

Well, I was lucky that I didn’t have to teach my half course the first semester. I had it the end of the year. I never changed anything at the end of the year I just taught what I had because I didn’t have time to do any of that stuff. It was bad enough trying to get the stuff marked. If I had had my half course last semester, I don’t know what I would have done, because I did a lot of my planning and, you know, where I was going, getting resources on my prep. (Sara, Interview 3)
During the first semester, she used her preparation period to get resources and plan the new course, but missed that time when she had to teach during it. For Karen and Sara, then, teaching four courses meant that they did not have the time or energy to make improvements to the curriculum or to alter things which they otherwise may have, because the teaching load was too demanding, particularly while they were also coaching sports.

Clearly, participants did not have enough time available to them to fully meet all of the demands of the new curriculum. In particular, Karen and Sara worked out their time as a commodity, as described in Werner's (1988) study. Werner found that participants in his research used a number of metaphors to describe time. Participants in Werner's research also described time as a finite commodity which had to be rationed and prioritized. In addition, participants could not spend time planning, familiarizing, and reflecting throughout implementation because of the scope of change, with the need to plan and implement not only a new curriculum document, but also several other new policies (Adelman & Walking-Eagle, 1997).

**Collegial Implementation**

The standardization and mutual challenge of implementing the new curriculum resulted in increased collegial teamwork. Generally, teachers tend to work in isolation, getting neither feedback nor support from their fellow teachers. The process in this study, as Datnow et al. (2000) found with The Core Knowledge Sequence, provided expectations which were shared by all of the teachers implementing a given course. This promoted teamwork and sharing among staff members. In the past, many teachers would work out of a
course binder provided by the department or colleagues who had taught the course in the past. Once in possession of a course binder, teachers would use, change, and adapt material as they saw fit. With new curriculum expectations and standards clearly outlined for every teacher, participants found that, when possible, they shared the implementation experience and any changes they had made with other staff teaching the same course. Instead of taking a binder of lessons and working through material on their own, colleagues shared ideas and resources. As Karen noted, “I’d much rather work with other people because they have different perspectives and they have different ideas and different backgrounds, so they come up with different things, plus it means that you’re not trying to do the whole thing” (Karen, Interview 2). This proved to be the case for all participants.

For the most part, sharing did not occur until implementation. Karen and Sara, however, both experienced some helpful sharing during planning. Karen worked with a group of teachers from another school and one colleague from her school to plan her geography course. She and her partner were able to get a number of ideas by collaborating. Sara relied on Karen’s experience from the previous year to get her started on the process. “If I didn’t have Karen, I would not have known what I was doing” (Sara, Interview 1). All 4 participants made great use of their colleagues throughout implementation.

Of the 4 participants, John had the greatest opportunity for colleague input. Although he was the only one developing his course, there were three other teachers who taught it.

We have four people on our team-- two of whom are very experienced teachers, one of whom has tremendous theological background, one of whom that [religion is] not
her background, and two of us who are in our first couple years of teaching. I have lots of experience in theology the other teacher, she doesn’t. She has some background but doesn’t have a lot. She has expertise in other areas. So we have a real cross-section, and what this is allowing us to do is identify, "what do we need?"(John, Interview 1)

John saw himself as the central clearinghouse for sorting through and compiling the advice of the other teachers and using that advice to polish the curriculum plan.

I think it’s expected that other people will be involved. You do need someone driving the truck though. Or it doesn’t go. Or it goes nowhere. Um, I basically said to them, "I will do this." They breathed a sigh of relief. Um, and then I said, "what you can do, is after I’ve produced the document, give me sort of as the central clearinghouse, I’ll be the central clearinghouse. Give me your stuff. And then when we do the second revision, which, from my point of view should be the final revision, even though there’s changes after that too, but in terms of having a document to work on it will be the document at the end of the year. Um, and I’ll take those resources that they give me. We’ll kind of decide which ones are the main ones, with the lesson plans, we’ll include the other ones as back-up, as other options.

And we’ll just go from there. (John, Interview 2)

At the beginning of the year, John tried giving questionnaires to the other teachers which were geared toward receiving feedback and improving the curriculum. After two units and little use of the questionnaires, John found that each of the teachers gave him feedback in his/her own way. One teacher was very blunt in telling him which lessons and activities she
thought were not effective. A second colleague would talk with him informally about the things which she felt could be improved, replaced, and otherwise changed. The third colleague would write out changes directly onto the lesson plans.

One staff member gives me her feedback by revising documents and handing them back saying, "I think I’ve fine tuned this." ...another member of the department, um, will work very independently but really be staying with, and we will simply coordinate our times. It’s become informal conversations. It has not become weekly meetings. (John, Interview 2)

So for John, a number of changes to how the material was taught came through the responses and advice of his colleagues. He himself kept thoughts of what needed changing on post-it notes and later wrote them directly on the lessons as well, during class, so that he could make the changes later.

In a similar way, Nora was teaching civics with another teacher. While Nora wrote most of the course herself, her colleague, Amanda, actually taught the course more often. They collaborated together on many of the changes, and Amanda, in particular, brought in a lot of new material from the internet to enhance and modernize the resources they used. While Nora did use the majority of the resources Amanda provided, they did not use exactly the same material. For example, Amanda developed a project in which students campaigned for office with posters, speeches, and so forth. Nora felt that, while the activities were fantastic, her students were not able to do some of the advanced work, and so she did not use the project. Also, Amanda had made a large number of changes to the course because she taught it so often and was bored. Nora did not feel it was necessary to use all of those
changes, which were made more for variety than out of necessity. Her partner helped encourage her to implement new policies like rubrics. Nora also felt that she and her teaching partner worked well together planning some of the course.

You know, what I think a good thing about it, too, is that Amanda and I think the same way, we both, we like positive learning, and we both are very imaginative, so... but we get these great ideas and we just go with them. So we both teach the same way, think the same way. (Nora, Interview 1)

Teachers who may not have worked together otherwise were drawn together because of the common expectations which they shared while struggling to implement the new curriculum. As they implemented, bonds were formed, and those who worked well together looked forward to future collaboration and enjoyed the collaborative experience. Just as in Datnow et al.'s (2000) study, the knowledge of what expectations other teachers had to implement promoted collaboration.

**Conclusion**

The format of the policy documents, coupled with the course profiles and the professional development which was or was not provided, served to both control teachers and afford them a certain degree of freedom. Participants felt that they had very little option but to implement the expectations which were a part of the new curriculum. They were almost unanimously faithful in their dedication to implementation of the policy documents. Despite arguments in the literature against curricular control (Hlebowitsh, 1990), this degree of control did not seem to be a concern of participants. They quite readily worked within the
confines of this level of curricular control. At the same time, the shared expectations fostered a level of collegial sharing and development which was new to and welcomed by most participants. These findings match those of Datnow et al. (2000) with regard to teacher acceptance of curricular expectation control. In that research and these findings, what concerned teachers was pedagogical control.

While it was clear that teachers did not receive enough professional development explaining policies and preparing teachers for planning, the degree to which participants were able to plan pedagogically fostered a great degree of ownership, commitment, and enthusiasm for the change process. An important element in this level of commitment was quite likely the direction from above, within the school, to complete a course binder with lesson plans within 2 years of implementation. Without such direction, teachers might not have undertaken the onerous task of planning a whole course, including expectations and such detailed lessons. At the same time, the course profiles were also invaluable for providing teachers with a starting place, a model from which to plan, and offered numerous ideas. Again, however, without direction from above, there might have been a temptation to follow the profiles and only adapt them as needed. The format, then, clearly provided teachers with pedagogical freedom to create plans with which they were satisfied, but was aided by the guide of the course profiles and the direction from school administration to complete those plans.

Also consistent with the literature, there was an obvious need for better professional development before and during the implementation process. The goals of and the procedures for implementing change must be clear to teachers as they implement. The
degree to which participants struggled with the late policy highlights this point. In addition, teachers needed much more time. The number of changes being made by the government were ridiculously vast. To have to implement several new policies in addition to the planning required of teachers to implement the expectations was a recipe for burnout, not educational improvement. Overall, implementation involved too much too fast. Teachers needed more time to prepare to implement, should have been provided more professional development, and only one change should have been implemented at a time. Participants were under the impression that they had to implement the policy documents, the culminating activities, rubrics, and the late policy. That meant four major concepts had to be synthesized, prepared, and implemented. The late policy was left far too unclear. Rubrics, culminating activities, and policy documents required more time for planning and preparing, and direct, consistent professional development. Teachers really struggled with the elements of the new curriculum, with which they were not familiar. The textbooks and profiles were very helpful in facilitating implementation of the policy documents. The profiles provided a model for bridging the unfamiliar territory of curriculum development, but there was no support in place which teachers found helpful for dealing with rubrics and the late policy.

Finally, the philosophical beliefs of teachers about curriculum, implementation, assessment, and pedagogy affected implementation. Where the beliefs of teachers did not match what they perceived to be the goals of the Ministry, implementation resulted in adaptations, sometimes even refusal to implement. It should be noted, however, that this only occurred with policies additional to the expectations in the policy documents. Teachers considered the expectations to be the core curricular change, the very curriculum itself, so
they worked to implement those expectations faithfully. Other policies, however, they did not consider central to the government’s new curriculum and therefore of less importance. Where philosophies deviated, then, teachers adapted to match their own beliefs.
CHAPTER FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Recommendations

When faced with change, teachers need to be provided a degree of extra time proportionate to the demands of the change itself. In this study, participants were dealing with numerous new initiatives at the same time. They had to implement the policy document, the late policy, achievement charts, and so forth. Each change required participants to familiarize themselves with the process and facts involved for preparation and implementation. The demands on participants’ time were considerable, particularly for those teachers who were teaching 6.5 out of 8 courses. A reduction in course load would have been more conducive to the change process than the increase experienced by most secondary school teachers in Ontario at the time of implementation. At the time of change, a reduction in teaching load would have allowed teachers the extra time to prepare for implementation, become familiar with the initiative, reflect on the process, and plan for continued implementation.

Relevant, effective professional development is important during the change process. Participants did not understand the purpose and exact procedure for implementing the late policy or the achievement charts. The participants also did not feel that they had been well prepared for the planning necessary to translate the expectations from the policy documents into lesson plans. Teachers need to be properly trained. They need the time before, during, and after the change process to be informed about the goals and planned procedure for implementation. Teachers should be provided professional development
which examines best practices and provides a forum for asking questions and receiving timely advice. Professional development should be provided throughout the change process for this purpose. In-servicing needs to be made available to teachers during school-time before, consistently throughout, and even after the planned initiative. In particular, during a process similar to the one in this study, involving planning from expectations, teachers need specialized training and support; participants in this study were expected to plan from the policy documents and implement using an unfamiliar process. The only professional development being offered was during teachers’ own time. Training should have been made available well in advance of implementation, during the previous school year, to outline and prepare teachers for the planning process.

The course profiles which were funded by the Ministry and developed by the school boards were an integral part of the implementation process. As has been stated, they provided teachers with a model and a resource. Future curricula similar to the policy documents in this study, which presented a general list of expectations with no pedagogical plans, should make use of the course profile model.

The top-down, bottom-up approach (Fullan, 1994) was another significant factor during implementation. The direction from the principal to have a finished course plan within the first 2 years of implementation provided participants a goal to work towards. Without a similar direction, it is likely that many teachers would not take the time to become as familiar with the expectations, to plan in advance, or to take as much care with outlining and editing their plans. Participants in this study noted that in the past they received a course binder from previous teachers without any connection to Ministry
curriculum being made; in addition, participants noted that they generally planned as they progressed through a semester, not in advance. The need to share their plans with other teachers and produce a finished product for their principal caused participants to take more time prior to implementation to prepare and familiarize themselves with the policy documents and edit their plans during and following implementation.

In order for teachers to be discriminating implementers of change and curricula, there are some areas of training which need to be developed. While preservice education would be the ideal forum for introducing teachers to the following topics, practising teachers could be provided in-service training. For one, teachers need specialized knowledge to be able to best adapt the curriculum to meet students' needs. It was evident in this study that teachers who had a greater knowledge of subject content, knowledge of the discipline they were teaching, were far more confident with and willing to make changes, extend the expectations in the policy document, or ignore those expectations altogether while teaching. The less a participant knew about the subject content, the more they relied on the resources available to them. Similarly, the level of pedagogical content knowledge which a teacher possesses can affect how much they are willing and able to deviate from planned instruction. Teachers need a more comprehensive and specific program for development of subject and pedagogical content knowledge in order to expand their ability to assess, extend, and improve upon externally developed curricula.

Teachers would benefit from courses on curriculum theory to enable them to be more critically aware of the curriculum. While participants in this study could describe practices which aligned with a curriculum-as-lived, they did not have the language or
awareness to discuss such concepts in detail or fully describe and explain what they implicitly understood worked in practice. Three of the 4 participants narrowly defined the curriculum as only the Ministry-developed policy document, even though none of them rigidly adhered to that definition. Educating teachers at even an introductory level about the extensive field of curriculum theory and practice would empower practitioners to make informed decisions while planning and implementing curriculum change.

Similarly, preservice teachers could benefit from experience critically analyzing and adapting curriculum materials such as texts and policy documents. Having recently graduated from a preservice program in 2001, I found that the program in which I was enrolled prepared teachers for planning the ideal unit or lesson. In practice, there is not the time to prepare plans which cross disciplines, excite and maintain student interest with contextually relevant and varied presentation and material. As a beginning teacher, I spent more time adapting from textbooks and prepackaged material than gathering lesson ideas and resources which might have been more interesting and relevant to the students. While there is a definite benefit in instructing beginning teachers on how to develop ideal units of study, teachers would also gain from training aimed at the critical analysis and adaptation of the types of material they are most likely to have available to them in the classroom.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

The results of this study were developed from the closely related experiences of 4 participants: They were all implementing the new grade 10 expectations-based curriculum in a secondary school in Ontario. All of the teachers were expected to complete a course
plan within 2 years of implementation. Future research could examine how the implementation process proceeded in other schools without the same administrative direction from above. Did teachers in other schools rely more heavily on textbooks and course profiles?

This study showed some of the ways in which participants conceptualized, understood, and defined curriculum versus their practice during implementation. These findings should be compared with other teachers.

This study examined the process of implementation as experienced by the participants. As a result, the interactions of the teachers with the new expectations-based curricula were explored. Future research might examine the success of the expectations format in general. Is the expectations-based format a more successful method of implementation because of the level of ownership claimed by teachers through pedagogical control? How does this format impact student learning?

While the additional policies which participants had to implement as part of the new curriculum were discussed, the focus of the study was the policy document. Future study could examine the additional individual policies. What effect do the new assessment policies, culminating activities, the no-late policy, and achievement charts have on student learning?

**Personal Development**

While researching this thesis, I discovered that the field of curriculum theory and practice is murky at best. As Jackson (1992) stated, for every curriculum theorist, you have
another definition of curriculum. I struggled throughout the research process to come to my own understanding of curriculum and have found it no easy task. At times, I found myself both conceptualizing curriculum both in a traditional sense, as a plan, and then more broadly as the whole educational process, including implementation, pedagogy, and so forth. Early in my research I compared curriculum to art:

In the literature which I have read so far, curriculum is used very generally to discuss many different parts of the educational process. The first example that came to mind is art and how art is a general heading with a lot of subheadings or types. But all of those types have clearly defined parameters or differences: oil versus watercolour versus air brush [not to mention sculpture versus architecture versus painting, etc. art is much broader!]. There are boundaries and terms for distinguishing the types of art forms and styles, but this seems to be lacking with curriculum because there are different categories of curriculum development and implementation or levels of importance or structure. For example, Ministry (i.e., provincial or state curricula) versus board curriculum versus the curriculum which teachers use. They are all very different. [It seems to me that most teachers would call what they do lesson planning and not even recognize it as curriculum development.] (Journal, May 29, 2000)

There is a broad sense of what art is and what things can be considered art, while at the same time one can specifically refer to sculpture or painting or dance. Yet again, one can narrow the scope even further to examine oil, watercolour, acrylic, and so forth. The difference between art and curriculum is that these layers of broad to specific regarding art are more generally understood by the public at large. While some will debate whether a
certain piece or performance is "art," what is meant by art is generally agreed upon. This is not the case with curriculum.

I had to come to a conclusion on my own determining how to sort out the various definitions and interpretations of curriculum which I had read in the literature. What I have concluded is that curriculum is the experience of learning (Aoki, 1993).

What I was considering was the idea of lived curriculum and my definition of curriculum itself and how these would mean that anytime someone learned something--anytime learning takes place--there is a curriculum. I had to decide if I agreed with that--and what I decided was, yes. My definition of curriculum is the actual process of that learning. Any time learning takes place, the curriculum is how that learning occurred--what happened, or the events that created that learning.

Curriculum is the method, the process, the means of facilitating or directing or providing knowledge/education/learning. (Journal, June, 2000)

As a result, all the myriad elements of the educational process are aspects of the curriculum: pedagogy, curriculum plans, hidden curricula, null curricula, implementation, and more.

This understanding of curriculum and relationship between the parts of the educational process has helped me arrive at a theoretical understanding of what curriculum is and where curriculum fits into my job as a teacher. Since I consider curriculum to be the essential foundation of student learning, and curriculum includes so many elements of the educational process, it is important as an educator to be knowledgeable about these elements so that informed decisions can be made.

Before reaching this understanding of curriculum, I completed course-work as a
Master's of Education and preservice education student. Much of my training and education in these programs taught me how a curriculum “should” be prepared, approached, and understood. I had an awareness of the hidden and the lived and of the ideals of cross-curricular lesson plans with activities which actively engaged students. In my M. Ed. program, I learned how to be critical of curricula, and that the experience is important, not the “script.” In my preservice program, I was encouraged to develop units of study which were well planned, full of catchy beginnings, active middles, and meaningful assessments at the end. I was taught to develop lessons (which I knew from my M. Ed. studies would serve only as a guide or resource from which to draw), which would sweep students off their feet with the thrill and excitement of learning. During my teaching blocks, I would spend hours at night preparing just such exciting and entertaining lessons, teaching well-behaved students, and not having to worry about parents, field trips, bullying, family and children’s services, long-term goals and professional development, colleagues, principals, and the list goes on. Then I entered my own classroom and felt like I had left Eden and entered a war zone.

What I had learned and been prepared for in university was the ideal—perhaps a level of teaching which I can strive for in a few more years. The reality is far too short on time and filled with the immediate demands of a very stressful working environment. In my first year of teaching, I relied heavily on the textbooks and materials which were available and easy to plan from. I did not have the time or energy to be overly critical of these curricula-as-plan or to develop well-integrated units full of all the bells-and-whistles which grab the students’ attention and keep them interested. I felt, in my first year of teaching, that my M.
Ed. studies held no relevance and that my preservice education had been a block of time and money which had to be given up for the "privilege" of teaching.

When I began teaching in September 2001, I had no idea where to begin. As an elementary teacher, I had to teach subjects with which I was not familiar and had no background knowledge or specialty in. As a result, curriculum expectations, textbooks, and other plans were the easiest place to start. While I adapted in some cases, there were so many subject areas with which I had no experience that I did not have enough time to critically alter all of them. I did not have the time to become familiar with a subject and change the materials which were available to suit students' needs and interests. Instead, I picked and chose what seemed the easiest, most fun, and educational lessons. I was, in truth, not very discriminating, not because I did not care, but because I did not have the time, energy, or knowledge to be more discerning.

As a second year teacher, teaching the same grade and the same subjects, I have now become a little more discriminating where I can. Just as in Karen's analogy in which teachers widen their subject content as they become more familiar with the material, I still stick very closely to what I did last year and to the policy documents, but I have found areas where I can deviate more from the curriculum plan. I am certain that Sara and Karen, who followed the course expectations very closely during implementation, would have very different stories to tell about their curricula, having taught the courses again and having become more familiar with the material. You cannot decide how to shape material which is new to you. That is one of the large differences between the experiences of John and Nora, and Sara and Karen. All 4 defined curriculum in very similar ways, but the former 2 were
much more satisfied with implementation than the latter 2, because John and Nora knew their subject and could begin shaping their course from the beginning, whereas Sara and Karen had to get to know the content before adapting it. The same was true of me. Getting a sense of where the government wants the grade 6 curriculum to be in my first year of teaching, I now can shape, adapt, and alter that.

Part of engaging teachers in the curriculum process is a matter of experience and a combination of pedagogical content and personal practical knowledge. Karen was unequivocal about her role in deciding whether an innovation has merit. She had taught for many years, experienced many different curricula and teaching techniques, and was very aware of what kids responded to and what worked. Her experience, her personal practical and pedagogical content knowledge, allowed her to be critical. While much of this knowledge comes from experience, there are elements of practical, pedagogical, and certainly subject content knowledge which can be taught. Teachers need to be educated on the interconnectedness of elements of the educational process and the importance of their role in that process. These are some of the foundational elements required to ensure that teachers do not rigidly stick to a curriculum plan and actively engage in shaping student learning. With the proper skills and knowledge, teachers are able to take even the most rigid prescribed curriculum and make it more meaningful and less structured.

Personally, I have learned that, as an elementary teacher who teaches every subject except French, an important step in implementing a meaningful curriculum for my students is to have considerable subject content knowledge. I cannot plan effectively if I do not know the core concepts of a discipline. I cannot help but rely on government expectations,
textbooks, and other prepackaged materials when I have no background knowledge of a subject. I cannot be discerning and discriminating when I have no foundation from which to judge and build. As I build that knowledge base from subject to subject, I become freer to chose not only how best to cover an expectation, but whether or not I agree with an expectation at all. Similarly, as I build up my knowledge of effective pedagogy, I become freer to shape the curriculum. The more ways in which I know to present information, the more opportunity I have to find the best fit between the learner and the subject content. Finally, as I become more experienced, I learn what techniques work best; I learn how to read the needs and interests of students; I become more aware of the environment in which I work to the end that I can more effectively manipulate it, with the goal of student learning. With more time, experience, and knowledge of subject content and pedagogical content and an awareness of the curriculum, I am becoming a more effective and discerning teacher.
References


Catholic District School Board Writing Partnership. (2000b). *Course profile: Canadian history in the twentieth century: Grade 10 academic.* Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario.


Footnotes

1. While I have provided a citation for one particular page of one particular policy document, the language is the same for every subject.

2. Teaching 6.5 out of 8 courses was a reality for most teachers in Ontario at the time of this study. At the time of publication, most boards in Ontario have negotiated back to 6 out of 8, at the expense of increased supervision duties.
Appendix A

Interview Schedules

Interview 1

1. General conceptions of curriculum and implementation:

What is curriculum?
How do you see the process of implementation? What is implementation? How does it work?
What is your role in the process of implementing the new curriculum?
What are the roles of other people/groups (i.e., Ministry, principal)? How do they relate?
How do curriculum, implementation, and teaching relate? How are they similar or different? Again, what is your role in each of these processes?

2. Perceptions of curriculum development:

What was the process of curriculum development?
What do/did you see as your job in the development process?
How would the Ministry see your role? How are these different? Why?
Is this a process which you have done before? Or like anything which you have done before?
How were you prepared for curriculum development - were you prepared?
Were you given the aid/time/resources/etc. necessary?
What sorts of stumbling blocks did you have in terms of resources? In general?
How have you followed (or deviated from) the Ministry guide?
How have you prepared for the expected needs of the classroom? Individual students, interruptions, etc.
What did you plan? (what structures did you use to plan in - i.e., units, lessons, activities?)
How did you plan?
How did you feel about the process and the product prior to the first day of classes?

3. Post-development, implementation concerns:

How do you feel about the process, and particularly the product, now?
What has and hasn’t - is and isn’t - working? Why do you think that?
What unforeseen problems have you encountered?
Are you, at this point, early in the semester, where you expected to be? Why not?

4. Open questions:

What do you feel is important to tell me? Is there anything which I haven’t asked about?
Is there anything which you feel is important or that you would like to add?
Interview 2

What you are doing right now with the new curriculum is called implementing it. You are implementing curriculum.

What does that mean to you?

What is the process of implementation?

What is your role?

How, from day 1, have you envisioned this process?

What other factors are there?

How do/have they affected the implementation process?

You are a teacher - what is the job of teaching? What does it entail? How do you do it? Where does curriculum fit in? Implementation?

Day 1: what did you have prepared? What was your ‘game-plan’? How did you begin implementation? What aspects of your lesson were yours, the Ministries, the textbook, etc.?

Now, take me through the first week... What did you do? What went according to plan, what did not? What factors were involved in things that did and did not work? Did you begin making changes as you went, based on the previous days?

Same questions, the rest of the semester... How did it proceed? What factors, etc.? What changes did you make based on what you were learning as you proceeded?

Throughout the semester, what did you find particularly difficult? What other factors, expected or unexpected, were involved? (Assemblies, sports...) How? Who else was involved? (students, other teachers, principal?)

How has the first semester informed what you are doing in the second? Specifically, what worked and didn’t - what did/are you changing and not?

Finally, what advice, right now, would you give some embarking on this process?
Interview 3

1. What is 'new' about the new curriculum? Describe, flesh out the new curriculum for me.
   • context; format; assessment; programs; expectations of what teachers must do; difficulty.

2. What supports have you been provided with by the school, board, and Ministry.
   • how have these helped?
   • what else could they have done?
     Summer Institute, school development teams, curriculum planner cd-rom, in-services, profiles, etc.

3. What is your personal opinion of the new curriculum, and the various elements of it?
   • what changes were manageable, too much?
   • its purpose; scope; various facets - tap, lates, assessment, rubrics, etc.; unclear;
     well-developed/explained; reasonable/unreasonable?

4. What has been your experience with implementation this year?
   • positives, negatives; what has stood out; was it rewarding, onerous; what have you learned?

5. These are issues which the literature says affects implementation, what is your opinion about how these have affected you during the process?
   • time - to prepare, reflect, understand, and breath
   • teacher understanding of the material - purpose
   • teacher belief alignment with material
   • administrative support - guidance, encouragement
   • teacher professional development - before, during, and sustained after

6. What would you like to add?
Ministry Interview Schedule

1. ‘New curriculum’ is a term which has been used broadly to define a number of changes which have been made within education over the last several years, what really falls under the scope of that term? Essentially, what is the new curriculum?
   • how do all of the elements fit? Tap, no lates, rubrics, assessment, etc.

2. What was and is the purpose of this curriculum change?

3. *How was the implementation process envisioned? How was it to be carried out?*

4. How successful has it been?

5. In your opinion, how are teachers coping with the changes?

6. *What implementation structures have been put in place?*
   • summer institute, professional development, videos, etc.

7. Where is it going from here?
   • changes for next year in process or supports?
   • specific curriculum policy changes?

8. Anything you would like to add?
Appendix B

Confidential Personal Information
This information is necessary for developing a bio of each participant. You are not required
to answer any question, and may freely decline any which you consider invasive or
inappropriate. All answers will be kept entirely confidential. The goal is to glean any
information which may have an impact on how you approached the implementation
process. (I.e., participants who have had past experience with implementation or maybe
who have young children and therefore not as much time to spend on reflection and
development throughout the process, etc.)

Name: __________________________ Date: __________________________
Age: ______ Sex: ______ Years Teaching: ______ Marital Status: __________________________
Spouse’s occupation: __________________________________________________________
Children: ________________________________________________________________
Current position: __________________________________________________________
Teachables: ______________________________________________________________
Extra-curricular involvement, committees, etc.: ______________________________

Other time consuming activities (children’s sports, etc.): ____________________

Teaching related experiences similar, or the same as, the current implementation work:
__________________________________________________________

Non-teaching related experience: ____________________________________________

Other relevant information (factors which may have positively or negatively influenced the
implementation process): _________________________________________________

Outline your teaching career - what you have taught, where, for how long, etc. : ________

Other relevant, previous work experience: ________________________________________

__________________________________________________________
How would you define your demographic information? (Race, culture, social class, ethnicity?)

Level of education (list degrees and professional development courses):
Appendix C

Sample Achievement Chart-Excerpt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>The student:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge/Understanding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- knowledge of facts and terms</td>
<td>- demonstrates limited knowledge of facts and terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- understanding of concepts,</td>
<td>- demonstrates limited understanding of concepts,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>principles, and theories</td>
<td>principles, and theories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- understanding of</td>
<td>- demonstrates some understanding of concepts, principles,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationships between</td>
<td>and theories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concepts</td>
<td>- demonstrates limited understanding of relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>between concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking/Inquiry</td>
<td>- uses critical thinking skills with limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- critical thinking skills</td>
<td>clancy and effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g., conducting analysis,</td>
<td>- applies creative thinking skills with moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>detecting point of view and</td>
<td>clancy and effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bias)</td>
<td>- applies creative thinking skills with moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- creative thinking skills</td>
<td>effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g., problem solving</td>
<td>- applies some of the skills involved in an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>using multiple perspectives)</td>
<td>inquiry process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- inquiry skills (e.g., formulating</td>
<td>- applies most of the skills involved in an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questions, organizing and</td>
<td>inquiry process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conducting research,</td>
<td>- applies all or almost all of the skills involved in an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analyzing, interpreting,</td>
<td>inquiry process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and evaluating information,</td>
<td>- applies critical thinking skills with a high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drawing conclusions)</td>
<td>degree of clancy and effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>- communicates information and ideas with limited clancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- communication of information</td>
<td>- communicates information and ideas with some clancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and ideas</td>
<td>- communicates information and ideas with considerable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- use of symbols and visuals,</td>
<td>- uses symbols and visuals with some accuracy and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including the use of</td>
<td>effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technology (e.g., mapping</td>
<td>- uses symbols and visuals with considerable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and graphic skills)</td>
<td>accuracy and effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- uses symbols and visuals with a high degree of accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and effectiveness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Ministry of Education and Training, 1999a, p. 58)
Appendix D
Ethics Board Approval

Brock University
Senate Research Ethics Board

FROM: Linda Rose-Krasnor, Acting Chair
Senate Research Ethics Board (REB)

TO: Susan Tilley, Faculty of Education
Tim Wirag

FILE: 99-319, Wirag

DATE: June 23, 2000

The Brock University Research Ethics Board has reviewed the research proposal:

Secondary School Ministry Guidelines in the Hands of Teachers: Curriculum Development and Implementation, Process and Practice

The Subcommittee finds that your proposal conforms to the Brock University guidelines set out for ethical research.

*Accepted as is.

Please note: Changes or Modifications to this approved research must be reviewed and approved by the committee. Please complete form #5 - Request for Ethics Clearance of a Revision or Modification to an Ongoing application for Ethics Review of Research with Human Participants and submit it to the Chair of the Research Ethics Board. You can download this form from the Office of Research Services or visit the web site:

LRK-ge