

## INTRODUCTION

... the issue of what part the learner is to play in shaping his own experiences ... [raises] very interesting prudential, dispositional and moral questions.

(Skilbeck, 1976, p. 5)

Studies of organizations suggest the trend towards participation in decision making is broadly based (Preston and Post, 1974; Richardson, 1983). In education, comparative analyses of approaches to curriculum development at the national level have also indicated, particularly during the 1970's, an international trend towards decentralization of decision making in countries where, in the past, control of the curriculum resided with central government agencies (McMahon, 1976). In Australia, too, control over the development of curriculum is becoming more decentralized. Teachers are increasingly involved in the development of educational policy and in curriculum development. The students, however, for whom the curriculum is intended, feature less significantly, if at all, in the decision-making process. This study attempts to examine the issue noted above by Skilbeck, and to unearth the theoretical and practical problems involved in student participation in decision making.

### Aims of the Study

The aims of the study are as follows:

- (i) to develop a model for curriculum development which accommodates the participation of students in the decision making required;
- (ii) to identify the rationale of this model;
- (iii) to indicate the conditions required for the model's implementation;
- (iv) to examine the feasibility of implementing the model in the context of literature education in New South Wales secondary schools.

### Organization of the Study

To fulfil the first and second aims the study includes a theoretical component comprising Chapters II, III and IV. Chapters V, VI and VII are concerned with the third and fourth aims and comprise the practical component of the study. Chapter VIII provides a summary and conclusions.

Chapter I identifies the nature, the general and the specific context, the rationale and significance of the study. It accounts for the selected aims in terms of recent trends and developments in education, both overseas and in Australia, which indicate students' dissatisfaction with, and alienation from, aspects of schooling and the growing trend towards participation in decision making about educational matters. The rationale and significance of the study are discussed in terms of this context.

Chapter II attempts to fulfil the first aim of the study by developing an interactive curriculum development model, identifying its basic components and essential features.

Chapter III relates to the second aim of the study. It attempts to identify the goals of the model, the underlying assumptions and values (e.g. about the nature of the learner, the teaching-learning process, the nature of knowledge, the aims of education) and their philosophical and theoretical orientations. The chapter also attempts to justify student participation in terms of the resulting benefits to students, and to analyze the significance of participation for personal development. That is, the chapter presents a theoretical framework for justifying the use of the interactive model, based on arguments drawn from philosophy of education, psychology and sociology of education.

Chapter IV extends the theoretical framework by comparing and contrasting the interactive model with other curriculum development models available in curriculum theory. It examines the functions, processes and outcomes of curriculum development models, their underlying assumptions, and their relationship with the theoretical position discussed in the previous chapter.

Having developed and justified the interactive model, the study in Chapter V considers the general conditions required for its effective implementation in schools. Studies of those alternative schools which have been established on a similar theoretical framework, and which have attempted to implement a policy of student participation in decision making, are examined and discussed with a view to identifying the lessons which may be derived about the conditions required for implementing the interactive model. The analysis focuses on identifying enabling and inhibiting conditions internal and external to the classroom and the school, the effect of internal and external controls and constraints and the degree of freedom required from them for effective operation.

Chapter VI discusses the implementation of the model in a specific context and examines to what extent the previously identified conditions are currently present in the New South Wales (N.S.W.) public or State educational system; to what extent this system governs, constrains and regulates the sorts of conditions which may be established in the classroom; and to what extent the interactive approach might be implemented.

Chapter VII examines the degree of implementation possible within the context of limited freedom, namely, in a subject-based curriculum in N.S.W. secondary schools, more specifically in the teaching of English literature. It indicates the approaches to the teaching of literature which are congruent with the interactive model and its theoretical framework; it examines what degree of congruence is attainable in a subject-based curriculum context, the conditions required for successful implementation; and the possibility of partial implementation.

Chapter VIII summarizes and presents the conclusions of the study. It identifies the degree of change required for implementing the interactive model in the N.S.W. system and provides directions for further research.

The study includes analysis of the interactive curriculum development model in relation to three levels of an educational system: the "micro", the "meso" and the "macro" levels (Langeveld, 1979). At the micro level the focus is on the classroom and this is the context for the development of the interactive model in Chapter II. At the meso level, the focus is on the school, and at the macro level, it is on the educational system as a whole. These levels are considered in Chapters V, VI and VII, with a view to identifying the conditions required for the effective implementation of the model. Figure 1 overleaf indicates the organization of the study.

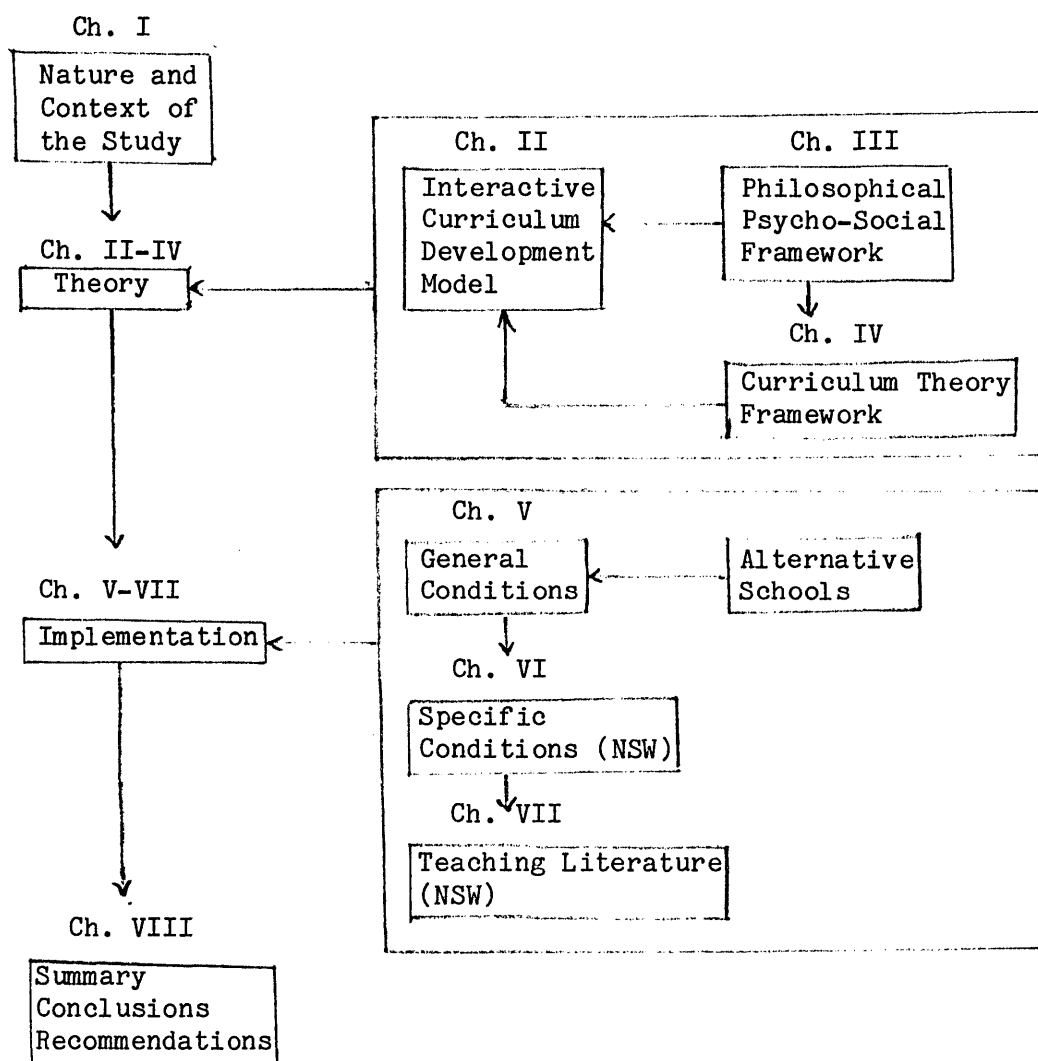


Figure 1 Flow diagram indicating the interrelationship between different components of the study. (Numbers indicate chapters.)

## CHAPTER I

## NATURE AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The test of an adaptive school is the degree to which its practices change to meet the needs of the students rather than expecting students simply to conform.

(Schools Commission, 1980, p.61)

The study has both a theoretical and a practical focus as it is concerned with developing and justifying an approach to curriculum development, with identifying the conditions required for its implementation and with examining the feasibility of implementation in a specific context. The study may be characterized as curriculum research, but its designation as such requires some qualification.

## Nature of the Study

The issue of curriculum studies as a field of inquiry distinct from other inquiry in education has been widely debated (see for example, Beauchamp, 1961; Pinar, 1975; Reid, 1978). The debate has involved redefining the boundaries of disciplines to take into account advances in knowledge; identifying the nature of educational problems and the relationship of problems to methods of inquiry; legitimating a new field of inquiry as well as the status of those who associate with it. While one does not wish to review the details of the debate about the distinction, a brief reference to its substance is in order to characterize the nature of this study and to clarify its focal thrusts.

Reid (1978) maintains that curriculum research is distinct from other educational research in that "it is centered on practical problems within a set of theoretical perspectives" (p. 26). This characterization does not on its own establish the uniqueness Reid claims for curriculum research, since research in other areas of education - for example, educational administration - may also focus on practical problems and treat them from particular theoretical perspectives. What characterizes curriculum research more adequately is the nature of the practical problems which Reid describes. One can agree with him that curriculum research is concerned with the practical problems arising in connection with "curriculum tasks" defined as "the planning, implementing and evaluation of learning experiences" (p. 27). This study is concerned with these curriculum tasks within a theoretical framework and thus qualifies as curriculum research on Reid's criterion.

Reid also maintains the following:

In order to provide information useful to those who want to move away from the status quo, curriculum research must look in two directions: towards information on desired states of affairs and towards descriptions which give indications of the kinds of states that might be possible and the conditions under which they would be attainable.

(Reid, 1978, p. 34)

With respect to these criteria the dominant thrust of the study is in the second direction, towards a consideration of what is possible and the conditions under which the possible might be attainable.

Reid refers to Westbury and Steimer (1971) to further elucidate the nature of curriculum research. These authors emphasize the integrative, synthesizing thrust of curriculum inquiry when they maintain that its subject matter is "the potentialities that subjects, students, teachers and milieus

offer, in their interaction for an end" (Reid, 1978, p. 28). This study explores the potentialities of an approach to curriculum decision making and fulfils the purpose Westbury and Steimer attribute to curriculum inquiry, namely, to provide "a knowledge of and suggestions for the variety of ways in which these potentialities can be actualised in terms of "curricula" for schools and systems" (Reid, 1978, p. 28). Reid agrees with Westbury and Steimer but he also enlarges the scope of curriculum inquiry to include in the milieu "the social and political contexts within which questions of ends and means are deliberated on and the nature of the mechanisms for carrying out this deliberation" (1978, p. 31). The importance of the context in curriculum inquiry is emphasized by other theorists too (Kallos and Lundgren, 1976; Lundgren, 1977). This study is also concerned with mechanisms for deliberation in terms of developing a model for curriculum decision making, and with context in terms of identifying the conditions required for its implementation.

Posner's (1979) conceptualization of curriculum research is also useful for identifying the nature of this study. He maintains that the curriculum field is concerned with the following processes: (i) planning and development, and (ii) teaching and learning. He observes that these processes can be studied for themselves and/or in terms of their contexts, their inputs and/or their outputs. He therefore identifies eight dimensions or "domains" in the curriculum field, each based on a perspective from which one chooses to study one of the above processes. He suggests that each domain represents "a particular territory of the field of curriculum research" (p. 81). Figure 1.1 depicts Posner's conceptualization of the field in terms of the eight domains: the context, input, process and output of planning and development, and the context, input, process and output of teaching and learning.



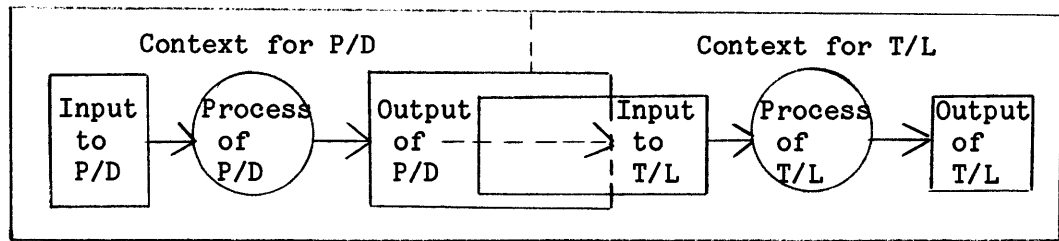


Figure 1.1 The domains of the field of curriculum research  
(Posner, 1979, p. 81).  
(P/D=planning/development, T/L=teaching/learning)

A research study may focus on only one of these domains or on a combination of them. For example, research on the context of planning and development may entail the study of the social, political, economic or intellectual milieu of the planning process. Posner cites Cremin's historical account of the progressive education movement as an exemplar of curriculum research in this domain (p. 82). Research on the process of planning and development is exemplified by Walker's (1971) case study of the deliberations of curriculum developers in three curriculum projects. In terms of Posner's classification this study touches upon all of the domains although the emphasis is more on planning and development.

In aiming to develop and justify an interactive curriculum decision-making model the theoretical thrust of the study is oriented toward the development of what Eisner (1979) defines as "normative" curriculum theory. Normative theory

...is concerned with the articulation and justification of a set of values. Its aim is to provide a persuasive case for the value of a particular end or state of being. In education, normative theory argues the case for certain educational goals on the basis that the goals themselves are intrinsically valuable.

(p. 42)

Eisner maintains that normative theory is critical for education because "Education itself is a normative enterprise...concerned with the realization of aims that are considered worthwhile" (p. 42). Without some image of educational value, without some commitment, "neither education nor curriculum has a rudder" (p. 43).

The value of normative enquiry is also argued by Vandenberg (1974) as follows: "Research investigates what is, rather than what should be, but unexamined values will remain operative in practice unless normative inquiry is also included in research" (p. 183). Reid (1978) maintains that research on the questions of how decisions can be reached or on what can be taught cannot be pursued in a "value-free way" because there are an infinite number of answers available to both types of questions. Thus curriculum inquiry is also concerned with what ought to be done with respect to the problems identified. It is an ethical enterprise. Apple (1979) takes a stronger stand by recommending that "curricularists must take an advocacy position on a number of critical fronts, both in and outside education" (p. 163). Among those he names as most important is support for student rights.

In Chapter III, the study attempts to identify the grounds available for advocates of greater student participation; that is, to identify and examine the value positions implicit in the interactive model and to examine the consequences of a commitment to them for decision making and teaching practice. In the development of the model's theoretical framework the study is guided by Eisner's admonition that the formulation of normative curriculum theory involves "the coherent articulation of a view and the grounds for holding it" (1979, p. 43) and Frankena's (1970) identification of the tasks involved in the formulation of normative theory. These tasks include the definition of a set of dispositions to be fostered by education; the articulation of a line of thought to

show that the defined dispositions are desirable and should be cultivated; and the identification and justification of means and methods helpful and effective in working towards the defined dispositions.

The study is "critical" in the sense that Kemmis (1984) uses the term to describe research which

... has a view of reform that is participatory and collaborative (rather than technical-managerial or practical-liberal) ... directed at practical transformation of the social and educational structure of society.

(p. 29)

#### Definition of Key Concepts and Themes

A definition of key concepts is provided here but a more detailed discussion of them is included in subsequent chapters.

Curriculum is defined as a tentative plan for education whose form emerges through an interactive, communicative, social process.

Curriculum development is defined as a social process of shared decision making in a group context consisting of teachers and students participating in collaboration, negotiation and dialogue, for the purpose of planning the curriculum, for implementing it and for evaluating progress and achievement.

"Process" is used in the sense defined by Berlo (1960):

If we accept the concept of process, we view events and relationships as dynamic, on-going, ever-changing, continuous. When we label something as a process, we also mean that it does not have a beginning, an end, a fixed sequence of events. It is not static, at rest. It is moving. The ingredients within a process interact; each affects all of the others.

(p. 24)

Decision making is defined as the process of resolving to take some form of action to achieve a purpose or a goal.

Participation conventionally means to take part in, to have a say in or to share an activity. In this study it is used in relation to decision making to mean taking part in a thoughtful, deliberate and responsible way with intellectual and emotional assent.

Interaction, integration, and interdependence are key concepts in this study and also function as themes or motifs, indicating an attempt to view aspects of education in an organic, holistic, relational way, rather than as separate, fragmented components.

Interaction is the term used to characterize the dynamic, social process-dimension of curriculum development. The term is conventionally applied to the social processes involved in teaching and learning, and in this study it is used in that context but it is also used in relation to curriculum planning and evaluation. It is an appropriate term to use because it subsumes a number of other concepts involving social processes relevant to curriculum development, namely, participation, collaboration, negotiation, dialogue and conflict. All these concepts connote interrelationship and, more specifically, interdependence, and their basis is interpersonal communication. Interaction is synonymous with communication when the latter is defined as a sequence of interdependent patterns of behaviour

... in which the behaviors of each communicator constrain and are constrained by the pattern of his own and the others' behaviors. This phenomenon of behavioral constraints may be called a process of reciprocal mutual influence of communicating individuals - in other words, interdependent behaviors among communicators.

(Fisher, 1974, p. 156)

Interaction is also an appropriate term to apply to curriculum development because it suggests that the process is "inherently unpredictable" (Husén, 1979, p. 165). This means that decision making must be flexible and open-ended, that one must be able to work within a framework of uncertainty.

Interaction is also used in relation to the process-dimension of personal development (an issue discussed in Chapter III); e.g. a person develops by means of interacting with the physical and social environment.

The study is concerned with integration as manifested in an attempt to link various theoretical perspectives into a coherent framework which may be used to justify the interactive approach to curriculum decision making. The theoretical rationale presented in Chapter III is concerned with integration of this nature.

Integration also figures in the psycho-social component of the theoretical framework. It functions as the dynamic or mechanism of personal development and of learning. For example, to develop as a person one needs to integrate one's experiences of life. The development of a world view or a personal, guiding "philosophy" of life requires such integration. Opportunities to experience decision making of some personal significance may provide for integration at this personal level. In order to learn one also needs to integrate the new, the strange and the unfamiliar with the known and the familiar.

Interdependence is a type of interrelation. It suggests mutual dependence and contingency, which interrelation does not imply. To be interdependent, one person or one part needs another. Decision making in this study is construed as an interdependent, communicative process.

### General Context of the Study

The selection of aims for this study has been influenced by two sets of factors, one generally negative, the other positive. These negative and positive factors constitute the general context of the study. The negative factors suggest that the development, justification and implementation of an interactive decision-making model are worthwhile and desirable, while the positive factors suggest that its implementation may be possible in the present educational and social climate.

#### Negative factors: alienation from and dissatisfaction with schools

Studies both overseas and in Australia indicate that many students are alienated from and dissatisfied with secondary schools. Neither state seems compatible with or conducive to effective education. The identified causes of dissatisfaction and alienation, and the recommended changes to alleviate both states, lend some support for the development and implementation of an interactive approach to curriculum development.

##### a) Characteristics of alienation and alienated students.

Alienation has been the subject of many sociological and psychological studies. The fact that it is a recurring topic for research suggests that it is an enduring and disturbing phenomenon. While the literature does not sufficiently clarify the relation between alienation and adolescence (e.g. whether or not some degree of alienation is a "normal" psychological characteristic of adolescents) and between adolescent and adult alienation, available studies do suggest that alienation in both groups is a multi-dimensional, psycho-social phenomenon.

Seeman's (1959) theoretical work defines alienation in terms of five components: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and self-estrangement. Further

attributes are provided by Gold (1969) and Keniston (1968). Gold associates alienation with feelings of disaffection, apathy, impotence, fatalism and incompetence. Keniston describes the alienated person as one who prefers the role of observer, avoiding responsibility and commitment to others or to the values of the culture in which one lives; as one who distrusts human nature, intimacy and attachment to a group; is unwilling to accept optimistic, affiliative and interpersonally oriented views; is preoccupied with the darkness, isolation and meaninglessness of life and may be scornful, bitter and angry. The state of alienation thus seems to be psychologically distressing and socially debilitating.

Alienation seems to be an undesirable state for effective teaching and learning. Harper (1973, cited in Anderson and Beswick, 1979) identifies the following symptoms as characteristic of alienated adolescent students: disciplinary problems, regular infringement of school rules, lethargic and apathetic classroom behaviour, absenteeism and truancy, and ostensibly irrational "striking out" against others. Stinchcombe (1964) identifies alienation in adolescents with a range of impulsive, disorganised behaviours which are oriented towards hedonistic gratification but have an overall emotional quality of hatred and sullenness. A report by the Western Australia Education Department (1972) summarizes alienated student behaviour in the following terms: apathy towards school-based activities; opting out of the struggle for high academic achievement; shrugging off the threat of a poor academic report; a general detachment from the school with its imposed discipline and formal teaching procedures, marked by feelings of mistrust, misfortune and rejection.

Anderson and Beswick (1972; 1979) in their study of high school students in Canberra found that alienation is manifested by withdrawal from the role of student. It is an alternative to either accepting the norms and roles prescribed for students or

rebellion. Alienated persons merely go through the motions of attending school and of pretending to learn, and invest minimum energy in their role as student. Among alienated students - those who are social isolates and who do not find support in a peer group - withdrawal may embrace wider areas of social life and the state of alienation can be psychologically crippling. Jackson (1973) maintains that when alienation arises in connection with the performance of a person's major social role it tends to spread to the performance of other roles as well, as an enduring "perceptual set" which, if unchecked, may be expected to affect increasingly larger portions of a person's life.

Another potential danger of alienation in adolescence is that it can contribute to socially delinquent behaviour (Gold, 1969; Weinberg, 1971). Weinberg maintains that through delinquency the alienated individual may find a sense of self-identity, an escape from the meaninglessness of one's world and a feeling of belonging to the delinquent clique. Delinquency thus seems to be a mechanism for countering alienation. It provides the opportunity for experiencing power which is denied alienated adolescents and allows them to prove their worth to themselves and to their peers, to achieve success and to overcome, to some extent, feelings of self-estrangement.

Studies of alienation in an educational context have examined the social structures and relationships which engender it and its psychological effects on individuals and groups. Anderson and Beswick (1972) surveyed students in large comprehensive Canberra high schools in conjunction with the Campbell Committee's investigation of secondary education in the Australian Capital Territory (Campbell, 1973). This Committee was considering the establishment of separate secondary colleges for upper secondary school students and was, therefore, interested in obtaining some kind of comparison in terms of the degree of alienation between students in the upper two years of



Canberra high schools and students in separate secondary colleges. At that time, only Tasmania had a separate structure for the last two years of secondary school, known as "matriculation colleges". It was in this context that Anderson and Beswick compared data on alienation among Canberra students and students in the Tasmanian colleges. Alienated students in Canberra were dissatisfied with the limited range of subjects offered and hence with the limitations on available choice; they were dissatisfied with their teacher's treatment of them as children rather than as socially mature persons, and particularly with the authoritarian discipline in schools. Many students saw the education process as irrelevant and meaningless and themselves powerless to change it. While 60% of the Canberra sample was perceived to be strongly alienated from school, only 20% of the Tasmanian group fell into this category.

The Campbell Committee eventually recommended the establishment of secondary colleges in Canberra and by the end of 1977 there were five colleges in operation (Anderson and Beswick, 1979). Each college has a governing board with representatives of parents, teachers and students, and the Committee's recommendation that the accent in colleges should be on freedom, self-development, self-motivation, self-discipline and student management of student affairs seems to have been achieved (Anderson and Beswick, 1979, p. 5).

Wittes (1970) has also identified a number of school-related conditions which tend to produce alienated responses from students: these include students' perceptions of the relevance of the curriculum, of the nature of classroom instruction, of the nature and degree of teachers' control over the students, and of the school's attitude towards what students perceive to be major problems in society. Wittes maintains that schools appear to be inconsistent in their goals and practices: on the one hand, the students are encouraged to

develop their powers of critical reasoning; on the other hand, they are not permitted to direct this faculty at the school itself. The separation of teachers and students in terms of status and privilege and the hierarchical distribution of power in the school are seen to prevent significant involvement of students in decision making.

b) Bureaucracy, education and alienation. The relationship between bureaucracy in education and alienation has been the focus of a good number of studies. The connection is seen to be due to the impersonal behaviour of bureaucrats, the restricted nature of interpersonal relationships within a bureaucracy, the hierarchical structure of a bureaucracy which demands little more than passivity and obedience, and the concern with efficiency which depends on division of labour and conformity in behaviour. Blau (1956), for example, identifies the following as characteristic of bureaucracies:

- (i) specialization, which allows the overall purpose of the system to be subdivided;
- (ii) a hierarchy of authority which provides for co-ordination by top management;
- (iii) a system of rules, ensuring uniformity and hence assisting co-ordination;
- (iv) impersonal relationships which ensure the detachment necessary if efficiency is to govern administrative decisions.

(Blau, 1956, p. 19)

Schools organized along bureaucratic lines appear to lead to teacher dissatisfaction, student alienation and lower student achievement (Ratsoy, 1973). Pusey's (1976) analysis of the dynamics of bureaucracy in the Tasmanian Education Department indicates that teachers' feelings of powerlessness in a hierarchical and authoritarian system generate impersonal and

authoritarian responses to unconfirming students. Anderson (1973) found a positive relationship between school bureaucratization and the five components of alienation identified by Seeman (1959). MacKay's (cited in Ratsoy, 1973) study of thirty-one schools in Alberta, designed to examine the relationship between organizational structure and teacher performance as measured by pupil achievement, found that where decision making was centralized and authority relationships between principal and teachers highly visible, teacher satisfaction with the school was significantly lower, as was pupil achievement. Kolesar (1967), in another Alberta study, examined the relationship between powerlessness and alienation in secondary students and two measures of bureaucracy - "authority" and "expertise". He found that powerlessness and alienation were significantly higher in schools which emphasized authority. In summarizing the findings of research studies on bureaucracy in education, Ratsoy (1973) concludes that they indicate that satisfaction is, on the average, lower in schools where teachers perceive a high degree of bureaucracy; student alienation is higher in schools where students perceive a high degree of bureaucracy; and student achievement is lower where teachers view schools as emphasizing hierarchical structure.

Hoy's (1972) study of the attitudes of over 8,600 students in 45 New Jersey high schools toward their schools, indicates that specific organizational characteristics, school climate and pupil control orientation, are related to students' sense of alienation. Hoy examined students' attitudes in terms of three variants of alienation - normlessness, powerlessness and meaninglessness - and found that they were related to one or more "climate" characteristics.

"Climate" refers to the culture of an organization (Taguiri and Litwin, 1968) or those internal characteristics which are experienced by and which influence the members of an organization. Hoy used the dimensions of teacher and principal

behaviour that Halpin and Croft (1963) formulated to characterize "open" and "closed" school climates. Briefly described, the open school climate is low in disengagement and in hindrance, in aloofness and production emphasis and high on esprit, thrust and consideration. Translated into teacher and principal behaviour this means that an open climate is an energetic organization which is moving towards its goals while simultaneously providing satisfaction for the group members' social needs (high esprit). The teachers work well together (low disengagement) and perceive the principal as helpful and facilitating, not hindering, their work (low hindrance). The principal is friendly and treats people in a personal way (low aloofness), he or she is considerate (high consideration) and people-oriented rather than task-oriented (low production emphasis). He or she tries to motivate teachers by example not by asking them to give more than he or she is willing to give (high thrust). The closed climate displays the opposite characteristics. Hoy found that specific characteristics of the closed climate relate to student alienation. Teacher disengagement is the best predictor of a sense of normlessness among students. Disengaged teachers simply go through the motions of teaching without really being committed to the task. They emphasize conforming behaviour, bicker among themselves and lack a sense of direction. High hindrance and low thrust were also found to be related to student alienation.

Hoy also used another conceptual framework to examine student alienation and school organization, that of Willower et al. (1967), which identifies the school's orientation toward pupil control. One of the limitations of Halpin and Croft's conceptual framework is that it neglects the students and looks only at social interaction between principals and teachers. Willower and his colleagues attempt to characterize the culture of the school with respect to its orientation toward the pupils. They identify a continuum of ideologies with respect to pupil control and their corresponding types of school

organization. At one extreme on the continuum is the custodial school, and at the other the humanistic one. The custodial school provides a rigid, highly controlled setting; students are stereotyped in terms of behaviour, appearance, and parents' social status; they must accept the decisions of their teachers without question; they are perceived as irresponsible and undisciplined persons who must be controlled through punitive actions. In contrast, the humanistic school is conceived as an educational community in which students learn through co-operative interaction and experience; learning and behaviour are viewed in psychological and sociological, not moralistic terms; self-discipline is substituted for strict teacher control. Teachers desire a democratic atmosphere with open channels and two-way communication between pupils and teacher and increased self-determination.

Hoy found that the pupil-control orientation of the school is a crucial factor in mediating the relationship between the school and the student and is likely to be an important clue to the school's social climate. His data indicate that the orientation of the teachers, coupled with the rigid and highly controlled setting of the custodial school, provide an atmosphere conducive to student cynicism, a lack of respect for their school and teachers, and a general sense of normlessness. He concluded that the model of a high school with a high degree of student alienation is one which has a custodial pupil control orientation, a closed organizational climate with high disengagement, high hindrance and lower thrust.

Research studies which have analysed students' statements of their perceptions and attitudes to schools have reached conclusions similar to those of studies in which alienation is inferred from more structured responses. Janne (1975) found evidence of alienation among European students in the 16-19 age group. Schools were regarded by many as

... places cut off from life and the environment; stifling any inclination for personal expression and hostile to communication between persons; irresponsible places, excluding any form of co-operative control over common resources; places demanding passivity and submission where pupils have no say as regards the subject matter, methods, duration, or organisation of studies.

(pp. 130-131)

Humphreys and Newcombe (1975), who surveyed a large cross-section of Australian students' views, obtained similar perceptions. Students wanted to see changes in the curriculum, improved student-teacher relationships and opportunities for participation in decision making. Harper (cited in Anderson and Beswick, 1979) concluded on the evidence of interviews with students that the issues of participation, involvement and control are central to student dissatisfaction. A recent study by Connell et al. (1982) of the perceptions of Australian students and their families indicates that schools are criticized for inconsistent discipline, favouritism and lack of respect for students. These criticisms come both from students doing well in schools and from those performing poorly. Those students who openly resist conventional schooling do so on the grounds that they do not receive fair and equal treatment from adults, and the authors found that "the arbitrary use of authority" was the "most deeply felt as well as the most widespread criticism of school" (p. 108).

The results of the study conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) on pupil attitudes towards school in twenty countries indicate that in highly industrialized countries "attitude towards school becomes increasingly negative as the students progress through the grades constituting compulsory schooling" (Husen, 1979, p. 13). This is not quite the case in Australia, however, where Walton and Hill (1985) found a decrease in alienation at the eleventh year. Nevertheless, the bureaucratization of schools

seems "counter to genuine educational pursuits which have to occur in the small group setting with its needs of informality, flexibility, and enduring contacts" (Husén, 1979, p. 149). Husén maintains that we need more hospitable institutional settings to "initiate young people into the adult world" (1979, p. 179).

c) Family background and students' attitudes to school.

Bernstein (1966) argues that the family is in some cases the source of pupil alienation from school. In his theoretical framework, alienation is the result of the pupils' rejection of the instrumental and expressive orders of the school. The instrumental order is concerned with the formal learning opportunities offered by the school: the structure of the curriculum, the goals of curriculum and instruction and the means used to achieve them. The expressive order is the moral order of the school, the goals of this order, namely the norms and values espoused by the school, and the means used to achieve them. If the pupil comes from a family which accepts and supports the goals and means of both orders, the pupil will likely be highly involved with the school. Bernstein claims that this type of family is likely to be middle class. If the family accepts the goals of the two orders but has little understanding of the means to transmit them, it may fail to support the pupil appropriately in matters of learning and adjustment. Consequently, the pupil's relationship to the school is likely to be painful and difficult. Bernstein believes that this situation is likely to occur in working class families. If the family is very negative about the goals and means of both orders it is likely to influence the pupil to reject both orders and exhibit in school the characteristics of the alienated student. Bernstein claims that such pupils would likely forge strong relations with their anti-school peers. Bernstein believes that despite strong family influence the school is, nevertheless, an independent force in the pupils'

definition of their roles and, depending on what the school does, it can modify the pupils' roles, in terms of alienation or involvement, from that which has been shaped by the family.

A number of studies suggest that alienation may not be a characteristic of only the working class student but that it does indeed affect certain middle class students as well. These studies indicate the presence of a "new alienation" which does not have its roots in poverty, oppression, lack of choice or opportunity or working class values. A study of tertiary students by Whyte (1963) showed that students from working class homes were not more alienated from the academic system than students from other social milieus. Indeed, urban middle class students appeared more alienated than small-town and lower class students. Further support for this concept is Hoy's (1972) finding of greater variants of alienation in some instances in non-urban schools with a small percentage of minority students than in urban schools with large minority groups, and in schools located in wealthier districts. The explanation of this phenomenon of alienation among middle class students may be the "ideology of alienation" suggested by Hofstadter (1963). He identified a general alienation among large numbers of educated people. Keniston (1968) also notes that one of the salient characteristics of intellectuals among contemporary society is the sceptical, critical and repudiative attitude towards many aspects of their culture. Therefore high school students in wealthier non-urban schools, the children of intellectuals with these attitudes, seem more likely to be exposed to this ideology of alienation and to identify with it. Identification with such intellectual values, a general disenchantment with society and the concomitant disillusionment may produce in middle class students a general alienated predisposition toward school. The opportunity to participate in curriculum development may counteract alienation in this group.



Howe and Moore's (1976) longitudinal study of failure and wastage among students in New South Wales high schools indicates that there is a relationship between parental dissatisfaction with schooling and early leaving. Discontinuity between the home and school in Australia has been widely documented (Bullivant, 1973; Rado, 1975; Holdsworth, 1975; Greco *et al.*, 1977) and other studies suggest that this situation may affect students' capacity to achieve well in school (N.S.W. Ethnic Affairs Commission, 1978) and may lead to withdrawal of loyalty either to the school (Claydon, 1975) or the home and the culture it represents (Taylor, 1976). Interactive curriculum development may prevent this from happening.

Studies in the area of cultural and ethnic differences and multicultural education indicate that the students' cultural and ethnic backgrounds affect their relationship with the school (Martin and Meade, 1979; Harris, 1980) but the school's responses to cultural and ethnic differences among the students also shape this relationship. Students' reactions to schools, either in the form of passive resistance or active participation, seem to be shaped by the school's understanding, regard, accommodation and respect for cultural and ethnic differences (Dumont and Wax, 1971; Castaneda, 1974).

The secondary school curriculum, however, continues to be irrelevant for many students, migrant or Australian born, who leave school early. The Australian Government's Commission of Inquiry into Poverty (1978) found that the curriculum in schools was orientated towards the development of academic competence and abstract verbal skills and rewarded those students who successfully acquired these competencies and skills. The report notes that:

Many students, while outwardly conforming to rules and routines, feel alienated from a process which appears largely irrelevant to their needs...it is this incongruity between what is sought and valued by the students and what appears to be the dominant value of the school, namely academic qualification, that is the source of so much restlessness and pain within the school system, not only for students, but for principals and staff as well.

(p. 64)

Schools appear to be catering most for those students intending to pursue tertiary studies. Connell et al. (1975) in their study of Sydney youth found that:

The school system does not convey the intellectual culture to the mass of students. ...What the school's socialising effort does, rather is to select out from the mass of pupils a scholarly type, to which it accords success. Rather than promoting the development of intellect generally, it makes intellect a speciality, associated with a certain type of work and aimed towards a certain path in life.

(p. 73)

d) Students excluded from decision making. Studies of both Australian and overseas schools (Alexander and Farrell, 1975) indicate that the organizational structure of many schools continues to exclude students from decision making in spite of the fact that many of them perceive themselves capable of making significant decisions related to their lives and desire the opportunity to do so. In Australia the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty (1978) found that students in both Government and

private schools want more say in the school. They are highly critical of the inadequacies of student representative councils (S.R.C.), which not all Australian schools have. Wright and Headlam (1976) found that students felt the S.R.C.'s in schools were given responsibility only over trivial matters and the students' desire for responsible involvement was largely ignored. Student government is perceived as a mere token if it has no power in significant aspects of school life. Wright and Headlam (1976) conclude that among the students they surveyed "the minority were actively resentful, a majority conformed more or less passively while another minority were keen and gathered most of the rewards of high academic achievement" (p. 27).

It is in response to this negative picture of schooling and its effects, and in response to the directions for change implicit in the studies discussed, that this study examines the potential contribution of an interactive approach to curriculum development to making schools come to have a liberating effect instead of an alienating one.

Positive factors: participation and decentralization

In the early 1960's, in OECD countries, economic growth and efficiency were considered national priorities which led to funding of curriculum development in the sciences and mathematics and to the formulation of curriculum development models geared to maximize investment in education in terms of individual and collective productivity (Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, 1973). By the late 1960's and early 1970's, however, curriculum goals were increasingly being expressed in terms of individual and collective satisfaction, personalization and self-realization (McMahon, 1976).

During this period there were also a large number of books and articles being published by writers such as Kozol, Holt, Illich, Goodman and Silberman, criticizing conventional

schools and their curricula and arguing the case for educational reform with new emotional force. When not criticizing the "actual" curriculum, they made scathing inferences about the "hidden" curriculum (a term coined by Jackson in 1968 and applied to the unstated values and attitudes assumed by teachers and expressed in teaching practice and school organization). Postman and Weingartner (1971), for example, drew attention to some aims which would never appear in any curriculum document but which they inferred from practice: that passive acceptance is a more desirable response to ideas than active criticism; discovering knowledge is beyond the power of students and is, in any case, none of their business; the voice of authority is to be trusted and valued more than independent judgement; and feelings are irrelevant in education. Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed and Cultural Action for Freedom were first published in the 1970's, presenting the thesis that through action and reflection human beings could throw off oppression and discover the dimensions of their humanity that they are at present ignorant of. Illich (1973) in Deschooling Society saw the remedy for freeing man from the domination of "manipulative institutions" in both children and adults structuring their own learning experiences according to their own desires and capacities. Similar ideas were expressed by the International Commission on the Development of Education in its report Learning to Be (Faure et al., 1972) which emphasized the need for all people to be continually active as learners.

Changes in public values and attitudes were also manifest in Australia and extended to changes in educational policy. As Musgrave (1979) notes:

Australia is part of the ideological context of so-called free societies. Thus a whole complex of educational ideas relating to anti-authoritarian and individualistic tendencies have become very strong in Australia as they are throughout the Western World.

(p. 146)

Commenting on changes in public attitudes, Blakers (1981) asserts that in Australia:

There has been an increasing tendency to question established authority and processes; to debunk the mystique attaching to long-established and high-status institutions like the professions, and to look for means of directly influencing policy and decision-making.

(p. 3)

These changes in public attitudes and values and the changes in educational policy comprise the positive background of this study.

a) Changes in education. Spring (1981) notes that during the last decade in Australia three major trends stand out as salient features of development in education. The first is a general move towards greater participation in decision making, which is illustrated by the creation of educational regions in the States which now share or take on many of the responsibilities previously held by the central office. This change has been accompanied by the removal of external examinations at the end of the primary and lower secondary school and, in some States, at the matriculation level. Secondly, there has been considerable rethinking about the aims of education and a growing recognition of the role of the school in responding to needs in local areas and of individual students, resulting in the development of less prescriptive and open-ended curriculum guidelines and encouragement of greater formal and informal participation of teachers, students, parents and the wider community in decision making about educational matters. Third, there has been a growth in teacher professionalism as a result of an increase in the duration and level of training, accompanied by changes in the role of the inspectorate, the provision of consultants and local resource facilities, teachers' centres and education centres. The growth in

teachers' professional status has contributed to the "softening up" of the previously highly bureaucratic and centralized administrative structure of the State departments of education. As Bassett (1975) notes:

The inherent incompatibilities between professions and bureaucracies, for example, status based on competence versus that based on rank, obligation to the client versus obligation to the institution, and the different systems of reward and punishment have been very much in evidence.

(p. 39)

b) Move towards decentralization. At the national level the establishment of two organizations in 1973, the Curriculum Development Centre (C.D.C.) and the Schools Commission, which have favoured decentralization, has provided support for greater participation in decision making. Both these organizations have been developed as statutory bodies and provide opportunity for a wide range of people, including parents and teachers, to participate in policy making. The C.D.C.'s philosophy has been that control of the curriculum should rest with the schools, and its objective has been to support teachers in curriculum development and in the establishment of more open forms of school organization (Spring, 1981; Skilbeck, 1981).

The Report of the Interim Committee of the Schools Commission (1973), better known as the Karmel Report, openly advocates decentralization of control over the operation of schools:

Responsibility should be devolved as far as possible upon the people involved in the actual task of schooling, in consideration with the parents of the pupils whom they teach and at senior levels, with the students themselves. ... this grass roots approach to the control of the school reflects a

conviction that responsibility will be most effectively discharged where the people entrusted with making decisions are also the people responsible for carrying them out, with an obligation to justify them and in a position to profit from their experience.

(Schools Commission, 1973, p. 10)

Subsequent reports throughout the 1970's re-emphasize decentralization and political devolution and the provision of choice and diversity in schooling. In its 1975 Report the Schools Commission officially recognizes the changed nature of Australian society. It addresses the issue of education in a multicultural society, affirms the nexus between cultural heritage, identity and self-esteem and emphasizes the need for curricula which reflect the variety of cultural heritages.

In its 1978 Report the Schools Commission maintains that there is little point in devolution which does not "increase the significance of choices open to people at school and local level" and which does not "advance the process of collaborative examination of school operations in which teachers, parents and senior students participate" (p. 119). It initiated a project to explore the possibility of extending real choices within the Government school system and to examine the consequences of choice and diversity from the consumers', the teachers', and administrators' point of view, the implications for policy development at the systems level, and its social implications. Action projects proposed in the Report were taken up in South Australia, Victoria and N.S.W.

Other projects funded by the Schools Commission have also supported school-based developments and diversity. The Innovations Program encouraged schools to submit proposals for grants. Even students were encouraged to participate in the development of proposals which would better relate the school to

the community. The Disadvantaged Schools Program was also set up to stimulate school-level initiatives. Conferences were sponsored on school-based decision making and reports on them made freely available (Schools Commission, 1977; 1979).

A Schools Commission report published in 1980 examines the schooling of 15 and 16 year olds and advocates the creation of school structures to provide students opportunities for "analysing and deciding issues for themselves" and for participating "in meaningful decision-making either in the classroom setting or in school governance" (Schools Commission, 1980, p. 59). The report also argues that from schooling students should gain "confidence in their power to influence events affecting their lives, whether at individual or societal level" and "the experience of having been regarded as a valuable person and of valuing others" (p. 5).

In its 1981 Report the Schools Commission puts participation at the heart of teaching and learning:

The Commission has...emphasized that participation is not merely an element of devolution but it is an issue that stands in its own right as an integral part of the process of teaching and learning. This recasting of the relationship between participation and devolution puts participation at the centre.

(Schools Commission, 1981, p. 106)

Official reports and studies on education initiated by State governments over the last decade also reflect a trend toward administrative decentralization and moves toward political decentralization. In the Australian Capital Territory (A.C.T.), as early as 1967, an unofficial group of parents, teachers and citizens produced a report (Report of a Working Party, 1967) arguing for an independent education authority for the A.C.T. on the grounds that the A.C.T. should not be denied



"the right to control its own education, to plan and establish a system which will be not only appropriate, but also coherent, imaginative and experimental" (p. 6). The Neal and Radford Report (1972) emphasizes the need to involve the community in decision making in order to "assist in the adaptation of schools to meet society's needs" in a time of rapid change (p. 42). Presently the A.C.T. system is controlled by a representative council which includes parents, teachers and general community members. In individual schools, School Boards have both parent and student representation and thus a role in determining school policy and in reviewing the school's progress.

In South Australia, movement toward administrative decentralization began in 1970 when Albie Jones, the Director-General of Education, issued the "Freedom and Authority Memorandum" to schools (Jones, 1970). This document maintains that principals, not the central office, are in "undisputed control" of the school, but it urges them to involve school staff in policy formulation. It also maintains that there should be provision in secondary schools "for student opinion to make itself known" (Jones, 1978, p. 61).

A comprehensive report on education in Tasmania (TEND Committee Report, 1978) encourages development and innovation in all aspects of the Tasmanian education system and supports school-based curriculum development, greater responsibility for decision making at the regional rather than central level and greater community involvement in decision making.

The Victorian Government's policy on administrative arrangements for Government schools (Victorian Government, 1980) advocates greater transfer of power and responsibility from the central office of the Education Department to the local and regional levels. It recognizes that "Effective devolution and decentralization both require the transfer of real power and functions and an increase in discretion and choice exercised by

recipients" (Victorian Government, 1980, p. 11). More recently, the Minister of Education published four papers concerning school-based decision making and the role of the Department of Education. The papers express a commitment

... that parents, teachers, students, principals, administrators, and others closely involved in the work of education will all have the right to participate in decision-making processes. They come together as a group charged with the collective responsibility of reaching agreement or coming to a decision on issues to be resolved. This participation in the education system will occur at the school, regional and State level.

(Ministerial Paper No. 1, 1983, p. 7)

Among the conditions specified for efficient learning the following statements are included:

- \* The learner should participate in decisions regarding what is learned and when it is learned.
- \* Parties in the learning process must have information sufficient to enable meaningful decisions to be made.
- \* Learners should be able to utilise and capitalise on things they can do well and in which they are interested.
- \* Self knowledge ought to be included as part of a definition of worthwhile knowledge.

(Ministerial Paper No. 2, 1983, p. 15)

The Australian Teachers' Federation has, since 1976, encouraged its affiliates to take initiatives to involve the community in the educational process. It has, however, taken the position that any structures for the involvement of the community in decision making should not be imposed but evolve from dialogue between all the interested parties. Furthermore, it has argued that

... there can only be effective community involvement ... when there has been a devolution of power from the central administration to the staff of the school with respect to the educational objectives of that school.

(Australian Teachers' Federation, 1980,  
p. 21)

With specific reference to students and decision making, the Federation believes that students

... should be given the opportunity depending on their experience, to take responsibility for their life and work in the school, to share in running the school and to participate progressively in its democratic procedures.

(p. 61).

Community pressure to influence schooling is increasing in Australia. Parents' and Citizens' Associations have gained increasing opportunity for involvement in decision making. Initiatives and achievements in this area have been well documented by the Schools Commission funded projects at the Canberra College of Advanced Education and the Burwood State College in Victoria (see Pettit (1980) for a recent account). The Australian Council of State School Organizations has, since 1973, emphasized "the need for parents' and other organizations to be engaged in consultations at the policy making level, to participate in the control of local education authorities and to share actively in the government of schools (Pettit, 1980, p. 178). School councils are now operating in different forms in the A.C.T., South Australia, and Victoria. Many Victorian councils have at least one student representative. In the Northern Territory, an Advisory Committee gives parents an opportunity to influence decision making at the top levels of the education system (Blakers, 1981, p. 32).

c) Expectations of schools. A study by Collins and Hughes (1978) of students', parents' and teachers' expectations of N.S.W. secondary schools indicates that students rate the teaching of basic skills, of practical skills and knowledge, very highly as important functions of schools. But achievement of schools, in the practical areas in particular, falls below expected levels. Students also expect schools to help them develop personal autonomy and social awareness and they see a need for improvement by schools in these areas too. Another study of the views of recent school leavers and of those who work with them (Collins et al., 1980) indicates that both employers and recent school leavers are dissatisfied with the dominance of the traditional academic subjects in the school curriculum. Schools are also criticized for devaluing the less academically competent students, a finding also of Wright and Headlam's (1976) study of Victorian school leavers.

Collins and Hughes (1982), in re-interpreting the findings of their own study, maintain that "the traditional orientation of secondary schools either ignores or is punitive towards the major tasks of adolescence - the evaluation of self and the development of a sense of integrity and a sense of direction" (p. 18). In reviewing the findings of other recent Australian studies they conclude that:

Changes in junior secondary schooling are urgent. There is curriculum failure on a grand scale: the goals which those who know secondary schools best regard as most important are by and large, not met. There is organisational failure: the basic developmental needs of youth growing towards adulthood cannot be catered for in the present system.

(p. 49)

Connell (1983) asserts that the main thrust of curriculum reform in Australia should be in the direction of

... shifting control of the processes that produce the curriculum out of the academy and the bureaucracy, where control now principally is held, into the hands of the direct participants, principally teachers, parents and pupils - and finding ways of making the shift permanent.

(p. 50)

Studies of public opinion about schools indicate the major change in opinion

... has been towards an emphasis on the value of humane schools. The hierarchical authoritarian model on which schools have been traditionally organized...is now unacceptable to most.

(Collins and Hughes, 1982, p. 38)

This view is borne out by another recent study of what Australian society expects of education (Campbell and Robinson, 1979). Those statements of school function which Campbell and Robinson characterized as having an "industrial" orientation (i.e. concern with transmission of facts and skills, assessment of pupils, orderly discipline and control) did not score as highly as those which projected an image of schools as "humane, learning communities".

Support for this view is found in an additional quarter. After analysing documents from Australian parent organizations Hunt (1981b) concludes that the dominant concern of these organizations is the individual student and a learner-centred curriculum. Furthermore, these parent organizations

... support smaller schools or school units and expect respect and warmth in teachers' relationships with students. Consistent with this, parents argue that students should be encouraged to participate in decisions about the learning programme and school organisation.

(p. 44)

The attitudes and values implicit in these trends and developments in Australian education suggest that the cultural and educational climate may not be inhospitable to the implementation of a proposal which seeks to increase the level of student participation in educational decision making.

d) Establishment of alternative schools. Another favourable aspect of the Australian educational system is the availability of some choice in the form of schooling. The cultural milieu of the 1960's and early 1970's, which nurtured a vision of a more democratic and participatory society (Swidler, 1979), also provided the context for the establishment of "alternative" schools; that is, schools which deviate from existing conventions or patterns of schooling in their goals, means and their value orientations (Fenstermacher, 1975). (The term "means" is used broadly to include the school's organization, curriculum content, teaching-learning methods and time frames).

Duke (1973) maintains that a school is an alternative to conventional schools if it has the following characteristics:

- (i) a wide range of options including what, when, where, and how to learn;
- (ii) increased emphasis on affective development;
- (iii) multiple-staffing involving teacher aides, assistants, volunteers, parents and other resource people;
- (iv) some attempt to group students of different ages, abilities and/or home backgrounds;
- (v) non-traditional facilities ranging from old homes to schools without walls;
- (vi) wide use of learning environments outside the school;

- (vii) more individually based as opposed to normative evaluation;
- (viii) a general climate of warmth, informality and cooperation.

(p. 67)

This characterization of alternative education has much in common with the assumptions and practices associated with "open education (Barth, 1969, 1972; Bussis and Chittenden, 1970; Walberg and Thomas, 1972; Silberman, 1973; Nyberg, 1975).

The prototype of contemporary private alternative schools is Neill's well known "Summerhill" school, and many schools designed along the lines of Summerhill were established in the U.S. in the early and mid 1960's (Graubard, 1972). But the idea of providing alternatives within the public school system did not become a high priority among educationists until the late 1960's and the early 1970's in the wake of criticism of conventional schooling by writers such as Holt, Illich and others already mentioned. The number of such schools in Australia (excluding Catholic and Independent schools) has not, of course, been as large as that in North America where according to Barr (1975), there were as many as 5,000 in operation in 1975. A belief that their documented successes and failures would provide valuable lessons for those seeking to establish schools alternative to the conventional forms of education, accounts for the inclusion of their study in Chapter V. Their existence in Australia also indicates the presence of at least a nucleus of people who seek an education for their children based on a different set of values than those exemplified by conventional schools. The greater availability for such options has been advocated recently by the Schools Commission's (1980) Choice and Diversity Project.

### Specific Context of the Study

The specific context of the study, the setting of Chapters VI and VII, is the N.S.W. system for secondary education and the teaching of English literature in this system.

#### N.S.W. system of secondary education

In N.S.W., various initiatives taken by the Department of Education and the State government over the last decade can be interpreted as positive moves in the direction of opening up the system to make it more responsive to community needs, and less bureaucratic in administrative structure. These initiatives will be discussed in more detail in Chapters VI and VII; some of them are briefly outlined here to illustrate the trends. The statement of Aims for secondary education, issued in 1974, stresses that the concern of education is with guiding individual and personal development in the context of society. It encouraged flexibility and diversity in curriculum planning to meet changing social needs and changes in the student population. Subsequent documents have encouraged school-based curriculum planning for the total curriculum, with input from the community and the students. The decision by the State government to establish an Education Commission in 1979, now allows parents, teachers and other community members to have a say in policy development at the highest level. A recent all-party parliamentary committee report of the government (Parliament of New South Wales, 1981), the McGowan Report, encourages diversity within schools and outlines principles and procedures by which schools might be more responsive to students and parents. Because development in education in N.S.W. seems favourable to approaches to education concerned with individual/personal development and with providing choice and diversity, it seems worthwhile to examine in greater detail the possibility of implementing a model for student participation in decision making in this context.



### Teaching of English literature

The teaching of English literature is the chosen curriculum content area for analysis of the possible implementation of the interactive model because it is the area of most personal interest from training and experience as a secondary school English teacher. Also, the subject area is of interest because English, by many accounts, is a highly contested curriculum area (Moffett, 1968; Tanner, 1971; Sureties, 1973; Allen, 1980; Ball, 1982). As Sooby (1980, p. 6) comments, "The state of the art is one of apparently boundless flux". While this turbulent status quo reinforces the significance of Chapter VII, that is, the need to work out the implications of a curriculum development model and an approach to teaching, the focus of Chapter VII on English and in particular on literature, also allows for the satisfaction of a vested interest as an English teacher. In relation to literature, the chapter attempts to identify what construction of the nature of the subject and what teaching-learning activities are compatible with the interactive approach. In relation to the N.S.W. system, it attempts to identify those aspects which would constrain the implementation of the model and those which are favourable to implementation.

Because the teaching of English is a subject of dispute and is in a state of flux, there are competing approaches and justifications for selected emphases and practices: subject-centred as opposed to student-centred approaches, language-centred as opposed to literature-centred approaches. Justification of a recommended approach is usually on the basis of a particular theoretical account of, for example, the nature of language development or of the reading process. Differences in the theoretical positions subscribed to by practitioners account for the existing controversy and disagreement about what should be taught in English and how it should be taught. Because these theoretical positions are the supporting

frameworks for various teaching methods one cannot ignore them. Thus while Chapter VII will have a practical thrust, focusing on the implementation of the interactive model in a specific educational context, it will also attempt to identify the theories which are pertinent to the teaching of English generally, and particularly those which an advocate of the interactive approach may draw upon or subscribe to for supporting arguments.

#### Limitations of the Study

The study is primarily concerned with decision making as it pertains to curriculum development. It is, however, recognized that other educational decisions do impinge on the curriculum and these are considered to some extent in the practical component of the study.

The study examines implementation in only one context - that of N.S.W. and not in other States where conditions may be more favourable. Moreover, an exemplar of implementation is developed in one subject area only - that of English literature - and only for the secondary level. The possibility of implementation at the primary or tertiary level is not discussed. Implementation is considered only in the State school system and not the private or the independent system. Schools in the latter sector are fewer in number and have greater opportunity and flexibility for innovation. The concern of the study is with examining the possibility of change in the context which the majority of students experience.

#### Rationale and Significance of the Study

Student participation in various aspects of school life is advocated for many reasons. McMahon (1976) maintains that

... there is an untenable paradox for curriculum developers in the future if they attempt to operationalise curricula with these goals of personalisation, individual satisfaction and self-realization, while at the same time excluding the individuals concerned from the arena of decision making about such goals.

(p. 133)

The individuals most directly concerned are the students so the paradox is not resolved by involving the teachers alone. Skilbeck (1976) argues that if young people are to be educated and not merely trained,

... students must enlarge the scope of their choices in schools and their capacity to choose...we must develop in a much more positive and direct way than is common in schools those situations in which students themselves feel free to participate in curriculum making.

(p. 5)

Andrews (1978) argues the case for student participation in decision making on the grounds that:

If a main task of the school is to educate children to be responsible members of society, it is imperative that its internal functioning should reflect those very democratic principles that our society is founded upon.

(p. 15)

Through participation students "will develop a clearer understanding of the educational issues schools must deal with and promote a more mature and informed point of view about the processes involved" (p. 14). Andrews claims that participation will endow students with "more political confidence and encourage them to be politically active in later life" (p. 15). Husén (1979) argues that the "solution" to the over-bureaucratization of schools is the establishment of

smaller school units and the provision of "Increased participation in planning the curriculum and actual organization of the instruction at the school and classroom levels" (p. 121).

Despite these arguments, the opportunities for students to actually participate in significant decision making at the secondary school level does not yet seem to be widely available in State schools. Fullan and Pomfret (1977), in their review of studies on the implementation of innovations, note that they focus on the role of teachers as participants and neglect the roles of students and parents as decision makers in relation to the degree of implementation of an innovation. In N.S.W. there is no provision for either secondary or post-secondary student representation on the recently established Education Commission. There does not seem to be the concern for the rights of young people under the law that there is in the United States (N.E.A. Task Force, 1971; Rodham, 1973), even though the age of majority is 18 years and more students are staying on in schools for the senior years. Martin and Meade (1979) note that among high school students in Sydney "the influence of students in bringing about changes that they wish to see - as distinct from winning sporadic concessions or eliciting ad hoc repression on the part of teachers - is weak" (p. 6). The schools tend "to define childhood and adolescence as preparation for the future", and this tendency aligns both groups with the "accrediting" function of schools and produces the "enervating and compromising effect of young peoples' orientation away from the school to what they see as the real world beyond" (p. 6).

Two recent publications include papers by teachers documenting experimental programs designed to develop student autonomy in learning at the tertiary level (Boud, 1981) and negotiating the curriculum with students at the primary and secondary levels (Boomer, 1982). However, the case for student participation in decision making is not readily available in terms of a rationale which identifies the goals and values of

participation and sets the issue in a detailed and coherent framework which would enable people working in a specific educational context and sympathetic to the idea to understand the links between the various theoretical arguments, to see the relationships between goals, values and means and their implications for their teaching situations. Without a supporting framework it would be difficult for even a person sympathetic to the concept of student participation to argue convincingly in its favour. The theoretical significance of this study therefore lies in constructing this frame of reference by developing an interactive curriculum decision-making model, bringing together the various strands of the case for student participation and integrating them. This is the purpose of Chapters II, III and IV, which describe the model and identify the arguments which may be used to justify and support it.

Interaction is not, of course, a new concept in the social sciences, but its application in the context of this study is novel in the sense that curriculum development is not commonly described as a process of social interaction. Therefore, knowledge about group processes in decision making has not been deliberately applied to models of curriculum development as attempted in this study (Chapter II). The study of the teacher's role in curriculum development is also a relatively new focus in curriculum studies. The student's role is an even more recent one and there are few studies examining the potential role of students. Those available will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

The emphasis in the study on developing a theoretical framework is justifiable in terms of curriculum theory. Curriculum theorists concur in the view that there are no simple answers to questions about the curriculum and the curriculum development process. Unruh's (1975) notion of "responsive curriculum development" dismisses the view that curricula can be

built around "linear or single-principle concepts". The notion of participation taken on its own is inadequate for responsive curriculum development which requires the support of a theoretical framework and the articulation of the assumptions and values which constitute that framework. Hooper (1971) also implicitly argues for justification when he asserts that "Curriculum does not develop in a vacuum but proceeds on the basis of beliefs...about how people learn, what human beings should be like, what society is" (p. 2). Taba (1962) also maintains that "Any enterprise as complex as curriculum development requires some kind of theoretical and conceptual framework to guide it" (p. 43). She argues that this framework should be explicit, not implicit, so that it can be easily examined and subjected to revision when required. Stenhouse (1975) supports this view by emphasizing the need for communicating an educational proposal in such a form that "it is open to critical scrutiny and capable of effective translation into practice" (p. 4). Scheffler (1970) also stresses the need for justification of curriculum decisions to ensure that such decisions are responsible and rational and not expedient or ad hoc. He identifies two types of justification: relative and general. A decision justified in a relative sense is justified in relation to an appropriately chosen set of "rules", as might be a move in a game of chess. He points out that justification of this type is useless unless the "rules" themselves are justified. This requires further justification on a general level, which entails a commitment to a whole set of interdependent "rules" which have credibility for us and in which we have confidence. He feels that the "evasion of general justification is responsible for much of the inadequacy of value discussion in education" (1970, p. 25).

The theoretical component of this study attempts to provide justification at a general level. It attempts to construct a conceptual map for the practitioner in relation to a curriculum development model, one which incorporates educational

philosophy, psychology, sociology and curriculum theory, and which attempts to show the linkages between them. If it does this effectively it will be of "practical" significance for those engaged in the task of curriculum development.

This study has practical significance for additional reasons. It attempts to identify the conditions required for effective student participation in decision making. Many people may agree in theory with the idea of student participation. As the previous discussion indicated, participation as a social value is sympathetically regarded in contemporary educational, political and social welfare discourse. But appreciation of a value does not guarantee visualization or translation of the value into processes, activities and organizational structures required for their support. If these processes and structures are not anticipated, efforts to implement participation may be frustrated and wasted. Chapter V of this study examines the lessons provided by those alternative schools which have attempted to implement participative decision-making structures, the problems these attempts entail and the conditions required for effective implementation.

The choice of the N.S.W. State system as the context for implementation in Chapter VI has been made on several grounds. If the study can identify what aspects of the system are, at present, favourable and what conditions need to be developed in the future, then it will be of practical significance for those in this system engaged in creating new institutions or concerned with changing existing ones.

There are other professional and personal reasons for selecting the study topic and the N.S.W. context. My work is concerned with the training and education of teachers in a tertiary institution in N.S.W. I have attempted to conduct a course based on an interactive model and have achieved moderate success. The study is, therefore, personally significant in

terms of enabling a working through an analysis of assumptions and practices in relation to interactive curriculum development and hopefully arriving at a more satisfactory integration of them. The students attending this institution will teach or are already teaching in the N.S.W. system. It seems then of practical significance to examine the implications of student participation in the system in which I work and the students I teach are likely to work.

Finally, the study has practical significance for another reason. Chapter VII examines how the proposed curriculum decision-making model may be implemented in the teaching of a particular subject area, that of English and specifically the literature component of English in the context of the existing N.S.W. system. Theoretical models for curriculum development and teaching tend to be concerned with general subject matter in a general context. That is, the practitioner is expected to apply the model to her\* subject and her specific circumstances. There are, however, often controversial issues attached to curriculum development in a particular subject area and contextual problems which impinge on the suggested models and which act as barriers to implementation. Curriculum theorists do not often adequately take these problems into account. As Postle's (1982) study has shown, policy makers need to provide "exemplars" or "guides for action" with respect to procedures to follow, activities to initiate, roles to enact, relationships to establish, if the desirable changes are to be affected. This study attempts to provide an exemplar for the proposed interactive model in the context of a specific educational system.

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\* When referring to teachers in this study the feminine pronoun is used instead of the masculine because of the author's preference.



## CHAPTER II

## A MODEL FOR INTERACTIVE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Finally, there are the kids themselves, who are the most neglected in terms of the formal politics of participation, though they are the people who are most totally involved in the life of the schools.

(Connell, 1983, p. 53)

## Introduction

Many types of decisions have to be made to provide education for children and young people. The purpose of this chapter is to develop and describe a model of decision making for curriculum development which accommodates the participation of both teachers and students and compensates for the neglect Connell refers to above. Such a model has been characterized as "interactive" by Soliman (1977) in a paper published early in the course of this study. The focus of the chapter is on describing the model in terms of its main components, that is, the processes involved in curriculum development. The meaning and implications of student participation should, therefore, be clearly understood. Also the justification of student participation, as developed in Chapter III, may then be appreciated in relation to the description of the model's operation. Comparison and contrast with other models of curriculum development, as presented in Chapter IV, will also be more meaningful.

The chapter also includes an analysis of the basic requirements of teachers and students for the effective operation of the model in an ideal context of freedom. (The issue of to what degree the model may be faithfully implemented in the context of limited freedom will be examined in Chapters VI and VII.) The nature of the processes, roles and relationships involved in the operation of the model requires a developmental sequence for its implementation. This sequence is described in the final section of the chapter.

### Overview of the Model

#### Purpose of the model

The purpose of the model is to indicate how curriculum development may be conducted jointly by teachers and students so that the relevant decisions emerge from their communication and social interaction. This is the significant feature of the interactive model which distinguishes it from other curriculum development models. Another feature of the model is that curriculum development is regarded as primarily a decision-making process which includes three components (sub-processes): curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation (Soliman et al., 1981). Therefore, it is assumed that one engages in curriculum development when one participates in any of these processes. Figure 2.1 illustrates the inter-relationship of the three components and the central role of the teacher and students with respect to the decisions required for each component. The dotted lines in the figure are intended to suggest that decisions related to each component are the product of interaction and decision making by the teacher and students. The solid lines indicate the sequence between the three components and the reflexive nature of the decision-making process at the various points.

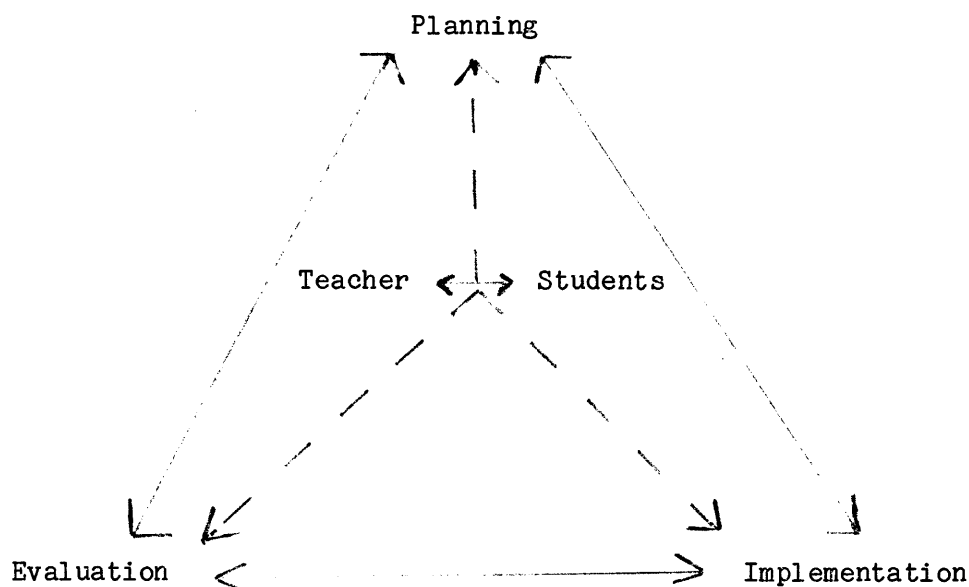


Figure 2.1 Components of the interactive curriculum development model

The inclusive view of curriculum development is not supported by all theorists. Pines (1982), for example, defines curriculum development more narrowly as being concerned with the epistemological domain, with the selection and organization of subject matter. The decisions to be made thus involve identifying the telling questions or key concepts in a discipline or subject area, identifying the methods of inquiry and the validity of knowledge claims or research findings, the value claims and the history and sociology of the subject. Obviously an overriding epistemological emphasis is not congruent with interactive curriculum decision making with students whose knowledge of subject matter may be far less than that of the teacher's.

Leithwood (1982) proposes an even narrower definition of curriculum development as "the selection, modification, and/or production of curriculum materials to resolve identified needs" (p. 278). While the identification of needs is seen as a curriculum task it is not considered a part of curriculum

development. Leithwood's emphasis is on the production of materials and not on ideas for activities. In the interactive model interaction between the teacher and students is specifically for identifying students' needs and for generating ideas for learning activities of interest.

Interactive curriculum development is conceived as a continuous process of modification and change rather than as a process which has a definite beginning and an end. This cyclical view is not out of step with the views of other theorists (e.g. Tyler, 1949; Wheeler, 1967; Nicholls and Nicholls, 1978) who argue that, to be effective, the curriculum must be regularly modified to accommodate changes in pupils, in knowledge, in values and expectations, and also social, economic, political and technological changes. Modifications would be also suggested by regular, realistic appraisals of what has been achieved.

The activities of planning, implementation and evaluation cannot be distinct and exclusive in practice, as Harrison (1981) found in relation to the activities of teachers in school-based curriculum development. She notes that "Curriculum processes involve decisions about curriculum elements made in an interactive, dynamic way, not necessarily following in any regular sequence or proceeding from objectives" (p. 52). In other words, curriculum development in Harrison's view is interactive, not only in the sense of depending on communication and social interaction, but also in the sense that decisions in relation to one component are contingent upon those in another and reflexive.

#### Components of the model

a) Curriculum planning. In the interactive model curriculum planning is taken to mean the processes the students and the teacher engage in in order to decide what should be

learned and how it should be learned. The planning process would take place in the classroom with the students and teacher in a face-to-face situation rather than be conducted by a group of curriculum developers outside or within the school, or by the teacher alone, prior to interacting with the students.

The process could begin with interaction through dialogue (a specific form of communicative behaviour to be discussed below in more detail). The purpose of this interaction is to help identify the students' concerns, problems, interests, aspirations and intentions, which will be the basis of subsequent planning. To initiate and mediate dialogue, the teacher may prepare a set of introductory materials or plan activities whose explicit purpose is not to teach subject matter but to mediate the communication process, to open the door for further dialogue.

The introductory (mediating) materials may be based on topics known to be of interest to adolescents as a social group, or on what may be called the "developmental themes" of adolescence as revealed by psycho-social studies of the group (to be discussed in more detail in Chapter III). Alternatively, the teacher might conduct interviews with groups of students or administer a questionnaire to survey their interests and expectations.

When topics of interest have been identified the next phase in planning may include delineating key questions of interest to individuals or groups of students and identifying the goals of possible inquiries. Through discussion in the group, students' intentions should be clarified and modified. In selecting questions or goals, the students should be encouraged by the teacher to consider criteria of value and of feasibility. Once the goals of inquiry are co-operatively determined, planning could proceed to identify and select learning activities, that is, planning for implementation is undertaken. Figure 2.2 indicates possible teacher and student inputs and areas of interaction in planning.

The figure illustrates that both students and teacher have an active role in terms of inputs and responsibility in planning, but it does not indicate any time factor or prerequisite level of development involved in arriving at this level of functioning.

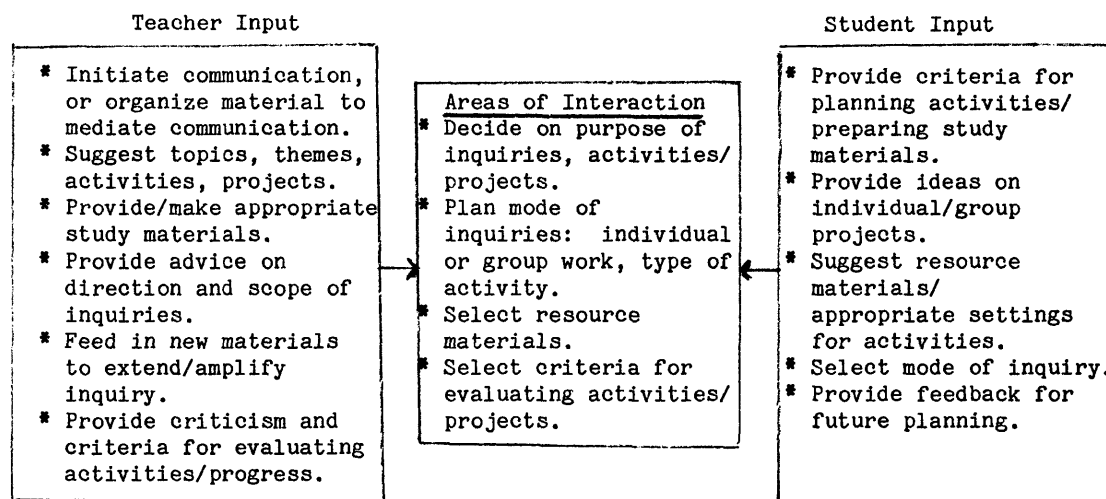


Figure 2.2 Teacher and student inputs and areas of interaction in curriculum planning

The extent of the teacher's input would depend on her perception of the amount and kind of assistance individuals and groups require. The quality of this perception would, in turn, depend on her ability to communicate with the pupils and to empathize with them - i.e. to see the world from their point of view. To the extent that the teacher does not rule out the possibility that the pupils may disclose new knowledge and meanings that are relevant for her personally, the teacher too becomes a learner.

Curriculum planning may also become a learning experience for the teacher if her assumptions and values about teaching are challenged by the students and if this challenge induces reflection on her assumptions about students' abilities and on traditional approaches to curriculum development.

Creativity may be stimulated in all the participants as learning activities and materials are developed together. The teacher, along with the pupils, may learn to structure inquiry in new ways. The approach enables the teacher and students to have more personal contact which may have positive consequences for learning and for resolving conflicts, particularly if the teacher has empathy and respect for students (Freese and West, 1972; Buxton and Pritchard, 1973).

Although sharing control over the selection of content and methods of inquiry, the teacher will undoubtedly have more influence over decisions than the students by virtue of her interests, education and experience. However, the teacher's concern should not be with transmitting the meaning she has found in a subject area, but with helping students find their own meanings. Her effectiveness as a teacher is likely to be judged in those terms but one should not disregard the impact of her enthusiasm for a subject area which can be contagious. The interests and values of the students and teacher may be compatible or in conflict. However, one need not assume that conflict is irreconcilable. The values which underlie the selection of subject matter or activities may well become the subject of discussion and negotiation.

These planning procedures may resemble those followed by graduate students planning their research projects with their supervisors. The suggested procedures are indeed similar but there are significant differences in what may be expected of high school students during the process and as outcomes. One could reasonably expect of the graduate student less trial and error, more confidence, independence and self-direction, than of the adolescent in high school. A reasonable assumption is that the learning process at the high school level is much more cautious, involving more trial and error and requiring more assistance from the teacher. This view of learning as a tentative process allows for making mistakes and for gradually acquiring new knowledge and skills.

b) Curriculum implementation. Implementation is the component of curriculum development concerned with putting plans into action. It is "The means by which the curriculum is put into operation at the classroom level" (Soliman et al., 1981, p. 47). It is contingent upon further decisions and activities, including compiling sources of information, selecting learning materials, deciding on the mode of working (in groups or individually), deciding on the time to be spent on a project, deciding on how information will be collected, recorded, analysed or interpreted, and deciding on how and to whom it will be communicated.

The availability of human and material resources, and the time and effort required for implementation may involve changing plans during implementation. It is the recognition of these changes which leads Harrison (1981) to distinguish between the operational and the intended curriculum. Thus the initial plan needs to be regarded in a tentative light, subject to modification during implementation.

Curriculum implementation in the sense of mediating teacher selected subject matter through pre-determined methods, activities and materials, does not apply in the interactive model. Implementation is more likely to be what Bernstein (1975) calls an "invisible pedagogy" where the teacher shares control of the learning situation with the students. Table 2.1 contrasts the invisible with the conventional visible pedagogy.

Implementation is often identified with instruction (Pines, 1982) which is taken to include not just an expository form of teaching but also group work, work with various audio-visual media, and independent or individual study. Pines maintains that implementation is concerned with "how" which, in his view, is designated as instruction and instructional planning and should be distinguished from curriculum planning. This distinction is not made in the interactive model.



INVISIBLE

1. Teacher's control over pupil is implicit - (e.g. teacher gives general guidelines).
2. Teacher arranges context which pupil is expected to explore and re-arrange (e.g. equips classroom with large variety of resources).
3. Within this context, the pupil has wide power over what he selects, how he structures and paces his activities (e.g. pupil initiates learning, asks questions).
4. Pupil regulates his own movements and social relationships - (e.g. to attend classes, join a group).
5. Reduced emphasis on transmission and acquisition of skills (e.g. late/flexible introduction of reading).
6. Multiple and diffusive evaluation criteria and not easily measured (e.g. infrequent, subjective assessment of learning).

VISIBLE

- Teacher's control is explicit (e.g. teacher states specific rules).
- Teacher arranges context compatible with what he intends to teach.
- Teacher selects content, activities, and their length and location and resources.
- Teacher regulates activities, determines groupings (e.g. teacher-determined time table, class groups).
- High emphasis on basic skills (e.g. early teaching of reading).
- Specific evaluation criteria (e.g. frequent, objective assessment of learning).

Table 2.1 Bernstein's invisible-visible pedagogies  
(Smith, 1979, after Bernstein, 1975)

The separation of curriculum and instruction made by Pines and others (Johnson, 1967; Beauchamp, 1972) raises some difficulties. For one thing, if the distinction is rigidly upheld, the possibility that the curriculum planner may be someone distinct and removed from the person who implements the plans is raised. There may then be differences of interpretation which could conceivably lead to outcomes far different from those intended by the curriculum planner (Fensham, 1980).

Also if one were to uphold the distinction then planning for the implementation of the curriculum would be excluded. This position is opposed by some theorists such as Beauchamp (1961) who, like Pines, upholds the distinction but maintains that one section of the curriculum plan should include a clear statement of the use to be made of the curriculum which implies formulating, at least, an implementation policy. This policy would guide the translation of the curriculum plan into a course of action in the classroom. This proposal is much like that of Stenhouse (1975) who maintains that, among other things, a curriculum should offer "Principles for the development of a teaching strategy - how it [the curriculum] is to be learned and taught" (p. 5).

The separation of curriculum and instruction is also untenable if curriculum is conceptualized as more than a body of subject matter to be transmitted. This is the viewpoint argued by Tanner and Tanner (1975) who maintain that separation of curriculum and instruction - "the doctrine of dualism" (p. 36) - excludes the processes or the methods of inquiry which have produced existing knowledge and which should also be the concern of teaching. In their view, the curriculum must incorporate the ways and means knowledge is produced, otherwise one is only teaching the knowledge which has already been produced (the product) not how knowledge is produced (the process). They quote Bruner's (1966) argument in support that "Knowledge is a process, not a product" (p. 72).

Implementation is also used to indicate the process of changing existing practice "to some new or revised practice (potentially involving materials, teaching, and beliefs) in order to achieve certain desired student learning outcomes" (Fullan and Park, 1981, p. 10). This definition is closer to the terms "innovation" and "change" rather than the conduct of teaching and learning activities with which implementation is more conventionally associated. It is not used in this latter sense in the interactive model. However, implementation of the model in a conventional system would depend on changing existing practice.

c) Curriculum evaluation. In the interactive model curriculum evaluation is regarded as a component of curriculum development, a view which receives wide support (Beauchamp, 1961; Wheeler, 1967; Daws, 1981). It is taken to mean both "the collection and use of information to make decisions" (Cronbach, 1963, p. 672) about the curriculum plans, and judgement of their worth and value. It also includes judgements about the effectiveness of the planning and implementation process, and the performance of groups and individuals in relation to their goals.

Criteria to be used for judging the progress of individuals and groups and the outcomes of activities are formulated interactively. The ongoing dialogue during planning and implementation would yield a substantial amount of feedback of an evaluative nature. Conventional and unconventional evaluation techniques (such as tape recording of discussions and videotaping of activities) could be used to collect data on processes and outcomes. Evaluative activities would be regarded as an ongoing part of interactive curriculum development and not as the last step in a linear sequence of activities.

Evaluation of the students' progress and achievement is usually referred to as assessment which has a diagnostic rather than judgemental connotation, e.g. assessing a student's strengths and weaknesses. However, the traditional purpose of assessment is to provide students with knowledge of their performance with regard to the content of a course and to award them with a certificate of intellectual competence in a subject (Heron, 1981). Thus both diagnosis and judgement are involved. It is a difficult task for teachers because it is the role most easily equated with the exercise of power, with control over another person, with classifying and selecting students and with determining social relationships between students and teacher. Assessment is too often reluctantly exercised in a unilateral way to satisfy parents or institutions of further education.

In interactive curriculum development, however, alternatives are envisaged to unilateral assessment. Collaborative assessment, self and peer assessment, may be used to redistribute power and responsibility for decision making (Heron, 1981). In collaborative assessment, the students assess themselves in the light of criteria agreed upon with the teacher. The teacher assesses the students by means of the same criteria and they then negotiate and agree on a final assessment. In self-assessment, the students formulate their own objectives, plan their own programs and perform the appropriate tasks, and assess their work in terms of their objectives and criteria. Peer assessment involves receiving feedback from one's peers on one's performance, to balance and refine self-assessment. In the interactive model the students and the teacher would decide on using one or more of these methods.

The most difficult part of assessment "is deciding which criteria to use" (Heron, 1981, p. 66). Heron attributes this difficulty to the prevailing authoritarian system which discourages criterion-based thinking. He nevertheless believes that students can be helped to develop this ability. A suggested strategy involves each person generating criteria and through sharing and discussion formulating sets of criteria for assessing projects to which everyone subscribes. This strategy emphasizes common standards and would be appropriate for schools which are accountable to the wider community for standards. Where students have difficulty formulating criteria, the teacher may present them with her own list, discuss each item, encouraging students to raise arguments for and against, propose modifications, deletions or amendments, and continue the discussion until there is general assent. In Heron's experience, once these interactive processes are underway, students "show an authentic conscientiousness and thoroughness" (1981, p. 66) in the way they handle assessment.

Collaborative assessment is the most appropriate strategy in the context of the interactive approach. Decisions over the

function, method, criteria, frequency and timing of assessment could be made collaboratively. It is important to emphasize that collaborative assessment does not minimize the role of the teacher. It also does not assume that the students have already developed to the level of autonomous self-directed learners, accountable primarily to themselves for the personal values realized through learning.

#### Outcomes of interactive curriculum development

The outcome of the planning process may be designated as a tentative curriculum "plan" or curriculum "design" whose final form emerges through implementation. The plan is viewed as emergent rather than received, and contingent upon the interests, knowledge and values of the participants. There may be more than one plan if the members of a class work in several small groups rather than as one large group. The terms plan and design are synonymous, however, Pratt (1980, p. 5) maintains that design has a connotation of "a greater degree of decisiveness and precision" which "plan" does not have and connotes a greater degree of form and structure in the product. This may or may not actually be the case. Whichever term is used, it should be recognized that the plan is based on the decision makers' beliefs, values, needs and aspirations, and may include long and short-term goals, content (in terms of subject areas, facts, concepts, principles and questions), descriptions of activities, projects, and resource materials.

Both terms suggest that a deliberate effort is made to identify and realize the intentions of the participants. What emerges is tentative, subject to change but not arbitrary or haphazard in that it is a plan, having a certain form and structure.

The view of curriculum as a tentative plan implies, however, that the teacher's and students' work may be closer to

that of the artist, as Eisner (1979) suggests when he states that curriculum decisions may be made by "considering options as they develop, by 'reading' the situation, by exploiting the adventitious and by allowing intentions to grow out of action rather than by requiring them to precede it" (p. 41). This process is implied by the notion that the details of the curriculum emerge through further interaction.

The interactive view neither over-emphasizes the role of teachers in decision making nor does it exclude them. Over-emphasis is implied by narrow definitions of curriculum as a course of subject matter. Eisner (1979) notes that the focus on subject matter is the traditional concept of curriculum since the term is derived from the Latin word "currere" meaning the course to be run. Pinar (1976), however, points out that the focus of the curriculum developer may, nevertheless, be on the existential experience of the runner rather than the course because the ultimate significance of the educational event is determined by what the student makes of it. The interactive model attempts to build on these experiences.

There is implicit in the above subject-based definition a restricted view of education which excludes the learning of social skills and decision-making skills. One can agree with Eisner (1979) that a school cannot function without some kind of program, but its planning need not exclude the students.

Curriculum defined as a tentative plan formulated interactively does not exclude a concern with purposes or goals which is Johnson's (1967) concern in his definition of curriculum as "a structured series of intended learning outcomes" (p. 130). The former definition accommodates the view that teachers and students may together intend certain outcomes and work to achieve them. The view that goals should be formulated at the classroom level receives support from research on the implementation of curriculum projects developed away from

the school, which shows that in many cases the outcomes planned and intended by the project developers are not attained in the classrooms because changes occur during the passage from planning to implementation (Fullan, 1982).

The result of interactive curriculum planning is a plan which is socially constructed and likely to include what has been called an "extra curriculum" or that which students may otherwise learn outside the classroom perhaps in the home, through contacts with peers, other adults and the mass media (von Moltke, 1976, p. 88). There are some advantages in producing the curriculum plan in the form of a written document. It constitutes a written record of plans and allows the participants to more easily monitor their plans for continuity and integration, criteria which may, if adhered to, impart a sense of coherence to separate activities. A written record of plans also allows for easy comparison of the implemented or actual curriculum with the intended one, and easier appraisal of achievement over time. Furthermore, the written document enables the participants to more easily account for and describe their intended and actual activities to educational authorities and parents if they are called upon to do so.

The time period which the curriculum plan should cover is difficult to specify if one does not wish to constrain the scope of activities in an arbitrary way. Planning for shorter time periods is, however, more manageable than for long ones and provides more frequent opportunities for appraisal of processes, activities and outcomes. Such opportunities may be necessary particularly when the interactive model is being implemented for the first time by an inexperienced teacher and frequent modification in plans may be desirable.

The outcome of implementation is the actual or the operational curriculum which may differ from that which the

teacher and students intended and planned for a number of reasons. The plans may have been too ambitious or too complex to carry out; there may be unanticipated difficulties due to lack of material or human resources. Without such problems, the outcome of implementation could be gauged by the activities conducted and the projects completed within and outside the school. (The outcome of implementing the model in terms of personal development will be discussed in Chapter III in relation to justifying the use of the model).

The outcome of formative evaluation could be the recording of group discussions and the completion of questionnaires which could account for changes made in the plans during implementation. The outcome of summative evaluation could be judgement of projects or work completed on the basis of criteria previously determined in a collaborative way. It could also consist of profiles of individual students describing the work planned and completed, including portfolios containing examples of the students' work.

#### The Decision-Making Process in the Model

Each component of the interactive model involves the making of decisions. These may be made with the teacher and small groups of four or five students, or the teacher and one large class group. The nature of the process and the roles of the teacher and students will now be examined in more detail.

#### Nature of decision making

To say that curriculum development requires decision making is to imply that the participants in the process resolve to take some form of action in order to achieve a purpose or goal. This resolve to act may involve making a choice between



alternative courses of action. Making a curriculum decision could, therefore, be equated with choosing. However, this is not quite the case. Choices may be based on immediate likes or dislikes, they can be spontaneous, thoughtless, impulsive or habitual (Taylor, 1961, p. 37). Decisions, however, imply choices based on reason, deliberation, thought, on the blending of desire with an appraisal of the likely consequences of the choice.

Decision making is often compared with problem solving. Some see no significant difference between the two processes (Fisher, 1974), while others point to distinctions. One could argue that curriculum development is concerned with the problem of what and how to learn. Gulley and Leathers (1977) maintain that "all problem-solving groups make decisions, but not all decision-making groups solve problems" (p. 223). Decision-making behaviour seems to involve behaviour of a broader scope than problem solving and relates both to the procedures employed and the content of the decision. Problem solving seems to be the most appropriate term to apply to situations for which there is a possibility of finding a correct or best solution on the basis of external and objective criteria. (Mathematical problems are examples of this type.) Situations where the "problem" to be solved involves questions of value and unverifiable facts, are not amenable to a correct or best solution. Nevertheless, these too are decision-making situations. Examples of the latter type include decisions made by voters deciding on the candidates to fill a political office, or decision making about a curriculum in terms of what to learn and how to learn it.

The value based decision making which seems to constitute curriculum decisions (see Chapter IV) is better described as "deliberation", particularly when the activity is that of a group rather than an individual. Certainly, many writers on the teacher's role in curriculum development, support the view that

an essential feature of curriculum decision making is deliberation (Schwab, 1969, 1973; Fox, 1972; Walker, 1971, 1975; Gough, 1978). The terms used to describe deliberation include negotiation, debate, discussion, collaboration, argument, all processes through which the participants

... learn something of the concerns, values, and operations which arise from each other's experience, to honour them, and to adapt and diminish their own values enough to make room in their thinking for the others.

(Gough, 1978, p. 35)

All decision makers operate within the context of situations which have social, political and economic dimensions. Kallos and Lundgren (1976) designate these as "frame factors", or as determinants of the curriculum which operate at macro, meso and micro levels of decision making. Such factors would need to be considered when considering implementation of the interactive model in a specific context. (See Chapters V and VI for the significance of the context.) Situations and the influence of frame factors do, of course, vary a great deal, as do people's perceptions of them (Smith, 1983), but they should never totally determine a decision or there would be no freedom and hence no decision to be made. Freedom to decide is linked with freedom to act. Decision-making power is manifested in action. If decision making is to have more than symbolic significance it cannot be separated from the responsibility and authority to act. If the two are separated and if the decisions made by one group, say the students, can be overridden by another, say the teachers, then the real decision-making power lies with those who have the power to implement or reject a decision.

Curriculum decisions, therefore, do not depend on finding the "correct" answers to the questions of what to learn and how

to learn. These are perennially controversial questions because there is no generally accepted agreement on the answers to them. Curriculum decisions are fundamentally based on values which require social acceptance and commitment for their implementation. The group setting is favourable to this type of decision making. It encourages the social testing, critical exchange and the reinforcement of ideas, all of which lead to more effective implementation of a decision (Fisher, 1974). Whether or not the group process results in better or higher quality decisions depends on the nature of the decision. Fisher (1974) notes, "If a group performs a task which an individual could just as easily perform, the group cannot surpass the efforts produced by its most competent individual member" (pp. 40-41). It can, however, be argued that a group context can lead to more effective curriculum decision making, and curriculum decisions are of the type which benefits from a group context.

Fisher's (1974, p. 39) research indicates that the social dimension the group provides offers more information sources, capacity to divide labour, social conflict, critical analysis and the demands of consensus which give the group advantages over individuals in curriculum decision making. Maier's (1978) summary of research on the merits of group decision making supports Fisher's claims. Maier also found that a group approach is advantageous if a decision requires the support of others. If more people participate in decision making, more feel responsible for implementing the decisions. The members of the group "not only understand the solution because they saw it develop, but they are also aware of the several other alternatives that were considered and the reasons why they were discarded" (Maier, 1978, p. 200).

Since responsibility is shared by members of the group, the group is more likely to take risks in decision making than an individual (Maier, 1978) which could be an advantage for

curriculum decision making. Also, individuals deciding on an issue alone may deceive themselves, whereas in a group, the members can prompt self-reflection, provide challenge and encourage critical testing of ideas, all important factors in learning.

The group setting, however, has some disadvantages in terms of generating disagreement and conflict of interest, and requiring more time to arrive at a decision. Another disadvantage accrues from the degree of pressure the group can exert on the non-conformist member. In the larger social system the non-conformist is not as visible as in the small group. Fisher (1974) refers to experimental studies which show "that an individual can seldom withstand the social pressure to conform" (p. 102). The pressure is apparently greater when there is no single correct decision to be made or "when social agreement is the sole means for validating one's opinion or belief" (Fisher, 1974, p. 102). Since curriculum decisions appear to be of this type, the teacher has to be on guard against the pressure to conform in a group and to offset this pressure by maintaining a sufficiently critical milieu for the testing of ideas, which is the strength of the group setting by means of adopting a critical attitude during curriculum development and also encouraging the students to do the same.

Assuming that curriculum decisions are best made in a group context, one may ask what methods should be used by group members and how should they behave when making decisions? Does research on group dynamics offer any guidelines for implementing the interactive model?

a) Methods used in decision making. There are a variety of methods that groups use in making a decision (Gulley and Leathers, 1977, p. 224), including i) consensus of the entire group, ii) majority view, iii) decision by a minority, and iv) averaging of individual opinions of group members. Of these

the last method may not involve face-to-face interaction of all the members of a group and actual deliberation of the alternatives before the group. The third method implies that less than half of the group members may support the decision which reduces the chances of implementing or acting upon it. The first two methods are time consuming but they make the most of the group's resources and dynamics and are the most likely to produce high quality decisions.

These two methods, by which group members reach consensus or at least a majority view, can take the needs of most members into account and involve the most interaction. They are, therefore, of the most interest for this study. But they are not simple processes, and as Fisher (1974) notes, there is a considerable amount of evidence available on "how members try to exert influence on each other during various periods of interaction; how members' communicative behaviours occur in interstructured patterns during interaction" (p. 129). Research into group processes shows the ways in which "groups balance social-emotional needs as persons and the task assignment of the group" (Gulley and Leathers, 1977, p. 113). During this process, the work of the group progresses through identifiable phases.

b) Phases in decision making. The literature on the processes involved in decision making by a group is extensive and it is not within the scope of this study to review it all. The descriptive models surveyed identify at least three phases. These include an initial phase of orientation during which members adjust to each other and familiarize themselves with the task at hand. An intermediate phase includes some social conflict among members engendered by differences in ideas about the tasks at hand and about social norms. The final phase includes resolution of conflicts, achievement of consensus and validation of decisions.

Gulley and Leathers (1977) note that some researchers describe the phases as though progression was of a linear, step by step nature (Tuckman, 1965), while others have noted a cyclical (Bales and Strodtbeck, 1951) and a spiral pattern (Scheidel and Crowell, 1964; Fisher, 1974). Fisher's (1974) descriptive model extends the findings of Scheidel and Crowell (1964) who found that decisions in groups develop cumulatively in a spiral and not a linear sequence. Of the models surveyed, Fisher's seems the most appropriate model for the behaviour of group members during the implementation of interactive curriculum development.

Fisher found that a decision emerges as members achieve consensus on a proposal by means of a communicative process whose effectiveness depends on the behaviour of group members. This perspective on decision making implies that one can affect a group's decision making by changing communicative behaviour and patterns of interaction rather than one's position in a group (i.e. as student or teacher). This perspective promotes a positive attitude towards the prospect of achieving effective decision making, since behaviour (e.g. decision-making skills) is more amenable to change than personality or role.

Fisher identifies four types of interaction patterns characteristic of decision-making groups: i) orientation, ii) conflict, iii) emergence and iv) reinforcement, each with its own communicative behaviours (1974, pp. 140-145). During the orientation phase, members of a group get acquainted with one another, express ideas and attitudes in a tentative and ambiguous manner and are reluctant to commit themselves to any decision proposals. The teacher could expect this early during the curriculum planning phase.

As individual students start proposing ideas the group moves into the conflict phase. Students become more definite and willing to dispute ideas and proposals as they are

... now aware of the direction the group is taking toward their decision-making task and of the relevant decision proposals which are emerging from the group deliberations. Thus members express either a favourable or an unfavourable attitude towards those decision proposals.

(Fisher, 1974, p. 141)

Coalitions are also formed during this phase, favouring and opposing proposals. The ideas which may eventually form a part of the group decision are introduced during the first two phases, and critical testing and exchange of ideas is at a maximum level during the conflict phase.

The adoption of a critical or a "vigilant" behaviour pattern, which the teacher could model, (Janis and Mann, 1977) enables group members to better cope with decision making. Vigilant behaviours include assessing values and objectives, canvassing a range of alternatives, searching for information, considering and assimilating it, and committing oneself to a planned course of action. Concomitant with the willingness to adopt such "vigilant" behaviours is a recognition and avoidance of defective strategies, which include complacency about seeking new courses of action, being uncritical about adopting a recommended course of action, trying to evade the decision process and believing that there is not enough time to search and deliberate.

There are fewer unfavourable opinions expressed during the emergence phase, and social conflict and dissent, characteristic of the former stage, gradually dissipate. Ambiguity, however, re-emerges, and members once again express ambiguous opinions about decision proposals. These opinions function as a form of modified dissent expressed by those group members who are in the process of changing their minds from disfavour (in the conflict phase) to favour. In Fisher's words, members who

... have already committed themselves to a stand of opposition in the conflict phase ... cannot be expected to change their opinions so abruptly. Thus, their dissent changes to assent via ambiguity.

(Fisher, 1974, p. 143)

The coalitions present in the conflict phase also gradually dissipate, mediated by the expression of ambiguous comments. Decision and agreement begin to emerge.

Dissent and social conflict all but vanish in the reinforcement phase. Group members express favourable opinions to the proposals and a spirit of unity pervades the interaction pattern.

c) Decision modification. In addition to identifying these phases Fisher found that in the course of a group's achieving consensus, a process of "decision modification" occurs in a "start and stop" manner. This is often frustrating to group members as the discussion seems to be "going around in circles". The group seems to be failing in its efforts at decision making as group members

... modify, reject, accept or combine previously introduced decision proposals. ... Sometimes a proposal is reintroduced several times, each with further modification. Thus, groups achieve consensus on decision proposals not in a consistent evolutionary pattern, but, rather, in spurts of energy.

(Fisher, 1974, p. 145)

The basis of the group's judgement often seems non-rational in the sense that if a new item of information is introduced when the group has already established its position and is in conflict with this position, the new information tends to be rejected and considered of inferior quality even if it is not. Obviously the timing of contributions is an important factor in their acceptance.



All the stopping and starting, extension and revision, abrupt changes of topics, and brief spurts of intensive interaction seem to be normal group behaviour and account for the spiral label. The techniques used seem to be mechanisms for managing the social tension generated by the intensity of the group processes particularly during the conflict phase.

One should avoid despair over the apparent slowness of group decision making. Slowness is actually an advantage because it allows members "time to develop new ideas and reformulate earlier proposals" and it "encourages creativity from group members" (Fisher, 1974, pp. 186, 190).

Sensitivity to group processes also needs to be developed for effective participation, e.g. sensitivity to the various phases of interaction to enable group members to time their contributions appropriately. For example, Fisher (1974) found that:

The point in time at which an information item is introduced is sometimes more important than the quality of the information itself. ... It is vitally important that members submit information to a comprehensive discussion of the proposals relatively early in the group interaction. Information takes on its greatest significance in the Conflict phase during which members cannot so easily dismiss it on nonrational bases.

(p. 174)

This level of sensitivity is only acquired through experience of the process of group decision making. As Fisher notes, "The more experiences and the greater variety of group experiences will lead inevitably to more effective group participation" (1974, p. 181). Therefore, lack of experience in decision making, which may be the reason for denying students the opportunity to participate, may effectively prevent them from learning the required skills.

d) Effect of social conflict. Conflict is often viewed as an impediment to decision making, and if it is not to be avoided outright it should at least be "managed" so that it does not become excessive and lead to debilitating, destructive outcomes. The literature on organizational development provides techniques for "conflict management" (Schmuck et al., 1977). The techniques suggested for dealing with conflicts are sensible and useful, but the incentive for using them stems from largely a negative perception of conflict. One may, however, regard conflict positively, as Fisher (1974) does, as a process through which individuals grow and develop, and as a natural, communicative behaviour among members of a group which leads to the making of better decisions.

At least two types of social conflict may be observed in the communicative behaviour of group members, intergroup and interpersonal conflict. While the latter is more relevant to interaction in a classroom, intergroup conflict may also occur with the formation of subgroups or coalitions. The development of such subgroups during decision making seems to be "inevitable and should be fully expected as a normal occurrence" (Fisher, 1974, p. 117). In Fisher's experience, the social conflicts arising from group coalitions are

... generally temporary and revolve around a specific issue or group of issues. The normal process of achieving group consensus gradually merges the coalitions into the unitary whole of the group.

(p. 118)

The basis of conflict, whether intergroup or interpersonal, is significant. It may be affective, the result of emotional clashes due to personality differences and thus the more disruptive and destructive of group cohesiveness; or, it may be substantive, involving opposition over the intellectual content of ideas or issues pertinent to the group's task. Conflict of a substantive nature is socially constructive but it is not always easy to discriminate between the two types.

Social conflict of either type is at least a sign of interaction which one must have for the development of any social system. It serves a therapeutic function in providing an outlet for hostility. Fisher observes that "The more inhibited group members are in expressing their feelings, the greater the frustration they experience due to their suppressed conflict" (p. 111). Honesty and candidness are also characteristic of effective communication, while the suppression of ideas and true feelings, "create[s] hidden agendas which can only disrupt the effective function of the entire group" (Fisher, 1974, p. 192). Negative feelings may become ingrained, leading to apathy and dropping out. As one sheds inhibitions about expressing negative feelings, one develops stronger ties to the group. Thus the expression of social conflict may build social cohesion.

Fisher also found that if members of a group consistently respond to each other's decision proposals with conflicting opinions or dissent, the successive re-introduction of proposals follows a certain pattern. Each subsequent proposal is at an "equivalent level of abstraction" (p. 151) as group members try to persuade each other to agree or change their minds. But if proposed decisions are received with little dissent, the process of decision modification follows a different pattern and each new proposal is "slightly more concrete than the rest" (p.151). So one can gauge the level of latent conflict in a group by the nature of the modifications proposed. When interpersonal conflict is present, members perceive their task as one of persuasion to secure agreement; without conflict, it is one of seeking or discovery.

At its best, social conflict can lead to decision modification, productivity and better decisions. This is because

... conflict over ideas causes groups to search for more alternatives and thereby improve the quality of group decisions. Conflict, then, serves as a stimulus to critical thinking and stimulates members to test their ideas.

(Fisher, 1974, p. 112)

The presence of social conflict affects the behaviour of group members in additional ways. It can lead to consensus. A simple agreement by vote, for example, does not necessarily mean a group has achieved consensus. Fisher maintains that consensus should be gauged by the degree of personal commitment members feel towards a decision. In his words, "The essential ingredient of consensus ... is the extent of group loyalty shared by members" (p. 125). Commitment grows as conflict is sustained and played out, and commitment leads to the implementation of decisions.

e) Role of negotiation. The teacher and the students, or the students among themselves, can learn to resolve conflicts through the process of negotiation. Negotiation is an obvious way of resolving conflicts in decision making, but some researchers perceive it to be of even greater significance, namely, as a key process in social interaction and, in its various forms, as a mechanism for social control in schools (Martin, 1976).

There are many definitions of negotiation, however, Morley's (1978) seems appropriate in relation to the interactive model. He defines the term "as a process of joint decision-making involving verbal communication about the issues involved" (p. 177). Negotiation is based on the assumption that the negotiators have different preferences about the action which might be taken and that their motives may be mixed (e.g. the teacher may favour cooperation as well as competition). The negotiators are guided by their expectations of what the other will accept and negotiation therefore involves talking things over before doing anything.

Pre-conditions for negotiation seem to be that negotiation be made available and that none of the negotiating parties should have the ultimate power, or wish to resort to power, in order to resolve the situation to his or her benefit. Martin (1976), however, distinguishes "closed" from "open"

negotiation, and the difference seems to lie in the willingness of one side to use some available power in a situation. "Closed" negotiation consists of specifying at the outset the course of negotiation and its possible outcomes. If, for example, the teacher indicates that certain aspects of the curriculum content are negotiable and others are not, she is offering closed negotiation. Such power relations are treated rather superficially by Boomer's (1982) proposal for negotiating the curriculum in that he expects to "empower our students" from a position where teachers "have ultimate power", and are held to be "responsible for teaching" (p. 3). The context he refers to is obviously a system which gives the teachers the most power, and in this system, when this power is used, negotiation tends to be of the closed kind.

Martin's (1976) study indicates another interesting aspect of negotiation. Teachers regarded students as "non-negotiable", "intermittently negotiable" or "continuously negotiable" and these perceptions were based on the students' behaviour. Students who were perceived as rebellious, undisciplined, aggressive, passive or unmotivated were non-negotiable and the degree of negotiability was not determined so much by status as by the degree of social distance maintained between teacher and students. Thus a model of decision making and communicative behaviours which may reduce social distance could increase the likelihood of effective negotiation.

The outcomes of negotiation may include compromise, or one side wins the other loses, or both sides are winners. Of these, the third outcome is the one most desirable for decision making in interactive curriculum development.

Compromise is undesirable because, as Fisher (1974) observes, there is a tendency for group members to escape from conflict through compromise. By turning to compromise too soon,

the problem which created the conflict is not discussed thoroughly and differences are not resolved. The compromise may depend on one side giving in, rather than both sides giving in a little, which reduces its commitment to implement the compromise decision. For similar reasons, the second outcome - one side wins - usually the result of a majority vote, is also undesirable. The last outcome, where both sides are winners, is achieved through reaching a position of consensus.

f) Arriving at consensus. The research reviewed on group dynamics in decision making dispels unrealistic expectations of smoothness, orderliness and calm in the decision-making process. Social conflict appears as natural to and as a positive aspect of the decision-making process. This does not imply that conflict is to be encouraged outright, or that its negative impact should be ignored, or that no strategies and techniques should be developed for dealing with it and for reaching consensus.

Consensus in decision making may be more easily achieved if the decisions taken are perceived as applying for only short periods of time and opportunities are built into the planning procedures for periodic redefinition of the bases on which future decision will be made. This provision allows for changes of interest or goals. It also leads to perceiving the decision-making process as a recurring group task based on changing expectations and a realistic appraisal of what has been achieved.

The process of seeking consensus in arriving at a decision may have positive side effects. It may encourage students "to consider the issues more deeply, to analyze their information more thoroughly, to listen to one another's opinion more closely and thoughtfully" (Stanford, 1977, p. 184). The ideas and opinions of all members are therefore more likely to receive serious consideration.

The achievement of consensus results in cooperative effort because in the process of seeking it, areas of agreement

and disagreement are sought out and clarified, the area of dispute is narrowed and the field of acceptability is enlarged (Pace, Peterson and Burnett, 1979, p. 164).

Consensus reached after the resolution of conflict and dissipation of adhering social tension would generate commitment to the decision and its implementation. Consensus means that there are no winners and losers and consequently no alienated or bitter group members who may feel that decisions are forced upon them by a slim majority. As a result there is no resentful minority group coalition with incentive to sabotage the work of the rest. Stanford (1977) notes that "Once the group becomes even moderately skilled in the consensus approach, aggression, discourtesy and hostility drop to much lower levels than in majority rule with its struggle to 'win' " (p. 184).

#### Process goals in decision making

In order to develop appropriate interpersonal relationships which influence communication and decision making (and thus the implementation of the interactive model), the participants should have knowledge of and work towards achieving dialogue between the members of the class, the full participation of the students and their collaboration with the teacher. These may be considered as the process goals of the interactive model.

a) Dialogue. Interpersonal relationships are developed and maintained by communication. Dialogue, a deep and honest form of interpersonal communication, suggests mutuality and reciprocity in social relationships: "In dialogue, each person has a deep concern for the other and both parties assume responsibility for the relationship" (Pace, Peterson and Burnett, 1979, p. 27). Dialogue involves a "symmetrical relationship in which neither person is "over" the other or in a "one-up" position" (Thomlinson, 1982, p. 49). Dialogue rules

out rigid distinctions in status between the participants so that a line of argument may not be imposed by virtue of being initiated from a person in a high status position. If it is imposed, dialogue is destroyed. In dialogue social distance between participants is reduced because dialogue is "one-to-one interaction in which we can be ourselves without feeling the need for a facade or the need to hide parts of ourselves" (Thomlinson, 1982, p. 23). Thomlinson contrasts dialogue with "monologue" or "monologic interaction". Monologue is communication "which at its extreme involves manipulation and exploitation of others and at its least involves more concern for self than for the transaction" (p. 23).

The key concept in effective communication is sensitivity to the existence of the "other", and, congruent with this view, Thomlinson (1982) characterizes dialogue in terms of four dimensions: other-recognition, other-acceptance, other-awareness and other-expression. Dialogue, therefore, includes recognizing and appreciating the unique individuality, equality and basic needs of others; accepting others in an unconditional, non-evaluative and non-manipulative manner; being intensely aware of, having empathy for the feelings, thoughts and perceptions of others; and actually communicating in a genuine and supportive way a recognition and acceptance of ourselves and others.

When described in this way, dialogue is obviously more an attitude or a philosophy of communication than a set of skills to be cultivated. It would be difficult to achieve and maintain a consistently high level of dialogue in terms of the dimensions outlined above. Indeed, Thomlinson maintains that the achievement of dialogue in interpersonal communication depends on a process of growth at the intrapersonal level towards greater self-understanding, and at the interpersonal level towards greater understanding and acceptance of others, as a result of conscious choice, effort and experience. The interactive model provides opportunities for such growth.



b) Participation. Another process goal of the interactive model is the direct full participation of students in curriculum decision making. It is worthwhile to examine the meaning of this concept because it is often used rather indiscriminately to describe relationships which are, in fact, dissimilar in the way authority and control are distributed among group members.

To say that the ideal is "full" participation suggests that there are degrees of participation. Havelock and Huberman (1978) distinguish six levels of participation in relation to decision making. The levels extend from a most rudimentary level of "being aware" of the existence of or knowing about a decision, through four successively higher levels, to full participation at the sixth level, where one has a say in all the decisions as one of the decision makers. Participation at the sixth level is the ideal in the operation of the interactive model.

In this study, participation is defined in relation to decision making as taking part in a thoughtful, deliberate and responsible way with intellectual and emotional assent. Havelock and Huberman consider "being aware" as a "gateway to higher levels of participation" (p. 203). It does not, however, entail having a part or a say in decision making. It may be better regarded as a prerequisite for participation rather than as a level of participation. Full participation is also a far cry from "being informed", the authors' second level of participation, or with being consulted or involved, terms which are sometimes used interchangeably with participation. Being informed that a decision will be, or has been made, or being informed of the facts pertaining to a decision, may be necessary for effective decision making but it does not imply joining in or being responsible for the decision. Similarly, although being consulted implies the valuing of opinion, it does not imply sharing in the activity of decision making. By consulting people we open ourselves to their influence but we can still

keep control over decision making. Being involved also does not entail full participation. One may, for example, be involved in an activity without a conscious act of will, as in an automobile accident where one is present as a passenger but not responsible for the driving. In such involvement there is no intellectual or emotional assent to the activity. Neither is there such assent when one is physically forced to participate or some other coercive techniques are used to override a genuine voluntary intellectual and emotional assent.

The third level of participation cited by Havelock and Huberman is "representational consent" (p. 203), which consists of having a voice in selecting those who will be directly participating in decision making as representatives of the electors. At this level one moves closer to decision making but does not directly participate as in a referendum or plebiscite - the fourth level. Representational consent would be required in electing a student for a curriculum committee. It is synonymous with "indirect participation", (Richardson, 1983, p. 11), the means by which people take part in decision making without involving personal interaction. At the fifth level, "vicarious participation", the persons involved are party to the decisions they identify with the decision makers and agree with the decisions made even though they do not actually make them. Full participation or "direct" participation, the sixth level, involves face-to-face interaction and, in relation to decision making, actually taking a decision. Richardson draws attention to a simple point which some people fail to appreciate, namely that "The activity of participation is not synonymous with the activity of taking decisions" (p. 19). Students may, for example, be invited to participate in discussion about a decision but not actually participate in decision making.

Even participation in decision making may become a symbolic ritual if those who make the decisions are not given the power to implement and act upon them. When that happens, the people who thought they were interacting as full

participants in decision making may find their status has been changed to that of consultants.

In relation to the students' role in decision making in schools, a distinction may be drawn between involvement and participation. Figure 2.3 contrasts involvement (positions A and B) and participation (positions C and D) in curriculum decision making where T represents teachers and S students. The role of the students, initially the receivers of decisions, changes from position A to D, from one of no responsibility to shared responsibility, from passivity to increasing activity, with the ideal relationship in the interactive model being represented by position D.

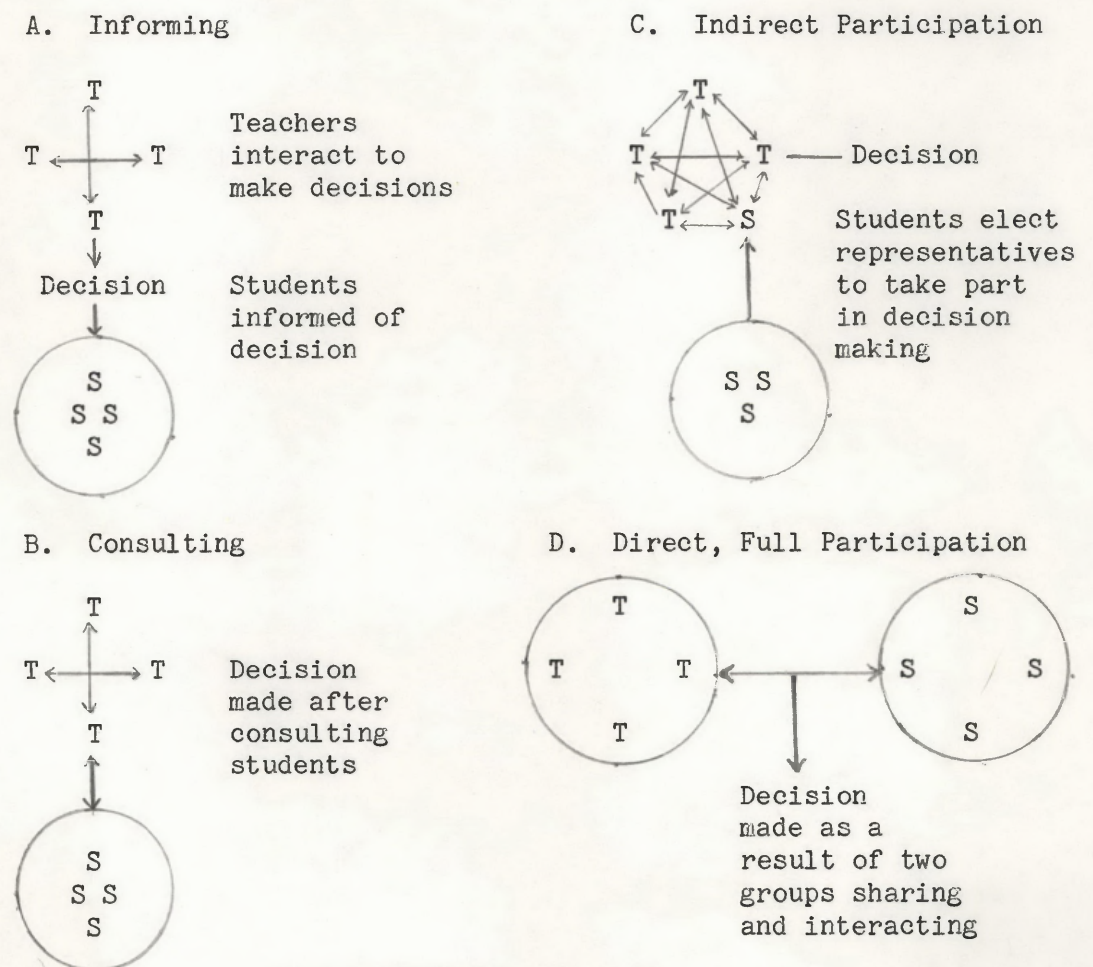


Figure 2.3 Involvement and participation in curriculum decision making

c) Collaboration. The term collaboration also characterizes the desirable relationships of the participants in interactive curriculum development. The concept connotes a conscious, intentional activity involving communication and a joint effort in deciding on a course of action.

A collaborative relationship may be described as one in which the participants agree about goals and work together in mutually supporting ways. The relationship may be described as interdependent so that achievement depends on the contribution of all the participants. Interdependence, in turn, suggests a reduction of social distance among the participants since it is difficult to remain aloof from a person one depends on. Effective collaboration probably depends on a recognition that all the participants have something of value to offer and a feeling of commitment and sense of responsibility to carry out designated tasks.

In collaborative decision making there is interaction at a social level as people discuss issues and work together. There is also "verbal collaboration" in the sense that "Each party borrows words and phrases and structures from the other, combines them, adds to them and elaborates them" (Moffett, 1968, pp. 72-3). In addition, there is "cognitive collaboration" in the sense that "we are incorporating the point of view, attitudes, ideas and modifications of ideas of our partner, even if we openly reject them" (p. 73). Collaboration in curriculum decision making may, therefore, promote development on three fronts: "the social art of conversing, the intellectual art of qualifying and the linguistic art of elaborating" (Moffett, 1968, p. 92).

#### Basic Requirements of Teachers and Students

Thus far the chapter has described the components of the interactive model and indicated how planning, implementation and

evaluation could be conducted in a collaborative way with both teacher and students having an input. The nature of the decisions required with respect to each component was also indicated and the likely decision-making process outlined. The goals which should guide the decision-making process for the effective operation of the model were also delineated.

In the course of the discussion some aspects of the teacher's and students' roles were described and some were implied. This section will attempt to identify and summarize what is required of them for the effective operation of the model, in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. It should be borne in mind that while one can talk about these concepts separately, in persons and in their actions they are obviously inter-related.

### Knowledge

In order to contribute effectively to the operation of interactive curriculum development the teacher would obviously have to understand how curriculum development can proceed in an interactive manner and have an image of her own role and that of the students' and what their performance entailed. She would also need to understand the nature of group processes, of group decision making and the nature of her own influence on each. In relation to effective group decision making, membership is not sufficient for either the teacher or the students; "a knowledge and understanding of the process of group decision making is absolutely essential for effective membership" (Fisher, 1974, p. 126).

The best way to acquire this knowledge is through experience and trial and error, but the initiative to acquire it must come from the teacher since implementation would depend on her. Thus she would have to be predisposed to try out the

model. Of course, information either by way of inservice or preservice training may influence her predisposition.

Knowledge of the students is another requirement; knowledge of their aspirations and expectations, beliefs, interests and biases. The best way of getting to know students is by interaction with them, which may be done informally through conversation, or formally through interviews, questionnaires or surveys.

The teacher would need to be knowledgeable about a wide range of subject matters, and knowledge of how and where to locate information and resources would also be required. (The importance and function of knowledge of subject matter in the operation of the model will be discussed in more detail in Chapters III and IV). Initially, the students would probably be dependent on the teacher's knowledge for planning learning activities, collecting and preparing resource materials, co-ordinating materials with various types of inquiry and allocating learning activities to appropriate settings. But gradually, the students will acquire the prerequisite knowledge and these tasks can be increasingly shared with them. Through the sharing of such activities, curriculum planning and learning become concurrent processes.

### Skills

In relation to the skills required for the effective performance of roles it is possible to distinguish curriculum development skills from communication skills and interpersonal skills.

a) Curriculum development skills. Curriculum development skills required of the teacher include engaging students in planning by helping them formulate and link goals to personal

concerns; proposing possible goals; helping students define problems or formulate study questions; encouraging them to critically reflect on and evaluate goals, problems and questions, plans and projects. The students' role includes nominating areas of study, stating preferences, deciding what counts as a personally worthwhile project, presenting proposals for projects, setting high but realistic goals based on self-reflection.

In relation to curriculum implementation and evaluation the teacher should be prepared to help students judge the feasibility of carrying out projects in terms of time, cost, demands on other people and on resource materials; she should be able to help individuals and groups coordinate ideas and activities and provide information and ideas for projects and methods of inquiry, and for the presentation of projects; she should also be able to suggest criteria for assessing completed work and to criticize constructively.

The participation of students in curriculum development would be contingent on acquiring knowledge and experience on how to plan their own work individually or in groups, and on their level of self-esteem and self-reliance.

b) Communication skills. Communication is the basis of interactive curriculum development and communication skills are essential for its operation particularly in relation to interpersonal communication, for negotiation in decision making and for the achievement of consensus. At the interpersonal level, the skills to be developed are those associated with dialogue. While dialogue is more an attitude than a set of skills, some guidelines for acquiring skill in the linguistic dimensions are suggested by Thomlinson (1982) and Pace, Peterson and Burnett (1979). These include using language which is descriptive instead of evaluative, making observations instead of inferences, avoiding stereotyped distinctions, being

supportive rather than generating defensive reactions, not creating social distance between people, and recognizing personal responsibility for actions and beliefs instead of placing blame or generalizing.

The teacher can also model negotiating and consensus seeking behaviour which could include encouraging the participation of all students, drawing them out in discussion, encouraging honest expression of criticism or negative views and feelings; reflecting ideas, opinions and feelings, clarifying meaning; helping to identify areas of agreement and summarizing ideas.

c) Interpersonal skills. Communication skills and interpersonal skills (i.e. skills for relating to people) are very closely linked and are, of course, dependent on one's attitudes. Thus, while it is possible to isolate and identify attributes which may be classified as skills at the conceptual level, in reality they are manifestations of certain attitudes, of a certain level of concern, of awareness, of a philosophy of human relations. These can be expressed in language and gestures and may be characterized as nurturing, supporting, caring, accepting, helping, praising, being accessible and available, encouraging, reinforcing, being candid and honest. The onus for modelling these attributes is on the teacher because her behaviour is the significant factor in influencing interpersonal relations in the classroom. She can nurture independence and self-reliance by helping students internalize self-direction and reassuring and counselling them in their efforts.

### Attitudes

The attitudes which support the suggested roles can be identified but the incentive for their development in the teacher is probably contingent on previous socialization and



current motivation or predisposition. The incentive for their development in the students is probably in the model the teacher provides, and the behaviours she rewards in the classroom and the support she receives from the family and peers.

On the teacher's part, respect for students is obviously required if curriculum development is to be conducted in collaboration with them. Respect for students extends to respect for their knowledge. Such respect does not, however, mean unquestioning acceptance and does not rule out regard of students' knowledge as problematic in the sense that it is a particular way of making sense of the world which makes it possible to ask certain questions and not others. Thus the teacher takes a critical attitude and poses the questions the students may not think of.

For dialogue to occur the teacher and students should each see the other as persons rather than as people in roles. Empathy is required to regard events and issues from each other's point of view.

The teacher should be willing to collaborate and deliberate with the students and be convinced that it is worthwhile to do so. She needs to be committed to the group and group processes. She needs to have a non-ageist attitude in the sense of being unwilling to discriminate against students because of age or to use age as a criterion for excluding or including them from an activity. Optimism and a willingness to take some risk are required in believing that students can develop ability and responsibility for decision making, and in trusting them and letting it happen.

The teacher should be prepared to accept that students will inquire into areas where she does not know the answers, and that her role will be increasingly that of a helper, a resource and a co-investigator rather than the person in authority. She

should have a positive attitude to conflict, that it can lead to growth, but also a consensus orientation as a goal of group decision making.

The students' role parallels the role of the teacher in many respects in that they should be interested and willing to participate actively, express ideas and feelings fluently, criticize honestly, and assume increasing responsibility for the goals and manner of their learning. These attitudes are contingent on other positive attitudes towards the self: esteem for one's knowledge, skills and interests and confidence in one's ability to develop further.

Attitudes determine how teachers and students approach their individual tasks and each other as persons. Their relationship influences and is influenced by how they communicate with each other. Relationships also determine how effectively they interact in decision making for curriculum development. Thus, it can be said that interactive curriculum development is contingent on interactive relationships at several levels.

#### Developmental Sequence for Implementation

Walker (1979) maintains that in current American practice curriculum development includes at least three enterprises: curriculum policy making, generic curriculum development and site-specific development. Policy making is concerned with the establishment of criteria, guidelines or limits. Generic curriculum development includes "the preparation of curriculum plans and materials for use potentially by any students or teachers" (p. 269). Site-specific development includes the curriculum decisions taken at individual schools.

The interactive model could, to some effect, be applied to decision making at each of these levels. For example, the model could be applied in a limited way at a system level in as much as students could elect representatives for committees planning curriculum policy. Similarly, some students could participate in generic curriculum development, however, their participation would not necessarily lead to the production of a curriculum reflecting the interests of the individuals concerned.

More students could be involved at the school level where the model may be implemented for planning a school's curriculum policy. However, the most direct participation of students would be at the classroom level. Here the scope of decision making may be circumscribed by subject areas and guidelines designated by a state education system for specified year levels, or the curriculum may be based entirely on student-teacher interaction in a school operating independently of state regulations.

The participation of students and of teachers working with students in curriculum development at any of these levels, would require time and experience to acquire the knowledge and skills which could be translated into effective interactive curriculum development. Research on self-directed learning (Scobie, 1983), and on student behaviour in alternative schools (Chapter V) suggest gradual implementation of the model. Therefore, a developmental sequence for implementation will be discussed and illustrated.

A developmental sequence means that the model is put into action gradually as teacher and pupils acquire experience, as knowledge, confidence and skills develop and as supportive relationships are established. The differences between the teacher and students in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and experience could, on balance, favour the teacher so that the teacher's degree of responsibility and contribution and the

quality of her participation would most likely be greater and higher initially than that of the students'. As the students progress through the conventional six years of secondary school, their level of participation in all aspects of curriculum development would increase, and the teacher's gradually decrease. A possible developmental sequence is illustrated by Figure 2.4.

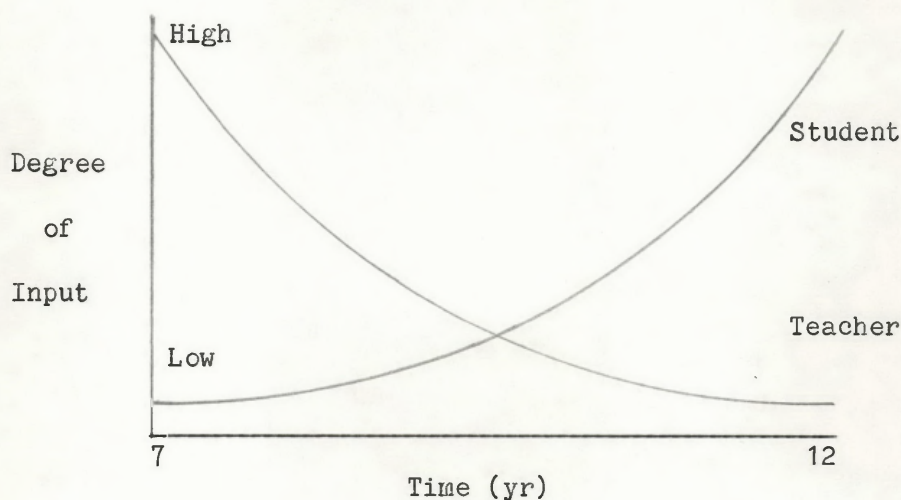


Figure 2.4 Developmental sequence for curriculum development

Initially the students are dependent on the teacher for initiating activities at each phase of curriculum development, planning, implementation and evaluation. The teacher's input and responsibility is also much greater. Gradually the students' input and responsibility increases and dependence on the teacher decreases.

A developmental sequence is justified because it takes time for a collection of individuals to develop into a group. Research studies indicate (Stanford, 1977; Shaw, 1981) that just as an individual goes through successive stages of development in a lifetime so, too, a group undergoes successive changes in developing into a productive working unit. Individuals have to become acquainted with each other, trust is

developed, communication channels established, norms for the future worked out, ways of resolving conflicts agreed upon, and goals for individuals and the group established. Time is also required for learning to deal with the processes involved in curriculum development and with the socio-emotional dimensions of a group's operation (Gulley and Leathers, 1977). Time and experience are required for parallel psychological and social development and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes indicated as necessary for effective functioning of the interactive model.

#### Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to develop a model for interactive curriculum development as the first part of the theoretical component of the study. An overview was presented of the model, followed by an analysis of the processes involved in curriculum development, from the perspective of student/teacher participation in each task. Group decision making was identified as the key process in curriculum development. Research on the nature of group decision making was reviewed and its implications for interactive curriculum decision making were derived. The process goals of decision making were also described. Basic requirements of the teacher and students for the effective operation of the model were discussed and an argument presented for its gradual implementation based on the development of appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes. The following chapter addresses the issue of why students should participate in curriculum development and presents a theoretical framework in justification of their inclusion. Chapters V and VI will consider the general and specific conditions required for the model's implementation.