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Curriculum Policy Enactment and Spaces of Change: A Bourdieuian Field Analysis

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Curriculum Policy Enactment and Spaces of Change: A Bourdieuian Field Analysis

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Abstract

Education reform is inevitable as governments grapple with a rapidly changing and uncertain world. Under the broader agenda of education reform sits curriculum reform, with much contestation about what curriculum should 'look like'. Should it be centralised, decentralised, nationalised, denationalised, and state-based or school based? The merits and demerits of these various models are frequently debated. The issue of curriculum reform is further complicated by the structure of education systems. Who has control over the decision-making process is a central tenet of the debate. How schools interpret, enact and experience curriculum change is an important component of curriculum reform as they ultimately deliver what policy makers and governments create. This thesis consequently attempts to capture this vital aspect of the complicated curriculum change process by examining the enactment of the Australian Curriculum in one case study school in Queensland, Australia, using the theoretical resources of Bourdieu.

Methodologically this study draws on socially critical qualitative research through a Bourdieuian lens. Data has been generated through semi-structured interviews with the school management team and the teachers involved in the first phase of the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, complemented by observations of staff meetings and Professional Development sessions. Field notes were generated during these observations as well as during data analysis while in the field. Documents such as the national curriculum along with school based official documents in relation to the curriculum enactment have also been utilised.

The main argument of this thesis is that agents are engaged in a process of position-making during this stage of transition to the Australian Curriculum. A transition phase of reform enactment, although confusing at times, provides a greater scope for position-making. This is because the agents at the local level mediate the change by analysing their own contextual requirements. A reflexive *habitus* is a critical component in the position-making process. It is at the initial stage of change enactment where the *habitus* of agents tends to favour the previous practices while the *field* demands a change as any change in policy tends to change practices by creating the condition for its enactment. However, the *habitus* responds to and mediates the change in the *field* by creating the conditions of its own fulfilment. This reciprocal and dialectic relationship between the changing *field* and the *habitus* creates the conditions for position-making as agents tend to change their practices not only in accordance with the reform but also in relation to their existing practices. This study explores how the school provides opportunities to bridge the gap between the *habitus*

of teachers and the new demands of the *field*. It is this mediating capacity of the habitus, which is reflexive and adaptive, that brings an incremental change in practices.

At the same time, the contested nature of the national curriculum reform created tension in the *field*. The analysis in this thesis explored agents' position-making on notions like 'what is national'; 'what has changed' and 'how do the objective guidelines inform practices?' At the enactment stage of the reform, agents understood the reform at two different levels: the 'interpretational' level of understanding appears well aligned with the intended reform; whereas the 'translation' of the reform into practices created confusion. Different views and contested thinking emerged about the nature of the reform being national and the change in practices. Some teachers saw the reform as prescriptive and hence providing a clear direction for their teaching, while others view it as restrictive for their pedagogical practices. Such confusion and debates at this stage of change enactment indicate that the school and the agents are making their position as they practice the reform.

The thesis is focused on the initial phase of the Australian National Curriculum enactment. Although this is an initial stage of reform enactment, it is nevertheless a critical one because agents are in the process of position-making in a changing and evolving field. The data for this study shows that the school is in the process of analysing its situation, evaluating its position, and negotiating and mediating the change. Classroom teachers are in the process of applying, reflecting and adapting to a changing field. Moreover, curriculum agencies are seeking clarification of their roles and responsibilities at national and state level (Savage, 2016). Thus the curriculum policy field is evolving, with agents taking up the reform, analysing their contextual needs and mediating the reform. Throughout the conduct of this study, curriculum policy reform in Australia was unsettled amid a shift of power to the federal level. In other words, this thesis captured position-making in a changing field while it was in process.

Declaration by author

This thesis is composed of my original work, and contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference has been made in the text. I have clearly stated the contribution by others to jointly-authored works that I have included in my thesis.

I have clearly stated the contribution of others to my thesis as a whole, including statistical assistance, survey design, data analysis, significant technical procedures, professional editorial advice, financial support and any other original research work used or reported in my thesis. The content of my thesis is the result of work I have carried out since the commencement of my higher degree by research candidature and does not include a substantial part of work that has been submitted to qualify for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution. I have clearly stated which parts of my thesis, if any, have been submitted to qualify for another award.

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Publications during candidature

Conference abstracts

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Contributions by others to the thesis

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None.

Research Involving Human Subjects

This thesis has utilized data from a school including the school management team and teachers through interviews. The school of Education Ethical committee approved an application for *Ethical Clearance for Research Involving Human Participants.* The Ethical Clearance Number is 15-001 and is attached in Appendix B. At the school level, application for *conducting research in Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment sites* was approved by the principal of the participating school. All participation was voluntarily - participants were provided with detailed information sheet about the project before their consent was sought. Moreover each participant gave their consent to participate by signing a consent form (information sheets and consent forms are attached in appendix C & D).

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Keywords

Curriculum enactment, education change, reflexive habitus, changing *field*, position-making, Bourdieu's theoretical resources

Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classifications (ANZSRC)

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ANZSRC code: 160809 Sociology of Education, 30%

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1301 Education Systems, 50%

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Dedicated to:

My father (A. R. Baig) for the dream you had for me.

My mother (Neera) for the path you chose for me.

My husband (Ali) for walking with me on that path.

My son (Alhan) for being in my life.

Table of Contents

List of Appendices

List of Abbreviations used in the thesis

AC	Australian Curriculum
ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
AEC	Australian Education Council
ALP	Australian Labor Party
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DET	Department of Education and Training
QCAA	Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority
EQ	Education Queensland
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States

Chapter 1: Introduction

Education reform is inevitable as governments grapple with a rapidly changing and uncertain world. Under the broader agenda of education reform sits curriculum reform, with much contestation about what curriculum should 'look like'. Should it be centralised, decentralised, nationalised, denationalised, and state-based or school based? The merits of these various models are frequently debated. The issue of curriculum reform is further complicated by the structure of education systems. Who has control over the decision-making process is a central tenet of the conversation too. How schools interpret, enact and experience curriculum change is an important component of curriculum reform as they ultimately deliver what policy makers and governments create. Curriculum, when it interacts with the local context, becomes complex, involving positions, dispositions, and power-relations. Agents compete for the valuable *capitals* in the *field* and there are contestations as well as consensus on what is possible. The purpose of this study is to explore this complexity in the enactment of the Australian Curriculum at one school using Bourdieu's theoretical resources of *field, habitus and capital*. The study does not aim to determine a standard curriculum management procedure at school, but to try to understand the diversity, creativity and complexity of curriculum enactment in one school and how such complex processes contribute towards achieving the goal of a national curriculum. This thesis consequently attempts to capture this vital aspect of curriculum change by examining the enactment of the Australian Curriculum at one case study school in Queensland, Australia.

The primary aim of this chapter is to locate the research topic and myself as the researcher within the context of the study. I do this by using three frames of reference. I use my personal frame of reference to explain my motivation for exploring the topic of change and transformation. Then, I use my professional frame to explain my observations and assumptions on the effects of education in a society. Finally, I use a theoretical frame of reference to outline the choice of Bourdieu's field analysis in trying to make sense of change in education in general and curriculum reform in particular. I end this chapter by outlining the organisation and significance of this thesis.

Locating the researcher and the research

> *One cannot talk about such an object without exposing oneself to a permanent mirror effect: every word that can be uttered about scientific practice can be turned back on the person who utters it. (Bourdieu, 2004, p. 4)*

As Bourdieu indicates, one cannot talk or construct the research without personal reflection and self-interrogation. The life experiences of a researcher influence the way the research is done. As a researcher, I am a socialised body in the *field* (Wacquant, 2011). The relationship between what I do and the philosophical position that I take is consequently problematic (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000). However, a conscious and reflective philosophical stance can help to address this issue. It is the socio-analysis which is an understanding of how I, as an active agent, am a social product and historically evolved embodied entity (Bourdieu, 1990a). Using Bourdieu's notion of reflexivity, I bring forth my background, assumptions, and perceptions about the social world that I inhabit and embody. My aim is two-fold. First, I want readers of this thesis to appreciate it from 'a' perspective that is influenced by my personal background. Second, I do this so I can consciously reflect on the 'how' and the 'why' of what I do (Pillow, 2003). The three frames of reference outlined here are: my personal frame of reference through time and space; my professional frame of reference of being in the discipline of education and finally the theoretical frame of reference as me using Bourdieu's theoretical resources.

Personal frame of reference: The unstable terrain of life

The question from my personal life is 'why I do this study on education change and curriculum reform?' There is no one right answer to this but to put it into frame, I will use my personal narrative for my interest in change and social transformation. Education is the predominant factor in the change process that I went through in my life. As a woman from a developing country like Pakistan, I have encountered many deviations in my personal journey through the time and the spaces that I have travelled. In terms of time, I grew up in the 1980s in Hunza, a small mountain valley to the extreme north of Pakistan. It was an interesting time as the effects of globalisation were making their way to this part of the country, while the rest of the country was on an entirely opposite path of religious conservatism. One of the effects of globalisation in Hunza was a push for girls' education. Interestingly and unlike the general notion that religion, and particularly Islam, in today's world is against female education, this move to modernisation and education was religiously inspired. The spiritual leader of the *Ismaili Muslim community* (constituting almost 99% of Hunza population), The Aga Khan III advised his community worldwide to educate their girls and prepare them for a changing future. His famous saying I heard was: 'if you have two children: a boy and a girl and if you can only afford education for one, then give it to your girl child'. This was in a context and time when poverty was a big issue and parents could not afford education for every child.

This was an era of opening up spaces for girls in education and gradually, later on, their entry into the work force. Having access to education is one thing, but having the means to do it is another. This transition to modernisation was challenging, messy and with meagre resources due to poverty. My

primary school, *Diamond Jubilee School (DJ school)*, sponsored by the Aga Khan III in the 1960s was the only school for girls. The government school was a boys-only school with better facilities. The DJ school consisted of only one room accommodating 6 classes at one time. It had a wooden floor without any furniture but mats to sit on. This room would buzz with the sounds of students in the harsh winters. However, the balcony and the two sandy courtyards were luxuries in the summer days. Blackboards, dusters, chalk, textbooks and even teachers were shared across classes and between students. Pedagogy was traditional: chalk and talk method with corporal punishment. Reading was my hobby. The school had no library but there was one in the village with very limited books. Reading was in my home culture too, because of my eldest brother. He would receive free magazines and borrow 'Digests' from his friends. The small library, the magazines and digests would quench my reading quest. After school and on holidays, my childhood was busy with house chores and helping my parents on the farm. I remember taking my school bag with me to do my homework and reading while looking after the cattle in the forest on holidays.

As I grew up I had responsibilities to take care of my siblings, from baby-sitting to financial support. At home I had to be a helping hand to my parents. In the community, being an educated girl, I was expected to preserve the traditions and culture. An 'educated girl' would be expected to be successful in education, be a professional in the work force, actively participate in and contribute to community rituals and traditional festivals. With the limited resources the transition to the modernised world was a triple-burden for women like myself. McNay (2000) terms it a process of 'de-traditionalisation' which is full of confrontations and conflicts, and a case of transformation and social change. Personally, for me and for many women like me, such changing expectations of the society created a '*field* dissonance' (McLeod, 2005) or a 'non-correspondence' of the *habitus* to the *field* structure (McNay, 2000) called *hysteresis* by Bourdieu (1977). In other words, the traditional society norms embodied in the *habitus* was a mismatch with the changing expectations. According to McLeod (2005), such a field dissonance gives rise to reflexivity as a way of living in the contemporary world characterised by the detraditionalisation and new arrangements of gender. Such changing roles compelled me to re-arrange, re-adjust and adapt to the new expectations which involved struggles and obstacles. The detraditionalisation of gender roles (McNay, 2003) increased women's responsibilities leading to a 'triple burden' (Gupta, Kemelgor, Fuchs, & Etzkowitz, 2005) – care for the family, raising kids and also being professional. While my reflexive adjustment through time was relatively smooth, the contextual or cross field dissonance was not always so.

During the 1980s-90s, while my village life was going through this process of de-traditionalised gender roles, the rest of Pakistani society was moving towards a religious conservatism influenced by the more dominated Sunni Muslim ideology. At the age of 17, I moved to Islamabad, the capital

of Pakistan, for my college and further university education. The city life was probably a retrospective journey in time. As opposed to the global trend of women's empowerment, here I realised that men and women are subjected to different life experiences. Women's movements and liberties were more restricted. Girls' education was not the priority; instead their marriage was. The male-female segregation was also very obvious. Girls were expected to have minimal interaction even with close male relatives; whereas traditionally I would shake and kiss (a traditional greeting) each other's hands, regardless of gender and age. The society in the city was more suspicious of people and also felt threatening in terms of males' aggressive attitude. The traditional as well as the changing or non-traditional roles – such as a relatively open male-female interaction and women's empowerment – that I was trying to embrace, was halted.

Moreover, I found the dominant religious ideology of the wider society not as tolerant for diverse beliefs, ethnicity, as well as languages. Being an ethnic minority, it was hard to talk about my background and belief system. So after moving to the city as an active and passionate girl, soon I found myself as passive, lacking confidence, unable to interact and make friends. I adjusted to the new society by choosing out of necessity to remain alienated. However, now that appears a temporary adjustment as it did not last for a life time, and instead instilled in me a critical disposition in questioning the socially constructed norms and traditions later in my life. Since this move to the city was my initial experience with an 'outside' world, it was thus a transition phase of change which presented a greater capacity for position-making that I will elaborate more in the final chapter of this thesis.

The non-correspondence of the *habitus* to the new *field* thus created instability or *hysteresis* (Bourdieu, 1977) from the crossing of different fields (McLeod, 2005). Many feminist researchers (Adkins, 2003; Lovell, 2000; McLeod, 2005; McNay, 2004) agree that the late modernity detraditionalised (or social transformation) world of gender presents a case of a misfit of *habitus* to the *field* – a case of social transformation. Based on my personal experience of the social world and its transformation or a detraditionalisation of gender roles, I found myself in constant refraction, reflection, adjustments and re-adjustment in the new configurations. Bourdieu (1990a, p. 116) argues that 'habitus can, in certain instances, be built … on contradictions, upon tensions, even upon instability'. It is in this context of post modernity and its changing circumstances that a possibility of social change through engaging and re-engaging with new expectations, standards and norms emerge.

Professional frame of reference: From access to inequalities in education

In my village it was normal for me to see every child going to school every day, despite poverty. However, in the general Pakistani society, I realised that education is not accessible to everyone but

was unequally distributed. It created a distinction between the education 'haves' and education 'have nots'. The education haves had relatively better life standards than the have nots. Those who were not able to afford education were trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty. At this point in time my reality was constructed (Ball, 2006) around this binary of education haves and have nots. I was not able to see any other reality such as the inequalities within the education system until further exploration of literature and particularly engaging with Bourdieu's concept of *'reproduction'*. Bourdieu challenged the perception that schooling is a means of social reform and equality. Bourdieu's work on *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (1990c) made a significant contribution to understanding the role that schools play in reproducing social inequalities. The school systems, according to Bourdieu, reproduce the dominant culture by legitimizing certain norms and values. It is the culture of the dominant group which is embodied in school. Children come to school with varying degrees of 'cultural *capital*' and with a distinct relationship with the dominant culture, and varying dispositions towards schooling (Bourdieu & Zanotti-Karp, 1968). Thus the cultural *capital* in the school is unequally distributed and the bourgeois culture serves the purpose of the school conserving the social hierarchy (Wacquant, 1998). In this way certain students are marginalised and the educational system 'maintain the pre-existing order, that is, the gap between pupils endowed with unequal amounts of cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 20). The school codes and communication system is accessible the children from certain classes but not for others.

Moreover, my profession being in education for a decade contributed further to education being a good service to humanity. As a Teacher Educator in a private organisation, I was helping teachers improve their pedagogy according to the changing nature of education in the world. As part of my Masters in Education (M.Ed.) research component I conducted a survey on how professional education in Pakistan was contributing towards teachers' professionalism, including their attitude towards changing and improving pedagogical practices. The thesis, along with my practical experience with teachers in the classroom, led me to observe a rather weak link between 'education in theory' and 'education as practiced' within the practical realities of the classroom. To further explore this relationship of education change in theory and in practice intrigued me to pursue my PhD.

Another contextual change in my life was a move to Australia. In my professional life being a student in the education department, I came closer to the Australian faculty and the course content which then influenced my choice for PhD studies here in Australia. When I came to Australia, my initial impression was that being a multicultural society equal educational opportunity was available to all which was true at one level but with embedded inequality. The fact that schooling is accessible and available to every child and that by law everyone has to complete schooling, presents another 'reality'.

This structural equity masks the embedded inequalities and irregularities. It was through the readings, discussions, attending seminars and lectures and tutoring that gave me the opportunities to explore and understand the inequalities in education. Reading and reflecting upon the new Australian national curriculum alongside Bourdieu's concepts, I realised that curriculum development has a high political influence. Politics is predominantly a Caucasian Anglo male dominated field in a multicultural society here in Australia. This has implications for a national curriculum as to how a curriculum for a multicultural population is defined and developed and whose interests are being served. For Bourdieu, the world is characterised by power relations and socially critical research attempts to dig beneath the surface by asking 'whose interests are being served and how' (Tripp, 1990, p. 56) in the social arrangements. With such an observation and understanding of a different reality within education, Bourdieu's field analysis was used to explore spaces of change and improvement.

Theoretical frame of reference: Field Analysis

Thus the 'reality' around change in my personal life and educational experience was complicated yet inter-related. The initial reading of Bourdieu's concepts of 'reproduction' and 'inequalities' in the education system were confronting for me in the sense that I could only imagine education as 'the good' service that was contributing to human life in a positive way. Such a confrontation led to curiosity as to why Bourdieu and other academics argue that education and schooling is a system of 'reproductive inequalities'.

As I read Bourdieu's concepts with amusement to try to understand why and how education is creating inequality through reproduction, I found that Bourdieu's notion of reproduction through *field* and *habitus* is not deterministic but is dynamic and evolving. I could relate my personal and professional life experience to this dynamism of reproduction as well as 'change' and thus moving and going. I was exposed to a different level of analysis and point of view. Hence I opted to utilise Bourdieu's field analysis, particularly his concept of an evolving *field* and a reflexive *habitus*. Bourdieu's theoretical resources are helpful in exploring and explaining change or transformation. The link between education in theory such as curriculum reform and education as practiced such as that experienced when the reform is introduced in the context of schooling presents a case of transformation and reproduction at the ground level. Thus this project is an attempt to examine the complexity of the change process vis-à-vis the *habitus* of teachers or school management team as 'lived experience' (McNay, 2004) in the curriculum enactment process.

I used Bourdieu's concepts in this study because they are not a 'rigid framework' but theoretical resources with a capacity to extend and explore these concepts in relation to changing times and with empirical studies. Many academics (such as Crossley, 2001; Crossley, 2003; McNay, 2000; Noble &

Watkins, 2003; Sweetman, 2003) have extended the original idea of Bourdieu's *habitus* being 'generative potential' and have added the idea of a 'reflexive *habitus*' in a changing, post-modern society. Thus the use of Bourdieu's theoretical resources are useful to see the theoretical significance of curriculum enactment in relation to changing practices. In this study, based on Bourdieu's original idea of agents' position-taking and position-taking strategies, I use the concept of agents' position-making particularly at an initial transition phase of change or during crisis or *hysteresis*. Thus I used Bourdieu's theoretical resources to 'deconstruct' and 'reconstruct' the generated knowledge and contribute to the *field*.

Bourdieu's theoretical resources in the form of a dynamic *field* and reflexive *habitus* are to locate and describe the happenings in a context in relation to the wider educational *field*. However, Bourdieu strongly rejected the binary division of theory and practice, instead suggesting they be explored in relation to each other (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). The case of curriculum enactment in a high school is unique in the sense that every school has a different context: be it physical; school culture; community composition; historical; external influences; internal dynamics; the *habitus*; perceptions and practices of school agents are all context specific. The local context and factors constitute the logic of practice of schools which are complex, contingent and specific to its context (Rawolle & Lingard, 2015). The curriculum reform in its theoretical form, on the other hand, requires a common understanding of the reform by all educators. Thus the question: how does the changing rules of the field shape and effect the logic of practice at the ground level? Or to put it another way: how does the logic of schooling practices manifest the intended change in the curriculum?

Field analysis suggests that the practices and the derivations of these practices in a particular *field* can be explored in relation to the logic of the *field* and the inter-relations of different *fields*. The acquisition and (re)production of *capital* in a *field* is not equal. The set of dispositions or embodied *habitus* coupled with the interest associated with the social position 'inclines agents to strive to reproduce at a constant or increasing rate, the properties constituting their social identities.' (Bourdieu, 1988, p. 176). It means that agents' actions are not purely individualistic because they play the game as per its logic. Hence it is important that in order to understand the social world one needs to understand the logics of practice that are determined by the positions that agents occupy in the *field*. A field analysis can explain the effects that policy changes bring upon the social *field* and is manifested in the institutional and agents' practices. Bourdieu's field analysis, specifically the logic of the *field* of policy enactment, is explored to provide an insight into curriculum reform and how it influences practices in a school given that the school and its agents have positions, dispositions, and forms of *capital* in circulation along with exerted external influence. In this regard it is pertinent to ask: how can the curriculum policy *field* change the practices of a school, its teachers and school

management in specific ways? How does the local context influence these policy changes? What kinds of opportunities and constraints do these policy changes bring to the local *field* of the school? The next section will shed light on the problem of curriculum reform and the significance of this study.

The purpose and significance of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore the enactment of a national curriculum in the junior section of one State High School in Queensland using Bourdieu's theoretical resources. This study is not to determine a standard curriculum management procedure at school, but to try and understand the diversity, creativity and complexity of curriculum enactment at the school level and how such complex process contributes towards achieving the goal of a national curriculum. Like many curriculum reforms, the current reform in Australia is criticised for reflecting the influence of political actors more than catering for the local context. For instance Carrington, Deppeler, and Mioss (2010) argue that the current curriculum reform in Australia has heavily relied on politically driven short term aims. Spillane (2004) fears that an active involvement of the federal government makes the reform vulnerable to global influences and may not cater for the local needs. Thomson (2005, p. 745) argues that curriculum from the national level is to create a 'uniform medium of communication' which for Bourdieu (1990b, p. 80) is a form of codification. Bourdieu (1990b, p. 83) criticises such codification for it 'ensures calculability and predictability over and above individual variations and temporal fluctuations'. This study examined how schools mediate, enact and contextualise the national curriculum using the available opportunities and resources to facilitate this change. It is an attempt to present the multiple realities that educational reform present in today's changing and uncertain world. Fullan (2007) argues that education change is a process of getting hold of the 'multiple realities' of the practitioners as the main participants in implementing it. The following section analyses the problem and the significance of this study.

The study is timely: The unsettled ecology

This study is significant because it is timely to be looking at the topic of curriculum enactment in its early phase of enactment. The study focussed on the enactment of the Australian Curriculum in its initial phase, officially 'Phase I' of the enactment process. The initiative of a national curriculum in 2008 by the state and territory ministers through the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* was endorsed for implementation in the year 2011. The study focuses on the first phase of the implementation of learning areas such as English, Mathematics, Science and History in the secondary section (grade 7 to 10) of a high school in Queensland. The shift of power from a state-based to a centralised curriculum is huge and evolving, particularly in this early phase. While

the Queensland government accepted and vowed to implement the curriculum as it became available for schools from the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), some schools, including the case study school, immediately adapted it and others used a 'wait and see strategy'. In this way some schools were in a privileged position to access and adapt the changes directly from the ACARA website while others faced a struggling situation. This shift of power also created some confusion over the roles and responsibilities of the state-based curriculum authority. Savage (2016) argues that an uneven power-relation between the federal and the state governments is on the rise as ACARA holds a central position in the national curriculum. These kinds of changing terrain and re-positioning of states and schools in the policy and development process sit within an emerging ecology with 'conflicting views, uneven power relations, overlapping roles and responsibilities and hazy decision-making process' (Savage, 2016, p. 15). Agents at the local level are in a position-making process using trial and error, wait-and-see or 'jump on the bandwagon' strategies.

A contribution to theory: Moving the field forward

While this research makes an empirical contribution, it also moves the *field* forward. As will be discussed in the final chapter of this thesis, the construction of taking/making a position/problem aligns with Bourdieu's suggested mechanism for how social and cultural reproduction occur but also simultaneously things change. For instance, as an extension of Bourdieu's assertion that agents develop a certain disposition by taking a certain position in the *field*, this study has a stance that agents are in the process of position-making in a changing *field*. This position-making is very obvious at the transition phase of change when agents' *habitus* tend to reproduce the previous practices while a change in the *field* demands a change in the *habitus* – a mis-match of *habitus* to *field* structure. For Bourdieu, such early experiences of change have particular weight because the *habitus* tends to ensure its own constancy and its defence against changes through the selection it makes (Bourdieu, 1990a). It implies that the *habitus* being inclined towards the existing practices makes selection at the early stages of a changing *field*. It is also at this initial stage of change and as the field evolves, that the agents in the *field* are in the process of position-making by experimenting or using trial and error or a wait and see strategy. Another contribution of this study is its empirical contribution towards the 'generative capacity' of the *habitus* through a reflexive *habitus* as opposed to the general critique on the notion of reproduction as a vicious cycle.

Original contribution to knowledge: Teachers' voices

The study is making an original empirical contribution to educational change and its enactment using field analysis. Although this is a very early phase of the curriculum reform covering a minor period

and one element of 'Education Revolution' in Australia, as the introduction of a national curriculum (to be discussed in Chapter 2), it is nevertheless a critical phase. This stage as a transition phase illustrates and depicts the new policy field while experiencing the changes, progressing and at times experiencing setbacks and moving forward. Savage (2016) states that although the 'new ecology' is not a settled one, it is evolving and debates are unfolding. There has been much confusion occurring during this time period at school level. In such an unsettled ecology and as debates unfold, problems faced, solutions sought, it is important to include school level voices, otherwise as Savage (2016) warns, states including schools and teachers will remain only the implementers and the federal government's hold on curriculum will be strengthened. It is teachers' sphere of authority and their knowledge of the local context that influences the implementation, reproduction, ownership and transformation at the local level (Kirk & MacDonald, 2001). The extent that schools and teachers own and embrace the reform, make sense of the curriculum, is to move beyond the written text by mediating and negotiating the needs of their learner and the context. Moreover, such mediation and sense making depends largely upon how the teachers have been involved in the process (Kirk & MacDonald, 2001). In such an unsettled ecology of curriculum reform in its early stages, the agents make their position, thus a position-making that adds to the value of field analysis.

I believe that the change or re-structuring of the *field* presents possibilities and opportunities for changing practices. At one level practices are changed to align them with the new expectations of the changing *field*. Yet at a different level, it is the teachers' agency and subjectivities that are critical for change. Teachers being individuals make the conversation complicated but in 'welcoming ways' (Pinar, 2015, p.110). The focus in this study is the practitioners who are attending to these policy changes at school level. This is because the official document is an abstraction of knowledge, skills and technical terms unless enacted by teachers. The relationship of the official curriculum is not a direct one to the enacted or practiced curriculum. They are re-made in the teachers' field and disciplinary knowledge is brought into life in the classroom with the teachers' pedagogical content knowledge with an array of other related factors such as students' background, cultural scripts, community, media influence, and institutional culture (Luke, 2010). Other related policies and practices like assessment, evaluation, funding, governance and leadership, professionalism and existing practices, long standing community values, are all (inter)related, sometimes (inter)twined, concepts at the implementation stage. The school practices, school ethos, professional culture, relationship, artefacts are important areas to investigate to inform policy. Ball, Maguire and Braun (2012) argue that many governments, states and schools use performance evaluation strategies such as quality assurance, inspection, audit and school performance to inform policy and reform. Such a system of evaluation, though, is helpful in the sense that the state monitors, guides, manages and

directs reforms in the education system at different levels and in different sectors. However, besides the quantitative performance, many other activities in the schools are not visible in the evaluation strategies which this study is looking at.

This study has used field analysis innovatively in analysing curriculum reform and its management at the school level. There are many studies on education change, but the usefulness of field analysis synthesises the many different factors to facilitate education change (as will be discussed in Chapter 2).The thesis introduces and elaborate on a theory, methodology and form of analysis suited to the study of curriculum policy analysis. While there are studies on curriculum policy analysis, the idea of curriculum policy analysis is an argument this thesis makes. It is a way to explore and discuss the complicated curriculum change in one empirical site, framed by the application of Bourdieuian concepts of *field*, *habitus* and *capital* in the stud of curriculum change enactment. The finding that curriculum change provides opportunities of positioning-making means that the configuration of the *field* is emerging. These arguments will be explained in detail throughout this thesis. The next section will explain the organisation of this thesis.

Organisation of this thesis

This thesis has two parts. Part I consists of chapters 1 to 3. This chapter, as Chapter 1, set up the context to the thesis with regard to my personal, professional and theoretical frames of reference. The locus of all these frames of reference are 'change' through the different lenses. I then presented the problem of curriculum reform and the significance of this study. Chapter 2 locates and outlines this study within its theoretical and empirical context. This chapter conceptualises curriculum as policy by using critical perspectives to policy analysis. It further locates the empirical context by briefly outlining the attempts of national curriculum reforms in Australia and a detailed account of the current Australian curriculum. The implications of curriculum being national are discussed. Chapter 3 of the thesis explains the methodological and theoretical underpinnings. Since Bourdieu's field analysis presents a strong methodological frame, I heavily draw on Bourdieuian methodology within a critical paradigm to research. Research techniques and data generation and date interpretations are outlined. Moreover, it discusses how I use reflexivity in this study to address some of the methodological limitations.

Part II of this thesis has three data chapters and a final conclusion chapter. Chapter 4 is the structural analysis of the institution/school and an analysis of the Deputy Principals and their roles. This chapter argues that the internal logic of schooling, the agents, their position, dispositions, position-taking strategies, perceptions, appreciations, ways of thinking and doing, are but a reflection of the roles that these agents play in the curriculum enactment process. Chapter 5 explores the tensions and

contestations within the institution that contributes to the logic of the schooling practices. Contested notions like 'the intended versus enacted national curriculum', 'the change versus continuing practices' and 'the objective structure versus subjective interpretations' are explored. It concludes with the spaces of change within these contested phenomena. Chapter 6 presents data on the schools' intended and unintended efforts to support the change and the agents' reflexive *habitus* in responding to such efforts. This chapter concludes with how a reflexive *habitus* is developed (though not always consciously) in a changing *field* and in complex times. Chapter 7 is the final chapter of this thesis which brings together the argument on change in a changing *field* and argues that within this process of initial phase of change, a position-making of the agents is evident.

To make Bourdieu's key concepts distinctive from other common versions of the labels, I *italicise* Bourdieu's key concepts such as *field*, *habitus, capital* and *hysteresis* in this thesis following Grenfell (2010). This is because each of Bourdieu's concepts have a complex and specific logic of practice attached to it (Eacott, 2013).

The next chapter will discuss the evolving nature of curriculum and its components in the contemporary world. It will then locate this thesis within the theoretical parameter of field analysis and outline the empirical context of the changing curriculum field in Australia and will set up the school as a *field* for the purpose of this study.

Chapter 2: Situating the Study

Education change is unavoidable in today's rapidly changing world. This is a Bourdieuian study of curriculum reform enactment as a case of education change and how one site has responded to this reform. The purpose of this chapter is to provide and set up the theoretical and empirical context of this study. The first section explores the evolving and changing nature of understanding curriculum over time. It will analyse notions like 'curriculum as text', 'curriculum as lived experience' and 'curriculum as intended and as practiced'. It will then move on to argue that in today's changing world, curriculum is a 'complicated conversation' (Pinar, 2015) that is evolving and expanding. Based on this notion of curriculum as a complicated conversation, this study uses 'curriculum as policy' which will be elaborated on next. The notion of curriculum as policy is complicated and has given rise to different perspectives to analyse curriculum. Thus perspectives like the realist perspectives, the narrative, and the constructivist perspectives are briefly outlined with their implications for curriculum policy. This will be followed by the need for a critical perspective to curriculum policy analysis that this study is based on. Under the critical perspective, field analysis and its usefulness for exploring education change is discussed followed by setting up the school as a *field*. Within critical perspectives to policy, it is argued that curriculum reform is not an isolated phenomena but is instead historically evolving and embedded in a global, national as well as an everyday context. The second part of this chapter puts the Australian Curriculum into historical and global context and discusses its implications. This section will briefly outline the different forms of national curriculum in Australia, followed by an elaborated discussion about the current national reform. It then analyses the implications of an Australian national curriculum in general, with specific reference to the Australian context. Finally, the conclusion explains what this study does.

What is curriculum?: The previous perspectives

In history, there have been attempts to define what curriculum is. However, no single definition has been arrived at, rather the conversation has been expanded and become more complex. Societies change and every generation asks the question about curriculum and tries to put it into a new context with new and expanding meaning and understanding. The term curriculum is a Latin word meaning 'a race course' and first appeared in education in the year 1576 (Hamilton, 1989). This course of study in education was later on referred to as curriculum. More exploration defined curriculum as things happening in and outside schools (Kelly, 2009). Reys et al. (2003) refer to curriculum as a set of learning goals with intended content and processes in school education. Further studies explored things beyond schools as an agreement to the what, why, when and how students should learn at a

particular time in their lives (Braslavsky, 2003). The contemporary notion of curriculum, that this study is based on, is a 'complicated conversation' (Pinar, 2015, p. 110) with expanded meaning and understanding. The purpose of curriculum is also different for different people. For parents, curriculum might be something that their children learn at school, whereas children may see it a ladder for their future career. A policy maker could see it as a body of laws and regulations to organise school activities. For an educator it can be the opportunities that the school presents to children. Moreover, different scholars explore curriculum based on their ideological positions. There are scholars who give more importance to 'curriculum as text', while others see 'curriculum as lived experiences', still others view 'curriculum as intended and as practiced'. The next section will discuss these different perspectives through which curriculum has been viewed by different scholars historically.

Curriculum as text

Before the 20th century, curriculum was the text or written material that was given to schools for teaching. Curriculum as text is the content of the text books and its structure (see for example Rogan & Luckowski, 1990). In this view, texts are seen as powerful determinants of the curriculum. In other words, the text in the curriculum determines the intentions and purpose of education and/or schooling. Text within a curriculum document is seen as a means of transmitting knowledge from the author to the reader. In other words, the text in the curriculum aims to transmit knowledge from the author to the students or more generally from one generation to the next. It assumes an expert or authority figure who gets to decide what children should learn in schools. Consequently curriculum would be a tool to shape or mould the child to the image of the expert. Thus, the question arises as to who gets to choose the text. Curriculum studies drawing on this perspective tend to analyse text (see Kim & Marshall, 2006). Rogan and Luckowski, (1990, p. 37) argue that 'a basic function of texts is to establish orthodoxy rather than to foster change'. However considering curriculum as merely text has implications and provides insufficient analysis for today's curriculum as complicated conversation.

Curriculum as lived experiences

A backlash to curriculum as text occurred when in the first half of the 20th century Dewey published *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902/1976). Dewey compares a map that an explorer can use to explore a new country to a finished map that s/he constructs after the exploration. Dewey suggests that the map cannot take the place of a personal journey. In other words, the curriculum as planned text cannot be substituted for the lived experiences of the child, thus implying that the text merely is not enough but the experience that children go through is an important component of a curriculum.

Adding to the importance of the experiences of a child in the curriculum was Franklin Bobbitt. Bobbitt (1941) published the *Curriculum of Modern Education* and challenged the notion of developing a curriculum and instilling it to transmit knowledge. He suggested that curriculum is the general experiences of living and not actually training for adult life. Thus curriculum as lived experiences emerged as more than the planned course of study and contents that curriculum as text would argue for. The curriculum as lived experiences sees curriculum as a social process within society and schools. Thus curriculum in this sense is the course of human experiences and human formation for a communal life. Curriculum as lived experiences also expanded the aim of curriculum being knowledge transmission to being building on or expanding that knowledge. For example, proponents of the curriculum as lived experiences perspective believes that as educators pass their knowledge to the next generation, the next generation builds on it (Young, 2013) or constructs more knowledge. Thus some scholars like Whitson (2008) see curriculum both as a text as well as lived experiences.

Curriculum as intended and as practiced

Some scholars expanded the meaning of curriculum and presented the idea that curriculum is an intention that when implemented improves practices; hence curriculum as intended and as practiced emerged. They argue that 'curriculum as intended' is a desire; a goal to achieve, whereas 'curriculum as practiced' is the thinking and actions involved in implementing the intended curriculum. In this view, educators view curriculum as intended in the form of a written document or text or rules and laws. Curriculum as practiced is the thinking and action or a 'translation of text into practices'. Dillon (2009) argues that it is not only the action but the thinking-in-action of the practitioners in their daily school routine. It assumes that curriculum as intended is developed by experts at the authority level whereas curriculum as practiced involves the school level teachers implementing it. Consequently it creates groups like 'curriculum developers' and 'curriculum implementers'. This view of curriculum is mainly concerned with planning, implementing/experiencing, assessing and improving the curriculum. Within this view of curriculum, curriculum studies tend to respond to questions like what is taught? What is the result? And what is important to bring the desired outcome? (Dillon, 2009).

Thus the different perspectives of understanding curriculum expanded from being 'text/content', to the 'lived experiences' to 'intended and practiced'. Today, as research activities increase, the notion of curricula, instead of finding the one right answer, one good solution and one definition, has expanded to a 'complicated conversation' with diverse interpretations, ideological positions and contextual dilemmas. It was in the latter half of the 20th century that the field of curriculum studies expanded into considering the political nature of curriculum development. Pinar's contribution through research in this regard has opened up the complicated conversation of understating and re-

conceptualising curriculum. He studied 20-years of American curriculum history. He invited researchers from different countries and different cultures and re-conceptualised curricula as a complicated conversation (Pinar, 2015). Curriculum in the contemporary field is reconceptualised as a complicated conversation that is not only the institutional text and/or experiences but is conceived in terms of historical, political, racial, gendered, phenomenological, postmodern, autobiographical, aesthetic, theological and international context (Pinar, Reynold, Slattery & Taubman, 2008). Thus the current form of the curricula as 'complicated conversation' is based on the previous versions but with a broader understanding, wider perspective and multi-dimensional view. One aspect of this complicated conversation is 'curriculum as policy'. The next section will explore curriculum as policy through two different lenses: one is applying the general policy elements to curriculum and another is interweaving the elements of 'curriculum' and 'policy' in an interactive fashion, thus reconceptualising curriculum as policy.

Conceptualising curriculum as policy

As discussed in the previous section, the nature of curriculum studies has shifted from an attempt to *defined curriculum and its boundaries* to an *expanded and complicated conversation*. The fact that curriculum has become a complicated conversation frees it from the boundaries of a definition and opens up more space for this conversation to occur. In today's complex and changing education field, the concepts of curriculum and/or policy are context dependant, susceptible to personal interpretations and open to modifications. Different academics as well as practitioners take policy and curriculum with different perspectives depending on their position in the field and also on the nature of their study.

In considering curriculum as policy, two views emerge in understanding curriculum. In the first approach the term 'policy' in its general public use is applied to curriculum. Such an understanding is problematic for understanding curriculum and I will highlight this in the section below. I will then elaborate on how curriculum and policy can be in an interactive dialectic relationship, combining the elements of curriculum and policy providing the opportunity to understand curriculum as policy of its own nature. This later approach to understanding curriculum as policy, that this study is based on, is more complex and hence open to analyses from different perspectives that I will explore later in this chapter.

Policy to curriculum: A solution to the problem

Public policy is seen as proposing a solution to address an issue relating to public welfare, well-being or lifestyle. According to Howlett and Mukherjee (2017), public policy is generally concerned with

changes to an institution or public behaviour in order to achieve some end goal. Public policy formulation involves government and other policy actors to analyse various kinds of problems and conditions affecting people in society. From this perspective, policy is positioned as something that is developed by experts at the top level of the hierarchy, such as governmental level, as a body of laws and regulations. Within this view Colebatch (2009) describes policy as a concept or an idea in the social sciences that shapes the way public life is organised and governed. Hence, policy is a rational means to achieve collective social ends and is an attempt to improve social life (Elmore & Sykes, 1992). Policy analysis within this framework of thinking defines the problem, gathers information and analyses the problem in light of gathered information. Moreover, using a set criteria, the different possibilities and alternatives are weighed against their consequences and a solution is presented (see Bardach, 2000).

If we apply this perspective to the arena of education, policy is then a body of laws and regulations concerning what should be taught in schools. Curriculum policy is consequently the 'text' framed by policy makers to organise and govern school activities. This view of policy in curriculum is used as a tool to shape behaviours and govern schools. Within this lens, curriculum policy reform is concerned with improving teaching and learning practices with definite outcomes. This approach toward curriculum development involves defining the goals or purposes, organising the learning experiences and assessing or evaluating the outcomes (Marsh, 2009).

Such an application of public policy to curriculum has several implications for education in general, and curriculum in particular. Firstly, this perspective of policy requires solutions to problems in the form of a 'silver bullet' (Webb, 2014, p. 368) or 'fixing educational problems' (Biesta , 2013, p. 4) thus formulating policy to solve the problems in education. As a silver bullet, curriculum reform is then seen as a remedy to solve educational problems. It follows that policy is taken for granted as a mechanism to solve problems when put into practice. With this understanding, the effectiveness of policy is judged by evaluating how well policies are implemented and how well they are realised in practice (Spillane, 2004). To determine policy effectiveness, studies then focus on the policy-practice gap or implementation gap (Spillane, Reiser & Reimer, 2002) or fidelity of implementation (see O'Donnell, 2008). In contrast, a more contemporary notion of curriculum policy enactment acknowledges the multiple, complex and diverse practices as an integral part of the curriculum policy. Secondly, in the general understanding of policy, policy making and policy formulation follow certain rules and criteria to solve a problem. In following such formulated criteria, this approach to curriculum policy more often ignores other realities and subjectivities involved in its formulation and enactment. In other words, contextual variables are seen as an obstacle to implementation or a 'warning of a trouble in the system' (McLaughlin, 2005, p. 60). In this way, the local context with its

active agents who have their individual subjectivities, collective practices and historically evolved beliefs and values, are not taken into account.

Finally, when policy is positioned as 'the solution to a problem', it is a one-way approach in which the authorities target a problem in the local context and attempt to solve it. In this view curriculum policy is something developed 'above' and 'outside' the schools to address problems in schools (Elmore & Sykes, 1992). This contributes to the concept of curriculum as intended from the government and curriculum as practiced in the local context. Such an approach creates groups like 'curriculum policy makers' and 'curriculum policy implementers' which according to Ball (2006) can lead to a blame-based approach where policy makers blame the school and teachers for implementation failures. Consequently this view of curriculum policy making has implications for curriculum reform such as finding solutions to problems in the school from 'above and outside' of the context which needs to be effectively implemented. In short, if we employ the characteristics of public policy for curriculum and ignore how the complicated conversation of curriculum can feed into policy, it becomes problematic. This study combines and weaves the different elements of policy as well as curriculum in an interactive fashion as discussed below.

(Re)conceptualising curriculum as policy

Researchers within the social sciences who position themselves within the areas of policy studies and curriculum studies have explored and unpacked the seemingly simple 'body of laws and regulations'. There is a body of scholars who see curriculum policy as far more complicated and intricate (see Bacchi, 2000; Ball, 2006; Gough, 2005; McLaughlin, 2005; Pinar, 2015) than a 'text' framed by policy makers to organise and govern school activities. Curriculum in the contemporary field is reconceptualised as a complicated conversation that is not only the institutional text and or experiences but is conceived in terms of historical, political, racial, gendered, phenomenological, postmodern, autobiographical, aesthetic, theological and international context (Pinar et al., 2008). By drawing on literature from curriculum policy, here I explore the complicated conversation of curriculum in the form of curriculum as policy. Research in curriculum policy explores how the officialised laws drive the activities at school level, change perceptions and actions but also in return are modified by the context. Thus a reciprocal and dialectic relationship of written policy to the local context emerges.

Curriculum 'as policy text' can be a body of rules and regulations but these texts do not necessarily control the meaning that readers derive from them. Gough (2005, p. 10) asserts that 'we should no longer assume that curriculum ideas and understanding is expressed through print media and words' only. Within a more contemporary perspective curriculum is not merely 'school material' but a

'symbolic representation' (Pinar et al., 2008, p. 16) in the contemporary field of education. Curriculum as symbolic representation refers to all those institutional and discursive practices, structures, images, and experiences that can be identified and analysed in various ways. Thus curriculum as text, words and ideas refers to 'social practices and institutions, cultural products, or anything that is created as a result of human action and reflection' (McEwan, 1992; cited in Pinar et al., 2008, p. 49). Such an understanding of curriculum policy involves diverse interpretations, individual meaning-making and sometimes different outcomes. Within this prism of thought, curriculum policy analysis seeks to bring to the surface the veiled dispositions, practices, relationships and positions that are embedded in the process of curriculum development.

Curriculum as policy entails problems, their solutions, presumptions, challenges as well as possibilities. In this regard solutions to problems are not necessarily explicitly in the policy text but are instead sometimes implicit in the day to day activities or the 'practical logic of the *field*' (Bourdieu, 1990a). In other words, curriculum policy may fall short of addressing problems on its own but it is in coordination with the local factors that contextual solutions are sought. Bacchi (2009) suggests analysing policy with its embedded problems, possibilities and limitations as well as assumptions, and alternatives should be sought. Taylor (1997) argues that policy enactment does not only flow from planned curriculum, rather the enactment can also inform and transform the set rules. In other words, the relationship of practices to rules is reciprocal – 'the rule lies essentially in the practice' (Taylor, 1997, p. 42). Curriculum policy today is a process which when put into practice is open to changes, modifications and interpretation in creative ways that suit the local context. Thus contemporary curriculum policy development considers policy as an ever changing phenomena with an interactive approach to and from the system of education. Such an open and contested meaning of curriculum as policy has opened up different perspectives to analyse policy. Researchers can be positioned differently in relation to the processes and methods or traditions and practices within the social field of curriculum policy analysis and this will be discussed below.

The Realist perspectives

The main question asked in the realist perspectives of curriculum policy analysis is 'what works?' in the real context. In this perspective of policy analysis, evidence of 'what works?' is of utmost importance. Hence there is an emphasis on evidence-based policy analysis. In this view policy is considered as an intervention or a solution to an identified problem. Intervention programs are of greater significance in this view. Such a realist perspective, presented by Pawson (2006), may work well in small and controlled 'problem situations' with clear and identifiable boundaries, however curriculum policy reform is broad, embedded and is a complex phenomenon. The complexity of

education change encompasses diverse and creative ways of doing, which may or may not count as evidence to the interventions.

The narrative analytical perspective

The narrative analytical perspectives of policy analysis use stories in describing and analysing policy issues and assessing policy functions. The policy analyst identifies and outlines the stories in the policy issues. The narrative perspective moves on to describe the scenarios, arguments, controversies, stabilising techniques and assumptions involved in the policy formation and evaluation. This view, presented by Roe (1994), is oriented towards individual subjectivities of policy actors. Curriculum policy involves individual subjectivities but within the structural limitations of the guidelines, standards, the existing practices and their practical logic at the local context. In other words policy has structures in the form of rules that regulate practices in the context. However, tracing policy merely through personal narratives ignores the structure or objective limitations of policy formulation and implementation. As Ball (2006, p. 44) states, 'policy text are set within structural frameworks which constrain but do not determine all of the possibilities for action'. So within structural limitations are possibilities or subjectivities.

The social constructivist perspectives

Like the realist approach, researchers in the social construction paradigm of policy analysis believe that knowledge is socially constructed. It is experience and interaction in context that shapes practices and constructs knowledge. This view of policy analysis asks 'what are the problems?' (Biesta 2014, p. 45) in the real context and uses a pragmatic view to know the possibilities of solutions. Social construction of policy formation is also problematic given that it has its focus on the real context and the subjectivities of the actors in the implementation process. Viewing curriculum policy as embedded within a broader field of power, its historical links, its powerful contextual factors along with objective structures and subjective experiences demands a critical perspective to policy analysis.

The need for a critical perspective to curriculum policy analysis

> *In failing to take account of the ways in which education is embedded in a set of more general economic and political changes, education policy researchers close down the possibilities for interpretation and rip the actors who feature in the dramas of education out of their social totality and their multiple struggle. (Ball, 2006, p. 20)*

The critical perspective to curriculum policy analysis takes into consideration the nature of the problem, the understanding of the issue, and the assumptions involved (Bacchi, 2009). It moves on to consider the means through which particular problem presentation is legitimised and who has access to it, who has a say in it, and what are the silent voices? Curriculum policy, within this prism

of thought, is a 'nested layer' (Berends, 2009) within the global, national, historical and local context. It involves the subjectivities of various players at different levels, their vested interests, and their experiences in formulating and enacting the rules of the policy. As Ball indicates in the above quote, understanding education policy within the broader field opens up the possibilities for diverse interpretations and perhaps contributes to the 'complicated conversation'. Moreover, this perspective does not rule out the role of the structure or guidelines to curriculum policy but analyses them as an important element that regulates practices in the context. In order to consider the wider global/national context, the historical evolvement, the structural boundaries, and the diverse subjectivities, this study utilizes a critical perspective to policy analysis. The role of a critical perspective to curriculum policy analysis in today's complicated conversation of curriculum has the benefit of seeing curriculum as multi-dimensional. Some of these dimensions in the form of curriculum being a political process, an embedded phenomenon historically and in global/national rhetoric as well as embedded in the real life context as an enacted phenomenon are discussed below.

Curriculum policy making: A political process

Curriculum policy making is a political process. In this sense public schooling is not just influenced by the political field but the curriculum in itself is a political process (Kirst & Walker, 1971) and is sometimes used as a political tool (Pinar et al., 2008) to govern schools. The question then is who governs them? Whose voice matters? In the critical perspective of policy analysis, it is believed that there is seldom a single voice behind policies (Elmore & Sykes, 1992). Policy making involves active agents who can be policy communities as opposed to the conventional view as 'policy makers' and 'policy implementers'. This policy community, working at different levels of policy process, interact and act, interpret and re-interpret, make their individual meanings and collective practices, and thus develop a complex ecology of policy making. This is in contrast to what Ladwig (1994, p. 344) believed; that education policy is concerned with what happens in schools and educational institutions and sits 'above' and 'outside' of the schools themselves. For him, the *field* of education, as in the form of schools, has little impact on the policy *field* at federal level. However, in the contemporary *field*, a democratic process to education is being sought, in which policy communities are more important in contributing to policy making at different levels.

Policy communities in policy making may seek an equal contribution in policy formation, but that is not always the case. Curriculum policy making involves struggle, position-taking and position-taking strategies for the valued *capital* in the *field*. In such a struggle, certain groups make their knowledge legitimate and defend or improve their position within the social *field* (Apple, 2014). This means the policy formation is a political process that involves power relations. The curriculum policy making

is contested with competing and often conflicting demands and values of what to teach? Whose knowledge is of worth? (Apple, 1996; Biesta, 2014). Thus policy making emerges from interactions among actors with their own political interests and levels of influence on decisions. As a result of such interaction, policy enactment develops positions among the different actors with their own interest and level of influence on decision making. Different people speak from a particular position and point of view with particular interest. Moreover, the curriculum policy is embedded in the broader global, national and historical context.

The embeddedness of curriculum policy in the broader field

Policy problems sit in a wider context of the global, national as well as in a historical context. A critical perspective in curriculum policy analysis is about 'attending to the ways in which policies evolve, change and decay through time and space and in their incoherence' (Ball, 2006, p. 17). Curriculum policy is stretched across different levels from federal to state and to local school levels involving active agents (McLaughlin, 2005) holding different positions and diverse points of view or position taking strategies. The curriculum policy text is then interpreted, reinterpreted, translated and transformed at each point in the process. Thus policy is mediated between different bodies like government and state authorities; between state and local schools; between schools and even sometimes between government and local schools (Braun, Maguire, & Ball, 2010; Spillane, 2004). Bourdieu (2005, p. 126) warns us not to conceive the relationship between the 'national' and the 'local' as the 'centre' and the 'periphery' as opposing matrices but how the different point of view complement one another. Ball (2006) argues that policy analysis needs to be accompanied by careful regional, local and organisational research if we are to understand the degrees of 'play' and 'room for manoeuvre' involved in the translation of policies into practice.

The process of translation and re-contextualisation of a national curriculum into schooling practices is not as smooth as it appears in the broader vision of the curriculum. Curriculum policy making, policy formulation and policy enactment further breaks down the process with wider influences ranging from the global context to the very local context. Bernstein's (2000) principle of re-contextualisation expands our understanding of how educational policy texts are shaped by multiple agencies, including teachers' enactment of policies in schools through re-contextualisation. When the curriculum policy as a discourse moves from its original site into the teachers' pedagogical practices, the policy as an original discourse remains no longer the same since a partially new meaning is created while it transfers from one sphere to another and moves from one context to another (Wahlström & Sundberg, 2017, p. 8). According to Spillane (2004), as policy moves from the national level to the state level and finally to schools and classrooms, people at each level try to figure out what that policy

means for them. People at multiple levels of policy making, including the professional development providers, professional associations and others outside the formal school system, pass down their perspective of the policy to the school administration and teachers. School leaders and classroom teachers may already have their own understanding of the reform from their previous experiences and dispositions. Thus the curriculum policy and its meaning is 'selectively appropriated, relocated and/or focused' (Wahlström & Sundberg, 2017, p. 8). In this contemporary view of curriculum policy analysis, the local context also needs a careful consideration within the broader context.

The embeddedness of curriculum policy in the everyday context

Researchers in curriculum policy analysis in the critical perspective believe that in the enactment of policy, the local context is significant. It is important to analyse the conditions which the problem as well as the solutions are part of. At the school level, curriculum policy entails the possibilities and choices of certain things but not others. For example, students in school are normally required to study certain subjects and not others; are provided with opportunities to study certain phenomena and not the means to study others; and are encouraged to pursue some topics and not pursue some others (Kirst & Walker, 1971). The schooling practices are influenced by the external interventions such as the state or the professional bodies. Kirst and Walker (1971) thus argue that when these requirements and pressures are uniformly and consistently in operation, it amounts to policy – intentional or unintentional. Such an explicit and implicit guide to action in schools makes curriculum policy. The contemporary notion of curriculum is no more seen as a problem to be solved but an understanding of the problem, its solution and the assumptions involved. The conditions in which the problem, its solution and alternatives are embedded are dynamic (Webb, 2014). Thus this view of policy analysis considers the active response of the local context or school to curriculum policy changes.

Education change is not only structural changes but is accompanied by 'ecological transformation in educational paradigms, professional beliefs and social culture' (Cheng, 2009b, p. 81). In other words it is the 're-culturing' that is embedded in the 're-structuring' of education change. Re-culturing is when teachers interact with the intended reform based on their existing practices and try and make change work (Fullan, 2000). Exploring the re-culturing of the school due to an external reform and a restructured field is critical for any reform effort. This is because policy analysis at the local level is not about capturing one reality as 'the truth' but about getting hold of the 'multiple realities' of the practitioners at the local level (Fullan, 2007). Such an effort of exploring the multiple realities provides a significant knowledge base to policy reforms. Lingard (2000) is of the view that teachers' knowledge and practices have been largely ignored in reform attempts. Priestley (2010) cautions that if little attention is given to fit a reform within the local culture and practices, it can lead to only minor

changes or changes in terminologies only. He envisions a good policy change as one which is a set of ideas or resources which, when it comes in contact with the local context, mutates through the system gradually, giving appropriate time for assimilation. This way teachers mediate the policy creatively as per the need of the context.

Such re-contextualisation is a process in which text is translated into action and abstract ideas into contextual practices thus making it a creative endeavour. Ball, Braun, and Maguire's (2012) extensive study on policy enactment in UK schools furthers our understanding on how the local actors and the local context modify the intended curriculum in ways different than the given text in curriculum policy. Hence it is argued that the outcomes of curriculum reforms are not always as intended but are unpredictable (Bailey, 2000; Ball, Maguire, Braun, & Hoskins, 2011a; McLaughlin, 2005). However this does not mean that policy intentions are ignored at the local level, but that curriculum enactment is a process that is complex and diverse yet encompasses elements of the intended curriculum. Organisations at different levels of the process also share common goals and tend to follow the stated aims. This is why institutions generally appear regular to the observer because institutions are linked to the broader field and develop a subjective coherence. According to Martin (2003, p. 42), 'organizational field connect and align organization, and in so doing, can induce shared subjectivities or culture'. Thus, the policy discourse at the enactment level does not remain the same but some common elements can be found between the intended and the enacted reform.

As the local context shapes policy, so does policy shape the context and create the condition for its enactment. Ball (2006, p. 21) asserts that 'policies do not normally tell you what to do, they create circumstances in which the range of options available in deciding what to do are narrowed or changed or particular goals or outcomes are set'. Policies shape the local field culturally as actors are re-positioned and sometimes dis-positioned in accordance to the requirements. Moreover policies, while developing certain conditions, position agents and develop certain relationships that configure the structure of the social world. Policy reform provides the formation of 'new professional subjectivities'. It creates the possibilities of 'who the teachers might become? Where and how they can seek new endeavour and opportunities' (Ball, 2006, p. 15). This is because policies usually leave a space for interpretations for the policy community. Curriculum as a policy thus entails possibilities and choices of certain things while not others. Hence policies shape the field culturally as actors enact it, contribute to its possibilities and to the rules of the game (Grimaldi, 2012).

Policy enactment is thus a mutual adaptation between the intended reform and the local context. In such an adaptation, contextual variability in critical perspectives is seen as healthy for the enactment process and it adds important knowledge and modification to the reform effort (McLaughlin, 2005).

Policies at the local level are 're-made and re-shaped' and policies become something (Ball, 2006). Such an understanding challenges the traditional notion of policy implementation in which contextual variation is seen as an obstacle to the 'effective' implementation process or to the notion fidelity. Curriculum policy as an enacted phenomenon remains unfinished and open to its intentions, meaning-making and adding to the logic of the *field* but also contributing to policy formation.

Curriculum policy as an enacted phenomena

In the contemporary view, curriculum policy implementation or fidelity of policy is challenged. Fidelity of implementation attempts to measure the outcomes against the policy intentions. Fidelity of implementation is defined as the 'determination of how well an intervention is implemented compared to the original program design during an efficacy and/or effectiveness study' (O'Donnell, 2008, p. 33). This view of curriculum and its effectiveness is linked to accountability and measurement and generally uses positivist notions of policy effectiveness. However when policies are put into practice there are transformations, changes and modifications as a result of implementation (Ball et al., 2012; Macdonald, 2003). The notion of curriculum enactment suggests that policies 'are translated into practice and in this way policies are almost always localized and customised' (Ball et al. 2011a, p. 629). Luke (2010) describes the enacted curriculum as the teaching and learning events lived by the teachers and students which are complex and open to changes. Policies, when entering into the local context, encounter the contextual history, the active agents, and structural limitations, hence possibilities and new ways of thinking emerge. Curriculum as policy is not a static object that moves between different systems and shows impact on enactment, but is 'practices of translation as policies are interpreted, enacted and assembled' (Clarke, Bainton, Lendvai, & Stubbs, 2015, p. 9). The resultant activity that is produced when policy is 'actualized, sensed, embodied and practiced' (Webb, 2014, p. 265) is a process that is not only regular but involves irregularities, incoherencies and ambiguity. As Ball (1993) states, it can create confusion but an opportunity for 'playing-off' or manoeuvring its meaning. Thus policy enactment processes are characterised by conflict, resistance, uncertainties and ambiguity (Colebatch, 2009). As a result of its complexity and ambiguity spaces of actions and responses are opened up.

Policy enactment involves policy actors as active agents. Teachers are conscious agents of change with the capacities to adapt to changing circumstances. Pinar (2006) insists that research should aspire to contribute to the intellectual formation of teachers as subjectively existing individuals contributing to the reconstruction of curriculum in practice. The conducive role of teachers in shaping the curriculum should not be ignored. Knowledge organised into subjects is necessary but teachers construct the curriculum in the process of interpreting it (Young, 1998). Curriculum changes as

teachers reflect on it, engage with it and act or respond to it. It becomes a 'verb, an action, a practice' and gives 'private meanings' and 'public hope' (Pinar et al., 2008, p. 848). In this way policy is modified but it also modifies practices. The acknowledgement of active involvement of teachers in the curriculum can create a condition where teachers own and embrace the change. Within this view, curriculum policy enactment has differences in practices, diversity in thoughts and complexity in its processes. Within such complexity and diversity lies creativity and new ways of thinking and doing that may not align well with the intended changes in the curriculum but, nevertheless, are changing and evolving practices. The active forces in the local context including the active agents and their experiences of curriculum as an enacted and complex phenomena needs a systematic exploration.

Taking a critical perspective of policy analysis, curriculum is thus a political process and is embedded in the broader global and national context as well as in the everyday context of the school. By viewing the process of curriculum enactment and the schooling practices in this way, our view of the logic of practices in the field within the broader perspectives widens. Within the umbrella of critical policy analysis, Bourdieu's field analysis is utilised to analyse the enactment of the Australian Curriculum in a high school context. The next section outlines what field analysis is and how it is useful in analysing curriculum reform.

Field analysis and curriculum policy reform

In this section, I will conceptualise field analysis with a particular focus on school and institutional practices. An understanding of field analysis will provide the basis to examine the contextual factors of curriculum reform that may constrain or enable reform at the local context. The section below will first conceptualise field analysis followed by its usefulness for analysing curriculum policy reform and its enactment and will map out the school as a *field*.

What is field analysis?

Bourdieu's original work was with the Kabyle in Africa, where he observed their day-to-day life and their activities, which led him to develop his *field theory*. Bourdieu later applied his field analysis in education, and particularly in tertiary education (Bourdieu, 1988). Many other academics use Bourdieu's field analysis in education policy (Lingard, Sellar, & Baroutsis, 2015; Thomson, 2005; Ladwig, 1994), policy enactment (Hardy, 2015; Taylor & Singh, 2005; Heimans, 2013), organisational change (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Everett, 2002) and in gender studies (Adkins, 2003; McNay, 2004; McLeod, 2005) .

Academics have used different analogies to try and explain the concept of *field* and its analysis. Rawolle (2007) uses the analogy of a magnetic field, where particles in the form of iron filings behave

in certain ways and arrange themselves in certain patterns. By observing the movement of the filings and the pattern they make, one can gain significant knowledge about the *field*. Martin (2003) contends that by observing and understanding the movement of the material in the form of filings in the magnetic field, the features of the *field* can be inferred. In this case it is the arrangement and distribution of the particles in relation to each other and in relation to the magnet itself, that the logic of the *field* can be explained. In the case of curriculum reform, the change can function like a magnet in the *field* of schooling. The reform in the *field* has the power to (dis)position and reposition agents. As agents take sides as per the changing structure of the social space, a common working consensus is developed, thus comprising the regularity of the *field* (Martin, 2003). However, merely comparing a social *field* to a magnetic field is a rather mechanical understanding of any social *field*. In mechanical terms sociologists refer to *field* as 'some readily understandable causal sequence that explains some theoretically accounted-for pattern' (Lundberg, 1939 cited in Martin 2003, p. 11). In this sense curriculum policy is believed to have a cause-effect relationship that can be examined through some coherent pattern. However such an understanding of cause-and-effect relationships largely undermines the complexity that is involved in the curriculum policy and schooling *field*. The contemporary field of schooling curriculum enactment is not as mechanical or technical as the magnetic field but requires understanding of the phenomena as an analytical process (Pinar et al., 2008).

The analogy of a magnetic field falls short when explaining a social *field* with active agents holding subjective dispositions as opposed to the iron filings as static objects. Agents react to the reform not only because it is introduced in the *field*, but in relation to their embodied dispositions from their previous practices, beliefs and the pre-existing field demands. At the same time, there are other policy interventions in place or other 'magnets' in place which can distort and re-direct the forces in play. Moreover, the boundaries of the social *field* are permeable, giving way to external forces in playing their role in the internal logic of the *field*. Hence the mechanism of the magnetic field and its explanation of the patterns that the filings make and fill up spaces based on the magnetic effect is rather a mechanistic one. Bourdieu argues that the social world is not a 'sociality of inertia' but is comprised of things and meanings as 'meaning-made-thing' and 'meaning-made-body' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 43). Trying to capture the social *field* in the sense of a magnetic field would rather be capturing the sociality of inertia through objectivist sociology. This accepts practices as a product of conditions and conditioning (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) only. In this case the *field* becomes static and a site of production and reproduction of practices through the embodiment of the structure of the *field*. Such an objectivist account will risk strengthening the durable dispositions and thus the doxa and reproduction in the *field*. Such an understanding of the *field* also risks a 'circular loop' of learning

the *field* rules and reproducing them continuously. However, and as Bourdieu (1993) argues, the *field* is dynamic, changing, and moving due to the diverse and sometimes contradictory active forces and the presence of subjective agents.

Bourdieu himself used the analogy of 'sports' or a 'game' to describe the *field* functions (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). In this game, though there are explicit rules to follow which provide the objective structure of the game, players have subjective dispositions and have access to certain *capital* or resources. They play the game strategically, though not always consciously (Warde, 2004). Agents strive in the *field* not by conscious strategy but the *habitus* working below the consciousness that affects perceptions and thus actions. However Bourdieu warns us that 'a field is a game devoid of inventor and much more fluid and complex than any game that one might ever design' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 104). The *habitus*, in the form of the dispositions of the players, is the product of social conditions and time. The *habitus* as the product of conditions also contributes to the reproduction of the *field* structure and thus can strengthen doxa. Bourdieu also emphasised the generative nature of the *habitus* and its ability to adapt to changing rules. Thus the basic elements in the *field* such as the agents' positions, their dispositions, the *capital* in the *field* and their position-taking strategies can contribute towards the game and its success. These basic theoretical resources in the *field* and their relationship with each other gives the *field* certain characteristics that have enormous capacity to enhance our understanding of the 'game' of 'curriculum reform'. The next section will discuss the use of field analysis in relation to educational change and enactment.

Unlocking the logic of curriculum policy reform through field analysis

As discussed in the previous section, curriculum policy reform involves various agents at various levels ranging from the global to the national and local with specific positions and dispositions. Since this thesis is exploring the case of curriculum enactment at one school using Bourdieuian theoretical resources, field analysis will be elaborated here using literature from the local context of the school. Such an analysis will help in mapping out the school as a *field* for the purpose of this thesis. According to Pinar et al. (2008), the contemporary curriculum field requires being understood in a responsive and thoughtful way with its internal dynamics and moments as well as movements of educational experiences. Such an analysis will not only bring forth the reproduction of practices but the mediating forces, and their transformational capacity, thus the usefulness of field analysis in exploring educational change as discussed below.

Positioning in the Field: The position teachers take in a reform enactment

The social *field* is a network of objective positions. Within the seemingly regular and coherent system, agents position themselves in the *field* as per the structure of the *field*, their dispositions and the volume and structure of the *capital* in possession. Bourdieu (1977) states that agents develop certain dispositions and position-taking strategies based on their position in the *field*. In the interaction of the curriculum reform with the existing professional culture at the school, policy impacts the positioning of the actors (Ball, Braun, & Maguire, 2012). Within curriculum reform, social relationships, especially the roles actors play in the enactment process within the *field*, is a powerful element in mediating policy reform (Priestley & Humes, 2010). For example, the role of the principal carries more opportunities for social action than the role of a classroom teacher and the support from the senior management may add to the change process in the enactment process.

The position of the school within the overall education *field* is an important analysis because such a position drives the change in the *field* (as will be discussed in this section and in Chapter 4). This is objective analysis of the position of the institution within the overall *field* of power. Moreover, it is also important to analyse the school culture. The school culture is not monolithic, rather it has multiple cultures within each department. McLaughlin (1990) is of the view that in order to understand school change, it is important to see it through a micro culture lens of each department within the school and not simply through a generalised understanding of the cultural regularities. The internal affairs of a subject community are characterised by power struggles between social groups, coalitions and segments within the subject community, each with their own vested interests and resources in hand. According to Goodson (2008) subject groups are not homogeneous groups whose members have similar values, common interests or identifications. Conflicts on issues such as curriculum reform can intensify within departments and can develop a defence group at particular points in time.

These departmental conflicts and struggles have particularly greater implications for teaching components of the curriculum not traditionally included in a particular discipline area, such as the *Cross-Curricular Priorities* (Perspectives on Indigenous issues; Engagement with Asia and Sustainability) and *Other Capabilities* in the Australian curriculum. A study by Kwok (2014) in Hong-Kong on 'Liberal Studies' as an interdisciplinary subject in the senior secondary education system showed inter-departmental disagreements. This inter-disciplinary component aimed to develop critical thinking and a broad perspective on contemporary issues in students. It was to be taught with an enquiry-issue approach across all the subjects and with a collaborative team effort. However, Kwok (2014) notes that the English teachers were not able to work with mathematics teachers because they believed that the mathematics teachers' cognitive style was a rigid mindset;

very different than the social science teachers. This shows that social subject groups are an ongoing coalition who are engaged in political struggle for resources and influence (Goodson, 2008). Teachers take positions according to their mental/cognitive style and ideologies, developed in them by studying certain subjects in certain ways, which affects teachers' perception and identification based on the subject they teach. Hence the departmental culture contributes towards teachers' positioning and their position-taking strategies.

Moreover, it is also important to consider how teachers position themselves within the overall school culture. Teachers' participation and collaboration in discussions about the reform in the overall school culture also influence their practices. Gitline and Margonis (1995) assert that when teachers concentrate on the short term planning and outcomes of the classroom teaching and avoid collaboration and discussion on the reform in the overall school culture, it can lead to little or no change in teachers' practices. This makes their engagement limited when agents are unable to strategically envision their role consciously or unconsciously in the broader context. This leads to situations where reforms aimed at changing practices are construed to fit within the limits of reality and interests, thus ignoring the bigger picture of the reform (Spillane & Callahan, 2000). *Capital* is an important element in the positioning and the relationship of agents in a *field* as discussed below.

Forms of *Capital*: Support for reform enactment

Agents struggle in the *field* not only to preserve or improve their position but also to access valued resources in the *field* and gain cultural commodity convertible to economic gains. Bourdieu (1984) argued that social *fields* are spaces of competition and what is at stake are the *field capitals* in their different forms. The forms of *capital* that Bourdieu described are: cultural, social, symbolic and a composition of the ratio of the different forms of capital with the potential to be converted to economic *capital* (Bourdieu, 1984). *Economic capital* refers to money and material assets such as salary; *cultural capital* are forms of knowledge, educational qualifications, language; *social capital* consists of aspects such as affiliations and networks, family, religion and cultural heritage; and *symbolic capital* includes elements and actions that are convertible to any of the other form of *capital* (Bourdieu, 1986).

There are general *capitals* but also *field* specific *capitals* that function as symbolic *capital* and can contribute towards understanding the configuration of the *field*. Schools and their staff possess certain *capitals* such as social *capital* in the form of networking and support; economic *capital* in the form of access to resources; and cultural *capital* in the form of academic qualifications. There are numerous practices and resources which, when legitimised, can work as symbolic *capital*. According to Naidoo (2004, p. 458), 'capital may be viewed as the specific cultural or social (rather than economic) assets

that are invested with value in the *field* which, when possessed, enables membership to the *field*'. Curriculum can also provide sources and resources which teachers can mediate 'to meet the negotiated needs' of the learner (Markee, 1997, p. 21).

Social *capital* is a resource which can be utilised to participate in the collective goal of curriculum enactment in a school. Professional development particularly presents opportunities to exchange and gain valuable *field* specific *capital*. Reeves (2008) contends that more professional learning opportunities for the enactment of policy can maximise the aspiration of curriculum reform to be realised. The professional development courses helped teachers in understanding the change and pondering their role in the innovation (Kwok, 2014). Priestley (2010) notes that uninformed teachers responded to change narrowly and were hesitant to take risks compared to teachers who participated in professional development activities. Contrarily, in Spain, Crujeiras and Jimenez-Aleixandre (2013) observed that the professional development programs for teachers with regards to developing scientific competencies as part of a reform initiative failed to develop these competencies in the students. However, they reasoned that it might be due to the teachers' low motivation for the reform, lack of resources and increased teachers' workload. Understanding *field*s as dynamic and reflexive plays a foundation for the exchanges in social knowledge and practices or *capital*.

Professional networking also enhances the social support or social *capital* in the *field*. Kwok (2014) argues that the network building in the training courses is the most valuable aspect fostering exchange of ideas, interaction and collaboration among team members. Social networks also provide a platform of mutual support and stimulate ideas in solving problems. Groundwater-Smith and Mockler (2012) stress the development of networking amongst schools as a means to share best practices for them to improve their performance. They suggest that universities can collaborate with schools to develop such networks of learning. Such collaborations can help schools develop knowledge, creating schools which eventually disseminate their knowledge by sharing. Thus, schools have the potential to develop collectively owned *capital* of the whole group through structured networking (Gerrard & Farrell, 2012). McGonigal et al. (2007) argue that school provides an opportunity for teachers to build additional social *capital* in the presence of support from authority and resources available. The extent to which individual teachers draw upon this by taking advantage of the available resources to enact and manage curriculum implementation plays a key part in policy development. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) are of the view that by developing networks and sharing their practices, schools can become aware of their shortcomings, which can be a kind of audit of knowledge. Once an audit of knowledge takes place, schools are in a better place to improve their situation. Thus *capital* is the product as well as the process in a *field* because it serves as the medium of relations between the objective positions and the imposition on their occupants (Grenfell & James, 2004).

Curriculum reform: The objective structure and subjective aspirations

Field has an objective structure as well as agents holding subjective aspirations. The curriculum standards and guidelines provide the basic framework for schools to act and enact the curriculum. Moreover the specific roles or objective positions that agents hold have certain 'role demands' (Martin: 2003, p. 22). There are certain expectations from a role that can be equated to *field* effect as an objective requirement. In addition, there are cognitive structures in place where agents already have a mental schema of the practices, values and ethos of the school when they come in contact with a change. Such practices become embodied in the agents through their disposition, and agents tend to act in certain ways as they are disposed to do so.

A major factor of objective structure is presented to schools in the form of accountability and standardised assessment practices. Strict accountability and testing or summative assessment can constrain the implementation process of a reform as it ignores creativity and personal and social aspects of the curriculum goals (Reeves, 2008). Reeves (2008) contends that with such a testing and measuring approach, policy makers do not understand the need to develop the capacity of schools to respond to the demands of deeper changes. However some control and accountability mechanisms along with support, in terms of opportunities to learn and provision of resources, can help teachers change their practices (Spillane, 2004). Moreover, such accountability measures should not deskill teachers by narrowing pedagogies for testing purposes (Lingard et al., 2000). To address this issue, Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) recommend teachers be more assessment literate, with an ability to interpret data and develop action plans to change instruction to improve their teaching and students' learning. Thus, avoiding strict accountability and developing teachers' autonomy in using performance scores to improve their teaching can be a way forward.

Change also involves subjectivities as individuals construct their personal meaning drawing on the objective structure, and the existing logic of the *field*. Bantwini (2010) argues that reform of any sort portrayed in the official documents is always subject to individual, collective and institutional interpretations. Teachers undergo a process of taking up a reform personally, interactively and continuously leading to a developed meaning of the reform which is not necessarily similar to others, neither is it necessarily supporting the reform intentions. Gitlin and Margonis (1995) argue that the nature of innovation and its potential for improvement aside, the meaning that is developed by the practitioners in itself is important for the reform to be implemented well. Spillane (2004) noted substantial variations among mathematics classrooms in the USA regarding the extent to which reform had influenced teachers' practices in terms of mathematical knowledge and doing mathematics in the classroom. According to Kwok (2014), teachers vary in their curricular

experiences and so they tend to differ from one another in the way they enact the reform. This means curriculum text, when translated into actions, evokes a variety of reactions.

Such subjective dispositions effect the perception, appreciation and actions of teachers within the objective structure. For some teachers it is helpful if the curriculum document sets out clear aims, objectives and expectations rather than general ambiguous ideas to be implemented. Crujeiras and Jimenez-Aleixandre (2013) analysed the Science curriculum reform of 2007 in Spain in terms of developing scientific competencies and higher-order thinking skills. They observed that the presence of scientific competencies in the curriculum document, and the 'sophisticated' and unpacked criteria made the expected performances clearer for teachers. They contend that a previous version of the curriculum document had barely mentioned the specific competencies and, any mention was general and ambiguous, which teachers could not link to their context. Such unclear or ambiguous policies, Spillane (2004) asserts, can develop a lack of interest and teachers do not attend to them. In order to facilitate the implementation of the National Curriculum in Queensland schools, a Curriculum-to-Classroom (C2C) guideline is provided as a clear guideline on teaching, learning, lesson plans and model assessment. The case study school has negotiated this document and uses it as a resource rather than a mandatory document. This can be explained through the teachers' positions, dispositions and the resources in their command in implementing the reform (as will be seen in Chapter 4).

Doxa: The established practices in relation to change

The social *field* has established practices, beliefs, perceptions and attitudes that create the *field* doxa. Doxa in the *field* is in different forms. At one level doxa works when there is no change in the *field* structure for a very long time. In this case the *habitus* is attuned to the *field* structure and reproduces the structure comfortably. Bourdieu (1977, p. 166) argues 'the stabler the objective structures and the more fully they reproduce themselves in the agents' dispositions, the greater the extent of the field of doxa of that which is taken for granted'. In this way, agents' aspirations are fitted to the objective conditions of which they are the products, and so the *field* and its activities appear natural to the agents. Doxa in the *field* can reject any external change. For instance, in the 1990s in China, in response to a deteriorating quality of education due to a centralised curriculum and college entrance assessment, a decentralised curriculum reform with the intention to develop creative and critical thinking skills was introduced. However an established test-oriented system took over the reform and instead enhanced competition among students and test preparation approaches of pedagogies (Zhao & Qiu, 2009). In this case the agents' *habitus* was in comfort with the testing structure of the *field* and tended to reproduce that structure, thus developing doxa. Priestley (2010, p. 34) argues that sometimes 'rejecting change in favour of established practices is fine, so long as it comes as a result

of a process of meaningful engagement with both the innovation and the context for change'. However rejecting change solely in favour of the established practices is worrisome.

At another level, doxa works when some agents have been in the *field* for a long time and develop a feel for the game. These agents hold privileged positions and can manipulate the rules and regulations. Having a feel for the game gives an advantageous position to those whose *habitus* is attuned to it over others (Ferrare & Apple, 2015) and these agents can manoeuvre (Priestley, Edwards, Priestley, & Miller, 2012) the structure. In comparison, agents who enter the *field* as new are engaged with learning the rules and acquire a feel for the game. Ball et al. (2012) found that newly qualified teachers perceive policies in a different way and may not necessarily see the bigger picture. At times the experienced teachers are considered to be more involved with a policy implementation process and the new teachers are found to be focused on the outcome only (Ball et. al., 2012). Yet at an official level doxa works because agents hold certain positions in the *field* as officially legitimised hierarchy. The Principal is the main authority, whereas the Deputy Principals assist him in the daily operations, followed by the Heads of Department (HoDs) who are responsible for their respective departmental functions. The role distribution within the teachers is also obvious in terms of the year coordinators being responsible for a year level's activities. Thus, and by virtue of their roles, agents have varying levels of access to resources including time, and they experience the reform differently. Doxa can work as misrecognition as it reproduces the hierarchy of positions and certain *capital* that is valued in the *field*.

Curriculum policy reform: A break with doxa

A change in the *field* can break the established practices or doxa. Introducing change in the *field* is a disruption in the objective structure and can challenge the established practices. Bourdieu used the term *hysteresis* to show the relationship between society and individual, as a *field* condition affecting individual *habitus* with the social space (Hardy, 2012). In this case of curriculum reform, there is a break between the objective structure and the subjective aspiration or a mismatch between the *field* and the *habitus*. In cases of changes in the *field* structure, the agents' *habitus* is in discomfort with the *field*, creating the capacity to mediate the change through a reflexive *habitus*. Moreover, in the case of change the 'undiscussed doxa' is brought under discussion through critique (Bourdieu, 1977). Bourdieu (1985) argues that the *habitus* is not only reproductive but has transformative potential and has generative capacities. This potential of the *habitus* gives it a reflexive characteristic which then becomes part of the agents' disposition. According to Cheng (2009a) individuals develop reform maps based on their own understanding and the way these are facilitated. Over the years these professional experiences accumulate and become trusted and powerful lenses that teachers use for

any new reform they encounter. In Bourdieu's terms, the reflexive *habitus* with its ability to adapt to changing circumstances becomes part of the agents' dispositions, and can work as symbolic *capital* in times of sudden changes.

However such mediation and adaptation to the change in the *field* requires support. In the case of the Australian curriculum, the curriculum document provides the basic framework in each subject area which includes standard achievements for each year level. At the state level, the C2C framework is developed with specific guidelines, teaching resources and assessment items for implementation. Schools can also seek help from the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA, 2016) or Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA, 2017) websites which provide substantial material and guidelines for implementation. Given all the support in terms of funding, frameworks, guidelines, websites, teaching and learning resources, Lingard and McGregor (2014) express their concern over the implementation stage stating that it is at the translation and interpretation point where teachers may feel lost, particularly if they are not given enough support.

Thus the support at school level becomes imperative in the change process. Such support can be in different forms – intended or unintended. Teachers' engagement with the reform is an indicator of such support. School reform researchers recommend that close attention be paid to teachers' understanding of the reform and ways should be sought to engage teachers in the reform process. Without the involvement of teachers in the change process, Gitlin and Margonis (1995) maintain that it creates a push-pull process where the external efforts push for reforms and teachers resist, leaving schools almost unchanged. This engagement can also be in different ways. In one way, teachers can be involved in the enactment process through Professional Development (PDs), formal and informal meetings, curriculum review processes and resource development at the school level. At another level it is the consideration of teachers' voices and their meaning making of the reform that needs attention. Savage (2016) is of the view that it is important to have teachers' voices in the national curriculum reform in Australia at such an early stage of the reform implementation, when the curriculum ecology is still evolving, otherwise they will only be 'implementers' of the reform which has implications for the reform. Research studies like this one can contribute and bring teachers' voices forward in reform efforts.

Mapping out the *field*: The HillView School

For Bourdieu the social world is a network of positions. For empirical purposes different *fields* can be outlined within the social world based on their properties, the social conditions and in relation to other *fields*. Bourdieu described *fields* like the education *field* (Bourdieu, 1988), the *field* of art and

culture (Bourdieu, 1995), science *field* (Bourdieu, 2004) and economic *field* (Bourdieu, 2005). Many researchers in the education field have outlined the boundaries of the *field* based on the focus of their research. For example, Yu (2017) considers public policy as a *field* and education as a sub-field in a study exploring the cross-field effects of international education in China. Ladwig (1994) distinguishes between the *field* of education policy and *field* of education by relating educational policy 'with the practices that occur within schools and educational systems and yet remains "outside" or "above" the schools themselves' (p.344). The focus of this study is curriculum reform enactment in one school. Based on the nature of this research and its primary focus in a school context, the school is considered as a *field.* The curriculum policy as conceptualized in this chapter is referred to as the broader *field* of power in which the schooling *field* is embedded. The changing field in this thesis refers to the changes in the schooling field in alignment with the changes in the broader curriculum policy reform. Other associations influencing the schooling *field* in the curriculum enactment are the sub-fields such as the subject-based-association and teachers' union.

Drawing from literature discussed in the previous section (such as the positioning of the school and of the agents, the internal dynamic of the school, the *capital* in circulation, the objective structure and the subjective aspirations as well as the established practices), this section will map out the school as a *field*. Bourdieu states:

> *The school system, the state, the church, political parties or unions are not apparatuses but fields …. [characterised by] struggle according to the regularities and the rules that constitute this social space with various degrees of strength and therefore diverse probabilities of success, to appropriate the specific products at stake in the game. (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 102)*

As Bourdieu indicates, the school system as a *field* is a site of constant struggle according to the regularities of the field and with diverse probabilities of success and change. The agents in this *field* are teachers, Deputy Principals, Heads of Department, students and parents who are the players in the game of policy enactment at the school level. These actors in the school constitute the network of positions interacting and competing with each other over legitimized resources. Bourdieu (1985, p. 734) states that 'every field is the site of struggle over the definition of the legitimate principles of the division of the field'. The outcome of the struggle depends upon the structure of the *field* at one point in time, the ability of agents to play the game and the structure of their *capital,* as well as on the evolution of the field over time. However the school as a *field* is more complex than it appears, particularly when an external reform interacts with the local context with active agents. The notion of *field* in the school reveals the thinking and actions or strategies of agents as a result of policy change. Bourdieu states:

> *It should become clear that so-called "difficult" spots (... or schools today) are, first of all, difficult to describe and think about, and that simplistic and one-sided images (notably those found in the press) must be replaced by a complex and multi-layered representation capable of articulating the same realities but in terms that are different and, sometimes, irreconcilable. (Bourdieu, 1999a, p. 3)*

Bourdieu indicates that there is a need to go beyond a simplistic description of schools today and explore the more complex and multiple representation of realities. While acknowledging the embeddedness of the schooling field in a global/national and a historical context, a more specific description of the case study school and its programs will lay the foundation for the complex activities and the agents' dispositions towards the reform which will be discussed in the later chapters. The case study school - HillView School - is a high school located in a high SES area of Brisbane. Agents in this *field* have differentiated power. For example, the Executive Principal is the central position, assisted by four Deputy Principals. The Heads of Department (Hods) guide their respective department in terms of curriculum enactment. These HoDs are assisted by Year Coordinators for each Year from Year 7 to Year 12 for each subject area (for example Year 7 Mathematics). With their official roles, agents hold a certain position in the *field* within an officially legitimised hierarchy. The Principal is the main authority, whereas the Deputy Principals assist him in the daily operations, followed by the HoDs who are responsible for their respective departmental functions. The role distribution within the teachers is also obvious in terms of the Year Coordinators being responsible for the activities of one year level. Such a power analysis reveals the hierarchy of the school. By virtue of their roles, and dispositions, agents have varying levels of access to resources, including time, and they experience the reform differently. Thus the different roles and stances in the *field* 'can be understood as strategies by which players defend or advance their positions' (Ladwig, 1994, p. 345).

An analysis of the position of HillView School vis-a-vis the broader *field* of curriculum reform in Australia and in relation to other schools in Brisbane highlights the privileged positioning of the school. The school website describes the school as a highly regarded school in the surrounding suburbs of Brisbane, with an increasing enrolment, and supportive community. The school's unique features are a culture of teamwork, pro-active approach in adapting to changes, and high performance in national testing. With these features as the backdrop, the school's position in the *field* guides the agents' strategies to preserve and/or improve such a privileged position (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). The fact that the school is in a high SES zone, the students perform highly in national standardised testing, the teachers work collaboratively and the school is active in adapting to changes make the school an elite school. Bourdieu would argue that in such schools the students' success is determined by the selection criteria of the school and the amount and structure of the academic *capital* the students have inherited from their families. It is closely tied to the distribution of the structure of

the *capital* but also their choices or *habitus* as the generating principle of practice and representations through which such relationships become effective (Bourdieu, 1996).

The school staff believes that every student can learn and succeed; 'success breeds success and the school can control the conditions of success' (*The principal's message in the Junior Secondary School Curriculum Handbook 2015*). The handbook states that the school curriculum challenges yet lays solid foundations in the skills students need for the future. To achieve this objective, students are offered different learning experiences; and provided with opportunities of responsibility and accountability for learning. A wide range of curricular and extracurricular activities are available. Gifted and talented students are provided enrichment and extension opportunities such as language immersion and extension programs, a problem solving project and advanced studies in collaboration with universities. A Targeted Educational support program for international students includes English as a Second Language, and targeted assisted tutorials. Co-curricular activities include academic, sporting, Arts, culture and community engagement activities.

The school has a number of structures and frameworks to guide its initiatives. For example, under the new curriculum reform agenda, Education Queensland requires schools to use a research-based pedagogical framework that is collaboratively developed with the school community to ensure consistency and effectiveness of the teaching and learning practices (QCAA, 2014). Under this direction, the school has Dimensions of Learning (DoL) as its pedagogical framework in practice. The Dimensions of Learning Framework is a tool to integrate the various practices and programs as a unified whole rather than as separate entities (Marzano, Pickering, & Brandt, 1990) (See Appendix A). In Queensland schools, before the introduction of the national curriculum in 2011, the Productive Pedagogies framework by Lingard et al. (2001) was in use for the New Basics curriculum.

The first phase of the Australian curriculum reform was for the junior secondary school subject areas of English, Mathematics, Science and Social Sciences. The school decided to implement the reform before it was mandated by the state curriculum authorities. Within the school *field*, this study focuses on the first phase of the national curriculum as the implementation of learning areas English, Mathematics, Science and History. Therefore Heads of Department (HoDs) of these learning areas, along with 4-5 teachers from each of the targeted learning areas, HoD of the Junior Secondary school and the school's management team involved with the implementation are part of this study as they have major responsibility for the enactment. These networks of positions and the dispositions associated with this network are not simple structures but are also bounded by *field* specific *capital*. The distribution of *capital* in the *field* constitutes a power-relation. Following Ladwig (1994), within

the *field* of schooling, I consider the attributes and positions used to distinguish among the positions in the *field* as *capital*.

Capital, such as a degree in pedagogy and teaching, is a valued *capital* to enter the *field*. The number of years of experience in teaching and administration is valuable cultural *capital* used to improve one's position in the field and make economic gains. Some players playing the game for a long time accumulate more of the *field*-specific *capital* and are in an advantaged position compared to new players. Since the school is viewed as proactive in relation to implementing the new curriculum, adapting to changes and policy reform is a symbolic *capital*. Networking within the school and outside and to a more general education *field* is a valuable reference for better opportunities in the more general education field. When such *capital* is socially recognized in the *field*, it becomes a cultural commodity convertible to economic *capital* (Bourdieu, 2005). Hence the distribution and possession of *capital* can help in understanding the logic of individual strategies in defining or advancing their positions within the *field*.

The configuration and distribution of *capital* shifts during times of change or reform. The valued *field capital* for a particular time and place is determined by the history of the *field* and is manifested in the agents' practices (Hardy, 2012). For instance, new *capital* such as the aptitude to adapt to changes in the form of symbolic *capital* may fade away once the *field* is regulated but is an important valued *capital* during the transition period to change. This means that the value of *capital* can be altered by interventions and change resulting in dislocating the *habitus*. The change in the form of a national curriculum reform in Australia is a structural change in the *field* dislocating the *habitus* and thus is a *hysteresis* effect. The rules of the game changed. It was hard for some experienced teachers to change their dispositions while new teachers, with fresh perspectives, saw it as an opportunity. Such hysteresis creates opportunities in the form of new positions. Schools adopting the changes maintain their dominant position while those resisting the changes are less successful. Similarly social support and networking are seen as important *capital* during changing times (discussed in Chapter 6).

Fields are relatively autonomous. This relative autonomy is due to its organizing practices which gives a logic to the *field*. This means that the norm of the *field* and the pursuit of the field-specific *capital* drive agents' thinking and actions (Krause, 2018). By distinguishing and identifying the *capital* in the *field* one can lay out mechanisms for relative autonomy of the *field*. Krause (2018) recommends exploration of the hierarchy and the influence of the more general field on the thinking, actions and strategies of the players within the *field* to uncover the extent of the *field* autonomy. The schooling *field* is embedded in the broader more powerful *field* of curriculum policy. The next section

will position the Australian Curriculum in its historical and global/national context and their implications, thus setting up the empirical context of this study.

The Australian Curriculum reform

Within critical perspectives to policy analysis, this study argues that the enactment of the Australian Curriculum in one school in Queensland is not an isolated entity but is embedded in the global, national and historical contexts. Analysing the institutional logic of the school by placing it within the broader context of educational field will provide a relatively broader understanding of the logic of the practices within the school and the enactment process. This is because the regularity at the level of institution is not an isolated phenomena but as Martin (2003) argues, as one goes further into a particular case, it reveals more general principles of the field. The following section will briefly outline the history of national curriculum in Australia before moving on to the Australian Curriculum as the focus of this study.

The previous attempt of national curriculum in Australia

In critical research it is important to consider the formation of the identified problem over time or the history of the problem. According to Ball (2006, p. 18), by not embedding history into the policy research, 'a significant continuity is lost sight of in the heat and noise of reform'. It is important to consider curriculum as a historically evolving phenomena, however a simple allegiance to the past should not persuade one to ignore the present. Pinar et al., (2008, p. 13) argue that 'there is a temptation to ignore contemporary developments and to retreat into a nostalgia for the field no longer present,' but a relationship of the present to the past is eminent. This section will briefly outline the previous attempts of national curriculum in Australia with a detailed description of the Australian Curriculum and its implications.

Australia has a 35+ year long history of attempted national curriculum reforms. The three declarations – 1989's Hobart Declaration; 1999's Adelaide Declaration; and the recent 2008 Melbourne Declaration – provide the base line for the national curriculum in the country. These declarations are the broader guidelines for educational initiatives, including a national curriculum. The first national curriculum in Australian was initiated to address the challenges of economic growth and a dearth of skilled human resources. It was in 1989 that the then state and territory education ministers agreed to act jointly to tackle the educational issue and produced the Hobart Declaration for Schooling in Australia. The reform in the form of *Outcome-Based Curriculum* defined some general knowledge, skills and values that learners could acquire and set standards against which all students' performances were to be monitored and reported (Bantwini, 2010; Yates & Collins, 2010). According

to Harris-Hart (2010), this curriculum intended to produce a multi-skilled and flexible workforce to meet the challenges of economic growth through a nationally coordinated curriculum. This curriculum was planned and practiced with a view of child development theory in a sense that the identified standards were not particularly linked to any grade level but was a pathway students could move on at their own pace. In this way there was no concept of pass or fail but students were at varying points along the standard pathways and teachers were to help them move upward or onward (Yates & Collins, 2010). Such a design of the curriculum attracted criticism including critique of the greater emphasis on cognitive skills which undermined other skills required for the upcoming 21st century. This curriculum was also criticised for its high political influence, because it was through the Australian Education Council (AEC) – a body largely consisting of political ministers – through which the national statements and profiles for this curriculum were developed (Batiwini, 2010; Harris-Hart, 2010). Moreover, the national curriculum was very broad and while translating it to their specific contexts, states and territories modified it to an extent that by 1993 Harris-Hart (2010) notes the widely different practices in its implementation. Such criticisms put a question mark on the *Outcome-Based Curriculum* being national.

Another attempt at curriculum reform in the form of *Essential Learnings* was made by the federal government in the late 1990s amid the demands of 21st century skills and shifts like globalisation, growth of ICT, and the evolving economic field. *Essential Learnings* had a focus on knowledge and skills outside traditional school subjects and considered academic knowledge crucial for developing procedural knowledge for new times (Yates & Collins, 2010). *Essential Learnings* defined and outlined 8 broad Key Learning Areas (KLAs). However, Australia being geographically wider, with diverse communities and a multicultural society, every state in Australia, again, adapted the KLAs based on their contextual requirements and existing practices. In this regards, Queensland took *Essential Learnings* as broader themes and included knowledge and skills for: complex, real life challenges such as social and personal competencies; for communication and ongoing learning such as literacy, numeracy, life skills, ICT and cultural skills (Yates & Collins, 2010, p. 95). Tasmania, on the other hand, focused on enquiry and reflective thinking skills, ethics and responsible citizenship and effective communication. Moreover, these KLAs were seen as important for employment, but at the classroom level, particularly in secondary schooling, were found impractical and were seen as a 'wish list' (Yates & Collins, 2010, p. 95).

Hence the efforts to move towards a national curriculum in order to develop greater consistency across education systems was not able to be materialised for a long time due to various political, social, economic, cultural and educational reasons and diverse agendas (Lingard & McGregor, 2014; Reid, 2009). In the mid-2000s, it was the Liberal Party government with Prime Minister John Howard

who called for a national curriculum and national standardised testing by recommending replacing the existing state and territory certificates with a national senior secondary certificate of education. The Australian Labor Party (ALP) came into power in late 2007 with the new Prime Minister Kevin Rudd promising an 'Education Revolution'. Under the Education Revolution promise the ALP government took different initiatives like a national Australian Curriculum; standardised National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN); a national data collection and reporting strategy in the form of the My School Website; Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and Principals' Accreditation and a revised national model of funding for schools (Harris-Hart, 2010; Savage, 2016). This study is focused on the Australian Curriculum under the Educational Revolution initiatives of the current government.

The Australian Curriculum

The current Australian Curriculum in 2008 is the third attempt at curriculum nationalisation since the late 1980s. With the recent curriculum reform in Australia, the formal work started with the establishment of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) in 2008. ACARA attempted to develop the national curriculum documents through cooperative consultation processes. Consultation on expert-drafted *Framing papers*, bureaucrat-crafted *Shape papers* and curriculum framework drafts took place till the final national curriculum framework was published in 2010. Since its inception major reviews and discussions have taken place, with more changes. For example a review of the *Reform of Federation* in 2014 and 2015 sought to clarify the roles and responsibilities of federal and state governments in education. The review highlighted the problematic nature of overlap and duplication in the state and federal government and an undermined role of the state government. A discussion paper, followed by the review in 2015, suggested including the full autonomy of state governments for schooling (Savage, 2016). It indicated that the field of curriculum reform is still evolving and is unstable due to major reviews and revisions. The implications for schools are still unclear but the data in this study suggests that the school is in the process of position-making as they negotiate the changes, analyse their existing practices, evaluate the risk to mediate and/or sometimes ignore certain changes.

Since the implementation phase and stages were delegated to the states, progress towards the enactment of the national curriculum was at varying levels of implementation in different states by the time this study was conducted in 2015. Under ACARA's guidelines the then Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) (now the Queensland Curriculum Assessment Authority, QCAA) was given the responsibility to translate the national standards into state-based documents and also determine the

timeline of the implementation process. QCAA, in alignment with ACARA, followed the phases of the national curriculum enactment as follows:

- Phase 1, curriculum for P-10 for learning areas English, Mathematics, Science and History was to be implemented by the end of 2013.
- Phase 2 and 3: by 2013 learning areas Geography, The Arts, Health and Physical Education, Civic Citizenship, Technology, Economics and Business and Languages were expected to begin implementation.
- By 2016 a complete staged implementation of the P-10 curriculum to be ensured.

This study has a focus on the first phase of the national curriculum enactment in the subject areas of English, History, Science and Mathematics. The final frame for Phase 1 was published in December 2010 ready for implementation in schools from 2011. During the time data was collected for this study in 2015, the curriculum implementation plan was on track, achieving its major milestones.

In addition to the discipline-based learning areas, the Australian Curriculum includes two other aspects in the form of a set of seven *General Capabilities* encompassing twenty-first century skills like literacy and critical thinking skills and three *Cross-Curriculum Priorities* namely: *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and cultures; Sustainability;* and *Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia* to be taught across the different disciplines and woven into the curriculum of each subject. However this was later on moderated in Queensland amid pressure from schools due to teachers' workload (Savage, 2016). Other than the QCAA, Education Queensland (EQ) – the state public education authority – prepared and provided detailed unit and lesson plans, assessment samples and related resources to assist teachers in implementing the curriculum reform in 2012. This document, known as 'Curriculum-to-Classroom' or 'C2C,' is also being attended to by schools along with other priorities. However it is evident from the data that the case study school negotiated some of the state-based initiatives in relation to the national curriculum, including the C2C. Mills and McGregor (2016) cite an evaluative report from the Department of Education in Queensland which found a greater variation of the use and implementation of C2C across the state. Some regional directors made it mandatory while in other regions C2C was taken as a resource to use. This changing ecology of the education in general and national curriculum in particular has implications for the education system.

Implications of a national curriculum

National curriculum reform and globalisation

National policy reforms are seen as an outcome of global and economic forces. It is believed that global issues drive the national reform agenda. In some ways, curriculum reform is then used as a tool (Pinar et al., 2008) to 'fix' education problems (Biesta, 2015). For instance, and in relation to the

history of national curriculum in Australia, in the political sphere, when a shortage of manpower was realised for an evolving economy, the solution was sought in the form of curriculum reform in the late 1980s. Similarly when globalisation was the new direction, curriculum reform was used to prepare students in the mid-1990s. In today's world, education outcomes or test results are seen as the success criteria for education systems, thus curriculum standardisation, accountability and testing is considered as the solution.

Nationalisation under the influence of globalisation has given rise to 'policy borrowing' (Lingard, 2010). Policy borrowing is the transfer of educational innovation from one context to another through a process called Global Education Reform Movement (GERM) facilitated by international development organisations with links to national interest and economic profit (Sahlberg, 2011). However, policies are influenced by the context, time and history. For instance and as Rawolle and Lingard (2010, p. 97) point out, 'while the pressures on curriculum reform might be similar throughout the globe, the reforms which result always have a vernacular character as they build incrementally on what has gone before within specific educational system'. Bourdieu (1999b) argues that in such policy movement or policy borrowing misunderstandings happens when:

> *texts circulate without their context – they don't bring with them the field of production of which they are a product, and the fact that the recipients, who are themselves in a different field of production, re-interpret the texts in accordance with the structure of the field of reception, are facts that generate some formidable misunderstandings that can have good or bad consequences. (Bourdieu, 1999b, p. 221)*

Nationalisation presents problems to the local context, particularly at the enactment stage. Rizvi and Lingard (2011, p. 42) argue that 'while national policies are still made by national governments, a significant role in driving national systems of education towards a similar policy outlook' are the global and economic forces. Such increasing concerns on the role of global forces in national education policies sometimes conceal the state and local issues (Lingard, 2010; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Even within the national boundary, policies such as curriculum policy transfer from one *field* to another through a series of social operations. The process of production or development of the overarching document at the national level, the translation and interpretation at the state level agencies, the material development and finally the reading and meaning making of the agents at the school level bring modifications to how the curriculum is enacted. This move towards globalisation restricts and limits the role of national policy development and hence a failure to enhance the national capabilities and schools' attempts to learn from their past practices (Fullan, 2007). Ball (2015, p. 308) pinpoints that the notion of standardisation on the one hand appears to offer an opportunity to change or improve practices while at the same time 'ensure that perfection is always out of reach and that there is more work to do'. In this way teachers are kept engaged with constructing their own reality

without being consciously aware of their strategic position. Bourdieu would argue that the agents are kept engaged in constructing their own identity within an illusio effect of legitimisation (Bourdieu, 1977).

The national curriculum reform in Australia is in response to the global trend of test results as the success criteria, and has the elements of more standardisation, accountability and testing. The comparison and competition between nations through standardised testing (such as the Program of International Student Assessment (PISA) that test students' scores) reflect their capability to compete in global market, hence the ability of nation's competitiveness (Lingard & McGregor, 2014; Savage, 2016). With this backdrop, improved educational quality is designed to increase educational outcomes, student learning and school performance. As a result, policy makers and education reformers believe that 'setting clear and sufficiently high performance standards for schools, teachers and students will necessarily improve the quality of desired outcomes' through a 'centrally prescribed curricula, with detailed and often ambitious performance targets, frequent testing of students and teachers, and high-stakes accountability' (Sahlberg, 2010, p. 330). Hence, standardisation of such a nature is homogenising educational policies with standardised solutions to improve quality and effectiveness, which comes at a lower cost. Such attempts at centralisation and standardisation are not unique to Australia but many first world countries including Canada, New Zealand, the US and UK have had clear and high standards performance initiatives since the 1990s. However, nationalisation and standardisation presents some unique challenges to Australia as discussed below.

Implications of national curriculum for Australia

In addition to the general implications of nationalisation as discussed in the previous section, national reforms pose unique challenges to the Australian context. The history of Australian schooling shows that policy formations evolved since the colonial period have resulted in diverse systems of schooling (Mills & McGregor, 2016; Savage, 2016; Yates, Collins, & O'Connor, 2011). According to Harris-Hart (2010), although the national level organisations play the major role in the national level reform agenda in schooling, it is still confusing to see who is governing Australian schooling because, constitutionally, it is the state governments who should govern school activities. According to Savage (2016) while the major policy shift is to the national level, states are held accountable for the outcomes amid a contested role of the state/territory and federal governments in schooling affairs. Thus the roles and responsibilities, once held by the states, are now shared and negotiated at a national level.

The attempt to nationalise the curriculum since the late 1980s is also seen as a concerted effort by the federal government to control education and the curriculum. For Mills and McGregor (2016), it is an intentional effort by the federal government in order to exert more control over the six different states

and two territories and thus a form of coercive federalism (Harris-Hart, 2010). Brennan (2011, p. 271) argues that the Australian Curriculum is highly politicised and hence doubts its long term stability and effectiveness. She argues that it is essentially 'owned by education ministers' and does not have the capacity to generate rich policy dialogue, professional knowledge and network capital to make it a reality. A strong tie to politics also means that any changes in the political scenario can affect the political commitment to education revolution and its underlying initiatives. However, Savage and O'Connor (2015) see it as a form of cooperative federalism because of intergovernmental cooperation and the development of a common language for the curriculum across the country. What is missing in both of these analyses of 'coercive' and/or 'cooperative' federalism is a question like, where are the actors at the local level positioned in this debate of federalism?

The formation of ACARA and the national curriculum is a dramatic shift in terms of curriculum policy and development processes in Australia. According to Savage (2016), ACARA has changed the processes of curriculum development in Australian schooling in many aspects, such as shifting the long standing state-based curriculum development to national fronts. Power has shifted to a national level and decision making about curriculum has become complex with the involvement and interaction of different national level organisations such as the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), the Education Council and ACARA, and state level curriculum agencies such as QCAA and DET in Queensland. The coordination of these agencies, and the guidance provided to schools, is multi-dimensional. In this broadened field schools have to navigate the field within a broader context, as they are responsible and accountable for the outcomes of a nationally developed curriculum (Harris-Hart, 2010; Savage, 2016). Another level requiring attention is the diverse pedagogic field such as state level education departments and local schools under the created and dominated (Bernstein, 2000) federal field. Nationalisation of such a nature can encounter sites of resistance and counter movements which makes it complex (Ball, 1998). However, as Ball, Maguire, Braun, and Hoskins (2011a) warn us, policies enactment 'cannot be understood as either active resistance or passive acceptance, but the continuous transformation of a token by many different people' (p. 11). Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) suggest that teachers must respond to such external standards and inform policy formation through their experiences and what works for them.

ACARA's dominating role is also obvious from the fact that some schools rely on ACARA as the federal agency for direction and resources. Savage (2016) found that teachers and school leaders were misunderstanding the distinction between state agencies and ACARA. This, Savage (2016) argues, is partly due to ACARA's direct online communication and updates about Australian curriculum. This creates more confusion because different states are at different levels of implementation and ACARA's updates can be different for different states and territories and even schools. Savage (2016)

argues that this is a 'side-stepping' of states' agencies by ACARA which can affect the state level message and in fact is undermining the states' position. This may lead to a situation where states or territories see themselves as not acting with real power but what Harris-Hart (2010, p. 301) thinks is with just a 'responsibility for implementing an agenda' decided by ACARA. A review of the *Reform of Federation* in the year 2014, and a discussion paper by the Australian Government in 2015 has highlighted the issue of overlapping roles and an increased role of the federal government and suggested a more coordinated model of federalism with clear lines of responsibilities (Savage, 2016). As stated, the field of curriculum reform is still evolving and unstable and therefore research at this stage can trace the new configuration of the field.

The implementation of this national curriculum is tied to funding through a national education agreement. The states and territories signed a range of national agendas, including the development of Australian Curriculum and its implementation, with increased federal funding for schools (Savage, 2016). Reid (2009) asserts that in this way the states have been forced by the federal government to agree to a number of curriculum initiatives under threat of losing federal funds. For Harris-Hart (2010) this is the use of economic power by the federal government to manage national curriculum development and implementation. Reid (2009) terms it as an 'interventionist' approach using 'financial muscle'. In addition to such an agreement, a shift in taxation has increased the revenue generation for the federal government while the expensive social services like education are left to the state government (Lingard, 2000; Savage, 2016). According to Lingard (2000) such a fiscal imbalance between the states and the federal government has made the states/territories dependent on the federal government and opened up ways of greater federal interventions in state education.

The recent 'Education Revolution' initiative has an increased element of accountability measures through NAPLAN and the MySchool Website. Coupled with the initiative of Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APSTs) by the federal government, policy changes have re-positioned schools and teachers and hence their position-taking and position-taking strategies (Bourdieu, 1992), which has implications for curriculum enactment. In this situation, schools feel more pressured to perform well in testing and standardised testing and accountability narrows down the curriculum and pedagogical practices (Lingard, 2010). According to Lewis and Hardy (2015), such accountability has impacted the work of teachers and school practices as teachers amend their curriculum and pedagogy with a focus on the test. This trend is not specific to Australia, rather it is a global trend manifesting locally. In the UK, in such an accountability measure, schools and teachers feel more and more watched but not supported (Ball, 1998). Such standardisation has given rise to 'performativity' and 'deliverology' (Ball, 2003; Ball et al., 2012). In addition, Lewis and Hardy (2015) argue that in Australia, national testing has de-historicised and decontextualised schooling practices because

constitutionally it is under the state's responsibility. This is because the work of teachers and their pedagogical practices are amended in order to fit a nationally developed framework of curriculum and assessment, largely ignoring the cultural, and contextual differences.

Thus the national curriculum is debated at the macro, political sphere, but the micro enactment stage needs attention. Such a debate has led to a push and pull situation as it is not only about education or policy but the international complicated conversations where to improve the economy is to tighten the link of schooling to employment and productivity; enhancing student outcomes; more direct control over curriculum and assessment and a reduced cost to govern education. As discussed above, this is not the first time that Australia has opted for a national curriculum, rather it is a historically evolving national phenomena which has implications for the states and territories as well.

The changing context in Queensland and teachers' re-positioning

In Australia, Queensland has remained open to changes and reforms for most of its history (Lingard et al., 2000; Mills & McGregor, 2016). This often comes at a cost. Mills and McGregor argue that the progressive state-based educational reforms in Queensland are being compromised with the increasing federal interventions. For instance, they argue that the state-based curriculum – the *New Basics* – with its innovative approach of curriculum, pedagogy and assessment could have possibly served and fed other states. The New Basics was developed in coordination with academic and public servants based on an intensive research in schools called Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study (QSRLS) 1998-2000 (Lingard et al., 2001) with a new approach of linking curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. Queensland schools trialled the New Basics which was a 'highly progressive 21st century curriculum' (Mills & McGregor, 2016, p. 114). However, and while Queensland was in the process of fully endorsing the New Basics in 2008, the national curriculum was successfully negotiated with state governments and the Queensland government decided to implement the curriculum in line with ACARA as the national authority.

Moreover, the relative performance of Queensland on the 2008 NAPLAN result compared to other states and a major review of Queensland education by the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER) led to the development of a 'teaching and learning audit'. Mills and McGregor (2016) argue that this was used as a tool with the purpose to enhance quality of pedagogy practice in Queensland classrooms but rather it further restricted pedagogical practices. Under such restrictions and accountability schools and teachers are under immense pressure, accountable for students' performance through the MySchool Website, national professional standards and responsible for NAPLAN results.

In Queensland, traditionally teachers have been involved in the state-based curriculum by developing resources, syllabus and mediating evaluation. They were involved as 'syllabus-writers or members of advisory committee to syllabus-writers, and as participants in school based trials of syllabus and curriculum material' (Kirk & MacDonald, 2001, p. 552). This practice of teachers' representation was institutionalised in the form of Board of Senior Secondary School Studies (BSSS) for senior curriculum from 1971-2002 and the Queensland School Curriculum Council (QSCC) for P-10 curriculum from 1994-2002. However these two bodies were replaced by QSA in 2002 which was again replaced by QCAA in 2014 responsible for all curricular development. However the role of ACARA and its communication with schools has re-positioned the traditional role of the state based curriculum authority, the QCAA. With a shift of power to ACARA, schools have to navigate the field within a broader context, as they are responsible and accountable for the outcome of the national curriculum at the local level.

Thus the Queensland teachers are specifically under pressure because of frequent reforms. According to Mills and McGregor (2016), the national curriculum reforms since the 1990s, the New Basics trials, the QCAR framework and coming along with the Australian curriculum in just one decade is too much. Currently, the state of Queensland in Australia is believed to be proactive in adopting education reforms. Queensland has witnessed many reforms including school-based management, curriculum change in the form of New Basics and switching to a national curriculum, standardised assessment and teachers' professional standards within one decade (Mills & McGregor, 2016; Lingard & McGregor, 2014). Such quick shifts coupled with an emphasis on testing and accountability, and frequent changes in curriculum can develop 'reform or change fatigue' (Lingard, et al., 2000, p. 99) in people working in schools. Furthermore, such frequent interventions can lead to what Cheng (2009a, p. 76) calls a 'bottle-neck effect' – a situation where new educational initiatives even with good-will and sufficient support can become additional burdens due to the jam or block of previous initiatives. Cheng (2009a, p. 82) argues that 'many reforms with good intentions can become a nightmare or disaster to teachers, schools and the whole community if they are organised and implemented forcefully with ignorance'. Therefore it is timely to pay attention to the Australian Curriculum reform and its enactment at school level in Queensland. Pinar (2006) argues that to understand curriculum reform it is pertinent to understand and appreciate the diversity and struggle in the local context, including the internal processes of the struggle for curriculum enactment. Understanding of the local struggle and the internal logic starts at individual level: that is the in-depth understanding of agents at the local level involved in the reform process.

Conclusion: What does this study do?

This study explores the enactment of the national Australian Curriculum reform in one state high school in Brisbane using Bourdieu's theoretical resources. The enactment of curriculum policy reform becomes more critical when abstract ideas are put to work or 'text' is translated into practice. The forces at the level of enactment are more varied and diverse than at any other stages of the curriculum policy formation. It is at this stage of enactment where it is not only about the external intended and desired change but the contextual needs, the embodied history, the individual *habitus*, the position and dispositions involved that needs to be attended to. Using a critical perspective to policy analysis, this study explores the diverse and innovative ways that a school adapts to respond to a national reform. It argues that the 'success' of an intended change cannot be how effectively the intended reform has been implemented but how positively and creatively the school is engaged with the reform.

This study acknowledges that the curriculum policy in the schooling *field* are influenced by other sub-fields such as subject associations and curriculum agencies as active forces exerting their pressure. The federal government organisation in the form of ACARA has probably the major influence on the enactment process, but equally important are the state level curriculum agencies such as QCAA and DET with direct involvement and interaction with the school and its practices. Moreover the ACER as a research organisation that influences school practices through recommendations like audits of schools (Mills & McGregor, 2016). Other related policies and practices like assessment, evaluation, funding, governance and leadership, professionalism and existing practices, and community values are all interrelated and sometimes (inter)twined concepts at the enactment stage. Other policy initiatives like NAPLAN affect the enactment of the national curriculum by consuming valuable teaching time. By considering these active forces in the schooling *field*, this study explores the spaces of change and constraints at the local school level. Hence it is recognised that the general education system has 'nested-layers' (Berends, 2009) in which teachers are nested within schools, regions, states, nations and so forth.

This study recognises that the regularity at the level of the system masks uncertainties, irregularities and urgencies. It attempts to understand curriculum policy and its enactment based on differences and diversity in practices; the shifting nature in time and space; the permeable and flexible boundaries; and the *field* as socially and historically constructed with political influences and the potential for intellectual exploration. It further sets curriculum policy that can by-pass bureaucratic control and acknowledges the errors, uncertainties and complexities that set in through the actions of the agents in the local context. Bourdieu's field analysis is thus utilised to analyse this complex curriculum policy along with the internal institutional logic of the school. Field theory, according to Martin (2003), emphasises that the regularity at the level of institution is not enough but as one goes further

into a particular case, it reveals more general principles of the *field*. This is because institutions are generally considered to be the building blocks of social explanations. The next chapter will explain the methodological and theoretical underpinnings that this study is based on. For anonymity purpose, all names including the school and the participants' names are pseudonyms.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Underpinnings and Research Design

This is a Bourdieuian study focusing on the experiences and perceptions of the school management team and teachers in one particular school in Queensland during the enactment of a national curriculum in Australia. For Bourdieu, the rigour of the *construction* of the research object is of utmost importance in order to approach a socially significant object in a scientific way (Bourdieu, 1992b, p.221, original emphasis). Bourdieu states:

> *...the construction of an object is not something that is effected once and for all, with one stroke, through a sort of inaugural theoretical act. The program of observation and analysis through which it is effected is not a blue print that you draw up in advance, in the manner of the engineer. It is, rather, a protracted and exacting task that is accomplished little by little, through a whole series of small rectifications and amendments inspired by what is called the "know-how", that is, by the set of practical principles that orients choices at once minute and decisive. (Bourdieu, 1992b, p.228)*

As Bourdieu indicated, the construction of the research object is only a theoretical act but the practical aspect of the research is equally important. This chapter is intended to outline the methodological and theoretical underpinnings that inform this study. The chapter begins with a discussion on the qualitative paradigm of research and its different epistemological and ontological orientations. The chapter then explores Bourdieuian methodology that has influenced the way I see the social world and explore it. Next, the chapter elaborates on the method used to explore curriculum enactment in the social set up of a schooling *field*. The multi-approach to data generation is explained followed by data analysis. Finally the problematic nature of researching and interpreting the social world in critical research is discussed and the notion of reflexivity is used to address some of these limitations. The conclusion sums up the way this study has been conducted.

Qualitative research paradigm

The purpose of this study is to explore the mediation of curriculum policy enactment from the point of view of teachers and the school management team in the junior section of one State High School in Queensland using Bourdieu's methodology. Methodology is based on how one understands the social world. According to Mason (2002), methodology is the reasoning that informs particular ways of doing research or the principles underlying the organisation of research activity. There are different ways of conceptualising the social world and different ways of conducting research and eventually presenting the data. Since this research seeks an exploration of the social world of a school with active agents having subjective aspirations within the limits of objective structures, a Bourdieuian methodology with a qualitative focus is believed to be useful. However qualitative research is not a

simple way of exploring the social world but is complex with its various epistemological and ontological paradigms. The following section will explore the epistemological and ontological orientation to qualitative research and outline Bourdieuian research paradigm of this study.

The epistemological orientations and a socially critical research

Qualitative research is not limited to only one distinct theoretical paradigm or discipline, rather multiple paradigms claim the use of qualitative research methods and strategies including positivist, constructivist, interpretivist, phenomenologist, postmodernist and socially critical research. In positivist research, the researcher formulates hypotheses, draws on careful and controlled observations, quantifies the data and presents the findings through statistical means (O'Donoghue, 2007). Knowledge in this paradigm is thus developed inductively from directly observable facts and is considered to be objective and generalisable (Flick, 2014; Ormston, Spencer, Bernard & Snape, 2003). This method of knowledge generation is closely associated with the natural sciences (Flick, 2014) which is challenged in the social sciences. Researchers in the social sciences maintain that reality goes beyond the observable facts perceived through human senses but involves thinking and creativity in order to understand the complexity in the social world (Ormston et al., 2003). Hence a research paradigm that emphasises social interaction and subjectivities in order to understand the meaning behind something is called an interpretivist paradigm. Knowledge in an interpretivist paradigm is believed to be generated through mutual negotiation and is specific to the situation being studied. However such a negotiated phenomenon in knowledge generation raised the question of the researcher's dominant position in generating knowledge. Thus a debate about the position of the researcher and the research participants gave rise to postmodernism. Postmodernism attempts to address the issue of the researcher's dominant position and thus is concerned with rhetorical tropes and narrative aspects involving storytelling in new ways by the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Like the positivist paradigm, interpretivist paradigms of research are descriptive, and interpretative with an attempt to rediscover a piece of reality (Kincheloe & Mclaren, 2005). Mills (2004) asserts that for practical and emancipatory value, research must not only assist in understanding an existing situation but should present alternative visions.

While acknowledging that no paradigm works in isolation and that many of them overlap, inform or are in conflict with each other (Guba & Lincoln, 2005), it is a Bourdieuian research approach that informs this study. Bourdieu is regarded as a critical researcher and his critical theory does not only shape the way I think of the world but also appeals to me for its active construction of the researcher, the research methods and the resources in hand (Kincheloe & Mclaren, 2005, p. 317). Bourdieu himself did not reject generation of knowledge in a positivistic approach using statistical tools but

considered it as an important aspect of social reality. He however contends that only capturing objectivity is not enough because subjective experience also matters. Bourdieu argues that 'unlike natural science, a total anthropology cannot keep to a construction of objective relations because the experience of meanings is part and parcel of the total meaning of experience' (Wacquant, 1992, p. 9). Bourdieu believed that there are two modes of knowledge generation: the social structure through the distribution of material resources; and the mental and bodily schemata or the symbolic forms of practices (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). The researcher should seek to grasp the objective structure in its material form. However behind such regulated structures are its principles of generation; that is the human experiences within the social world. Bourdieu (1977, p. 3) states that the phenomenological knowledge makes explicit the truth of the primary experience of the social world while objectivist knowledge constructs the objective relations which structure practices. Such an active approach in research rejects a deterministic view and standardised modes of knowledge production.

A critical research paradigm seeks to address social problems and provide alternative ways of doing things. In the education field, critical educators not only critique the existing practices but are engaged in formulating democratic and progressive visions of what could be done to improve them. Such a democratic approach attempts to understand and value those involved in the process and transform educational practices. Although Bourdieu is criticised for not dealing with change, Bourdieu stated that 'it is by knowing the laws of reproduction that we can have a chance, however small, of minimizing the reproductive effect of the educational institution' (Bourdieu, 2008, p. 53). Critical researchers are therefore committed not just to knowing, but to transforming and to changing the world (Mills & Gale, 2007). In this study while the qualitative nature of the research enables me to study the phenomena of curriculum enactment in the natural setting of the school, the critical aspect of this research offers an insight into the possibilities of changing the existing practices. Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000, p. 111) argue that one aim of critical theory is to 'increase our awareness of the political nature of the social phenomena and develop the ability of researchers to reflect critically upon those taken-for-granted realities under study'. A critical paradigm is based on the assumption that 'knowledge is problematic and capable of systematic distortion' (O'Donoghue, 2007, p. 10).

The ontological orientation of critical research

Ontologically, in qualitative research the debate of whether there is a social reality to be captured or reality is constructed, gave rise to different positions: realism; materialism; and idealism. Researchers who agree with realism believe that reality exists independent of observers. This reality can be thought about, experienced, and observed, but is beyond human apprehension (Guba & Lincoln,

2005, p. 203). A more or less similar stance is held by materialism, which claims that reality is in the material features of the world that influence values, experiences or beliefs but is not shaped by these physical objects. Idealism, on the contrary, asserts that reality can only be known through human experience and meaning is socially constructed (Ormston, et al., 2003).

Generally, the different positions are not taken in their extreme forms, rather modification and flexibility to such positions has made them suitable to diverse ontological needs. In this regard, critical researchers maintain that the social world is shaped by normative expectations and shared understandings and that the laws governing it are not rigid but flexible (Ormston, et al., 2003). Following this contemporary stance, and using Bourdieuian methodology I believe that social reality is shaped by the objective structures as well as the subjective experiences developed within the social world, but at the same time these are not absolute. Along with the structure, the social world of school is equally influenced by the subjective aspirations and shared understanding and so is open to changes, modifications and transformation. Moreover the researcher, her personal experiences and assumed knowledge influence the way knowledge is generated.

Bourdieu's methodology is relational; that is seeing all social phenomena in relation to their location in a given *field* and in relation to others in the *field* (Rawolle & Lingard, 2013, p.117). This methodological relationalism is not only about the object itself but the relations that exists in the social *field* (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu states, 'a field consists of a set of objective, historical relations between positions anchored in certain forms of power (or capital), while habitus consists of a set of historical relations "deposited", within individual bodies in the form of mental and corporeal schemata of perception, appreciation, and action' (Wacquant, 1992, p. 16). Bourdieu (1992b) argues that it is easier to think of reality in terms of observable facts rather than in terms of relations. The real is relational (Bourdieu, 1992b, p. 232).

Instead of taking a theoretical position in a fixed way of its applicability in all situations, I prefer using a theoretical paradigm which is the researcher's epistemological, ontological and methodological premises or interpretive framework. The following section will discuss Bourdieu's theoretical resources in relation to the structure, the subjective experiences of the agents as well as the involvement of the researcher in this process of knowledge generation.

A Bourdieuian Research Methodology

Within the framework of a critical approach to research I intend to explore the social world of a school enacting a new curriculum using Bourdieuian research methodology. This is because the social and institutional structure provides a framework for the educational practices, actions and beliefs but there

are subjectivities of active agents in the *field*. While agreeing with Carr and Kemmis (1986, p. 130) that many educational outcomes are the result of constraints contained in the 'social structure over which teachers have little or no control', I also believe that there are spaces to exercise agency and thus opportunities for doing things differently and innovatively. As Boltanski (2011, p. 10) puts it, 'every time we find ourselves in the presence of theoretical corpuses, subject as such to internal consistency – at least relative – while being haunted by a structural tension, the possibilities are certainly not unlimited' but nevertheless are present. Utilising a Bourdieuian research methodology I aim to analyse the structural limitations that influence the values, beliefs and practices of the people in a school context and explore spaces or opportunities for change. This is because I believe that curriculum enactment is a complex, multidimensional phenomena intending to achieve objective outcomes, pursued subjectively in a social context.

Robbins (1998) is of the view that there is no strict formula or standard instruments of enquiry for pursuing Bourdieu's theory in research. The important thing is to deconstruct and reconstruct Bourdieu's concepts in relation to the topic under investigation in the social world. This thesis argues that the process of curriculum enactment encompasses complex relationships, tensions, contestations, diverse dispositions, but also spaces for change and transformation. Field analysis has been extensively used in exploring power and injustice. However and as Krause (2018, p. 8) suggests 'substantive concerns about inequality and power are at the core of the sociological tradition, but to associate the concept of field exclusively with these concerns might lead us to explore only selectively what the concept of field has to offer as a tool for describing patterns and aspects of social order'. Bourdieu's theoretical resources are useful in breaking the pre-conceived objects of the social world and allows for the examination of the relationship between them which is often overlooked (Rawolle & Lingard, 2012). Here I use *field, habitus* and *field* structure through positioning as the theoretical resources.

Field is an important conceptual mode of the construction of the object and the first percept of method (Bourdieu, 1992b). The notion of *field* is methodologically useful in considering the diverse influence and complexity involved in the enactment process. Gerrard and Farrell (2013, p. 9) are of the view that 'by mobilizing the concept of field, the methodology adopted will trace the multiple iterations of education policies as they are produced and their effect on normalizing particular forms of educational practice in a particular field or institution'. Schooling practices have internal forces or tensions and external influences of continued intervention (Hardy, 2010). This project examines the objective structure of the intended change and explores the subjective experiences of the participants with the aim to develop an insight into the spaces or opportunities for change and improvement. Curriculum enactment in a social setting of a school involves the everyday experiences of the school personnel

and the existing social conditions that mask the underlying contestations and struggle. For instance this study examines the role of Deputy Principals (DPs) and the resultant dispositions produced in them towards a certain way of thinking and doing. Thus the official roles and responsibilities as the objective structure produces in them dispositions or positions taken towards the normality of the defined role (Gunter & Forrester, 2010). Hence the concept of *field* and positioning can explore how changes or reform in a broader educational *field* is manifested in the school and how some practices are strengthened or adopted in pursuing curriculum goals.

The concept of *habitus* in this study helps in understanding the practices of policy agents in order to understand the embodied practices of the reform at the local level. According to Blackmore (2010, p. 110), 'Bourdieu brings back the significance of experience through the notions of habitus and disposition as mediating theory and practice'. The experiences of the school staff in a school through their *habitus* and disposition in transiting to the new reform is made meaningful within the *field* structure. Implementing a reform is not a simple translation of intended changes into reality, rather it encompasses personal experiences, professional development opportunities, social support, school values and position. By mobilising the concept of *habitus*, the logic of the *field* is explored as the agents orient themselves to the new expectations. The dialectic relations between the objective structures and conditions influence the individual and/or collective *habitus*, leading to situations where possibilities, struggles and contestation of reform is manifested in the practices of agents.

The concept of *field* encompasses the nexus between *habitus* and *field* in which *field* as an objective structure is made meaningful by the bodily embodiment which is the *habitus* of its agents (Gerrard & Farrell, 2013; Grenfell & James, 1998). Grenfell (2010, p. 88) argues that 'field provides the objective structure, while habitus is the subjective part as the product of infra-structure and is the structuring structure in a functionalist view'. In this study the nexus between the *field* structure in terms of the changes introduced in the *field* and how it calls for a change in the agents' *habitus* is explored. The change in the field created a mis-match between the *field* and the *habitus* – thus a *hysteresis effect* (Hardy, 2012). Such an external reform calls upon a change in the *habitus*. This way the nexus between the school's structural constraints and opportunities for alternatives are sought and a reflexive *habitus* is developed (this will discussed in Chapter 6)

Critical research is dialectic in nature, which provides a greater scope for analysing change in a complex social context comprised of seemingly oppositional components. Critical research from a Bourdieuian perspective emphasises abolishing dichotomies and synthesising the two ends of a theoretical spectrum such as: objectivity and subjectivity; time and space; structure and agency; change and sustainability; and theory and practice (Mills & Gale, 2007). The critical approach to

research makes it possible to synthesise these apparent oppositions in the process and provide a more in-depth understanding beyond the debate of acceptance or resistance to change. In doing so, it unmasks and brings to the surface the underlying assumptions, complex interactions and relationships that constitute the apparently regular practices. A synthesis of such phenomena in relation to each other can provide an insight into the dynamic nature of the *field* with its (re)productive as well as generative potentials. Being dialectic in nature also aligns well with Bourdieu's concept of *field* which is dynamic, fluid, and functions in a dialectic relationship with the related concepts.

The complexity of curriculum enactment does not require a perfect answer, rather an in-depth understanding of the factors and forces in play in the *field*. Bourdieu draws our attention to what happens when the researcher considers the social world as a set of significations to be interpreted rather than as concrete problems to be solved practically (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Thus, following a critical perspective, this project does not aim to solve an ambiguity that occurs when varied strategies of reform are in place or when people interpret the reform differently (Spillane, 2004). Instead this study will build on the argument that curriculum reform, no matter how similar the goal is at the macro level, is mediated and enacted differently by diverse factors at the micro level. Bourdieu (1992b, p. 233) argues that the particular case should be systematically investigated and constitute it as a 'particular instance of the possible'. Hence, this project does not attempt to establish a standard curriculum implementation strategy by seeing differences as concerns; rather, it seeks to explore how a school at the local level experiences the reform by creating opportunities for change which can be open for further exploration. The presence of ambiguity and the lack of unity upon the use and nature of critical theory reflects one of the basic tenets of postmodernity – that there is no one 'right way' (Etherington, 2004) to explore the social world.

The methodology in this project is adopted from a critical paradigm utilizing Bourdieu's theoretical resources. For Bourdieu, there is not a particular rigid way, but different methods can be adopted to explore the social world, as explained below.

The research method

The purpose of this study is to explore the mediation of curriculum policy enactment from the point of view of teachers and the school management team in the junior section of one State High School in Queensland using Bourdieu's theoretical resources. The study intended to investigate the enactment of a national curriculum at the local school level with its complex relationships, existing practices, personal and professional understandings, contextual needs, external influences, internal logics but with opportunities and constraints. In this research involving one State High School in Queensland enacting the current Australian national curriculum, I employ a semi-ethnographic case

study to explore questions as to how the policy changes the practices of a school, its teachers and school management in specific ways? What kinds of opportunities and constraints do these policy changes bring to the local *field* of the school? How does the local context influence the policy changes?

Semi-ethnographic case study

This study adopts a semi-ethnographic case study approach in exploring curriculum enactment using Bourdieu's theoretical resources. Since this study involves the everyday problematic nature of a national reform enactment, by mobilising the concepts of field analysis, positioning, position-taking and *habitus*, it attends to the complexities of the everyday practices of policy production and enactment.

The school is the basic social set up for this study. As a social context, the school has its structural and functional unit which is a setting for ethnographic studies. Enclosed in the school are the executive team, the teachers, the students and other staff members with its distinct structural and functional curve which distinguishes it from the ordinary environment (Wacquant, 2011) or from any other social set up. The school is also influenced by external factors and there is a significant cross-field effect from the broader *field* as well as sub-fields such as subject associations. Moreover the curriculum phenomena is a historically evolving entity and the school is a 'nested layer' in the global and national education field (as discussed in Chapter 2). This gives the schooling *field* a permeable boundary having overlapping effects from other *field*s. In this background I seek to explain how the internal logic of the *field*, the external influences and the historically evolving practices manifest in the disposition of the agents through their position-taking strategies in the process of a reform enactment. Like ethnographic studies, this case study involves an extensive immersion in a natural setting (Litchman, 2013). By focusing on a real life situation such as schools, and examining teachers' views directly in relation to the phenomenon of curriculum reform, this study can help develop a deeper understanding of the phenomena (Stake, 1978) of educational reform. The intensive nature of this field work takes it beyond the traditional boundaries of a case study and towards an ethnographic method of enquiry and is therefore semi-ethnographic in nature.

My involvement in the data generation process gradually moved from being a listener to an interactive active agent. Initially my role was a passive observer, and listener, since I attempted to understand the new social context as an outsider. As time passed, I adopted a more active role by becoming more comfortable with the participants; identifying key informants; and widening the information base by exploring more on related concepts (Litchman, 2013). This transition in my role also contributed towards the semi-ethnographic nature of the study. Moreover, as a researcher I was able to closely

observe the process of curriculum enactment during the data generation phase and remained close through the process of data analysis and drawing conclusions (Flyvbjerg, 2001). However, unlike an ethnographic study which encourages the researcher to spend a period of about one year or more in the field, in this study, I spent a relatively lesser time of about six months in the field for data generation, thus a semi-ethnographic study.

Within this semi-ethnographic nature, I adopted a single case study of a high school in Brisbane to explore the complex social activity of curriculum enactment. Case study is widely used because of its applicability across different disciplines, strong links to the context and the nature of a study. There is not a single agreed meaning of case study; however there is a common thread across all definitions. The basic idea in case study is to study a particular case or a phenomenon in its natural setting with greater detail using various methods and appropriate data in order to gain insight into the phenomenon (Simons, 1996, Stake, 2005, Yin, 2014). Hence, case study in this project is an in-depth exploration of a single phenomenon or event in its natural setting using different methods of data generation techniques. However, defining case study in this way makes it sound more simplistic than it actually is. Simons (1996) argues that case study is not a technical method but an alternative epistemological social process as the data is more open, complex and presents multiple perspectives. Such a process is compatible with field analysis. The *field* of curriculum policy and its enactment is conceptualised as dynamic, changing, holding complex relationships and the boundaries are permeable.

This study seeks to gain an insight into the phenomenon of educational change and its practical possibilities which is of personal interest to me (as discussed in Chapter 1). Stake (2005) describes this type of exploration as intrinsic case study, when the researcher has a keen interest in the case itself with a purpose to understand the phenomenon. This study can also be categorised under what Yin (2014) calls a *single case study* that is embedded in an overall study or a selected unit within it. The curriculum enactment in schools is an embedded part of an overarching education policy and the study can provide useful insight for policy reform (as discussed in Chapter 2). According to Verschuren (2003), most objects of study are part of a larger whole which impact each other. Hence the curriculum enactment in the schooling *field*, work in relation to the overall education *field* and other related sub-fields.

For Verschuren (2003), defining the boundaries of phenomena and the context are important. However, Yin (2014) states that the case is studied in its natural context especially when the boundary of phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. Following Bourdieu's field analysis, this study acknowledges that the boundary of the *field* is not rigidly defined but for emancipatory reasons the *field* boundary can be outlined (as defined in Chap 2). Bourdieu's concept of *field* is not a distinct

clear feature, but is always overlapping with other *fields*. The conceptual resources of *habitus*, *field* and *capital* are also inter-dependent and it is important to keep flexibility in defining boundaries. The specific case of curriculum enactment has many different contexts – the physical context of the school, a social context inside and outside the school, external political context, internal cultural context, the broader economic situation, historical reform of the curriculum, institutional influences of teacher education – and there is always overlapping and inter-dependency. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007) assert that case studies have geographical parameters or boundaries; in a particular context and time with specific function but at the same time cases, or phenomena, are shaped by organisational arrangements. In other words, cases or phenomena in a specific geographic context are influenced by the structural arrangements and social activities of the organisation.

The case of curriculum enactment has subsections, dimensions and domains – the role of the school executive team, the teacher's personal experiences, professional support, expectations, the dominated and dominant positions, individual dispositions, and the many nexuses of relationships. In a social world, like this, the context is described with its influencing factors inside and outside the case which are social, cultural, situational and contextual. As Stake (2005, p. 449), put it '…qualitative research is based on a view that social phenomena, human dilemmas, and the nature of cases are situational, revealing, experiential happenings of many kinds'. Therefore an in-depth case study offers an opportunity to explore the social world by locating agents, indicating particular *habitus* and roles, who possess certain *capital* to defend or improve their position in the *field* (Grenfell & James, 1998).

As discussed in Chapter 2, a national curriculum with high global influences, economic and political preferences, when enacted at the local level is problematic. Policy changes when it shifts from the broader policy into the schooling *field*. Bourdieu states 'every sub-field has its own logic, rules and regularities, and each stage in the division of a field … entails a genuine qualitative leap' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 104). Another layer of legitimisation is presented at the school level when some practices are selected over others due to structural constraints, local needs, students' background and teachers' contextual and professional knowledge. According to Kirst and Walker (1971) students in school are normally required to study certain subjects and not others; are provided with opportunities to study certain phenomena and not the means to study others; are encouraged to pursue some topics and not pursue some others. It includes the external interventions such as the state or the professional bodies. At this level it is the school's internal dynamics and values that determine and legitimise the game. For this reason, it becomes important to describe the internal and already existing practices, programs and structure of the school.

This study utilised different methods for generating data which resonates with Bourdieu's views of a multi-method approach towards data generation. In this project, the methods used for data generation, analysis, explanation and argument building take into account the complexity, detail and context (Mason, 2002) of the phenomenon under study. This project utilises a multi-method approach for data generation, discussed below.

Research Technique

Qualitative studies can employ several data generation techniques. This study uses Bourdieu's theoretical resources, guided by a philosophical stance of polytheism whereby Bourdieu contends that multiple methods can be adopted to generate data. For Bourdieu, in the construction of the research object, the "empirical" choices that the researcher makes cannot be disentangled from the "theoretical" (Bourdieu, 1992b, p.225, original emphasis). Bourdieu (1992b) argues that almost all data are constructed with an abstraction. He encourages researchers to mobilize all techniques of data generation that are relevant and feasible to the practical conditions of the *field* (Bourdieu, 1992b). This study includes semi-structured interviews with teachers and the school management team as the primary data generation technique. In addition at least two Professional Development (PD) sessions were observed, one curriculum review meeting and one staff meeting were attended during the data generation process. My field notes included a reflection on the observations that I had during the PD and meetings as well as my reflection on the preliminary interviews with the participants.

Data generation techniques

Semi structured Interviews

> *…the interview can be considered a sort of* ***spiritual exercise*** *that, through* ***forgetfulness of self,*** *aims at a true* ***conversion of the way we look*** *at other people in the ordinary circumstances of life. (Bourdieu, 1999a, p. 614)*

Semi-structured interviews, upon which this project relies, are referred to as 'an interview agenda shaped by the operationalisation of the research questions, but retaining an open-ended, and flexible nature' (Alexiadou, 2001, p. 52). Yin (2011) states that questions in the semi-structured interview are not restricted to the script, rather, the researcher has a mental framework of questions which is posed to each participant according to the context and setting of the interview.

Bourdieu's quote above indicated that interview is a true conversation in ordinary circumstances. Through a reflexive approach, interviews offer an opportunity to reflect on the importance of personal narratives of individual policy agents in the educational field: on the day-to-day practices of teachers and the school management team and their mediation and enactment of the curriculum reform as it is

being practiced in the local context (Gerrard & Farrell, 2013). The objective of semi-structured interviews in this project was to examine the experiences of the school management team and teachers of the curriculum enactment process. This is because interviews are believed to be convenient ways of overcoming distance in space and time. In other words, past events can be talked through in interviews (Peräkylä, 2008), which in this case are the teachers' reflections on the initial and subsequent years of the implementation process. Semi-structured interviews with teachers and the school executive team assisted me in examining the ways in which people take up texts in articulating their role and in their understanding of the policy reform. Here text-in-action can be traced as people in the local schools discuss the policy documents that are important for their work in enacting the curriculum (Gerrard & Farrell, 2013). This face-to-face social interaction is in line with ethnographic studies to gain the richest possible data for studies.

In this study, a total of 43 interviews were conducted. These interviews were with 16 teachers from four departments (English, Mathematics, Social Sciences and Science); 5 Heads of Department (HoDs) (one from each of the four departments and one junior secondary HoD); and 4 Deputy Principals. The preliminary interviews were about 30-40 minutes with the purpose of familiarising myself with the participants' views and their initial responses towards the curriculum reform. Another round of interviews of about 60-90 minutes was with the same participants to seek a more detailed account and in-depth insight into the participants' experiences and about the external influences they encountered.

The preliminary interviews included questions related to the personal profile of the participants, their professional experience, their educational qualification and subject area. It elicited information about their experience while coming in contact with the national curriculum, after the initial year of implementation, and their current level of satisfaction with the process. The second phase of the interview was with the same participants after a gap of about 4 weeks. In the second phase of interviews, I as the interviewer asked the participants about the resources they accessed to understand the reform, the social support in the school or outside. Information regarding the influence of other agencies like the national Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), the state level agencies like Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA), Education Queensland (EQ)/Department of Education (DET), the subject associations, media, politics and teacher unions and professional organisation roles were explored. The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, reflected upon and analysed. As mentioned, this study adapts the semi-structured interview as the main source of data production; however other sources such as observation, field notes and document analysis are used as supplementary techniques.

Observations and field notes

This study adopts observation of a school setting which requires recording of the daily happenings regarding curriculum enactment activities in the school context. It is a process in which the observer is involved in a social situation for the purpose of systematic investigation (Ball, 1982). According to Hennink, Hiutter, and Bailey (2011), the written record of observation becomes the data for analysis. In this study the data from observation of the social setting of curriculum enactment and the specific events like the PDs, curriculum review meetings and staff meetings are considered part of the field notes. Since the phenomena of curriculum enactment is part of the process of the daily life of the school, the relevant teachers' and school management team's activities and the contextual conditions were observed along with two PD sessions, one curriculum review meeting and one staff meeting. These observation notes have not been used in the data chapters but nevertheless provided me with an opportunity to reflexively position myself in the field.

A second type of field note is recorded during the transcribing process of interviews. During data generation, I transcribed the preliminary interviews and developed summaries and further questions to explore. In addition, some participants added more information after the formal or audio taped semi-structured interview finished, I brought these to the record through reflective notes. These field notes and personal reflections in the social setting of a school helped in noting my thoughts on emerging ideas and initial cultural inferences. Using reflexivity, I also reflected on my previous experience, the new context and on the process of data collection.

Document analysis

Document analysis in this study includes the official Australian curriculum documents as well as any official document produced by the school for record keeping or dissemination related to the enactment of curriculum reform. These documents are utilised in order to understand the curriculum reform and its structural details in a new context. This background knowledge of the curriculum reform helped me view the process of meaning construction of the teachers or school management. Official curriculum documents accessed on ACARA and QCAA websites such as '*The shape of Australian Curriculum'* (ACARA, 2013) were used in this thesis.

The school's official documents included a planning framework, timetable, unit plans, and handouts of the PD sessions were used to understand the context. In this way the structures and the communication and dissemination of reform related information was able to be observed. The generated data from semi-structured interviews, field notes and document analysis is then analysed and interpreted to draw conclusions based on the evidence collected. The next section will elaborate on the process of data analysis and interpretation.

Data analysis and interpretation

Data analysis, according to Bogdan and Biklen (2003), is a process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes, reflections and document analysis notes in order to draw conclusions from the findings. Data analysis encompasses 'classifying, comparing, weighing and combining material from the interviews to extract the meaning and implications, to reveal patterns, or to stitch together descriptions of events into a coherent narrative' (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 201). Bourdieu argues that any analysis of the social *field* should seek to construct the objective structure or spaces of positions and then reintroduce the lived experiences of agents to explain the dispositions that influences actions (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Data analysis in this study was an ongoing process of analysis during and after working at the school site. It adopted a deductive approach using Bourdieu's concepts in relation to reform enactment. However some inductive and abductive observations were also noted. Bourdieu (Bourdieu, Chambordredon & Passeron 1991, p. 87) states that 'distinctive epistemological inquiry appears only when one waits for the expected or even alertness to the unexpected but also spells out one's methods and adopts the methodic vigilance as essential part of the methodical application of methods'.

Deductive Bourdieuian analysis

In Bourdieu's view, the research approach should be open ended, 'guided by a particular philosophical stance' (Grenfell & James, 1998, p. 156) and at the same time conscious of emerging themes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Theory and practice, for Bourdieu, should complement each other by developing explanations, which can help in understanding the social phenomena at hand. In order to develop an understanding of the social phenomena through theory and practice, Bourdieu proposes three interconnected levels for analysis:

1. Analysis of the position of the field vis-à-vis the field of power.
2. Mapping out the objective structure of the relations between the positions occupied by the agents or institutions.
3. Analyses of the habitus of agents, the different systems of dispositions they have acquired by internalizing a determinate type of social and economic condition and which find in a definite trajectory within the field under consideration a more or less favourable opportunity to become actualised. (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 105)

Level one is power analysis (Everett, 2002) in which the relationship between education and the political and economic system of society is to be analysed (Mills & Gale, 2007). According to Grenfell (2010), the field of education is a particular *field* within the overall *field* of power which involves examination of the *field*; more specifically the position of the *field* vis-à-vis the *field* of power (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 104). For Everett (2002), power analysis in such cases

involves one general field and the other restricted field. There is a high tendency that the general field colonises the restricted field. Here, although the school is the more 'restricted field' within the general education policy field, it is positioned in the overall field of education as a privileged school in terms of the available resources, located in a high SES area, collaborative school culture and above average performance in national testing (to be discussed in Chapter 4). Moreover the schooling practices interact and are influenced by other sub-fields such as subject associations, teachers' unions, media and professional development bodies. All in all the school's position within the general field*s*, the other related field*s* and the sub-fields and their effect on the internal logic of the school is analysed.

Level two is the analysis of the structure and relationships within a *field*. This is called relationship mapping (Everett, 2002) which involves the positions occupied by the agents based on their *capital* and their dispositions (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 105). Bourdieu would argue that this is the internal logic of the *field* based on the active forces in play within the school. This study has taken into account the positions of Deputy Principals (DPs) in relation to each other and the roles they are assigned in the enactment process. The DPs display diverse dispositions and position-taking strategies towards the curriculum enactment based on the roles they played in the enactment process, the disposition they brought to the role and the *capital* in their possession. The analysis of these positions in relation to each other uncover the structure, however partially, which provides a base for other agents to take a stance and also tends to legitimise practices in the *field*. Such an analysis of the structure helps in exploring the forces in action in the *field* that determine the *field* structure.

Level three is disposition analysis and is concerned with the *habitus* of those involved in the institution (Grenfell & James, 1998). Disposition analysis involves coming to terms with the social aspects which cannot be easily measured such as the symbolic formations in the practical activities, the everyday knowledge construction, subjective meaning and the lived experiences of the agents (Everett, 2002). Agents acquire 'the different systems of dispositions … by internalizing a determinate type of social and economic condition, and which find in a definite trajectory within the field under consideration a more or less favourable opportunity to become actualized' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 105). This study involves and explores the concept of *habitus* in regards to its capacity for accommodating the reform and being reflexive. On the one hand, the external reform is reproduced within the schooling *field* by actively enacting an external agenda. On the other hand, such an enactment requires interpretation and translation of text into action in a creative, innovative and practical way. This is done by creatively and innovatively translating the reform into their contextual needs while 'attempting to apply nationally defined policies or the professional activities' (Grenfell & James, 1998, p. 169).

While taking the structure of the *field* and the experiences of the agents within it into consideration, Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) advise us to use a double-focused analytical lens: objectivity of the first order; and objectivity of the second order. In the objectivity of the first order, the social world is treated as an objective structure from the outside without the representations of those who live in it. Such a structuralist view, Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p. 8) argue, can undermine the 'illusion of the transparency of the social world and can break the common sense perceptions in order to uncover the relations in which people produce their social existence'. However in order to capture a relatively holistic reality of the moment, it is important to consider the subjective viewpoints or the consciousness and interpretations of the agents, because the 'experience of meanings is part and parcel of the total meaning of experience' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 9). Hence the objectivity of second order – a constructivist approach – asserts that agents in the social world construct their world with organised practices of everyday life (Garfinkel, 1967; cited in Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 9). To gain a better understanding, the structuralist and constructivist views can be weaved together by constructing the objective structures and reintroducing the lived experiences of the agents or their dispositions that influence their actions and practices (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). In this way the dualities of objectivism and subjectivism are converted into 'moments of a form of analysis designed to capture the intrinsically double reality of the social world' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 11). This is done by analysing the positioning of the school within the overall field and of the agent within the school, their position-taking and position taking strategies and the generative potential of the *habitus* to adapt to changing circumstances. Moreover the structure of the school in terms of the support to accommodate the intended change is analysed and agents' experiences are examined.

While deductive was the major data analysis approach, I also utilised inductive and abductive approaches. During the data generation process, as the first step towards analysis, I transcribed and summarised the preliminary data in order to know the context and become familiar with the participants. At this stage I 'played' (Yin, 2014, p. 135) with the data trying to make sense of what the agents said, how they responded and how they felt about the reform. During this 'play', I broke down the interviews into several related blocks of information or data units such as 'coming in contact with the reform', '2nd/3rd year of experience', 'how is it now?', 'PD', 'resources', etc. These data units were further broken down into sub-units. For instance, the data unit, 'coming in contact with the reform' further shows signs of frustration and disappointment or excitement and achievement as the sub-unit. Such breaking down of the data into units and sub-units is an inductive approach towards data analysis (Reichertz, 2014).

During this deductive and inductive process, I also took into account new and emerging ideas, themes and concepts, and attempted to explain the reasons behind these. This is called the abductive approach

by Reichertz (2014). Abduction starts with surprises that humans feel and is replaced by understanding and further development of the ability for prediction through reasoning. Rawolle and Lingard (2013) view the ongoing interaction between deductive and inductive as an abductive approach. They believe that the 'ongoing imbrications of theory and data, we might see Bourdieu's approach as "abductive" simultaneously applying both deductive (theory to data) and inductive (data to theory) approaches to analysis' (Rawolle & Lingard, 2013, p. 130). I think it is within such a reciprocal interaction of theory and data, that new relationships can be explored. In this case, while analysing the dialectic relationship between the demands of a changing *field* and a *habitus* inclined towards the past practices, I observed that agents are in a position-making process. In this initial stage of change and while agents are in a transition phase, a reflexive *habitus* emerges out of the confusion or mismatch of *field-habitus* nexus.

Critical research can help in deconstructing the social world of enactment, analyse relationships and reconstruct or synthesise (Robbins, 1998) the process of enactment. In this process of deconstruction and reconstruction, I develop close and interactive contact with the social world and its participants under exploration (Ormston, et al., 2003). Critical research demands a conscious reflection and acknowledgment of the researcher's role in influencing the process of knowledge generation. The next section will elaborate on the notion of reflexivity as a way of consciously reflecting on myself, on the research process and the agents in the *field*.

The problematic nature of researching the social world

> *A small chance of knowing what game we play and of minimizing the ways in which we are manipulated by the forces of the field in which we evolve, as well as by the embodied social forces that operate from within us . . . Therefore I think that there is indeed a philosophical or an ethical usage of reflexive sociology. Its purpose is not to 'pick' on others, to reduce them, to accuse them . . . Quite the contrary . . . [t]o understand fully the conduct of an individual acting in a space is tantamount to understanding the necessity behind what he or she does . . . [And yet, when] you apply reflexive sociology to yourself, you open up the possibility of identifying true sites of freedom, and thus of building small-scale, modest, practical morals. (Bourdieu, 1992: 198-199)*

For Bourdieu, reality is contested and negotiated and this world is a site of an ongoing struggle. Bourdieu encourages researchers to avoid the symbolic violence of imposing an interpretation on reality (Grenfell & James, 1998). One way of addressing this issue is to acknowledge that as I select, interpret and represent the data, the intended meanings of participants inevitably become distorted and reshaped (Burke, 2002). I also acknowledge that my interpretation is partial and limited which is in addition to the ways others have interpreted it in their own perspective. Moreover, through reflexivity I attended to preconception and assumptions and attempted to avoid the imposition of my

interpretations where necessary as a response to intellectual bias. As Bourdieu indicates in the above quote, reflexivity is to understand the conduct of the researcher and what one does.

The research object is vulnerable to common sense preconstruction that is the representation the people have of the object. Bourdieu states that the reconstructed is everywhere (Bourdieu, 1992b, p.235, original emphasis). It is also a fact that the researcher is the product of the same social world which she inhabits. It is problematic to break from such common sense representation and to prevent her embodied social world from influencing the construction of the research object requires a reflexive intention (Bourdieu, 1992b, p.236). Through reflexivity, Bourdieu suggests recognising the dual reality of research as social construction as well as an empirical reality. Here I will reflect on my positionality, and the use of reflexivity as an attempt to address the limitations of the way this research is constructed and knowledge presented.

Reflexivity and the researcher

In Chapter 1, I laid out my personal background and motivation to do this study and the professional and theoretical frames of reference in order to bring forth underlying assumptions. Setting up one's position in the *field* demands methodological reflexivity as well, which is 'the relentless self-questioning of the method itself in the very moment whereby it is implemented' (Wacquant, 2008, p. 266). As Stake and Kerr (1995) state, the researcher should confront expectations and assumptions not only in terms of how to present knowledge but also how that knowledge is constructed and what the implications are. It is the positionality – the researcher's position in relation to the object of study – that demands reflexivity and consideration of the researcher's position with regard to actual location with respect to data analysis, theoretical/methodological stance, spatial or temporal location (Rawolle & Lingard, 2015). Rawolle and Lingard (2015) are of the view that by declaring one's position, her knowledge, assumptions, perceptions and being reflective about it, is a rejection of 'epistemological innocence'.

As a novice researcher, the dialectical nature of socially critical research prepares me to live with uncertainty and ambiguity (Mills, 2004) which is more obvious because of my involvement in a relatively new social world. With the research participants, I reflected upon and grappled with the new context and changing circumstances. In a complex social world, critical research provided me the amenity to think that there may not be a perfect answer to social problems, rather diverse interpretation and knowledge generation. Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) recommend critical researchers be open to the ambiguity of empirical material and the complexity of interpretations. This is an important consideration given my background studies in the hard sciences which may have influenced me with the notion of 'one right answer' to problems.

As a critical researcher, and actively constructing the research process, I position myself as a 'negotiator' (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005, p. 317). I think of my relationship with the objects of the enquiry as complicated, unpredictable and complex. As a negotiator in the *field*, reflexivity demands that I question myself regarding the binaries, contradictions and paradoxes within or around us; during my interaction with the respondents; and also during the process of writing (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). As I explore curriculum enactment in a foreign context, it demands that I re-examine myself and perhaps change and learn how to negotiate the two fields (Reinharz, 2011) that is, my previous experience with schools in Pakistan and the Australian context of schooling. This means that I have general practical knowledge of how schools work but I lack the contextual knowledge specific to the Australian schooling system.

Contextual knowledge is valuable in understanding the social world under study and a lack of it, as in the case of this study, can hinder field work. To address this issue I used various strategies reflexively including using the initial year of my PhD to prepare myself to enter into the field and my previous practical knowledge of working with schools. First, I constructed my identity as a researcher conceptually and methodologically through literature review and discussions with my supervisors, which prepared me to enter the schooling *field*. Second, I used my practical knowledge in a reflexive manner to gain contextual knowledge in the new field (Schirato & Webb, 2002) here in Australia. My practical knowledge involved working in different high schools in Pakistan as a science teacher and being part of a school management team. Such roles helped me in approaching the participants of this study according to the role they play in their school. For instance, involving teachers is different than involving the Heads of Department or Deputy Principals in curriculum related activities and issues. Thus practical knowledge of the field is utilised reflexively in interacting with the participants on the everyday curriculum related activities and issues.

However the use of my practical knowledge to gain contextual knowledge may have given rise to what Bourdieu calls intellectual bias. Intellectual bias is the researcher's inclination towards her previous practices and needs to be consciously reflected upon in relation to the practices in a new geographical, social and historical context. Intellectual bias, according to Schirato and Webb (2002, p. 260), is a 'tendency for subjects from certain fields to abstract practices from their contexts and see them as ideas to be contemplated rather than problems to be addressed or solved'. Through a reflexive approach one can recognise misrecognitions and locate and preserve functions of the current context. To address this, I reflected on my everyday activities and interactions during my data generation through preliminary interviews, reflective field notes and informal discussions with the participants. I conducted a preliminary interview with the participants in an attempt to understand their background and views on the curriculum enactment. Deer (2008, p. 206) is of the view that

'reflexivity is a strategy to explicitly link the objective structure of the field with the structuring structure or the *habitus* of the agents in the field'. In other words, by reducing the gap between *field* and *habitus,* reflexive knowledge can be generated which can in turn develop the contextual knowledge required to negotiate one's position in the *field*. Through the preliminary interviews I attempted to understand the dispositions that agents bring to the *field*, which was helpful in seeing the participants' point of view. In terms of my relationship with the agents, Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) suggest the researcher be attentive to the agents they study and 'take seriously their point of view' (p. 89); doing so is central to developing affective ties with agents. For this purpose I set up a relationship with the participants based on *active listening* (Bourdieu, 1999a, p. 609). Active listening, on the one hand, is useful in preparing for next level interview questions during a semi-structured interview and on the other hand, develops an effective relationship with the participants.

Reflexivity and the research process

Another methodological consideration was the research process in itself. For instance, I had planned to interview at least 15 participants three times during data generation. However, as I negotiated access to a large school with more than 100 teachers, I realised that enough data can be generated with 25 participants over two rounds of interviews. This way I 'reflect constantly on the suitability of the means of investigation to its ends, on the difference between the practical and the theoretical mastery of a practice in the field' (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 5). This process required a very high cognitive process of construction and reconstruction, contextual diagnosis, negotiation and readjustment (Kincheloe & Mclaren, 2005, p. 317). In doing so, reflexivity draws attention to the complex relationship of the process of production of knowledge and the context in which it takes place as well as the role of the knowledge producer. Thus detailed attention to the research procedure, including how to enter the world under study, was a careful consideration.

Reflexivity and data interpretation and representation

Presenting knowledge about social reality in a socially critical research approach is complicated. Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p. 26) argue that data analysis in qualitative research is a creative and interpretive process and that 'qualitative interpretations are constructed'. Critical research and particularly a post structural approach in research does not encourage the researcher to draw a single meaning from the data in which everything is said at once to everyone (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). In this sense, the purpose of critical analysis in this study is to discover variations, portray diverse meanings and examine complexity in the social world. I attempt to present, narrate, explain, or understand the social world, which is an ongoing incomplete task 'yet forever generative of new possibility' (Stake & Kerr, 1995, p. 56). For this very reason, Bourdieu did not devise any law for

analysis for social science, but had a philosophical stance for data analysis (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Following this notion of diversified meaning-making, and acknowledging the variation of curriculum management in different contexts, this analysis and interpretation will focus on how the formation and modification of curriculum at the national level positions the school at the local level and how the *habitus* and the internal logic of the *field* is activated to respond to such changes, giving way to new ways of thinking and doing. As discussed in the previous section, this study does not aim to resolve an ambiguity due to varied strategies. Instead, it argues that curriculum reform is mediated and enacted differently by diverse factors at the micro level. Hence, this project does not attempt to establish a standard curriculum implementation strategy by seeing differences as concerns; rather, it seeks to explore how a school at the local level experiences the reform, creating opportunities for change.

As discussed previously, being reflexive in the research process and to acquaint myself with a new context required me to be close to the data throughout the research process (Flyvbjerg, 2001). My involvment in the data through transcribing and reflective notes was one way of practicing reflexivity. I transcribed the recorded interviews and examined them through the lens of Bourdieu's concepts. In the process of data generation, I transcribed and examined the preliminary interviews while in the field. This initial data analysis informed me about the position and the stances the school and the agents held in responding to the curriculum reform. I became aware that the school held a privileged position in the sense of actively adapting the curriculum reform and that guided the agents' strategies in the *field* to be proactive and responsive towards the change (to be discussed in Chapter 5). Based on this preliminary interview, I developed more questions for a second round of interviews to develop further insight and a deeper knowledge of the agents' participation, their experiences with the enactment process and the external influences they encountered. Once the second round of interviews were finished, I transcribed all the data preparing a full written version of the interview transcripts of each participant. After transcribing each interview a summary of the interview content, time and location of the interview, the length of the interview, followed by the main points of the interview that address the research questions, insights and reflection or any emerging themes, were noted. Rubin and Rubin (2005) argue that such an intensive involvement of the researcher in the data helps challenge preconceptions and assumptions kept by the researcher.

During the analysis of preliminary interviews I used memos, in which I made notes of how I felt about the interview, my assumptions, or what I heard in another interview, or common concepts or contradictory ideas. For instance, one teacher showed her frustration over the turnover of staff which

in her view affected the implementation process, however for a participant in a management position, staff turnover was not a big issue in such a large school. In one of my interviews somebody used the metaphor that the enactment process was 'a battle' (interview transcription), which resonates with Bourdieu's idea of struggle, contestation and negotiation in the *field*. Rubin and Rubin (2005) suggest noting good quotes around which further information can be generated.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research methodology with regards to the broader research approach of critical research and as Bourdieuian research methodology. It then described the more specific research method of a semi-ethnographic case study as an approach to explore the phenomena of curriculum enactment in one high school in Brisbane, followed by the school context. Data generation techniques as identified were semi-structured interviews as the major technique but also observations and document analysis were involved. Moreover the data analysis and interpretation was explained through a major deductive approaches. The use of reflexivity in addressing the methodological limitations was outlined.

The next chapter, as part II of the thesis, is the empirical part with a focus on field analysis. The main argument in the data chapters is that the agents at the local level are in the process of position making in a changing *field*. An analysis of the roles that the DPs played in the enactment process developed in them certain ways of thinking and doing in relation to the roles they played in the enactment process. Following Bourdieu's structural analysis, Chapter 4 will position the school in the overall schooling *field* and will explore the positions that the DPs held in relation to each other and the disposition that was produced by virtue of the roles they played in the enactment process. It will also discuss the pre-dispositions agents brings to their role and the *capital* in circulation. Chapter 5 is about the tensions in the *field*. At this initial phase of the change, in which this study was conducted, there are many active forces in play. Particularly in relation to the Australian Curriculum, notions like 'the national', 'the change' and the 'objective structure versus the subjective aspirations' are being contested in theory and in practice. The active forces in the *field* are as a result of the struggle to 'do things the right way' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 105). Agents tend to perceive and act in accordance with the forces in play. Chapter 6 focuses on the analysis of dispositions in the form of a reflexive *habitus*. The *field* has active agents with subjective aspirations who are re-positioned, and/or (dis)positioned by the reform. To bridge the gap between the *habitus* and the changing *field*, the school has intended and unintended platform and support to shape the subjective aspirations and make it fit with the changed structure but with a 'rough adjustment' (Bourdieu, 2000a). The spaces of change at the enactment stage are through a reflexive *habitus*. Chapter 7 is the concluding chapter which will

synthesise the dynamic changing *field* with a reflexive *habitus* in the transition phase of change to demonstrate a position-making process.

Chapter 4: The Relationship Between Agents' Position and Their Disposition in the Schooling Field

This chapter is about the roles that agents played and how those roles developed in them specific ways of thinking, being and doing in the curriculum enactment process. First, I will locate the relative position of HillView School as the school management and teachers see it. Then I will analyse the positions of the Deputy Principals (DPs) in terms of the roles they played in relation to each other. In this chapter the schooling *field* is comprehended as 'structured spaces of positions (or posts) whose properties depend on their position within these spaces and which can be analyzed independently of the characteristics of their occupants (which are particularly determined by them)' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 72). As Bourdieu indicates, the position that the agents occupy in the *field* can be analysed independently of their personal characteristics or individual *habitus*. With this feature of the *field*, I explore here the relationship between the positions that the DPs occupied in relation to each other and their stances on curriculum enactment. This is because sometimes the constraints and opportunities are in the *field* structure rather than the cultural stance or *habitus* (Thomson, 2005). Interestingly, unlike the general assumption that the deputy principals, working under the same conditions and holding almost equal authority would display more or less similar dispositions, this study found that their stances on curriculum enactment are very diverse instead. It is argued that such a diverse perspective on the process of curriculum enactment is in relation to the roles and responsibilities they played, thus establishing the relationship between the space of the positions occupied by agents and their corresponding stances (Bourdieu, 1996). However the fact that these agents bring their durable disposition from their previous roles or societal roles is and the *capital* they possess cannot be ignored.

Positioning the school: As the agents see it

As discussed in Chapter 2, the analysis of the position of HillView School vis-a-vis the broader *field* of curriculum reform in Australia and in relation to other schools in Brisbane presents a privileged position that the school holds. Here I will use interview data from the school management and teachers to demonstrate the school's position. With regards to the current national curriculum reform, the school management team, as well as the teachers, describe HillView as a school that has responded to the reform promptly and 'pro-actively'.

William, a DP, states that the school is a leading school in terms of the national curriculum enactment. He asserts that as a school they are 'leaders' in 'implementing the national curriculum'. James,

another DP, shares William's views when he recalls a discussion with the faculty that teachers 'didn't want to be dumbed down', and 'didn't want to lose the vehicle'. James's statement implies that teachers wanted to avail themselves of the opportunity of curriculum reform to sustain or improve their position. Reflecting the DPs' thoughts is Sonia, a science teacher who credits the school management team for a pro-active response to the reform. She comments that the management team members are 'leaders trying to bring everything that is changing and we are with time' and that the school is not a 'laid back school'. Sonia's assertion suggests that the school is well placed to cope with a changing world and that it is a pro-active school responding promptly to education reform.

Another feature of the school that was highlighted in the interviews from the participants was the strong collaborative work of the faculty. This collaboration can be seen at the management and departmental levels as well as amongst teachers. William, a DP, remarked that 'the strength of a large school and large faculty' is the opportunity 'that there are teams of people writing it [the curriculum] and implementing'. Sonia contends that she developed confidence because of the team work in the school due to the 'pool of expertise' that the team members bring to the task in hand. The English Head of Department (HoD), Anna, shares a picture of the collaborative planning as 'what I am saying is the same as what the math HoD will be saying and same with the secondary HoD' and that is a 'shared understanding' that matters. Similarly team work amongst the HoDs of the four departments who took the lead to implement the first phase of the national curriculum is evident. For Tanya 'the HoDs worked together and supported each other' with a shared 'personality or leadership style'.

The participants also regard the school as a high performing school in national standardised testing. Kate states, 'we try to get green, we are mainly a green school', flagging the school's performance on national testing. Green is a symbolic rank assigned to schools that are performing above average in the NAPLAN results. Moreover, Kate comments on the students' composition as a 'fairly homogenous clientele' which means 'we also don't have the behaviour challenges that other schools have. We don't have socio economic or equity issues that other schools have so this school is extremely different to other schools in the network'. Here Kate's emphasis is on the absence of issues related to behaviour, socio-economic status or equity as a position-taking that guides agents' actions. It suggests that diversity in students' composition is linked to more behavioural issues affecting the teaching and learning and consequently the school's performance. The homogenous composition of students is seen as an advantage because students from same background do not create behavioural problems. Such a stance, Emirbayer and Johnson (2008) argue, is a symbolic position-taking by the agents to distinguish themselves from other schools.

The strong teamwork in the school represents social *capital* that the school highly values and encourages. High performance the national testing and being active in adapting to changes is symbolic *capital* that the school seems to value. The school is situated in a high socio-economic zone of the city which indicates the economic capital of the community and consequently of the school. With these features as the backdrop, the school's position in the *field* guides the agents' strategies in the *field* to preserve and/or improve its privileged position (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). This is clear from James's comments that HillView is a 'leading state high school' and so would be 'expected to implement the curriculum without waiting for an official order'. Here 'a leading school' and 'expected to implement' guides the agents' strategies to be an 'early adopter' of the curriculum reform. The DPs' position, and position-taking that effects their strategies to preserve or improve the school's position in the *field*, is discussed below.

Positioning the agents: The Deputy Principals

Like any social *field*, the schooling *field* is structured hierarchically with the Executive Principal at the top followed by the Deputy Principals (DPs), the Heads of Department (HoDs), year coordinators and teachers. The four DPs in the school assist the Executive Principal. In their official positions as DPs, they are assigned different roles and responsibilities in everyday school life, particularly in the curriculum enactment process. The DPs played specific roles in relation to each other in the curriculum enactment process. From the data, it appears that these assigned roles and responsibilities developed in them different ways of thinking and doing. Thomson (2005) asserts that an officially assigned position is not just a role but a social space in which the determined positions that agents hold in relation to each other produce in them particular ways of thinking, being and doing, or dispositions. While agreeing with Thomson (2005) on the relationship of the position to their disposition, here I specifically explore the role that agents played in the enactment process in shaping their dispositions. I conceptualise 'playing a role' as an action and thus capable of developing the agents' perspectives in relation to each other. For that matter, in this chapter I argue that the DPs, despite holding similar positions, display diverse stances on curriculum enactment, owing to the role they played. Bourdieu argues:

> *Point of view depends on the point from which they are taken, since the vision that every agent has of the space depends on his or her position in that space … As perceptive dispositions tend to be adjusted to position, agents tend to perceive the world as natural and accept it much more readily than one might imagine. (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 18)*

In any social *field*, agents are active and creative beings, holding or developing their points of view. Such points of view, according to Bourdieu, are related to the positions that the agents hold in the *field*. In the case of the schooling *field* in this study, the DPs function as the 'middle management'

working within and across sub-fields. The DPs interact with the broader curriculum policy *field* and encounter other sub-fields like the subject associations. Within the specific schooling *field*, they work across the different departments to ensure a smooth curriculum transition. They are also positioned between different agents or positions within the school such as between the Executive Principal and the HoDs or teachers. An analysis of such a position and position-taking, according to Bourdieu, provides a better understanding of the *field* under study. In this regard, Bourdieu states that the knowledge in the social space in terms of the agents' relational properties or positions can be:

> *...seen particularly clearly in the case of the occupants of the intermediate or middle positions, who, in addition to the average or median values of their properties, owe a number of their most typical properties to the fact that they are situated between the two poles of the field, in the neutral point of the space, and that they are balanced between the two extreme positions.(Bourdieu, 1985, p. 725)*

It suggests that the DPs' position in the *field*, other than their personal disposition are influenced by the roles they play. Their positions across the different *fields* and sub-fields has the potential to inform an exploration of the wider forces in action during the enactment process in a complex local context which will be discussed in this chapter.

The roles of the Deputy Principals

This chapter relies on the interview data from four deputy principals. Amongst them, Mark is responsible for setting up a timetable that can accommodate the mainstream subjects, elective subjects, the school's signature programs and allocating time for teachers' PD and resource development. In regards to the new curriculum, he ensures that the new subjects are accommodated by adjusting the timetable, the mainstream subjects are in the timetable and the elective subjects are considered. In addition, he maintains the school's unique signature programs by allocating appropriate time to them. Along with these competing priorities, he manages time for teachers' PD and resource development. In his role, he displayed a perspective on curriculum enactment with regards to the timetable and its structure which will be discussed further in this chapter. Mark worked as a Health and Physical Education (HPE) teacher for 10 years and has been a DP for the last 5 years. From the interview, Mark seemed to possess a quiet personality. He kept his responses to the point, short and specific.

James is another DP who is responsible for looking after the overall enactment process of the national curriculum in the junior secondary section (grade 7 to 10) of the school. James's account shows a perspective or a concern of (re)contextualising a national curriculum. He displays a process-oriented disposition in terms of the thinking, actions and feelings of agents involved in the enactment process, as will be discussed. James has over 15 years of teaching experience in music and performing arts

and he has been a DP for 5 years. From my interaction with James, he appeared to be an influential person. While introducing me to the school staff for this data generation, the HoDs and teachers listened to him carefully. He responded to my questions in great detail, showing an in-depth understanding of how schools came to terms with the new curriculum and its challenges.

Tanya is a newly promoted DP responsible for teachers' Professional Development (PD). Tanya was promoted to DP from science HoD during the time that this data was collected. She worked as a science teacher in another school before moving to HillView School three years ago. Her new role is not very different to her previous role as a HoD, but she is now responsible for teachers' PD at a more general level than her departmental focus role. Tanya shows a disposition of empathy for teachers and their high load of work. This might be due to her gender role being a woman in the society, which will be discussed further in this chapter.

William is responsible for budgeting and he is also a member of different curriculum committees at state and the national level. He has been involved in the social science curriculum development at national level and is a representative of the Teachers' Union. Due to this interaction, William has an understanding of the politics in curriculum development at state and national levels. He has more than 20 years of experience in teaching and has served as DP at the said school for the last 4 years.

Agents' position-taking

Bourdieu believed that positioning of the *field* and the agents in the *field* helps in determining the structure of the *field*, because the *field* as a network of positions and their relationships can be mapped out objectively (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). These objective relations are considered the *field* boundaries but are fluid and permeable (Gerrard & Farrell, 2013). Within this boundary, practices are shaped and structured by different forces active in the *field* thus making the *field* dynamic. Here, one such force, that is the roles that the DPs played, and the ways that such a 'role play' shaped their practices, will be explored.

Perspectives on transition to the new curriculum

Transition in terms of moving from a state-based curriculum to a new national curriculum was viewed as a magnificent opportunity by all the DPs as they were all positively disposed to embracing the reform as evidenced by the school's active response towards the reform. However, they displayed different stances or position-taking at differing times of the enactment process, mainly because of their different roles. In this section the DPs' accounts of and perspectives on the transition process are presented.

Mark is responsible for adjusting the new syllabi into a timetable that works for the school, so transition for him was about accommodating the new curriculum in a suitable timeframe. For him, the transition process involved discussions as to:

> make sure that our timetable design gave us a go for the [new] curriculum to meet its objectives … We mapped out a change in that timetable process as to 'how much time to be devoted when we come online with the national curriculum? How many lessons a week?' – knowing that we will be part of [the] national curriculum. So the national curriculum for us, I guess we looked at different structures around semesterisation going to trimesters and looked at having 12 week trimesters but that again gets very tricky with the staffing structures and rotating teachers. When we started looking at implementing the national curriculum, we developed a number of different options and we put those options out to start.

Mark's views on the transition to the new curriculum are mainly associated with trying out different timetable structures that could work for their school context. The concern for him was 'how much time' and 'how many lessons' to be 'devoted' to the new curriculum. Although the new curriculum includes certain contact times for each subject area, according to Mark, these did not suit their context.

> At the moment it is really the senior school that drives our [junior] curriculum structure, because students have 6 subjects. We run 6 lines and we have taken that down into the 7s-10s [grades] because it works across both. So the senior time structure is followed in the junior regardless of the time allocation from QCAA regarding the national curriculum.

With the new national curriculum, the state-based curriculum authority called Queensland Curriculum Assessment Authority (QCAA), which is responsible for the national curriculum at the state level, recommends a certain amount of teacher-student interaction time for each content area in alignment with the national authorities or Australian Curriculum Assessment ad Reporting Authority (ACARA) recommendations. This recommended time from the curriculum authorities was not found suitable for the school context and hence the existing time structure was followed for practical reasons. Since the senior section of the school had not moved to the national curriculum at the time of data collection, their timetable was the existing one. Here the *field* has applied its own practical logic through a process called 'conservation'. According to Zanten (2005), 'conservation is the tendency of schools to remain the same by replicating themselves and particularly re-translating external influences into traditional forms' (p. 674). By conserving the time structure, certain practices are strengthened with the notion of logic of practice. Thus thoughts, perceptions and actions are organised, regulated and coordinated for a practical reason (Gerrard & Farrell, 2013). Such a practical logic of the *field* contributes to the relative durability of the *field* and reproduces the structure. In this sense, agents, because of the virtue of their position in the *field*, can contribute to doxa through reproduction (Kloot, 2009, p. 472).

Changing the timetable to better accommodate the new curriculum may be in the interests of the students, but it does not align with the DP's *habitus*. Also trying a new timetable will require a significant rethinking and re-aligning the *habitus* to a changed structure that requires a massive amount of work, so the DP's reluctance is understandable. Moreover, given how often curriculum changes, it might not be in this position's interest and invested time and effort, particularly when their current timetable is working smoothly.

For William, the transition to a new curriculum was mainly managing the school budget.

> We allocated many thousands of dollars to personal development in curriculum through the implementation. That was being steadily phased back as things have been written but that has helped a smooth transition to the national curriculum.

According to William, the budget for transition to the new curriculum was huge because it involved writing the curriculum by giving the teachers the time to plan.

The transition phase of curriculum enactment presented different problems to James, who is looking after the overall process of enactment. For James, (re)contextualising a national curriculum with the interplay of the local factors was involved in the transition phase.

> I guess we spent a lot of time thinking about, 'how do we start the planning? What does the planning process look like? What steps do we go through? What templates do we write? What order of thinking do we use with teachers to build a curriculum from the national curriculum?' So mapping out, keeping all of those goals and the DOL [Dimensions of Learning] framework as a pedagogical frame, the curriculum documents, the existing units we had, which had great stuff in them that teachers believed engaged kids … they didn't want to lose the [Language Immersion program] that worked and ignited curiosity in the kids. So mapping how to do that against the new requirements.

James's concern here exemplify the kind of 'thinking' involved to develop a local curriculum from the national curriculum. He presents the process as analysing the existing practices against the new requirements. The existing practices like the pedagogical framework, unit plans, and the school programs like 'Language Immersion' needed to align with the new requirements. James's perspective is more closely associated with integrating the existing programs and practices to the new expectations to develop a 'local curriculum'. Other than the existing practices and resources, he considers the students as important and active agents in the transition process.

> And then there was a lot of those discussions in the first year about the transition. We all just jumped onto the national curriculum; 'I am trying to teach this concept, I have presumed they [students] have done it'. And that's probably what teachers talked about because all of a

> sudden you try and introduce those concepts that they are meant to be able to cope with. 'Oh I need to go back 2 steps'. So it took a 2-4 years process of reviewing.

James explains that during the transition process and while adopting any new content from the national curriculum, the staff assumed that students had sufficient background knowledge for the new content, which they found was not the case. To address this issue, teachers had to 'go back two steps' or had to introduce some basic concepts before they presented the new content. In such a case, then, strategies like curriculum review and revision were adapted to adjust the new content to students' existing level of exposure. For Bourdieu, such strategies are not 'conscious, individual rational choice, rather appropriate actions taken without conscious reflection' (Eacott, 2010, p. 268). The strategies of curriculum review and revision in the curriculum enactment are now organised activities in the school to better align their practices to the new requirements, as will be discussed in Chapter 6. Curriculum review as an organised activity is an implicit practical knowledge that becomes part of the history of the game that new entrants are tacitly required to have (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 74) thus a symbolic *capital* for entry to the *field*. Bourdieu argues that the principle behind these strategies remains implicit because these are individual moves, that by virtue of their position, integrate into organised practices and behaviour (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 19) thus becoming natural for the position.

Thus far the transition process for Mark involves time adjustment and reproducing the existing time structure, for William a concern for the budget, whereas for James it was more focused on (re)contextualising the new curriculum. Tanya is positioned by her role to look after teachers' PD in the enactment process. She envisioned the transition process as being difficult for teachers.

> I thought it was hard on people [teachers] and I felt like it was my job to look after people at that time. And I don't mean that in a nice fluffy way but I just felt like it really was my job to say; 'done is better than perfect; ok we'll fix that next year'. Because there was so much work to do, 'so let's just do the best we can'. And I felt it as a lot of pressure and people were constantly busy.

In her role as professional developer of teachers, Tanya displays a disposition of empathy for teachers. It was 'hard' for teachers, and for Tanya, it was her 'job to look after people'. Such a disposition might be because of Tanya's close working relationship with teachers and/or gender role that shaped her perception and appreciation. Women as primary carers are considered to be more apt for love labouring (Cantillon & Lynch, 2017). Relating such emotions as empathy to gender role is embodied and is shaped within the social structure. Cantillon and Lynch (2017) call such a disposition 'love labouring' as physical, cognitive, mental and emotional work. It involves 'looking out for' and 'looking after' the others producing a sense of support, solidarity and well-being in others. According to McNay (2004) emotions are social interactions shaped by latent social structures. Emotions are

the ‘vehicle through which invisible power dynamics are made present within immediate everyday experience’ (McNay, 2004, p. 187). McLeod (2005, p. 19) notes ‘gender is an “inherited” and embodied way of being that is shaped in interaction with social *fields*, constituting a repertoire of orientations and disposition’. Thus love labouring is unequally distributed gender wise which at times may not work in favour of women with relation to *capital* accumulation for which men have more time. However Lovell (2000) argues that femininity as a form of *cultural capital* is in demand in today’s world. In a study with doctors, Pringle (1998, p. 8) suggests that there is an increasing demand for, and recognition of, feminine skills in the medical profession. This may very well also be true for education that requires a more sensitive and careful relationship. In the post-modern capitalist world, even the service economy demands an orientation towards persons rather than commodities. This relationship to clients/customers’ demands them to ‘incorporate in their personality … so called feminine attributes such as paying attention to emotions, controlling anger and listening sympathetically to others’ (Illouz, 1997, p. 39). Thus attending to needs with empathy is a symbolic *capital* in the schooling *field*. For Bourdieu, the *field* as a network of objective relations is a structure that moulds practices in dynamic ways depending not only on the positions that agents hold, but also their *habitus* and the *capital* in their possession.

From the above analysis, it is clear that the transition process to a new curriculum is viewed differently by the agents due to the different roles they played. Mark had to deal with the timetable, William had budget concerns and James had concerns about (re)contextualising a national curriculum, whereas Tanya was worried about teachers’ well-being during the transition to the new curriculum. The process involved defending the existing practices, as in the case of defending the existing timetable. But at the same time, it required new ways of doing things, such as aligning the existing practices to the new expectations through curriculum review. Hence it can be argued that the enactment process involved reproducing as well as transforming practices. By recognising the relative position of these policy agents within a *field* it can be argued that the stance taken by them in relation to understanding and/or interpreting and enacting the reform are related to the roles they played in the *field*, besides their *habitus*.

The complexity in the enactment process

The complexity of the school context is another area where each role expressed a different point of view. The concept of complexity in the local context is already well established by researchers like Ball et al. (2012). For them, the school-specific factors such as situated, material, professional and the external influences make policy enactment a complex process and shape the ways policy is enacted at the ground level. In this section, I will discuss how the DPs perceived the enactment

process as complex from the position that they have constructed around what they do and their dispositions. This is in line with Bourdieu's argument that the social *field*, which appears regular, hides many complex relationships including the relationship between agents' disposition to their position in the *field*. As stated, 'point of view depends on the point from which they are taken' (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 18).

Mark's role is to work with the timetable and accommodate the new curriculum into a timetable that can work for the school. For him, the complexity was in setting up a timetable structure that accommodates what the school values.

> Other schools I know run 6 lines in senior and then gave a 7/8/9 even 10 lines in junior, and they work split lines. Then you start sharing teachers across classes, which is not a good practice because one of our philosophies is, I personally as a teacher I never like sharing class with another teacher. So if I was taking one lesson and somebody else was taking 2, it is disjointed for me and that once a week the other teacher does things in 2 lessons, but I don't get to see. So we have a philosophy that we don't share classes [unless] we absolutely have to. So we wanted to maintain 6 lines, 3 classes each week, each class regardless of year level.

Mark justifies the use of a 6 line timetable so as to avoid sharing teachers for a class. Here he is exercising his own *habitus* when he says that 'personally as teacher' he does not like sharing teachers. For him this is 'disjointed' because he would not get to know what the other teacher does. In this case, Mark, besides occupying a physical and social space, exercises his *habitus* (Bourdieu, 2000a) in shaping the timetable practices. Mark links this personal preference to a collective philosophy of the school by saying 'so we have a philosophy that we don't share classes'. Mark's challenges were in relation to the timetable to extract time for PDs.

> I think managing the time to write the new curriculum was probably the biggest challenge. Knowing how much time to devote to that, knowing or finding ways within the year that did not impose too much on teachers. So we had to think creatively about where we got that time from … 'this is the planning that needs to happen this year, where can we find the time for teachers' PD.' So we had to be creative, that was the biggest challenge as how to make that work.

Mark states that managing the time for developing resources and teachers' PD was the most challenging for his role. Resource development for the new curriculum requires substantial out of class time for teachers. Along with many competing priorities like adjusting time for the mainstream subjects and considering the elective subjects, allocating time for resource development was not easy within a limited time structure. Mark is also conscious of not imposing 'too much on teachers' within the time limit. In this way some practices become the norm because some ways of doing are encouraged within the *field* (Gerrard & Farrell, 2013). Here again, Mark, by virtue of his position, is

contributing to the doxa of the *field* thus making some practices normative. The implication is that a split time structure was not in alignment with the personal *habitus* of his position and hence there was a reproduction of the practice in the *field*.

The sense of a complicated enactment process is presented differently by James who is looking after the overall curriculum enactment. His perspective of complexity relates to the students' needs within the situated context.

> I guess early discussions for us were about the complexity of our school in terms of the range of kids we've got [that] led us to believe that we really wanted to write our own units. We wanted to control our curriculum. We wanted [a curriculum] that suits our kids, a focus on the student, a better focus on the learner. Because we all were having chats about that learner, and had to be consistent for that little person, and what we knew about how they learn and so [we said] 'let's talk about strategies'.

James indicates that the complexity of the school was in relation to the composition of the student body and their differing needs. Such a view of the school being complex was an impetus for a local version of the curriculum that could 'suit' the students' needs. Here he is again indicating that in (re)contextualising a national curriculum, the right way to do it, for him, was to adopt appropriate strategies. Indeed, for Bourdieu, strategies are not conscious and to the level of rational thinking but are actions governed by the *field* structure (Bourdieu, 1993).

The sense of complexity of enactment from the points of view of the DPs is based on the role they played in the process. Mark's sense of complexity in regards to the enactment process is about adjusting the timetable and avoiding the risk of sharing teachers. For James, on the other hand, (re)contextualising the curriculum with an understanding of the students' needs, the existing practices and the new expectations contribute to the complexity of the process. Here the demand from their role as well as personal preferences or *habitus* shapes their views on the complexity of the curriculum enactment process.

Perspectives on external influences

As noted above, Mark, James, William and Tanya experienced the transition to a new curriculum and the complexity involved differently owing to the roles they played in the enactment process. The challenges they encountered also relate to their specific positions and their position-taking. As discussed in the previous sections, James' concern is the (re)contextualisation of the curriculum. By his personal characterization, James is an outgoing person who can interact with people confidently. Because of his role as well as his disposition he was in constant communication with agents from the broader *field* of curriculum policy. He elaborate in length on the confusing messages:

> I remember this was the frustration, there was lots of mixed messages and I am also remembering around the same time, they introduced the teaching and learning audit and different ministers at different times gave different messages and used the teaching and learning audit as the big stick to make sure you are doing certain things. I remember one time, one of the messages was everyone must do it and you must show in your teaching and learning audit that you have done C2C and if you don't, you can't score higher than a 'C', in that criteria…. and then suddenly 6 months later that message was moderated. So I definitely noted some of [those] confusing messages from different ministers for different political reasons and using the teaching and learning audit and how we apply the curriculum, what degree of certainty are you saying and do we have to have this done by February, or like all those messages were very mixed. And then, a minister would get up and say, 'oh we'll slow down the implementation process', so those changing messages in terms of administrator trying to save teachers was a big challenge. It wasn't as simple as the syllabus itself didn't give you the answer, there was all these considerations.

For James's position the differing messages from the authorities was challenging. Messages related to using a teaching audit to make them do certain things were later 'moderated'. The timeline of the implementation process, for him, was not clearly laid out. More importantly, at some point, the curriculum authorities, after realising that most of the schools in the region are facing workload problems due to the transition to the new curriculum, suggested that the process be slowed down. Such a decision, particularly for HillView School, was a major cause of frustration. This is because HillView is positioned as a proactive school and a 'leader' in adapting to the reform, and messages related to 'slowing down the implementation' process were not supporting their interest. This position-taking of the school is in relation to its position, and a 'slow down' instruction is perceived as a risk to their efforts in maintaining or improving their position.

In relation to the 'middle management' role, here James is positioned to interact with the broader *field*. Bourdieu would regard such a position in the *field* as towards the 'pole' of the *field*. James's role encompasses strategies like communicating, mediating and translating external messages to a contextual and practical use. As James indicates, the solution to all problems is not given in the syllabus document, rather the curriculum goals put forward objectively are pursued subjectively and hence there can be modification and unintended outcomes (Spillane, 2004). Bourdieu would describe these strategies as '… actions objectively oriented towards goals that may not be the goals subjectively pursued' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 76).

As Tanya approaches the new curriculum differently than her collegues because of the role that she has been assigned, she is concerned about 'reform fatigue' due to the changing messages from the authorities.

> Reform fatigue will, if it's not already coming through with teachers' comments, but it will set in. It will be a huge factor, as every time we do major reform but particularly the stress on the later subjects [teachers] has been the waiting and waiting and the planning and half changing things or not changing them.

Tanya shares James's experience of the mixed and sometimes conflicting messages from the broader educational *field*. She expresses the confusing messages as 'the waiting and waiting and the planning and half changing or not changing things' indicating that they wait for an official order for a lengthy period, then sometimes it is mediated or changed while the school is in planning stage, making it difficult to move on. The school, positioned as 'proactive' in the broader *field*, perceives the changing message as a cause of teachers' stress. It follows that the position and position-taking of the school in relation to the broader curriculum policy *field* presents challenges and constraints for teachers making them vulnerable to 'reform fatigue'. By resisting external strategies such as 'slowing down implementation', the school attempts to retain or improve their position in the *field*, thus resisting anything that is not perceived as being in their interest. William presents a perspective of how much teachers can give feedback to the system as opposed to receiving the information from the broader *field*.

> There are opportunities for teachers to have more say, the reality is most don't have time to do that. That is a reality of what it is to be a teacher. You are so busy to be a teacher, that most don't have time.

For William, teachers can have their say in the system, but it is controlled by the time structure as teachers have to do more in less and less time. Such a disposition of acknowledging teachers' work might be coming from William's work with the teachers' union that he is a representative of. Ball (2006) argues that teachers are kept constructing their reality confined by a structure and where perfection is out of reach. According to Bourdieu, the social reality that agents construct involves struggle, thinking and actions from a specific point of view or vested interest determined by the position they occupy in the field (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 8). Bourdieu suggests that each *field* has its own struggle to access the valued *capital* in the *field*, to retain or improve one's position in the *field*. Hence the agents in this study are constructing their reality from a specific vested interest of their position in the overall education *field*. To manage these struggles, agents develop strategies in relation to their roles and will be discussed below.

Agents' position-taking strategies

In this chapter, it is argued that enacting a national curriculum is complex, from different fronts, in relation to the roles agents play. The roles the DPs played in the transition phase of moving to a new curriculum shaped their ways of thinking and doing and hence their position-taking or disposition.

However the role of personal *habitus* in the form of Mark's personal preference of not sharing teachers, James' personality and Tanya's gender role plays a significant part in influencing the roles they play along with the official expectations. Perceiving their problems and challenges from the specific lens of the roles they played, these agents tend to adopt diverse strategies in relation to each other. As discussed above, strategy for Bourdieu is not a conscious or rational choice but 'appropriate actions' (Eacott, 2010) or 'a specific orientation of practice' (Naidoo, 2004, p. 458). Bourdieu explains strategies in one of his interviews as the 'product of an unconscious program without conscious or rational calculations' (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986, p. 112). Here the adoption of strategies by the DPs to address their specific challenges is derived by what they do or their specific roles. In this section the position-taking strategies of the DPs with regards to their position and disposition is discussed.

Mark's role is to accommodate the new curriculum in terms of the timetable with due consideration for the existing practices and programs, avoiding the risk of sharing teachers and allocating time for resource development. Against this background and dealing with the complexity of setting up a suitable timetable for the school, Mark describes the strategy as a multi-layered process.

> Structurally we have a foundation structure and then the next layer is students' choice. So we offer subjects but determining which subjects run and who teaches those subject comes down to students' choice. So in year 10 for instance there is something like 32 or 33 different subject choices that students pick their top 15 preferences. So each individual student gives 15 preferences. We then determine which subjects run based on those preferences. So there might be subjects which teachers have written units for and ready to go but there might actually not run because students don't prefer them. So the base structure is there, teachers understand it, the next layer is actually determining which subject will run and that process. Getting students' preference forms, sorting them out, working out what preferences are there.

Mark's roles in this process of developing a timetable also involves students' subject preferences in addition to running mainstream subjects. Subject choice involves distributing, collecting and sorting of 'preference forms' which then helps Mark to decide on which subjects to offer. Once again it is the management of the timetable in the enactment that played a substantial part for this role. It can be noted that elective subject choices are restricted due to the local contextual factors such as deciding on how much time to be allocated and to which activities. Such an arrangement at the school level determines the curricular priorities at the local level. Ferrare and Apple (2015) call it the socio-curricular position that shapes students' knowledge, perception and choice of subject and ultimately their future trajectory. Here the socio-curricular position is defined by the time structure which may influence students' further options and career choices.

James has a different pathway to address curriculum issues in relation to his role in the process. Since James's role is curriculum enactment in the junior school, his strategies are more widespread across teachers' preparation and includes curriculum review and teaching strategies; as well as mediating the broader education *field* messages as discussed above. Moreover, he is positioned to mediate between departments, neutralise external effects and re-adjust individual teachers in a changed structure of the *field*. James's role exemplifies the intermediate or middle position situated between the poles of the *fields* (Bourdieu, 1985) as he encounters and attempts to balance the effects of policy change within his immediate position.

The broader education *field*, with regards to adding or removing certain subjects, created conflict between different departments within the school, invoked subject associations to maintain their position and displaced certain teachers. Here James's strategy of mediation, neutralisation and counselling is evident.

> The big interactions were PE [Physical Education] and Home Economics; Media and Design Technologies. So the faculties [of media and design technology], and what the national curriculum wanted us to do, we had to think outside the square. We developed a 6 month course on digital design as '3D printer' the kids actually do. There was a lot of...when you think of the creative design part of media, and design technology is similar and I have to get between the two HoDs and try to mediate. So there was bit of that.

The addition of Media Study created a conflict with the subject called Design Technologies. James's role involves strategies like negotiation and mediation between the HoDs of these subjects. Similarly, the removal of 'Home Economics' and the merger of its content to 'Physical Education', evoked sub-field effect from the subject associations. James highlights the influence of the broader *field* of education with modified structure by adding/removing subjects like Home Economics, Media Studies, Business Studies and Robotics.

> Also the faculty PE, was just the sheer amount of professional associations that wanted them to sense worth in the PE – one of the most complex syllabuses to me. 'The Surf Life Savers' and that all 'The healthy eating people' wanted their bits, health messages that is normally in Home Economics. The PE syllabus stings of everyone wanting their thing recognised so much and so many to cover. I think you had all the states put in their syllabus traditionally valued then you had all the professional associations, there would be 100s in physical education wanting. This is an interesting theme because in Home Economics we have lot of upset teachers around there was no Home Economics anymore, but technology. And a lot of the stuff they valued went to PE and so healthy diet, food pyramid … it's not there anymore. So the Home Economics association was in uproar. There was some stresses around again what people traditionally saw as their syllabus and skills and what they valued and I had to mediate between HoDs to say no, I am not gonna have year 7 doing the 'food pyramid' in PE only to

> do the 'food pyramid' a term later. It's my job to make sure kids are engaged and we are not doubling up. And negotiating some of that was difficult and people going to associations and bringing back papers saying to me, 'but this...' and at the end of the day, you're doing the syllabus and that's what you are assessing, so that was interesting too.

So by removing Home Economics, the subject associations came into action to defend their position in the schooling *field*. According to James, PE and Home Economics had the major influence of the other sub-fields like the professional associations with their vested interests. Here the subject associations as 'other sub-fields' influence teachers and the practices in the *field*. This is called cross-field effect (Rawolle, 2005; Rawolle & Lingard, 2015). The notion of cross-field effect lies beyond the logic of a specific *field* and includes the relationship of a *field* to any other *field*. Rawolle and Lingard (2015) as well as Yu (2018) argue that almost every social *field* is influenced by other *field*s putting the complete autonomy of a *field* into question. Bourdieu argues that 'the *field* is subject to (external) *pressures* and contains *tensions*, in the sense of forces that act so as to drive apart, separate, the constituent parts of a body' (Bourdieu, 2004, pp. 47, emphasis in original). Bourdieu indicates that external *field* pressures are as important as internal tensions of the *field* in shaping the practices of agents in the *field*. James's role exercises its own logic through strategies like mediation and negotiation to neutralise the cross-field effects and avoid repetition by 'not doubling up' content for students. Here James is positioned at the pole of the school and plays his role in neutralising the effects of the external forces.

These policy changes also affected the schooling *field* at a more individual level. The replacement of Business with Economics shows the case.

> This is another thing, you have teachers who have to survive, like Business disappeared overnight and became Economics. So we had Business teachers who weren't Economics match. 'What we gonna do with them in our staffing match?' Like one lady was not interested in Economics and she spent Christmas [holidays] learning year 7 Robotics. So people had to show willingness to be flexible because they saw there were no Business classes anymore.

James explains that the subject 'Business' was replaced with 'Economics' and the Business teachers who did not want to switch to Economics required alternative arrangements. Here one teacher is accommodated in the staff by opting for an entirely new subject, 'Robotics'. Here James's role encompasses counselling at a personal level to help teachers re-position themselves in the *field*.

Tanya's position as DP is relatively new, but she brings the disposition from the role as a HoD into her new role which is a broader version of her previous role. Being responsible for teachers' PD, the position-taking strategy for Tanya was to maintain their confidence as the *field* structure changed.

> So whilst sequencing was a big deal, and breadth and depth was a big deal, you can also help teachers be confident. They've done this before, they know how to plan. How to map out good assessment? It gave them a sense of confidence. I think we did a good job of having people calm about that, 'that's ok, it's not perfect, we are not using that experiment again let's look for something else'. Because it was a big year, it was a stressful year for teachers and I think a lot of them were stressed.

As discussed above, Tanya's main role is teachers' PD which she felt included 'look[ing] after the teachers'. Such a position-taking drives her strategies to sustain teachers' efficacy. Teacher efficacy appears to be reduced for two reasons: first with changes in the *field*, teachers' *habitus* fell out of its comfort zone (discussed further in Chapter 6) risking a low confidence level among teachers. Another obvious reason can be the increasing pressure that teachers feel in strict accountability measures. According to Ball and Youdell, (2008), in recent educational reforms around the world, the increasing bureaucracy has intensified teachers' work, leaving teachers with a feeling of disempowerment and marginalisation. In Australia, along with the national curriculum, national testing in the form of NAPLAN and Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APSTs) were introduced to ensure teachers' professionalism in the education *field*. These policy initiatives may lead to teachers perceiving it as a threat to their professional autonomy and a lack of trust on their abilities by the powerful political *field* and its influences. Hence Tanya's position-taking strategies include improving teachers' self-confidence.

It can be seen that the position-taking strategies the agents adopt are in line with the position and/or disposition of the agents. They range from Mark's multi-layered approach to setting up a timetable, to James's approach of mediating and neutralising external forces, to Tanya's ways of maintaining teachers' self-confidence. Hence:

> *The strategies of agents depend on their position in the field that is … the perception that they have of the field depending on the point of view they take on the field as a view taken from a point in the field. (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 101)*

From the analysis above, it can be implied that the DPs' positon-taking strategies depend upon the roles they played and consequently the stance they took in the curriculum enactment process. Bourdieu maintains, strategies are 'the product of a practical sense; of a particular social game. This sense is acquired through participation in social activities' (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986, p. 112). By playing a role and participating in the process, these DPs gain the knowledge of the practical logic of the *field*. Such a practical sense or 'feel for the game' (Bourdieu, 2000a) guides their strategies in the *field*. It is a general practice in schools that teachers with certain years of experience are only hired for senior positions such as Head of Department or Deputy Principal or even Principal of a school. It suggests that having a feel for the game is a symbolic *capital* to improve one's position in the *field*.

It appears that the roles that the agents play and the disposition they sustain or acquire become the basis of differential visions of the social world in connection with the curriculum enactment process.

The interplay between position, position-taking and position-taking strategies

As the analysis above shows, the DPs displayed very diverse views and perspectives on the process of curriculum enactment. These different stances on the curriculum enactment process are evident in the agents' presentation of the transition phase, the complexity they envisioned, the external influences they encountered, and consequently the position-taking strategies in line with their roles but which differed in relation to each other. Mark, who was responsible for timetabling, experiments with different models of timetabling but eventually conserves the existing timetable in the *field*. James's role requires him to engage with strategies to align the existing practices to the new requirements. William is concerned with budgeting, whereas Tanya is concerned about teachers' well-being at a time of major reform. It appears that these agents are constructing their primary reality around what they do (Ball, Maguire, Braun, & Hoskins, 2011b).

Bourdieu argues that agents holding the same position, and working under the same conditions, would more or less develop similar dispositions or position-taking. Bourdieu states:

> *Sets of agents who occupy similar positions and who, being placed in similar conditions and subjected to similar conditionings, have every likelihood of having similar dispositions and interests and therefore of producing similar practices and adopting similar stance. (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 198)*

However, it is evident from the analyses above that the DPs, despite holding similar positions as deputies, working under the same conditions of the school, and sharing the same authority display very diverse dispositions and practices during the reform enactment process. It might be that the DPs are 'subjected to differing conditioning' by assigning them different roles that developed in them differing dispositions and strategies. In this case the agents, by agreeing to the rules of the game and playing their roles, developed certain disposition in alignment with the rules of the game and the *field* logic influenced by their assigned roles. Such diverse dispositions can also be associated with the previous roles the agents played or the societal role as in the case of Tanya. As agents play the game, and learn the rules, it becomes part of their habitus (Bourdieu, 1989a, p. 176) that influences future actions. In this case, the DPs attempted to adjust their ways of thinking and doing according to the *field* demands of their roles. However this can also lead to a misrecognition of the social space as a natural world by unconsciously producing what it recognises and playing the game gradually appears natural, comfortable and automatic, thus taken for granted (Wacquant, 1990). Thus the ways of thinking and doing appear natural without conscious reflection and the dispositions acquired over time are accepted as self-evident and appear naturally. This may engender a more static *field* by

strengthening the doxa. To avoid this, a change in the *field* structure may contribute in keeping the *field* moving.

In the analysis above, the constraints and opportunities within the *field* structure, and more specifically the space of 'position-making,' seem more influential in shaping practices. Bourdieu argues that 'the knowledge of positions occupied in the social spaces contains information as to the agents' intrinsic properties (their condition) and their relational properties (their position)' (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 197). This chapter explored the latter; that is the knowledge within the 'agents' relational properties' with regards to the roles that the DPs played in the enactment process. Such knowledge and understanding can provide insight into the structure of the *field* and its forces of action and thinking that shape practices. Ferrare and Apple (2015, p. 46) argue that 'field positions – not just habitus – are inscribed with information that selectively "speaks" to individuals and suggests strategies for action in educational situations'. In this chapter, it has been shown that the *field* structure or positions contain information associated with the role that agents played and thus guides their strategies for actions.

The objective structure of the schooling *field* in terms of the DPs with their differentiated points of view and actions show that the stance taken by them in relation to understanding and/or interpreting and enacting the reform are related to the roles they played in the *field* and is also guided by the privileged position of the school in the general curriculum policy *field*. In this way the objective structure of the *field* in terms of the relationship between these agents with differentiated thinking, actions and the strategies they employ to defend or advance their position, is embedded in the roles they played. Simply put, 'where you stand depends on where you sit' (Maguire, Braun, & Ball 2015, p. 485). This means that dispositions can emerge in an effort to adjust to the assigned roles in the *field* and it makes sense to what you do and how you do it. In this case, the DPs within their official positions are playing different roles leading to a belief that what they do is what they are required to do and so appears natural to them.

The DPs' personal disposition or *habitus* that they bring to the role is also significant in exploring the *field* configuration. James is situated at the poles of the *field,* interacting with the curriculum policy and other sub-fields such as subject associations, thus attempting to neutralise the cross-field effects. As discussed previously, James' personality trait in negotiating and developing consensus might be a valued *capital* which has led him to acquire his DP position. The coordination and mediation between departments or individual teachers, as in the case of James role, demonstrates the widespread effects of policy changes at the ground level. It can be argued that the space or position held by these agents is not fully operated according to the specific logic of the *field* nor completely determined by

outside forces (Ferrare & Apple, 2015). Rather, the internal logic as well as the external forces drive and shape the thinking and practices of the *field* through these positions. Hence the structure of the *field* is dependent on the logic of the *field* that is the external influences and internal dynamics.

In such a dialectic relationship of the position to position-taking, *habitus* plays a major role. According to Bourdieu (2000a), *habitus* is the mediating factor between position and position-taking. In light of the analysis in this chapter, the association of agents' positions to their differing position-taking is correlated to the roles these agents play. The specific roles that each of the DPs played in the enactment process as part of their roles and responsibilities disposed in them specific ways of thinking and doing or disposition. In Bourdieu's language, the social role agents played become part of the biological body. Thus the 'disposition acquired in the position occupied imply an adjustment to this position' as a 'sense of one's place' in the social world (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 17). However this adjustment to a new position is not only the role demanded; agents bring with them their pre-embodied disposition to play the game and carry out their roles.

Agents in the *field* are also pre-dispositioned, in the form of the *habitus* below the level of consciousness that influences agents' strategies (Naidoo, 2004). As indicated in Tanya's role, the 'love labouring' and the use of affective strategies may be the durable dispositions. In *Masculine Domination*, Bourdieu (2001) examined the symbolic domination of gender inequality. He argues that the objective structure of the social world inscribed in the *habitus* is reproduced in the social world. McNay (2004) argues that despite women's entry to the workforce, women are not freed from the burden of emotional responsibilities. The question then is, should they be freed from this emotional responsibility or can such responsibility be capitalised on more in this post-modern world where human relationships are intricate? Women continue to work to preserve their symbolic value by conforming to the male ideal of feminine virtue. According to McNay (2004), the social inequalities are established through the inculcation of power relations in the dispositions and the role women play is always devalued if not dismissed. For Bourdieu, this is symbolic domination in the form of gender inequality when:

> *men are the subjects of matrimonial strategies through which they work to maintain or to increase their symbolic capital, women are always treated as objects of these exchanges in which they circulate as symbolic fit for striking alliances. (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 173)*

Thus men maintain or preserve their symbolic *capital* and women are subjected to the dominant norms set by men. However such act of cognition and (mis)recognition of gender roles is beyond the consciousness to which agents are not always aware. Bourdieu argues:

> *the case of gender domination shows better than any other that symbolic violence accomplishes itself through an act of cognition and of mis-recognition that lies beyond – or beneath – the controls of consciousness and will, in the obscurities of the schemata of habitus that are at once gendered and gendering. (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 171-172)*

Thus the sexual differentiation and the social structure imposes upon men and women different sets of disposition in the social *field*. According to Bourdieu, dispositions remain unnoticed unless actualised in practice and adjust to the necessity of the situation (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 139). The position-taking strategies actually bring to the surface the embodied disposition of the agent.

However the *habitus* does not only work in relation to what it disposes, it also analyses the available possibilities in the *field* structure and has the capacity to evaluate such 'possibilities as per their interest associated with their position' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 184). In this case, agents try and adjust to the requirement of the *field* through position-taking strategies. These position-taking strategies are the manifestation of dispositions durable or acquired. Agents understand the social world by utilising the knowledge derived from history and the structure of that world, because the social is in the biological individual (Bourdieu, 2000a). At the same time, dispositions are structured and adjusted to new situations and changes in the *field*. Hence the social world is perceived and expressed in various ways with a 'degree of indeterminacy and vagueness' and with a 'semantic elasticity' (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 20). This is because dispositions are subject to variation and so relatively indeterminate or uncertain (Bourdieu, 1989b).

Bourdieu explains the role of position and disposition in influencing agents' practices by hinting that 'in a state of equilibrium the space of position tends to command the space of position-takings' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 105). In this case, the DPs' state of equilibrium or their level of comfort that their *habitus* developed within the *field* structure to play their roles, outweigh the more personal or individual *habitus*. Bourdieu believed that the influence of the *habitus* over practices is more obvious when the position is more open, uncertain and ambiguous leaving space for the *habitus*. In such cases, the *habitus* has more influence in shaping the practices. On the other hand, if the position is more regulated and defined, there is less of the agent's *habitus* involvement and more adherence to the regulations is evident (Bourdieu, 2000a). In this background, the positions of DPs as deputies is well defined and regulated with specific roles assigned to each one of them despite holding similar positions. The analysis above shows that it is the role these agents played that tended to influence practices. Mark's attempts to come up with a suitable timetable that accommodates the mainstream as well as elective subjects and time for teachers' PD and resource development revolves around his assigned role. However, at certain places Mark also shows a concern for teachers' work load, which is in alignment with Tanya's account. This may be because of the collaborative and 'sharing culture' of the school while working towards a common goal.

Analysing the position agents hold in the *field* can give us access to the thoughts and perceptions of the agents and in that way to the logic of the *field*. According to Bourdieu, 'it enables us to monitor, up to a certain point, some of the determinisms that operate through the relation of immediate complicity between position and disposition' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 136). The social world of curriculum enactment is complex with many local factors coming into play while translating text into action. Although all the deputies are holding the same position of power, they think and act differently in relation to the curriculum enactment. Other than the structured roles they are assigned, agents are active social bodies with the ability to exercise their own *habitus;* durable or acquired. In the case of Tanya with a disposition of empathy towards teachers, the personal embodied *habitus* in the form of gender role is manifested in her actions and thoughts. Availability and access to the *field capital* is yet another force that contributes to the *field* complexity. Teaching experience ranging from 10-20+ years is a valued *capital* giving the DPs a feel to play the game. However the relationship of teaching experience to their role is not as straightforward. James has relatively less teaching experience of 15 years compared to William with 20+, but his role managing the curriculum enactment is huge ranging from dealing with outside forces to individual counselling. Part of the disposition for this role might be related to his personality and his ability to deal with people. Hence agents cannot be expected to think and act as directed or assigned. It can be argued that sometimes 'the problem is not in the perception but in the world and it makes little sense to put people in a distorted world and ask them to think straight' (Martin, 2011, p. 230). The physical space or interaction amongst the agents in the social space 'masks the structure that are realized in them'. That is, the 'visible, that which is immediately given, hides the invisible which determines it' (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 16).

Conclusion

A Bourdieuian study of the experiences of teachers during the enactment of a new curriculum in one school shows that the social world of schooling has multiple and often interconnected and inter-dependent positions. These positions that agents hold have the capacity to develop in them specific ways of thinking and doing. This chapter concludes that agents develop differing perceptions and stances based on the role they played in the *field*, regardless of the more visible hierarchal position of being deputies. In this chapter, the four agents discussed held the same position as deputy principals, exercised almost equal authority and worked under the same conditions, yet displayed diverse ways of thinking and doing or disposition in the enactment process owing to the specific role they played in the process. This is because, as Bourdieu argues, 'the vision that every agent has of the space depends on his or her position in that space' (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 18). Such position is influenced by their past experiences, the societal norms, the *capital* they bring to the role and the access to the

*capital*s in the *field*, the *field* structure at a given time; all contributed to the way these roles are played out. Agents adopt strategies that are in relation to the role they play and may not be consciously strategic. It implies that the schooling *field* is reflexive, elastic, dynamic with diverse and sometimes opposite forces in play in the *field*. Krause (2018) recommends to examine the *field* structure in relation to the degree of consensus and contestations and the symbolic oppositions in the *field*. The next chapter will provide more insight into the diverse and often opposite active forces in the *field* that goes beyond the roles that agents play.

Chapter 5: The Field Tensions and Spaces of Change

Field is one of the key concepts of Bourdieu's theoretical resources and every other concept operates in relation to it. For this reason Bourdieu states that *field* is the primary tool and a crucial focus of any research. By definition, *field* is dynamic and ever-changing due to its many active forces. Bourdieu (1993) states that the *field* structure, particularly the distance, the gaps, the asymmetries between the various specific forces, confront one another, making the *field* dynamic, dialectic and changing. In other words, 'the social field is not a product of total consensus but of permanent conflict' (Naidoo, 2004, p. 459). Bourdieu believed that the regularity in the *field* borne out of conflict and competition serves the purpose of orienting it towards a common function (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). For such a dynamic *field*, Bourdieu argues that one cannot impose a rigid structure and definite boundaries except through empirical investigation. The *field* characteristics can be outlined in relation to the empirical investigation in hand. The argument in this chapter is that the schooling *field* is dynamic with its own internal logic, permeable boundaries and active forces in play.

In this chapter, I will draw on interview data from the school management team, as well as teachers, to explore the tensions, the contested notions and the resultant emerging spaces for change. This analysis is an attempt to demonstrate how the *field* is regulated through the internal dynamic and logic with contested and opposing forces in play. The interaction of the external curriculum reform with the internal existing logic makes the enactment process a site of struggle. Such an analysis of policy construction at the school level contributes to the 'practical logic' (Bourdieu, 1992) of the *field* where theory is used to explain the regularities and complexities (Gunter & Forrester, 2010) of the *field*. This chapter explores the contested notion of the reform in three areas. These areas are: contesting the meaning of 'national' in the curriculum; contesting the 'change' within the continuity of practices; and contesting the subjective desire within the objective structure. Finally the chapter will discuss the opportunities and spaces for change as diverse and sometimes opposing forces come together developing a generative potential for transformation.

Contesting the 'national' in the curriculum

The aim of the Australian Curriculum is contested in theory and practice. In theory, the agents' understanding of the rationale of the national curriculum is well aligned with the stated aim of the curriculum document. The aim of the national curriculum as stated on the ACARA website is to develop 'consistent national standards to improve learning outcomes for all young Australians. It sets

out, through content descriptions and achievement standards, what students should be taught and achieve, as they progress through school' (ACARA, 2013). The ACARA document states:

> *The commitment to develop a national curriculum reflects a willingness to work together, across geographical and school-sector boundaries, to provide a world-class education for all young Australians. Working nationally makes it possible to harness collective expertise and effort in the pursuit of this common goal. It also offers the potential of economies of scale and a substantial reduction in the duplication of time, effort and resources. (Selection from 'The Shape of the Australian Curriculum, Version 4.0', ACARA, 2013)*

The Shape of Australian Curriculum is a document accompanying the national curriculum which contains advice for schools in transition to the national curriculum. The aim of the national curriculum in this document is defined as a unifying force that can develop greater consistency, foster national cohesion, and encourage the sharing of expertise and resources. Hence the current curriculum reform is rationalised as developing greater consistency through standardised content and achievement benchmarks. This section explores the aim and rationale of the curriculum reform in relation to this stated aim of the curriculum. From the data, there appears to be diverse views that support, but at times contradict, the stated aim of the curriculum. Some teachers showed their appreciation for the initiative of a national curriculum. Richard stated:

> I was appreciative of the need for a national curriculum. I guess in Australia having education as a holistic thing rather than individual states having their separate things. I think it makes sense to have a common goal and common curriculum across Australia. (Richard)

Richard is appreciative of a national curriculum for it has the capacity to develop a 'holistic' system of education across Australia. Richard views the previous state-based curriculum as dividing the states because each state was following their own curricula. The current national curriculum, on the other hand, has a common goal for education in the form of a central curriculum across the country – thus a holistic system. For Maria, that holistic system provided an opportunity for educators to work in collaboration across the country.

> I think it has made it easier as well for teachers to talk collaboratively because previously even across the states, even across regions, people were doing such different things and that made it difficult to share resources or assessment. So this will hopefully enable people to share what they do. (Maria)

As Maria highlighted, the national curriculum makes it easier for teachers to 'talk collaboratively'. Like Richard, Maria thinks that in the previous state-based curriculum, teachers were doing different things and it was not easy for teachers to share resources or assessment practices. Within this 'holistic' and 'collaborative' opportunity the curriculum has developed 'consistency' and 'unity of work' for Amy:

> It is the Australian Curriculum, so I guess it is everybody in alignment, it gave us the opportunity to … I think that unity of work and that consistency is a good thing as well. Really! That's what the Australian Curriculum did. I don't know that it did anything else that was particularly outstanding. If I have to think about what was the point of it: 'consistency' and that's really good. (Amy)

Amy infers that since it is 'Australian Curriculum', every educator in Australia should be in 'alignment' with one another. She states that the current curriculum is an 'opportunity' to work in unity and develop 'consistency' in their practices across Australia. Such a notion of 'unity' and 'consistency' is aimed towards the development of national cohesion.

From the above analysis, it is inferred that the aim of the national curriculum is interpreted as an opportunity to develop a holistic education system leading to a platform for a collaborative culture of sharing practices and resources and ultimately to develop a sense of unity or national cohesion amongst educators. Other academics reinforce this aim and maintain that the aim of the current curriculum is to develop greater consistency across the different states ensuring efficient use of resources and developing a sense of national cohesion (Savage, 2016; Harris-Hart, 2010). Teachers' understanding or meaning-making of reform in light of the above analysis can be termed as 'interpretation' and the first step to meaning-making. According to Ball et al. (2012), interpretation is a stage where teachers read the text and try to understand it. The second stage, Ball (2012) suggests, is 'translation', which goes beyond making sense of the text but involves teachers' practices, their experiences with the text, their reflection on what works and what does not. In this case and in the second stage, when teachers tried to translate the text into practices, they experienced the new curriculum and its aims rather differently, as will be discussed below. Rubecca stated that as time passed she faced real inconsistencies and incoherence in the reform process.

> I don't know what it [the national curriculum] will achieve, but when it first came, the idea of it was great, we were finally gonna come to a system, a situation where we have the same system operating. But we don't, we still have six different systems operating in this country. I don't get it, I can't understand what the purpose is? The idea being that the content is similar – but not really, because the way schools have implemented it – well in our school at least, and I know for many other schools they have taken what they did and adjusted and compared what they were doing with the curriculum and so adjusted accordingly; got them to fit in and continued on our way which is what I am saying that nothing has really changed, I feel nothing has really changed. (Rubecca)

Rubecca shared the joy at the 'interpretation' stage for having the same system of education across the country, but when she practiced and experienced the curriculum she realised they are 'still having six different' education systems (four states and two territories) in Australia. She tries to convince herself of the value of the content of the curriculum being the same across the country but then

immediately suspends it based on her experience or practice. This is because schools have implemented the same content based on 'what they were doing' and 'fit it in' to the previous practices. It follows that each state and territory and even each school is practicing the national curriculum differently based on what they were doing previously. Rubecca showed her frustration toward this discrepancy of the curriculum rationale and the practices at school level when she said that she felt 'nothing had really changed.' Jess shared a similar stance and frustration.

> I know that every school is doing something different, so the idea of everyone having the same according to the Australian Curriculum is just not happening which is very frustrating because no one really knows exactly what it should be. There are so many different versions of what to do. I think there is still quite a bit of confusion as to what the requirements are, because it seems different schools are doing different things. I think what we originally expected hasn't necessarily been what we have been told at the beginning. … The fact that different schools are still doing different things makes it a little bit confusing as well. (Jess)

Jess's comment suggests that the national curriculum, when put into practice, did not seem to achieve its aims. According to Jess, as time passed more questions arose as to how schools can possibly be expected to do the same things when every school is different. Hence questions and confusion on what exactly teachers are expected to do still remains. Since the previous state-based curriculum was different in each state, adjusting the national curriculum requirements to their previous practice may not make a substantial difference to the curriculum aims being holistic, collaborative and developing unity of work. Ditchburn (2012b, p. 259) argues that the national curriculum in Australia is not well debated within the curricular sphere; rather it is the economic and political forces that have led to a collaboration on national curriculum. This has made the curriculum 'disconnected from local realities' and has developed 'a one-size-fits-all' approach which is accepted by the educator and general community without question. Similarly, Seddon (2001) argues that in the context of complex globalisation and cultural pluralism such a notion of one national curriculum may not work.

James, a DP, confirmed Rubecca and Jess's assertion that each school implemented the curriculum according to what they were already doing:

> We probably started shaping our vision of what our curriculum would look like under the national Curriculum … as 'what is our philosophy for teaching and learning? What's our philosophy for junior secondary?' In trying to shape the curriculum, we really wanted to write our own units, we wanted to control our curriculum. We wanted [the curriculum] to suit our kids. We didn't want to wait for something from Education Queensland that was written for a very diverse state. So I guess we spent a lot of time thinking about: 'What order of thinking do we use with teachers to build a curriculum from the national curriculum?' (James)

In order to help schools implement the national curriculum, Education Queensland as the state based curriculum authority developed the C2C document containing unit plans, sample assessment and teaching resources. However, James sees the C2C document as something for a diverse state as opposed to a school-based curriculum which the school can have a 'control' over. For this reason, the school developed their school vision and their school philosophy that shaped the local curriculum. It suggests that the school has specific practices and resources that may not necessarily match with the national curriculum and/or other schools in the state or across the country. Such a practice does not align well with the understanding of the national curriculum being able to provide the opportunity for the wider collaboration across the country that Maria alluded to. Terry, the HoD Social Sciences, sums up the debate of 'national curriculum' as:

> Strictly speaking at the end of the day I don't think there is a lot of accountability in this national curriculum. There is no clearing house, no scrutiny on what schools are doing. Even within this school to say a national curriculum is being developed and delivered is a misnomer. Some of our specialist signature programs for example are not in format closely [with the national curriculum] if at all. (Terry)

For Terry, continuity of the school's unique signature programs indicates that the school's existing practices are not affected by the national curriculum. He implies that the school has the autonomy to continue its existing programs and has positioned itself to negotiate its own practices within a changing *field*. Bourdieu argues that agents can exercise their interpretation, with access to resources 'at their command' and based on their position in the *field* (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 257).

While analysing the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) in Australia, Savage and Lewis (2017), argue that when one goes 'looking' for the national, it is difficult to find. In other words, when the national policy is broken down into its component parts, there is no inherent essence to the policy at the national level, beyond the written document itself. This is because as Australia moves into the enactment phase of the reform, distinct elements of the curriculum versions of the standards are being adapted and put into practice across different jurisdictions. Savage and Lewis (2017) believe that such diverse practice is further exacerbated by differential uptake within Australia's three main schooling sectors (Government, Independent and Catholic) and how the standards are being understood and enacted in schools and by individual educators. Perhaps all of this is happening with the national curriculum policy in addition to the different levels of uptake in different states and the different time frames. Thus finding 'the national' is difficult but the curriculum can be viewed as a 'complex assemblage of policy ideas and practices' (Savage and Lewis, 2017, p. 20). This is in line with conceptualising policy as more than written text and thus complex with no defined essence (Ball, 1993). Such an understanding of curriculum policy then conceptualises it as

an always dynamic process of changing, moving, contingent and based on the changing relationship and interactions within the *field*.

Moreover the practical logic of the *field* is comprised of not only the regularities that the official document define, but also the irregularities or incoherence implicit in the practical conditions of the *field*. Bourdieu argues:

> *In other words, symbolic systems owe their practical coherence – that is, on the one hand, their unit and their regularities, on the other their 'fuzziness' and their irregularities and even incoherencies, which are both equally necessary, being inscribed in the logic of their genesis and functioning – to the fact that they are the product of practices that can fulfil their practical functions only in so far as they implement, in the practical state, principles that are not only coherent and compatible with the objective conditions – but also practical, in the sense of convenient, that is, easy to master and use, because they obey a 'poor' and economical logic. (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 86)*

As Bourdieu indicates, in the practical logic of the *field*, the regularities as well as the irregularities and/or incoherence are equally important for the functioning of the *field*. Principles that are not only coherent and compatible with the conditions of the *field* but also convenient to use and practice, make the *field* logic. Hence the schooling practices are adjusted to the objective standards of the curriculum in a complex process involving struggles, conflicts and tensions.

Contradicting the notion of the opportunity to share practices is Rubecca who states that there are no such opportunities at the practical level:

> In terms of other schools I think we don't have ties really. I would say we've not done that sort of interaction, unless it is other teachers you know and talk to and they are doing something and you use that sort of thing. So there is that kind of casual but not in a structured way. So there should be more, but there is not. (Rubecca)

As Rubecca indicated, there is no 'structured' platform where schools can interact and share practices. She desires interaction with other schools but the current education structure has no space for it in terms of time and resources. Bourdieu (2000a) would argue that the subjective aspirations are not always entertained by the objective structure; most of the time the subjective expectations are made to fit the objective structure, mediated by the *habitus*. The idea that the current curriculum has made it easier for collaboration amongst schools is restricted by the structure and time. From this analysis, it is inferred that in the case study school the curriculum reform provides a structure for the teachers to adhere to. By providing such an objective structure, the curriculum thus develops a social condition for the agents to think and act within. Such a relationship between the structure and practices further provides a frame of reference for the group members to 'drive their truth, inscribed in objectivity and thus abiding by the rules' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 22).

From the above analysis, it can be observed that the meaning-making of the staff at the 'interpretation' stage of the curriculum enactment is in conflict with the understating of the curriculum at the 'translation' stage. The analysis shows that there is a tension; a conflict in the *field* between the national curriculum as an opportunity to develop unity of work, collaboration in practices and resources, and being a holistic system; and the staff's experience and practices being different from school to school and the lack of platform to collaborate. National curriculum, according to Seddon (2001, p. 308), is 'a means of regulation, an instrument of control and construction, wrapped up in nation-building rhetoric, which welded and organised 'the people' into a collective productive force to advance the nation, consolidate national identity and realise national destiny'. In this one-size-fits-all approach, the government attempts to regularise practices and attempts to develop an equal field. However at the local level, when policies are translated into practice, agents experience conflict, struggle, contestations and sometimes frustration. Such tensions and frustrations arising from the inconsistencies imply that 'agents are endlessly occupied in negotiating their own identity', whereas the states legitimises strategies (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 86) to govern them.

Another frame of reference to such a discrepancy between the stated and the practiced, is the curriculum being official. Officialisation of such kind, according to Bourdieu, establishes, authorises and legitimises certain relationships between the structures and practices, and thus draws a line between the thinkable and the unthinkable, basically developing a limit to think within (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 21). The rationale of the national curriculum developing a national cohesion is perhaps a strategy of the state in the form of a symbolic exchange to involve the agents in the game by developing an illusio or 'interest in the game' (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 207). Such illusio, in terms of investment and interest in the game, speaks to agents or 'players [who] were taken in by the game' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 98). Bourdieu argues that 'each field calls forth and gives life to a specific form of interest, a specific illusio, as tacit recognition of the value of the stakes of the game and as practical mastery of its rules' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 117). Hence the rationale for a national curriculum developed the interest and recognised the value of providing national standards in which schools were invested.

However the school as a social *field* is dynamic and its activities are more complex than it appears. Agents are active individuals and they bring their own professional judgement, *habitus* and pre-existing notions in understanding the reform. From the analysis it is inferred that teachers' understanding of the curriculum reform is developed at two different levels. At the first level is the 'interpretation' whereby teachers described their understanding of the reform after reading the documents or attending PD sessions. It is at this level that teachers are invested, or as Bourdieu would claim, 'players were taken in by the game' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 98) through the state

level intervention. Karpiak informs us that change is possible if agents recognise the illusio that can lead agents to ponder other options and choices (Karpiak cited in Anfara & Mertz, 2006). Thus it is at the translation that alternative solutions can be sought through practical experience. This level is not always aligned with the stated aim and rationale but involves irregularities, frustrations and conflicts. It appears that the teachers are 'invested' in the reform at the official level of the written curriculum, however the practical logic or 'feel for the game' that teachers obtained through their practical experience is inconsistent with the official rationale. Since it is the initial phase of the Australian curriculum implementation, the mismatch between the *habitus* and the *field* is evident. The *field* is evolving and a site of struggle as the school and agents try and adjust the subjective aspirations to the objective changes but also negotiate what is possible. However, and without appropriate support, the reform can be enacted. Thus the enactment at the school level is uneven, irregular, ambiguous, and incoherent with contradictory forces and notions in play. The next section will explore another tension between change and continuity in practices that teachers and the school management team encountered.

Contesting 'the change' in the curriculum

As discussed in the previous section the curriculum enactment at the school level is complex, with views and experiences that are differing and sometimes inconsistent with the intended reform. Inconsistencies between the reform intentions and the practices at school level give rise to contesting the notion of 'change' itself. Questions like 'what is changed?' or 'is it the existing practices that drive the change?' emerge. The curriculum reform introduced a change in the *field* and the school actively participated in the change process, which demands an adjustment to the new structure. As Savage (2016) argues, the national curriculum is a radical change in the educational field in Australia and Queensland's active approach in its implementation (Mills & McGregor, 2016) contribute to this demand for change. However, as will be discussed in this section, a strong hold on the existing practices in the case study school echoes loud as well. Bourdieu would argue that the *habitus* is inclined towards past practices while the *field* demands a change. This *field-habitus* mismatch is more obvious at an initial or transitional phase of enacting the reform. This is because the *habitus* was in comfort with the practices to the extent that it was like 'fish in water' (Bourdieu, 1977). Adapting to any new changes required an effort on the part of agents' *habitus* to adjust to the new expectations. Alex's statement clearly captures the tension and struggle in adapting the changes in the *field* while holding onto what they were already doing.

> Teachers will try and rely on the existing unit to the new curriculum, so working backwards. By doing that, the curriculum gets reworked, that's what we risked doing. That's what the

> school or science department is trying to fight against to make sure we don't just kind of adapt the new curriculum, but to what we have already got. (Alex)

Alex asserts that, in enacting the reform, the teachers tried and relied on the existing practices in order to accommodate the reform. This, he thinks, is 'working backwards', implying that they used their existing practices as a means to accommodate the changes. Working this way is a 'risk' for Alex, whereas for Maria, their previous practices provided a strong base for the new curriculum.

> So my experience is initially, we sort of looked at what we had originally for our cohort. We started looking at our units and editing it against the Australian curriculum and I think we had a fairly solid base to begin with, because we had, you know we had our cultural climate in the school, a lot of rigour, assessment items etc. (Maria)

Like Alex, Maria explained the process that initially they looked at their existing practices and unit plans and then consulted the new curriculum documents to analyse their practices. However, unlike Alex, Maria thinks that the existing practices provide a 'solid base' as they were rigorous and in line with the cultural climate in the school. In this sense the existing practices appeared natural to Maria. Anna, the English HoD, had a similar stance of holding on to their old practices owned by teachers.

> …schools were conscious of not throwing out all the work that teachers have done previously and they could see, we could see there were key units that were really well developed that would sit very well with C2C and it was a matter of modifying to suit and vice versa. (Anna)

Anna explained that the school consciously continued with the existing work because they saw value in it as part of the *field* logic. Likewise, Tanya, the then Science HoD (now a DP), was conscious of not 'throwing out' everything that teachers had 'ownership' of.

> I try very hard not to throw everything out. That was the other thing we did – 'what are the things we value, that we've always taught in grade 8, what are the things you really hold, [or] things you really want to hold onto them [and] what worth they are?' So we brainstormed. …. You know … you had to value that people have been teaching here for 30 years and they don't want to see all the good stuff just gone and rightly so, they don't want to lose that good stuff. They had been teaching it very well and very successfully. So we had a lot of trainings for what we value, what works, training for what resources we have and what resources can we buy. (Tanya)

Tanya described that it was hard to throw out some of the practices, programs and resources that were owned and valued by the teachers, so they analysed and evaluated their practices and continued with the ones teachers valued. This, as she states, is because teachers have a long experience in the *field* and they have a 'feel for the game' (Bourdieu, 1977) at the practical level. Bourdieu would argue that the 'feel for the game' appears natural to the agents because of the doxa in the *field* and unconsciously

these agents follow the rules – 'a misrecognition of the limits of cognition that they make possible, thereby founding immediate adherence' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 164) to the structure. It can be argued that since their *habitus* is attuned and is structured in a certain way from the previous actions, their practices naturally appear useful and necessary to the logic of the *field*. Perhaps this problem arises when an external change from the system level encounters the local schooling *field* and its 'valued' practices and dispositions. The change re-positions and sometimes (dis)positions the *habitus*. Maria makes the point:

> I think, we quite went downhill, when we were told that we need to take up the C2C. And it was a bit of spanner in the works because all of a sudden we were dealing with something that nobody had ownership over. We had these huge units that had just massive information that we had to take in. And basically we were a little bit overwhelmed. (Maria)

The C2C was introduced by the state government one year later than the introduction of the national curriculum by the federal government. However by that time the school was doing what seemed suitable to them – evaluating their existing practices and adapting to the desired changes from the national level – the C2C was seen as a 'downhill' effect partly because it was a huge change and lacked local ownership. For Maria, the C2C was a hurdle in their practices because it was not owned by the school staff. So from these teachers' accounts and their early encounters with the national curriculum, a strong assertion and a defence against the changes is evident. Exploring this early experience of the change is worthy because it is where the habitus is attuned to the previous practices while the *field* demands a change. Bourdieu states:

> *Early experiences have particular weight because the habitus tends to ensure its own constancy and its defence against change through the selection it makes within new information by rejecting information capable of calling into question its accumulated information, if exposed to it accidentally or by force, and especially by avoiding exposure to such information. (Bourdieu, 1990a, pp. 60-61)*

As Bourdieu states, the *habitus* makes its choices by rejecting information that is by force and defends itself against such information. The national curriculum reform in Australia is an external change that all schools have to adapt to sooner or later. Here the school and the teachers' strong hold on their existing practices while at the same time positioning themselves as active adopters of change (discussed in Chapter 4) illustrate the dynamic nature of the *field*. So through tension between these two phenomena of changing their practices and/or continuing their existing practices, emerges new ways of thinking and doing that can be different from the existing practices but not necessarily in compliance with the new changes. For Kate it was an adaption:

> I think we looked at the units, we looked at what was the Australian curriculum and we also looked at what we currently did, so there were some current units. Now most of the units we may have slightly adapted. (Kate)

Kate highlights the contested changes as 'slightly adapted' as she explained that they looked at their own existing practices and also looked at what the new curriculum was about. In the sense of adapting to the new reform it was a 'rough adjustment' (Bourdieu, 2000a) of the new to the existing practices. For Josh it was a blend of the new and the old:

> It was a matter of looking at the curriculum – national curriculum and say, 'alright! These things more or less fit. We'll go with what we've got and just try and blend it into what we are already doing,' and that was a little bit haphazard at times in terms of what we got. (Josh)

Josh calls it a 'blend' of the new requirements and what they were already doing. But, as he indicates, this blend was a 'haphazard' process. The curriculum enactment is complex, messy (Ball et al., 2012; Annette Braun, Ball, Maguire, & Hoskins, 2011; Maguire et al., 2015; Spillane, 2004) and a 'rough adjustment' (Bourdieu, 2000a). So a new format, perhaps a 'HillView School' format of the curriculum, emerged. Kate stated:

> We added some of our own resources. Initially there was an outline, then we looked at our DoL [Dimensions of learning] framework. We also used more DoL in the early implementation. So we took the plan that was there and we put it in a framework - DoL- so we actually put it in a HillView [school] format. (Kate)

Kate asserts that the new curriculum was adapted to the existing teaching and learning structure of the school; thus into the school format. Such an assertion suggests that the school has gained enough autonomy to negotiate the change and function according to its own logic. For Bourdieu, 'the more autonomous the field is, the more empowered it is in imposing its own specific logic of the field as a cumulative product of its own history' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 105-6). There are the unformulated rules which are embodied – 'objectification of past history' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 57) and are in close relation to the *habitus* in the form of 'a practical sense which reactivates the sense objectified in institutions' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 67). Bourdieu argues that the specific logic of the *field* encompasses the unformulated, embodied logic that is the practical sense of the agents in the *field*. Thus, the active agents reactivate their practical logic of the *field* when an external change is introduced. However, the more forces external to the *field* shape what is possible in it, the more it loses its objectifying potential by tending to reproduce the external misrecognised interest (Grenfell & James, 2004). Maria explained the perplexing situations of accommodating the changes to the school format as a complex process.

> As a school, I think we were functioning quite nicely with our curriculum map at that point of time [before the national curriculum]. We did have a little bit of a hurdle … and since that time we have been scaling back some of the C2C. We threw out some of the units...we expanded some of the units, because there wasn't really interesting... assessment items in there and we basically have this hybrid that's a combination of the C2C units and also some of the things we were doing before that. We threw out, you know, the baby with the bath water [but] we brought them back because they still fit in very nicely and aligned very nicely what we were hoping to achieve. Since then we have been reviewing on a yearly basis. We have re-tweaked it and changed it, to make sure we are dealing with the clientele. In that sense, it has been an interesting kind of roller coaster. (Maria)

For Maria, the process of adapting to the new curriculum was a 'kind of a roller coaster' in the sense that they had to throw out 'the baby with the bath water' but then 'brought them back'. This is because as time passed and regular review and reflection was carried out, they had to leave certain things while adopting others. Hence the progression in time from starting with their existing practices and more and more blending of the new requirements then led to something that worked to the logic of the school. This is a convergent approach to curriculum (Priestley et al., 2012) in which the broader national curriculum is made fit to the local structure.

The local and contextual practices and perceptions have the potential to open up possibilities and opportunities for change and improvement. Priestley (2010, p. 34) argues that sometimes 'rejecting change in favour of established practices is fine, so long as it comes as a result of a process of meaningful engagement with both the innovation and the context for change'. Ball et al. (2012, p. 21) argue that policies are always 'set against and alongside existing commitments, values and form of experiences'. These existing experiences either are in the form of objective structures such as the DoL framework or in the dynamic subjectivities of the teachers' experiences and sense of ownership. Policy makers generally undermine the school context and assume the 'best possible' context for policy implementation including 'ideal buildings, student, teachers and even resources' (Ball et al., 2012, p. 42). Gerrard et al. (2013) argue that the current curriculum reform in Australia is objectified and legitimised as official, with the notion of best practices in an ideal situation. Such an approach by policy makers is a quick fix method (Biesta, 2015), which does not take into consideration the local dynamics of schooling.

From this analysis it is obvious that, at the school level of policy enactment, preference was given to the existing practices over the new demands for many reasons. One of the reasons is to develop an ownership of the work that teachers had developed. Another reason is that the school has an existing structure that the outside change can be made to fit for practical reasons. Priestley et al (2012) calls this a 'practical-evaluative' approach to curriculum enactment. Yet another reason could be that the

habitus was 'a fish in water' situation and hence inclined toward past practices, particularly at such early stages of the curriculum reform. However, an external change and the school's proactive response called upon a change in the *habitus* of the agents. The existing practices were used to cope with this demand and as a means to deal with teachers' change resistance and fatigue. By relying on the existing practices, and as Bourdieu argues, history objectified in work is activated when agents, because of their previous investment, are inclined to be interested in it and are endowed with the aptitudes needed to reactivate it (Bourdieu, 2000a).

The practical logic in this case is a junction between following the prescribed guidelines and holding to the local realities and historical practices. This practical logic can develop a feel for the game which becomes part of the disposition for future actions and practices but for the moment creates an internal dynamic of the *field*. For Bourdieu, having 'the 'feel' (sens) for the game is the sense of the imminent future of the game, the sense of the direction (sens) of the history of the game that gives the game its sense' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 82). Bourdieu further states:

> *The habitus is the principle of a selective perception of the indices tending to conform and reinforce it rather than transform it, a matrix generating responses adapted in advance to all objective conditions identical to or homologous with the (past) conditions of its production; it adjusts itself to a probable future which it anticipates and helps to bring about because it reads it directly in the present of the presumed world, the only one it can ever know. (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 64)*

Such a unique and dynamic logic develops positions and dispositions with the ability to control entry to the game or doxa. This is because some actors through their active involvement and participation occupy privileged spaces and dispositions that can be self-evident truths. Having a feel for the game gives an advantageous position to those whose *habitus* is attuned to it over others (Ferrare & Apple, 2015) and agents can manoeuvre (Priestley et al. 2012) the structure. Such a notion of working within the objective structure and/or spaces for subjective interpretations is discussed in the next section.

Contesting the subjective interpretations within the objective structure

The main argument in this chapter is that the *field* is a site of struggle with visible tensions. As discussed in the previous sections, the practices at the schooling *field* are not well aligned with the rationale of the reform and the expected changes stated in the curriculum document. There is a reliance on the existing practices over changing practices. This section will discuss the tension between objective rules and subjective interpretations. It will explore teachers' ways of thinking and positioning in relation to the reform. Some teachers think of the curriculum standards as useful in regards to guidelines and direction for what to teach and learn. Josh stated:

> With having the national curriculum, I know what I am working towards, that's where I have seen the changes. It used to be, we used to say; 'Oh! What we are gonna cover? Yeah cool! That sounds good!' But there was no real meaningful outcome in terms of where we work towards but now [after the national curriculum] it's a bit more structured in terms of what we're supposed to cover. (Josh)

Laura shares a similar experience.

> I suppose it is handy to have those codes [standard elaborations] to refer back to them to make sure that we are doing the right thing - the ACARA codes. We've things to look back to...you know, standards that we have to cover. (Laura)

Josh indicated that the current curriculum is 'more structured', providing the scope and sequence of the content to be covered. In this way, for Josh, having a structure can lead to meaningful outcomes as opposed to teaching content that 'sounds good' but had 'no real meaningful outcome'. Similarly, for Laura, having structure is to make sure that they are 'doing the right thing'. So the objective structure officially provided the 'right way of doing' (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 201) or a frame of reference for the 'right' action. Such an understanding of the curriculum as an objective structure providing guidelines aligns with what Ball et al. (2012) found that some teachers exhibit 'policy dependency' and a high level of 'compliance' as they seek guidance and direction. That the curriculum standard is seen as a 'handy' frame of reference with 'meaningful outcomes' suggests that in such cases the curriculum standard 'determines both students' learning and teachers' work' (Seddon, 2001, p. 310). For Bourdieu, by following the rules agents preserve or improve their position in the *field*:

> *the agent who 'regularizes' his situation or puts himself in the right is simply beating the group at its own game; in abiding by the rules, falling in line with good form, he wins the group over to his side by ostentatiously honouring the values the group honours. (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 22)*

As Bourdieu states, agents 'regularize' their practices and 'win' the game by 'abiding by the rules'. As discussed in Chapter 4, the school valued the curriculum reform as something useful. Thus Josh's assertion that the structure is what they are supposed to do and 'do the right thing' as Laura indicates, is a form of compliance to the rules the school valued. For Bourdieu, such a scheme of thoughts, perceptions and dispositions produce the objective structure by adhering to rules as if they are natural and taken-for-granted (Bourdieu, 1977).

The analysis further suggests that teachers tend to look at curriculum in their practices in the sense of implementation rather than enactment (discussed in Chapter 2) and this has implications for reform enactment. Gunter and Forrester (2010, p. 65) call these actors 'ambivalent implementers' who emphasise 'taking responsibility for the best way to implement externally determined change'.

Whereas enactment is a multifaceted phenomenon in which policies need to be understood alongside with the contextual factors (Maguire et al., 2015). According to Ball et al. (2012, p. 71), 'enactments are always more than just implementation, they bring together contextual, historic and psychosocial dynamics into a relation with texts and imperatives to produce action and activities that are policy'.

With the same line of argument that teachers prefer structure, Robin explained why he prefers having curriculum standards against personal interpretations:

> Usually if you as a teacher like the activity or the content, it is easier to teach and makes the point you [are] trying to make... [but] let's not forget that these standards are what have been instructing us or informing us. So that the structure in it, what we have been delivering in terms of content. It is easy to say 'I liked this or that unit, had lots of fun'....but that is not the only thing needed. (Robin)

Robin prefers having curriculum standards as opposed to teaching based on personal likes and dislikes. For him, the structure or content in the curriculum are 'instructing' and 'informing' practices. He stressed the need to pay attention to the standards rather than teach what one likes. Robin expressed the dilemma that he encountered between having a structure and subjective interpretation.

> I think, I know what I am teaching and why I am teaching to a large extent. I found lots of things interesting, and I want to share them with students but I have to make sure that I have to give them what they need to get the job done which is their assessment. That's the only thing that shows up what they get. It is a hard balancing act in keeping kids learning things but also making sure they feel like achieving. (Robin)

The issue is to have a 'balance' between the subjectively 'interesting' and the objectively 'required' content. Robin's subjective aspiration urges him to teach the things that are 'interesting' that he wanted to 'share with students'. The curriculum requirement, on the other hand, driven by the assessment and the curriculum standards, require him to make sure that students achieve well on tests. Ball (2003) is of the view that at a time of more and more accountability, many teachers face this challenge or 'hard balance'. However the teachers tend to follow the objective structure more in the form of the assessment that gives students a grade which is the 'only thing that shows up,' as Robin indicated. Such a structure in the form of standards and assessment 'tends to give rise to a sense of limit or sense of reality as an established order to which agents adhere' (Bourdieu, 1977).

As opposed to a 'sense of direction', some teachers perceive the curriculum standards as a hurdle or restriction. Rubecca stated:

> I have been told more and more what I teach. What I need to assess. And those kind of things, and looking at data. Within those bounds I am actually restricted. I can't teach, I can't

> construct assessment that really suit my students, because we are all doing the same things. We all have to do the same thing, and therefore, once, when I started [teaching] I was doing things that really engaged the low level students whereas [now] we all have to do this final assessment piece, so that limits the task that you do. That's interesting, because if you are doing a lesson, everyone must do it, then you are going to target your class work to that and our time frame has to become much narrower. (Rubecca)

For Rubecca, having a structure means restricting their practices to that one thing that 'everyone must do' in order to prepare the students for a final assessment. Rubecca sees the curriculum standards and assessment as a restriction on her autonomy to accommodate the diverse needs of the students. Thus by adjusting their practices to the standards with the rationale that everyone should teach the same way is restricting them. Joseph uses the term 'box it in' to describe the restricted practices that Rubecca expressed.

> I think they are limiting us by the way they construct the assessment. We could do a lot if schools get a bit more free hand in it. I think they tend to box it in way too much as we go in a limited time and at the expense of time and at the expense of their interest. So it does tend to limit the engagement. That limits our engagement and actually engaging the students with something that they actually aren't interested in. (Joseph)

In this case the restriction is in regard to too much content, limited time and at the expanse of students' interests. Such a situation affects students' engagement by moving them away from what 'they actually are interested in' and this can be stressful for students. Such a restriction can also limit teachers' engagement because they just follow the rules. Consequently, following the curriculum standards, assessment and having the same expectations for every student, can lead to learning gaps for students. Rubecca states:

> I think there are things that we could do better and I don't think they are necessarily in the national curriculum. Like, I think it could be a focus in the English course more on the technicalities of language and punctuation and those sorts of things. They are often forgotten in the everyday rush to get this assessment, because the focus becomes the assessment. In that process you do it and you teach it as you go. But I still think, as a place it needs to be more explicitly taught. Particularly vocabulary is weak. So even though I remind myself, I have got to do that, I get to push the vocab more, it gets pushed aside because the focus is different. (Rubecca)

Joseph's view that 'schools can do better if given free hand' is echoed by Rubecca. For example, for her, the curriculum does not involve the particularities or 'technicalities of language and punctuation' which go unnoticed in the everyday of teaching. That is not because teachers are forgetful but because they have to cover content that is officially legitimised and prioritised for them. So the basics of teaching do not gain a space in the time and curriculum structure. To counter this, the new curriculum

has made literacy and numeracy a part of every subject. However, with the reforms, more content is given without giving more time to teach the extra content. In many interviews, such as Kate's, it appears that the extra components of the curriculum including the 'capabilities' are not focused.

> The cross curriculum and other capabilities are embedded in there. We don't overly focus on that although it's part of our units. So they are just there, if we can make connections if they relate, we will, but you don't know. It is not like a checklist in my head, you just do it. (Kate)

Kate's assertion is that the cross curricular priorities and capabilities to which literacy and numeracy are part do not get attention. As she says, they 'are just there' and are not consciously taught unless they relate to the topic.

Thus the standards by the national curriculum are seen as 'guiding principles' by some whereas for others they are 'restricting' their practices and autonomy. This tension between these two notions in the *field* then draws attention to the position that these agents take. Rubecca and Joseph are from English and the Social Sciences respectively, for whom 'structure' presents a different notion altogether as they feel restricted and bound. Whereas Laura, Josh and Robin are from the Mathematics and Science department, for whom having structure in the form of curriculum standards provide a clear direction for their teaching. In the case of 'guiding principles', the agents from the Mathematics and Science departments may have been exposed to a structured way of thinking.

It is generally seen that the teaching and learning in Science and Math is more structured and an example of a one 'right answer' approach as per the needs of the subject. A similar situation was noted in Hong Kong by Kwok (2014), where an interdisciplinary 'Liberal Studies' in senior secondary schools was to be taught from a broad perspective on contemporary issues and a collaborative team approach. However Kwok (2014) observed that inter-departmental disagreements were evident. For instance an English teacher was unable to work with Mathematics teachers because she believed that their cognitive style is a rigid mindset which was very different from Social Sciences. Teachers vary in their curricular experiences and so they tend to differ from one another in the way they enact the reform (Kwok, 2014). This is because the internal affairs of the subject community are characterised by power struggles between social groups, coalitions and segments within the subject community, each with their own vested interest and resources (Goodson, 2008). For Bourdieu, such points of view and their enactment depend upon the position the agents occupy in the social *field*. Bourdieu argues:

> *without doubt social agents construct social reality, without doubt they enter into struggles and transactions oriented towards imposing their view, but they do so always with points of view, interests and principles of vision determined by the position they occupy in the very world they seek to transform or to conserve (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 8).*

Agents adopt strategies according to the positions they hold and the forms of *capital* at stake. The strategies that agents adopt to 'win the symbolic struggle' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 256) are a manifestation of the objective relationship that exists between the agents or between the various *fields* where these agents occupy certain positions.

Jess, a mathematics teacher with a background in environmental science, encountered the structural constraints but presented the solution in accordance with the logic of the *field* at the school level.

> We had a lot of trouble trying to come up with a criteria sheet that is basically easy to produce, easy to understand, able to make sure that everyone is consistent. I think that is one of the biggest problems – different people interpret what the criteria is saying in a different manner – which means when you mark an exam you are not necessarily going to be marking the exam the same as the person sitting just next to you. And this is another problem just trying to contest. I guess that's what we're trying to do – to work with ideas that is going to make everyone succeed I guess. (Jess)

From Jess's assertion it is clear that the one thing that everyone should be able to follow in a consistent way is a success goal. She states that the Mathematics department is trying to develop a criteria sheet that everyone can use and feel successful. This, for Bourdieu, is to develop immediate understanding:

> *Immediate understanding is possible only if the agents are objectively attuned so as to associate the same meaning with the same sign, whether this be a word, a practice or a work, and the same sign with the same signifying intention; ... so that in their encoding and decoding operation they refer to one and the same system of constant relations, independent of individual consciousness and wills and irreducible to their execution in practice or work. (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 26)*

So to develop an immediate understanding, Jess was trying to 'come up with a criteria sheet' that everyone could use with consistency. This again, according to Bourdieu, defines the scope by establishing the conditions in which the action is possible. However, and as Priestley et al. (2012) argue, within the confinements of curriculum guidelines and standards there is scope for 'procedural autonomy'. Kate makes the point:

> We all have that freedom based on students' [needs]. One of the key priorities is to know their learners and meet their needs so all teachers have that ability to differentiate for their class. It might be the type of novels, the type of math problems you do, the science you do. All of us have that opportunity to do that. So it is not only up to the specialist [in the form of standards] but every single teacher [can do it]. (Kate)

According to Kate, while prioritising the local needs and planning contextually specific plans and programs, the curriculum has the flexibility to differentiate according to the students' needs. This implies that there is a common goal and standard to follow but there are individual variations in

practices. This debate of the curriculum standards being official, providing guidelines, restricting practices, but with a procedural autonomy is described by Bourdieu in the following way:

> *There is an official point of view, which is the point of view of officials and which is expressed in official discourse. This discourse fulfils three functions. First, it performs a diagnostic, that is, an act of knowledge or cognition which begets recognition and which, quite often, tends to assert what a person or a thing is and what it is universally for every possible person, thus objectively … In the second place, administrative discourse says, through directive, orders, prescriptions, etc., what people have to do, given what they are. Thirdly, it says what people have actually done, as in authorized accounts. (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 22)*

Managing the tension between the external change or reform and the local teachers' own ideas based on their existing practices and structure, and internal logic of the *field*, is challenging for many teachers. For Spillane (2004) it is more likely that reforms or new ideas based on and gauging the teachers' existing or prior knowledge and practice may help in bridging this gap. Spillane argues that 'policy makers have to develop external representations that communicate the deeper underlying meaning rather than the surface features of the reform ideas' (Spillane, 2004, p. 181). In this case the idea of 'developing one standard for all young Australians' may need unpacking and conceptual elaboration. In this regard professional development or education can play its part to develop substantial conceptual sense-making and can help address teachers' frustration, confusion and fatigue. The next section will bring together the main theme of tension and contested practices and will highlight the spaces for change in the *field* struggle.

Field tensions and the spaces for change

It is clear in the preceding analysis that the curriculum enactment in the school is complex and oppositional forces are active. There are visible tensions between the curriculums as 'intended' and 'as practiced'. The existing practices are more valued as they appear natural to the agents over the desired change. Moreover, the objective structure and the subjective aspirations are being contested depending on the position that agents hold in the *field*. When such oppositional phenomena are in contest with each other, the solution might not be in 'either/or' of them but a 'both/and' approach can accommodate these oppositions and generate the potential for change and transformation (Ball, 2006). In this regard, Bourdieu himself stressed the need to abolish dichotomy and explore the social world beyond the categorical matrices. This section will demonstrate how diverse and opposite forces coexist in a generative potential for transformation and change.

The *field* which appears smooth and coherent, entails many active and oftentimes oppositional forces. Bourdieu would argue that the logic of the *field* is not necessarily as it appears on the surface but what it entails within. The logic of the *field* in this case entails diverse and oftentimes opposing forces. These forces are in play and their intensity keeps the *field* moving as agents position, re-position or

(dis)position themselves according to the forces in play in the *field*. This is a 'dynamic process by which heterogenous elements come together to transform existing assemblages into something new' (Savage & Lewis, 2017, p. 7). According to Lingard and Rawolle (2013, p. 124), 'as a non-substantialist concept, social fields comprise an organisation of social forces, with the producers of these field forces being individual agents and collections of agents, located in the relations between these agents'. Thus the actors in the *field* change their practices with the aim to align with the new structure by establishing particular patterns of relations between the new and the existing practices. This way certain ideas and practices are 'made to cohere' (Savage and Lewis, 2017, p. 7) in the practical logic of the *field*.

The practical logic of the *field* has its regularities, irregularities as well as incoherences (Bourdieu, 2000a). The logic of the *field* are the 'forms' and 'formalities' of a *field* that produce the discourse of a *field* (Thompson, 1991). In this discourse people participate in 'rule-bound activity, an activity which, without necessarily being the product of obedience to rules, obeys certain regularities' (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 64). Such a practical logic is the product of practices that fulfil their practical functions and are convenient and easy to master in the *field*. Such dispositions can predict future practices as agents' thoughts, perceptions and actions are organised and coordinated for a practical reason in the social *field* (Gerrard & Farrell, 2013). Such an analysis of the logic of the *field* contributes towards understanding and revealing the dispositions in the making for, in this case, a centralised national curriculum. That is, the regularity in the *field* is examined through the formulated and unformulated rules agents follow as patterns of reasons for their actions (Taylor, 1997). Bourdieu states:

> *The social game is regulated, it is the locus of certain regularities. Things happen in regular fashion in it … how can behavior be regulated without being the product of obedience to set rules? … in order to construct a model of the game, which will not be the mere recording of explicit norms, nor a statement of regularities, while synthesising both norms and regularities, one has to reflect on the different modes of existence of the principles of regulation and the regularity of different forms of practice. (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 65)*

Thus the game in the social *field* is 'regulated,' which goes beyond obedience to rules or explicit norms and entails the underlying principles of the different forms of practices. The formulated rules in this study are the curriculum guidelines and standards that the teachers follow as required, along with some explicit rules set by the school. However there are unformulated rules which are embodied – 'objectification of past history' (Bourdieu, 1990a) – and are in close relation to the *habitus* in the form of 'a practical sense which reactivates the sense objectified in institutions' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 67). Bouveresse (1999, p. 52) argues that 'regularity without rules is very much the rule rather than the exception' that regulates practices. This chapter analysed the explicit as well as the tacit rules in

the form of the struggle involved in the meaning-making of the reform, obeying explicit rules while also exercising individual agency, negotiating rules, and eventually developing a feel for the game.

In that effort of following rules while also mediating the reform in the local context, agents develop a feel for the game, that is, 'a feel for the necessity and logic of the game' (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 66). A feel for the game has a two-fold effect in the *field*. On the one hand, when actors or agents develop the practical sense and the practices become 'business as usual', it introduces a safe space where agents' *habitus* is in alignment with their practice as comfortable as 'fish in water' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p.127). However if this situation lasts for too long, there is a risk of developing a *field* doxa – 'the relationship of immediate adherence that is established in practice between the habitus and the field to which it is attuned, the pre-verbal taken-for-granted of the world that flows from practical sense' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 68). This is because 'the stabler the objective structures and the more fully they reproduce themselves in the agents' dispositions, the greater the extent of the field of doxa of that which is taken for granted' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 166). A more stable *field* limits the agents' aspirations as per the objective conditions of which they are the products. As Bourdieu argues 'and when the group adheres to the self-evident world, it is re-affirmed and brings the subjective experiences into the reassured, socially approved and collectively attested sense which imposes itself with the authority and necessity' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 167). Doxa defines and controls the entry to the game or self-evident truth (Bourdieu, 2000a). Although the dispositions are the bases of engagement in the game, the practical sense of the *field* such as doxa contributes to its intentions (Bourdieu, 1977). Doxa can work as misrecognition as it reproduces the hierarchy of positions and certain *capital* that is valued in the *field*. Thus, doxa as an established relationship between the *habitus* and the *field* structure can be an obstacle to change.

On the other hand a feel for the game can add a creative part to the reform where agents use their 'intuition of a practical sense' (Bouveresse, 1999, p. 54) and can manipulate the rules – explicit or tacit. In this way obedience to the changing rules can bring innovation, invention or creativity as the actors develop a feel for the game and can manipulate the changing rules according to their situation. Such creativity or innovation is possible only if the rules or guidelines have a high enough margin of indeterminacy, or in other words, if the curriculum guidelines are not strictly predetermined. Moreover, when the rules applying in a particular situation or condition results in a problem of interpretation, it creates a necessity to develop a 'supplementary rule to cover the correct fashion in which the rule is to be interpreted' (Bouveresse, 1999, p. 55). As discussed in the previous section, Jess presents an alternative option to develop a new school-based criteria sheet from the broader national curriculum for everyone to use in the department, exemplifying the 'supplementary rule'.

A feel for the game can also develop certain dominant positions in the *field*. That is, by having a feel for the game, some actors know when to 'take risk' (Ferrare & Apple, 2015, p. 48) or manipulate rules, or they know position-taking strategies. Having a feel for the game gives an advantageous position to those whose *habitus* is attuned to it over others (Ferrare & Apple, 2015). Bouveresse (1999) is of the view that by having the knowledge of the rules along with an understanding of the logic, agents can develop the ability to interpret the rule in light of certain circumstances. Hence the agents know how to ignore the rules or even how to break them, and/or manipulate them in certain situations. The unique and dynamic logic with a 'feel for the game' can develop positions and dispositions with the ability to control entry to the game. This is because some actors, through their active involvement and participation, occupy privileged spaces and dispositions that can be self-evident truths. This means that the practical knowledge is very unequally distributed, but also very unequally appropriated and adapted, depending on the situation and the realm of activity (Bourdieu, 2000a). Thus a feel for the game can function as symbolic *capital* in the *field* but at the same time can also contribute to the doxa.

A struggle in the form of tensions and contestations in the changing *field* also indicated that the *field* is not static but is moving or changing. This is because stability and rigidity of thoughts and actions is challenged through struggle (Crossley, 2003). According to Bourdieu (1989a), the objective structure of the *field* provides the bases and constitutes the structural constraints that bear upon interactions, but at the same time the daily individual and collective struggle asserts to transform and/or preserve these structures. The case study school navigated its way forward, negotiated the reform and mediated it, enabling a space for transformation while also attempting to preserve its 'advantageous' position in the *field*. Thus, the *field* became 'the locus of relations of forces … and of struggles aimed at transforming it, and therefore of endless changes' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 103). For Bourdieu, agents are in constant struggle in a *field* according to the regularities and the rules constitutive of this space with various degree of power and influence and therefore with diverse probabilities of success to appropriate the product (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). The position taking and position-taking strategies of the Mathematics/Science and Social Science department teachers analysed above exemplify this.

The privileged position of the school in the *field* gives it enough space to negotiate the change in their context. Bourdieu maintains that the everyday symbolic struggle is with a specific logic that empowers autonomy from the structure in which they are rooted (Bourdieu, 1989b). It can be deduced that the school is able to exercise its autonomy to a certain extent from an externally given change, however the school's autonomy from its own developed structure in which its practices are rooted needs to be examined. Negotiating the C2C and using it as a resource rather than a rigid structure to

follow is an example of autonomy from an external reform. Also, holding to its existing programs, practices and owned resources demonstrates a level of exercise of autonomy. This way the historically evolved structure, along with the new demands of the changing *field*, develops a representation for the future practices of the school and contributes to its privileged position. For Bourdieu, historically such symbolic struggle contributes to the construction of the representation of the social world in the form of *habitus* or schemes of perception and appreciation (Bourdieu, 1985). If a genetic relationship exists between position and *habitus*, the changes generated by struggle in the social structures should also produce redefinitions in the *habitus* (Costa, 2006). However, the *habitus* as implicit working below consciousness does not determine practices in a rigid way, but 'with *vagueness* and *indeterminacy*' (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 77, original emphasis). The *capital* at stake, the symbolic rituals and taking a stance (Gunter & Forester, 1999) also contribute to the agents' actions and practices. The *habitus* is lasting, Bourdieu would say, but not unalterable.

A struggle may shift, distort or transform the structure of a *field* inscribed in it. Such struggle can influence the game at every moment and the form of symbolic *capital* required to enact a reform in response to the change in the *field*. Gerrard and Farrell (2013) are of the view that tracing the new configuration of the emerging *field* will assist in discovering the re-structured operations of the *field*. The new configuration may encompass different types of struggle with different outcomes depending upon the re-distributed power based on the *capital* valued in the process of change. The outcome of the struggle depends upon the 'structure of the field at one point in time, the ability of agents to play the game and the structure of their capital as well as on the evolution of the field over time' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 99). The 'configuration' and 'reconfiguration' of forces that goes on in schools is to maintain and sustain the school in the changing field and the 'de-stabilizing effects of the context' (Ball et al. 2012, p. 70).

Therefore a change in the *field* is immanent to challenge the doxa and create opportunities to think and act differently. Doxa can also be nullified through 'critique which brings the undiscussed into discussion,' by 'breaking the immediate fit between the subjective and objective structures and practically destroying the self-evident truth' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 168-69). Here the social world and order is questioned as being natural. In a changing *field* the expectations of a particular group slips out of the actualities of the *field*, it can develop the critical attitude of the agents and they start questioning the doxa. In other words, 'when the fit between objective structures and subjective expectations is broken, the opportunity for critical reflection and debate upon previously unquestioned assumptions is made possible' (Crossley, 2003, p. 47). The next chapter will discuss how the change introduced in the *field* created a mismatch between the *field* and the *habitus*.

Moreover the intended and unintended opportunities that the school provided to enable the agents to accommodate the change and develop a reflexive *habitus* will be discussed.

Conclusion

A Bourdieuian study of the experiences of teachers during a transition to a new curriculum demonstrates that curriculum enactment entails many diverse forces, oftentimes in conflict with each other. In this chapter, it is obvious that the curriculum rationale as intended at the 'interpretational' level is in conflict with the curriculum as practiced at a 'translational' level. Agents tend to hold on to their existing practices and resources because the *habitus* is inclined towards the past practices, but also because agents have ownership of their developed resources such as the unit plans, assessment items and so on. On the other hand, a change introduced in the *field* and the school's active approach in adapting the reform demand a change in the *habitus*. Some agents in the *field* are comfortable with the curriculum guidelines and standards providing them direction towards specific outcomes; whereas others see such standards as restricting their practices. However, it is such tensions, contestations and struggles that make the *field* dynamic and moving, indicating transformation and change in the *field*. This change or transformation is only possible if agents are given appropriate support for their *habitus* to align with the new expectations and to avoid confusion and fatigue. The next chapter will discuss the intended and unintended support efforts in the school for the change.

Chapter 6: Re-conceptualising Agency Through Reflexive *Habitus*

> You have the curriculum that's all written in black and white dot points and somehow you have to materialise that into this engaging, 3-dimensional, amazing learning experience and that process, I think, is quite challenging. (Amy)

In this chapter I will present the *habitus* as the locus of responding to and mediating the changes in the *field*. It will bring to light the instances, events, intended and/or unintended efforts and spaces or opportunities as evidence of the changing ways of being and doing in the schooling *field* of enacting the curriculum reform. There are a range of contributing factors to this transformation, including but not limited to, the contextual needs, the new expectations and the involvement of active agents capable of modifying the national reform further in the enactment process. As Amy indicates above, the curriculum is written in a 'black and white' form, and the school or teachers are required to convert this 2-dimensional text into an 'engaging 3-dimensional amazing learning experience'. Such a transition from a 2-D text into a 3-D learning experience as a process brings incremental changes in the teachers' practices. This chapter will first conceptualise *habitus* as a generative principle with its potential to adapt to changing circumstances. Then it will discuss in detail the intended and unintended evidences of a changing *habitus* using empirical data. Moreover the influences of such events or instances of change as synchronised collective practices will be elaborated. Finally the chapter will conclude by re-conceptualising a reflexive *habitus*.

Conceptualising the *habitus*

As much as Bourdieu's theory is useful in analysing and exploring the social world and its realities, it has attracted a number of criticisms as well. Such criticisms are mostly based on the notion of *habitus* being reproductive. Critics argue that the objective structure is incorporated into the cognitive schema of the agents and in return it contributes to the (re)production of the structure. In this regard Jenkins (2000, p. 152) maintains that Bourdieu's work suggests that 'structures produce the *habitus*, which generates practices, which reproduces the structure and so on'. Arnot (2002, p. 49) argues that Bourdieu 'offers no account of social change in the cultural arena'. In this way Bourdieu's theory is criticised for being a circular loop of the *habitus* reproducing the structure of which it is the product itself. Such critics maintain that Bourdieu's theory leaves no room for change or alternative ways of thinking. However the same theoretical framework used for reproduction can equally be employed to explore transformation and change in the social world (Adkins, 2003; Crossley, 2003; Mills, 2008a;

Noble & Watkins, 2003, Wacquant, 2011). In fact in several places Bourdieu has attempted to clarify this (mis)interpretation of the notion of '*habitus*'. Bourdieu states:

> *I ... give to practice an active, inventive intention: I wanted to stress the generative capacities of dispositions, it being understood that these are acquired, socially constituted dispositions. .... I should recall that this active, creative, inventive capacity is not that of the transcendental subject of the idealist tradition, but that of an acting agent. (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 23)*

Bourdieu stresses the 'generative capacities' of the *habitus* in the sense that dispositions are acquired in a social set up by 'active', 'creative' and 'inventive' agents. This means that the agents, by actively participating in the game, analyse the objective structure and are either inclined to act as per the durable disposition and/or create new dispositions. However using the durable or creating a new disposition is not a conscious process nor a 'pure rational model' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 62). Evens (1999, p. 14) criticises Bourdieu for presenting the embodiment of the objective structure of the *field* as a constraint reproducing the structure, but asserts that even 'the embodiment is above all a creative process, in which the body not only turns convention into habit, facilitating constraints, but also creates'. I tend to agree with Evens and argue that the *habitus* is mediating the *field* and is bringing incremental changes in practices rather than passively responding to the external change.

Crossley (2003) stresses the need to empirically contribute to and expand the notion of *habitus* and its adaptive capacity in a changing, complex world. This chapter is such an attempt to highlight the reflexive nature of the *habitus* and its contributing factors in the wake of a major curriculum reform. The concept of *habitus* is used in exploring changes and transformation of practices in the school while accommodating the Australian Curriculum reform. The data reflected four themes in supporting a reflexive and adaptive *habitus*. These include changes in the *field* leading to changes in the *habitus*; participation in the change process; critical reflection; and social support as incidences of change in thinking, actions and practices.

Changes in the field: Changing the *habitus*

Habitus 'realises itself' in relation to the *field* (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 116). In a particular *field* the *habitus* develops an affinity with the positions the agents occupy. With time and practice the agents develop a 'feel for the game' and thus become comfortable in that position as 'fish in water' (Bourdieu, 1990a). However a change in the *field* and changed expectations is a disruption in the level of comfort to the *habitus*. This may demand a different way of thinking and acting in the changed *field*. Depending upon the stimuli and the structure of the *field* 'the very same habitus can generate different, or even opposite, outcomes' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 135). This mis-match of the

habitus and the *field* due to a disruption is *hysteresis* (Bourdieu, 1977). Alex is a Science teacher and he described the mismatch between the existing practices and the changing *field* in the following way:

> I think that process [learning the new] comes about when teachers actually engage with the content or the unit as opposed to … repeatedly [teaching] the same content year after year ... All of a sudden teachers have to change and use the units or change the topics they were teaching, and learn and teach new things. I just think that you have to be able to adapt. (Alex)

As this excerpt illustrates, teachers were comfortable with their teaching since they were teaching the same content every year. Alex's assertion that teachers teach the same content 'year after year' depicts the situation as one of 'fish in water: it does not feel the weight of the water and it takes the world about itself for granted' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 127). In this case, Bourdieu would argue that it is 'an unproblematic agreement between the position and the dispositions of its occupants' (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 157). Alex continues that a sudden change in the *field* developed a level of discomfort and teachers had to learn new things and adapt. This, according to Bourdieu, is a structural transformation and modification where the homology between the space of positions and dispositions is disturbed and some agents are 'displaced, out of place and ill at ease' (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 157). Bourdieu argues:

> *As a result of the hysteresis effect necessarily implied in the logic of the constitution of habitus, practices are always liable to incur negative sanctions when the environment with which they are actually confronted is too distant from that to which they are objectively fitted. (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 78).*

The disruption in the form of a change in the *field* created a *hysteresis* when the practices teachers where comfortable with became uncomfortable. In cases of such a break between position and disposition, Bourdieu argues that change in the *habitus* is inevitable.

> *Whenever the adjustment between structures and dispositions is broken, the transformation of the generative schemes is doubtless reinforced and accelerated by the dialectic between the schemes immanent in practice and the norms produced by reflection on practices, which imposed new meanings on them by reference to alien structures. (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 20)*

The changes in the curriculum created a mismatch between the *field* and the *habitus* which can invoke the 'generative schemes' of the *habitus*. And since the *habitus* and the *field* are in a dialectic relationship, new meanings can be developed in relation to the new structure. In an attempt to adjust the scheme of thought to the changing expectations, new ways of thinking are sought. In this case, McNay (2004) argues that the unfamiliarity in the social *field* provides a catalyst for alterations in the *habitus*. Hardy (2012) argues that such a disruption between the *habitus* and the *field* creates *hysteresis*: a crisis when the *habitus* has to respond to abrupt *field* changes. This response of the *habitus* to the *field* changes takes time and in unpredictable ways.

On the other hand, as Bourdieu (1977, p. 166) states, 'the stabler the objective structures and the more fully they reproduce themselves in the agents' dispositions, the greater the extent of the *field* of doxa of that which is taken for granted'. Teachers being comfortable with their teaching means reproducing the structure by doing the same thing; that is, teaching the 'same content year after year' as Alex indicated above. This happens in a stable *field* where there is less disruption or change. In such conditions, Bourdieu fears that it will lead to strengthening the 'self-held' truth of the *field* or the doxa. However, no social world is without change or interruptions, Bourdieu (1990b) admits: only capturing the 'sociality of inertia' through objectivist sociology is to accept practices as a product of condition and conditioning leading to only durable dispositions, which:

> *... is part of how society reproduces itself. But there is also change. Conflict is built into society. People can find that their expectations and ways of living are suddenly out of step with the new social position they find themselves in ... then the question of social agency ... becomes very important. (Bourdieu, 2000a, p.19)*

As Alex indicated above, the introduction of the curriculum reform created new expectations such as changes in their practices or altogether teaching new concepts. Teachers found that their practices were not in line with the new expectations. This situation required them to 'learn' and 'adapt' as Alex stated, or in Bourdieu's words, exercise their 'social agency'. This social agency in the form of the ability to 'adapt' is a symbolic *capital* in the changing *field* of a school. Hence the adaptive nature of the *habitus* may require agents to develop dispositions different from those derived from their conditions of origin (Bourdieu, 2000a).

In the changing *field*, the school's pro-active approach in adopting the curriculum reform is seen as a helpful factor in adapting to the change. As discussed in Chapter 4, the school is an active school responding to changes aptly demonstrating the school's willingness to adapt to changes. Josh indicated that the school adapting the reform well before time was helpful for teachers to accommodate the changes.

> I think what helped more is that our school was pretty keen to jump onto things as they happen. I think what worked very well is that, with the national curriculum, it was clear that it was gonna happen. So there was no point in waiting around till it happens and waiting and waiting and waiting till the last minute. As soon as it [the reform] was said, 'well we can go for it'. We jumped straight in, well before it was necessarily implemented. We already had a year or two running the program, before the mandatory time for starting. So when you do it, when you jump in it, it means people, especially administration type roles etc., have to get their head around it so they can communicate it. So I think that kind of forced information a lot better through to individual teachers. (Josh)

Josh's explanation reinforces the data in Chapter 4 suggesting that the school actively responded to the curriculum reform 'well before it became mandatory' for all schools. Such an approach, according to Josh, compelled the management to analyse and comprehend the reform in order to communicate it to teachers. For Josh, clarifying expectations through clear communication was helpful in adapting the reform. Crujeiras and Jimenez-Aleixandre (2013) found that clearly communicating expectations is helpful in developing scientific competencies in a science curriculum reform in Spain. Spillane (2004) also asserts that unclear policies can develop lack of interest and teachers do not attend to them. In this case of curriculum enactment at a school level, although the national curriculum document is reported to be flexible, broad and general to a wider Australian context, the ability of the management to break it down into manageable chunks is commended by the teachers. Rubecca's experience reflects this:

> I think, perhaps this school, [HillView] is a school that challenges teachers to adapt and change and to constantly grow and become better at what you doing. So I just saw this as another step in, I am trying something new. (Rubecca)

Rubecca suggests that the school's proactive approach in responding to changes provoked a change in their *habitus* by challenging them. Such an adaption to changes, for Rubecca, meant continued growth and improvement in practices and trying 'something new'. Schools such as this one, Broccolichi and Euvrard in Bourdieu (1999a) state, interpret change as opportunity and are more willing to move ahead. This contributes to the privileged position of the active schools whereas other schools, whose working conditions are not favourable, are blamed for not doing well, thus creating an 'ill-considered competition between schools confronted by very unequal difficulties' (Broccolichi & Euvarard in Bourdieu, 1999a, p. 462). Successful players recognize opportunities while less successful misrecognize the strengths and weaknesses of *field* positions (Hardy, 2012). Thus adapting to educational reform is embodied symbolic *capital* that agents acquire through the *hysteresis* effect. A lack of this symbolic *capital* can lead to misrecognizing new positions. Bourdieu argues that the 'hysteresis of habitus … is doubtless one of the foundations of the structural lag between opportunities and the dispositions to grasp them which is the cause of missed opportunities' (Bourdieu, 1977, p.83). So the change in the *field* structure creates opportunities for agents with the aptitudes and practices to grasp and occupy these new positions (Hardy, 2012) as in the case study school. Thus *capital* in the *field* is not equally distributed nor equally possessed and in this case change itself creates inequalities in society.

However it is noteworthy that adjustment to the changing *field* is not always by choice. As Josh expressed above, 'it was clear that it was gonna happen, so there was no point in waiting around till

it happens', indicating the mandatory nature of the reform. So, there was a sign of compliance as Laura expressed:

> There was a bit of compliance in there because it was something we had to do. So we had to resign ourselves to the fact that we had to do [it], so we had to comply with that. And there's certain things that we have to do in certain ways so there is some flexibility but there is compliance too. (Laura)

A similar kind of level of compliance is evident in Alex's statement.

> The ultimate goal [is] that … we are trying to do what we are supposed to be doing what we are paid for – implementing the curriculum the government has asked for. (Alex)

Alex articulated the 'ultimate goal' as doing what they are doing because they are 'paid' for doing it. For Laura, they had to 'comply,' with 'some flexibility' of how they enact the curriculum. This aligns with Bourdieu's notion of abolishing dichotomy in the social world. Bourdieu maintains that in a socially complex world, 'the network of oppositions … is the matrix of all the commonplaces which find such ready acceptance because behind them lies the whole social order' (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 468). This is because 'the external stimuli and conditioning experiences are perceived through categories already constructed by prior experiences which may imply a relative closure of the system of dispositions that constitute the habitus' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 133). Hence the curriculum reform was adapted and mediated at the local level, making it neither a complete compliance nor a truly free choice.

In abolishing dichotomies, the *habitus* plays the mediating role and in a dialectic relation with the *field* structure: when there are changes in the *field*, the *habitus* orients itself to the changes and ultimately to the logic of the *field* to which it itself is the product. Here *habitus* can be observed as adjusting itself to new *field* expectations by complying to some rules but at the same time exercising its reflexive nature to adapt to changes in the contextual, continual and practical needs. Bourdieu maintains that the cognitive scheme of the *habitus* as the product of incorporating the structure and tendencies of the *field*, are *roughly adjusted* to the *field* structure and hence make it possible to adapt to a changing context (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 139, emphasis added).

This 'rough adjustment' of the *habitus* to the *field* structure can be explained by analysing the mismatch between them. For instance, a change introduced in a relatively stable *field* can lead to a situation where the *habitus* finds itself at odds with the *field*. In such situations the *habitus*, being part of an active body, does not blindly and simply follow the new structure but makes use of its existing (durable) dispositions as well as transposable dispositions and in the process acquires new dispositions. As discussed in Chapter 5, amid the tension between existing and changing practices,

the teachers tended to rely on their previous practices in an attempt to understand the new reform. This inclination to their previous practices is the durable dispositions in play, whereas the practical logic developed in understanding the changes in the *field* is what Bourdieu would call 'transposable' and 'acquired' dispositions (Crossley, 2003). Thus the *habitus* seeks conditions of its fulfilment within the structure as Bourdieu states:

> *Habitus as a system of dispositions to be and to do is a potentiality, a desire to be which, in certain ways seeks to create the conditions of its fulfilment, and therefore to create the conditions most favourable to what it is. (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 150)*

This potentiality of the *habitus* of being, thinking and doing is shaped by the conditions the agents find themselves in. This does mean that the subjective expectation tends to completely adjust to the objective reality of the social world but is roughly adapted to the objective changes (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 216). It then follows that 'conditions tend to offer possibilities or denial of possibilities to institute durability in the body as dispositions-to-be are proportioned to these potentialities' (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 217). Thus the agents will invest time and emotion in the chances of successes of this investment. Such conditions institute in the body a durable disposition-to-be 'which tends to produce practices objectively adjusted to the possibilities by orienting the perception and evaluation of the possibilities inscribed in the present situation' (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 217). In line with the *habitus'* generative schema and seeking alternative pathways, participation in the change process was reported as a change facilitating factor, as discussed below.

Participation in the change process and the *habitus*

Participation in a new activity or event effects the *habitus* in different ways. Sometimes an interaction with the change process enables the *habitus* to orient itself to the changing *field* structure. According to Ball et al. (2012), while teachers' individual, personal and professional experiences shape their practices, thinking and actions are also influenced by the ways that the reforms are communicated to them through professional development sessions or distribution of roles and responsibilities and above all, their participation in the process. In this section, I will explore the nature of teachers' involvement and participation in the curriculum enactment process and how it shaped teachers ways of enacting the reform.

For Laura, an initial rejection of change is turned into something valuable through participation and engagement with the change process.

> Initially I thought, 'oh, not another [change], not something else.' But once I have had a chance to process it and see what it is that we are required to do, usually I can see that there are benefits. My initial reaction is to put up a shutter and say 'no! I don't want to do that,' but

> inevitably I will do it, and I'll try to be as involved as I can be, so that I can understand what is required. I don't like to sit back and just follow what's been done, rather I would like to be involved and understand it. (Laura)

Laura stated that her initial impression of change was that she didn't want it. But eventually and 'inevitably' she becomes engaged in the process which helps her to develop an understanding of it. It implies that her *habitus* rejected the change for it was inclined to its durable and comfortable disposition. Engagement not only helps her understand the change but also in that process she becomes an active contributor. Crossley (2003) rightly argues that change largely depends upon the agents who are disposed to engage with it. Such an engagement involves a particular way of perceiving and understanding the way change works, the ethos of the context and a tendency of agents to try to access and mobilise the resources to make the change happen. The *habitus* brings the cognitive and motivating structure into play and determines the things to be done, or not to be done, the urgencies etc., which trigger action. It is this disposition which means that objective changes can be translated, for some agents, into modifications of behaviour in various areas of practice (Bourdieu, 2000a). Alex also believed that engagement with the process helped in comprehending the reform.

> I think that process [understanding the reform] comes about when teachers actually engage with the content or the unit … and so through teaching and learning the content, re-learning the content, I guess, teachers including myself are able to show the foundation of content taught and then the other things are able to be understood once the basic knowledge is established, and a good teacher is able to teach and simplify complex things to make meaning for kids who are learning it as fresh. (Alex)

For Alex, understanding the reform came through participation or engagement in the teaching learning process for him and for many other teachers. He indicates that teaching and 'learning' or 're-learning the content' enabled him and others to gain basic knowledge of the reform. It implies that through engaging with the reform, the teachers are able to acquire the required knowledge to teach complex concepts in meaningful ways. Thus access to such kinds of foundation or 'basic knowledge' is critical for teachers to be able to teach in meaningful ways. Alex explained the different levels of engagement in the change process and its impact on his understanding in the following way:

> I think, being involved in that focus group inter-face [meetings], curriculum and units [development] and teaching it, helped me to kind of understanding that progression as opposed to just [being] given a unit to implement. [Developing] new units and assessment has perhaps helped me better. It has been a learning curve, kind of forced me to get engaged or involved with the planning process and adapting it from the original document. It helped me to understand, how to go from the big picture concept to right down to what am going teach in that part of the lesson. (Alex)

For Alex, this involvement in the reform process came in different forms. He had been involved in group meetings, and has developed resources like unit plans using the curriculum documents and teaching them. This process, according to Alex, was a 'learning curve' which motivated him to engage with the process and adapt to the new expectations. The two forms of engagement, that is, participation in curriculum review meetings and Professional Development (PD) sessions, will be discussed below.

Participation in review meetings

As part of the teamwork in enacting the curriculum, the curriculum review meetings provided an avenue or platform to the actors in helping them adjust their practices to the new expectations. For Joseph, the review meetings at the end of the semester were designed to change practices as required:

> At the end of the semester we can sit down and review. That's what we do; at the end of the assessment we sit down and teachers teaching the same year levels share their issues. We had people who were leaders within the subject groups, the people controlling the subjects and doing the meetings to the teachers who were delivering. [We would discuss] 'What are the issues? What do we change?' [and share] the feedback from students at that stage [such as] sometimes the content were heavy and complicated for the students. (Joseph)

Joseph reflects that at the end of each semester the staff would have a review meeting led by the year coordinators. In these meetings teachers would share their problems including students' feedback and the content level for students' understanding. It suggests that based on these meetings, the teachers modified their practices where required. In other words, changes recommended based on the review meetings were endorsed. Amy shared an example of a changing unit as a result of review meetings:

> You know the 'Multi-Model Popular Culture' for example in history, we refine that every time we fit it, because of feedback from the students. It was too much, it was overwhelming, it was just really long, and it was whatever, so we tinker with that. [Now] you know three years, it's been completely different look, than in year one. (Amy)

According to Amy, continuous review meetings over a period of three years gave a 'completely different look' to a unit in History. According to her, in the initial year the content in this particular unit was heavy, 'long' and 'overwhelming' for the students. This example reflects Joseph's assertion that, in a review meeting teachers analyse what could be changed and actually modify the content for students. For Laura, that process of getting involved on a regular basis and the feedback makes their teaching better.

> As we work through units, we get a better idea of doing a particular unit. We had an idea of what's working well and what's not working well and we'll be able to sort of feedback that information and then make changes. It happened regularly. (Laura)

Being involved in the unit planning gave the teachers a better idea of what worked well and what needed to be changed. Such a meeting or discussion also helps in improving the initial plans. Laura states:

> We went through and made sure that perhaps in our initial planning we might have incorporated something we didn't need to incorporate and we have gone back and said 'oh we really don't need to do that'. We left that out. 'We should have put that in', so yeah definitely we have gone back and refined. (Laura)

According to Laura, the review meetings were an opportunity for teachers to reflect and bring to their consciousness something that was unintentionally 'left out' that needed to be included or vice versa. Here it signals towards the *habitus* working below the consciousness. For Bourdieu, 'history objectified in artefacts or work is activated when agents, because of their previous *investment* are inclined to be *interested* in it and are endowed with the aptitudes needed to reactivate it' (Bourdieu, 2000a, pp. 151, original emphasis). Laura's assertion above, that the 'incorporation' of things that were unintentionally left out were re-activated in these meetings, supports the raising of consciousness. The *habitus* has the aptitude to reactivate and make conscious that which is below the consciousness. Alex has a similar assertion:

> I'd say we are all getting our heads around the whole process. It's not super complicated but to say that some issues, some complicated issues [were] raised. So we are trying to make new units required by the new curriculum and occasionally without knowing it, teachers will try and rely on the current unit to the new curriculum so working backwards. By doing that the curriculum gets reworked, … that's what the school or science department is trying to make sure we don't just kind of adapt the new curriculum, but to what we have already got. (Alex)

Alex is also signalling the *habitus* below the level of consciousness. The assertion that the teachers try to develop units from the new curriculum and occasionally rely on the existing practices 'without knowing it', is in line with Laura's thinking in relation to the *habitus* at the level of subconscious. Bourdieu argues that the *habitus* at the unconscious level is overly weighted towards the past (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 133), hence Alex's indication that teachers would 'un-knowingly rely on the old units to adapt to the new curriculum'. It indicates the unthinking-ness of the *habitus* in action, operating below the level of calculation and consciousness (Mills, 2008b, p. 80). Such a disposition in the *habitus* conditions and orients practices and responds to changes in the *field* 'without consciously obeying rules explicitly posed as such' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1990, p. 76). According to Thomson (2005, p. 742), agents, as social beings, learn the rules of the *field* in a semi-conscious fashion. Such a learning becomes part of the social agents in the form of 'the habitus which is a set of dispositions to know, be and act in particular ways'. Hence the review meetings provided the opportunity to bring to consciousness the disposition from below consciousness. According to

Barrett and Martina (2012), when the *habitus* operates at the conscious level, new possibilities, new thinking and transformation is sought, or in other words alteration of *habitus* takes place. This is supported by Amy's assertion that such regular review meetings over the years bring improvement and change.

> After the first roll out we sort of had a vague idea. The second time we did it, we had a better idea. By year 2, we certainly knew what we wanted to achieve and fine tune, but again it is constant attention. So it is constant refinement and constant refinement means constant re-working at things which may need fine tuning. I think we get better in it, but I think it takes a good three years to embed it and implement in an effective and functional positive way. (Amy)

As Amy indicates, it takes a 'good three years' to become better in implementing the changes. But those three years involved continual working, reworking, constant attention, refinement and fine tuning. These three years are the time lag of *hysteresis* effect – disruption in the *field-habitus* homology. According to Bourdieu, *habitus* is an open system of dispositions that is constantly subjected to experiences, and therefore constantly affected by them in ways that either reinforce or modify its structure. *Habitus* is durable but not eternal in that 'there is a probability inscribed in the social system, experiences will confirm *habitus*, because most people are statistically bound to encounter circumstances that tend to agree with those that originally fashioned their *habitus*' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 133). Participation in PD sessions provided another condition to engage with the reform.

Participation through professional development

Professional Development (PD) of teachers for the curriculum reform was yet another platform that teachers participated in, in an attempt to adapt to the changed field. PDs are generally intentional efforts by schools to prepare teachers for change. Such involvement in the process, as is argued above, provided impetus for change in the *habitus* because by attending the event, the agents developed motivation and appreciation for the change. Thomas's description of PD indicates its intended nature.

> We invested a lot of time into our PD and making sure that every staff member who was teaching those year levels were involved in the planning process. So they all took part in [a] deliberate DOL [Dimensions of Learning] inspired unit plan process. We looked at 'where is the declarative knowledge? How we gonna implement and make sure we are developing units to cover the topic in a way we can incorporate our reflective practice?' And talking about our success criteria and adding that to our unit plans as we go along. We kind of built it from the bottom up but used the resources that we thought were useful and the C2C and from the QCAA and also from ACARA. We looked at how we did things in the past, we used our previous resources and new resources that were available. (Thomas)

This excerpt indicates that the school invested in PDs and every teacher's participation was ensured. In these PDs, the ultimate resource to be used in the classroom in the form of unit plans were developed by using different sources of knowledge such as the curriculum descriptors, standard criteria, C2C documents, reflective meeting notes and previous resources such as Dimensions of Learning (Marzano et al. 1990) framework. For Josh these PDs were useful:

> Those were pretty good. The early PD was about how we are going to use the DOL framework to do our unit planning as the new way of doing it. That was quite effective that took a lot of time and a lot of resources in that from a school based [PD]. I think for the first few units we were spending two days in teams just to write a unit essentially and that was stepping through all the different processes that had to go into it and all that. That was all pretty much for long term but was quite effective. It was slow, comprehensive, good depth and well managed in that sense. And once we finished that process, it was all about refinement all along the way of PD as how to implement the standards from the curriculum properly with assessment items? How to match them into what the curriculum wanted. Those sort of bits of PD travelled down, so it was kind of initially a large amount of PD and it tapered off quite substantially. (Josh)

Josh found PDs on long-term and short-term bases effective. He stated that the initial PD was 'large' 'comprehensive' and in-depth as well as 'well managed'. The subsequent PDs were just aligning what is to be taught to the curriculum standard that was not as time consuming. In this context of preparing teachers for the change, Bourdieu would argue:

> *The automatic effects of the conditionings imposed by the conditions of existence are added to by the directly educative intervention ... of the agents of the educational system which expressly aim to favour the adjustment of aspiration to objective changes, needs to possibilities, the anticipation and acceptance of the limits, both visible and invisible, explicit and tacit. (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 217)*

In the above analysis, it is clear that the conditions were presented to agents in the *field* as 'directly educative intervention' through PDs. In this case, PDs for teachers were aimed at adjusting the subjective aspirations to the objective changes, the available opportunities, and the anticipated objective structures. In this way, the school management team helped teachers understand the 'big picture' or the rationale behind the reform as the intended objectives of the reform. However, and as discussed previously, such an adjustment of aspirations to structure is rather a rough adjustment. Teachers as active agents reflect and analyse the structure and possible actions are devised. This is discussed below.

Critical reflection and the changing *habitus*

The argument in this chapter is that the *habitus* is enabled to adapt to changing circumstances through different intended or unintended activities; critical thinking is explored in this section as yet another

contributing factor in changing the *habitus*. The data indicates that critical thinking takes place when agents find themselves struggling to adjust their subjective expectations to the objective and changing structure. Sometimes the durable dispositions are strong and do not simply adjust to the new expectations, but give rise to questions. Amy states:

> We would have opportunities to refine things and discuss those [personal] interpretations. Sometimes we've had very robust discussions … one of the relevant things that came up was 'how much do we need to go into the descriptor? Do we need to just touch on it and mention it? Or do we have a whole lot of resources planned around it? Do we have a broad approach and try and do a little bit of everything or is it better to have a smaller scope and develop deeper?' So I think those discussions were extremely important to have and trial and error and reflection and collaborative input and respecting one another's ideas and interpretations was very important [too]. (Amy)

From Amy's excerpt it is clear that in the process of aligning personal 'interpretations' to the objective changes, 'very robust discussions' would take place. Such hefty discussions gave rise to questions such as that regarding the depth and breadth of the content of the curriculum. Amy found such discussions, as well as 'trial and error', 'reflection' and 'collaboration,' useful to align with the changes. A similar and more specific discussion on the assessment explained by Amy demonstrates the critical thinking involved in the process.

> Probably the biggest difficulty was possibly around assessment, agreeing on the type of assessment, 'whether it is too much, too little? When it should be? How it should be? What should be included, what shouldn't? What is relevant, what is not? Do we really need to spend such time on that? Probably not. Shall we cut it out? Yes we can ... [and also] what kind of kids you have? What is going to work? What mode of assessment is going to work for this unit and the kids you have got?' and I think that's where some of the big fundamental problems arise with the curriculum. (Amy)

As Amy indicated, some of the 'fundamental problems' were brought into the 'robust discussion' through questioning. This implies that such issues were brought to consciousness through discussion. According to Crossley (2003, p. 56), it is through such 'consciousness raising' that the individual gains 'specific reflexive schemas for inspecting and defining their actions, perceptions, thoughts and feelings, and elect to work upon them to bring them in line with' the new expectations of the *field* as they accept the change, in part, through self-change. According to Reay (2004, p. 438), *habitus* 'operates at an unconscious level unless individuals confront events that cause self-questioning, whereupon habitus begins to operate at the level of consciousness and the person develops new facets of the self'. This is conscious change through 'socioanalysis' – a kind of 'self-work' that involves an 'awareness of pedagogy' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 133). Therefore, the *habitus* is 'permeable and responsive to what is going on around them' (Reay, 2004, p. 434). Through this self-reflection,

Rubecca questions and seeks contextual solutions to the structural problems in the reform when she states:

> We are following the national curriculum at this school, but as the years progressed, I started saying; 'well this does not work really well with the task, it is a simple book.' I don't follow this [recommended] book anymore. And so we adapted and we have changed. A lot of us don't teach that book any more. But that is the kind of thing that just demonstrates that you can't put a system like that in place and expect to defeat everybody [in the world], because it doesn't. (Rubecca)

The book that Rubecca was talking about was recommended by the state curriculum authorities, but which did not fit well with the students' needs. Rubecca indicates a deviation with the objective structure when she states that she as well as others in her department are not following the recommended book 'anymore' but using a different book. With this evidence in hand, she then questions the expectation of the curriculum authorities that everyone should be doing the same thing. This is where teachers encounter the belief that policy makers have regarding standardising education to improve quality (Sahlberg, 2011). Critics like Seddon (2001) argue that a standard national curriculum for Australia is critical and may not be suitable for a diverse population. Continuing with the notion of 'same expectations' for all, Rubecca reflected that the curriculum structure was actually restricting their practices.

> I have been told more and more what I teach, what I need to assess and look at data and those kind of things. Within those bounds I am actually restricted. I can't teach, I can't construct assessment that really suits my students, because we are all doing the same thing. We all have to do the same thing. Because if you are doing a lesson, everyone must do it, then you are going to target your class work to the assessment. So I feel that as various authorities have put demands upon teachers, I think we are actually moving away from allowing creativity. Especially in English, that creativity [for] a student to develop, we are very much controlling what they do. (Rubecca)

Here Rubecca shows an awareness of the limitations and constraints in the changing *field*. The current reform for her is restricting and controlling diverse practices through following standards. She is concerned about the individual students' needs because she could not teach or assess students according to their needs, but instead follow standards. As an English teacher she thinks that such reform is actually drifting them away from 'creativity' and moving towards 'controlling what they do'. Such kinds of critical reflection are, perhaps, a reaction or a kind of resistance to the changes in the *field*. Such kinds of critical dispositions in teachers can be seen as important to defend educational practices against what Giroux (2004) calls the more powerful economic and political forces believed to be commercialising education.

However structural constraints can also give an enabling environment for questioning the unquestioned assumptions or doxa (Crossley, 2003). When the expectations of a particular group slips out of the actualities of the *field*, the group can develop critical attitudes and they start questioning the doxa. A heightened level of misfit develops consciousness and agents start questioning the doxa, or the belief in the game, which usually remains unquestioned (Thomson, 2010). As Crossley (2003, p. 47) states, 'when the fit between objective structures and subjective expectations is broken, the opportunity for critical reflection and debate upon previously unquestioned assumptions is made possible.' Hence doxa is nullified through 'critique which brings the undiscussed into discussion,' by 'breaking the immediate fit between the subjective and objective structures and practically destroy the self-evident truth' (Bourdieu, 1977, pp. 168-169). Here the social world and order is questioned as natural. Such questioning can bring the silence of *habitus* into discourse and help develop a conscious change in the structure of the *habitus* (Crossley, 2003, p. 55). It is not a break with the *habitus*, but rather a demonstration of the complexity of the *habitus* (Crossley, 2003). In this way *habitus* is useful in understanding the taken-for-granted schemes of understanding and practices of the policy agents (Gerrard et al., 2013). Thus constraints in the *field* cause self-questioning and reflection, whereupon *habitus* begins to operate at the level of consciousness, allowing for the development of new facets of the self (Reay, 2004). For Crossley (2003, p. 55) 'consciousness raising, is an amplified and politicised version of the habitual self-interrogation to which most social agents regularly subject themselves and find themselves subject in their everyday lives'. Bourdieu (2000) states:

> *As a result of heightened consciousness associated with an effort of transformation, there is inertia (or hysteresis) of habitus which has a spontaneous tendency (based in biology) to perpetuate structures corresponding to their conditions of production. Bourdieu, 2000, p. 160)*

Consciousness raising helps the *habitus* perpetuate the new structure in changing times. Bourdieu also argues that when the *habitus* falls out of alignment in the changing *field* it can create a situation of 'crisis' in which 'belief in the game or "illusio" is temporarily suspended and doxic assumptions are raised to the level of discourse, where they can be contested' (Crossley, 2003, p. 44). It is called the 'theory of crisis' or *hysteresis*. In crisis situations the *habitus* of common day to day actions is suspended and more critical and innovative forms of praxis are developed. Though the *habitus* is bound genetically to the objective structure it is nevertheless generative, active, creative and innovative, open to possibilities within which the *habitus* operates.

When a crisis situation catches the attention of more people, it can develop a movement and eventually can influence or revert the change in the structure (Crossley, 2003). However, this is rarely the case because such critical impetus is temporary. According to Sweetman (2003, p. 540), such

crisis is situational 'where one is unable to simply keep on going as before' as agents, in order to preserve and/or improve their position in the *field*, are bound to their 'durable impetus' or a belief in the game. So the agents survive in the *field* by following the rules, believing in the game and preserving or improving their positions. Bourdieu argues:

> *The critique which brings the undiscussed into discussion, the unformulated into formulation, has as the condition of its possibility objective crisis, which in breaking the immediate fit between the subjective structure and the objective structures, destroys self-evidence practically… the would-be most radical critique always has the limits that are assigned to it by the objective conditions. (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 169)*

This means that crisis is not continuous and pervasive as agents develop a stamina for living and thinking in uncertain and complex situations that is needed in a post-traditional context (Crossley, 2001; Edgerton & Roberts, 2014; Sweetman, 2003). Crossley (2001, pp. 113-114) also suggests that 'late modern societies ... tend to call for and generate more reflexive *habits* amongst their members', in part because of their increased 'complexity and speed of change'. McNay (1999, p. 110) calls such an awareness a reflexive awareness which is not an evenly generalised capacity of agents. Such an awareness is uneven and unevenly distributed and raises unevenly from their embedded *habitus*, thus making it a symbolic *capital* to survive in a postmodern society.

Bourdieu argues that *habitus* changes in response to new experiences; dispositions are revised depending on the individual flexibility or rigidity. Noble and Watkins (2003), however criticised Bourdieu for paying more attention to the embodied history over the acquired disposition which can be developed through new experiences. In times of sudden change, agents may face difficulty in adjusting to the new expectations that may lead to a crisis situation and sometimes *habitus* suspends the immediate adaptation (Bourdieu, 2000a). Thus it is imperative that in changing *fields* agents are given enough support to adapt to the changing situations. Social support in the curriculum enactment is critical in a changing *field* and will be discussed below.

Social networks and transformative *habitus*

After demonstrating that change in the *field*, participation in the change process and critical reflection contribute towards the reflexive nature of the *habitus*, this section will discuss the role of social networking and social support as a form of social *capital* supporting change in the *habitus*. Without denying the role of other kinds of *capital* like economic, cultural and other symbolic *capitals*, here I highlight social *capital* as a visible support in a changing *field*. Social *capital* is the social relationship that allows individuals to claim resources from the collective possession (Dika & Singh, 2002). For Bourdieu, social *capital* is the 'contacts and group memberships which, through the accumulation of exchanges, obligations and shared identities, provide actual or potential support and access to valued

resources' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 143). Rubecca elaborated her experience of social support in understanding the change in the following way:

> I have certainly learnt a lot by involving myself in it. I think it is because we have had some really good teachers who care. This is one of the important things. The fact that we sort of come together in this area [English dept. staffroom]. We here end up talking together about an idea and someone overhears it and so 'I hear talking about year 9' and so they come and discuss. The fact that we have some really expert teachers and at least they care that we want to try our opinion. I have been involved in tasks where we have sort of challenged to the point where you have to work out 'where do you fit in this idea in regard to change teaching?' I think it is positive, it reflects a kind of passion and a real interest in what it is that we are doing. And we desire to learn to get better, because that's what to me you have that in-depth information. (Rubecca)

Rubecca asserted that she has been able to understand, and changed her practices, by involving herself in the discussion with colleagues. The physical space as well as the social space, in her opinion, provides her with a safe platform to try new ideas. Such support for her develops 'passion' and a 'desire' to 'learn to get better' which is a 'positive' way of understanding the reform. For Josh, in that social space people bring their different expertise and contribute to the change process.

> We always tend to write units in groups or pairs, that's great. You could, sort of, one person look at a certain aspect to share the load. Certain teachers are better in some aspect than others. [For example] some are good for resource finding and going along to sort our resources and help out with the planning but less, [or] a little bit more reluctant to get engaged with the pre-planning stuff, but not really necessarily the delivery of the [content] but more of the actual planning of lesson by lesson what we are going to teach. (Josh)

For Josh, the social support in the department on the one hand distributed the work load and at the same time different people with different expertise contributed to the change process. For example, someone who was reluctant to contribute to the planning can arrange resources instead or can help in the delivery of the content. Thus change is enacted with everyone's contribution working towards a common goal of aligning their practices with the desired change. In this way the social support enhanced individual capacity to act and work on common problems (Lowndes, 2004). It follows that social *capital* can work as a critical link when there a *hysteresis effect*. According to Edgerton and Roberts (2014, p. 209), in the dialectic relationship between *habitus* and the *field, capital* functions like a 'price signal that modulates adjustment of the dispositions of the habitus within a particular field'.

Other than the interaction amongst colleagues, the school management support is another kind of social support assisting in the transformation. Josh described the support of the HoD in the following way:

> The HoD is being fantastic, as well as the deputies who were put in charge of overseeing the implementation. They were great in the initial setting of getting us how they would plan stuff out and making clear what their expectations are, and supporting on on-going basis, making sure that timing is allocated. (Josh)

Josh stated that the HoDs and Deputy Principals' support in planning, clarifying their expectations, managing time for the enactment process and on-going support had been useful and helpful in adapting to the change. For Laura, the year coordinators added to her social support.

> We have year level coordinators, so one person would be in charge of that particular year level and they oversee what's being done. We do have meetings to decide whether it is going to be an assessment item or an exam or what's it going to be...so we come to an agreement on that. (Laura)

The year coordinators oversee the process and decide on meetings for assessment or planning and share it with the teachers involved in that year level, until an agreement is reached. The year coordinators also assign tasks in order to make sure that everyone is involved in the process. Josh is a year coordinator and according to him:

> [As a year coordinator] that's what we do is double check [that we] have been applying criteria to student work effectively. So I think it becomes pretty easy to look at it and say 'look here's what we have decided for year 10 unit, we have been asked to look at it, the assessment, the criteria,' I would say, 'well it's not matching, not working'. In that sort of position, I can suggest you 'do this and this and this.' If it is not working I can jump in and say 'look I'll fix it up for you' and try and explain it. So I like it from a point of view that I think I can help influence significantly what's happening with the programs. (Josh)

As a coordinator, Josh sees his role as important for influencing the change process. He assisted teachers in his department by sharing an agreed upon unit for a year level. He made sure that the unit was checked against the set criteria and if he found it not aligned, offered suggestions and/or altogether 'fix' it for teachers. Bourdieu, Passeron, and de Saint Martin (1996) call these agents 'pedagogic agents' who conduct events like PDs, workshops and resource development and allocate time for these activities. Support networks and ways of educating and providing the agents with the required knowledge about the change and developing their knowledge and skills is an integral part of the change process. It is in such professional events that *capital* exchange takes place in the form of shared understanding, symbolic or social, through social networking. According to Dika and Singh (2002), social *capital* is an institutionalised relationship that develops relations on the basis of

material or symbolic exchange. Such social networking and support contributes towards teachers' participation in the activity and eventually a call for changing the *habitus* to the requirements of the structure.

Individual *habitus* and collective practices

The school has been depicted as a proactive school with distinct features of team work and a collaborative culture as discussed in Chapter 4. The previous sections of this chapter demonstrated that school activities like the curriculum review meetings, the informal discussions and the social networking and support are collective actions working towards a common goal. For Lingard et al. (2015) a shared *habitus* is constituted as a result of and contribution to the *field* by agents in the *field*. Bourdieu also argues that the agent is a collective individual in the social *field*.

> *The social agent is a collective individual or a collective individuated by the fact of embodying objective structures. The individual, the subjective, is social and collective. The habitus is socialised subjectivity, a historical transcendental, whose schemes of perception and appreciation (systems of appreciation, tastes, etc.) are the product of collective and individual history. (Bourdieu, 2005, p. 211)*

As Bourdieu indicates, the social agent is a 'collective individual' by virtue of embodying the social structure. The *habitus* as a 'socialised subjectivity' is the product of collective and individual history. Maria's statement shows how important it was to develop shared understanding and thus collective *habitus*.

> The whole department had a big hand in playing what we have now. We had, I guess when we developed the unit, and there was clarity around it, that we put everything together. Coordinators had responsibilities to ensure that people on that year level had a good idea of what they had to teach and the outcomes. And then directly after that we would have a session where we would review the unit while it is still fresh in our mind and we had all of the changes we needed to make. So the year level coordinator will always, you know, give everyone a briefing of what we were about to teach and when we get to the end, there is usually feedback. There is always sharing and questionings that go around. We are always sharing. When we all were unfamiliar, [sharing] was just the life saver. So as a HoD, I had already gone through and had identified, you know, all the descriptors for that unit and I gave staff a lot of that information prior, with the basic overview of possible assessment pieces and a few ideas and then they took that up and ran with it. (Maria)

Maria explained that everyone in the department 'had a big hand in playing' in the curriculum enactment process and its outcome. As a HoD Maria provided the staff with an overview of what needed to be done. The year coordinators along with the teachers developed unit plans. These year coordinators then compiled, shared and briefed all teachers of that year level about these plans. After the teaching or 'when it is still fresh' there would be a review meeting to reflect back and make

necessary changes. As can been seen, Maria stresses the idea that there is a strong 'sharing' culture in which everyone is involved. Such a sharing culture, according to her, saved them when they were not familiar with the reform, implying that they relied on each other's expertise and support. Laura has a similar experience of sharing culture.

> We often talk about what is going on in a particular unit and sharing that information on occasions or we might get together just to reinforce that to everybody. In case for someone who was not here when we were having an informal chat, we might have a formal meeting [then] to pass that message on to everybody and then email. (Laura)

Similarly Joseph stated:

> We all got together as a group, saw all the options and well what do we want to do as a school and then we picked, to give us the option rather than saying 'ok! You got to do this and that's it'. So at least we had multiple options. (Joseph)

Laura's assertion that sharing information and making sure everyone receives the required information was a critical part of the enactment process. Joseph also stresses the idea that they worked and decided in groups what they wanted to do 'as a school'. Such sharing practices are actions and interactions, which according to Crossley (2003, p. 44), shape the *habitus* and the *capital* in the *field* that agents share in a 'common game'. Joseph's statement that 'what we want to do as a school' suggests the actions, interactions and direction of a common game.

In the sense of the *habitus* contributing to the collective practices, it becomes part of history. According to Bourdieu 'the habitus, the product of history, produces individual and collective practices, and hence history, in accordance with the schemes engendered by history' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 82). According to Hardy (2010, p. 74), 'it is this strategizing capacity of the habitus that enables actors to change the individual and collective circumstances in which they find themselves'. However, and as Bourdieu argues, the durable and transposable dispositions shape practices in a collective way without being consciously organised to do so:

> *...systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures pre-disposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organise practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively regulated and regular without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of an organising action of a conductor ... The habitus, the product of history, produces individual and collective practices, and hence history, in accordance with the schemas engendered by history. (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 84)*

As Bourdieu indicates and as has been highlighted in this chapter previously, the *habitus* with its durable and transposable dispositions sometimes relies on the previous practices (discussed in Chapter 5) but at the same time attempts to grasp the new reform (as discussed in this chapter). Such an analysis suggests that agents use their durable dispositions while also acquiring new dispositions that can contribute to making collective practices that become history. Moreover, the *habitus* can be regulated by the changes in the *field* without strictly obeying the rules and can be orchestrated and make collective practices in history. Further, the *habitus* as a cognitive structure shapes and structures practices along with adapting to the changes in the *field*. Lingard et al. (2015) as well as Blackmore (2010) argue that no individual *habitus* are the same but individual *habitus* stand in a collective history. This is because individuals belong to a certain group, and therefore have a tendency to develop shared understanding but at the same time contribute to the group diversity as individuals. With this understating of the *habitus*, it is argued in this chapter that a reflexive *habitus* can be history in the making for a complex postmodern world. The next section will explore a reflexive *habitus* in-the-making in today's complex world.

A reflexive *habitus*

In this chapter, I have argued that the *habitus* is active and creative as opposed to the strictly deterministic construct that Bourdieu was criticised for. Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* was criticised as being deterministic, however there is evidence in his work that *habitus* can adapt and acquire new dispositions. Bourdieu argues that:

> *. . . habitus, as the product of social conditionings, and thus of history . . . is endlessly transformed, either in a direction that reinforces it, when embodied structures of expectation encounter structures of objective chances in harmony with these expectations, or in a direction that transforms it and, for instance, raises or lowers the level of expectations and aspirations.(Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 116)*

Bourdieu argues that the *habitus,* though the product of the social world and history, can still be transformed. When the *habitus* is in harmony with the *field* structure, the internal schemes can be reinforced; whereas if there happens to be a mismatch between the *field* structure and subjective aspirations, the *habitus* can adapt. In the latter case, 'habitus changes in response to new experiences, dispositions are revised depending on the individual flexibility or rigidity but that which is not radical' (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 148). Thus subjective expectations are adjusted to objective structure in a changing *field*.

Habitus, in a social *field*, is constructed in a social context with subjective expectations, explicit and tacit rules, and involves professional experiences and actions. The process of curriculum enactment in a school is complex given that curriculum as text moves through and enters into a space that

includes active agents with subjective aspirations. These agents in the *field* bring their own individual perceptions and appreciations that have evolved under certain conditions and times. When there are changes in the rules, *habitus* has the ability to reflexively engage with the change and with itself enabling an 'inherently reflexive habitus' (Sweetman, 2003, p. 529). This is because *habitus* as a system of dispositions to be and to do is a potentiality, a desire to be which in certain way seeks to create the conditions of its fulfilment, and therefore to create the conditions most favourable to what it is (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 150). The *field* also contains knowledge which enables the *habitus* to anticipate the course of action '… and the habitus is capable of mastering it by providing adequate responses enabling the agent to perform that which it is oriented with' (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 138). Thus the new world is comprehended and meaning is endowed to it because the body is exposed and open to the world outside and its regularities (Bourdieu, 2000a). Through this exposure, 'the body acquires a system of dispositions attuned to the regularities the world presents, it is inclined and able to anticipate them practically in behaviours with a knowledge that provides practical comprehension of the world which might be different from the intentional act of consciousness' (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 135). This characteristic of the *habitus* and patterns of behaviour and action are capable of developing new and acquired dispositions. The *habitus* as a product of history is invested in the practical knowledge of the *field* and in practices that are socially constructed, constructs the social and is structured by the world that it structures.

The *habitus*, by constructing itself in a social space and structuring the social space, contributes towards understanding the practical logic of the *field*. The practical logic or understanding of the *field* is beyond conscious and mechanical but is evolving and constructive. This practical knowledge is the:

> *function of the notion of habitus which restores to the agent a generating, unifying, constructing, classifying power, while recalling that this capacity to construct social reality, itself socially constructed, is not that of a transcendental subject but of a socialized body, investing in its practice socially constructed organizing principles that are acquired in the course of a situated and dated social experience. (Bourdieu, 2000a, pp. 136-137)*

As Bourdieu indicates, the *habitus* contributes to practical knowledge based on its generative and constructive principles. This practical knowledge or social reality is constructed by a 'socialised body' or *habitus* that in itself has acquired its organising principles in a 'situated social experience'. Crossley maintains that 'the habitus forms the practical-social basis for innovative and improvised action. It consists of forms of competence, skill, and multi-track dispositions, rather than fixed and mechanical blueprints for action' (Crossley, 2001, p. 89). This potentiality of the *habitus* is in the form of capabilities, capacities and dispositions that are shaped by the conditions. This makes the process of curriculum enactment a 'secondary adjustment' to the local context of a national reform

mediated by the local context (Braun et al., 2011). Such an adjustment entails the recognition that actors' knowledge and dispositions 'generate diversity, being differently applied in diverse spatiotemporal conjunctures, and also that some are subject to transformation in the very process of their application in policy enactment' (Grimaldi, 2012, p. 460).

Habitus exercises a certain level of freedom in choosing actions, movements and strategies subject to *field* limitations and constraints. Since *habitus* is the mediating factor abolishing the structure/agency dichotomy (Sweetman, 2003), it analyses the *field* demands and evaluates the possible strategies amongst many possible actions. Therefore Bourdieu calls it a 'system of durable, transposable dispositions' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72) with 'generative capacities of dispositions' (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 13). This 'strategy-generating principle' of the *habitus* enables agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72). Thus the *habitus* is creative, yet limited in its capacity, demonstrating that it is reflexive in the face of constraints with social conditions and limitations (Bourdieu, 1990b). According to Bourdieu, 'the habitus is a set of dispositions, reflexes and forms of behaviour people acquire through acting in society' (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 19).

As education undergoes changes in a complex and uncertain postmodern world, a reflexive *habitus* is significant. This is because a postmodern world is characterised by multiple identities depending upon the choices agents make about 'who they are' (Sweetman, 2003, p. 528) and construct their 'subject positions' by exercising their social agency (Giroux, 2004, p. 32). As discussed previously, the *habitus* and its engagement with itself and with the *field* provides enough evidence in supporting the nature of the *habitus* as reflexive and adaptive. In this sense educational practices encompass a social agency as a means to adapt to more complex and ambiguous situations – 'bridging the gap between learning and everyday life' (Giroux, 2004, p. 34) as a prerequisite for social change. With a reflexive *habitus*, educators can be more open to multiple perspectives, alternatives and the sense of possibilities (Welch, 2001). It is in such ambiguous, diverse contexts of postmodernity that the *habitus* evolves as agents construct their ways of being, doing and thinking in a social world. Curriculum reform and its enactment as a social phenomenon provides a space for the *habitus* to evolve and ultimately shape collective practices according to the demands of the local context but also the new expectations. That is, schools produce their own 'take' on policy, drawing on aspects of their culture or ethos, as well as on the situated necessities (Ozga, 2000). Bourdieu argues:

> *The cognitive and motivating structures that the habitus brings into play, it plays its part in determining the things to be done, or not to be done, the urgencies etc. which trigger action … It is this disposition which means that objective changes to which others remain insensitive can be translated, for some agents, into modifications of behaviour in various areas of practice. (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 148)*

Bourdieu argues that *habitus* in the form of cognitive structure determines actions and contributes to modifications of behaviours or practice based on the *field* necessities. *Habitus* is structured by the changes in the *field* but it is structuring in the sense of re-contextualising and mediating the changes and by seeking contextual solutions. By the same token, curriculum structures the practices in the local *field* but at the same time it is modified and made suitable to the local context. A change in the *field* provides the opportunity to agents to critically reflect, self-question and question the structure, bringing the unconscious self-held truth into a discourse which can result in conscious changes to the structure as well as to the *habitus*. This mediating ability of the *habitus* helps the social world sustain reflexive practices well beyond crisis situations.

The *habitus* is also not entirely free from limits and constraints from past experiences (Sweetman, 2003). Crossley argues that the *habitus* is a 'residue' of the past working below the level of consciousness within the present. An agent's *habitus* is an active residue or sediment of his past that functions within his present, shaping his perception, thought and action and thereby moulding social practice in a regular way. It consists in dispositions, schemas, forms or know-how and competence, all of which function below the threshold of consciousness (Crossley, 2001, p. 83).

This past residue or sediment in the form of the *habitus* shapes the present actions and thinking, moulding practices. Against this backdrop, Harker and May (1993, p. 174) believe that *habitus* 'sets the boundaries within which agents are "free" to adopt strategic practices'. Such a scheme below the consciousness works according to the intuitions of the practical sense of the *field*, orienting rather than strictly determining actions and practices. That is, *habitus* shapes but does not determine life choices (Mills, 2008b, p. 82). Bourdieu states that decisions and preferences do not only depend upon the previous choices of the agent but also 'on the conditions which includes all the choices of those who have chosen it for him, in a specific place by pre-judging and thus shaping his judgment' (Bourdieu, 1990a, pp. 49-50). Thus the logic of practice has to be sought between the external conditioning or structure and the internal dispositions which are the products of specific conditions at a particular time.

Thus the *habitus* is not fixed but open to evolving incremental changes with a new structure and expectations. It also operates not only at an unconscious, pre-reflective level but also at a conscious, deliberative level (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014). This means that innovation and change is possible at the individual and thus collective level within the confined structure. So 'our choices, our actions are shaped but not programmed by our habitus; we cannot fully escape nor are we caged by our history' (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014, p. 202). In other words actions are neither 'purely reactive', nor purely conscious and calculated (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 148).

Conclusion

Within the broader Boudieuian study of teachers and school management team's experiences of the enactment of the Australian Curriculum, this chapter discussed the transformative potential of the *habitus* of agents in the schooling *field* along with the different avenues available to support a reflexive *habitus*. A change in the *field* compels – but not forces – the *habitus* in the form of subjective aspirations to align with the objective expectations. The data shows that it is through participation in the different activities like PD and curriculum review meetings, that some teachers develop the tendency to adapt to the changing *field*. Moreover, some agents, by responding to the changes critically, were able to bring to the surface the unconscious and undiscussed notions of the *habitus* working below the level of consciousness. *Capital* in the form of social networking and support is seen as yet another factor along with the changing structure and participation in the change process, in preparing agents for the reform. Thus agents invested in and valued social networking which they believed 'saved them when they were unfamiliar' with the changes.

Such a reflexive disposition developed through intended or unintended activities in the school then becomes part of the *habitus* which has long term effects in adapting to changes but with a degree of stability and durability. In other words the durable disposition is easy to bring into use because the *habitus* is well aligned to the *field*, however a reflexive *habitus* is the need of a changing time. Agents can acquire the disposition as a capacity for practice which is transposable to different contexts. The connection of *habitus* to practice is through 'systems of disposition' – bodily incorporations of social history (Rawolle & Lingard, 2008, p. 731). The next chapter is the conclusion of the thesis. It brings together field analysis, particularly the feature of the *field* being dynamic, and a reflexive *habitus* in arguing that agents construct their position in a changing *field*.

Chapter 7: A Position-Making Process In a Changing Field

> *Regularity in practices is based on dispositions [translation habitus], on a sense of the game [position-taking] as well as on the explicit rules, the code. (Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986, p. 114)*

This thesis is about the Australian Curriculum, its enactment in one school in Brisbane and the spaces or opportunities for change using Bourdieuian methodology. The principal argument is that the agents at the enactment level of the reform, particularly at the transition phase of change, are in the process of position-making. The Australian Curriculum conceived in the year 2008 was implemented in the year 2011 in Queensland schools. The data for this study was generated in 2015 – four years into the enactment process – in one state high school in Brisbane. Officially it was the first phase of the enactment of four subject areas – Mathematics, Science, English and Social Sciences – in junior secondary schools in Queensland. The data for this study is comprised of the experiences that the teachers and the school management team had while transiting to the new curriculum. This chapter discusses the empirical as well as the theoretical contributions of this thesis to extending Bourdieu's concept of position-taking. Using the empirical evidence of a changing *field* with a reflexive *habitus*, I argue that the agents at the enactment level are in a position-making process. As Bourdieu indicates in the quote above, practices are regulated based on dispositions, position-taking and the rules of the game. However the transition phase of change provides a different condition or situation than a relatively regular and stable *field*. At this stage the changing rules of the game disrupt the dispositions as agents seek to attain a sense of the game or position-taking to regulate their practices. The section that follows will elaborate on the transition phase and spaces for position-making.

The transition phase of change and position-making

Bourdieu presented the concept of position-taking as the viewpoints that agents hold in relation to their position, under certain conditions and with vested interests. Position-taking by the agents in the *field* is based on their dispositions, an awareness of the rules of the game and a sense or feel for the game. In any social *field*, Bourdieu argued that agents take certain positions and position-taking strategies based on the *field* structure, the subjective aspirations, the access to certain resources and the *capitals* in their possession. Such position-taking or feel for the game happens when agents are invested and engaged in the game over a certain period of time.

Although Bourdieu argued that any social *field*, even with regulated practices, is not static, but dynamic and moving, the *field* under discussion in this thesis was going through an intentional change

process. An external change in the form of curriculum reform was introduced which destabilised the *field* and created an oscillating condition. Moreover, an active approach in adapting the reform by the Queensland state government and by the school itself, increased the intensity of the change in the schooling *field*. It was mainly in this phase that schools and teachers were grappling with the changes. The changing rules were positioning, re-positioning and even (dis)positioning the agents. It is a condition where the homology between the space of positions and dispositions is disrupted and agents are 'displaced, out of place and ill at ease' (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 157). Hence the change, coupled with the school's proactive response, created a 'field dissonance' (Adkins, 2003) or a *field-habitus* mismatch and thus a crisis or *hysteresis*. Hardy argues:

> *at times of crisis in particular, habitus must respond to abrupt, sometimes catastrophic, field changes, but that response always takes time. In such circumstances where the new and stable field structures have yet to emerge, novel field opportunities, often transitory, come into being. Habitus evolves in response to these new opportunities, but in unpredictable ways, where the consequences for an individual's field positioning are yet to be determined (Hardy, 2012, p. 127).*

During this time lag and while agents grapple with the new rules, they are in a position-making condition. Bourdieu talked about structural lag and time lag between the objective structure and the disposition during changing circumstances, that is 'dispositions out of line with the field and the collective expectations' (Bourdieu 2000, p. 160). Position making is to capture this time lag while teachers re-position themselves and mobilize their accumulated *capital* or gain new *capital* to occupy positions within the changing *field*.

Savage (2016) argues that this phase of the curriculum reform is an 'evolving ecology' where confusions about communication, support and positioning also exist. Such a condition of confusion suggests that the evolving *field* is in a state of fluctuation seeking coherence while the agents are making their 'subject positions' (Ball, 2006). In the pursuit of bringing regularity and coherence to their practices, agents go through a position-making process. This position-making process is messy and entails confusion, unclear communication, competing demands, local priorities, national accountability, vested interests from other sub-fields and personal and professional subjectivities. However, and as McNay (2004) suggests, the unfamiliarity in the social *field* sometimes provides a catalyst for alterations in the *habitus*. Consequently spaces of new thinking, actions and innovative responses are opened up. For this to happen, appropriate support at this phase of change is critical. This chapter will highlight the instances where the school and the agents exhibit and manifest a position-making stance. The following section explores this position-making process in relation to the empirical findings of this thesis.

A privileged position, proactive approach and position-making of the school

The school's proactive approach in preserving or improving its position drives the agents' strategies. As discussed in Chapter 4, the school's location in a high SES area, maintaining above average results in NAPLAN and with a positive and collaborative school culture, disposes the agents to think and act in the *field* and respond to changes actively. An analysis of the positions of the Deputy Principals (DPs) in relation to the roles they played in the enactment process showed the internal dynamic of the *field* as 'reproducing' as well as changing practices. There were instances of reproducing the established practices for practical reasons. For instance, the maintenance of the previous timetable and its structure was for practical reasons, thus 'preserving' their practices and programs. From another perspective and by responding to the curriculum reform proactively, the school was invested in the game and agreed to 'reproduce' the reform by adopting it. Preserving their existing practices and activities and/or adopting the reform are strategies to maintain their privileged position in the general education *field*. This binary of maintaining their own practices and at the same time adopting the change, masks the complexity involved in preserving and improving their position. The school sought spaces of negotiations consciously or unconsciously. For instance, by virtue of its privileged position, the school resisted a 'slow-down' of the implementation processes by the Queensland government amid complaints of workload pressure from other schools. The school also negotiated the use of the then mandatory C2C document by the Queensland government before it was mediated one year later. Hence the curriculum reform at the state as well as the school level was evolving and the school was in the process of adopting, adapting, mediating and negotiating the possibilities of change in relation to their existing context.

At the school level, agents experienced incremental changes in their practices but did not necessarily 'reproduce' the intended reform. The agents relied on the existing practices and resources to accommodate the change by engaging with it. For example, James's desire to have a 'local curriculum' by merging the existing practice and the new expectations demonstrates the new ways of doing things. Thus the new curriculum was put into a 'HillView school format' by using their existing practices and resources and fitting the new requirements within it. So, the agents' ways of thinking and doing were influenced by the decisions at the management level to adopt the reform, negotiate their needs and mediate the changes.

The field tensions and position-making

The national curriculum reform has diverse players from national to state and to school level, giving rise to contestations over the meaning and rationale of the reform. This contested meaning-making is more obvious in the transition phase as agents negotiate their stance and find possible ways of moving

forward. As discussed in Chapter 5, agents experienced the reform differently in theory and in practice. At the theoretical or interpretational level, their understanding of a national curriculum was well aligned with the official rationale of the reform. At the same time, agents found the rationale to be in conflict with the practical possibilities at the practical or translation stage of the intended changes. For example, the curriculum being 'national' provides the possibility of consistency of practices across the country, sharing of pedagogical resources and working in collaboration with other educators, which were not happening in practice for the agents. Instead, at the practical/translation level, the school and the agents tended to use their existing resources, practices, structures and programs which were different in each school. Since every school had different ways of doing, the notion of sharing resources and building collaboration in the teachers' realm of reality is contested.

The nature of tension and struggle in the transition stage adds to the uniqueness of the *field* at this particular time of the curriculum reform. The analysis in this thesis explored agents' position-making on notions like 'what is national'; 'what has changed' and 'how do the objective guidelines inform practices?' Differing views and contested thinking emerged about the nature of the reform being national and the change in practices. Some teachers saw the reform as prescriptive and hence providing a clear direction for their teaching, while others view it as restrictive of their pedagogical practices. Such confusion and debates at this stage of change enactment indicate that the school and the agents are making their position as they practice the reform. The relationship between such heterogeneous elements of the reform is dynamic, emerging, evolving and contingent with opposing forces and their complex nature of interactions. The presence of active and contested notions makes the *field* undetermined, contingent and unpredictable in the process of policy enactment. Grunakdu (2012) is of the view that such a *field* presents more opportunities and possibilities for spaces of change that needs to be explored. The position of agents is shaped and constructed and possibilities of actions emerge without the agents being consciously strategic. However, at the same time, shared dispositions or values hold the *field* together in relation to other *field*s.

The field-*habitus* mismatch and position-making

At the transition phase in a changing *field*, a *field-habitus* mismatch is evident. Bourdieu (2000b) has examined this *field-habitus* mismatch in *Making the economic habitus: Algerian workers revisited*. In this article he argues that the *habitus* of the agents fell out of place when the capital economy was introduced in the pre-capitalist Algerian society. The *habitus* of the pre-capitalist economy of the 1950s was in visible mismatch with the imported capitalist market. The agents in the pre-capitalist economy had specific dispositions in relation to the working of the economy. The pre-capitalist economy was characterised by the exchange between relatives and neighbours, not selling food but helping their neighbours instead, reciprocating services, and borrowing/landing in the form of land

or ox. The arrival of capitalism in the 1960s stirred up these dispositions. It demanded economic behaviour such as working with wages, saving, credits etc. The agents were distressed, devoid of dispositions tacitly demanded by the new *field* (Bourdieu, 2000b). However, the new *field* also created social conditions of possibilities to adapt to the changing economic system.

A similar situation can be observed in any *field* with changes. In the case of the curriculum reform in this study, and particularly during the transition phase, the *habitus* of agents was *inclined* to the past practices while the *field* demanded a change. The analysis in Chapter 5 shows that the inclination of the *habitus* towards the past practices was for practical reasons and related to an ownership of their resources. For example, the use of the existing pedagogical framework (the DoL framework), the reliance on their existing units, and the existing programs and resources were reported by the management team as well as teachers as 'rigorous' and providing a strong base for the new changes. On the other hand, the school's active response to adopt the reform demanded a change in their thinking and doing. Bourdieu argues that the *habitus* is shaped by new experiences but in relation to past practices:

> *The habitus which, at every moment, structures new experiences in accordance with the structures produced by past experiences, which are modified by the new experiences within the limits defined by their power of selection, brings about a unique integration, dominated by the earliest experiences, of the experiences statistically common to members of the same class. (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 60)*

As Bourdieu indicates, a unique integration of the past and the new experiences shape the *habitus* in new ways, within the confines of the boundaries. Noble and Watkins (2003) criticise Bourdieu for paying less attention to the acquired disposition through new experiences and change. They argue that more emphasis on the embodied history or durable dispositions 'denote a passive process that captures nothing of the generative capacity' (p. 525). The past experiences embodied in the *habitus* can dominate but equally important are the *field* structures which demand an adjustment of the subjective aspirations to the objective structure (Bourdieu, 2000a). In other words, policy change creates conditions of its enactment while *habitus* creates conditions of its own fulfilment. In this dialectic and reciprocal relationship, and based on a feel for the game, agents are only able to develop their point of view or position-taking. This dialectic and reciprocal relationship can only be explored when such a complex relationship is manifested in the agents' actions. Savage and Lewis (2017) argue that such a relationship is not necessarily formed by prior coordination but is formed by the complex relations between the heterogeneous parts while in action. However, such a feel for the game or position-taking requires enough time – time lag of *field* and *habitus* (Hardy, 2012) - for the agents to engage with the changing rules, practice it, and find the solutions sometimes implicit in their day-to-day professional work. It brings an incremental change in their ways of thinking and doing, based

on past experiences and new expectations, thus making their positions. As Crossley (2013, p. 49) states, there is room for improvisation or 'coherent deformation' and we should never underestimate the potential of agents to invent new strategies and add to their stock.

Critical policy analysis and problem-making

In the critical approach to policy analysis, policies pose problems to be solved in context. In other words, policy creates the conditions and makes the subject or actors in the field. However, the subjects also work on policy and make the policy. According to Ureta (2015) policies are a 'temporary concentration of heterogeneous entities, always on the verge of becoming something completely different' (p. 12). Within this interaction of policy and subject lies the logic of a *field* which is a historical product – continually renewed by the agents in the field through interaction with each other and with the surrounding conditions and events (Zipin & Brennan, 2003). Thus the interplay of the policy, the subjects and the socio-historical conditions create an opportunity to make problems as well as their solutions leading to alternative thoughts and practices (Webb, 2014). Problem-making or problematisation in a contemporary notion of policy is the proposal and process of identifying the problem and proceeding with strategies and possibly altering the proposed policy to adjust it to the needs of the context. On the contrary, problem-taking in policy is a traditional approach of targeting problems in the field and devising policies to address them. In a transition phase of change enactment, subjects are in the process of becoming someone while the policy is also in the process of becoming something and the context is evolving, presenting a problem-making process. In this case, the generative potential of policy lies within the choices that agents make through appropriation, exclusion, interpretations and reinterpretation (Grimaldi, 2012) at the enactment stage. Curriculum policy today thus is 'textual interventions into practice' (Ball 1993, p. 12) which is the making of the problem and addressing it in coordination with the context.

A reflexive *habitus* and position-making

To keep up with the rapidly changing post-modern world, education reform is unavoidable. A *field* with no change/reform for a long period of time would establish practices or doxa and a reproductive *habitus*. Over an extended period of time, such a *field* and established practices appear natural to the agents' *habitus* and the *habitus* may become rigid and resist change. However, the world is changing and requires a positive response from the *field* of education. Introducing reform in education can challenge the doxa or established practices in the *field*. A change in the *field* can create a *field-habitus* mismatch but also an opportunity for a reflexive *habitus*. This is because, as Bourdieu argues, although the *habitus* tends to rely on past practices, a change in the *field* tends to make the subjective aspirations fit to the objective structure. It thus develops an opportunity for a reflexive *habitus* which

is adaptive to the changes in the *field* but not in a reproductive fashion. A reflexive *habitus* enables a condition of its own fulfilment by engaging with the changes in the *field* as well as with itself. As discussed in Chapter 6, an engagement and involvement with the new curriculum and its enactment was helpful in changing the thinking and doings of the agents. Rubecca reported that at first sight, she was scared of change but once she participated in the change process, she could see the value and benefits of it.

In a changing *field* a reflexive *habitus* is not only engaged with the change process but also with itself through critical reflection. As discussed in Chapter 6, the agents critically reflected on the reform structure as restricting their pedagogical practices, killing creativity and not catering for individual learners. Such critique can bring the undiscussed into discussion and the unconscious mind into consciousness. With this awareness, agents can think differently and exercise their agency to create alternative solutions. Through critical reflection the external change is challenged and new and contextual ways of thinking and doing emerge. Thus a reflexive *habitus* is in the making in a changing *field*. However such reflexive *habitus* is not a generalised capacity of agents but is uneven and unevenly distributed thus making it a symbolic *capital* required by a post-modern world.

However, introducing a change in the *field* merely to address the doxa in the *field* can be dangerous. Any change needs careful planning and a professional democratic process of involving the voices of those who are to implement it. A change without proper consultation, once introduced in the *field* for enactment, can lead to confusion, frustration and even fatigue and ultimately a crisis situation can occur. The transition phase of change requires appropriate support to bridge the gap between the *habitus* and the changing *field*. In the case study school, it was the curriculum review meeting, engagement with the change through resource development and PD sessions and the social support that helped in bridging this gap. Thus a reflexive *habitus* can be developed through change and proper support to accommodate and assimilate the change. This reflexive *habitus* can become part of the disposition for future action and particularly so for sudden changes in an uncertain post-modern world. With a reflexive *habitus*, educators can be more open to multiple perspectives, alternatives and a sense of possibilities. As Bourdieu (1999a, p. 3) states, ‘we must work instead with the multiple perspectives that corresponds to the multiplicity of coexisting, and sometimes directly competing points of view’.

Conclusion: Position-making in the dynamic field

Policies are both ‘structured structure’ and ‘structuring structure’ (Bourdieu 2000). As structured structure, they are set up with particular intentions planned to be implemented with defined outcomes; however actors work on it, or rather, it works on actors (Ball, 2006) and can be modified and can lead

to intended or unintended outcomes. This means that policies as structure do not endlessly repeat or reproduce social life, nor mechanically translate the text into practice, but can equally be transformative and shape paths (Grimaldi, 2012). The initial phase of policy change enactment creates a condition of unrest and agents felt 'ill-at-ease' (Bourdieu, 2000a). However with appropriate support and by engaging with the change, agents accommodate the reform with incremental changes in their practices which goes beyond reproduction, but evokes creative and alternative thinking. In the mismatch of *habitus* and *field* or *hysteresis* situations, and while agents are in a position-making process, they mobilize their accumulated *capital* and strive for new *capital* in the changing *field*. This new *capital* such as adjusting to changing situations may fade away once the *field* is stable. Education change provides a condition of developing a reflexive *habitus* as a critical component of today's complex world. Policy evolves in a changing context with appropriate support and the dialectic relationship of the *field-habitus* nexus. The constructed space thus is dynamic, emerging, evolving and contingent due not only to the heterogeneous forces and their complex nature of interactions, but also the *field-habitus* relationships.

This is a Bourdieuian study of the experiences, and perceptions of the school management team and teachers about the enactment of a national curriculum in one particular school in Queensland Australia. The data for this study shows that the school is in the process of analysing its situation, evaluating its position, and negotiating and mediating the change. Classroom teachers are in the process of applying, reflecting and adapting to a changing *field*. Moreover, curriculum agencies are seeking clarification of their roles and responsibilities at national and state level. Thus the curriculum policy *field* is evolving, with agents taking up the reform, analysing their contextual needs and mediating the reform. Throughout the conduct of this study, curriculum policy reform in Australia was unsettled amid a shift of power to the federal level. In other words, what has been captured by this thesis is position-making in a changing *field* with a *hysteresis effect* while curriculum reform was in process.

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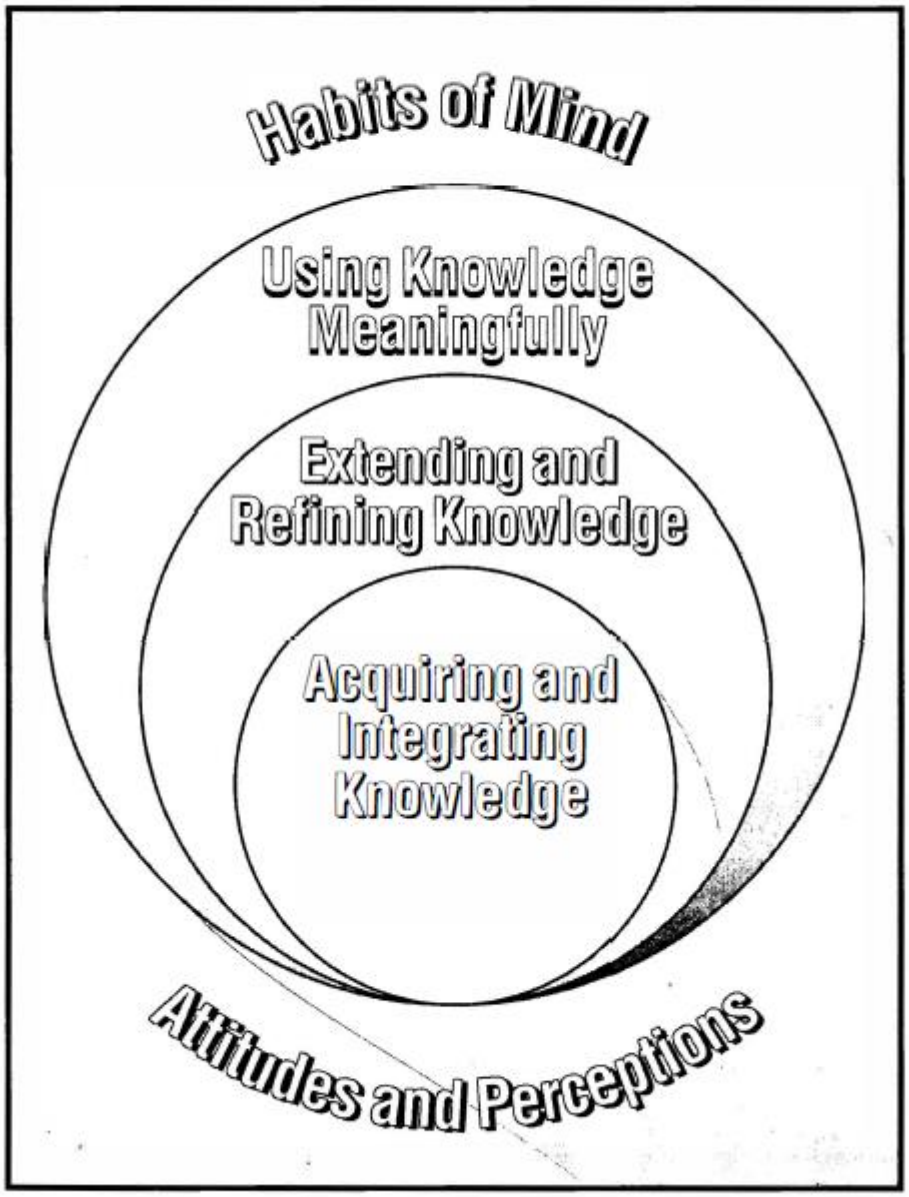
Appendices

Appendix A

Dimensions of Learning (DoL) framework

FIGURE 1
Dimensions of Learning



Source:

Marzano, R. J., Pickering, D., & McTighe, J. (1993). *Assessing Student Outcomes: Performance Assessment Using the Dimensions of Learning Model.* Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED461665.pdf

Appendix B

Ethical clearance approval

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

The School of Education

CRICOS PROVIDER NUMBER 00025B

7 January 2015

Ms Reshma Parveen
School of Education

Email: Reshma.parveen@uqconnect.edu.au

S/N: 42825977

Ethical Clearance Number: 15-001

Dear Reshma,

I am pleased to advise that on the 7 January 2015 ethical clearance was granted for your project "The enactment of Australian National Curriculum Reform: A semi-ethnographic case study analysis".

I would also like to remind you that any correspondence associated with your project (consent forms, information sheets etc.) must be printed on official UQ letterhead (available from the School of Education Front Office).

It is important that the School of Education receives for our records a final copy of all Information Letters and Consent forms.

If you have any questions regarding this matter please do not hesitate to contact me.

I wish you well with your studies.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle Weston (Ms)
Senior Administrative Officer
(Postgraduate & Higher Degrees)

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Appendix C

Participants' information sheet

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

School of Education
CRICOS PROVIDER NUMBER 00025B

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET FOR THE PRINCIPAL

Project Title: The enactment of Australian National Curriculum Reform: A semi-ethnographic case study analysis

About the project
This study aims to explore the enactment of Australian national curriculum at the school level. This study will not determine a standard curriculum management procedure at school, but will try to understand the diversity, creativity and complexity of curriculum management at the school level and how it contributes towards achieving a uniform goal of the curriculum.

Benefits of the project
Through gaining an understanding of the complexity of curriculum enactment at school level, this project will contribute to the knowledge base for curriculum development. This knowledge will be useful for education agencies outside the school to plan curriculum implementation while keeping in view the uniqueness of the school in the local context. In any curriculum reform, teachers' involvement is crucial; this project will incorporate teachers' voices in the curriculum reform process by looking at how teachers experience the reform at the school. Teachers and the school executive team will have an opportunity to share their achievements, concerns and challenges while enacting a national curriculum.

The research team
My name is Reshma Parveen. I will be conducting this research as a PhD student at The University of Queensland in conjunction with Dr. Carmen Mills (Principal advisor), Dr. Katie Makar (Associate advisor) and Dr. Christina Gowlett (Associate advisor).

What I am inviting you and your school to do
I would like to work with you and your school over the course of the 2015 school year. My data generation will involve interviews, document analysis, informal and formal observations. I will conduct semi-structured interviews with you as the school principal, with the deputy principal, with Heads of Department and secondary teachers involved in the enactment of Science, Mathematics, English, History and Geography curriculum. The interviews will be on three different occasions with a duration ranging from 20 up to 60 minutes. During these interviews I will try to gain an insight into how teachers make sense of the curriculum reform and mediate it in the presence of many factors such as the available support, resources and their own professional experiences and knowledge. Interviews with the school executive team will help me understand the dynamics of internal support available to the teachers for curriculum enactment and how such a support enables a conducive environment for curriculum implementation. Interviews with the school executive team will also help me analyse the role of team members in light of the current curriculum reform and how it has been influenced.

I will carry out informal observation of the daily school activities related to the national curriculum enactment. The formal observation will include observation of staff meetings and professional development sessions related to curriculum enactment. Furthermore participant observation will take place at the end of professional development sessions in

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which the researcher will have an informal discussion with a few participants about the session and its relevance to the daily activities of curriculum enactment in the school.
I will also ask for school official documents regarding the national curriculum and its implementation plan or any related official document from ACCA or DETE.

Maintaining confidentiality and privacy
Interviews will be recorded using digital audio recorders and transcribed into written form. Interview transcripts and notes made by the researcher will be de-identified and securely stored in the School of Education at The University of Queensland (Room, 533, Building 24). Data will be stored for five years after the project ends before being destroyed. Only the research team will have access to this data. Any information you provide will remain confidential during storage, analysis and reporting. You will be provided with the interview transcripts for your review and final approval. A summary of the project findings will be provided to the school.

Right to refuse or withdraw from the study
Should you wish to participate, I will ask you to provide written consent. Participation is voluntary and includes the right to withdraw from the project. You may therefore choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice or repercussions of any type. If you choose to withdraw from the study, any contributions you have made will be destroyed at your request.

This study has been cleared in accordance with the ethical review guidelines and processes of The University of Queensland. These guidelines are endorsed by the University's principal human ethics committee, the Human Experimentation Ethical Review Committee and registered with the Australian Health Ethics Committee as complying with the national statement. You are free to discuss your participation in this study with me or my advisors (details below). If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved with the study, you may contact the School Ethics Officer on 3365 6502.

Feedback and results of the study
A copy of the findings of the project will be given to your school. I can also present a seminar to the staff after completion of the project if you wish.

Contacts
If you need to clarify any of the above points either now or later, or if any issues arise, please do not hesitate to contact any of the following people.

Reshma Parveen (PhD Student Researcher)
reshma.parveen@uqconnect.edu.au
Tel: 31507264 or 0420635457

Dr. Carmen Mills (Principal Advisor)
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The University of Queensland
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Dr. Katie Makar (Associate Advisor)
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The University of Queensland
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E mail: k.makar@uq.edu.au

Dr. Christina Gowlett (Associate Advisor)
School of Education
The University of Queensland
Tel: 3365 6648
E mail: c.gowlett@uq.edu.au

I welcome your participation in the project and thank you for considering my invitation. If you agree to participate in the project, please sign both copies of the consent form. Retain one copy for your records and return the other copy to me.

Kind regards

Reshma Parveen

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET FOR SCHOOL EXECUTIVE TEAM

Project title: The enactment of Australian National Curriculum Reform: A semi-ethnographic case study analysis

About the project

This study aims to explore the enactment of Australian national curriculum at the school level. This study will not determine a standard curriculum management procedure at school, but will try to understand the diversity, creativity and complexity of curriculum management at the school level in order to achieve common goals.

Benefits of the project

Through gaining an understanding of the complexity of curriculum enactment at school level, this project will contribute to the knowledge base for curriculum development. This knowledge will be useful for education agencies outside the school to plan curriculum implementation while keeping in view the uniqueness of the school in the local context. In any curriculum reform, teachers' involvement is crucial; this project will incorporate school voices in the curriculum reform process by looking at how School Executive Team, Head of Departments and teachers experience the reform at the school. They will have an opportunity to share their achievements, concerns and challenges while enacting a national curriculum.

The research team

My name is Reshma Parveen. I will be conducting this research as a PhD student at The University of Queensland in conjunction with Dr. Carmen Mills (Principal advisor), Dr. Katie Makar (Associate advisor) and Dr. Christina Gowlett (Associate advisor).

What I am inviting you to do

I would like to work with you over the course of the 2015 school year and generate data on the enactment of the national curriculum in your school. I will conduct semi-structured interviews with you as the deputy principal supporting the enactment process at school level. The interviews will be on three different occasions with a duration ranging from 20 up to 60 minutes. During these interviews I will try to gain an insight into how you as a deputy principal assist in and mediate the enactment of the curriculum reform in your school. It will also require you to reflect on your role as deputy principal and if it is influenced by the nature of the curriculum reform being centralized. Interviews with the school executive team will help me understand the dynamics of internal support available to the teachers for curriculum enactment and how such a support enables a conducive environment for curriculum implementation. Interviews with the school executive team will also help me analyse the role of team members in light of the current curriculum reform and its influence on their role.

I will carry out informal observation of the daily school activities related to the national curriculum enactment. The formal observation will include observation of staff meetings and observation of professional development sessions related to curriculum enactment. Furthermore participant observation will take place at the end of professional development sessions in which I will have an informal discussion with a few participants about the session and its relevance to the daily activities of curriculum enactment in the school.

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Right to refuse or withdraw from the study
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Feedback and results of the study
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I welcome your participation in the project and thank you for considering my invitation. If you agree to participate in the project, please sign both copies of the consent form. Retain one copy for your records and return the other copy to me.

Kind regards

Reshma Parveen

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

School of Education
CRICOS PROVIDER NUMBER 00025B

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Project Title: The enactment of Australian National Curriculum Reform: A semi-ethnographic case study analysis

About the project

This study aims to explore the enactment of Australian national curriculum at the school level. This study will not determine a standard curriculum management procedure at school, but will try to understand the diversity, creativity and complexity of curriculum management at the school level in order to achieve common goals.

Benefits of the project

Through gaining an understanding of the complexity of curriculum enactment at school level, this project will contribute to the knowledge base for curriculum development. This knowledge will be useful for education agencies outside the school to plan curriculum implementation while keeping in view the uniqueness of the school in the local context. In any curriculum reform, teachers' involvement is crucial; this project will incorporate teachers' voices in the curriculum reform process by looking at how teachers experience the reform at the school. Teachers and the school executive team will have an opportunity to share their achievements, concerns and challenges while enacting a national curriculum.

The research team

My name is Reshma Parveen. I will be conducting this research as a PhD student at The University of Queensland in conjunction with Dr. Carmen Mills (Principal advisor), Dr. Katie Makar (Associate advisor) and Dr. Christina Gowlett (Associate advisor).

What I am inviting you to do

I would like to work with you over the course of the 2015 school year and generate data on the enactment of the national curriculum in a school. I will conduct semi-structured interviews with you as a teacher involved in the enactment of Australian National Curriculum. The interviews will be on three different occasions with a duration ranging from 20 up to 60 minutes. During these interviews I will try to gain an insight into how you as a teacher make sense of the new curriculum and how the support available to you influences your thinking, and consequently your actions regarding curriculum implementation. Curriculum enactment is influenced by different factors such as your own professional experiences, the professional development support you are exposed to, the resources in your access and the support of school executive team. Interviews with teachers involved in curriculum enactment will help me understand the individual perceptions and understanding of the reform and how a common consensus is reached in order to achieve the set goals.

I will carry out informal observation of the daily school activities related to the national curriculum enactment. The formal observation will include observation of staff meetings and observation of professional development sessions related to curriculum enactment. Furthermore participant observation will take place at the end of professional development sessions in which I will have an informal discussion with a few participants about the session and its relevance to the daily activities of curriculum enactment in the school.

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A copy of the findings of the project will be given to your school. I can also present a seminar to the staff after completion of the project if you wish.

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Kind regards

Reshma Parveen

Appendix D

Participants' consent form

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

School of Education
CRICOS PROVIDER NUMBER 00025B

CONSENT FORM FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Project title: The enactment of Australian National Curriculum Reform: A semi-ethnographic case study analysis

Student Researcher: Reshma Parveen
Principal Advisor: Dr. Carmen Mills
Associate Advisor: Dr. Katie Makar
Associate Advisor: Dr. Christina Gowlett

Contact: Reshma Parveen reshma.parveen@uqconnect.edu.au

Please read the following statements, and write your name, signature and date at the end of this sheet, if you agree and consent to your school's involvement to the research project.

I understand that:

- the researcher will visit the school and conduct observations of the enactment related activities at the school.
- the researcher will conduct formal observation of staff meetings and professional development sessions related to curriculum reform followed by an informal conversation with few participants of the professional development session.
- the researcher will use the school official documents related to curriculum reform.
- the school executive team and teachers will be asked to participate in interviews at three different occasions ranging from 20 to 60 minutes in duration. These interviews will be audio recoded, transcribed and de-identified for later analysis.
- the transcriptions and original recordings will be securely stored in the School of Education at The University of Queensland. Only the research team will have access to this data.
- the information gained during the study may be published but school members will not be identified and all personal information will remain confidential.
- I may withdraw my school's participation in the project at any stage without prejudice and any data collected will be destroyed on my request.

I have read the attached information sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me.

Name of school principal .....

Signature..... **Date** .....

Thank you for your participation.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

School of Education
CRICOS PROVIDER NUMBER 00025B

CONSENT FORM FOR SCHOOL EXECUTIVE TEAM

Project title: The enactment of Australian National Curriculum Reform: A semi-ethnographic case study analysis

Student Researcher: Reshma Parveen
Principal Advisor: Dr. Carmen Mills
Associate Advisor: Dr. Katie Makar
Associate Advisor: Dr. Christina Gowlett

Contact: Reshma Parveen reshma.parveen@uqconnect.edu.au

Please read the statements and write your name, signature and date at the end of this sheet if you agree and consent to your involvement to the research project.

I understand that:

- I will be asked to participate in interviews on three different occasions ranging from 20 to 60 minutes in duration.
- the interviews will be audio recorded, transcribed and de-identified for later analysis.
- the transcription and original recording will be securely stored in the School of Education at The University of Queensland. Only the research team will have access to this data.
- the researcher will conduct some informal observations of my activities in the school related to curriculum enactment.
- the researcher will have an informal conversation with me after attending a professional development session.
- the information gained during the study may be published but I will not be identified and all personal information will remain confidential.
- I may withdraw from the research project at any stage without consequences and any data collected will be destroyed on my request.
- there will be no direct benefit to me from my participation in this research.

I have read the attached information sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me.

Name of School Executive team .....

Signature..... **Date** .....

Thank you for your participation.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

School of Education
CRICOS PROVIDER NUMBER 00025B

CONSENT FORM FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Project title: The enactment of Australian National Curriculum Reform: A semi-ethnographic case study analysis

Student Researcher: Reshma Parveen
Principal Advisor: Dr. Carmen Mills
Associate Advisor: Dr. Katie Makar
Associate Advisor: Dr. Christina Gowlett

Contact: Reshma Parveen reshma.parveen@uqconnect.edu.au

Please read the following statements and write your name, signature and date at the end of this sheet if you agree and consent to your involvement to the research project.

I understand that:

- I will be asked to participate in interviews on three different occasions ranging from 20 to 60 minutes in duration.
- the interviews will be audio recorded, transcribed and de-identified for later analysis.
- the transcription and original recording will be securely stored in the School of Education at The University of Queensland. Only the research team will have access to this data.
- the researcher will conduct some informal observations of my activities in the school related to curriculum enactment.
- the researcher will have an informal conversation with me after attending a professional development session.
- the information gained during the study may be published but I will not be identified and all personal information will remain confidential.
- I may withdraw from the research project at any stage without consequences and any data collected will be destroyed in this case.
- there will be no direct benefit to me from my participation in this research

I have read the attached information sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me.

Name of Teacher .....

Signature..... **Date** .....

Thank you for your participation

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