The Emergence of a Dominant Discourse Associated with School Programs: A Study of

CLaSS

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STATEMENT OF SOURCES

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis takes the position that once schools and school systems adopt reform programs, the values and meanings inherent in those programs create and perpetuate powerful forms of discourse that characterize the projects themselves, evoke loyalty and commitment and may ultimately serve to stifle other voices. The thesis examines several primary schools involved with the Children's Literacy Success Strategy (CLaSS) in the Victorian Catholic Education system. It is an analysis of the dominant discourse created and perpetuated by the CLaSS documentation, education officers, principals, and classroom teachers. The study characterizes the nature of that discourse and explores its effects on the work of teachers, principals, and on school improvement. The analysis proposed in no way disparages CLaSS itself, nor does it seek to judge its objectives, or offer a critique of the specific methods used to improve literacy. Rather, it advocates that genuine school improvement requires one to step outside the circle of discourse engendered by reform programs such as CLaSS which promote a 'single minded' discourse about themselves and that which the school is attempting. When programs such as CLaSS are introduced into schools as part of a sector-wide reform agenda they are expected to provide proof of improved results in order to justify the financial investment associated with the initiative. The values and beliefs of the reform initiative are expected to be accepted by school systems usually without question (Apple, 2000). The effects of such unquestioned acceptance of particular values are examined in the current study.

As schools are expected to accept programs like CLaSS in their entirety, it is not possible within the rhetoric of CLaSS to select what elements of the program to adopt. This appears to lead to the creation and perpetuation of an 'officially' sanctioned way of thinking about school reform and teaching. Proponents of reform programs may argue that such sanctions are a necessary feature of whole school reform programs and provide a focus for energy and activism, for winning people's support, and for conveying to parents and the wider school

community a sense of purposeful action and rational planning. However, these dominant discourses seem to obscure other perspectives, disallowing critique and preventing reflective discourse and analysis. Indeed, this study holds that genuine school reform requires schools to break out of the imprisonment of dominant discourses and remain open to critical reflection.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CLaSS: Children's Literacy Success Strategy

SER: School Effectiveness Research

SIR: School Improvement Research

CEO: Catholic Education Office

IGE: Individual Guide Education

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The specific context of this research

The decision to undertake this doctoral research project has its origins in my experiences working in a primary school that had a commitment to a multi-age teaching philosophy. Commitment to that philosophy was a defining feature of the school. During my time as a teacher and leader within this school, I became a recognized and celebrated zealot of the multi-age philosophy. I became the school's leading advocate for this philosophy. Within this advocacy role, I was regularly asked to induct new teachers into the school, explain the philosophy to new parents, and speak to staff that had concerns with the philosophy and address any query that questioned or challenged the philosophy. As far as the school community was concerned when it came to the multi-age philosophy I could indeed "talk the talk" and "walk the walk". Moreover, I was increasingly called upon to make technical arbitrations between what *was* and what *was not* multi-age. Without fully realizing it, my professional identity had become centred on my strong affiliation with and interpretation of this philosophy.

Through my doctoral studies I became more aware of the interplay between language, power and meaning. Reading *The Myth of Education Reform* (Popkewitz, Tabachnick & Welhage, 1982) was a pivotal point in my career as it brought the effects of the relationship between the above mentioned concepts into view. *Discourse Analysis* (Gee, 1999) provided further understanding about the relationship between language, power and meaning and how language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing and valuing constitute particular Discourses. The Popkewitz et al. (1982) study demonstrated how the institutionalisation of a reform program in several schools resulted in a variety of interpretations of the one reform program. These variations were significantly different from the one that was intended.

I became curious about the possibility of *differing* interpretations of multi-age that could possibly exist within the school. I began to wonder about the effects of the multi-age philosophy on other aspects of school life. Following Popkewitz et al. (1982), I initiated a small research project (Rafferty & Stephens, 2001) to investigate the impact of the multi-age philosophy on the school beyond the rhetoric of advocates and school leaders like myself. This small project ultimately served as a pilot program for this current study and is referred to as the *St Monica's study.*

After interviewing the teachers within the school about multi-age and their classroom practice, an intriguing picture emerged. It became evident that the multi-age philosophy had developed into a dominant discourse within the school. The framework for discourse analysis provided by Gee (1999) demonstrated the power and effect of the discourse that permeated and intersected the teachers' personal stories about multi-age. More can be read about the results of that small pilot study in later sections of this thesis. However, it can be said that the data demonstrated that the teachers' lived realities of working within the multi-age philosophy were drastically different and often oppositional to the perspective on multi-age that I had so zealously advocated. The data from the teachers exposed several unresolved lines of tension between what the teachers said and did about the multi-age philosophy. Many of the teachers had become so preoccupied with ensuring that they were seen to be doing multi-age properly that they found it difficult to exercise their own analytical and creative professionalism concerning foundational issues to do with teaching and learning. The heavily promoted notion that the multi-age philosophy gave teachers more support and freedom to be creative in regard to their own professionalism was clearly challenged by the data. The teachers' stories reflected their frustration concerning the multi-age philosophy's ability to answer or even recognise the legitimacy of their most fundamental professional concerns. This study demonstrated how the voices of experienced and effective teachers can be reduced to background noise against a dominant discourse. The teachers clearly had important and

valuable contributions to make about teaching and learning and the discourse emanating out of the multi-age philosophy effectively silenced and dismissed their concerns through the discourse it created.

The case study demonstrated how powerful discourse could be in shaping teachers' professional identities and determining and directing classroom practices. More importantly, the case study demonstrated how effectively a dominant discourse could close down other discourses. The multi-age philosophy was a localised initiative and enjoyed support from the school's leadership team. Yet, the discourse coming from the multi-age philosophy set strict parameters for what could be called *effective* teaching and who could be called an *effective* teacher. I began to wonder about the effects major reform initiatives have on schools and teachers. The case study demonstrated the value associated with listening to teachers' stories when examining the effectiveness of school reform. It also provided an interpretative framework that is critical for this current study.

Importance of the St Monica's Study

The St. Monica's Study was important because it showed how teachers created distinctions and differentiations that function to divide the teacher's classroom practice into "spaces". Some of the practices that occupied this space that exists between what teachers are expected to do and what they actually do were not supported by the dominant discourse of multi-age teaching. It is important to be clear that this project was not about questioning or challenging the school's commitment to, or even criticizing, its multi-age program. Similarly this current study is not concerned with criticizing the literacy practices associated with CLaSS. The current study is concerned with identifying the distinctions and differentiations that function to divide teachers' classroom practice into discursive spaces. It will become evident that some of these spaces are occupied by specific teacher behaviours that are sanctioned by CLaSS, while others are not. Through the identification and subsequent analysis of three levels of discourse, insights can be gained into how the teachers actually respond to CLaSS,

as opposed to the reports from principals and CLaSS coordinators about how the teachers are expected to respond to CLaSS.

Introduction to this study

This research project is concerned with giving teachers a chance to "speak" or to tell their stories about the effects of the introduction of a third age reform program called *Children's Literacy Success Strategy* (CLaSS). The parameters of CLaSS will be explained fully in subsequent section of this thesis. The stories that come from the CLaSS schools included in this study are told from the perspective of the teachers' understandings and lived experiences of working in schools that engage a third age reform. Goodson (1992) points to the importance of teachers' stories as a powerful means of exploring and understanding the complexities of teaching. Shacklock (1995) suggests that

> Work-story research is about editing back into accounts produced from research into teaching by creating a 'space' in the discourse where teachers' voices have legitimacy and can be heard in their complexity, in educational research. (p. 2)

Theoretical framework

As will be explained later, the theoretical framework adopted by this study involves engaging a perspective that acknowledges reality as constituted in language and meaning as shifting according to context (Scheurich, 1995). This research places great value on the levels of discourse located in and around the reform program and identifies and interrogates discourse in order to reveal alternative or previously unseen perspectives. As subsequent chapters of this thesis will demonstrate, the stories told by teachers from these schools occupy "spaces" that exist between the dominant discourse and a lived reality of the school. These discursive spaces highlight and legitimate teachers' accounts of what has changed in those schools as a result of CLaSS.

According to Popkewitz (1998), contemporary educational research debates have perhaps led to the "wrong questions" being asked by educational researchers. Debate about the nature and

function of educational research is well documented (see Elliott & Doherty, 2001; Hargreaves 2001, Hammersly, 2002). Indeed, according to Slattery (1997) many scholars conclude that a paradigm shift in curriculum research is underway guided by what Doll (1993) refers to as "a new cosmology". Following such arguments, the epistemology of this study is concerned with re-evaluating the assumptions about the nature of curriculum research. In referring to Dale (1989), Apple (2000) argues,

> In times of such radical social and educational change it is crucial to document the processes and effects of the various and sometimes contradictory elements of what might best be called 'conservative modernization' and of the ways in which they are mediated, compromised with, accepted, used in different ways by people in different groups for their own purposes, and/or struggled over in the policies and practices of people's daily educational lives. (p.xii)

The epistemology of this research is focused on investigating the possibilities and limitations for school improvement and curriculum development when schools become part of a high profile system-endorsed reform program. It is apparent that when schools adopt programs such as CLaSS, and their associated training programs, the most prominent changes are associated with the new discourse taken on and used by principals and school leaders. This discourse is the discourse of reform, improvement, accountability, efficiency and new found confidence.

The new institutional culture

Ball (1994), Whitty, Power and Halpin (1998) and McTaggart (1992) argue that this domination of action and analysis constitutes a new institutional culture. This new culture which has been termed variously "new management", "new managerialism," "entrepreneurial governance", and "corporate managerialism" has the effect of legitimizing the domination of business oriented versions of practice in education (see, Apple, 2000; Grace, 1993, 2000). Marginson, (1997) contends that the language, assumptions and ideology of this new

management "dominate the language, conscious action and modes of analysis of those working within the education sector" (p. 353).

The only way forward

There is little doubt that CLaSS presents itself as the only way forward for failing primary schools to raise literacy levels through providing the certainty and control over the knowledge teachers have. The dominant discourse of CLaSS derives much of its power from its research pedigree, as explained in the literature review chapter. This powerful discourse is further strengthened by the support third age reform programs, like CLaSS, find in the mix of neo-liberal and neo-conservative policies that shape the educational landscape of countries with advanced economies.

Overview of Chapters

Chapter One

The first chapter covers the general context of the study. The research question and significance of this study are outlined and an overview of each chapter follows.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two provides a review of relevant literature with an historical account of school effectiveness research and school improvement research. This illustrates the development of the third age reform programs and continues to establish the pedigree of such reform programs. The review of literature recounts how the merging of the two research traditions which led to the emergence of a new and powerful paradigm of school reform.

Chapter Three

Chapter Three begins with the methodological overview of the conceptual and theoretical influences that inform this study. This chapter situates the study, explains its theoretical position and explores the usefulness of the methodology.

Chapter Four

Chapter Four is concerned with setting the scene and explaining the rationale used to select the schools and gives some indication of how CLaSS validates, presents and depicts itself. This chapter also reveals the first impressions of some common themes emerging from interviews with principals.

Chapter Five

Chapter Five includes analysis and discussion of the principals' interviews. The principals are the public face of CLaSS and it is not surprising that their comments parallel the position taken by Hill and Crévola (2001) as expressed in the CLaSS documentation. In the analysis of the data several themes emerged that demonstrates how the principals interpreted their role and explain how they implemented and maintain CLaSS. This chapter identifies and explores a number of themes common to all four principals, including: responding to a flawed culture; single-minded focus; monopolization of resources; ensuring compliance; removing threats and managing people; and cultivating an image of superiority.

Chapter Six

Chapter Six focuses on the comments of the CLaSS coordinators and CLaSS teachers. The first section of this chapter looks at the role of the CLaSS coordinators as the interface between the principal, CLaSS documentation, and the teachers. The second section of this chapter focuses on the teachers who implement CLaSS. In many instances teachers' beliefs reflect those of the CLaSS coordinator. They display similar commitment, confidence, and faith in CLaSS. However, teachers are not clones of the CLaSS coordinator. Some experience CLaSS as challenging and difficult but are prepared to comply with expectations.

Chapter Seven

In this chapter the aim is to bring together the findings of the research and broader contemporary issues of schooling and teacher professional identity, managerial and

democratic discourse, and institutional configurations, with particular reference to

Popkewitz et al. (1982) and Sachs (2001).

Chapter Eight

This chapter considers how the principal developers of CLaSS, Hill and Crévola (2001),

might respond to assertions that link CLaSS with the values and practices of technical

schooling as described by Popkewitz et al. (1982).This chapter also outlines the extent to

which the research objectives were achieved and the implication of the findings in terms of

practice and future research by demonstrating how the characteristics of CLaSS mesh closely

with those of technical schooling as described by Popkewitz et al. (1982).

General context of the study

School reform dominates the political agenda of most countries that have advanced

economies, including the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Australia. In

these countries there has been significant expansion of bureaucratic control in the

development and delivery of educational services. Such expansion is sponsored by the neo-

liberal and neo-conservative orientations of their respective political systems. In line with this

global trend, Australian federal, state and independent education authorities have placed

heavy emphasis on educational reform through the implementation of various programs and

strategies that reflect neo-liberal and neo-conservative philosophies. Such programs are

characterized by their efforts to increase productivity, define and control time, eliminate

waste, and exert control and surveillance (Hargreaves, 1994). Despite such programs having

different names and agendas they usually have similar components, such as: a prescription of

best practices, specific training of personnel, and measurable outcomes such as student

achievement. The 'Children's Literacy Success Strategy', (CLaSS), is used in this study as an

example of such programs.

The Nature of Education Reform

The remainder of this chapter outlines the nature of school reform and presents the precept that the changes initiated by school reform programs, although designed to provide schools and teachers with a pathway to salvation, also have the capacity to generate unanticipated and unwelcome consequences While the word "salvation" may appear to be emotive and rhetorical, it is clear that authors like Hill and Crévola are, by their own words, on a mission not just to improve children's literacy performance but also to save schools from the mistakes of the past and guide them along the right path as they have identified it. There is a strong sense of urgency in regard to improving both student and teacher performance. The students and the teachers are regarded as having deficiencies that need to be addressed if improvements in literacy attainment are to be made.

This chapter also points to the significance of examining the work-stories of principals, CLaSS coordinators and teachers as means of opening to scrutiny the reality of the lived experience of school reform and consequences of reform that are not readily identified through positivistic and quantitative research paradigms.

The real world of schools

Reform programs continue to be a part of the school 'experience' and the structure of reform programs are 'maintained through the exercise of political and economic power' which is 'legitimated through ideology' (Harvey, 1990, p.19). The question asked by Bellack in his foreword for *The Myth of Education Reform: a Study of School Responses to a Program of Change* (Popkewitz, et al. 1982) is

> . . . what happens to ideas and practices aimed at reforming curricula and administrative patterns when these ideas and practices are introduced into the real world of the schools? (p. vii)

This query resonates throughout this study.

This study accepts the precept established by Popkewitz et al. (1982) that many reform programs bring concealed values into schools which in turn generate unanticipated consequences. This study attempts to move away from the positivistic approach of determining the extent to which reform ideas have been implemented, or to measure the planned consequences of an initiative in terms of satisfying the anticipated outcomes such as student achievement. Rather, this study moves toward identifying the realities of the implications of reform programs through the perceptions and testimony of teachers. Examining the perceptions and actions of people in schools is important in understanding what actually changes in schools as a result of reform. This study, as was that of Popkewitz et al. (1982), is concerned with investigating the impact of underlying assumptions and social values that are implicit in school practices, and finding out how they affect the realization of reform programs.

Data background

In the Australian state of Victoria, both Catholic and State Primary Schools have been governed by educational authorities driven by neo-liberal philosophies. Schools have been actively encouraged to move away from centralised models of operating and at the same time are forced to be increasingly accountable to governing authorities in regard to funding allocations and student outcomes. Neo-liberal inspired education policy prompts these schools to decentralise some aspects of their operation and centralise other aspects. This paradox provides a problematic backdrop for schools and teachers as they develop an identity with this contemporary educational landscape. For example, Catholic schools within the Sandhurst Diocese have been encouraged to ensure the quality of their literacy programs and some schools have been able to generate their own literacy programs[1]. In a sense, making

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[1] In Australia the Catholic schools are governed and administrated through a series of Education Offices that operate at a Diocesan level. Each Diocesan Education Office operastes independently.

schools directly responsible for the students' literacy attainment levels decentralises

some of the Catholic Education Office's (CEO) authority. However, access to literacy

funding is dependent on the school's ability to prove to the CEO that student literacy

outcomes are being improved. While responsibility for literacy outcomes has been

decentralised, access to funding for literacy has been increasingly centralised. As a result

many schools have opted to be involved in the CLaSS programs sponsored by the Melbourne

Catholic Education Office and used exclusively in primary schools within the Archdiocese of

Melbourne. As later sections of the thesis will demonstrate, schools are attracted to CLaSS

because it guarantees success. CLaSS claims that through total compliance to the values and

beliefs it promotes any school will undergo the necessary reform to ensure that literacy

attainment levels among students will improve and that the school will become more

effective and efficient in all aspects of its operation. Securing such improvements then has a

positive impact on a school's ability to secure performance based literacy funding.

CLaSS offers schools and teachers an identity. This identity is shaped by neo-liberal ideas of

efficiency and accountability that lead to practices and actions that provides the school, the

teachers and the students a safe and secure future in rapidly changing times. In other words,

CLaSS offers schools and teachers a particular form of salvation from the paradox of neo-

liberal ideology. Schools that use CLaSS as a defining feature and are acknowledged as

'exemplary' CLaSS schools are examined in this study because they operate in ways that

advocates of CLaSS endorse.

As mentioned earlier, CLaSS is an example of the type of sector endorsed reform program

described above. The CLaSS program was developed as a joint project between the Catholic

Education Office of the Archdiocese of Melbourne (CEOM) and the University of

Melbourne, and was generated out of a newly emerging paradigm of school reform. The

principal authors of the program, Peter Hill and Carmel Crévola, (see, Hill & Crévola, 2001),

are held in high regard within school systems Hill has a respected volume of concerning

school improvement and Crévola has a history as a Reading Recovery Tutor and Early Years literacy program manager. The discourse emanating out of CLaSS is designed to develop a strong sense of mission and purpose within school communities. It focuses on the importance and urgency of improving student outcomes in regard to literacy development in the early years of schooling through prescribed teaching and administrative practices. The program presents itself not just as a model for improving literacy outcomes but also as a model of whole school reform. The program is as much about school management as it is about literacy (Hill & Crévola, 2001).

The premise of CLaSS is that through changing individual teacher's practices student learning outcomes can be improved in significant and enduring ways. As with other education reform programs originating out of a socio-political environment dominated by neo-liberal perspectives, the way teachers go about their work is the centre of attention, and modifying teachers' behaviour is crucial to the success of the CLaSS program.

The CLaSS program is presented as an example of a sector-endorsed reform program generated out of the new paradigm or 'third age' of school reform. It was developed outside the sector and presents a detailed program for implementation at school and classroom levels. The credibility of the program is attached to highly credentialed researchers, is strongly promoted to schools by the sector, is marketed at the expense of other programs, and is implemented and supported by structures which operate at sector and local school levels. CLaSS articulates a set of beliefs and assumptions about teaching and learning through a structured reform process. CLaSS insists that all of its components are faithfully implemented with several elements referred to as being non-negotiable.

Significance of this research

This research is significant because it demonstrates that, by opening to scrutiny the reality of the lived experiences of teachers, alternative analyses of reform programs can occur. This study also moves toward identifying the realities of the implications of reform programs

through the perceptions of the teachers. If education is to be connected to the lived realities of schools, teachers, students and communities, the production and circulation of discourse, and their effects on the lives of people, is of critical importance during these times of neo-liberal domination (Bourdieu, 1998). Through analysis of the criticism and accolades of teachers and reform planners, the reality of the lived experience in schools can be examined. The study provides opportunities for the previously unheard and sometimes silenced perspectives of those who are involved with the day-to-day implications of reform programs to become clearly audible. Potentially important perspectives that are both unintentionally and intentionally obscured by the dominant discourse are given a platform from which to be recognized. Reform programs will continue to be a part of the school 'experience'. According to Harvey (1990) the structure of sector-endorsed reform programs is "maintained through the exercise of political and economic power' which is 'legitimated through ideology" (p. 19). It is important for sector administrators, principals, teachers and educators generally to be aware of the unforeseen effects of such programs. This study offers significant insights into the impact of school reform programs that may empower schools to see beyond, or in other ways break out of the imprisonment of the dominant discourse, enabling genuine school reform to occur. As such, this study makes a significant contribution to the wider scholarly debate concerning school reform. The Children's Literacy Success Strategy (CLaSS) as engaged by the Catholic Education system within Victoria is an appropriate representation of the type of sector endorsed school reform program in question and is the object of this study.

Of course, all sector-endorsed programs come with powerful rhetoric to promote adoption and implementation. These powerful and self-perpetuating forms of discourse that evoke loyalty and commitment among the members of the school community are, it can be argued, necessary as they provide a target for energy and activism, for winning people's support, and for conveying to parents and the wider school community a sense of purposeful action and

rational planning. On the other hand, these dominant discourses seem to have the effect of obscuring other perspectives, disallowing criticism and even preventing reflective discourse and analysis from taking place. This study attempts to analyse and support other levels of discourse and draw attention to the lack of significance they are afforded.

The Aims of This Research

The principle research issues

The purpose of this study is to investigate the complexity of schooling and what is the impact of a sector-endorsed program on conceptions of teachers' work, curriculum reform and school accountability. The main area of investigation considers what happens, in and to, schools when implementing sector-endorsed reform programs.

It will be important to look at the value and meanings that are inherent in reform programs like CLaSS. These values and meanings are not simply the results of ideas being adopted or chosen by the authors of CLaSS. At a deeper level the particular ideas and values imbedded in CLaSS have their origin in, and grow out of, a long history of recent programs of school reform. It is important therefore to identify the particular traditions of school reform which CLaSS has come to represent.

As will be explored in the review of literature, notions of school reform have developed and evolved over recent years. CLaSS is an expression of a new tradition of school improvement that embodies clear and unchallenged views about the nature of schooling, the professional life of teachers, and the role of principals. As Apple (2000) contends, these values are often expressed using the neo-liberal and neo-conservative language of accountability and efficiency. As stated in the abstract of this thesis, when programs such as CLaSS are introduced into schools as part of a sector-wide reform agenda they are expected to provide proof of improved results in order to justify the financial investment associated with the initiative. The values and beliefs of the reform initiative are expected to be accepted by school systems usually without question (Apple, 2000). The effects of such unquestioned acceptance of particular values are examined in the current study.

This study as qualitative research

It is argued that contemporary conventions that govern the way reform programs are implemented and evaluated obscure many of the values and consequences that reform initiatives bring to schools. To explore the hidden consequences, this study places great value on the work stories of teachers who are responsible for the daily implementation of the reform. Therefore, a qualitative research methodology within a theoretical framework that involves discourse analysis coming from interviews has been chosen. Despite the increasing pressure on schools to improve, there are few studies that evaluate the effect of reform programs from the perspective of those who implement them. It is important to determine how useful discourse analysis is in highlighting the broader effects of sector endorsed reform programs.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

Introduction

Contemporary school reform programs are influenced by the empirical studies that have

emerged from the two separate yet intricately connected research traditions of school

effectiveness research (SER) and school improvement research (SIR).

SER is concerned with large-scale, longitudinal, quantitative investigations that rely on

increasingly sophisticated statistical modeling to sample school populations. Such sampling,

according to Mortimore (1997)

> . . . leads to the identification and collection of appropriate student outcomes and
>
> information about their backgrounds; and the mapping of patterns of results to life in
>
> schools, in order to identify particular school processes or mechanisms associated
>
> with good practice. (p. 475)

SIR is characterized by small-scale and qualitative studies that have a specific focus on the

processes and mechanisms that occur within schools and how they might be improved

(Hayes, Mills, Christie & Lingard, 2006). While methodological differences distinguish the

two traditions (Thrupp, 1999), they also have different orientations. SER focuses on the

nature and patterning of school effects (Creemers & Reeizigt, 1997; Gray, Hopkins,

Reynolds, Wilcox, Farrell, & Jesson, 1999), and while SIR focuses on the processes of

change and understanding in the context of particular schools (Sammons, Hillman, &

Mortimore, 1995). That is, SER is concerned with gathering evidence to describe what

effective schools are like, while SIR is concerned with discovering the processes and

strategies that make schools effective (Teddlie & Reynolds 2000).

The two traditions have long historical links, but both have their limitations. SER is of little

value unless its findings are available to schools in practical ways, while SIR has the capacity

to point to inaccurate perceptions of effectiveness (Creemers & Reezigt, 1997). Despite their

limitations and differences in methodology and orientation, both SER and SIR share a common commitment to ensuring that schools provide students with a quality education (Creemers & Reezigt, 1997). Through this commonality, Gray et al. (1999), Teddlie and Reynolds (2000) and Stoll and Fink (1996) contend that the two traditions have gradually drawn closer together. This convergence of research traditions has created particular paradigms or 'ages' of reform (Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001). The history of the first and second age of school reform is important and will be discussed shortly. However, of most interest to this study is the emergence of a distinctly different and new paradigm, or third age, of school reform.

The new paradigm of reform is distinguished by a clear focus on pedagogy, assessment of students, intellectual capacity within the school, reliance on external pressure and support combined with internal energy. It is argued that the new paradigm provides school reform programs with a potency and legitimacy to change teachers' classrooms to a degree not previously available. It is further argued that sustained improvement of student outcomes can only be realized through changing the classroom practices of teachers. The combination of the characteristics mentioned above are expressed through whole school approaches to reform that are designed to establish the necessary conditions to ensure classroom teachers make changes to their practice. It is also argued (see Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001) that initiatives stemming from the third age of reform eclipse the efforts of the reform programs originating from the previous ages of reform. Contemporary reform programs, such as CLaSS (Hill & Crévola, 2001), are representative of this ever developing 'third age' paradigm of school reform.

It is important to note that while the 'third age' is considered to be a new paradigm, the factors that constitute it, the determinants of effective schooling, and practices and strategies that lead to school improvement, have their genesis in SER and SIR. Indeed, all the characteristics of the new paradigm are evident in varying degrees and differing combinations

in most school reform projects. Recent history of school reform shows that school systems and schools have continually searched for ways to improve student outcomes in sustainable and lasting ways. Each reform effort is seemingly inspired by the failure of its predecessor. Reform programs continued to develop through necessity as reform initiative after reform initiative was perceived to have failed. The first and second ages of school reform reflect the changing relationship between SER and SIR and point to the key characteristics of the third age.

The first age of school reform

The first age of school improvement research focused on the implementation of externally developed reform programs that reflected the behavioural and organizational characteristics of effective schools, as identified by SER. Reform programs characteristic of the first age of reform regularly failed to reach their objectives and make lasting improvements to student outcomes. Through the findings of SER, those interested in school reform started to understand what effective schools looked like. First age reform programs regarded schools as being homogeneous and the prevailing logic from this perspective suggested that, once determined, the characteristics of an effective school could be readily transferred to other schools. The first age of reform was characterized by externally mandated changes to school management and classroom practice; schools and teachers were told what they should be doing in order to improve the school (Mortimore, 1998). It is argued that reliance on externally developed programs discouraged teachers' participation and cooperation in the implementation of first age reform programs. As will be explained in subsequent sections of this chapter, despite a record of failure, the first age of school reform highlighted the critical importance of allowing teachers to feel like they owned the reform initiative and change process in order to capture the necessary commitment from the teachers to ensure the success of the reform programs. This emphasis on staff "ownership" of reform programs became a key component of the second age of reform (Mortimore, 1998).

The second age of school reform

The initial characteristics of the second age of reform started to come into view during the 1980s. In reaction to the failure of first age reform programs, second age reform programs started to recognize and value the participation of teachers in the development and implementation of innovations. In particular, the cultural processes that occur within schools and the impact they have on the success of reform became the focus of SIR. Initially, second age school reform programs focused on changing school *culture* rather than changing school *structure* as a pathway to successful reform.

School culture, according to Stoll and Fink (1996), "can be seen as the way the school conducts its assemblies, defines its various roles and responsibilities . . ." (p. 120). As insights and understanding into the complexities associated with changing school culture became evident, issues concerning teachers' classroom practice and professional development, as well as school leadership and management, were given particular attention by SIR. Although reform programs generated by the first age had a high failure rate they did provide insights and understandings about school reform that influenced subsequent ages of reform. As Stoll and Fink (1996) explain;

> Failed school improvement initiatives in the past appear to have a missing
>
> ingredient: a need to reculture schools and their larger systems. (p.120)

The influence reculturing has had in regard to the success of reform programs is supported by Hargreaves, Earl and Ryan (1996) and will be examined more fully in subsequent sections of this literature review.

Merged intellectual enterprise

As reform programs generated out of the first age of school reform continued to fail and those educators interested in school reform searched for successful approaches to reform, the traditions of SER and SIR started to be drawn together and merge. The merging intellectual enterprises constituted the second age of school reform. Reform programs generated from the

second age of school reform are characterized by a focus on developing links between what is known about effective schools and how to apply that knowledge. Increasingly, programs generated from the second age of school reform placed an emphasis on improved student outcomes as a way of measuring success. The use of "hard" quantitative data was regarded as an essential foundation of reform programs and the teachers' instructional behaviours become the target of explicit attention. Like the reforms generated out of the first age, the reform programs generated out of the second age are distinguished by their distinct lack of success.

According to Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2006) many reform programs generated out of the first and second age of reform are, and have been, doing "all the right things…and still falling short" (p.2) of establishing sustainable and continued improvement of student learning outcomes on a large scale or at a systemic level. The new paradigm of school reform provides a framework that claims that the limitations experienced by previous paradigms of school reform can be easily overcome. That is, sustainable and continuing improvement of all students' educational outcomes on a large scale is readily achievable. Reform programs like Children's Literacy Success Strategy (CLaSS) (Hill & Crévola, 2001) constitute a distinctly different form of school improvement that eclipses the efforts of the reform paradigms generated out of the intellectual merger of SER and SIR.

The new paradigm is complex, with many overlapping concepts and principles from SER and SIR impacting on each other and new principles being formed. The third age of reform, however, distinguishes and distances itself from any other paradigm of reform. For example, programs emanating out of the new paradigm draw a distinction between being prescriptive about teachers' behaviours and being precise about the expectations placed on teachers (Fullan, Hill, & Crévola, 2006). Third age programs also refer to the importance of collaboration but do not necessarily regard consensus as being part of collaboration (Fullan, Bertani, & Quinn, 2004).

This review of the literature on SER and SIR outlines the enduring principles or legacy of each tradition and describes the characteristics of the subsequent 'ages' of school improvement. The remainder of this chapter is in two sections. The purpose of the first section of this chapter, *School Effectiveness and School Improvement,* is to explore the complexity and nuances of the new paradigm and determine its appeal to school systems and schools. The following headings are used in order to more fully exam the discrete histories of the SER and SIR traditions and first and second age reforms.

- Principles of school effectiveness research

- Three ages of school improvement research

- Principles and limitations of the second age

- School culture and teacher development

- Overview and limitations of the second age

To conclude this section an *Interim Summary* argues that, despite numerous SER and SIR studies and the emergence of two distinct paradigms of reform, a perception of perpetual failure is associated with school reform programs. This perception of continual failure is the catalyst for the third age of reform.

The second section of this chapter, *The Third Age of Reform*, identifies the characteristics of the emerging paradigm and point to its entrepreneurial focus. The rhetoric that CLaSS promotes and circulates about itself is powerful because it draws from the research heritage of SER and SIR. Gaining insights into the research heritage of SER and SIR provides a greater understanding power associated with third age reforms. The second section also explores the specific appeal of the new paradigm with particular reference to CLaSS (Hill & Crévola, 2001). To this end the CLaSS documentation is also examined. Third age programs such as CLaSS have a powerful ideological base that needs to be acknowledged.

Section One - School Effectiveness and School Improvement

SER identifies the determinants of effective schools and provides those interested in school reform a common set of proven and accepted features on which successful reform programs should be developed. Such models of reform are legitimized and given credibility through the methodological heritage of SER. That is, the characteristics of effective schools are widely accepted and are considered to be beyond questioning because of the esteem in which the positivistic and quantitative evaluation techniques employed by the SER tradition are held within the academic and wider community. It will be argued that school reform programs emanating out of the third age of reform, not only draw on the principles of SER to develop the beliefs and understanding considered necessary for successful reform, but also use the heritage of SER as a source of enduring credibility and power. An exploration of the history of SER highlights the principles of the research tradition and helps identify the level of influence such principles have on third age reform programs, such as CLaSS (Hill & Crévola, 2001).

The Coleman Report (Coleman, et at., 1966) is considered the starting point of school effectiveness research. Coleman et al. (1966) reported to the United States congress:

> . . . the inequalities imposed on children by their home, neighbourhood and peer environment are carried along to become the inequalities with which they confront adult life at the end of school. (p. 325)

According to Scheerens and Bosker (1997), this finding created a rather pessimistic impression that schools "did not matter" in regard to enhancing student outcomes, particularly the outcomes of disadvantaged students. The Coleman report raised interesting and challenging questions about the structure of society and the purpose of schools and education. Much school effectiveness research in the ensuing years can be regarded as a reaction against the Coleman report and was determined to prove that schools did "make a difference". Ensuring that all students, regardless of socio-economic, cultural or racial

background, experienced success in schools became a moral imperative for those

interested in school effectiveness. Indeed, attainment of the highest level of education for the

entire citizenry was regarded as the cornerstone for the future development of democracy.

While it is beyond the scope of this review to examine the extensive history of SER in detail

(Brophy & Good, 1986: Creemers, 1994; Edmonds, 1979; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, &

Ousten, 1979; Reynolds, 1992; Scheerens, 1992; Scheerens & Bosker, 1997; Teddlie &

Reynolds, 2000), it is important to highlight the most influential findings and determine their

influence on the contemporary school reform movement. Bosker and Scheerens (1992 as

cited by Wyatt, 1996) suggest that the most important finding of school effectiveness

research is that schools actively seek to improve their students' learning and that some school

related factors seem to lead to better outcomes than others. As Reynolds and Creemers (1990)

argue:

> . . . schools do have a major effect upon children's development and that, to put it
>
> simply schools do make a difference. (p.1)

Identifying and determining the potency of these school related factors became the focus of

SER. Murphy (1992) provides an overview of the characteristics of effective schooling. His

following four points explain the principles of SER:

1. *The educability of learners.* At the heart of the school effectiveness movement

    there is an attack on the prevailing notion of the distribution of achievement according

    to a normal curve. There is a clear demonstration that all students can learn.

2. *A focus on outcomes.* For a variety of reasons, educators have tended to avoid

    serious inspection of the educational process. Effective school advocates, however,

    argued persuasively that rigorous assessments of schooling were needed and that one

    could judge the quality of education only by examining student outcomes. Equally

    important, they defined success not only in absolute terms, but as the value added to

    what students bring to the educational setting.

3.   *Taking responsibility for students.* The third major contribution of the

effective schools movement is an attack on the practice of blaming the victim for the

shortcomings of the school itself. It means an end of the philosophy of "I taught them

but they didn't learn". The improvement has been due to the insistence that the school

community takes a fair share of the responsibilities for what happens to the youth in

its care.

4.   *Attention to consistency throughout the school.* One of the most powerful and

enduring lessons from all the research on effective schools is that the better schools

are more tightly linked – structurally, symbolically and culturally – than the less

effective ones. They operate more as an organic whole and less as a loose collection

of sub-systems. An overarching sense of consistency and coordination is a key

element that cuts across the effectiveness correlates and permeates better schools (pp.

94-96).

Murphy (1992) points out that the legacy of SER involves the promotion of a particular set of

beliefs about students and the nature of effective schools. Effective schools are characterized

by the acceptance of the belief that all students are capable of experiencing success at school.

Following on, improvement is measured by the degree to which students can demonstrate

mastery of, or competence in, specific outcomes.

Measurement of student outcomes provides, not only a measure for success, but also

contributes to a school's capacity to be accountable via external and internal inspection of the

attainment levels among students pertaining to those outcomes. Murphy (1992) also points to

the need for schools to take responsibility for student learning as an essential feature of

effective schooling. This means that a significant feature of an effective school is a single

unified sense of purpose or "vision" that serves to provide a stable and consistent approach to

all aspects of schooling.

While the characteristics of an effective school, as described by Murphy (1992), were influential in shaping the school reform movement, SER continued to isolate and identify determinants of effective schools. After reviewing British and North American research literature, Sammons et al. (1995) identified eleven determinants of successful schools that expand upon the key factors identified by Murphy (1992). Sammons et al. (1995) advise that the factors that they identified should not be considered independent of each other and they draw attention to the importance of the links between the factors in providing a better understanding of the possible mechanisms of an effective school. While the list of determinants is not to be considered exhaustive, it does, in the authors' opinion, provide a summary of the relevant research evidence which in turn provides a "useful background for those concerned with promoting school effectiveness and improvement" (p.12). The following table is drawn from Sammons et al.'s (1995) summary of the determinants of effective schools.

Table 1.

Key elements of effective schools identified by Sammons et al. (1995)

Professional leadership	Firm and purposeful leadership
	A participant approach
	The leading professional
Shared vision and goals	Unity of purpose
	Consistency of practice
	Collegiality and collaboration
A learning environment	An orderly atmosphere
	An attractive working environment
Concentration on teaching and learning	Maximization of learning time
	Academic emphasis
	Focus on achievement
High Expectations	High expectations all round
	Communicating expectations
	Providing intellectual challenge
Positive reinforcement	Clear and fair discipline
	Feedback
Monitoring progress	Evaluating pupil performance
	Evaluating school performance
Pupil rights and responsibilities	High pupil self-esteem
	Positions of responsibility
	Control of work
Purposeful teaching	Efficient organization
	Clarity of purpose
	Structured lessons
	Adaptive practice
Home- school partnerships	Parent involvement.
A learning organization	School-based staff development

According to Stoll and Fink (1996), the Sammons et al. (1995) articulation of the

determinants of effective schools provides the foundations for school growth and reform. The

interconnectedness of the determinants is also an important principle of SER in its own right.

That is, the determinants impact both positively and negatively upon each other. Effective

schooling relies on a school's capacity to successfully monitor and control the effects of the

interactions that occur between the determinants. School reform programs generated out of

the third age of school reform, like CLaSS, place particular emphasis on the importance of

monitoring and controlling the interactions that occur between the determinants of effective schools.

Reviews of SER by contemporary Australian educational researchers are consistent with the reviews mentioned so far. For example, according to Teese and Polesel (2003), numerous recent SER studies in the United Kingdom, United States of America, Australia, the Netherlands and Scandinavia

> . . . reveal much about what effective schools do and do not do. Strong leadership, positive academic expectations and requirements, high levels of pupil and parental involvement, structured programs, low levels of coercion, orderly environment, shared sense of mission among staff, high teacher-pupil ratios and small school size all appear on the list of factors associated with effective schooling. (p.186)

Hayes et al. (2006) point out that their review of international SER revealed a common set of features that characterize effective schools. For Hayes et al. (2006) strong leadership with a curriculum focus, clear goals and high expectations of staff and students; a supportive environment; a culture of monitoring and evaluation; parental involvement and support are characteristic of an effective school.

Certainly, the framework outlined by Sammons et al. (1995) and the features of effective schools as identified by Teese and Polesel (2003) and Hayes et al. (2006) are significant in the terms of the design of third age programs, particularly CLaSS. This will become evident as the characteristics of CLaSS are explored later in this chapter.

Not surprisingly, as SER successfully identifies the determinants of effective schools, the determinants of ineffective schools have also been identified. Stoll and Fink (1996) describe ineffective schools as being characterized by:

> . . . a lack of vision, unfocused leadership, dysfunctional staff relationships, and ineffective classroom practices as mechanisms through which the effectiveness of schools can deteriorate. (pp. 33-34)

Similarly, Mortimore, Davies, and Portway. (1996) and Teddlie and Stringfield (1993) have identified a number of ineffective practices that impede and limit the impact of reform programs. Inconsistent approaches to teaching accompanied by low expectations of teachers are at the forefront of ineffective practices. For example "housekeeping" activities that keep students quiet and promote low levels of student involvement are the dominant routines of ineffective schools. Frequent criticism and negative feedback to students is another feature of ineffective schools.

A reading of the SER history reveals that the key determinants of effective and ineffective schooling have been clearly established. Schools make a positive difference to student outcomes when strong leadership provides a clear and consistent vision that promotes structured and organized programs within a cultural emphasis of assessment and monitoring. Through the summaries of SER provided by Sammons et al. (1995), Teese and Polesel (2003) and Hayes et al. (2006), specific conceptions of the determinants of effective schools emerge. For example, the leadership for effective schooling needs to be firm leadership; the management of the learning environment needs to be orderly; teaching needs to be efficient and structured, and teaching and learning time should be maximized. Moreover, SER presents ineffective schools as being characterized by fundamental cultural flaws. Inconsistent approaches to teaching and learning, disparate school planning mechanisms, disunited visions and dysfunctional staff relationships are part of the culture of ineffective schools.

Mortimore (1997 citing Maden & Hillman 1995), suggests that the determinants of effective schools are most efficiently expressed as

> …a leadership stance which builds on and develops a team approach; a vision of success which includes a view of how the school can improve and which, once it has improved, is replaced by a pride in its achievement; school policies which encourage the planning and setting up of targets; the improvement of the physical environment;

common expectations about pupil behaviour and success; and an investment in good relationships with parents and the community. (p. 481)

While this summary provides a useful framework to discuss and describe what an effective school might look like, some of the determinants of effective schooling can, at times, appear to be ambiguous or even adversarial. The qualifications given to the determinants of school effectiveness are unclear in their meaning and allow opportunity for various interpretations and forms of enactment. As mentioned earlier, monitoring and controlling the interaction of the determinants of effective schooling remain problematic for schools. For example, issues concerning the enactment of firm leadership can be difficult to reconcile with developing a shared vision among staff. The relationship between efficient teaching and quiet, orderly classrooms provides a challenging framework from which to develop collegiality and collaboration.

Reynolds and Creemers (1990) state "in many ways our knowledge of what makes a 'good' school greatly exceeds our knowledge of how to apply that knowledge in programmes of school improvement to make schools 'good'" (p. 2). Hill and Crévola (2001) point out that many of the determinants of effective schools are integral to the CLaSS design. The need for strong leadership, clear goals and explicit definitions on what is, and what is not, effective teaching, for example, feature prominently in CLaSS. This point will be revisited in a subsequent section of this review.

Three ages of school improvement reform

As with the previous section concerning SER, it is beyond the scope of this literature review to provide a comprehensive history of SIR (see, Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, Liebermann, Fullan, & Hopkins, 1998; Stoll & Fink, 1996). However, it is important to recapitulate and note that within its relatively short history SIR has already passed through two distinct ages and is now entering its third age "of which there is still no definite conclusion or an end point" (Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001, p. 459). However, Hill and Crévola (2001) and Fullan,

Hill, and Crévola (2006) argue that at the end point, substantive and sustained improved student outcomes for all students, is "closer than we think" (p.12). Hill and Crévola (2001) advocate that school reform programs generated out of the third age of school reform are different and better than other reforms because they are *scientifically* proven to be effective. SIR has provided insights into the complexities of the day to day activities and processes that constitute the determinants of effective schools. The complexity of the processes that occur in schools and how they can be improved has been extensively researched by Fullan (1982, 1993, 1997 & 2001), Hargreaves (1994, 1997, 2003), Hargreaves and Fullan (1991), Hopkins, Ainscow, and West (1994) and Stoll and Fink (1996). As result of such studies, much more is known about the management of change, the importance of school culture in regard to establishing a shared vision, the value and nature of effective professional development for teachers, and the type of leadership needed to initiate and maintain the changes necessary to ensure that improvement is substantive and sustainable.

The purpose of this section of the literature review is to examine the features of the first two ages of school reform. The underlying characteristics of the first age of school reform are readily identifiable. Although the contribution made by the first age of school reform in shaping the third age is significant, it requires only minimal attention. However, the second age of school reform is more complex and involved than the first age. The second age of school reform initially highlighted the centrality of school ownership to successful school reform which signified a move away from the "top down" approaches of the first age. Within the second age, schools became the centre of change and it was no longer assumed that all schools were the same. What teachers do, and how they are led and managed, started to receive specific attention from SIR.

The later stages of the second age of school reform are characterized by the drawing together of school effectiveness and school improvement research traditions (Hopkins & Reynolds 2001; Mortimore, 1998; Stoll & Fink, 1996) towards what Reynolds, Teddlie with Hopkins

and Stringfield (in Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000) refer to as the "New Wave Projects" or "New Wave Thinking". This phase resulted in the interaction between school effectiveness and school improvement research. To understand the enduring value that the interaction between the two research traditions has had on the formation of the third age requires an involved discussion. Therefore after briefly discussing the first age of reform, this section of the literature review will pay particular attention to the second age.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s school improvement innovations were generally introduced to schools in a "top down" manner. The innovations were based upon knowledge developed outside of the school, and schools were expected to adopt the behavioural and organizational characteristics that reflected the findings of SER. Schools were expected to enact the directions given by the external agencies with only rudimentary instruction. As Teddlie and Reynolds (2000) explain;

> The whole improvement edifice was based upon positivistic, quantitative evaluation of effects. The worldwide failures of this model of school improvement to generate more than very partial take up by schools of the curricula and organizational innovations became an established finding in the discourse of the 1970s explained widely as due to a lack of teacher 'ownership'.(p. 214)

The failings of the first age of school reform were attributed to low levels of participation by teachers. Issues of teachers' ownership and commitment need to be addressed if innovations are to be accepted, let alone be successful (Reynolds, Teddlie with Hopkins & Stringfield in Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000, p. 231).

Fullan (1993) argues that, teachers will adopt and accept new programs and approaches when they thoroughly understand them. He continues, "You cannot mandate what matters to effective practice" (Fullan, 1993, in Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 25). However, Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2006) and Hargreaves and Fink (2006) argue that direct instruction and mandated programs have an initial impact on the effectiveness of school. For Hill and

Crévola (2001), Fullan (2004), and Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2006), the impact of

mandated reforms in making initial gains in improving student outcomes cannot be ignored.

While Hill and Crévola (2001) distance CLaSS from being a mandated program, CLaSS has

several non-negotiable components that schools need to accept for CLaSS to be implemented

successfully.

Gray et al. (1999) contend that the second phase of the school reform movement received

great impetus from the International School Improvement Project (ISIP), which was

sponsored by the Organization for Economical Cooperation and Development (OECD). In

response to the failed "top down" approaches of the first age the ISIP offered a radically

different approach to school reform and improvement.

The ISIP defined school improvement as:

> . . . a systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other
>
> related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of
>
> accomplishing educational goals more effectively. (van Velzen 1985, in Gray et al.,
>
> 1999, p. 22)

The role that individual schools and teachers have in improving the quality of education for

students became the focus of SIR and much attention was afforded to organization change.

The second age of reform looked toward practitioner knowledge, group improvement

activity, internally generated "bottom up" solutions and completely school-based

improvement attempts "to do what the first phase failed to do; influence classroom practice"

(Reynolds & Cuttance, 1992, p. 183).

Gray et al. (1999) argue that the second age of reform emphasized "bottom-up" orientations

toward school improvement whereby the individual school and its staff would own the

innovation and have control and ownership of the initiative. Second age reform "focused

upon "school culture' rather than "school structure" as the main way of understanding the

potential for school growth and development" (Gray et al., 1999, pp. 21-22). Following on,

reform programs generated out of the second age are concerned with organizational and cultural processes rather than changes in the outcomes of the school. For second age reform programs the "journey" schools and teachers experienced was considered to be important in regard to the success of the initiative. Gray et al. (1999) argue that the second age of reform regards schools

> as dynamic institutions, requiring extended study over time rather than the typical 'snapshots'. . . with more qualitative orientation in its research methodology. (p. 22)

Nevertheless, despite emphasising the role of the teacher, having greater understanding of the dynamic nature of schools and focusing on changing school culture, second age reform programs have failed to make substantive and sustainable improvements (Hill & Crévola, 2001; Fullan, Hill, & Crévola, 2006). Sarason (1990, 1996) and Sarason and Lorentz (1998) argue that the school reform movement continually demonstrates a reluctance to learn from its own history. Despite extensive documentation outlining the problems facing school reform, the failure of school reform programs will remain predictable unless a radical shift in thinking about reform occurs (Sarason, 1990; Sarason & Lorentz, 1998). It is argued that those interested in school reform repeatedly seize the chance to make their own mistakes rather than learn from previous reforms. School reform, according to Sarason (1990),

> can change curricula, change power relations, raise standards, and do a lot more, but if these efforts are not powered by altered conceptions of what children are and what makes them tick and keeps them intellectually alive, willingly pursuing knowledge and growth, their results will be inconsequential. (p. 5)

Sarason (1990) contends that the educational reform movement has never come to terms with its overarching aim of fostering in children the desire to learn and see their life-span as an endless quest for knowledge and meaning. While Hill and Crévola (2001) acknowledge the value of this aim of schooling, they add that life in modern society relies heavily on high levels of literacy. Therefore, for students to take advantage of the richness offered by

contemporary curricula "learning about thinking, communication and learning itself, as well as personal and social learning . . . assumes high levels of literacy" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 3). For Hill and Crévola (2001) losing track of the need to prioritise literacy and numeracy in the quest for knowledge and meaning is a major failing of the second age of reform.

As the knowledge base of SER and SIR increased and school reform programs continued to fail, the potential of a coalition of the once mutually exclusive approaches was beginning to be explored. As suggested by Reynolds and Packer (in Reynolds & Cuttance, 1992), a shift in thinking required researchers concerned with school reform to consider that

> . . . their knowledge base should not be drawn 'either' from one paradigm 'or' from an oppositional other, but should be drawn from 'both' one paradigm 'and' the other at the same time. (p. 183)

The intellectual merging of the two traditions has provided a synergy of perspectives from the SER and SIR traditions. This synergetic approach enabled the development of reform programs that provided schools with guidelines and strategies designed to be powerful enough to facilitate change in classroom practice (Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001). Hopkins (in Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000) points out

> . . . one of the most encouraging recent developments in the area of school effectiveness and school improvement is the seriousness with which the confluence of these two streams of enquiry is being taken. (p. 216)

The School Restructuring Study undertaken by the University of Wisconsin's Center on Organisation and Restructuring Schools (CORS) (Newman and Welhage, 1995) and the Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study (QRLS) study through its Productive Pedagogies Research (Hayes et al., 2006) provide examples of reforms that take seriously the confluence of SER and SIR.

The CORS study highlighted the need to establish links between classroom practices, schools' organisational capacity and systemic support in order for schools to enhance student outcomes. The key finding of the CORS research is that improving student outcomes requires a restructuring of school with a clear focus on pedagogy.

> Schools need to have a clear, shared purpose for students, collaborative activity to achieve the purpose, and collective responsibility among teachers and students for student learning. (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995, p. 51)

The CORS study has "re-emphasized that it was teachers and their pedagogy that made the greatest difference of all in-school factors in term of student outcomes" (Hayes et al., 2006 p. 15). Fullan and Watson (2000), referring to the Newmann and Wehlage (1995) study, found that some schools did disproportionately well in affecting the performance of students on a continual basis. The essence of their findings is that more successful schools had teachers and administrators who

> 1. formed a professional learning community
>
> 2. focused on student work (assessment)
>
> 3. changed their instructional practice (pedagogy and support for learning in the classroom) in order to get better results. (p.456)

Similarly the QRLS, with its direct intellectual links with the CORS study (Hayes et al., 2006), found a

> . . . pressing need to place teacher professional practices – pedagogies and assessment practices linked to desired students outcomes – at the core of professional communities, both inside and outside the school. (p. 25)

This is connected to the idea of a "negotiated curriculum" (Boomer, Lester, Onore, Cook, 1992) where the main purpose for schools shifts from producing a necessary component of the economy to helping students "becoming somebody" and lead a flourishing life (Wexler, 1992). The New London Group (1996) contends that the process of negotiating the

curriculum requires "critical sensibilities" (p 85). Shor (1992, 1996) draws attention to the notion that the development of critical sensibilities requires "critical teaching". Similarly, Goodman and Kuzmic (1997) contend that such "connectionist pedagogy"

> . . . makes a conscious effort to help children understand the ways that life on this planet is deeply interconnected and interdependent. It represents a pedagogy that places one's connection to the lives of all human beings and other things on this planet are at the center of the educational process. (p. 81)

Hill and Rowe (1994, 1998), using data from Victorian primary schools, claim to demonstrate that significant educational and statistical differences exist in students' achievements among classrooms in the same school. This supports the notion that individual teachers, not schools, can "make the difference" in student learning. Teachers have a powerful influence over what and how students learn. It is argued (Fullan & Watson, 2000; Hayes et al., 2006; Hill & Crévola, 2001; Newman & Associates, 1996) that for schools to make a difference to students' learning experiences and outcomes, individual teachers' pedagogy must be central to all school activities and strong links between other dimensions of schooling must be established. Fullan (1999) contends that by increasing the focus on core instruction, processes and outcomes the capacity of teachers and administrators to work together increases. Fullan and Watson (2000) label this process as "reculturing" or "capacity building". Reculturing would see teachers become, as Hargreaves and Fullan (1998) explain "assessment literate". Assessment literacy refers to the teachers' individual and collective ability to examine and accurately understand student performance data and the ability to create the classroom condition necessary to improve results. Fullan and Watson (2000) argue that schools do better when close attention is given to external standards and student achievement levels. Bryk, Thum, Easton, and Luppescu (1998) contend that "reculturing" or "capacity building" develops attitudes, behaviours and practices that stand in contrast with

conventional school practice where teachers work autonomously, and there is little meaningful professional exchange among co-workers. (p. 128)

Second age reform programs started to exploit a number of school-level and systemic interventions to create a school environment that would allow teachers to focus on their most important work: teaching and learning that enhance student outcomes. To ensure pedagogy remained the focus of the teachers, a particular form of school leadership was required. Hayes et al. (2006) emphasize that;

> While teachers are a centrally important element of effective school reform, school leadership of a particular kind is also important - that is, the kind that disperses the practices of leadership across the school and creates a culture and structure linking ongoing teacher learning to enhancement of student outcomes. (p. 25)

This position is supported by Fullan (2002), who argued that "effective school leaders are key to large scale, sustainable educational reform" (p. 16). While CLaSS acknowledges the exercise of leadership by the school principal as being "the most important source of leadership" (Hill & Crévola, 2001 p. 38), the value of dispersed leadership is recognized as having value within CLaSS. In support of dispersed leadership, Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) contest that "In a fully functioning collaborative school, many (indeed all) teachers are leaders" (p. 52). However, Hill and Crévola (2001) argued that regardless of the level at which the leadership is exercised, the important thing in the pursuit of meaningful and lasting reform is "that there is strong leadership within the school" (p.38).

Principles and limitations of the second age

In response to the problems associated with the replication and sustainability of school improvement, SER and SIR traditions were drawn together (Stoll & Fink, 1999; Mortimore, 1998; Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001). This merged intellectual enterprise introduced the value added methodology for judging school effectiveness and a large-scale knowledge base about "what works" at a school level to facilitate change. The second age school reform programs

were designed to potentiate student outcomes (Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000) by facilitating change in classroom practice. Hopkins and Reynolds (2001) state:

> The second age provided schools with guidelines and strategies for implementation that were sufficiently powerful to begin to take educational change into classrooms. (p. 460)

The strategies and guidelines of second age reforms focus on particular styles of leadership, school capacity and professional shared vision. The next section of this review of literature will examine

- School Leadership and a shared vision

- School culture and teacher development

- Overview and limitations of second age

Meta-control and preferred futures

In his comprehensive review of school effectiveness research, Scheerens (1992) points to firm leadership, highly structured learning and effective teaching time as school related factors associated with effective schooling. Following on, Scheerens and Bosker (1997) conceptualize the idea of principals having "meta-control" over all educational and instructional aspects of classroom teaching strategies. That is, principals need the skills and knowledge to enable them to recognize and reward effective teaching practices and ensure that the conditions and structures for effective teaching are provided.

This notion of "meta control" is expressed by Limerick, Cunningham, and Crowther (1998) as "meta strategy", which Crowther, Kaagen, Ferguson and Hann (2002) explain involves the role of the principal having five functions. The first of these functions is (regarded as) visioning, and involves the principal inspiring an image of a preferred future to which the school community can aspire. After establishing the vision of the preferred future the second function of the principal is to generate a distinctive new identity whereby the school distinguishes itself from other schools by drawing attention to its perceived ability to prove

its excellence. The envisioned future must be unified with the values of the school

through the promotion of shared cultural meaning. The third function of the principal is to

modify the school infrastructure to facilitate the implementation of the innovation and ensure

shared understanding and commitment to the essential features of the innovation. The fourth

function of the principal is to encourage teachers to view themselves as important in shaping

the direction and values of the school through the distribution of power and leadership. The

final function of the principal is to allow networking and participation in joint ventures.

Following on, Crowther et al. (2002) contend that none of the functions of the principal can

be realized unless the principal nurtures parallel teacher leadership. Parallel leadership

requires the implementation of strategies that challenge and provoke teachers to critique

professional issues while at the same time providing them with enough support to ensure a

"safe environment for exploration and experimentation" (p 52). For individuals within

schools parallel leadership or "distributed leadership" (Hill & Crévola, 2005) requires them

to reconceptualise their role and to work in different ways that they have hitherto" (p. 46).

Engaging this model of leadership requires teachers to clarify their personal values and

explore the alignment they have with the values of the school. Clarification of values must

> . . . heighten the level of professional dialogue about education practices; encourage
>
> individual commitment from alienated teachers. (Crowther et al., 2002, p 52)

Heightening professional dialogue involves the identification and confrontation of

institutional barriers. Crowther et al. (2002) contend that a key aspect of parallel leadership

involves illuminating how power can and should be distributed, while acknowledging the

importance of the individual professional and attesting to the central place of teaching in

school decision making. Ultimately, parallel leadership, according to Crowther et al. (2002),

"creates an ethos of teachers as guardians of the school culture; demonstrating that from little

acorns, big oak trees can grow" (p 63).

While such models of school reform call for leadership and power to be distributed throughout the school, responsibility for change and improvement ultimately remains squarely at the feet of the principal. Many of the functions principals are expected to fulfill within second age reform programs appear to involve some level of conflict and tension. For example, while strong leadership is specifically called for from principals, successful reform also involves distributing power among staff. A shared and common vision concerning effective classroom teaching needs to be developed and the individual innovation and professionalism of teachers respected. Organizational configurations need to be established while organizational configurations need to be challenged. The functionality of the principal within the second age of reform requires an enduring source of energy and commitment. Towards the end of the second age, aligning leadership with moral purposes proved to be that source for principals.

The capacity of school leaders to apply pressure on teachers, support change and improve their classroom practice was enhanced as second age reform placed increasing emphasis on the moral and social purpose of schooling. It is argued that "School leaders with moral purpose seek to make a difference in the lives of students" (Fullan, 2002, p. 16). Second age reform promotes the belief that strong leadership is necessary to ensure that pedagogy remains the epicentre of all school activity. Strong leadership is regard as being driven by moral responsibility. As Hargreaves and Fink (2006) claim

> . . . school leadership begins with a moral purpose of product integrity. It puts learning first, before achievement or testing. Learning is the essential prerequisite to everything else. Learning that sustains is deep and broad, moving far beyond the basics of literacy and numeracy. (p. 266)

In many, ways second age reform programs attempt to convince school leaders that the attainment of high levels of literacy, in the early years, becomes a moral as well as economic imperative (Hill & Crévola, 2005). That is, for schools and, teachers in particular, the

attainment of high levels of literacy becomes a moral obligation. Within second age reform programs, the economic imperatives that guide all decision making and management of schools converts into a governing moral mandate. All other considerations that rival or have the potential to impede an exclusive focus on pedagogy must then argue their case on moral, not necessarily educational, grounds.

Within dispersed leadership teachers remain the front line workers and assume more responsibility for student outcomes. The new production targets of market driven education result in what Seddon (1997) refers to as the *reprofessionalisation* and *deprofessionalisation* of teaching. Giroux (1986) regards the effects of *deprofessionalisation* as reducing teachers to either high level clerks implementing the orders of others within the school bureaucracy or the status of "specialized technicians" (p. 33.).

The discourse emanating from and around dispersed leadership determines a specific set of performance indicators by which teachers can be assessed and their value to the enterprise determined. The performance indicators give rise to performativity discourses (Jeffrey, 2004) that incorporate the values of the reform, prescribe the professional behaviour of the teachers and, provide operation parameters for the relationships among teachers and administrators. Ball (2003) explains that performativity

> is a technology, a culture, a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as a means of incentive, attrition and change - based on rewards and sanctions. (p. 216)

The performativity discourse requires that the attention of the enterprise be focused on ensuring that the outcomes are attained through efficient and effective structures and practices. As a result, specific tasks need to be performed by specific personnel in order to reflect the new roles. This imposed discipline reconstitutes teacher relations and identity (Ball, 1990). Lawn and Ozga (1986) argue that the relationship between school

administrators and teachers then becomes an unequal partnership in which teachers have

to accept a "limited or licensed professionalism" (p. 255).

Codd (1999) contends that performance management sits well with low trust, if not distrustful

work relations. Avis (2005) adds that such a position

> is at odds with current strictures surrounding the knowledge economy, which
>
> emphasize fluidity, non-hierarchical team work and high trust relations linked to the
>
> ongoing development of human, intellectual and social capital. (p. 212)

The link between teaching and leading, as identified by Hargreaves (in Crowther et al., 2002),

is so strong that leadership needs to be reconceptualised as a form of pedagogy in which

schools are viewed as places of learning for principals, teachers and students (Hayes et al.,

2006). The heavy emphasis placed on *strong* leadership in the second age of reform remains

an essential component of the third age. Fullan (in Reynolds & Cuttance 1992) states that:

> To be effective instructional leaders, however, principals must understand instruction.
>
> Through professional development opportunities, they must gain a sophisticated
>
> understanding of the relationship between instructional practice and student
>
> achievement. (p. 45)

Indeed, CLaSS organizes a specialized program for principals concerning professional

development opportunities involved in leadership. The aim of the program is to ensure that

principals are clear on how to "ensure CLaSS is operating effectively in their schools" (Hill

& Crévola, 2001 p. 38). Hill and Crévola (2001) consider that effective leadership requires

principals to provide the "right mix" of pressure and support to ensure that teachers change

and improve. Likewise, Fullan (1993) cautions leaders to be wary of over-control on the one

hand and chaos on the other. As outlined in the previous section of this literature review,

leadership of a particular kind is required in order for teachers to focus on their most

important work - teaching.

School culture and teacher development

Fullan and Watson (2000) argue that culture is the primary agent of change. Following on the key role of leadership in second age reform is the development of a unified vision or a common culture within a school. Crowther et al. (2002) commenting on the CORS study point out that

> . . . where school reform involves collective responsibility for an agreed upon approach to teaching, learning and assessment, it directly and significantly affects student achievement. (p. 46)

Changing the culture of a school is a complex task and requires a collective determination, or even single mindedness, to pursue the conditions necessary for changes to occur. Fullan (1999) labels "reculturing or capacity building" as the process of increasing focus on core instructional goals, processes and outcomes by improving the capacity of teachers to work together on these matters. For Hayes (2006) "good teachers and good pedagogy make the difference to student outcomes" (p.26). As a result Hayes (2006) suggests

> . . . the challenges faced by practitioners at various levels of schooling should reflect common sets of concerns – concerns associated with enhancing the needs of the conditions of learning. This alignment requires a shared language to talk about curriculum, assessment and pedagogy. (p. 26)

In order to change culture there needs to be an acknowledgement by the individual teachers and the school as a collective that the existing culture is permeated by fundamental inadequacies. Sarason (1998) observed in his review of a second age reform program that

> . . . schools rest on a devastating critique of the present system because it implies that for a school meaningfully to innovate to achieve more desirable outcomes, it must be free of the usual rules, regulations, and traditions of a school system. (p. 18)

The re-culturing of a school's existing culture needs to demonstrate a desire and ability to lead the school away from undesirable cultural flaws. In a sense, in order for schools to

improve they must acknowledge that, despite their best efforts, fundamental flaws in

their approach toward teaching and learning have prevented and will continually prevent

improvement from occurring. The usual rules and regulations need to make way for the new

rules and regulations. The "old way" of thinking must yield to the new.

Second age reforms promote school improvement as being a systematic process involving a

number of strategies that would lead to changes in school culture. Joyce (1991) provides a

useful metaphor to explain such approaches. In exploring the strategic dimensions of school

improvement Joyce (1991) describes five "doors" that schools need to open in order to

unlock the process of improvement. Joyce (1991) argues that when all the approaches are

pursued enthusiastically the following substantive changes to the culture of the school are

possible:

1.   Collegiality: the development of collaborative and professional relations

within a school's staff and among members of their surrounding communities.

2.   Research: where a school staff studies research findings about, for example,

effective schools and teaching practices or the processes of change.

3.   Action research: where teachers collect and analyze information and data,

about their classroom and schools and (sometimes more recently) their students'

progress.

4.   Curriculum initiatives; the introduction of self-chosen curricular or cross-

curricular changes or projects.

5.   Teaching strategies: the study, discussion and development of teaching skills

and strategies (such as flexible learning and co-operative group work).

The processes presented by Joyce (1991) promote the notion that behind each "door" a series

of interconnecting passageways lead teachers and schools to improvement (Gray et al., 1999).

Through focusing on the complexities of the day to day activities that occur in schools, SIR

started to understand and make connections between the links that exist in the approaches identified by Joyce (1991) in order to change the culture of a school.

In order to make the necessary connections between collegiality, research, action research, curriculum initiatives and teaching strategies, second age reforms require teachers to experience specific professional development. The characteristics of effective professional development are well known (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1991) and inevitably require changes in teacher behaviour (Hill & Crévola, 2001).

> Some changes in behaviour can be brought about through being mandated, but the most enduring changes occur because they are in alignment with the professional beliefs and understandings of educators in schools. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 27)

It is important to note that one of the lessons from the second age of reform is that bringing about change in behaviour and growth in beliefs and understandings is a multifaceted, complex and inherently unpredictable process. It involves the implementation of new ideas, programs and structures. Teachers need a thorough understanding of the meaning of educational change before there is an acceptance and adoption of new programs and approaches. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) contend that:

> If changing the teacher means changing the person the teacher is, we need to know how to change people. (p. 37)

For Fullan and Watson (2000) establishing rigorous external accountability regimes is an essential component of success reform, as it is claimed that "Schools do best when they focus on standards and performance assessment for learning" (p. 459). The argument then continues that "Teachers must become assessment literate" (p. 459). This means, according to Fullan and Watson (2000), that teachers can "alone and together examine and accurately understand student work and performance data, and correspondingly and, develop classroom and school plans to alter conditions necessary to achieve better results" (p. 457).

According to Gray et al. (1999) reforms that encompassed Joyce's processes tended to focus on individual changes, and individual teachers and classrooms, "rather than how these changes can fit in with and adapt to the school's organization and ethos" (p. 25). Similarly, Louis and Marks (in Fullan & Watson, 2000) conclude that, while individual teacher performance is critical and needs to be supported within the school, "schools and teachers will need help from the outside in learning new forms of pedagogy and how to assess the development of classroom qualities that foster learning" (Fullan & Watson, 2000, p. 561). Bryk et al. (in Fullan & Watson, 2000) argue that the maintenance of decentralisation, the provision for local capacity-building and an investment in policies and training are essential elements of external infrastructure that must be systematically incorporated.

The challenge for school reform is, according to Hayes et al. (2006), for

> . . . teachers, administrators and other educators is to make sure that schools are places of learning, so that learning is one of the effects of schooling. (p. 182)

Hayes et al. (2006) suggest too that in order to improve student outcomes through improved classroom practice, teachers need to be valued. Particularly, as Darling-Hammond (2000) explains, teachers' knowledge and ongoing learning needs to valued and regarded as central to a school's capacity to improve. Fullan (2001) contends that as well as valuing teachers and their knowledge, successful school reform also needs a central rationale for systemic infrastructural change. In order for schools to become places of learning, second age reform requires schools and teachers to adopt what Campbell and Crowther (1990) define as an entrepreneurial identity where they

> . . . demonstrate a passionate commitment to use all available resources to create new ideas and actions that will enrich the quality of education, and life generally, within the school. (p. 13)

Campbell and Crowther (1990) go on to explain that

An entrepreneurial school has a clear sense of purpose – a strong well articulated

philosophy of the role of the school in developing students' ability to reach their

potential. (p. 14)

According to Ball (1995), from a policy perspective, the

entrepreneur is committed to the application of certain technical solutions [to]

organizations and contexts which are taken *a priori* to be in need of structural and/or

cultural change. (p. 265)

Reform programs that generate out of the second age are consistent with the characteristics of

entrepreneurial schools. Within entrepreneurial schools, teachers are expected to adopt an

entrepreneurial identity. Such a position finds a supportive and nurturing home among the

individualistic and positivistic goals of neo-liberal and neo-conservative philosophies that

drive educational agendas. Further to this Logan and Sachs (1997) encourage teachers to

. . . respond and manage change as an integral part of our personal lives. To this end,

change should not be seen as frightening but rather as something we take up as a

challenge. (p.11)

However, as Goodman (1989) argues "teachers need to work within the tensions that exist

between 'individuality and community'" (in Smyth, Dow, Hattam, Reid & Shacklock, 2000,

p. 41). This means that modifying or changing one's professional identity is not as

straightforward as it may appear in a theoretical sense. Whether change is taken up with

enthusiasm by teachers themselves or thrust upon them through mandatory practices, the

process is complicated and presents a variety of potential outcomes.

The school effectiveness and school improvement movements attach considerable weight to

"in school factors" in explaining differential results by apparently similar schools, and

perhaps underestimate the extent to which external social factors influence pupil

achievement.

Consequently, Democratic Discourses call for a change in relations and a reconstitution of school and teacher professionalism that extend beyond the "narrow economic thinking" of corporate managerialism (Porter, 1993, p. 46).

Overview and limitations of the second age

Improved student outcomes in academic areas are regarded as the key "'success criteria', rather than the measures to do with teacher perception of the innovations which were used historically" (Teddlie and Reynolds, 2000 p. 217)**.** Such measurement is reliant on the use of "hard data" coming from student assessment. The use of hard data "is regarded as necessary to build commitment and confidence amongst those taking part and to measure the success or failure of the project" (p. 217). Second age reformers suspend any personal philosophical judgements about the nature of appropriate strategies in favour of a "what works approach that is distinctly non denominational" (p.217) drawn from bodies of knowledge from SER and SIR traditions. In regards to second age reforms, Reynolds, Teddlie with Hopkins and Stringfield in Teddlie and Reynolds (2000) note that

> the instructional behaviour of teachers at the classroom level are increasingly being targeted for explicit programme attention as well as the school level, a marked contrast again with the work from the 1980s where "the school" was often the sole focus. (p. 217)

According to Leithwood, Jantzi, and Mascall (2002) the specific properties that are widely used and claimed to produce reform reflect the following attributes:

1. a centrally determined, unifying vision of and explicit goals for students' performance based on the vision

2. curriculum frameworks and related materials for use in accomplishing the set goals for students

3. standards for judging the quality or degree of success

4. coherent, well integrated policies that reinforce standards

5. information about the organization's performance – particularly students'

    performance

6. systems of finance and governance that devolves to the local school responsibility for

    producing improvements in system and student performance

7. an agent that receives information on organization performance, judges the extent to

    which standards have or have not been met, and distributes rewards and sanctions for

    success or failure. (p. 15)

The Leithwood et al. (2002) study considered five cases of reform in which the above

properties featured and two conclusions were drawn:

1. There was no increase in student achievement.

2. [That there was a] Disappointing contribution that performance-based reforms

    have made to improve the core technology of schools. These reforms did not support

    the school site seriously, did not find incentives that worked, did not contribute to any

    significant increase in professional capacity. (p. 30)

Reviews by Stringfield, Ross, and Smith (1996) of large-scale systemic reform of a

"performance oriented" variety used in the United States during the 1990s point to the same

conclusion. The characteristics of effective schools have been clearly identified, as have the

strategies and processes needed to establish those characteristics in schools. The Leithwood

et al. (2002) and Stringfield et al. (1996) reports argue that, despite this, reform programs

coming out of the second age of reform do not improve student outcomes. Further Hill and

Crévola (2001) contend that, even though second age reforms are well conceived, the

drawing of such conclusions about their impact should not be surprising. As discussed earlier,

Sarason (1990, 1998) suggests that such conclusions should perhaps even be expected from

reform programs until the paradigm is changed.

Reform programs generated out of the second age, such as *Success for All* (Slavin, 1996)

endeavored to scale up success but repeatedly experience limited success. Fullan (in

Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 252) argues "our knowledge base is such that there is no excuse for failing to design and implement strategies that get short term results" (p. 252) yet replication remains elusive. Reform programs originating from the second age of reform were unable to make lasting and positive impacts on student achievement (Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001). Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2006) explain in reference to contemporary school reforms programs:

> Even with all the best decisions and with considerable resources for education, only partial, non sustainable gains are made. (p. 2)

Failure of reform has been attributed to the inability of second age reform to make sustainable changes to classroom practices. Hopkins and Reynolds (2001) contend that changes at classroom level are the only avenues to successful reform. To be successful, according to Hopkins and Reynolds (2001), schools can experience successful reform only if they are committed to improving the day-to-day instructional practices of teachers through changing the culture of schools by following expert external guidance. Unless, this criterion is engaged by schools their "aspirations of reform are unlikely to be realized" (Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001, p. 461).

Fullan, Hill and Crévola (2006) offer an explanation as to why second age reform programs have failed. They recognize that many reform programs have almost got it right. However they contest that within second age reform programs there is not enough trust in the power of assessment as a continual guide to instruction. For Fullan, Hill and Crévola (2006) the components of effective schools and successful reform are known, and indeed already present to varying degrees in most schools. Successful reform is dependent upon determining the right combination.

Interim summary

The numerous studies that have emerged from SER and SIR have revealed much about the characteristics of effective schools and the inner mechanisms of schooling that positively and

negatively influence student outcomes. As a result, characteristics of schools that influence student achievement have become extensively documented (Sarson, 1990, 1998) and well known (Hayes et al., 2006).

SER has historically viewed schools as rational systems that can produce specific outcomes through the establishment and maintenance of certain determinants within schools. SIR has historically viewed schools as a series of dynamic interactions that can be manipulated and combined to produce specific outcomes. As has been discussed above, the first age and the second age of reform were based on assumptions that the organizational aspects of schools and teacher behaviour could be separated and analyzed apart from each other to identify those determinants. Over time the concepts that link school effectiveness and school improvement came to be seen as critical to the development of school reform. Towards the end of the second age of reform, maintaining links between concepts such as "context, planning, culture, leadership, teaching and learning, partnerships, learning organizations, and evaluation . . ." (Stoll & Fink, 1997, p. 191) were increasingly seen as critical to successful reform.

School reformers, schools systems and schools have merged the findings from both traditions to develop reform programs that rely upon strong leadership, improvement of school culture, maintenance of high expectations, professionalism of teachers, rigorous assessment, shared vision and access to appropriate resources as the core elements necessary for reform to be successful. Consequently the discovery of new mechanisms to help schools produce successful change and enhanced outcomes for all students continues, as exemplified by the CORS and QRSL studies. As Fullan (2000) suggests, such developments are indeed good news; however, there are serious and continually occurring problems associated with the reforms generated from the second age of school reform.

The main problem with second age reforms is the fact that improvement in student outcomes has been evident in only a small number of schools and has not been reproduced at a systemic level. Despite the well-cited success of individual projects like *Success for All* (Slavin, 1996),

and an increased knowledge base of what effective schools do, sustained improvement

of student outcomes on a systemic or reproducible scale remains elusive.

According to Hopkins and Reynolds (2001) the wide range of reform programs stemming

from the second age of reform ultimately presents "uncomfortable evidence" (p. 460) that

many of the reforms have been unsuccessful in improving student outcomes. It is also argued

that after experiencing initial success in the early stages of adopting a reform program these

improvements seemingly cannot be sustained. For example, Weissbourd (1996) claims that

the successive generations of the *Success for All* projects do not replicate the strong results of

the first experiments, and Thrupp (1999) claims that the financial costs incurred by schools

while implementing *Success for All* are too substantive for schools to sustain. Hargreaves and

Fink (2006) comment that

> …the overall evidence is not uplifting. The vast majority of reform efforts are –
>
> unsustainable. (p. 252)

The perception of perpetual failure of school reform programs originating from the second

age of reform is supported by Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2006) who claim that such reforms

have at best "made only partial non sustainable gains" (p.2).

In essence, reform programs emanating out of each tradition and each age of reform have a

track record that is largely distinguished by a continual failure to make significant and

sustainable improvements to student outcomes, with only isolated incidents of success.

Darling-Hammond (1997) comments that

> Schools chew up and spit out undigested reforms on a regular basis. This creates a
>
> sense within schools that whatever the innovation, 'this too will pass' - and that it
>
> probably should. (p. 167)

Fullan, Hill and Crévola (2006), contend that despite over half a century of research into

school effectiveness and school improvement and substantial financial investment and

. . . the use of expertise to design and put into place the best strategies most likely

to succeed, and the political will to stay the course, no one yet has cracked the

classroom code leading to better instruction for all. (p.12)

The drawing together of the two traditions has been necessitated by the apparent failings of

previous reform initiatives to make sustained improvement to student outcomes. Individual

projects emerging from the first two ages of school reform demonstrate limited success.

Teddlie & Reynolds (2000) contend that research suggests that the majority of projects may

not have been particularly successful. The failure of programs emanating out of second age

school reform suggests that the challenges involved with maintaining links between the core

elements is more difficult to manage than anticipated by program developers. Although it

seems logical to combine the most effective aspects of each tradition, the expectations of the

hybrid vigour of the ensuing reform programs to precipitate sustainable improvements at a

systems level seems to have been over-estimated and under-resourced (Reynolds, Teddlie

with Hopkins & Stringfield in Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000).

The challenge facing those involved with school reform, is how to scale up the pockets of

successful innovation that have led to improved student outcomes (Fullan, 1998). According

to Weissbourd (1996, p. 171) the scaling up, "of successful schools or schooling methods is

the single most notable gap in prior effective school reforms". For Fullan (1998) making

reform widespread is more than the spreading of a selection of good or proven ideas, it "…is

related to replicating the conditions of successful change, not to transferring products" (Healy

& DeStefano, 1997 in Fullan, 1998, p.10). Second age school reform programs are not only

concerned with ensuring that schools improve student outcomes through engaging proven

pedagogical practices, they are also mindful of the conditions, or institutional configurations,

that are necessary for sustaining improvements in schools.

Fullan, Hill and Crévola (2006) argue that the lack of success of first and second reform

programs can be attributed to a lack of understanding concerning the effect of different

combinations of the core elements of successful reform. As a result of this lack of understanding the key ingredients to successful change are overlooked. This is not a case of misalignment but rather one of establishing dynamic connectivity among the core elements (Fullan, Hill & Crévola, 2006 p.15). Such a process is referred to by Abrahamson (2004 in Fullan, Hill & Crévola, 2006) as "creative recombination". The premise of creative recombination, according to Fullan, Hill and Crévola (2006, p.14) is to "redeploy and recombine existing elements in the system into new configurations" (p. 14). Many reform programs nearly get the combination right. Many of the elements needed for large scale reform exist in schools already. This means the answer is closer to home than we think (Fullan, Hill & Crévola, 2006).

<div align="center">Section Two -The Third Age of School reform</div>

In search of sustainable systemic success, school reform programs are evolving into a distinctly different form of school reform that has been described as the "Third Age" of school reform (Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001). In this section of the literature review particular attention will be given to identifying characteristics of the third age of reform. It will become evident that proponents and commentators of the third age (Fullan, Hill & Crévola, 2006; Hill & Crévola, 2001, 2006; Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001) reflect positivist notions of knowledge and learning. From such a position third age reform programs adopt an entrepreneurial focus that gives little attention to the effects of changes in power relations and teacher identity beyond those planned and anticipated to satisfy the objectives of the program.

Hopkins and Reynolds (2001) point out that the third age of reform is moving beyond the first and second ages of school reform and requires new mechanisms and processes to initiate and maintain change.

In attempting to develop the mechanisms for the third age, Stoll and Fink (1997) suggest that there is a need to maintain the concepts that link school effectiveness and school improvement. For Stoll and Fink (1997, p.191) concepts like "context, planning, culture,

leadership, teaching and learning, partnerships, learning organizations, and evaluation among many others" must remain linked.

Stoll and Fink (1997, p.120) define cultural norms as consisting of the "unspoken rules for what is regarded as acceptable behaviour and action within a school". Similarly, this current study identifies seven interconnected cultural norms that align with the characteristics of the emerging paradigm as expressed by Hopkins and Reynolds (2001). The following section identifies the ways of thinking, or Discourse models, that influence school reform and are accompanied by a catchphrase that articulates the core message.

Table 2.

Discourse models and core message
1. School culture – "We can get better and better"
2. Single minded focus – "Respond to responsibility"
3. Resource intensive – "Every effort must be made"
4. Ensuring compliance – "We must work together as one"
5. Removing threats and managing people – "There is one path to success"
6. Cultivating an image of superiority – "We know where we are going"
7. New professional identities – "We are informed"

These statements may appear as motherhood statements as they can be interpreted as reasonable and rational guidelines to motivate a community to move harmoniously toward certainty. But, they can also be used with a firmness of purpose to establish social norms and ensure conformity of teacher behaviour.

School culture

Like the second age, third age reform programs are concerned with capacity building or re-culturing within the school. Fullan (1992) contends that attempts to improve schools that do not address school culture are doomed to tinkering. Third age programs require

"organizational conditions and culture that support continuous improvement" (Hopkins

& Reynolds, 2001, pp. 473-474). Sarason (1998) contends that

> . . . for a school meaningfully to innovate to achieve more desirable outcomes, it must
>
> be free of the usual rules, regulations, and traditions of a school system. (p. 17)

Stoll and Fink (1996, p. 120) argue that traditional school cultures "may well be inimical to

the kind of learning" sought by reform programs. The need for the organizational conditions

and culture of a school to be supportive towards continuous improvement implies that the

pre-existing organizational conditions and culture are wanting or fundamentally flawed and

undesirable.

Single minded focus

Hopkins and Reynolds (2001, pp. 473-474) argue that third age programs are characterized

by the schools' acceptance of

> …the reality of a centralised policy context, but also realizing the need to adapt
>
> external change for internal purpose, and to exploit the creativity and synergies
>
> existing within the system.

This means third age programs respond to external calls for accountability, by developing

instructional strategies that respond positively to such pressure. Third age programs require

that schools embrace the socio-political environment which surrounds them and respond to

accountability with a single-minded focus.

Resource intensive

Third age programs require a direct focus on the quality of classroom practice and student

learning. To offer students consistent experiences, third age programs require all available

physical and human resources to be directed towards the goals of the innovation. The

resource requirements of third age innovations must be supported, even if at the expense of

other programs. The third age programs answer concerns about sustainability by ensuring that

the allocation of existing resources is in line with the objectives of the reform. There are no

extra resources required by third age reforms; existing resources need to be used strategically. Hopkins and Reynolds (2001) argue that third age reforms require foundational, basic interventions regarding core curricular activities and school organizational issues to be made. The distribution of resources to support the reform constitutes such intervention.

Ensuring compliance

The continual gathering of data relating to student performance is required by third age programs to drive instruction. While the data satisfies the external and internal pressure for accountability it is primarily regarded as essential to the provision of high quality feedback loops required to give teachers information to drive their teaching and sustain improvement. While acknowledging and valuing the capacity of the school to initiate reform, third age programs are dependent on support from external agencies to disseminate, sustain and define "good practice" (Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001). The success of the innovation is largely dependent upon the teachers' compliance with the strategies, structures, beliefs and understandings of the innovation that constitutes "best practice".

Authority to manage people and remove threats

Third age programs come with a strong pedigree. The strategies that comprise third age programs are presented as having a proven track record of effectiveness. For schools to be effective specific strategies need to be adopted to ensure the school remains "moving" in the direction (Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001).This prestigious research heritage legitimizes the structures and practices that the third age reform generates. This legitimacy generates an authoritative base on which the school leadership can base all management decisions. Simply put, programs generated from the third age argue that their alignment with proven and well supported strategies provide its proponents with privileged knowledge and unquestionable authority.

Cultivating an image of superiority

Following on from this unassailable position, third age programs are presented as being distinctively superior to other programs. Third age programs produce results not only in the targeted area but also improve schools generally. Third age programs are concerned with what affects outcomes, not merely classroom and school processes. Finally, third age programs operate from a new paradigm that not only enlightens practice but also clearly points to ineffective practices and the flaws of old ways of thinking. Third age programs claim to empower teachers through raising their performance levels (Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001).

New professional identities

Third age programs, it is argued, raise levels of performance throughout the educational community. They require re-conceptualization of professional and occupational identities of teachers. As a result of participating in third age programs teachers are required to reflect on their practice and ensure that they align themselves with the preferred vision generated by the school. It is argued that teachers who understand and embrace reform programs generated from the third age become better teachers. This contention is a central question for the current study. At this point, it is important to note that the set of rationally based beliefs and actions that mark third age reforms constitute a kind of salvation story for schools and school systems to follow (Popkewitz, 1991, 2000).

The combination of a clear focus on pedagogy, intellectual capacity within the school, reliance on external pressure and support combined with internal energy provide, it is argued, school reform programs with potency and legitimacy not previously available. The enactment of cultural norms mentioned above are expressed through whole school approaches to reform and are designed to establish the necessary conditions to ensure that classroom teachers make changes to their practice. Changes in teachers' practice, ultimately leading to sustained improvement in student outcomes and initiatives stemming from the third age, eclipse the efforts of the intellectual merger of the second age of reform.

The "Third age" of school reform has been critically responsive to the successes and failings of previous reform initiatives and attempts to develop a philosophy and a set of practices that will enable school systems and schools to develop the conditions necessary to achieve sustainable improvements of student outcomes. The main premise, or condition, of the third age of reform is to make pedagogy the central focus of reform. Issues with teaching and learning must be addressed if the aspirations of the reform are to be realized (Fullan, Hill & Crévola 2006; Hill & Crévola, 2001; Hopkins & Reynolds, 2001). Fullan goes on to argue that third age of reform also points to the importance of "building the capacity of school leadership teams to improve pedagogy and results" (Fullan, 2004, p. 44). Finally the need for well placed pressure and support from external agencies combined with internal energy is recognized as an important component of the new paradigm (Fullan, 2004, p. 45).

Angus (1986) urges those interested in school reform to be continually wary of programs that are promoted as efficient one-best systems of instruction as they can neglect fundamental issues of school reform. Hayes et al. (2006) warn against approaching school reform initiatives as solutions and suggest that they are more useful as a way of foregrounding teachers' work. Fullan (1991) and Louis and Miles (1991) contest that the implementation of processes designed to improve student outcomes must explore the context and history of participating schools. The importance of applying school effectiveness research findings within the context and history of a particular school needs to be acknowledged. Hill and Crévola (2001, 2006) would agree that while each school is unique, they also insist that fundamental issues concerning teaching and learning require universal and immediate attention.

Overview of CLaSS

CLaSS is presented as an example of the "third age" reform programs described earlier. The CLaSS program was developed as a joint project between the Catholic Education Office of the Archdiocese of Melbourne and the Centre for Applied Educational Research of the

Faculty of Education at The University of Melbourne. CLaSS focuses on the processes

that enable participating schools to

> . . . systematically review different aspects of their operations and engage in a
>
> structured approach to ensuring that all students experience success in early literacy.
>
> (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 1)

The principal authors of the program, Peter Hill and Carmel Crévola, two senior academics

with extensive and impressive research profiles, are held in high regard within school systems

in Australia and internationally. The discourse emanating out of CLaSS is designed to

develop a strong sense of mission and purpose in school communities about the urgency and

importance of improving student outcomes in regard to literacy development in the early

years of schooling. The urgency is dependent on the belief that only a "narrow window of

opportunity" (Hill & Crévola, 2001) exists for students to develop acceptable levels of

literacy attainment. Referring to the research of Kennedy, Birman, and Demaline (1986) Hill

and Crévola (2001) claim that there is little evidence to suggest that literacy problems can be

successfully addressed beyond the first two years of schooling. From a CLaSS perspective

schools need to act quickly and target literacy attainment in the early years of schooling. Hill

and Crévola (2001, p. 2) point to literacy (fluency using the spoken and written word) as

providing a pathway to success across the curriculum and having "a huge influence over a

person's quality of life". Further, they claim that democracy cannot be sustained without

literate citizens. However, Møller (2000) contends that such a position requires the

transformation of democracy as a political concept into an economic concept. From an

economic based concept of democracy CLaSS presents itself not just as a model for

improving literacy outcomes, but also as a model of whole school reform. The program is as

much about whole school management as it is about literacy.

> Preliminary evidence would suggest that dramatic improvements are achievable within
>
> the context of a fully implemented, comprehensive program that is results-driven and

involves both a system and school-wide commitment and coordination (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 5).

Challenging, stimulating and motivating teachers

CLaSS is symptomatic of the response of schools and school systems to the pressures produced by neo-liberal inspired education policies. Consistent with the third age paradigm, the way teachers go about their work is the focus of attention, and modifying teachers' behaviour is crucial to the success of the CLaSS program. CLaSS is clear that for lasting changes to occur a shared belief in fundamental education issues must be established among the teachers. CLaSS argues that with a shared belief the behaviour of teachers will be coherent and consistent with best practice. From this perspective teachers need to be challenged, stimulated and motivated regardless of how threatening or uncomfortable the experience may be.

The authors of CLaSS acknowledge commonalities between CLaSS and particular aspects of literacy improvement programs like *Early Literacy In-service Course* (ELIC), Western Australia's *First Steps* and Victoria's *Early Years Literacy Program*. The authors acknowledge that while these programs were effective in having a lasting impact on the teachers involved (as was the case with ELIC in the Victorian context), little is known about the short and long term impact such programs actually have on student achievement.

Deliberate and purposeful planning

While recognizing commonalities with these programs, Hill and Crévola (2001) distinguish CLaSS as a whole-school approach in contrast to the apparently discrete nature of the above mentioned programs. The authors refer to the New American Schools Development Corporation designs as examples of whole-school approaches to improvement. The New American Schools Development Corporation promotes nine designs that "adopt a comprehensive, whole school approach to improvement and student outcomes" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 6). In line with literacy designs coming from the New American Schools Development Corporation, CLaSS refers to itself as a design in an effort to convey the notion of "deliberately planning each element of the school to ensure a given outcome" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 6). The "designs" are fundamental to CLaSS and the thoroughness of their preparation by educational experts is used to validate their importance:

Each design required hundreds of hours of design work by teams of educators all working to create a completely coherent and consistent approach to improvement, based on best practice and findings from research into school and teacher effectiveness. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 6)

The particular design engaged by CLaSS has emerged out of the New American Schools Development Corporation work and Hill and Crévola's previous work undertaken within the Early Literacy Research Project. The Early Literacy Research Project was a joint project between the Department of Education, Victoria, and the Centre for Applied Educational Research at The University of Melbourne.

Total compliance and fidelity

Before the CLaSS design is examined in detail it should be noted that the design elements are not optional for schools that intend to engage with CLaSS. The design elements are not open to local interpretation or manipulation.

The nine design elements are essential to participation in CLaSS, since they form

the focus of attention for CLaSS schools as they review their early literacy provision,

participate in ongoing professional learning opportunities and seek to improve literacy

outcomes for their students. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 6)

CLaSS has the expectation that schools will demonstrate compliance with each of its design

elements. This expectation is clearly expressed in the CLaSS documentation and will be

examined in the following section.

Beliefs and understandings

For CLaSS to succeed there must be a shared belief among staff that good teaching will

ensure literacy attainment among young children and that it is unacceptable to "give up" on

students experiencing difficulties (Hill & Crévola, 2001). Beliefs and understandings held by

teachers must be examined "in the light of data" collected through engagement of CLaSS

(Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 8).

According to Hill and Crévola (2001), only a small number of factors best predict whether

students make progress at school.

These include:

- high expectations of student achievement

- engaged learning

- structured teaching focused on the learning needs of students. (Hill & Crévola,
  2001, p. 8)

Hill and Crévola (2001) contend that

Understanding how these factors operate within the school and within individual

classrooms is fundamental to the success of all schools participating in CLaSS. (p. 8)

CLaSS promotes itself as being essentially concerned with improving and generating lasting

changes to the teaching of literacy. While acknowledging the potential for individual teachers

to possess considerable knowledge about how children learn and about effective literacy

instruction, the authors comment that it is likely that the depth of such knowledge varies considerably from teacher to teacher.

Success for all

As an impetus for professional dialogue and growth to occur CLaSS reinforces the belief that all students make progress given sufficient time and support.

> Through involvement with CLaSS, teachers will arrive at a shared set of understandings and a shared language regarding practice. They become more confident in their professional judgement as they develop the ability to be explicit about their teaching decisions. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 8)

CLaSS requires schools to adopt a renewed focus on literacy. It requires greater importance to be placed on literacy in the early years of primary school relative to other areas of the curriculum and relative to other aims of education. The authors state that schools will find sanctioning of literacy the hardest aspect of the beliefs and understandings to establish. The expanded provision of curriculum as described by Hill and Crévola (2001) has created a dilemma for schools. According to the authors (Hill &Crévola, 2001) some areas of the curriculum such as music, drama and the humanities appeal to the parents of children who have experienced success in literacy and numeracy. As a result of their success such children are considered "easier to educate" (p. 9). The argument continues that these few privileged students have experienced, and will continue to experience, success in literacy and numeracy. Hill and Crévola (2001) point to pressures on schools to divert resources away from core subjects like literacy and numeracy with the result that more time "is given to visual and performing arts, teaching languages other than English, computers in the classroom, sport and health." (p. 8)

Any allocation of resources away from literacy is regarded by Hill and Crévola (2001) as an understandable, but, in their view, a naïve response to parent expectations, market forces and associated trends. As a consequence of these trends, Hill and Crévola claim that there is

considerable evidence of a degree of "overcrowding" of the curriculum and therefore there are pressures on the time available for teaching core subjects such as literacy and numeracy. They insist that schools can resolve such tensions through prioritizing curriculum objectives in different stages of schooling as opposed to a narrowing of the curriculum:

> Within CLaSS, the assumption is that by ensuring success for all in the early literacy, a school makes it possible in later years for all students to reap the full benefits of the rich array of curriculum available in later years of schooling. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 9)

Hill and Crévola (2001) acknowledge that issues involving curriculum priorities, access to resources and time have generated and will continue to generate tensions for schools. However, they insist that schools realize that only students who are functionally literate (can read and write to a specific level) can access the "rich" curriculum schools attempt to offer.

Standards and targets

To participate in CLaSS, schools are expected to set specific targets within the context targets derived from those of Clay and Tuck (1991) in their "three-waves of teaching". Through "good teaching" in the first year of school, it is expected that 80% of students will have reading and writing underway. In the second year of school, with appropriate Reading Recovery, a further 18% of students will make adequate progress towards literacy attainment. Therefore, it would be anticipated that the remaining 2% of students in their third year of schooling (Year 2) will require further referral and special assistance in order to make satisfactory progress (Hill & Crévola 2001).

Targets for CLaSS schools in the "three wave" approach:

First Wave - Good teaching in the first year of school (80% of students underway).

Second Wave - Intervention: Reading recovery for students in their second year of school (98% of students underway).

Third Wave - Further referral/special assistance (remaining 2% of students).

These targets provide the impetus for CLaSS schools to set appropriate

expectations and evaluate performance. They also act as milestones on the way

towards achieving national goals. (Hill & Crévola, 2001 p. 11)

Not only does CLaSS insist that targets are set for the school, targets must also be set for

individual students. Students who are not making adequate progress are identified as being

"at risk" and need to be closely monitored. For students who are identified as being "at risk",

Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) need to be developed. The ILPs embody appropriate targets

and a plan of action for how to realize these targets. ILPs represent the only permissible

variation to the prescribed practices and structures of *CLaSS*.

Monitoring and assessment

Systematic monitoring and assessment are important means for CLaSS schools to establish

whether targets are being met and progress towards agreed goals is being achieved. The key

function of monitoring and assessment within CLaSS is to "establish starting points for

teaching and use this diagnostic information to drive classroom teaching programs" (Hill &

Crévola, 2001, p.11).

CLaSS requires teachers to use Running Records, Observational Surveys, and Records of

Oral Language as key assessment instruments. Hill and Crévola (2001) claim that these

technical tasks are not difficult and can be easily learned by teachers. They argue that practice

is the most important "ingredient" in attaining these skills (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p.13). An

appropriate professional development design will give priority to training teachers in these

skills. The ability to interpret and analyze structured observations, writing processes and

spelling processes is complex and takes more time than the technical tasks mentioned earlier.

The professional development components of CLaSS continually revisit such analytical

competencies.

The diagnostic nature of these assessment instruments, according to the authors, provides

teachers with immediate information concerning students' ability - or lack thereof - in regard

to literacy. Such information will then serve to guide a teacher's decision-making in

regard to planning instruction. Hill and Crévola (2001) promote the belief that assessing and

monitoring students' learning is at the heart of effective teaching:

> Effective teachers know they must focus their teaching on the learning needs of each
>
> student and build on their strengths in seeking to remedy their weaknesses. This implies
>
> finding out as quickly a possible what each student does and does not know. Effective
>
> teachers also make a habit of monitoring their students' progress so that they can ensure
>
> that each student is working within his or her level of challenge. (Hill & Crévola, 2001,
>
> p. 25)
>
> Classroom teaching strategies

CLaSS attempts to distinguish itself from other programs and designs that focus on literacy

but require lessons to be scripted and planned in advance. According to Hill and Crévola,

some program developers attempt to "teacher-proof" their programs in order to ensure that

lessons are purposeful. The authors of CLaSS maintain that such approaches are unwarranted

where there are competent and well trained teachers involved:

> In CLaSS, emphasis is on raising the professional competence of teachers so that they
>
> are better able to implement effective classroom literacy strategies that are both
>
> structured and focused on the learning needs of all students. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p.
>
> 14)

Following on, the authors define effective teaching as teaching that is structured and focused

on the needs of the students. CLaSS prescribes teaching and administrative practices in order

to assist teachers. Such focused teaching

> . . . requires well-developed understandings of how children learn and of the reading
>
> and writing processes. It requires well-developed classroom routines and expert
>
> organization and management related to the teaching of small groups. It also requires

teachers who are adept in implementing a range of classroom practices and

strategies in response to the needs of all students. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p.14)

Hill and Crévola (2001) believe that many of the strategies referred to will be familiar to

teachers since these strategies have been well promoted in other programs that focus on

literacy, especially by the *Early Literacy In-Service Course* (ELIC). Hill and Crévola (2001)

believe that many of these strategies have been adopted by teachers, especially in the

Victorian context. Hill and Crévola (2001) simultaneously declare allegiance with many of

the strategies offered in these programs but reiterate their early cautions about the

comparative shortcomings of these programs by making reference to their apparent lack of

organizational procedures which they claim inhibit the strategies' overall effectiveness.

The two hour literacy block

The compulsory CLaSS professional development sessions provide the opportunity to

demonstrate to teachers the way they are expected to combine the following strategies within

a daily two-hour literacy block:

• Reading to children

• Language experience (reading)

• Shared reading

• Guided reading

• Modeled writing

• Language experience (writing)

• Interactive writing

• Guided writing

The integration of each of the above into classroom literacy programs occurs as

teachers grow in their understanding of students' strengths and weaknesses. (Hill &

Crévola, 2001 pp. 14-15)

The structure of the daily two-hour literacy block is one of the non-negotiable features of

CLaSS. It will be found in every CLaSS school and will be implemented without question or

alteration. "It is within this three-part whole-class/ small group /whole-class structure that

each of the above strategies is integrated into effective classroom practice" (Hill & Crévola,

2001, p. 20).

Whole-class to small-group teaching

The authors describe in detail (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 20) the transition from whole-class to

small-group teaching focus and back to whole-class focus (sharing) as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Structure of daily two-hour literacy teaching block[2]

WHOLE-CLASS FOCUS

The daily reading workshop begins with a whole-class focus which is based on the shared reading strategy. Shared reading can consist of books, charts, poems, songs etc. The daily writing workshop begins with a whole-class focus which consists of either modeled writing or shared writing. This element of the classroom program sets the scene for the workshop, providing an initial teaching focus and a specific teaching of the visual information of print, including direct instruction in phonics. This is a teacher-directed time. A mini-lesson, a 10 minute segment of the whole-class focus – Writing – is a time to attend to the direct instruction of spelling, phonics and phonemic awareness.

SMALL-GROUP TEACHING FOCUS

This section of the reading and writing workshop focuses on the explicit teaching of small groups of students. During the reading workshop the strategies of reading to children, language experience and guided reading take place at the same time that learning centres are in operation for the remainder of the class. During the writing workshop the teaching strategies of language experience, interactive writing and guided writing take place while the remainder of the class are engaged in independent writing and various other activities included to extend the students' understanding of grammar and spelling. This is a time for students to take responsibility for large sections of their learning time.

WHOLE-CLASS FOCUS: SHARING

This is the concluding section of both the reading and writing workshops and it is a time for reflection when students articulate what they have learnt. During this time the teacher encourages the development of the students' oral language. This share time draws the workshop to a close and the teacher concludes the formal reading and writing components for the day. This is also a teacher-directed time.

Professional learning teams

The authors point to the CLaSS professional learning model as a feature that distinguishes

CLaSS from all other programs that focus on literacy attainment. CLaSS operates on the

premise that there are some "givens" or "non-negotiable" elements that participating schools

must adhere to. The daily two-hour literacy block referred to above is one such element. The

formation of a professional learning team within a school is another "non-negotiable", as is the establishment of particular roles within the team. Justification for having these non-negotiable elements is based on the belief, articulated with some force by the authors, that ". . . time is short and the stakes are too high to waste time 'reinventing the wheel'. When there is good evidence that a particular way of doing things works effectively, it makes sense to stick with it" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 21).

Significant commitment of resources

The provision of CLaSS professional development requires a significant commitment of resources. Hill and Crévola (2001) caution schools not to think that professional development can be done "on the cheap" (p. 22). In comparing alternative professional development programs to that offered by CLaSS, schools are encouraged to realize that even though other professional development programs may be informative and even be entertaining and enjoyable, they are likely to have little real impact on teaching practice within the school and student achievement.

Initiating changes in teachers' behaviour and growth in beliefs is regarded by Hill and Crévola (2001) as inherently complex and sophisticated. Hill and Crévola (2001, p. 21) contend that teachers need a thorough understanding of the meaning of educational change before there is an acceptance and adoption of new programs and approaches. CLaSS makes use of four key strategies to facilitate change and growth:

- An off-site professional development;

- CLaSS facilitators, who work with schools;

- School- based CLaSS coordinators; and

- Professional learning teams;

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[2] From "Children's Literacy Success Strategy: An Overview" by Hill and Crévola , 2001, p.20

CLaSS offers compulsory off-site professional development sessions designed to bring teachers to full understanding of key instructional strategies. The sessions also emphasize the "big picture" on changing and improving schools, rather than on learning new teaching, monitoring and assessment techniques in isolation.

> With the big picture firmly established, it is then more likely that teachers are able to gain maximum value from specific training in using strategies such as guided reading and writing and the teaching of oral language. All off-site professional development sessions are planned and delivered by the CLaSS trainers in conjunction with CLaSS facilitators. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 23)

These sessions are conducted in Melbourne by the authors and participation by the Principal, CLaSS coordinator and teachers responsible for literacy in P-2 is regarded by Hill and Crévola (2001) as "givens or non-negotiable elements" (p.21). Schools must commit to four off-site professional development days per year. Even before their first year of involvement with CLaSS, teachers are required to attend an initial introductory session. The purpose of this session is to make sure that schools are fully aware of what they are committing themselves to:

> It is important that schools are aware of the demands that their involvement in CLaSS makes on the school and are committed to embarking on the journey in full knowledge that there are significant challenges to be confronted, but the potential of great rewards for those who successfully confront these challenges. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 23)

After accepting the challenges, schools are expected to facilitate professional development through the establishment of professional learning teams. Through the Professional learning team

> . . . teachers will come to understand fully the key instructional strategies as they practise, discuss, modify and refine them in the classroom as their understandings

develop through interaction with their peers and coordinators. (Hill and Crévola, 2001, p. 24)

As we have already heard, CLaSS claims to provide a proven pathway to success and should not be altered; it is teachers' understandings and beliefs that need modification and refinement. The implementation of professional learning teams provides the impetus for schools to develop a *change culture*. All staff responsible for literacy in P-2 should be part of the professional development teams and are

…expected to meet weekly within their schools to review progress, work jointly on solving problems that arise, share ideas and experiences and plan together as they progressively implement new practices within the school. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 24)

The CLaSS professional development model is designed explicitly to improve teachers' capacity to impact effectively on student literacy progress through the direct development and consolidation of their core beliefs and understanding regarding literacy attainment. Effective professional development means

creating meaningful learning opportunities for teachers with direct links to student outcomes, challenging teachers to develop their understandings and to work and learn together. (Hill & Crévola 2001, p. 24)

To maintain the professional learning teams, CLaSS facilitators and CLaSS school-based coordinators have complementary roles. CLaSS Facilitators are system based personnel who undergo a full year of CLaSS training. During that time they work under the guidance of a CLaSS trainer who is ultimately responsible for the training for all CLaSS schools. CLaSS Facilitators are appointed to schools and are regarded as the first "port of call" for CLaSS schools in addressing issues that arise and ensuring that involvement in CLaSS is proceeding smoothly.

School-based CLaSS coordinators organize weekly meetings and play a vital role in consolidating and further supporting teachers' learning by creating opportunities for

modeling, demonstrating, coaching and mentoring. The authors claim that the school-based CLaSS coordinator, who is referred to as the CLaSS Literacy Coordinator, is perhaps the most significant factor in determining the success of CLaSS at a particular school. Hill and Crévola (2001) go into some detail concerning the role and selection of a CLaSS Literacy Coordinator.

School and classroom organization

When considering the school and classroom organisation element of the design, Hill and Crévola (2001), rely on the belief that "time matters, especially engaged learning time" (p. 27). CLaSS calls for schools to be orderly and focused in their efforts to engage all elements of the design.

> Well organized schools and classrooms facilitate effective and efficient classroom teaching and student learning. Poor organization acts as a barrier to teaching and learning. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 26)

Through effective organization, schools are expected to ensure that within the early years' classrooms "there is an uninterrupted two-hour block scheduled during the morning session five days per week" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 27).

Hill and Crévola (2001) acknowledge that students do read and write in other subjects and that engaging in other subjects gives students opportunities to extend and consolidate the literacy skills they learn in the two-hour literacy block. Nevertheless, the authors indicate that it would be dangerous to assume that students "learn to read and write in these other subjects" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 26). They argue that progress in literacy is likely to occur only as a result of explicit teaching. Any reduction in the daily two-hour literacy block reduces the potential impact of CLaSS. "Once students begin to make rapid progress, they can, of course, spend more time learning in other curriculum areas that make use of their literacy skills" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 26).

The contentious issues of class size and the allocation of students to classes are explored by Hill and Crévola (2001). They maintain the position that issues relating to class size and structure (composite, multi-age etc.) readily become political, and that industrial issues quickly overshadow and demean educational issues. Schools are assured that research indicates that there is a correlation between class size and positive effects on student achievement in the early years. Therefore schools are requested to keep class sizes as small as can be managed in the early years, especially in the Preparatory Year.

Hill and Crévola (2001) contend that improved literacy outcomes have more to do with improved teaching approaches, not class size or structure. They maintain that changes in classroom practice are the only factors that will lead to improved literacy outcomes. For Hill and Crévola (2001) the specific classroom practice that most needs changing is the widespread reliance on whole-class teaching, which they believe to be ineffective:

> There is consistent research evidence to show that whole-class teaching is not as effective as teaching students who have been grouped according to their ability and readiness to learn the material to be covered. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p.28)
>
> Instructional groups

Hill and Crévola (2001) contend that since they have reviewed the research to do with class sizes and different classroom structures, teachers need not be burdened with such a distraction. Regardless of class size or structure teachers are expected to

> …form approximately four flexible instructional groups for both reading and writing and use these groups as the main means of focusing their teaching on the needs of all students. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 29)

The formation of these small static groups is intended to be based on performance data, with membership relatively homogenous in regard to the students' needs and stage of progress. The students are in groups to enable the teacher to give direct and specific instruction to them. Teachers are encouraged to use an organizational system referred to as a *Task*

Management Board with the students to help facilitate the movement of groups to appropriate learning centres thereby reducing classroom management issues:

> The Task Management Board is a tool which allows the teacher to get on with teaching and not have to spend five minutes each session explaining the group rotations for the session. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p.29)

> Acceptable classroom organization

It is intended that the use of Task Management Boards provide an acceptable level of organization to classrooms since a feature of effective and efficient teaching is good organization. The teachers and students need to know what they are meant to be doing and what they will be doing next. The urgency associated with improving literacy outcomes, as mentioned earlier, is reflected in the classroom organization of CLaSS.

Teachers need to "get on with teaching." In the first year of implementation of CLaSS teachers must emphasize reading and

> . . . can expect to spend a great deal of time establishing routines and expectations for students in small groups and with the new frameworks of classroom organization . . . In many cases teachers have to make substantial changes to the physical set-up of their classrooms in order to allow the various learning centres to operate. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 29)

In effect, Hill and Crévola (2001) expect that teachers will spend most of the first year getting used to the "new" framework of organization. In the second year of implementation it is expected that the reading workshops will be operating as designed and the emphasis will move to writing workshops. Speaking and listening are elements of literacy that are taught continuously during the implementation of CLaSS.

> Intervention and special assistance

The authors begin the explanation of the Intervention and Special Assistance Design by stating "Even with the very best classroom teacher a significant portion of students fail to

make satisfactory progress" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 31). As mentioned earlier, the authors recognize Reading Recovery as an essential component of CLaSS and continually point to its consistently documented success as an early intervention program. The authors disclose that substantial evidence for the effectiveness of Reading Recovery can be found in international research; however, there is "little publication of data within Australia". Nevertheless, implementing and maintaining the Reading Recovery Program requires the allocation of significant school and financial resources:

> The Reading Recovery Program must operate five days a week with a minimum of four children per day. Reading Recovery is thus a key element of the literacy program in CLaSS schools for Year 1 students at risk. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 32)

As a precondition to participation in CLaSS:

> . . . schools are required to sign a letter of agreement in which they make a commitment to the implementation and maintenance of the Reading Recovery one-to-one tutoring program for at least three years. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 5)

The authors acknowledge that although Reading Recovery is the most costly element of CLaSS, schools are required to be "deliberate" when allocating funds to ensure that Reading Recovery is adequately supported.

> The extra time and support may often prove costly, but in the long run they are less costly than the institutionalized failure that occurs when problems go unattended. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 33)

> Early intervention

It is argued by the authors that Reading Recovery is the most successful short term early intervention program available. However, Reading Recovery is not the only intervention and special assistance component advocated by CLaSS. CLaSS schools are encouraged to intervene and support students who are experiencing difficulties throughout the early years of school. Also, the authors stress that intervention and special assistance are given special

attention within CLaSS and insist that the special assistance offered to some students by Reading Recovery must be closely linked to "what is happening in the classroom" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 33). Such links to the classroom can take the form of referral to specialists or the development of ILPs. Hill and Crévola (2001) explain that it is essential for schools to show a "relentless determination" in developing literacy and reinforce the notion that "all students will achieve success given sufficient time and support" (p.33).

Home school partnerships

CLaSS requires schools to be proactive in establishing comprehensive and permanent programs of partnership with families and communities. The wider school community must participate in the shared belief and understandings that CLaSS promotes. CLaSS presents five steps for developing more positive home/school community partnerships:

- establish an action team

- secure necessary resources - a budget

- identify starting point - improve and systematize existing partnerships

- the three-year plan - identify specific steps to improve partnerships

- continue planning and working – make annual presentations

The ultimate aim is to integrate "all family and community connections within a single unified plan and program" that reflects the beliefs and understandings of CLaSS. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p 36).

Leadership and coordination

The authors of CLaSS concede the premise that "good" teaching may be found in a school that has weak and ineffective leadership, but they argue that sustained change in poorly led schools is impossible. CLaSS maintains that leadership is a critical ingredient in school improvement;

> CLaSS makes considerable demands on the quality of leadership exercised within participating schools and on the capacity of the school to coordinate the various elements of the design. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 38)

As a result of the perceived need for quality leadership, the authors carefully define the roles of key personnel, particularly the Principal and the CLaSS Literacy Coordinator.

Role of the Principal

Hill and Crévola (2001) explain that it is useful to examine the role of the principal by viewing CLaSS as progressing through three distinct phases. The principal's role changes over time as each phase is reached. The three phases are Initiation, Implementation and Institutionalization. The authors urge Principals to provide the right mix of pressure and support to ensure that improvement in the school occurs during each phase because:

> It is not unusual to find whole school communities in which there is a culture of low expectation and blaming factors beyond the control of the school for the poor performance of their students. (p. 11)

In introducing the CLaSS design, Hill and Crévola (2001) acknowledge the value of pressure as contributing to the effectiveness of reform:

> Pressure is necessary to provide a stimulus and an incentive to change and improve. Low expectations and complacency are an unavoidable consequence of lack of pressure. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 39)

During the initiation phase the principal must 'convince' classroom teachers who are directly involved in the "change process that priorities addressed by CLaSS are significant for them

and their practice" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p.39).The authors recognize that careful consideration must be given to the costs involved in engaging the program. A conscious decision about the importance of literacy attainment, relative to all other school pursuits needs to be made by the school. Involvement with CLaSS requires commitment of no less than three years. All the non-negotiable elements of CLaSS must be implemented; there can be no half measures or turning back. The rules of engagement are clear; there are no exceptions.

During the implementation phase the principal needs to build a culture of team work and shared vision. This can be assisted by giving individuals the "opportunity to reflect and rediscover what they really care about" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 39). The efforts of the principal to generate broad-based support for CLaSS throughout the school community will act as a change agent for the rest of the community. During the implementation phase, there may be occasions when things do not proceed smoothly.

Hill and Crévola (2001) point to these critical times and suggest that principals need to take on specific roles such as motivator, listener or problem solver, to maintain the implementation phase:

> Indeed, there are occasions when things appear to be going backwards rather than forwards, when the time and effort involved are overwhelming and individuals waver in their commitments and want to return to their comfort zones. These feelings are especially likely when teachers implement new ways of doing things but have not yet let go of the old ways. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 39)

It is therefore considered important that the principal provide effective leadership by advocating the "big picture" of what CLaSS entails to help teachers understand that they need to let go of old ways in order to embrace the new. CLaSS is specifically designed to benefit the students; teachers may need reminding of that. In order to facilitate this "principals must maintain a strategic overview" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 40). The strategic overview is an

expression of the literacy attainment targets the school is aiming to achieve for each cohort of students.

Embedding CLaSS

The institutionalization phase ensures that CLaSS is embedded into the ongoing processes and school structures. It is essential that CLaSS is not seen as a project with a discrete beginning and end; therefore it is necessary for "the principal to assume a leading role in 'locking in' the changes that have led to the improvement" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 40). As well as the need for the principal to display effective leadership, it is necessary for CLaSS schools to avoid the situation where the ongoing success of CLaSS is dependent on one or two individuals in formal leadership positions.

> As teachers within a school work more closely together as a professional learning
> team, so leadership can be dispersed among various individuals, with each member of
> the team undertaking specific responsibilities on behalf of the whole team. (Hill &
> Crévola, 2001, p. 40)

Strategic formation of teams

The strategic facilitation of a team of teachers capable of sustaining CLaSS in the context of ongoing changes to key leadership positions within a school is envisaged, by Hill and Crévola (2001), as being ideal. After all, CLaSS is based on current research and presents itself as a common sense response to the complex issues that face schools. From Hill and Crévola's (2001) perspective teachers have considerable knowledge about teaching and learning and literacy instruction. Hill and Crévola (2001) contend that there is great variation in the depth of knowledge among any group of teachers. It is anticipated that CLaSS will bring to the school shared professional understandings about literacy attainment among all staff. CLaSS will also inspire a shared language that will enable staff to enhance their beliefs and understandings about effective pedagogy. It is argued by Hill and Crévola (2001) that the value of data driven instruction will become self evident to all teachers, especially those who

hold reservations about CLaSS, as they accumulate evidence of improved student outcomes. According to the authors of CLaSS, it seems that the engagement of CLaSS would be an extension of teachers' existing knowledge and practice requiring little in the way of coordination. Nevertheless, despite the persuasive arguments put forward by CLaSS that good teachers will readily accept the logic and rationality of CLaSS, the appointment of, and ongoing time release for a school based CLaSS coordinator remains a 'non negotiable' and critical design element within CLaSS (Hill & Crévola, 2001).

CLaSS coordinator

The appointment of a school based CLaSS coordinator is described as a critical decision for principals to make during the implementation phase of CLaSS. Principals are vigorously encouraged to appoint an "excellent classroom" teacher to the role of CLaSS coordinator:

> The reason for doing so is to use that person to bring all classes up to the level of the most effective class and to have a dramatic impact on the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 40)

The CLaSS coordinator is to be allocated between 0.5 to 1.0 time release from classroom and administrative duties. CLaSS places great expectations on the CLaSS coordinators:

> They are expected to perform at the highest level of professional challenge and to operate on a number of levels including peer coach, mentor, change agent and 'linker'. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 41)

The Hill & Crévola (2001) also provide an outline of a job description for CLaSS Literacy Coordinators which includes monitoring the implementation of CLaSS, ensuring fidelity and progress of all CLaSS design elements, and modeling CLaSS related strategies for teachers, assistants and helpers.

The authors clearly state that the success of CLaSS relies, to a substantial degree, on the CLaSS coordinator's effectiveness.

Effective CLaSS coordinators have a number of motivational and interpersonal

attributes as well as a belief in the mantra of CLaSS that "all children can learn given

sufficient time and support". (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 41)

CLaSS Literacy Coordinators are expected to visit classrooms and work closely with

colleagues within their school:

Visits to classrooms are extremely important in monitoring change. Regardless of the

amount or quality of professional development, teachers need feedback, and they need

to have a trusted mentor to discuss their challenges and successes. (Hill & Crévola,

2001, p. 41)

The Principal's Walk

CLaSS urges principals to visit classrooms on a regular basis, daily if possible. These visits

usually take place during what is referred to as "the Principal's Walk". These are regular

principals' visits through which the principal offers visible support to teachers and also

monitors the correct implementation of CLaSS. Visits to other CLaSS schools are regarded as

important for providing comparisons during the implementation stage. A few times a year the

CLaSS coordinator, as well as the teachers, may expect a similar visit from a CLaSS

Facilitator as a sign of further support and a monitoring of progress.

CLaSS coordinators are encouraged to identify teachers who are working effectively within

the CLaSS design and arrange for other teachers to observe them. Through such observations

and providing short demonstrations of their own, a regular system of appraisal and review

through performance comparison is established. CLaSS encourages CLaSS coordinators to

use their energy, interpersonal skills and knowledge to be "agents of change". CLaSS

coordinators are requested to avoid setting up expert/novice roles, instead developing a role

as respected, trusted coach and providing the necessary professional feedback.

Non Negotiable Elements

From within the nine design elements of CLaSS, thirteen expectations, or requirements of schools wanting to participate, are presented. The Hill and Crévola (2001) repeatedly insist that schools considering participating in CLaSS give careful consideration to the willingness and ability of the school to meet each of these expectations. For schools within the Archdiocese of Melbourne, all literacy funding is conditional upon involvement in the CLaSS program and meeting all the expectations listed by the Hill and Crévola (2001). In other dioceses, literacy funding has not been tied to CLaSS, but schools undertaking CLaSS are expected to carry out the requirements summarized below:

1. It is expected that the school community, including all classroom teachers within the school P-6, has a firm commitment to making early literacy and implementation of CLaSS a key priority for at least three years.

2. Schools are required to ensure central access to multiple copies of graded student texts.

3. The school is required to appoint a full-time member as the school based CLaSS Literacy Coordinator. The coordinator must be given a minimum 0.5 time release to carry out the role.

4. The school is required to make a written commitment to the implementation or maintenance of the Reading Recovery program.

5. The school is expected to allocate a daily two-hour classroom literacy teaching block for Prep – Year 2 and to minimize disruptions and interruptions during that block of time.

6. The school requires the CLaSS coordinator, the Reading Recovery teacher(s) and all classroom teachers in Year P-1 in the first year and Years Prep, Year 1 and 2 in the second year, to attend out-of-school professional development sessions and to

participate in school-based learning as members of the professional learning team.

The professional learning team will meet weekly for no less than one hour.

7. Classroom teachers within CLaSS schools are expected to establish a minimum of

four flexible instruction groups within a classroom and use these groups as their chief

means for directing their teaching within the small-group teaching focus of the two-

hour literacy block.

8. The school is expected to provide for the professional development needs of teachers

with respect to early literacy and not to fund, or support, alternative programs of

professional development relating to early literacy without discussing the possibility

with the CLaSS Facilitator. This is to reduce the possibility of confusing teachers with

conflicting messages.

9. The school will require teachers to participate in formal data collection as part of the

research and evaluation of CLaSS.

10. The school is required to explain to all parents and students the nature and purpose

of CLaSS and allow them to withdraw their children from the testing program if they

request in writing that this be done.

11. The school is required to ensure confidentiality of information relating to individual

students.

12. The school is expected to progressively implement each component of the design

element and strive to reach the agreed minimum targets embodied in the 'three waves

of teaching' for ensuring success for all.

13. The school is expected to set up home/school/community action teams and

individual learning plans for students "at risk". (Hill & Crévola, 2001, pp 48-49)

In this study, the CLaSS program is presented as an example of a sector-endorsed third age

reform program. It was developed outside the sector and presents a detailed program for

implementation at school and classroom levels. The credibility of the program is attached to

highly credentialed researchers; is strongly promoted to schools by the sector; is marketed at the expense of other programs and implemented and supported by structures which operate at sector and local school levels. Moreover CLaSS comes with a firmly held system of beliefs concerning literacy, literacy attainment and teacher effectiveness and CLaSS sets out to ensure that this belief system is shared by all teachers. For lasting reform and improvement to be achieved CLaSS insists that the individual beliefs of teachers must be challenged and modified. Hill and Crévola (2001) and Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2005) maintain that the acceptance of a common shared belief, informed by CLaSS, among the entire school community is a necessary precondition for successful reform.

Of course, all sector-endorsed programs come with powerful rhetoric to promote adoption and implementation. These powerful and self-perpetuating forms of discourse that evoke loyalty and commitment among the members of the school community are necessary, it can be argued, to provide a focus for energy and activism, for winning people's support, and conveying to parents and the wider school community, a sense of purposeful action and rational planning. On the other hand, these dominant discourses with their strongly held beliefs may obscure other perspectives, and may disallow criticism and even prevent reflective discourse and analysis from taking place. CLaSS insists that schools are 100% committed to the beliefs and understandings it espouses. The patterns of conduct that are generated by such commitment are of particular interest to this study. As a result, further chapters attempt to identify and analyze other levels of discourse evident in schools and draw attention to the lack of significance they are afforded. Ultimately the effects CLaSS has as a whole school reform program will be explored.

Schools systems, schools and principals in particular find reforms that are based in the new paradigm appealing. As Fullan (1998) explains, school principals, due to the complex, demanding and constrained role they fulfill as educational leaders in an ever changing world are vulnerable to packaged solutions or the latest recipe for success. Third age reform

programs, like CLaSS, appeal to school systems and schools because they maintain that all schools have the capacity to improve the learning outcomes for all students. CLaSS provides a design that allows schools to configure and utilize the professional skills and knowledge that already exist within the school. In a sense CLaSS offers schools and school systems a new perspective on themselves. This new perspective allows schools to free themselves from the fundamental flaws of the schools' culture, practices and structures that have hindered previous attempts to improve student outcomes. Schools are shown to possess the core elements needed to ensure sustainable improvements in student outcomes; the school only needs assistance in developing the necessary recombination of those core elements. Substantive and lasting reform requires more than initiating the recombination of core elements. Schools and teachers are required to trust the processes that are incorporated into the CLaSS design, without reservation, to ensure the preferred future of the school is realized. In a sense, third age reforms are presented to school systems and schools as a salvation narrative (Popkewitz, 1991; 2000). In this narrative the capacity of schools and teachers to save themselves and their students can only be realized when the appropriate guidance is accepted. Once the recombination is established and maintained the improvements in student outcomes will be evident. If improvements plateau the school need only check that the alignment of the core elements is consistent with the recommended recombination and persevere and push through to the next level and stay on the path to salvation.

<div align="center">Conclusions</div>

It has been argued throughout this review of literature that the third age of school improvement goes beyond the intellectual blending of school effectiveness and school improvement research to establish a new paradigm of reform. The new paradigm claims to have the potential to generate school reform programs that have the legitimacy and potency to succeed where other programs have failed. The mechanism, knowledge and understanding needed to release the potential of schools to make significant and lasting improvements to

student outcomes are available through the third age. Through addressing issues concerning the instructional behaviour of teachers, schools can expect continual improvement in student attainment levels. Programs generated out of the third age promise that, if faithfully implemented, all students will experience success.

Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2006. p. 12) contend that although some second age reform programs have experienced some success "no one yet has been able to crack the classroom code leading to better instruction for all". Third age programs offer schools and school systems a breakthrough in transforming classroom instruction. It is evident that both first and third age reforms rely on high levels of orchestration of global aspects of teaching and analysing teaching patterns or regimes. While there may appear to be some similarities in regard to first and third age programs, the findings in this study point to important differences. Over recent years advancements in statistical modelling has enabled third age programs to scientifically validate global aspects of teaching as well as of specific kinds of teaching. Third age programs use this validation to develop explicit scripts for school, classroom and lesson management. This level of authorisation, through clear scripts for teaching and classroom organisation, distinguishes first and third age reforms.

Faith will be rewarded

Innovations and initiatives generated from the third age of reform draw from the rich heritage of SER and SIR traditions as a source of legitimacy and potency. Third age reform use the well documented successes and failures of past reform paradigms to position themselves for acceptance and success. For example, reforms generating out of the third age, like CLaSS, seek to capitalize on the faith and excitement created by their newness and potential for success to develop a preferred shared future for the school community. Yet, at the same time CLaSS presents several non-negotiable components that the community must accept and honour. The authors of CLaSS acknowledge that while the non-negotiable beliefs and understandings can cause difficulties and tensions within the whole school, particularly for

the teachers, enduring faith in the program will be rewarded with success. Managing and controlling interactions between the determinants of effective schooling produces certain contradictions and tensions within schools. Such tensions and contradictions contribute to reform initiatives faltering and stalling. From the third age paradigm such difficulties are to be expected by schools which must draw on their faith in the mechanisms and structures and push through the difficulties. The social and professional obligation of the school and the teachers to ensure that literacy attainment levels continually improve is expressed as a moral responsibility for maintaining and protecting democracy. The subsequent methodology relies on the documentation of teacher discourse as reflecting hidden norms and exposing tensions in teachers' own values as they work with complex and often conflicting values.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Introduction

This study holds that schools are socially constructed institutions that mediate particular

cultural values and human interests. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, third age

reforms are entrenched in the rhetoric of individualism and accountability. The subsequent

methodology explains how the consequences of engaging potent third age generated reform

programs, like CLaSS, can be examined by disturbing the conformity and unwritten codes of

school culture. The theoretical position of this research is based on variations of Discourse

analysis as interpreted by Gee (2005).

This study looked at the effects of major sector endorsed reform in a small number of

schools. It utilized discourse analysis to identify implications which result from the adoption

and promotion of reform programs, and point to ways in which genuine school reform can co

exist with sector-endorsed reform programs. As already described, the effects of

contemporary or "third age" reform programs within the lived reality of schools is particular

concern to this study. That is, it sets out to explore the impact of changes to the school

culture, the professional identity of teachers, and the effects of the type of leadership required

by the "third age" on a daily basis within schools. In particular it addresses:

> How conceptions of knowledge and work interrelate with particular pedagogical
>
> models endorsed by third age programs;
>
> How third age programs shape or help determine relationships among teaching,
>
> occupational structures, and power relationships within schools;
>
> How schools relate to their communities.

These questions were considered in the context of CLaSS to investigate the impact of CLaSS

on schools. Evaluation concerning the educative integrity of the practices and structures

associated with such reforms and discussions concerning the degree of success reforms

generate in regard to improving student outcomes is beyond the scope of this study.

Organisation of this chapter

This chapter explains the research design and the data collection procedures for the current

study and is arranged under the following sections; Theoretical Framework of Discourse

Ananlysis; Justifying Discourse Analysis in this Study; Specifics of this Study; Defining

Data; Data Analysis; Other Considerations. In the first section on *Theoretical Framework of*

Discourse Analysis the question of what is Discourse and why it is important will be

explored. This section will also examine how Discourse can be analyzed by focusing on

Discourse models, as put forward by Gee (2005), as a research tool. The differentiation made

between Discourse with a capital "D" and discourse with a lower case "d" will also be

explained. The second section, *Justifying Discourse Analysis in this Study,* outlines the

suitability of discourse analysis for this particular study. This section will restate some key

concepts about CLaSS that were raised in the *Review of Literature* chapter of this thesis. Part

of the justification of using discourse analysis for this study involves understanding the

claims to knowledge which the authors of CLaSS and its associated advocates assume. The

third section, *Specifics of this Study*, will provide a detailed explanation of how and why the

schools included in this study were actually chosen. The specific criteria used to select the

schools will also be explained. The fourth section, *Defining Data*, will explain what

constitutes data for this study and how describe how that data were gathered. The fifth

section, *Data Analysis*, explains how and data was classified into various Discourse models.

The processes used to interrogate the data will be explained in detail. The final section of this

chapter, *Other Considerations*, explores the ethic considerations pertinent to this study as

well as the threats and limitations of this study. This final section also discusses the

trustworthiness of the data.

Section One - Theoretical Framework of Discourse Analysis

The theoretical framework adopted by this study involves engaging a perspective that acknowledges reality as constituted in language and meaning as shifting according to context (Scheurich, 1995). The language, knowledge and practices used in and around constitute various discourses. Discourses constitute a particular patchwork of thoughts, words and actions and interactions that give them a unique entity and promote specific identities. According to Gee (2005), discourses present themselves as the "'theories' (story lines, images, explanatory frameworks) that people hold, often unconsciously, and use to make sense of the world and their experience of it" (p. 61). This study agrees with Davies (1994) who suggests that, since teachers hold a wide range of explanatory frameworks, most schools are a series of competing discourses. From this perspective reality becomes malleable and is reduced to a commodity that can be packaged and marketed. As Humes (2000) states

> "Guidelines" are, in fact, mandatory; "empowerment" involves taking on additional responsibility without additional power; "ownership" requires unreflective acquiescence in the face of central directives; and "consultation" is a process that is to be managed rather than a source of insight. (p. 46)

Discourse

Discourse is one tool, used alongside other tools, which people use to design and construct "reality". This study holds that within a school, as in society, different people would construct different realities from various discourses. Dannaher, Schirato and Webb (2000) contend that from statements to accumulated discursive formations, discourses "are associated with 'games of truth' working within fields such as science and government to authorize what can be as judged true or untrue" (p. 45). These *games of truth* are controlled by different players at different time. Similairly, Ball (1994) argues that "discourses are about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority" (p.21). This study accepts Ball (1997) arguement that "what we access and

understand as the school is thus an effect of the interweaving of certain historical and more immediate (and sometimes future, possible) discourses" (p. 318). Like other organizations, schools are produced and articulated by disparate discourses that bring order and effect. These resources of order and effect constantly develop as schools respond to the ideological, economic, political, professional and institutional forces that shape them. "This means language in which educational policies are expressed is subject to constant adjustment and refinement" (Humes, 2000 p. 47). Investigating the effects of language is at the core of this research and is referred to as discourse analysis.

Discourse Analysis

Analysis of discourse is one way to understand how others view the world. Humes (2000) explains that discourse analysis involves identifying the

> central concepts and recurring metaphors that are employed by those who authorize
>
> and contribute to the discourse, their clarity and consistency, their meaning for
>
> audience or audiences to which they are directed, and the extent to which they relate
>
> to the stated purpose of the organization. (p.48)

In this sense, discourse analysis can simply be considered as reading 'on the lines' and 'between the lines'. However, as Gale (2005) and Gee (2005) point out, it is not enough to confine the exercise of discourse analysis to internal linguistic deconstruction: discursive threads can be identified and subjected to analysis. Humes (2000) contends that attempts to explain the ideological context within which discourses are developed and come to dominance are an essential part of discourse analysis. It is argued that the ideological context controls the construction of a narrative that presents a preferential account of what happens in organizations.

As Humes (2002) explains,

> Certain narratives become dominant and serve as the received wisdom of educational
>
> institutions and systems. Discourse analysis can help to expose the political character

of official accounts of policy and challenge the ostensibly 'neutral' stance

adopted by bureaucrats. (p. 49)

Hence, Discourse analysis provides insights beyond the institutional context in which the language appears. The approach taken in this study reflects only one approach to discourse analysis. While there are many different approaches to discourse analysis (see, Fairclough, 1992, 1995, 2003; Gee, 2005; Schiffrin, 1994; van Dijk, 1997; Rogers, 2004), none of them including this one, are uniquely right (Gee, 2005). However, this study does draw on the work produced by a community of practice and engages a theory about the nature of language-in-use (Gee, 2005).

Discourses constitute a particular patchwork of thoughts, words and actions and interactions that give them a unique entity and promote specific identities. The intention of this research is to explore the patchwork of thoughts and words of teachers as they work within schools that engage a third age reform. For this study, questions about the origins of dominant discourse, the way in which discourse has been promoted, the ideological climate which has enabled a particular discourse to gain currency, and the groups that benefit from it are paramount in developing perspectives on what is happening to particular individuals within particular institutions at particular times. Various models of Discourse analysis has been employed effectively by Ball (1990; 1994), Hargreaves (1994) and Smyth (1995), among others. The Discourse models that are fundamental to Gee's (1992, 1996, 2005) discourse analysis provide the most suitable tools for the kind of inquiry that this study undertakes.

In exploring discourse analysis Gee (2005) explains that "situated meaning" and "Discourse models" are ways of talking about, constructing and construing the world. In effect, they are "tools of inquiry". Gee (2005) argues that "situated meaning" is a "thinking device" (p. 70). That is, "situated meaning" highlights the need to learn about the context that oral or written language is both used in and helps to create or construe. According to Gee (2005), as more is

learned about the material, social, cultural, and historical contexts in which words are uttered or written, the more open those words are to revision.

Gee (2005) contends that Discourse models are learned from the experiences we have as "we get on efficiently with our daily lives" (p. 71). From such experiences inferences are made about what is "normal" and what is "typical". Crucially, according to Gee (2005), these inferences are shaped and normed by the social and cultural groups to which we belong. These inferences and assumptions are then the premise of all our subconscious and deliberate actions. Discourse models present "appropriate" attitudes, viewpoints, beliefs and values of individuals or groups. They can also be about "appropriate" institutional and organisational structures and "appropriate" ways of communicating and interacting within institutions. Discourse models are not complete nor fully formed or even consistent, they are theories or explanations. The partiality and inconsistency of Discourse models makes sense because "we all have had a great many diverse and conflicting experiences; we all belong to different, sometimes conflicting groups; and we are all influenced by a wide array of groups, texts, institutions . . . . (Gee, 2005, p. 85). Discourse models are complex and flexibly organised; each model is associated with other models, in different ways in different settings. Discourse models are useful "tools of inquiry" for this current study because, as Gee (2005) explains, "they mediate between the "micro" (small) level interaction and the "macro" (large) level of institutions" (p. 71). By identifying Discourse models, the various enactments of a Discourse can be identified. That is, for example, by revising and reflecting on the "situated meaning" of the work stories of teachers (discourse) in a particular school, as this study does, it is possible to identify "Discourse models" or themes within these stories. These themes or Discourse models help identify how the characteristics of the meta narrative (Discourse) of the school are enacted. Only through classifying the data into Discourse models can this study explore the full effect of reform programs.

Differentiating between Discourse and discourse

From here on in this study a distinction is made concerning the use of Discourse with a "big D" and discourse with "little d". Using Discourses (with a big "D") helps explain that when language melds with non-language "stuff" specific identities and activities are enacted (Gee, 2005). For example, in subsequent chapters reference will be made to Managerial Discourse and Democratic Discourse. Managerial Discourse (with a big "D") explains that the language, ways of thinking and ways of interacting that are expressed through managerialism promotes particular behaviours among teachers. While Democratic Discourse (with a big "D") explains that the types of language, ways of thinking, ways of interacting that are expressed through democratic schooling promote particular behaviours among teachers. In each case the use of Discourse with a capital "D" helps explain that identities and activities are enacted as a result of identifying oneself as a member of meaningful group (Gee, 1992, 1996, 2005). While "little d" discourse refers to stretches of language or stories, "'Big D' Discourses are always language plus 'other stuff'" (Gee, 2005, p. 26). Popkewitz et al. (1982) explain the key role played by language in establishing norms of Discourse referring to the simple conversations that occur within schools. Within the conversations that happen in schools it is possible to recognize the difference between the norms constructed by the institution and the norms constructed by personal expression. As the reality of a school is constructed through language, analysing the language of the institution and the language of the teachers will assist in identifying the norms and rules that affect daily life in schools. Schools and the teachers who are connected to them construct realities of the world in which they live. As discussed earlier in this chapter, these realities represent the truth about how both the school and the teachers perceive themselves and their work. Discourse analysis provides the tools that allow those realities or truths to be opened up and examined.

Section Two - Justifying Discourse Analysis in this Study

The methodology for this study relies upon investigating the complex patterns of influence created by Discourse in order to reveal perspectives about what is happening in school beyond that which is assumed. Popkewitz (1998) suggests that if we

> . . . disrupt the way we tell the truth about ourselves as teachers we thus open a
>
> potential space for alternatives. (p. 24)

To disrupt the way "we tell the truth" this research suggests that interrogation of the different discourses will provide insights not readily available. In this vein, Slaughter (1989) argues that acknowledging and valuing alternative perspectives on the world relies on the systematic undermining of what appears natural and open and questions which appear obvious. Such approaches to evaluation are intrinsically positivistic in that such comparisons rely on quantitative methods to produce evidence of success. This study maintains that the discourse of the participants reflects hidden norms and attitudes that, when interrogated, reveal lines of tension between the assumed effects and other effects of a school reform program. Research concerned with the effectiveness of CLaSS (see Hill & Crévola, 2005) has focused only on comparing students' literacy levels with standardized scales, focusing on student outcomes. Hence, the potential for Discourse analysis to provide a different perspective on CLaSS and its effect on schools and teachers makes it the most suitable methodology for this study. Further, Discourse analysis is suitable for this study as it provides a framework that challenges the claims to knowledge the authors of CLaSS assume without discrediting or disputing the evidence CLaSS generates to validate those claims.

Claims on Knowledge

In their report, Hill and Crévola (2005) provide, what they consider to be, overwhelming evidence that literacy attainment levels of students in "CLaSS schools outperformed non-CLaSS schools" (p. 6). Using sophisticated multi-level analysis of statistics derived from data produced by CLaSS, Hill and Crévola (2005) claim that the longer schools are in CLaSS, the

greater the improvement in children's literacy attainment levels. Hill and Crévola (2005) hypothesize that the following factors appear to be most significant in accounting for the results. Firstly, the authors point to a school's commitment to a proven evidence-based strategy that allows for ownership at the local level and also enables the school to evaluate the ongoing impact of CLaSS, as reasons for such positive results. Success is also attributed to the willingness of schools to remain consistent with the authors' wishes in regard to implementing CLaSS and not change or modify the design. The phased roll out of CLaSS with its small but committed initial intake "paved the way for later intakes and ensured smoother implementation in succeeding years" (Hill & Crévola, 2005, p. 7). The six-tier professional development model equipped participants with "the knowledge to make sound professional judgments". Similarly, the apprentice model for training CLaSS facilitators reportedly contributes to the success of CLaSS by ensuring that the feedback given to schools by the facilitators is consistent and focused, particularly during the early stages of implementation. The use of data to drive improved instruction and well qualified teachers that were "receptive to the strategies and approaches promoted through CLaSS and willing to engage in significant, ongoing professional growth and development" (Hill & Crévola, 2005 p. 7) are noted as a significant factors in the success of CLaSS. For Hill and Crévola (2005) the final factors that contribute to the success of CLaSS are

> the instructional leadership role of the principal and the coaching and mentoring of the CLaSS coordinator in changing the beliefs and expectations among participants regarding the importance of early literacy and the moral and economic imperative for all students to achieve high standards. (p. 7)

Hill and Crévola (2005) conclude their report by stating that it is impossible to determine "with any precision the significance of each factor" (p. 46). However, Hill and Crévola (2005) emphasize that

the emergence of a education community that has a strong conviction about the
importance of early literacy and of the moral and economic imperative for all
students to achieve high standards have been both outcomes of participation in
CLaSS and a reason why CLaSS has been able to operate successfully. (p.46)

For Hill and Crévola (2005) "CLaSS has been a highly effective project with six intakes over
time, indicating that the success is replicable" (p. 46). Hill and Crévola (2005) contend that

Without question, beliefs and attitudes have changed dramatically among teachers and
administrators to the extent that propositions that were quite novel and challenging
when CLaSS was first implemented are now accepted without question. (p. 46)

Acceptance without question

This study, as mentioned before, is not concerned with, or even alluding to, value judgments
about the worth of the CLaSS program in relation to its impact as a tool for improving
literacy levels among primary aged children in Catholic Schools. This study is concerned
with gaining insights into the complexity of schooling, and the possibilities of reform
programs and generating knowledge. Hill and Crévola (2005) point out that many aspects of
CLaSS are accepted "without question". The effect uncritical acceptance of beliefs and
values that are espoused by CLaSS have on teaching and teachers is at the core of this study.
Engaging Discourse analysis in this study challenges the claims to knowledge which the
authors of CLaSS, system administrators, principals and CLaSS coordinators assume and
requires them to explain, justify and defend their own position and the demands they make of
others (Humes, 2000).

Uncovering layers of Meaning

The use of Discourse analysis, through its guiding questions, concepts, and methods allowed
the views of the teachers involved with processes of turning educational theory into practice
to be given credible voice in debates concerning the impact of dominant discourse emerging
from a particular tradition of school reform of which CLaSS is a pre-eminent example. In

short, the research dealt with how change takes place in schools. Discourse analysis can

be an effective tool in determining what is actually happening in classrooms and schools by

probing principals' and teachers' understanding of what is happening in the school.

As subsequent chapters of this thesis will demonstrate, within and around the explanations

and justifications offered by the principals and coordinators about CLaSS "spaces" exist

between the Discourses that dominate the school and the lived reality of the school. The

stories told by teachers occupy these spaces. These discursive spaces highlight and legitimate

teachers' accounts of what has changed in those schools as a result of CLaSS. While creating

discursive spaces for the voice of the teacher to be heard is not easy, particularly as the

CLaSS Discourse discourages them from straying out of its tightly defined boundaries, it is

not impossible. In this study, Discourse analysis was engaged in order to uncover layers of

values and meanings that were held securely and unseen within the confining boundaries of

the Discourse that supported the reform program and dominated the school community.

This research is committed to the exploration of new lines of research and in particular,

examining the effects of the dominant Discourse associated with reform programs more

critically, openly and comprehensively than convention has previously allowed. This is an

important test of the usefulness of these theoretical perspectives in education research. This

study takes the view that the above theoretical perspectives are ultimately useful only to the

extent that they help explain the nature and appeal of sector-endorsed reform programs and

elucidate insights into what happens to and in schools where such programs are implemented.

Summary

It is important to reiterate that this study is not an evaluation of the effectiveness of the

CLaSS program or an evaluation of the specific teaching strategies it advocates. This study is

asking the questions: What price is paid by those schools who wholeheartedly adopt the

model? What are the costs? Is it all as straight forward as it sounds? What other costs are

involved? For example, what are the implications for devaluing other components of the

curriculum? What are the effects on a school's capacity to respond to educational issues and dilemmas? Are there priorities apart from literacy that schools need to attend? When a school wholeheartedly embraces CLaSS does this effectively silence other voices? What happens when the beliefs and values of one program dominate a school?

The four schools selected for this study provide a framework for considering these questions. The intention of this study is not to dissuade schools from taking on programs like CLaSS, but to show that when systemically endorsed programs like CLaSS are promoted and adopted their impact on schools extends well beyond literacy. Indeed, CLaSS is a whole-school reform program and determining the effects of this reformation is at the heart of this study.

<div align="center">Section Three - The Specifics of this Study</div>

This study focuses on four schools from the Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst and the CLaSS documentation provided to the schools (see Hill & Crévola, 2001). Considering there would be at least 4 participants from each school it was decided that only four schools need to be included in the study in order to provide sufficient and manageable data. The selection of these four schools was established through discussions based on the literature generated from the CLaSS program between the researcher, the CEO Educational Consultant, key proponents of CLaSS and Principals.

Criteria for inclusion

In 1997, the Catholic Education Office within the Sandhurst Diocese reviewed several literacy improvement strategies to present to the Catholic schools it administers. Several programs, including CLaSS, were suggested as suitable programs for schools to participate in the literacy advance project. Extra funding was made available for schools participating in the literacy advance project regardless of their choice of program. Schools had a choice of several programs or the option of developing their own literacy improvement program. Several schools chose CLaSS and, at the commencement of this study, 13 diocesan schools identified themselves as CLaSS schools.

To determine possible candidates for this study CLaSS schools had to meet the following criteria:

1. Implemented CLaSS for at least 3 years; Being part of CLaSS for three years indicated that the school had maintained CLaSS beyond the official three year implementation program and had reformed the school in line with the wishes of the authors of CLaSS

2. Had the same principal and CLaSS Literacy Coordinator for at least 3 years; Having the same leaders in CLaSS insured consistency in regard to the schools commitment to CLaSS. Having the same principal and coordinator for three years meant that the people who initially engaged CLaSS have presided over its implementation and sanctioned its continuation.

3. Presented themselves as CLaSS schools in the diocese and beyond; CLaSS claims to be a reform program for schools and it is argued by the authors of CLaSS that schools will be different after implementing CLaSS. It was important to have schools that differentiated themselves from other schools through there involvement with CLaSS

4. Enjoyed a reputation as committed CLaSS school as seen by the diocesan education office and other CLaSS schools. CLaSS lays claims to knowledge about teaching that makes CLaSS superior to other schools. Not only did this study require schools that regarded themselves as different to other schools, this study required schools that believed that they were indeed operating out of a greater knowledge base than other schools.

The four schools chosen for this study saw themselves as making excellent progress in improving their literacy outcomes. The principals publicly attributed their success directly to the level of fidelity they showed to the CLaSS design. This public identification involved proclaiming their affiliation to CLaSS through the newsletters to parents, their websites,

school signage, and local media. The principals considered themselves to be advocates of CLaSS and willingly accepted invitations to be part of this study.

Although these schools are geographically up to 350 kilometers apart, they saw themselves as CLaSS affiliated schools, meeting with each other rather than with schools committed to other literacy programs when occasions provided. At the time of commencing CLaSS, all four schools had access to the same CLaSS facilitator from the Diocesan office. The facilitator was later to become a CLaSS coordinator in one of the schools. Even though the facilitator was no longer based in the Diocesan office and had no longer had an official role as a CLaSS facilitator within the Diocese, the schools asked this person to continue the role in an unofficial capacity. This person remained effective as a point of contact for the four schools.

<div align="center">Section Four- - Defining Data</div>

The data for this study includes the CLaSS documentation that is distributed to schools, transcriptions from interviews with principals, CLaSS coordinators and teachers from the four schools. The documentation *Children's Literacy Success Strategy (CLaSS)* (Hill and Crévola, 2001) details the philosophy of CLaSS and explains in detail the processes schools must adopt in order to successfully implement CLaSS. All schools have access to multiple copies of this document and make exclusive reference to it. This document as well as *The Children's Literacy Success Strategy (CLaSS). A research report on the first six years of a large-scale reform initiative*, (Hill & Crévola, 2005) are important data and this will be elaborated on directly. School principals, CLaSS coordinators and teachers using CLaSS from four schools were asked to give accounts of their lives working in a school that engaged CLaSS. The transcripts from the subsequent interviews constitute the main data. Details of how the interviews were conducted follow the elaborations on the documents as data.

Documents

Analysis of the sector-sponsored, documentation (Children's Literacy Success Strategy (CLaSS), *Hill and Crévola, 2001)* that accompanies CLaSS helps identify the dominant discourse and highlights the program's "third age" orientations. Analysis of the official documentation demonstrated how CLaSS validated, presented and depicted itself and other programs. August, 2005 saw the release of *The Children's Literacy Success Strategy (CLaSS). A research report on the first six years of a large-scale reform initiative*, (Hill & Crévola, 2005). Both these documents are used to inform this study because they provide insights into how the underlying neo-liberal and neo-conservative assumptions and ideologies of third age programs dominate the language, conscious actions and modes of analysis used and accepted by those involved with the CLaSS. These two documents shape the Discourse that defines the actions and of effective and schools, principals, and students.

Interviews

From within the four schools involved in this study, 16 semi-structured interviews were conducted. The principals, CLaSS coordinators and teachers were interviewed. The purpose of the interviews was to provide opportunities for interviewees to give account of their lived experience from within the school. Each participant was asked a series of questions during a 30 minute interview. All interviews were recorded digitally to ensure the accuracy of the data collection, capture the immediacy of the situation, protect the participant from misinterpretation, permit the interviewer to be more attentive to the interviewee, and help maintain the flow and pace of the interview. Transcripts were drawn from the recordings and then entered into NVivo. The NVivo program was used as an interactive electronic data base that provided instrumentation for the comprehensive coding of data which facilitated deep levels of analysis.

Each participant was treated as an unique individual and interview questions were

personalised in a manner that was more appropriate for each interviewee (Denzin, 1989;

Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The participant details are included in Table 3

Table 3.

Sites and Participants

Site	Participants
School A	Principal A
	CLaSS coordinator A
	Teacher A1
	Teacher A2
School B	Principal B
	CLaSS coordinator B
	Teacher B1
	Teacher B2
School C	Principal C
	CLaSS coordinator C
	Teacher C1
	Teacher C2
School D	Principal D
	CLaSS coordinator D
	Teacher D1
	Teacher D2

Sample of Questions

Interviewees were given the same questions but they were not structured or ordered in exactly

the same way. The following questions were used as the basis to initiate interviews with all

participants. Pilots interviews with Principal A and Principal B foregrounded the

development of these questions.

- The CLaSS documents talk directly about the role of the principal as motivator, and

  about enduring through the hard times. Were there hard times during the

  implementation of CLaSS here?

- What would you expect a principal to do in the face of strong or enduring resistance?

- Have any teachers wavered with their support? If so how is this (or would this be) handled?

- Why do you think schools move away from CLaSS?

- What would happen if a cluster of schools said they are dropping CLaSS?

- The two hour literacy block seems to be quite rigid and structured (data driven lessons etc). What would you imagine a classroom would look like during this time?

Data gathering schedule

Data were gathered over a six month period in 2002. The following table outlines the stages involved in the collection of the data.

Table 4.

Tasks and Purpose

Stage	Task	Action	Research issue addressed
1.	Sector authored material and Sector sponsored literature to schools concern CLaSS and its design and implementation	Analysis of the sector-authored material concerning CLaSS and the subsequent sector sponsored literature issued to schools concerning the implementation of the CLaSS model.	What values and meanings are inherent in CLaSS are expressed through the CLaSS documentation?
2.	Pilot interviews	Short interviews with Principal A and Principal B to pilot and develop questions.	To what degree do principals accept CLaSS?
3.	Interviews with the four Principals	Interview principals following semi-structured format	How are the values of third age programs expressed by the principals?
4.	Interviews with the four CLaSS coordinators	Interview coordinators following semi-structured format	How do the expectations of CLaSS interact with school on a daily operational level?
5.	Interviews with teachers	Interview teachers following semi-structured format	What is the impact of CLaSS on the daily lives of teachers?
6.	Data Analysis	Transcribe interviews and use NVivo as coding instrument. Identifying Discourse models	To what degree is CLaSS accepted? What are the effects of the acceptance of the particular values and beliefs CLaSS brings to the school?

Section Five - Data Analysis

The repeated interrogation of the data and the subsequent classification of that data into different types of Discourse models and Discourses, as facilitated by engaging discourse analysis, led to a gradual reduction in the quantity of data. The selection and classification of a discourse is not a final or single instance. As Harvey (1990) notes, "it only emerges in the course of the analysis…and is only "correct" in the sense that it provides. . . the best focus [at that time]" (p. 30). In effect the approach adopted in this thesis was to identify core concepts as they emerged from analysis of the data.

CLaSS documentation, Principal and CLaSS coordinator data

The data from the CLaSS documentation, the principals, CLaSS coordinators, and teachers were examined as document through NVIVO and repeatedly reviewed. During the reviewing process, I repeatedly asked myself the following questions.

1. What Discourse models are relevant here? What values and beliefs can I assume that this text represents?

2. What sort of Discourse models are used within the text to make value judgements about CLaSS or other programs?

3. Are there competing Discourse models at play within this text? Whose interest are the Discourse models representing?

4. What Discourse do these Discourse models produce?

5. What sort of experiences, texts, interactions could have given rise to these Discourse models?

6. How are these Discourse models helping to reproduce, transform or create the social, cultural and institutional relationships? (Gee, 2005)

Through repeated revision of this data and considering the "situated meaning" of the data, connections to the themes that characterize third age reform programs started to emerge. As discussed in the *Review of Literature* chapter third age programs can be expressed in several

Discourse models that focus on; School Culture; Single Minded Focus; Resource

Intensive; Ensuring Compliance; Removing Threats and Managing People; Cultivating an

Image of Superiority; New Professional Identities. The data from the CLaSS documentation,

principals and CLaSS coordinators correlated strongly with those Discourse models. Chapter

Five of this study further explains these Discourse models and demonstrates the particular

thinking, attitudes, beliefs and values of the principals that constitute each model. The first

section of Chapter Six applies explores the particular thinking, attitudes, beliefs and values of

the CLaSS coordinators. These Discourse models are associated to each other and constitute

what became known as the Public Discourse of CLaSS.

Teachers' data

When applying the analytical questions used with the teachers, data lines of tension became

evident and alternative narratives outside of the Public Discourse started to emerge.

In the interviews with teachers, new levels of discourse emerged. Sometimes teachers'

comments mirrored the Public Discourse about CLaSS as set out by principals and CLaSS

coordinators. At other times, teachers were able to reflect upon difficulties that they had

experienced with settling into CLaSS, adapting their practice to the requirements of the

CLaSS model and maintaining the level of commitment expected of them by the principals.

These practical and professional concerns form a distinct kind of Discourse that was not

evident in interviews with principals and CLaSS coordinators. One could imagine that

teachers might be asked by principals and CLaSS coordinators to say how things were going,

and teachers in turn would expect to receive support and encouragement. On the other hand,

there were occasions when teachers discussed ways in which they had modified, adapted and

changed CLaSS. They also discussed conflicts between the CLaSS model and their own

beliefs about teaching and literacy. These are issues that are outside and beyond the thinking,

speaking and acting that are sanctioned by CLaSS and could not be captured by the Discourse

models used to analyze the principals' comments. To analyze the teachers' comments, new

and different Discourse model were needed. In creating these new models, the researcher's previous study, called the St Monica's Study, provided three Discourse models that are suitable to this current study.

The St Monica's Study

As mentioned in the opening chapter, St Monica's Primary School has had a commitment to a multi-age teaching philosophy for approximately 15 years. This multi-age philosophy influenced the school's teaching, learning and classroom structures. Over several years a discourse developed within the school community to maintain, explain, promote and defend this multi-age reform program. This discourse actively set boundaries and defined the work and associated behaviour of teachers within the school. In order to investigate the influence of this discourse, several members of staff, including the principal were interviewed, and questioned about their beliefs and understandings of the multi-age philosophy as expressed by the school, as well of the implications of this philosophy on their own classroom practices. The St Monica's Study identified three Discourse models: Public, Personal, and Practical (Rafferty & Stephens, 2002). These Discourse models provided an extremely useful perspective of teachers' experience of and reflection.

Three Discourse models

In this study, the Public Discourse model presented the rational perspective of the CLaSS philosophy with its own intrinsic logic. The Personal Discourse model showed how the practices and structures of teachers and their classroom management intersect with CLaSS practice, and created space for teachers to express and sometimes to qualify their commitment to the school's multi-age philosophy. The Practical Discourse model highlighted those changes made by teachers to reconcile their beliefs and understandings of teaching and learning with those beliefs and understandings about teaching and learning prescribed by the dominant Discourse of CLaSS. Through analysis of the three levels of discourse, a continuum of the teachers' values and beliefs about teaching and learning emerged. These values and

beliefs could then be viewed and contrasted with prescribed values about teaching and learning that the school publicized.

As the values and beliefs that abound within the school were contrasted, it became clear that in fact, there were two competing systems of rationality. One system of rationality is prescribed by CLaSS and is evident in the Public Discourse of CLaSS. The Public Discourse and associated behaviours it requires teachers to adopt are best be expressed through contemporary notions of Managerial Discourse and entrepreneurial identities as advocated by Sachs (2001). The other system of rationality is derived from an eclectic mix of the teachers' own beliefs and experiences and is evident in the teachers' Personal and Practical Discourse models. This second system of rationality is best be expressed through contemporary notions of Democratic Discourse and activist identities as advocated by Sachs (2001).

This current study reconciles what the school sanctioned and valued about teaching and learning as expressed through the Managerial Discourse, with what teachers reported as happening in their classrooms and expressed through Democratic Discourse with some understanding as to why there were contradictions between the two. Chapter Six of this study further explores the effects on Managerial and Democratic Discourses and demonstrate the particular thinking, attitudes, beliefs and values, and identity the teachers that constitute each Discourse.

Bringing findings together

After analyzing the data through the various Discourse models mentioned previously it was necessary to bring the findings of the research together. As chapters five and six will reveal, all the Discourse models presented a range of attitudes, beliefs and values that abound in the schools. Within each school the Discourse models reflect differing perspectivities on broad contemporary issues on schooling, with particular emphasis on teacher professional identity. These differing perspectives on teacher professional identity extended to a range of institutional configurations being expressed through each school. That is, the Discourse

models revealed that the within the schools the nature, purpose and most appropriate form of school organization was contested. In order to explore the effects of these differing institutional configurations this study relies on the three-way typology offered by Popkewitz et al. (1982).

Three institutional configurations

In their evaluation of Individually Guided Education (IGE) schools, Popkewitz et al. (1982) identified three institutional configurations that schools adopted as a result of implementing the reform. These institutional configurations were intended to identify common institutional characteristics of schools and key underlying principles on which schools operate. The first institutional configuration was technical schooling (in which techniques became the focus of school activity). The second was constructive schooling (in which collaborative ideals dominated). The third configuration was illusory schooling (in which activities and purpose seemed unrelated). Importantly, identification of the three categories of institutional configuration of schools demonstrated that the schools actually developed several unintended outcomes. Using the institutional configuration of schools, it is possible to identify the influence of particular ideologies on teachers' patterns of behaviour. They are not intended to represent a continuum. For example, while it may appear that Popkewitz et al. (1982) are themselves more comfortable with the underlying principles of constructive schools, it is not correct to assume that constructive schools are "good" or "better" schools while technical schools and illusory schools are flawed.

Exploring ideological underpinnings

The Popkewitz et al. (1982) study stands outside SER and SIR and provides an enduring perspective of school change regardless of the philosophical origin of a reform program. The institutional configurations developed by Popkewitz et al. (1982) are extremely useful to the final section of this study. Through the comparison of technical, constructive and illusory schools, the influence of ideology that drives reform programs on the meaning of daily school

activities in the focus school becomes apparent and allows a clearer exploration of the ideological underpinnings of reform programs.

Unresolved questions and issues

The Popkewitz et al. (1982) study points to the importance of understanding how sets of relationships affect institutional life and what meaning they give to reform. Popkewitz et al. (1982) found that the specific content and dynamics of relationships contained unresolved questions and issues. Similarly, this study found that teachers within the different CLaSS schools demonstrated different and potentially conflicting perceptions of their occupational role and the purpose of schooling. The conflicting perspectives of the role of the teacher and the purpose of schooling are examined with the context of Managerial and Democratic Discourses. The implications of teachers' developing different and potentially conflicting perceptions about roles will be explored in chapter seven.

<div align="center">Section Six - Other Considerations</div>

The following section will present the considerations that contribute to the trustworthiness of this study. This study was conducted in ethical ways and presents truthful and credible portrayals of the lived experience of the participants. Firstly, this research was conducted in accordance with the policies of the Australian Catholic University Ethics Committee. As the participants in the research were members of school communities in Diocesan schools, approval was sought from the appropriate bodies within the Catholic Education Office. Participants in the study were assured that their participation was voluntary, and that they could withdraw at any time throughout the research. No school or individual has been identified through the study; pseudonyms have been used to protect anonymity.

The interpretation of data through discourse analysis provides what Gee (2005) refers to as "social judgements and adjudications" (p. 115). These social judgements and adjudications are composed in "language-plus-situation" and offer a certain interpretation of data that is meaningful in certain ways but not others. This kind of analysis is constantly "open to further

discussion and dispute, and their status goes up or down with time as work goes on in

the field" (Gee, 2005, p. 113). In this study trustworthiness was grounded in its presentation

of credible portrayals of the constructed realities that are plausible to those who constructed

them. The credibility of these portrayals is thus the basis of this study's trustworthiness.

Denzin (1989) argues, that

> . . . validity may be an inappropriate term in a critical research context, as it simply
>
> reflects a concern for acceptance within the positivist concept of research rigour. (p.
>
> 287)

Giroux (1983) surmises the postmodern rejection, "methodological correctness will never

guarantee valid data, nor does it reveal power interests within a body of information" (p. 17).

Such arguments have led to *trustworthiness* stemming from truthfulness becoming the most

appropriate word to use in the context of this type of research. This study has a different set

of assumptions about research compared to traditional research. In this study variables were

not strictly defined and manipulated, assumptions were not made and tested.

> Truth and truthfulness are commonly invoked in judging particular aspects of the
>
> research process . . . . When we judge a research project solely on the apparent
>
> truthfulness of its parts, we neglect its larger purpose; generating new knowledge
>
> about education and schooling. (Wagner, 1993, p. 15)

In an effort to be trustworthy, this research generates new knowledge by asking the right

questions to the right people to reveal any possible tension between the dominant discourse

promoted by CLaSS and other discourse generated by the teachers. The right people are, in

this case, the teachers at the living end of the CLaSS program. The voice of these

professionals at the "coalface", within the educational complexity of the school were

acknowledged, defined and given validity as a necessary element in the construction of the

school's "reality". However, the conclusions drawn from discourse analysis are always

tentative (Gee, 2005).

Limitations of this study

An interview is usually a meaningful conversation between two people…that is directed by one to get information (Bogdan & Bilken, 1982, p. 133). Patton (1990) maintains that "The purpose of an interview is to find out what is in someone else's mind . . . to access the perspective of the person being interviewed" (p. 278). Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe an interview as "a conversation with a purpose" (p. 268). From this conventional and positivistic perspective, the researcher asking the questions is in control of the situation. However, considering "that the very relationship between language and meaning is contextually grounded, unstable, ambiguous and subject to endless re-interpretations the researcher is presented with "intractable uncertainties" " (Mishler, 1991, p.260). These uncertainties are unavoidable consequence of engaging discourse analysis, they are also the studies greatest limitation.

Following on, Scheurich (1995) maintains that,

> Even holding people, place and time constant, however, will not guarantee that stable, unambiguous communication occurred in all or even most of the interview . . . Human interactions and meaning are neither unitary nor teleological. Instead interactions and meaning are a shifting carnival of ambiguous complexity, a fast moving feast of differences interrupting differences. (pp.240-243)

This study is one of many possible interpretations of the data. Application of these analytical tools to this data by other researchers could well result in different outcomes. As Denzin (1989) explains

> Human beings are complex, and their lives are ever changing; the more methods we use to study them, the better our chances to gain some understanding of how they construct their lives and the stories they tell us about them . . . to learn about people we must treat them as people and they will work with us to help create accounts of their lives. (p.268)

The deconstruction of the metanarrative, through discourse analysis is for examination of the metanarrative not for its termination. Descriptions and explanations can be valid, according to Denzin (1989) "so long as one does not mistake local conventions for (a new) universal truth" (p. 1032). In this instance, a reading of this research that alludes to a negative assessment of (or indeed an abandonment of) the CLaSS program as a tool for improving literacy in the early years would be misguided. This study is designed to explore the values and attitudes that emerge within a particular school as it engages the CLaSS program. The limitations of this study should be apparent. For example, the study does not advocate a preferred position in what is currently regarded as the "literacy wars" – between the relative merits of whole language and phonics driven approaches to literacy attainment. The methodology of this study did not include direct classroom observations nor provide a detailed demographic analysis of teachers and students in the three schools. The study did not gather and analyse test data concerning students' literacy attainment. These avenues may have added other dimensions to the findings of this study but to pursue these directions in any depth would have been to undertake a different kind of study reflecting different purposes and methodologies.

CHAPTER FOUR

Setting the Scene

This chapter discusses how the all the schools involved in this project displayed levels

of fidelity to the CLaSS program. The following references to the official documentation give

some indication of how CLaSS validates, presents and depicts itself. It is important to note

that the teachers who are responsible for implementing CLaSS in the three schools studied

represent beginning teachers and teachers with up to 30 years of experience. There was no

particular demographic that identified typical CLaSS teachers. On the other hand, CLaSS

coordinators were in every case highly experienced. No CLaSS coordinator had less than 10

years teaching experience and all three principals held non teaching positions.

School A

Interviewees: Principal A; CLaSS coordinator A; class teacher A1; class teacher A2;

School A has approximately 200 students and is situated in a rural Victorian town with a

population of between 2500 and 3500. The community has a strong rural base and the

enrolments are drawn from the outlying farming district as well as from within the town. The

school promotes itself as taking pride in providing a caring, enjoyable and safe environment

with a strong emphasis on the individual student's needs both pastorally and educationally.

Special mention is made of the school's participation in the CLaSS initiative in school based

promotional material. The school joined the third intake of CLaSS and has been involved

with the program for three years. Initially, three teachers (including class teacher A1 and

class teacher A2) were trained in CLaSS and in that first year took charge of CLaSS for Prep

and Year 1. Subsequently four new staff members have joined the program as the students

moved through the school. These new members of staff had not participated in the formal

CLaSS Professional Development training with Hill and Crévola. They were trained at the

school by working closely with the original members of the CLaSS Team.

The school claims, in its promotional literature, that testing indicates that its literacy attainment surpasses Australia Literacy Standards.

The beliefs, practices and structures of the CLaSS are available to parents in the form of a handout pamphlet, which says:

- all students can achieve high standards of literacy if given sufficient time and support.

- all teachers can teach to high standards and schools can underwrite conditions for assistance

- high expectations and early intervention are essential.

The Principal of School A states clearly that the school is determined to pursue excellence and connects involvement with CLaSS directly with this pursuit. The Principal is the first lay Principal of the school after the religious order of sisters that established the school relinquished governance of the school to the Catholic Education Office (CEO). After the sisters withdrew from the school, the new Principal was appointed by the CEO. He joined the school with five new staff members in 2000 and 3 staff members remained at the school after the sisters withdrew. The Principal indicated that his first priority was to change the culture of the school in regard to teaching and learning. Indeed, the Principal initiated standardized literacy testing throughout the school and the results, according to the Principal, indicated that literacy levels throughout the school were poor and needed to be improved:

> The results of the literacy testing and pre-testing were very disappointing. We came together as a staff and I showed them the results. I asked the question, what are we to do with this school? (Principal A, paragraph 5)

The school board was involved in revising the school's vision and mission statements. From surveys of parents, staff and students, the Principal said that it was clear the community wanted the school to be committed to excellence in regard to teaching and learning. CLaSS is seen as the vehicle to provide the school with the capacity to attain its core mission. The principal indicated that the financial costs of being involved with CLaSS placed considerable

pressure on the school's resources but he added that the community was committed to
the program:

> In the very first statement (vision and mission documents) we state that we are
>
> committed to excellence in teaching and learning. As a result anything less is simply
>
> not good enough – CLaSS provides a path to excellence in literacy development, we are
>
> committed to it. (Principal A, paragraph 41)

Further to this, the principal publicly promotes the level of fidelity and confidence the school
has in the CLaSS model:

> During introductory tours for new enrolments, we explain the CLaSS model carefully
>
> and make a point of letting prospective parents know that we do literacy particularly
>
> well. (Principal A, paragraph 146)

Uniformity among the teachers concerning participation in the professional development
component of CLaSS is also promoted by the principal who emphasizes key elements of the
CLaSS model and how they contribute to quality control and fidelity:

> The principal gets CLaSS professional development; the CLaSS coordinator gets
>
> ongoing CLaSS professional development and the teachers get CLaSS professional
>
> development. All this together combines to ensure that we all walk the right path.
>
> Where CLaSS professional development is concerned and our understandings about
>
> literacy is concerned we all hear the same thing. (Principal A, paragraph 59)

In providing an historical context for the school's decision to engage in the CLaSS model, the
principal explains:

> The priority was to change the culture of the school concerning teaching and learning.
>
> Prior to the engagement of CLaSS there was not a great emphasis on "teaching and
>
> learning classrooms". (Principal A, paragraph 15)

The Principal confirms the connection between the school's Vision and Mission statements
and what CLaSS aims to do:

We have one obligation with CLaSS, we do this for the betterment of the children.

(Principal A, paragraph 45)

It is important to note that Principal A has stated several times that CLaSS is a vehicle to bring about a "change in the culture of the school concerning teaching and learning" (paragraph, 15). Following on, it is not surprising that through strategic staffing arrangements advocates of CLaSS are moved into other targeted sections of the school:

The Year 3 and 4 teachers think it is fantastic, and have a good knowledge of that model. The current Year 3 and Year 4 teachers started in CLaSS, this helped change the culture of the school a lot. . . .CLaSS has some benefits for all our classrooms.

(Principal A, paragraph 88)

It is clear that this school wants CLaSS to be model of reform for all year levels within the school.

School B

Interviewees; Principal; CLaSS coordinator; class teacher B1; class teacher B2

This school is located in northeast Victoria and has a student enrolment of approximately 180 students. The school readily identifies itself as a CLaSS school. The CLaSS logo appears on the school's letterhead as well as the weekly newsletter to families. Promotional material relating to the school also displays the CLaSS logo. The beliefs, practices and structure of the CLaSS model are prominently displayed in the foyer of the school. After visiting schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne that were using CLaSS, this school was enthusiastic about becoming part of the second intake of CLaSS in 1999.

The principal had been at the school for several years preceding the adoption and implementation of CLaSS. The commitment of the school towards CLaSS has been constant. The school has had the same CLaSS coordinator since CLaSS was engaged. Prior to coming to School B, the CLaSS coordinator was the Diocesan CLaSS Facilitator. In this capacity she

was a key support person for schools in the diocese that were adopting CLaSS. Since the interviews, this CLaSS coordinator has being appointed principal to another Diocesan school. None of the teachers who were directly involved with the original implementation of CLaSS is now directly involved with CLaSS. Teacher B1 has been CLaSS trained through the official CLaSS professional development program. Teacher B2 has only received training within the school. The teachers that have engaged in CLaSS have been carefully selected and explicitly told that total fidelity to CLaSS is required of them. The staff members are chosen to be part of the CLaSS team for reasons relating to their receptiveness towards CLaSS. The principal also indicated a young female teacher who was pregnant was quickly moved out of the CLaSS team (Principal B, paragraph 62). She was replaced by a teacher who had an adult family and was well established in the wider community and was therefore less likely to take maternity leave. This teacher's potential to be a long term participant in CLaSS was appealing to the principal, and in his, view greatly added to the stability and effectiveness of the CLaSS team. Similarly, as the school prepared to engage in CLaSS one Year 1 was very questioning and reluctant to engage CLaSS practices. The principal saw this as a "potential threat to the stability of the CLaSS team" (Principal B, paragraph 67), and took the opportunity to introduce a new member into the CLaSS team by assigning the teacher to a Year level not directly involved with CLaSS.

According to the principal there are several financial challenges arising from the school's involvement with CLaSS. The principal also expressed frustration concerning what he believed to be inadequacies of the existing funding formula applied by the Diocesan Education Office in regard to literacy. The Principal explained that CLaSS required a CLaSS coordinator to have a 0.5 teaching load (thus freeing the teacher to use the other 0.5 time to coordinate CLaSS) and that the existing funding to the school did not cover the expense of this resource.

To facilitate the CLaSS program within the school's existing budget, the Principal decided to return to teaching duties for 0.5 of a load to make this happen. Also the cost of frequently transporting staff to, and accommodating them in Melbourne for the official 3 year professional development component of CLaSS, with the authors of the program, provided a significant additional financial challenge to the school. The principal continued to explain that the school has some autonomy in setting its own budget within the funds received from the Diocesan Office. As a result of the school's involvement with CLaSS, all resources needed by CLaSS were prioritized above other aspects of the school's general teaching programs.

The "money factor", according to Principal B, was a major contributing factor behind many schools "dropping" CLaSS, or not taking it on fully. This Principal indicated that the financial investment required for CLaSS was well known to the school community and the community was prepared to make the necessary sacrifices. Consequently, CLaSS remains the only major project in which the school participates. Any other projects or programs the school looks at are analyzed to determine how well they would fit into the existing mechanisms within the CLaSS design and within the financial constraints that are associated with being involved with CLaSS. The Principal prefers not to use the word "marketing", but stated that CLaSS is "a great promotional tool" for the school (Principal B, paragraph 165). The Principal says ("guarantees") that the school's involvement with CLaSS is mentioned to prospective parents. Existing parents are regarded by the Principal as the strongest advocates for the CLaSS program in the school. The significance of the CLaSS design in relation to the organization and structure of this school is evident in the following statement made by the principal:

> Our whole teaching and learning policy now is based around the CLaSS design.
>
> (Principal B, paragraph 19)

Further, Principal B explained that:

We are working towards ensuring that we apply the CLaSS model throughout the whole school. We hope to apply the CLaSS model when we focus on numeracy. (Principal B, paragraph 16)

In defining how the CLaSS model manifests itself, the principal explained:

Through the CLaSS model, all children are given sufficient time support. Teaching is focused. Home/school relationships are strong. Classroom strategies are consistent, and a model of strong leadership is given. (Principal B, paragraph 56)

This principal insists that the school not only shows great fidelity to the CLaSS model but also takes opportunities to challenge all schools to engage in the CLaSS model:

At this school we are very supportive of the CLaSS model and advocate that strongly, if "you are on a winner" you should promote that for the good of the other schools within the system. (Principal B, paragraph 89)

School C

Interviewees: Principal C; CLaSS coordinator C; Class Teacher C1; Class Teacher C2

This school is located in a large regional centre, and strongly promotes itself as a CLaSS school. The school's letterhead, for example, carries the CLaSS logo. The school has a student enrolment of 385 students. There are 5 government primary schools and two other Catholic schools in the town. The school uses its association with CLaSS as a defining characteristic of its operations and as a marketing tool when attracting enrolments. The school has been committed to CLaSS for five years and was part of the second intake commencing in 1999. This principal explains that the school receives around $12 000 for literacy from the Diocese and spends in excess of $60 000 on implementing CLaSS as their literacy program. CLaSS is the priority for the school and was the only initiative operating within the school. The school is looking toward revising its approach to numeracy with a view to ensuring that the approach the school takes with numeracy will emulate the CLaSS model.

Until recently the school has experienced minimal staff turnover during its involvement with CLaSS. The principal, the CLaSS coordinator, the Reading Recovery teacher, and three classroom teachers participated in the initial professional development in Melbourne. This core group remained together for the next 2 years. Two of the classroom teachers moved to other areas of the school and two more teachers joined what the principal refers to as the "core group". This core group has consisted of the principal, CLaSS coordinator, Reading Recovery Teacher and one of the CLaSS teachers. These four, together with one additional classroom teacher comprised the school's leadership team. Since the first round of interviews the principal has left the school and a subsequent interview was conducted with the new principal. This principal will be identified as "New Principal". All other references belong to the CLaSS foundation principal. (Designated Principal C)

Principal C offers some explanation on how the school has maintained the integrity of its CLaSS program:

> We all made a strong commitment to CLaSS when it was first initiated. The induction
>
> programs we offer new staff are extremely thorough. (Principal C, paragraph 109)

The principal refers to the CLaSS model's ability to provide data about children's literacy progress and economic pressure as factors contributing to the school's engagement of the model:

> It is about accountability. If you want funding, you need to prove the effectiveness of
>
> programs - CLaSS schools can do this. (Principal C, paragraph 128)

When asked if CLaSS had made an impact beyond literacy, the principal responded:

> Absolutely, I think that the actual model, the CLaSS design brief, we've overlaid that in
>
> a lot of areas, and use that as our model for evaluating what we're doing in other areas.
>
> (Principal C, paragraph 130)

In defining how the model is used in the school the principal offered this insight:

It is not a manual on how to teach literacy but a selection of strategies that help us

move kids from one point to another, and acknowledges that all kids have different

strengths and weaknesses. We are committed to those strategies. (Principal C,

paragraph 8)

In summing up the reasons for the school's high level of commitment to the CLaSS model,

the principal offered the following:

I've always been a strong believer in doing only a few things at a time and doing them

really well rather than doing a lot of things poorly. We try hard to make sure we do

CLaSS well. CLaSS allows us to do literacy really well. (Principal C, paragraph 8)

The principal and the school's potential CLaSS coordinator went to an initial Hill and

Crévola (2001) presentation of their early literacy project (which preceded CLaSS). The

principal said that, even at those early stages, he could sense the direction Hill and Crévola

were heading and it was important for the school to be ready for any subsequent initiatives.

School D

Interviewees; Principal D; CLaSS coordinator D; Class Teacher D1; Class teacher D2;

This school is located in a provincial city of approximately 150,000 and heavily promotes

itself as a CLaSS school. The school has a student enrolment of 470 students. There are

several government primary schools as well as other Catholic schools in the town. The school

uses its association with CLaSS as a defining characteristic of its operations and as a

marketing tool when attracting enrolments.

The principal was appointed to the school in 2000 when the school was in its second year of

CLaSS. This principal, although newly appointed, was familiar with and supportive of

CLaSS as his previous school was part of the first intake of CLaSS. The previous principal at

this school had proposed that the school be part of the first intake in 1998. However, during

1997, the Principal felt that the resistance to CLaSS from the teachers in Prep and Year 2 was

likely to inhibit the implementation of CLaSS. Therefore, at the end of 1997 the principal and

the CLaSS coordinator announced to all staff that the school would be joining the

second intake of CLaSS in 1999 and teachers supportive of CLaSS would be required in the

early years' classrooms. The staff was provided with CLaSS professional development during

1998. Any teachers who had doubts about any aspect of CLaSS and/or felt that they could not

fully support CLaSS were advised that they would be assigned to classes in the upper

primary. Consequently, those teachers showing a willingness to engage in CLaSS were

attached to Prep, Year 1 and Year 2 classes. As a result, the end of the 1998 school year saw

considerable movement among teachers within the school in regard to their classroom

responsibilities. Since then staff movement has been minimal. Two teachers initially involved

in CLaSS have left the school. An existing staff member, who had developed an interest in

CLaSS, was reassigned to a CLaSS classroom, and another staff member was appointed from

outside the school to join the CLaSS team. Although not formally trained in CLaSS through

the official CLaSS professional development program, this teacher is held up by the Principal

as an example of the transforming effect that CLaSS can have on an experienced teacher.

CLaSS Teacher C1 has been part of the CLaSS program since inception. Likewise, the role of

CLaSS coordinator at this school has been carried out by the same teacher from inception.

According to Principal C, the coordinator is "extremely supportive of and even passionate

about" the CLaSS model (paragraph 25).

The school finds it financially challenging to maintain the 0.5 time release for the CLaSS

coordinator; and the principal doubts that the school has the ability to maintain the 0.5

loading for the Coordinator into the future. Nevertheless, the principal believes that

commitment to CLaSS is so strong that the removal of the 0.5 time release for the CLaSS

coordinator would not diminish the school's commitment to CLaSS. The principal explained

that the school's high level of commitment to CLaSS would override any minor alterations to

the resource structuring. He anticipated that the CLaSS coordinator could assume fulltime

classroom teaching with CLaSS, and still be effective as the leader of CLaSS team.

This Principal placed great value on literacy development for his students. Indeed, he expressed a sense of urgency about the contribution CLaSS was making to the school's literacy program and beyond:

> If we don't get literacy right, then we should just kiss the other curriculum areas good-bye. (Principal D, paragraph 25)

When asked about the high level of commitment shown to the CLaSS model the principal responded:

> Because of the results I have seen, and tracking student progress, I am convinced that the CLaSS model is the best way to teach literacy. (Principal C, paragraph 96)

The principal was invited to offer an opinion concerning the reasons why some neighbouring schools had ceased implementing CLaSS. His response clearly indicates the high level of fidelity he believes his school has to CLaSS:

> Because of financial issues, I do know that some schools are skimping and saving when it comes to CLaSS. Basically they're not remaining true to the program. I don't know what effect that is having on the children's learning. That is not happening here. The literacy coordinator and I are convinced of the worth of this program and while we're both here it's not going to change. We will use the model as it is meant to be used. (Principal C, paragraph 100)

Summary, each of the four schools comes to CLaSS with its own history and local needs. All four schools have no doubts about the effectiveness and value of CLaSS as a means for improving children's literacy. In addition these schools embrace the structures and practices of CLaSS as a model for whole school reform. The principals share the beliefs and understandings that are fundamental to CLaSS. All four schools see themselves as implementing CLaSS totally, and criticize other schools that have not been able to sustain CLaSS.

Fidelity is Paramount

The importance on fidelity to the CLaSS model will now be examined. For advocates of CLaSS success is completely dependent on the faithful implementation of the model. Fidelity to the model is evident as all four schools place importance on obtaining data to drive teaching, fully engage the CLaSS model, apply pressure to teachers to change, define effective teaching according to the CLaSS model, and promote organization and structures prescribed by CLaSS as the key to school effectiveness. These four schools also subscribe, without question, to the view that poor literacy levels among children have a "logical remedy" and that this remedy is supplied by CLaSS. The four schools accept and promote definitions of effectiveness put forward in the dominant discourse of CLaSS as presented in CLaSS documentation as the only rational response available to schools.

Advocates of CLaSS

These four schools in particular drew attention to the need to implement CLaSS fully and faithfully and at times criticized other schools whose fidelity to the model was seen to be lacking. The schools adopted the model with the level of compliance that was expected by the authors of CLaSS. The schools also expressed skepticism about successful literacy improvement made in non-CLaSS schools. The allocation of funds to designated key learning areas, and even other literacy programs, was seen as wasteful. The schools identify themselves to their own educational community as advocates of CLaSS. In summary, the four schools regard CLaSS as the only logical and rational response to issues facing schools in regard to improving literacy attainment levels and school reform.

Improving literacy

The primary aim of CLaSS is to improve literacy attainment through ensuring that a shared set of beliefs concerning literacy, literacy attainment and effective teaching dominates the school. It is anticipated that, by operating out of a shared belief system, teachers' behaviour

related to literacy development becomes predictable, consistent and of a high standard. For advocates of CLaSS, the result of such a universal approach to teaching equates to universal improvement in student outcomes. To be successful CLaSS depends on schools and teachers developing shared beliefs. CLaSS expects teachers to think, talk and teach from within the belief system that CLaSS is founded on and promotes. The process of developing and operating from a shared belief system constitutes a particular institutional configuration that distinguishes CLaSS from other schools. Investigation of institutional configurations allows opportunity for questions to be raised about the effect of CLaSS on the teachers' professional identity and the purpose of schooling.

First Impressions

The following section of this chapter identifies common strands emerging from the pilot interviews with Principal A and Principal B. The sample comments provided insights into the nature of the discourse of CLaSS.

There is an unambiguous tendency to trivialise other approaches to children's literacy and school accountability. Principal A, for example, said:

> I think there ought to be some accountability to the system for literacy funding. I don't think this should be a system where we are handing out five, ten, twenty, forty thousand dollars to schools, and say 'tick a box if you are doing a literacy approved program' and that's the accountability.

The CLaSS program has predetermined goals to achieve in an order to be accountable. When asked to comment on the apparent success of a non-CLaSS literacy approach at a neighbouring school Principal B commented that:

> CLaSS has a stronger structure and a little more rigour to it. I believe that the professional learning of teachers is the key, and that commitment to that on a weekly basis and the Melbourne meetings and just the general talk about literacy practice in

this school is a lot more thorough. The school is obviously doing some great

things up there and good luck to them if some of the elements of CLaSS are there.

Starting from a clean slate.

There is a clear disregard for the past educational experiences of the school and strategies

used by the teachers. Principal A contrasts "the non-focused teaching of the past" with the

school's current CLaSS program:

> I think a lot of our teachers were just working in isolation. I guess in the old style, you
>
> know, you've got individual teachers who do great things with kids and they can work
>
> as a team and all that, but whether they can share what they are doing with other
>
> people is pretty hit and miss. What CLaSS has helped us to do is to make those links
>
> more structured, more concrete.
>
> . . . .(CLaSS) is a framework really and I think, you know, good teachers found that
>
> they could use their strategies in the CLaSS model, no problem at all. But, it gave
>
> them structure. They could slot what they would like to do in, and they could also
>
> discard things that actually were a bit wishy washy but actually worked for kids. They
>
> can leave that behind and say "Oh, but that doesn't work".

According to Principal A, not only do these old practices lack credibility, they tend to distract

the teachers from their real work.

> There is a little bit of hard work for someone to unpack a bit of stuff they used to do
>
> and let it go.

Similarly, Principal B disregarded the past succinctly by saying:

> Our teachers wouldn't teach any other way now. My teachers would not go back and
>
> teach another way. They know that this is the way to go and so hence our movement
>
> into numeracy has enabled the same design to take place. They wouldn't go back to
>
> the way it was before.

Not only are previous ways of operating disparaged, any return to them is foreshadowed

by a warning articulated by Principal B;

> If we went back to the old way that we taught and delivered with no focused teaching
>
> with a general approach to curriculum those kids would be lost.

Conforming to a recipe for change

Conforming to the prescribed practices and ideologies of the program is an important element

of the CLaSS program. Principal A suggests that:

> When I walk into a classroom and I see someone working in the CLaSS model, and
>
> they're not doing what they are supposed to be doing, I will know they are not doing
>
> it and I can have a conversation with them. 'We agreed that we were going to do it
>
> this way'. So we would have a conversation about what people are struggling with
>
> (when they might say) 'I'm finding this thing hard', (I would say) 'Do you need some
>
> support? What would help you? Can I get someone to come and team teach with you
>
> for a little while?' But I know what's going on and what to look for even though I
>
> don't teach it.

Conformity extends beyond what's happening in one school and is an issue for the sector as

Principal B says:

> CLaSS puts definite pressure on teachers, because we do work them pretty hard with
>
> high expectations and the professional development component of that actually
>
> happened outside the school, enabling our teachers to mix with a bank of schools and
>
> discuss practice at a state-wide level.

Further to this, Principal B associates discussion to do with CLaSS as professional dialogue,

while any other discussion is valued only as "chit chat".

> The talk around the staff table, and socially, is talking about professional practice, and
>
> not general chit-chat, so the level of professional conversation has lifted because
>
> they're wishing to share their successes, their challenges.

Principal A responded to a question concerning his experience of teachers having difficulty with implementing CLaSS.

> Oh, some have found it very difficult to make the change to CLaSS because of the level of planning required. The pre-planning needed each day forced people to work pretty hard, and to work at another level and requires a different set of thinking, particularly if you've been teaching a long time. It's often hard to let go of what you think are good ways of doing things, until someone actually shows that there might be another way to do it, it might be actually more effective. I think it's been hard for a couple of them to commit themselves to professional practice, of every night sitting down and saying, 'Well tomorrow I've got this group of kids, let's look at my records and see where they're up to and what do they need for tomorrow.' That's hard for some people because a lot of people are used to planning their week on Sunday night and writing their work program when they are teaching for the week and not really analysing on a daily basis what they are doing.

This statement defines very clearly what the expectations of "effective" teachers are within the CLaSS model. Past models of planning tend to be devalued and portrayed as inadequate and constitute a submissive discourse. The dominant discourse provides guidelines for effective teaching. A dichotomy of effective and ineffective teaching practices can be seen with this response. Teachers who can't let go are not "analysing" what they are doing, according to the dominant discourse and are teaching ineffectively.

Document study

Analysis of the sector-sponsored, documentation that accompanies CLaSS also helps identify the dominant discourse and highlights the program's neo-liberal orientations. The following references to the official documentation give some indication of how CLaSS validates, presents and depicts itself and other programs.

The teaching strategies recommended by CLaSS are "results driven" and must be implemented at sector level. Programs like CLaSS refer to evidence of effectiveness as a key factor distinguishing CLaSS from other programs that recommend teaching strategies that are not "results driven". As the authors suggest

> Preliminary evidence would suggest that dramatic improvements are achievable within the context of a fully implemented, comprehensive program that is results driven and involves both system and school wide commitment and coordination. (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 5)

The value of pressure

Hill and Crévola (2001) acknowledge the value of pressure as contributing to effective reform: "It is not unusual to find whole school communities in which there is a culture of low expectation and blaming factors beyond the control of the school for the poor performance of their students" (p. 11). The application of pressure is targeted toward the "small number of factors that best predict whether students make progress at school." (p. 15).

Hill and Crévola (2001) continue by defining what constitutes effective teaching and highlight the following factors that are associated with effective teaching:

> Effective teachers know they must focus their teaching on the learning needs of each student. (p. 25)

> Effective teaching is structured. (p. 26)

> Well organised schools and classrooms facilitate effective and efficient teaching and student learning. Poor organization acts as a barrier to teaching and learning. (p. 26)

> Low expectations and complacency are an unavoidable consequence of lack of pressure. (p. 34)

Hill and Crévola (2001) promote a need for urgency in regard to the adoption and implementation of CLaSS:

Time is short and the stakes are too high to 'reinvent the wheel'. When there is

good evidence that a particular way of doing things works effectively, it makes sense

to stick with it. (p. 29)

School improvement means bringing about change, particularly in how teachers

operate within the classroom, but also in how the entire staff operate as a team. (p. 28)

One reading of this text is that the goals of the reform program will be obtained through

forceful application of some simple rules concerning a small number of factors.

Summary of chapter four

The schools in this study demonstrate strong loyalty to CLaSS. There is a clear desire to

ensure that all aspects of school life conform to the prescribe practices demanded by CLaSS.

The principals recognize and justify the value of placing pressure on teachers to ensure the

success of the CLaSS. There is a strong sense of urgency in regard to improving both student

and teacher performance. The students and the teachers are regarded as having deficiencies

that need to be addressed if improvements in literacy attainment are to be made. With this

urgency and deficit model of student and teacher, the rich linguistic and cultural knowledges

of diverse students and how those could be used as a resource for learning are not mentioned.

CLaSS makes the assumption that all students are the same and it is acceptable to teach them

all the same. The next chapter will explore how the principals explain and justify the intent

and purpose of CLaSS and highlights their expectations of teachers and students.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Public Face of CLaSS

The principals are the public face of CLaSS and it is not surprising that their comments echo the position taken by Hill and Crévola (2001) in the CLaSS documentation. In the analysis of the data, several Discourse models emerged that demonstrate how the principals interpret their role and explain how they implemented and maintain CLaSS. This chapter will explore the Discourse models that emerged form the principals data. The seven interconnected Discourse models will be presented under the following headings.

- Responding to a Flawed Culture

- Single-minded Focus

- Resource Intensive

- Selecting the Right Team – Removing Threats and Managing People

- Ensuring Compliance

- Cultivating an Image and Positioning CLaSS Above Others

- New Professional Identity: Operating in the CLaSS Model

Initially the principals explain how CLaSS provided an appropriate response to what they considered to be the flawed culture of their respective schools. Indeed, initial contact with CLaSS helped them to identify and articulate these apparent cultural flaws that permeated the schools. The principals demonstrate the need and their own capacity to be single minded in their focus on improving the school through implementing CLaSS.

The principals raised issues demonstrating their commitment to ensuring the extensive financial and human resources needed to implement CLaSS are managed. The principals are firm in their belief that CLaSS will be successful if the school can implement the program as directed, without alteration of any kind. The principals indicate that ensuring total compliance to the CLaSS design is achieved through a series of protocols and the identification of

particular patterns of teacher behaviour. Following on from the need for total compliance the principals explain their tactics and strategies for removing threats to CLaSS through the careful management of the teachers. Finally the principals illustrate that through an amalgam of these Discourse models - flawed culture; single minded focus; intensive application of resource; ensuring compliance; removing threats and managing people; cultivating an image - a new professional identity for the teachers emerges. This last Discourse model, new professional identity, also includes some data from interviews with CLaSS coordinators and CLaSS teachers. This additional data provides evidence that the teachers have acquired the new professional identity that the principals promote.

<div align="center">Responding to a Flawed Culture</div>

In this section the principals of the four focus schools elaborate on the reasons for their commitment to CLaSS by making reference to the frustration and disappointment they felt towards the apparently flawed culture of their respective schools before introducing CLaSS. In three schools (A, B & D) the principal was responsible for introducing CLaSS. Principal C had come from a school where CLaSS had been introduced and came to School C with CLaSS already in operation. The following section presents comments of the principals as they responded to the question "Why did this school take on CLaSS". The theme of *Responding to a Flawed Culture* is a common thread which appears to run through all four responses.

Flawed Culture of School A

The impetus for change came for School A as the principal examined the results of the literacy testing on arrival as principal of the school:

> The results of literacy testing and pre-testing were very disappointing.
>
> We came together as a staff and I showed the results of the testing. I asked the
>
> question, what are we to do with this school? (Principal A, paragraphs 5-6)

Notice that the Principal A is not asking to consider what to do in response to the literacy assessments. Principal A sees the problem with the school's culture concerning teaching and learning not a literacy problem. Having shared his frustration with the staff, Principal A set about to engage CLaSS in order to ensure the existing culture of the school would change:

> The priority was to change the culture of the school concerning teaching and learning. Prior to the engagement of CLaSS there was not a great emphasis on teaching and learning in classrooms. (Principal A, paragraphs 15)

As a result of the impact of CLaSS, Principal A believes that "a decent change" has occurred in the culture of the school:

> CLaSS helped us address the problem. Everybody had to own this problem before we could make a decent change. (Principal A, paragraph 49)

Once more Principal A is clear that the problem is a school problem not a literacy problem. Notice that there was no evaluation of the school's current literacy program: what areas of strength do we need to retain, what areas of weakness do we need to address? Such questions are absent from the Principal's discussion. Improvement within the existing program was not an option for Principal A. The school is seen to be at fault and CLaSS is taken on as remedy.

Flawed culture of School B

The Principal of School B also refers to the flawed culture of his school as an impetus for the school to change or be reformed:

> …we felt that the teaching practice here needed reforming. We thought it was unreasonable that there were a number of children within our school that didn't get the best opportunity with literacy in particular. We were implementing programs such as 'Bridging the gap' but we were still missing kids, kids were coming through with poor literacy. (Principal B, paragraph 5)

Principal B also defines the teaching approaches that characterize and contribute to the inadequacies of the previous culture and points to the success of the Reading Recovery

program as being a redeeming component of the flawed culture and a point of reference

in regard to changes in culture:

> Teaching was an empty cup approach, we used to fill the kids up with knowledge and
>
> hope that it would overflow. Reading Recovery was great because we would see those
>
> kids that actually had that intense instruction move so quickly. There were a large
>
> number of kids who missed it. When we actually implemented Reading Recovery I
>
> can remember there were a couple of children in Year 5 who struggled with literacy.
>
> One of them missed Reading Recovery and I felt really bad about one kid. When he
>
> left our school I know we could have done more for that child. (Principal B,
>
> paragraph 7)

This last statement by Principal B highlights and matches Principal A's contention that there

was a serious problem that everyone needed "to own" before the school could move forward.

Once more it is not a question of identifying strengths and weaknesses in the schools' current

approaches to literacy. Those approaches are seen to be without merit.

Principal B directly acknowledges that the implementation of the Reading Recovery program

initially highlighted his and the teachers' lack of confidence in the existing practices and

culture of the school:

> I must say that Reading Recovery was the seed, we really questioned the manner in
>
> which we were teaching and dealing with kids that we had concerns with. A trained
>
> Reading Recovery person joined the staff and she was very impressive with the
>
> results she could get with some intensive one-on-one instruction through Reading
>
> Recovery. We've never had the Reading Recovery program here before we were just
>
> doing literacy in the best way we thought. Teachers - I must say - were feeling
>
> uncomfortable in what they were doing too. They were unsure about the correct
>
> procedures and strategies to use to ensure the kids were learning properly in literacy.
>
> (Principal B, paragraph 9-11)

"Uncomfortable" and "unsure"? Is Principal B asserting that the teachers, all experienced primary teachers, had insufficient ideas about successful strategies to support children's literacy development? After being impressed with the reported success of Reading Recovery, Principal B reveals that further investigation of the school's teaching and learning practices led to the discovery of greater concerns about the school:

> We did some action research as we wanted to look at the best way we could do literacy. We were uncertain about whether our approaches to literacy were the correct way to go. We were still probably teaching all the curriculum so every child including the smartest in the class or a struggler or a middle-of-the-road child was getting the same dosage. (Principal B, paragraph 12)

Notice the word "uncertain". The expression "uncertain" (like "uncomfortable" and "unsure") is not intended to refer to teachers' knowledge of literacy and teaching skills in the classroom but to their perceived inability to provide a united direction to the schools' literacy program. CLaSS, like Reading Recovery, claims to provide exactly that direction. It is not surprising that individual teachers, even experienced teachers, are unable to match what CLaSS promises. Principal B points to the school's failure to address the individual needs of the students as being the apex of his concerns. The investigations of this Principal concluded with summations that the inadequacies associated with existing literacy practices contributed to other issues, specifically the general classroom behaviour of some students:

> I must say that not only were literacy levels lacking, there was also a flow-on effect. We had some disciplinary concerns because kids were becoming anxious or bored in class and also behaving badly. (Principal B, paragraph 20)

Other problems are now said to be caused by the school's perceived-to-be-inadequate literacy program. In Principal B's eyes, if the perceived shortcomings of the school's literacy program are not enough to persuade teachers to change, then these other "disciplinary concerns" will compel people to agree to a change. Principal B indicated that despite

involvement in the professional development components of other programs the school was unable to change its flawed culture. The notion that the school was covering too much curriculum and not responding to the individual needs of the students was again expressed:

> We did the Framework's course professional development. We had also completed some components of First Steps and we've just come off the spelling one. But we still questioned our practices. We were using the First Steps modules as strategies to teach but we weren't really sure how they really fitted with the learning of children. We were still delivering those strategies that came from First Steps for curriculum coverage rather than really meeting the specific needs of children. (Principal B, paragraph 22)

Here again is clear evidence that teachers at school B have been working on a range of well-respected literacy programs. Principal B is clearly not criticizing the teachers for lacking skill or professional training. Principal B reinforces his earlier comments about the inadequacies of the school's culture by stating that in is his opinion, the school was failing to meet the "specific needs of children". Third age reform insists that the "specific needs of children" must be meet if schools are to improve student outcomes. Program like CLaSS or Reading Recovery promise to respond to such demands. CLaSS and Reading Recovery rely on their rich empirical research heritage as proof their effectiveness. Individual teachers, no matter how well trained, cannot make or match that promise.

Flawed culture of School C

The Principal of School C came to the school after CLaSS had been introduced. Principal C suggests that the "hard work" at School C in regard to the implementation of CLaSS had been completed by the time he was appointed:

> When I came to this school a lot of the hard work in getting the program up and going had been done. (Principal C, paragraph 25)

Principal C claims that involvement in CLaSS and the subsequent changes in literacy

practice resulted in improved literacy results and improved results in external standardized

testing:

> …CLaSS was responsible for lifting the literacy standards of the children out of sight.
>
> Even in the Achievement Improvement Monitor (AIM) tests had improved results.
>
> (Principal C, paragraph 116)

Notice that Principal C believes that involvement in CLaSS claims to have produced

improvements that are "out of sight" even though these improvements have not been matched

to the same degree by Achievement Improvement Monitor (AIM) results. Furthermore,

Principal C was of the opinion that improved results in literacy, through participation in

CLaSS, would have a positive effect on student behaviour, particularly as students who

experienced CLaSS progress through the school. Principal C also indicated that such students

would be more academically capable than those students educated in the previous culture of

the school:

> We took the approach that if we could fix up some literacy problems, hopefully the
>
> children coming into the upper primary would be more capable and less problematic.
>
> (Principal C, paragraph 17)

Principal C explains that the teaching and learning practices (culture) of the early

Year's classrooms need to spread through the entire school if the results attained

through CLaSS are to be maintained and consolidated:

> We did find in the early stages when the children left the CLaSS classrooms and got to
>
> Year 3 and 4 their results would flatten and sometimes drop-off, especially the boys.
>
> We would get the early years' kids, even the kids coming off Reading Recovery to the
>
> desired reading levels and beyond. When the same kids got to Year 3 and 4 their
>
> reading level would fall right back. That's why we try to have the program go into the
>
> upper primary. (Principal C, paragraph 116)

Principal C does not say why the results "drop-off" in Years 3 and 4. Is it because

CLaSS results cannot be sustained for some students beyond Year 2? Principal C does not

appear to suggest that these problems in Years 3 and 4 are attributable to specific teachers;

otherwise he could shift these teachers to other Year levels. On the contrary, he sees the

problem as the absence of the CLaSS program in Years 3 and 4. His faith in CLaSS is such

that he assumes its presence in these levels would remedy the situation.

According to Principal C, having the new culture established in the junior primary section of

the school has improved literacy results. Principal C indicates that the immediate challenge

for the school is to establish the new culture in the upper primary in pursuit of similar

success.

Flawed culture of School D

The principal of School D refers to the work of Hill and Crévola to highlight the inadequacies

of existing school culture in regard to literacy teaching:

> From their research, they (Hill and Crévola) felt there were gaps in the way in which
>
> literacy programs were operating and how they felt they could be addressed. So the
>
> model they were presenting was, you know, 'there has to be a more holistic approach
>
> to teaching literacy' which involves a cultural change which in turn involves
>
> strategies. It is not a manual on how to teach literacy but a selection of strategies that
>
> help us move kids from one point to another, and acknowledge that all kids have
>
> different strengths and weaknesses. We are committed to those strategies. (Principal
>
> D, paragraph 8)

Principal D's reference to the gaps "in the way literacy programs were operating" makes it

clear that Hill and Crévola were not providing skill development for teachers to use in current

literacy programs. The focus of CLaSS is not about working with individual teachers or

training teachers to improve their practice. CLaSS is about adopting a program without

reference to individual experiences, skills or accumulated knowledge that teachers may be

using in their current programs. CLaSS is fundamentally about program change as a

group, with no room for individual preferences or philosophies. These are the essence of the

"flawed culture". Principal D specially identifies School D as fundamentally flawed in its

approach to teaching literacy, and sees the emergence of a "new culture" as required, if any

improvement is to occur:

> So, we thought, well yes if we can get this conversation happening and we can
>
> dedicate time in the school to doing literacy properly and we can all use a common
>
> language and we are approaching it together, there must be hope of some
>
> improvement and change. (Principal D, paragraph 8)

Principal D expresses the essence of CLaSS. It is a shared conversation. Even more, it has to

be a "common language" and it must be approached by everyone working together. CLaSS

prioritizes addressing the individual needs of students. To meet that goal, teachers must

sacrifice their individuality. Such sacrifices produce a new culture, and according to Principal

D, immediate gains. Principal D defines significant fruits of the new culture:

> . . . we have seen a massive increase in the focus of teaching in the two hour literacy
>
> block. So it is very focused. Individual children's needs are being met much more
>
> clearly than they were under the way we used to do things. We are allowing for kids
>
> to extend if they have got literacy underway. We are not assuming that there's this
>
> sort of medial group and a bottom group and a top group any more. I mean you are
>
> actually looking at kids as individual learners and it's helping the *whole school* move
>
> towards . . . individual learning contracts with kids, and actually knowing each child.
>
> (Principal D, paragraph 55, emphasis added)

Principal D describes the previous culture as being one reliant on teaching and testing

students in groups assumed to be homogeneous (bottom, medial and top groups) and points to

the essence of the new culture being focused on "looking at kids as individual learners . . .

and knowing each child". For Principal D sustained change requires a cultural

reformation. A cultural reformation in turn can be created and requires an implementation

strategy:

> You have to target the things that you think are important for a given time and really
>
> invent a change in culture in those areas and then you may move into another area
>
> while you are maintaining those, but I don't think you can tackle nine key learning
>
> areas. I have always had a view that if you decide to do something and you can get a
>
> model that can help you sustain and develop that and get it embedded into the culture
>
> of the school and get a cultural change that's going to be a much more sustaining
>
> process. (Principal D, paragraph 82-84)

Principal D says that cultural change also means "letting go" of some cultural practices and

seeking help from more knowledgeable colleagues. "Letting go" of one's personal styles of

teaching is what CLaSS requires. CLaSS requires a unified response from the whole school

community:

> Often, aspects of teachers' existing classroom practice can't be used within CLaSS.
>
> So I think that's a little bit of that cultural change of helping people to reflect and be
>
> willing to say 'Look, hey wait a minute, I need help'. This is really important and I
>
> don't think that was something that was very strong in this school, I don't think
>
> people were very good at saying 'Hey, I'm struggling with this, can someone give me
>
> a hand'. (Principal D, paragraph 110)

Part of the "struggle" that Principal D refers to is the difficulties experienced by teachers in

"letting go" of individual practices and adopting the CLaSS approach. Those past practices

may have been adequate and even very good, but they do not match what CLaSS requires.

Principal D also sees cultural change as needing to take place beyond the school, that is, at

diocesan level:

I think what happens is if a school thinks they're doing something reasonably well it's very hard to talk about it, and I think that's cultural change that needs to happen in leadership in our diocese. (Principal D, paragraph 152)

Principal D points to the Melbourne CEO's approach to CLaSS as his preferred model of systemic reform:

At one level, I think, the Melbourne CEO wanted systemic improvement. Whether you like the autocratic approach or not they've actually got schools doing a better job now than they were before. (Principal D, paragraph 160)

By implication, CLaSS is to be commended for its own "autocratic approach" to school change. Principal D suggests that those responsible for schools in the diocese failed to challenge schools sufficiently; and, as a result, no coordinated and effective systematic change has occurred:

The diocesan leadership team took the other approach, I suppose - which has often been the case in our diocese - where we're not going to mandate anything in particular. We'll let people do things their own way. Schools can know their own communities - that's another way to go - but if you don't have any accountability at all in that process and you don't say 'Well, come on we don't mind what you do, but at the end of the day you have got to be able show us you're making some improvement in the kids' lives, then I think it runs the risk of going the other way. (Principal D, paragraph 162)

In the end, Principal D claims that students and schools are being "let" down at a systemic level. Principal D in a follow up interview expresses these views even more emphatically. Once again, Principal D implies that the strength of CLaSS is that it is prepared to mandate what teachers and schools need to do in order to enhance children's learning.

Summary

The teaching and learning practices of a school and the associated beliefs and values that drive them constitute what the interviewees and the authors of CLaSS referred to as the culture of a school. The four focus schools engaged in CLaSS as a direct response to perceptions by principals and other school leaders that the culture within each school was fundamentally flawed. These perceptions resonate throughout the interviews. Such perceptions were generated by the schools themselves and fuelled by literature and information emanating from the CLaSS documentation and introductory sessions.

When the four principals refer in different ways to a flawed culture, they are not criticizing individual teachers or pointing to bad practices that have crept into teachers' professional lives. The word "culture" can refer to many things: the way a school carries out assessment, the way teachers discuss their practices, what they feel they can talk about, what they feel they can't discuss. The term "flawed culture" is the platform used by the authors of CLaSS and by those who have been inducted into CLaSS thinking as a way of suggesting that there is a single way of acting and thinking that can be adopted. CLaSS offers that promise to schools. No matter how good an individual teacher may be, he or she cannot produce cultural change. "Cultural change" stands in contrast to "individual improvement" and "individual action". Cultural change is above conformity and uniformity of practice and thinking. These themes will be explored more fully in subsequent sections.

Single-Minded Focus

The four principals involved in this study refer to their own critical role in organizing and continually motivating the community to support CLaSS. For the principals, CLaSS is the only valid approach to meeting children's individual literacy needs. The successful implementation of CLaSS requires a single-minded approach from the principals to ensure that the whole school community is committed to CLaSS. For the principals, this single-mindedness is about leadership, like leadership in a business corporation – sticking to goals,

establishing corporate identity, strategic planning, keeping everyone on task, focusing on

production and meeting outputs, keeping to budget and being accountable for results.

Principal A provides a clear description of the implications for the whole school of

committing to CLaSS and refers to the possibility of improved literacy results as the

motivation for such determination:

> Our budget was quite solid. We were able to commit heavily to bringing huge
>
> amounts of literacy resources. Teachers had control over what materials they needed.
>
> Basically we ran an audit of the whole school, and we purchased materials
>
> accordingly. To do that we had to set a three-year plan, we had to improve our literacy
>
> results over the next three years and commit to spending money to do it (Principal A,
>
> paragraph 15-16).

However, the geographical location of school A made it difficult to include the teachers in the

professional development component. Nevertheless, the attendance of the staff at the

professional development is pointed to by Principal A as indicative of the teachers'

commitment to CLaSS and reforming the school:

> It is a huge ask on us to get to Melbourne for the professional development. Teachers
>
> leave here at 6 a.m. in the morning to actually get to Melbourne on time for the PD.
>
> Then they won't get home until 7:30 p.m. It is a huge commitment. (Principal A,
>
> paragraph 67)

Principal A makes further reference to the value of weekly meetings in revitalizing the staff

commitment to CLaSS and regards the effort involved as tangible evidence of the 'single-

mindedness' of the staff:

> That's why we need to constantly keep meeting and talking about what should be
>
> happening in our classrooms. That tends to revitalize teachers and keep them on a
>
> steady flow. (Principal A, paragraph 85)

For Principal A, the single-mindedness and determination needed to engage CLaSS can be found in other CLaSS schools to varying degrees. Certainly, single-minded determination is a defining feature of CLaSS schools' collective identity:

> We need to stick with other CLaSS schools and see what they are doing well and keep improving ourselves. This is probably the area we got the most out of anyway - our teachers' visiting other CLaSS schools was fantastic professional development. There are a couple of schools that do CLaSS really well and we try to visit them often (Principal A, paragraph 132).

Aspects of CLaSS are non-negotiable and must be implemented. Principal B regards such aspects of CLaSS as pivotal in establishing a mutually supportive environment within the school community. In turn, such mutual support adds strength to the single-minded approach needed to implement and maintain CLaSS:

> The key to it all, a non-negotiable element of CLaSS is that the principal and the CLaSS coordinator have to give strong leadership and some co-ordination to it. For any change to take place in the schools adequate support must be given to teachers. If teachers feel as though they are not being supported they will not support you in return. For any change to take place in schools, principals must provide adequate support for teachers. (Principal B, paragraph 47-52)

Principal B states clearly that the role of the principal and the CLaSS coordinator is to be focused totally on the objectives of CLaSS. According to Principal B nothing other than a single-minded approach is needed for CLaSS to be maintained. This principal is adamant that he cannot be seen to "back-off" from his personal commitment to CLaSS. He is the "corporate" leader:

> Everyday, I do the principal walk through classrooms. The children can see that I am pretty keen on what they are doing in the classroom and I make sure I support teachers professionally. If I back off, it sends a subtle message to teachers that we

have implemented a design that you can be half-hearted about. If that was the

case, the program would wither and die. It is also about providing accommodation for

them in Melbourne, it's about shouting them tea and making sure they are adequately

resourced at the classroom level and making sure the CLaSS co-coordinator is

supported. The CLaSS coordinator is in the driving seat, it is a very important role. I

attend all professional learning team meetings as part of our professional learning

team. I'm keen on making sure that these kids get the best possible chance with

literacy and that will happen by using the CLaSS design fully. We've got to make

sure that the resources are there for them. (Principal B, paragraph 56)

The "principal walk" referred to above is a feature of CLaSS and the purpose of the walk is

not to look at children's work; rather it is to be seen in the work place. As corporate leader

the principal cannot be an office person. The "principal walk" is also important for making

sure that things are going smoothly and according to plan. As one principal comments: "If I

see someone doing something different I can have a conversation."

Principal B explains how staff are allocated to classes with the maintenance of CLaSS in

mind. Principal B also highlights the significance of ensuring that internally organized

CLaSS professional development continues after the professional development component of

CLaSS have been satisfied. In the following quotation, Principal B talks about how he

managed a request for maternity leave from a teacher who was in CLaSS. His decision was

made with reference to the corporate ideals mentioned above. This teacher, regardless of the

quality of her work, had to be moved out of the team and replaced by someone who could

provide long term commitment:

I endeavoured to move her to another area, the Year 3-5 area. I knew one of my more

experienced teachers, an older teacher, would come back into that Prep area knowing

that she would have a long time in that area. So that's part of it. My Reading

Recovery teacher is the CLaSS coordinator. She is probably one of the best literacy

people going. She gave a great energy and passion to CLaSS. (Principal B, paragraph 62)

Principal B goes on to talk about staff development – not in terms of what was provided – but in terms of the impact it had on team spirit and team identity:

We make sure that we support teachers and give them adequate professional development. We have gone through the three phases of the official professional development. We've been more creative about how we provide professional development for teachers that are coming on board. As an example this year we initiated our own professional development as a group of CLaSS schools within our diocese. The teachers need to get together, need time to talk about their progress, success and failures. The value of that is incredible. The offsite professional development that we had in Melbourne was fantastic. (Principal B, paragraph 62)

Team leaders are also like sports coaches, as Principal B further explains:

CLaSS puts a definite pressure on teachers. We do work the teachers pretty hard and with high expectations. The Professional Development component of that actually happens outside the school, enabling our teachers to mix with a bank of schools and discuss practice at a state-wide level. When talking to a more knowing other you naturally just raise the bar. (Principal B, paragraph 104)

Principal B continues in the language of the sports coach to describe the effects of this single-minded pursuit of CLaSS objectives on teachers:

We are very much aware of how tiring CLaSS can make teachers, but considering the results at the end of the school year everyone thinks it is worth the effort. (Principal B, paragraph 128)

At the end of the day, the team has achieved the results. For Principal B, any questions concerning the sustainability of CLaSS in regard to the "cost on teachers" can be justified:

That's probably the question I would have to ask myself about the sustainability of the cost on teachers physically. But my teachers responded. I've lost teachers through all the normal reasons, through pregnancy or they've left because their partner has moved with work, but as I've said, my teachers wouldn't teach another way now. (Principal B, paragraph131)

For Principal B, literacy success for all students is the foremost priority for schools. Principal B advocates that all schools should be single-minded in their approach to literacy:

Literacy is the most important issue for all schools. Literacy is for everyone, regardless of anything else. I have questioned the allocation of funding at different times. Literacy should be the priority. Money seems to go to what can seem like non-priority areas. (Principal B, paragraph 159)

Similarly, Principal C refers to the need to follow the CLaSS design and to his role in maintaining team morale during the early stages of CLaSS. The following quotation illustrates his use of corporate mantras to reassure the team in the early days of CLaSS:

I had to reassure people that it didn't matter if other schools were ahead of us with their implementation, or if we were having difficulties grasping some aspects of CLaSS. I was saying we would get there in the end, just follow the process, constantly reminding them that we are doing the *right thing*. (Principal C, paragraph 10, emphasis added)

Principal C uses the following analogy to justify the focus on literacy and the associated priority given to CLaSS:

I use the analogy of a tree. The root of the tree is the social and physical health of the child and this supports the trunk. After the trunk come the branches. The first branch is literacy and the next branch is numeracy. In the small branches coming off the main branch are the other curriculum areas. Literacy has to come first. (Principal C, paragraph 63)

In a similar way, Principal D outlines the need to be single-minded about CLaSS in order to prioritize literacy. As in the rhetoric of the other principals, the language of targets and strategic planning dominates discussions. In a sense, this principal is urging the school's community to forget about all other key learning areas and makes no apology for making the tough choices:

> I've always been a strong believer in doing only a few things at a time and doing them really well rather than doing a lot of things poorly. We try hard to make sure we do CLaSS well. CLaSS allows us to do literacy really well. I have always struggled with this idea that you can have eight or nine key learning areas all developing at the same time, I just don't think you can in reality, you have to target the things that you think are important. We have targeted literacy and make no apology for that. (Principal D, paragraph 77-78)

At one level these principals are saying that nothing within the school curriculum is more important than the attainment of improved literacy outcomes for their students. But one cannot help notice that the language in which this commitment is expressed is the language of the corporate team leader. The decisions that principals make to achieve this priority are shaped more by these corporatist beliefs and values. As they describe their roles in supporting CLaSS and the decision they have taken, there is little reference to educational considerations evident in the principal's comments. While principals do mention that their commitment to CLaSS is driven by a desire to ensure that individual children do not get left behind educationally, the focus is on literacy attainment according to the narrow measures provided by CLaSS. Reflection and discussion on the nature and quality of children's literacy, diverse literacies, quality of teaching and of student work are absent from the principals' comments. It is more about branding, team leadership, maintaining morale and achieving improved outcomes.

Resource Intensive

The CLaSS program is resource intensive and for schools to participate, they must prioritize their financial, physical and human resources in favour of CLaSS. Decisions are made in regard to the distribution of resources to the advantage of CLaSS. Consequently, such weighted distribution disadvantages other school endeavours and curriculum areas and can be the source of tension within the school community.

The main costs associated with implementing CLaSS include releasing teachers from face to face teaching for individual testing of students, the purchase of support materials, costs associated with travel in order to attend the professional development component and the direct staffing costs of maintaining a Reading Recovery teacher and time release for the CLaSS coordinators. This is confirmed by Principal B when he says:

> One of the biggest costs was the staffing schedule because our numbers are based on the number of children we've got in our school. Now it's costing us even before we even start CLaSS, it was costing us .5 of a teacher. Now that's a lot of time. If you consider that .5 of a teacher's salary which might be let's say $58 000, that's a lot of money. It also puts pressure on the rest of the school because you're down .5 of a teacher. That might load up classes in certain areas of the school as it did in the middle and upper areas of this school. Going with CLaSS has to be a whole school decision. I would say to staff, 'Look, this is the way we are going to go", because we endeavour to keep our numbers small in the infant area and it cost us initially, also because I was required to teach, and I was teaching 2 days a week, 2.5 days a week to enable initially Reading Recovery to start and also CLaSS. (Principal B, paragraph 160-170)

The problem concerning funding is endorsed by Principal D who points to the fact that existing literacy funding from the diocesan education office is insufficient and schools

wishing to engage CLaSS are required to make substantial adjustments to their budget to
support CLaSS:

> CLaSS requires a financial commitment to literacy beyond the funding allocated by
> the CEO. Your own school will need to fund the deficit. Let's face it, $12 000 is not
> going to pay for your literacy program, if you are serious about it in a school of about
> 330 kids. What's that going to pay for really? I mean, stuff all. We've got a staff
> member on .6 going around supporting people, that's $30, 000 plus your materials,
> plus your books, plus your reserves. We'd be spending $60 000 a year on literacy.
> (Principal D, paragraph 143-145)

All four principals in this section speak with the voice of one responsible for the overall
management of a school and all its human and financial resources. That should not be
surprising as administrative management is within the accepted role of a principal. However,
CLaSS provides principals with specific training aimed at clarifying "how best they can
ensure that CLaSS is operating effectively in their schools" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p.38). Part
of that training is to understand that leadership can be exercised at many levels. Principals are
encouraged to focus on managerial leadership and leave educational leadership to the CLaSS
coordinator. After all, the education direction of the school is clearly expressed through the
school's acceptance of CLaSS. The principal's time is therefore better spent on ensuring that
resource allocation supports CLaSS. As a result, principals are increasingly heard using
voices other than those of educational leaders, as the following extracts demonstrate.
Principal A explains that the pre-testing and post-testing components of CLaSS place great
demands on the schools' financial resources:

> These tests involved teachers having to be actually released from face-to-face
> classroom duties and given time so they could observe the children properly. It can
> get expensive. It has to be handled carefully. (Principal A, paragraph 21)

I prefer to arrange for teachers to be individually released from face to face teaching when testing. Whilst it is a cost on the school I think that it's really valuable. The teachers need to be with their children and have one-on-one time with them for testing. (Principal A, paragraph 25)

The provision of adequate staffing to ensure that teachers have the opportunity to test individual children is problematic. However, overcoming this particular challenge is a necessary requirement of CLaSS as Principal A explains:

Financially it is very difficult as well, as these teachers have to be replaced during the day. But when you are committed you just have to do it. (Principal A, paragraph 67)

For Principal A, another important challenge is to ensure that CLaSS has adequate resources in regard to reading material for children, particularly providing multiple copies of graded readers:

It is financially challenging, especially considering you are trying to get in as many resources as you can. (Principal A, paragraph 128)

Despite Principal A's commitment to implementing CLaSS faithfully, he does concede that the systemic staffing formulas applied to the school are outside his control and a general lack of funding results in unavoidable deviations from the recommended CLaSS program:

We lost our CLaSS coordinator and she was a gun. Fortunately, the person who picked it up is also very strong, and everything was in place for her to continue. We have a lack of freedom with our staffing schedule this year. Coupled with this the school is getting bigger and that means it's difficult to provide the release time needed by the CLaSS coordinator. (Principal A, paragraph 111-112)

Participation in the CLaSS professional development program provides particular challenges for schools outside the metropolitan area. Providing for staff accommodation, sustenance, travel and replacement costs provides the biggest challenge as Principal A explains:

Probably though, the biggest challenge I found, and I think the same would be

found by most principals, is the challenge of getting teachers to Melbourne for the

professional development. It's just a huge cost itself. The cost involved with getting

emergency teachers in for the day is huge. (Principal A, paragraph 120)

Because allocations of resources are prioritized to support CLaSS, some tension is caused for

classroom teachers that are not involved directly with CLaSS as they lobby for their share of

the available funds:

When we initially started talking about CLaSS and what would be involved as far as

resources go, the middle primary people wanted to make sure that they had enough

resources for their teaching as well. (Principal A, paragraph 84)

Principal A openly acknowledges that CLaSS requires a disproportional allocation of

available resources. Despite the problematic nature of such allocation, Principal A remains

resolute in his commitment to CLaSS and the necessary provision of resources:

Whilst it is a challenging model and an expensive model, I think that it's very

worthwhile because it benefits the children so much. (Principal A, paragraph 144)

However, Principal B explains that in ensuring that CLaSS was adequately resourced,

financial resources were directed away from other areas:

As I said, it was a needs based decision. It did cost money and literacy money did

come from the diocese to a certain extent. But we also had to put our hand in our

pocket to support literacy. (Principal B, paragraph 16)

He made the further point that:

A lot of resources were poured into the infant area. (Principal B, paragraph 33)

. . . we have to measure finances very carefully. It is very difficult. (Principal C,

paragraph 87)

The financial obligations that are required to ensure CLaSS is appropriately resourced helps

explain why some diocesan schools have not engaged CLaSS. As Principal B points out, he

was required to take on some teaching duties in order to provide the staffing resources

required by CLaSS:

> Another reason why some schools might not have picked up CLaSS, is there's a cost
>
> factor. The appointment of a CLaSS coordinator requires a .5 CLaSS coordinator and
>
> we must have Reading Recovery in place too. The decision to go with CLaSS can
>
> come down to staffing issues. As a result I had to work into our staffing so hence I do
>
> a bit of teaching to enable a teacher to be released. (Principal B, paragraph 98-99)

Not only do the schools have to prioritize CLaSS within their fiscal budget, the teachers

themselves are required to commit their time and energy to CLaSS:

> It also was an extra cost on teachers by going backwards and forwards to Melbourne.
>
> The CLaSS coordinator and myself had to go backwards and forwards 12 times, so
>
> that's a cost on her, as I said teachers are required in Melbourne twice, and we are
>
> travelling a long distance. (Principal B, paragraph 99-100)

Thus for Principal B there is a cost to the school and a cost to the staff for being involved

with CLaSS. But the commitment to CLaSS is a cost Principal B regards as a necessary

burden:

> When you've got to really think about the way you do your teaching you've got to
>
> have focus groups and team teaching sessions during the course of that two hour
>
> literacy block and have kids actively involved in learning centres that aren't just
>
> keeping them actively occupied but it's actually supporting what they may have done
>
> in their focus teaching. It comes at a cost. (Principal B, paragraph 127)

> It is a lot of call on teacher's time. (Principal C, paragraph 33)

The cost for CLaSS teachers is visible but justifiable to Principal B as he describes the effects

that being involved with CLaSS had on his staff. It is the language of the sporting coach. It is

also the language of the corporate manager. Teachers have trained hard and sacrificed their individuality for the good of the team but it has all been worthwhile.

> So eventually the teachers were mentally tired. Physically they were tired. We are very much aware of how tiring CLaSS can make teachers. But considering the results at the end of the school year, everyone thinks it is worth the effort. (Principal B, paragraph 129)

The "results" that Principal B refers are the improved literacy attainment rates provided by CLaSS. The physical and cognitive fatigue experienced by the teachers was apparently "worth it" because the school can now prove that literacy attainment levels improved during the year in the early years classrooms.

Principal B is frustrated by what he regards as the inadequate funding from the system and believes that the improved literacy results of the students is evidence enough for the funding formulas to be changed in favour of schools that have improved results:

> I used to get a bit angry too. I used to get a bit annoyed at the funding. It was costing us a lot to do CLaSS. I could see the results even with our limited funding so I will not give it up. I'm sure other schools are getting results but you really don't know how good CLaSS is until you are in it. (Principal B, paragraph 155)

Responsibility for providing the appropriate resources for CLaSS was seen as a communal responsibility. The whole community had to be aware of the school's commitment to CLaSS and supportive of it:

> Then at a P&F meeting I can say "look we need support to do this because this is where we really need these resources because" or at a board meeting "this is where this is going". (Principal D, paragraph 86)

Principal C explains that the disproportional allocation of funds to support CLaSS was a potential cause of tension among the staff:

> The CLaSS model requires a lot of resources to be allocated to the juniors so we
>
> had to sell it to the upper primary. (Principal C, paragraph 17)

> Yes there was a big drain on the finances. It is also a big impact on other programs.
>
> But I think that could be a fear for staff and other schools that all the school's
>
> resources go towards literacy. (Principal C, paragraph 59)

> What I would do around testing time is employ casual teachers to give the classroom
>
> teacher face-to-face relief to do the one-on-one testing. Or if a staff member came and
>
> said "look we are falling a little bit behind here", I would employ a casual teacher so
>
> the classroom teacher could catch up with testing and data gathering. (Principal C,
>
> paragraph 55)

Schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne receive funding for taking on CLaSS. The costs for

the CLaSS coordinator are fully funded. The four schools in this study receive only a fraction

of the literacy funding given to schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne and are still

required to run the full CLaSS model with a CLaSS coordinator and all other costs associated

with the professional development. In reference to the issue of funding, Principal D laments

the decreasing levels of support from the diocesan office towards CLaSS:

> Some schools have found it pretty hard to engage support. Well some schools would
>
> have felt that they needed support at a diocesan level, particularly this year since we
>
> did have a literacy coordinator up until the beginning of this year specifically
>
> dedicated to CLaSS schools, and that person is no longer there. (Principal D,
>
> paragraph 166)

Interestingly, Hill and Crévola (2001) say the second year should be the easiest.

Principal D suggests that the increased workload for teachers involved with CLaSS, while

initially problematic, is accepted as an expectation of staff:

We are in our fifth year now so I think we've got over some of the little hurdles

you expect to run into on the way. I think maybe the second year in, we probably ran

into a few little headwinds because people are just working so hard. (Principal D,

paragraph 108-109)

Principal D regards the extra demands on teachers as a necessary and natural expression of

the school's commitment to CLaSS:

What's not flexible is the focus on using the data to drive what you are doing. And so

the workload for teachers increases because you have to continually get data from the

kids. Like Running Records, I mean they update those every 2 or 3 weeks. So there is

a continuous feedback and assessment coming, anecdotal records become a pretty big

part of planning. (Principal D, paragraph 30)

The measuring of finances is seen as a necessary component of being committed to CLaSS.

All four principals underline the fact that taking on CLaSS, and ensuring it is properly

resourced, is a major financial commitment. Meeting the shortfall clearly means that there is

less to spend on other areas of the curriculum and their associated resources. The CLaSS

schools in this study have less money to spend on numeracy, humanities and the arts.

Principals tend to justify their financial commitment to CLaSS by stating that without success

in literacy, success in other areas is not likely. It is clear that schools not only have to be

committed to CLaSS one hundred percent, but that this commitment also comes at a cost to

other areas of the curriculum and to the teachers themselves.

Selecting the Right Team for CLaSS - Removing Threats and Managing People

Cultivating and eliciting staff support for CLaSS permeates the Principals' discussions in this

section. Issues concerning the management of resources, particularly human resources,

feature strongly and have already been discussed. However, the strategic involvement of

human resources in CLaSS is particularly interesting. The correct team needs to be chosen.

Even during the preliminary stages of implementation, Principals give considerable thought

to determining which members of staff will be supportive and therefore useful to CLaSS and which will not. The needs of the students (through ensuring that CLaSS is faithfully implemented) are unapologetically given priority over all other needs, particularly the needs of the staff. The value of a staff member can be determined by the contribution that she or he can or could make to CLaSS. Staff who do not comply are seen as threats and are strategically re-assigned within the school. There is no room for discontent or wavering support of CLaSS. As Principal A explains:

> In the very first statement (vision and mission documents) we state we are committed to excellence in teaching and learning… anything less is not good enough…CLaSS provides a path to excellence in literacy development, we are committed to it… we push this really hard. (Principal A, Paragraph 41)

For Principal A the incidence of wavering was swept aside through the commitment to follow the "path to excellence" as prescribed by CLaSS. Within the CLaSS team there is no room for discontent or deviation as "we are committed to it… we push this really hard". Not surprisingly, when asked directly about any incidence of wavering support among his staff, Principal A commented:

> No, I can say we have not had a block(er) during that time. It has been really healthy that we actually produced good results. CLaSS helped us address the problem. Everybody had to own this problem before we could make a decent change. They (the whole staff) were happy with the option we decided to go with. They had to agree with it before we went ahead with it. So the process we went through is pretty healthy and everyone is on board. (Principal A, Paragraph 43)

When asked to describe his likely response to a hypothetical staff member beginning to lose faith in CLaSS Principal A indicated:

> I would go back and revisit the reasons why we are doing CLaSS with that person. The reason is to enhance the literacy standards of the children and the whole

community agreed to take on CLaSS. We have no excuses, we know CLaSS

works and we are committed to it for the betterment of the children. It would be a

difficult point to argue against. (Principal A, Paragraph 57)

Notice how the argument is directed to this hypothetical staff member: "We all owned the

problem", "the whole community agreed". The extrapolation is "therefore you have agreed"

and "therefore you have to be on board as well". Indeed, it would be very difficult for a

teacher to "argue against" such a position expressed so forcefully and cogently by the

principal.

It is not too difficult to imagine the stifling effects such a discussion between a principal and

a teacher about CLaSS would have on the promotion of educational discourse within a

school. Is this the language of an educational leader? There is no questioning the rationale for

taking on CLaSS. There is no invitation to express concerns. Here the principal is simply

reminding the staff member of the agreement, and therefore, the need to have everyone fall

into line. Principal B explains that wavering support was avoided at School B through careful

management of personnel:

We put people in P1/2 area that were going to be more receptive to change and we

had a couple of people leave, not because of the fact that it was too pressured but they

left the P/1/2 area as we started implementing CLaSS. (Principal B, paragraph 67)

What constitutes a "receptive" staff member is unclear. Is "receptive" a code word for being

compliant? When asked to comment on a specific incidence of wavering support, Principal B

told of the following incident:

There was one particular teacher who was very questioning and a little bit reluctant

initially to engage in the professional dialogue which is your team meetings, and that

can still be the case where, depending on the personality of the person, they may think

they know better. Some people don't like to be told "this could be a way of looking at

it", they might think they've got all the answers already. (Principal B, paragraph 67)

Here, reluctance to engage in dialogue suggests that the teacher wanted to use language

and thoughts outside of what is sanctioned by CLaSS. Principal B gave another incident of

wavering support:

> As I think back too, we had another teacher who's now not with us any longer, but we
>
> had a concern with her. She didn't accept the role of the CLaSS coordinator, until it
>
> was made clear again that this person, the CLaSS coordinator's role was to team
>
> teach, mentor and to coach. Every teacher, regardless of how much experience they
>
> have in any particular area, needs to continually develop. Well, she thought she had it
>
> all in place. We've got to keep stretching our professionalism because we'll never be
>
> on top of it. We'll never have the golden age of teaching; it's growing all the time.
>
> (Principal B, paragraph 67)

Again this teacher is seen to be at fault because "she thought she had it all in place". She was

unwilling to "stretch" her professionalism, and as a result unable to grow professionally in

the principal's judgement. This unfavourable judgement is made because she did not accept

the authority of the CLaSS coordinator. The debate is not about literacy, it is about who is in

charge, as agreed by any school that takes on CLaSS. It is all about following the rules and

not discussing reasons or working through difficulties from an educational perspective.

When Principal C was asked to comment on his approach to wavering support for CLaSS

among teachers, he gave the following example, from his previous school, of a teacher

whom, he suspects, resigned because of CLaSS:

> I don't know if CLaSS had anything to do with her resignation but she put in many
>
> long hours. In her letter of resignation she offered legitimate personal reasons. The
>
> work that CLaSS created meant she did have to work late. She never ever said she
>
> was resigning because of CLaSS. So, I don't know. It might have been because of
>
> CLaSS. So the next person that I put in to the junior school was a graduate. She was
>
> young and enthusiastic. I placed her there knowing full well that she liked classroom

structure and the CLaSS model is very structured. So I really handpicked a

person going in there knowing that she would pick it up and be enthusiastic about it.

She would go with it because it suited her style. (Principal C, paragraph 14)

Principal C who responded with questions concerning management of personnel in regard to

implementing CLaSS offered the following:

I did have one of my senior teachers, she did have a different approach to literacy. I

think she was more committed to the old whole language approach to literacy. I know

that if I put her in the junior primary the program it just would not have worked. She

wasn't openly critical of CLaSS and was not willing to trial it. (Principal C, paragraph

21)

Basically you would shuffle people around until you got the right team together.

(Principal C, paragraph 27)

When asked about his experience of resistance to CLaSS at School C he replied:

I handpick the people who go into the program. I know I'm not likely to have that

kind of problem. The CLaSS coordinator would be better placed to answer this

question. (Principal C, paragraph 25)

CLaSS coordinator C's response to questions on how she would deal with wavering support

at School C:

Yes, there was a lot of opposition and people were making a lot of noise about it

(CLaSS). The principal asked everyone to write to him and explain their anxiety and

what they thought about the CLaSS program. After he got all of the letters it was

decided that we would not be part of that intake. However the principal announced

that we would be part of the third intake in the following year. That gave people a

year to think about if they wanted to stay in that part of the school. If you did not want

to be part of it you had the opportunity to negotiate a move to another part of the

school. This also gave people in other parts of the school the opportunity to move into the junior school. (CLaSS coordinator C, Paragraph 9)

CLaSS coordinator C agrees with Principal A in the assertion that differences and discontent among teachers are problems that can be eradicated through consistent and controlled approaches:

> I have been teaching a long time and the biggest problem I see is that there are the differences between classrooms. There is a need for consistency among classrooms. It is a question of quality control and parents want it. CLaSS is a great equalizer. (CLaSS coordinator C, Paragraph106)

Principal D points out that when he spends time in a classroom he is looking for specific behaviours from the teacher and students that indicate whether CLaSS is being implemented:

> I go into a CLaSS classroom. I know what I am looking for. (Principal D, paragraph 86)

Principal D continues:

> I am familiar enough with the CLaSS processes to know what the teachers are doing and I understand the strategy well enough to recognize what is going on and I can sit in any room and know what the teachers should be doing. Whether I have the skill or not to go away and plan it and do it, I would need a lot of time to do that, and I don't think I could because I think it's highly skilled. (Principal, D paragraph 89)

If Principal D could not identify the necessary indicators present in a particular classroom he said:

> I can have the conversation with the teachers about why they are using that text with a group of kids, they can talk to me about it which is fantastic and I can use the language in an informed way. (Principal D paragraph 105)

Principal D refers to shared language and common practice as evidence of a teacher's commitment to CLaSS. Through CLaSS his school is provided with a sanctioned way of using language:

> The CLaSS design is good for getting people talking about their common values and having those discussions. Getting people using the same language is really important. I think you know, at one level it sounds really simple, and it really should be I suppose, but I guess it is having a consistent way of being able to dialogue is essential for change. (Principal D, paragraph 73)

If a staff member persists with resistance to CLaSS, individuals are reminded by Principal D that:

> We all made a strong commitment to CLaSS when it was first initiated. The induction programs we offer new staff are extremely thorough. (Principal D, paragraph 109)

Non-compliance with CLaSS practices and structures is seen as a major threat to a school's ability to make improvements. Managing threats to CLaSS is not the sole responsibility of the principal, as staff that are "struggling" get support from the CLaSS coordinator and their peers at the weekly mandated meeting:

> Yeah, it started as a mandate, you have to meet every week as a literacy team and now you won't be able to get rid of it because people know that's where they can get their support when they are struggling with a particular child, or strategy or idea. Teachers will come to that meeting with a piece of information, piece of writing, piece of work, saying I am really trying to get this child's literacy moving, I am having difficulty. Then the other six or seven people in the team will then say, OK, well let's try this. There would become a shared focus on learning and how can we move this child on. (Principal D, paragraph 51)

Any form of non-compliance in thought or action that has the potential to distract staff from giving CLaSS structures and practices their full and unquestioning attention is regarded as a

threat to CLaSS. Selecting and maintaining the "right team" is the strategy that CLaSS recommends in the management of staff. It is anticipated by CLaSS, and recognized by principals, that some teachers will hold values and beliefs about literacy and school improvement that are contrary to those of CLaSS. Therefore, staff management is a strategic and ongoing venture aimed at ensuring that the implementation and subsequent maintenance of CLaSS is free of discontent and interruption.

<div align="center">Ensuring Compliance</div>

In this section, the principals explain how the necessary levels of fidelity can be converted into compliance with CLaSS. For Principal A, it is important that all the teachers "hear the same thing", and in his opinion, CLaSS ensures that all the staff "walk the right path" in order to ensure the success of CLaSS:

> All this together combines to ensure that we all walk the right path. Where CLaSS professional development is concerned and our understandings of literacy is concerned we all hear the same thing. (Principal A, paragraph 59)

As mentioned earlier, Principal B describes his regular participation in the "Principal's walk" as requested by CLaSS, as a way of supporting "teachers professionally" and sending "a subtle message" to the teachers and the students that he has no intention of "backing off" from his commitment to CLaSS. Despite claiming to having avoided difficulties with waivering commitment by handpicking CLaSS teachers, on being asked about the protocols for dealing with questioning from teachers, or possibly recalcitrant behaviour in regard to implementing and maintaining CLaSS, Principal C comments:

> … looking at other schools that had resistor, it caused friction, and a subsequent lack of commitment. The program fell down in individual classrooms. (Principal C, paragraph 25)

Principal C relies upon the strategic selection of staff to avoid any "friction" that may result from "resistors" to CLaSS or to what he considers to be the school's commitment to CLaSS.

A "lack of commitment" and resulting disunity has led to the demise of CLaSS in other schools. Principal D supports the importance of ensuring commonality of ideology in teaching values for the success of CLaSS and points to the staff's ability to use a common language as an indicator of compliance:

> The CLaSS design is good for getting people talking about their common values and having those discussions. Getting people using the same language is really important. At one level it sounds really simple, and it really should be I suppose, but I guess it's having a consistent way of being able to dialogue is essential for change to occur.
> (Principal D, paragraph 73)

Principal D explains some of the practicalities of how this "sharing" in thinking and ideas is developed and demonstrated through the actions of teachers:

> You can share in the language, and share in ideas at the CLaSS team meeting which happens every Monday. People come to these meetings and they have it in turns to bring a piece of data from one of their children, and it may be a child that they have had a success with and they will say 'this child is doing really well', or they may bring something they're not having success with and they share it. Having an excellent CLaSS coordinator who can jump in and team teach with people and model teaching to other teachers is great. You've got one person moving between the four or five rooms doing it. They say 'look, this person's really good at doing this, I'll jump in their room for a minute and get them to model for this person how they do that'. So this sort of stuff wasn't happening and CLaSS has allowed us to develop that sort of thing. Teachers in the early years look at all the kids as a whole group and work to help all these kids, not just their students. CLaSS has allowed us to develop that team approach. (Principal D, paragraph 40-43)

The identification of what are "really good things" involves the principal and CLaSS coordinator determining the level of congruence between an individual teacher's practice and

the "agreed practices" derived from CLaSS. The "really good things" are shared among

the staff as described below:

> It started as a mandate, you have to meet every week as a literacy team and now you
>
> won't be able to get rid of it because people know that's where they can get their
>
> support when they are struggling with a particular child, or strategy or idea. Teachers
>
> will come to that meeting with a piece of information, piece of writing, piece of work,
>
> saying "I am really trying to get this child's literacy moving and I am having
>
> difficulty". Then the other six or seven people in the team will then say, "Okay, well
>
> let's try this". This would become a shared focus on learning and how we can move
>
> this child on (Principal D, paragraph 51)

Principal D, being removed from full-time teaching, relies upon the professional development

he received from CLaSS to recognize what "should be happening" if the teacher is engaging

CLaSS. Principal revisited a point he made earlier:

> Yes as I said I'm familiar enough with the process and I know what the teachers are
>
> doing and I understand the strategy well enough to recognize what is going on and I
>
> can sit in a small group and *know what teachers should be doing*. Whether I have the
>
> skill or not to go away and plan it and do it, I would need a lot of time to do that, and I
>
> don't think I could because I think it's highly skilled. I can have the conversation with
>
> the teachers about why they are using that text with a group of kids, they can talk to
>
> me about it which is fantastic and I can use the language in an informed way.
>
> (Principal D, paragraph 105, emphasis added)

Using language in an "informed way" is another way of saying that the principal is using the

approved language which is representative of the improved way of thinking. When asked

about the course of action available if the "conversation" with a recalcitrant teacher failed to

get the desired compliance, Principal D presented the following scenario:

When I walk into a CLaSS room and I see someone working and they're not

doing what they are supposed to be doing. I will know they are not doing it and I can

have a conversation with them and I will say

Hang on a minute; tell me why you are doing this?

Ah well, you know I didn't have time to do…

Well hang on a minute; we agreed that we were going to do it this way.

So we would have a conversation about that.

What are you struggling with?

I'm finding this thing hard.

Do you need some support in that way, what would help you, can I get someone to come and team teach with you for a little while?

I know what's going on and what to look for even though I don't teach it. (Principal

D, paragraph 88-96)

According to Principal D, teachers coming into classrooms that are using CLaSS from other

areas of the school can find using the approved language and thinking - being compliant - "a

little bit hard" as they may be unwilling to "let go" of some of the values and practices that

they have developed through their teaching experience:

If someone has to come in midway along and they have come out of another unit and

they haven't been teaching the way you do in CLaSS and they have got their own

teaching practice already boxed, wrapped up and tied up, there is a little bit of hard

work for someone to unpack a bit of stuff they used to do and *let it go*. (Principal D,

paragraph 11, emphasis added)

For Principal D, teachers will be effective if they can let go of their old practices and adopt

the commonalities expressed by CLaSS.

Summary

Loyalty and demonstrated fidelity to CLaSS are of paramount importance to the successful implementation of the model. Conspicuous among the ideological and pedagogical presumptions promoted by the principals are ascriptions of a common language, common identity, common practice and common purpose.

Principals vigorously defend and promote their commitment to CLaSS and associated commonalities by engaging what can be described as "control technologies". All four principals use a range of "control technologies" including their own physical presence in classrooms, direct "dialogue" with staff, devolution of authority (mostly to the CLaSS coordinator) and overt reliance on visual and verbal clues to ensure that commonality in ideology and language is pursued, even policed if necessary. Non-compliance or rebelliousness to the conventions of CLaSS by teachers is treated procedurally within the context of the desired outcomes by the principal and CLaSS coordinator.

Teachers who question what CLaSS requires, or who are seen by their principal as being slow to change their practice to the CLaSS model, are encouraged to "let go" of old practices; or they are reminded of what had been "agreed" to when the decision was made to take on CLaSS. The decision is presented as a collective decision, even if it was made by the principal and only a small group of committed teachers. "Letting go" is a clearer way of reminding recalcitrant teachers that the problem is located with them. They are considered to be out of touch and in need of help to change. Help is on hand, as Principal D explained - "they can talk to me" (paragraph 105).

CLaSS represents a powerful cultural change, not just of shared goals and a common language. What is more important is that the language of fidelity and loyalty reminds teachers that individual autonomy needs to be submerged to conform to the "collective decisions" which bind the school to CLaSS. Teachers may have their practice "boxed, wrapped up and tied up". It may even be good practice but that is not the question. They have to let go. The

costs for those who do not accept this rhetoric are clear: the responsibility for change rests with them. Failure to change over time is seen as a threat to the new culture; a very serious threat for the culture of CLaSS. The only remedy is to remove teachers who persistently fail to conform. There may appear to be "dialogue" with teachers who question CLaSS or who are slow to change, but this "dialogue" is a one-way discussion in which teachers are reminded of what the school has committed itself to and, by implication, what they have "agreed" to. This is no longer dialogue. It is not extreme to see strong elements of policing in this "dialogue".

As Principal D infers with his reference to the Catholic Education Office of Melbourne experience of implementing CLaSS, as he understands it, "autocratic" approaches to literacy reform are accepted and welcomed if the right results are forthcoming. It is expected that, through the implementation of CLaSS, a new culture will emerge within the school and, indeed, the whole school community. This new culture, as demonstrated by all four principals, has the intrinsic authority to devalue, disregard or even fail to acknowledge, the professional autonomy of the teachers.

Despite the rhetoric of CLaSS concerning the value of professional development for teachers within CLaSS, there are checks and procedures specifically designed to be enforced to ensure compliance; there is one answer to the perceived flawed culture of the four schools - CLaSS. It would seem that teachers have inadvertently participated in the apparent demise of the school and compliance to CLaSS is the only opportunity teachers have to remedy the situation. Indeed, the teachers' compliance with CLaSS is seen as obligatory. CLaSS is to be considered as something much more than simply a better way of teaching.

Cultivating an Image and Positioning CLaSS Schools Above Others

In this section, it will be seen that the principals cultivate an image that CLaSS schools are in control of all aspects of teaching and learning. Unlike the opening section, where principals talked about responding to a flawed culture as a principal reason for introducing CLaSS, the

four principals in this section, tell how CLaSS has changed their culture, and how each school now sees itself and is able to be seen. Further, the successful implementation of CLaSS and the subsequent change in culture sets the four CLaSS schools apart from other schools. For the principals CLaSS provides a framework for the school to have a "consistent way of being able to dialogue" (Principal D, paragraph 73). While acknowledging similarities with other literacy programs, the four principals maintain that there are important differences between CLaSS and non-CLaSS schools. Engaging in CLaSS according to these principals, is proof of heightened awareness and understanding about the very nature of teaching and learning, resulting in a shared understanding and a common purpose among the entire school community. When people, parents in particular, perceive diversity in teachers' approaches to literacy, this is seen, especially by principals, as an undesirable characteristic that should be replaced with consistency. CLaSS is described as a "great equalizer", and dominates the approach these schools take to literacy. According to the four principals, CLaSS makes them different from, and better than, other schools. When asked to comment on factors that differentiate CLaSS from other reform programs, Principal A explains:

> The professional development component is very different. With CLaSS, professional development is a big issue. We all hear the same thing, while other schools would not have the consistency that we have. (Principal A, paragraph 75)

> Only the CLaSS model actually ensures that each of those components needed for reform happen. The principal gets CLaSS professional development; the CLaSS coordinator gets ongoing professional development and the teachers get professional development. All this together combines to ensure that we all walk the right path. Where CLaSS professional development is concerned and our understanding about literacy is concerned, we all hear the same thing. (Principal A, paragraph 59)

"Hearing the same thing" and "walking the same path" provides Principal A with the catalyst to promote the school as being in control of literacy.

Principal B also uses CLaSS as a promotional tool:

> . . . it's a great selling point when you walk in with people through our school especially if they're prospective enrolments. I try and have prospective parents come through between that literacy block between 9-11. It's very much a positive thing for parents. (Principal B, paragraph 140)

In particular, Principal B points to the "atmosphere" that he attributes to CLaSS and the school's commitment to it:

> There's settledness in the school. Parents would particularly make comment on that. If I can get people here who might be prospective enrolments at this school and they can sense the atmosphere, it's great PR. I don't like to use the word marketing, but CLaSS has been a great promotional tool for this school. [Then simulating a conversation with parents] I am happy to have a chat with you and I'm on the strong end of CLaSS and wouldn't go back any other way. (Principal B, paragraph 192-193)

For Principal B the main difference between CLaSS and other literacy programs is in the unparalleled results in literacy attainment:

> I believe our results prove that our approach is unparalleled. Also the general professional understanding and the tone of the school has improved. (Principal B, paragraph 85)

A deduction that could be made here is that other schools do not provide the data that CLaSS schools are required to gather in order to show gains in children's literacy achievement. They may well be able to provide some data to demonstrate improvement in children's literacy, but they are not as focused on collecting and using data as CLaSS schools are. There is the suggestion, therefore, that their professional culture is impoverished and will only be remedied and enriched through CLaSS. Such is the need for remediation across the system that Principal B advocates the adoption of the CLaSS philosophy to be mandatory for all schools:

> At this school we are very supportive of the CLaSS model and advocate that
>
> strongly. If "you are on a winner" you should promote that for the good of the other
>
> schools within the system. (Principal B paragraph 89)

Principal B believes his school is "on a winner". When asked to comment on a diocesan

publication describing the literacy approach of a neighbouring school, that does not use

CLaSS, and the apparent success of that approach, Principal B explained:

> I read the article by the school and obviously they have had a long look at what sort of
>
> literacy practice they were going to have in place. When you look at what they are
>
> doing, it is very similar to CLaSS. They've got focus teaching, small teaching groups
>
> and team meetings etc. CLaSS as a design has a little more rigour to it concerning the
>
> way professional learning of teachers is handled. The commitment from my teachers
>
> to meet weekly and do those sessions in Melbourne and the general level of talk about
>
> literacy practice in the school is a lot more thorough than experienced in other
>
> schools. That school is obviously doing some great things, and good luck to them. I
>
> know we can maintain our results over a long period of time. (Principal B, paragraph
>
> 95)

In this part of the interview, Principal B has been asked to comment on the reported success

of a neighbouring (non-CLaSS) school that has been achieving results in literacy that match

the publicized results of CLaSS schools. In the above, Principal B used the word

"unparalleled" to describe his schools' results. Notice he does not dispute the evidence

presented in the article. Principal B seems to present the notion that a possible element of

luck or non-sustainability is associated with those schools that experience success in literacy

attainment without engaging in CLaSS. He is confident that CLaSS does not rely on luck and

trusts that the processes initiated through CLaSS have the intellectual and professional rigour

to ensure continued success for his school over a sustained period. The comparison between

his school and the neighbouring non-CLaSS school is not about evidence of literacy

achievement but creating doubt about the other school's ability to sustain its good performance in literacy. This is the language of market positioning: only a CLaSS school can reliably guarantee sustained improvement in literacy. Other schools may show improvement but can they be trusted to reproduce this achievement over time?

Principal C also finds CLaSS to be a good promotional tool. In particular, Principal C points to the decisiveness and certainty concerning literacy about which his teachers can now speak as a result of CLaSS:

> Yes, absolutely at my last school we won a national literacy award in two consecutive years. So in our promotional brochure we had that right across the front cover. It's hard to measure the influence that has on people, but, in a small town, that Catholic school is now bigger than the state school. . . .Now that is a really good spin-off in small towns and has a big bearing on enrolments. (Principal C, paragraph 46-47)

Here Principal C is convinced, although he admits he did not have precise evidence, that CLaSS and the National Literacy Awards gave his previous school a vital competitive edge. Principal C points to the professional development program of CLaSS as being critical for the success of CLaSS and the most significant difference between CLaSS and other literacy programs:

> In the past I would send staff to a one-off PD day. They would come back with a fire in the belly but within two weeks the initial enthusiasm has dissipated and no impact has been made on the school. The research says that change needs to be sustained.
>
> (Principal C, paragraph 79)

It is not clear whether Principal C is criticizing other programs for failing to make an impact, that "sending staff off" to a professional development event is not likely to be an effective way of generating sustained change. Similar comments concerning the inadequacies of other models of professional development models in contrast to CLaSS are made by Principal D:

Often people would go to in-services, they come back and they will try to talk

about something but if you haven't been involved as a leader in the actual process and

taken the main message on board, then you can't support those teachers with any

implementation because you are not going to back it up with resources or with

philosophy. (Principal D, paragraph 84)

Once again, Principal D is admitting that simply sending teachers off to a professional

development day is unlikely to generate sustained change. CLaSS is a highly structured

school wide program that enjoys significant funding and support from the school system. The

one-off in-service days which Principal D refers do not have the same financial or

authoritarian base from which to draw. When asked to compare CLaSS with other "serious"

literacy programs, Principal D acknowledges similarities between CLaSS and these other

literacy programs, but points to the sustained use of data as a key difference.

The strategies that CLaSS uses are the same as the ones you find in Early Years, the

prescribed tasks for both models are the same. However, the difference was that the

assumption in CLaSS is that you actually work from the data you have on each child.

With CLaSS you actually have tested them when they have come in, you know what

they know at the start, and at the interview with the Parents we can say that over the

year we know what this child needs in order to be literate. (Principal D paragraph 14)

According to Principal D, the removal of any ambiguity concerning literacy is the main

attribute of CLaSS, and presents a CLaSS school as having greater understanding of literacy

development than other schools. The combination of certainty, decisiveness in regard to

communicating to parents, and the confidence that comes from being in control of literacy are

the most distinguishable and defining aspects of CLaSS. Principal D claims that from his

perspective:

It's okay for schools to do whatever they want in literacy. If schools are comfortable

with knowing where their kids are starting from and can show how the kids have

improved, schools can do whatever they like. I think for us CLaSS really helped

us to do that, to put a structure around improvement. Now, I'm skeptical as to whether

every school is being able to do that with their kids. I mean some schools are very

good at literacy, they have got some good people driving their literacy programs.

They might be doing Early Years. They might be doing Frameworks or whatever it is.

(Principal D, paragraph 130)

The need for accountability features strongly with Principal D. To his mind CLaSS provides

clear accountability for literacy development. Principal D points out that the system is not

tough enough on those schools that are using other approved literacy programs. It is

extravagant to suggest that these schools simply "tick a box" and have no evidence to support

the effectiveness of their programs. This is an assertion that needs to be supported by

evidence, but Principal D is asserting that he believes control and accountability are only

available to schools that engage in CLaSS.

Principal D is really concerned to promote the benefits of CLaSS. It is not central to his case

to engage in a detailed analysis of what happens in non-CLaSS schools that implement

"approved literacy programs". From his perspective, CLaSS schools meet all requirements of

accountability:

You want to have benchmarks: and you want to be able to say 'Well we're trying to

help every child reach a certain standard in literacy and this is how we are going with

it, and these are the kids who aren't doing it, this is how we are meeting their needs'.

We've got them slotted into Reading Recovery or other support programs. We are

supporting kids in their learning. And the kids that are flying - we are supporting them

too. I just think at the moment that accountability is a sheet of paper, tick the

approved program you are doing and sign off. So anybody can do that, no one

actually knows whether you're doing it or not. I mean, I just think, that's just 'Mickey

Mouse'. (Principal D, paragraph 148)

Principal D is clearly dismissive of the efforts made by other schools in the diocese that are implementing approved literacy programs. Of course, some of these schools may not be implementing their programs as well as CLaSS schools implement theirs. Principal B tends to dismiss them by association, as his final comment about "Mickey Mouse" implementation suggests. Principal D is also concerned about the reasoning used by schools for not engaging CLaSS, and ironically he calls for schools to be more open-minded when considering ways to improve literacy in schools:

> Surely we want all schools to be doing something really well, that we want all kids to learn and so I think this idea of having a defensive attitude is counterproductive. When CLaSS was implemented a small group of schools were saying that they were finding something really exciting. Other schools would just get defensive and say 'Yeah, but we're doing such and such, you know, what you are doing couldn't be any better than what we're doing'. I think that's a bit unfortunate, let's just be a bit open-minded and have a look at what people are doing. If they can do something without CLaSS, and get better results, well then let's look at that. But in the meantime CLaSS is miles ahead in terms of accountability and results. (Principal D, paragraph 152-153)

Principal D, in referring to CLaSS as being "miles ahead in terms of accountability and results", is clearly echoing Principal B's comments that his school's "approach is unparalleled", and Principal C's belief that CLaSS can change enrolment patterns in a school's favour.

Image is important to principals. Principal A is also concerned about "letting prospective parents know that we do literacy particularly well". The image that these principals wish to foster is clearly supported by evidence derived from, and sanctioned by, the CLaSS program. But in all four cases the principals all tend to be dismissive, in some way, of the efforts of non-CLaSS schools. In their words, some of these other schools do not have any strong evidence and when they do present evidence their success is attributed to following some of

the features that CLaSS espouses. Nevertheless, even when these other schools appear to have clear evidence of literacy achievement, there are questions raised about whether their performances are sustainable in the long run. CLaSS invests schools with an image of accountability, certainty and sustainability beyond what can be promised by "other approved literacy programs".

Principal D is sufficiently convinced that there is a need for CLaSS schools to continue CLaSS Professional Development beyond the compulsory three-year (Prep to Year 2) period by working with other CLaSS schools only, despite being geographically closer to other diocesan schools:

> We (other CLaSS schools in the diocese) are actually organizing our own external supervision and support by using the person that used to do that job (CLaSS facilitator) that is now working in a school to run some professional development and free our teachers to go and work with that person. (Principal D, paragraph 174)

Principal D promotes the idea that for teachers to maintain their high standards in regard to understanding literacy, they must interact professionally with the right people. Schools that do not engage CLaSS, seemingly, do not have the levels of understanding about literacy to participate in professional development with schools that use CLaSS.

CLaSS Principals see themselves and their schools as being more knowledgeable about teaching literacy than schools that do not engage CLaSS. Indeed, the Principals regard their schools as being far more professional in their approach to literacy as a direct result of the

Summary

CLaSS Professional Development. CLaSS provides principals and teachers with the belief and image that they are in control of the literacy development of their students. These beliefs are evident in the clear and decisive discussions CLaSS teachers are said to have with parents. Further validation of CLaSS comes, as these principals assert, through the systems of accountability that CLaSS provides. For these CLaSS principals, responding to neo-liberal

notions of accountability is intertwined with marketing an image of their school and positioning it to take advantage of the limited number of new enrolments available each year. All the schools see themselves as competing for enrolments with other neighbouring government and non-government primary schools.

This intense focus on image and marketing does not necessarily mean the schools have spent time discussing educational perspectives on literacy among staff. In any event, the CLaSS documentation regards discussions on issues to do with the educational perspectives on literacy as an unnecessary professional liberty; the "hard work" has already happened among the experts. Educational discussions concerning the philosophy and pedagogy of literacy would inevitably introduce elements of ambiguity and complexity to the school community. Such notions are unhelpful in the cultivation of images that CLaSS principals want to convey. In any case, the CLaSS program removes ambiguity and complexity. According to Hill and Crévola (2005) failure is not an option for a CLaSS school. By "working smarter and, in particular being explicit about why things are done in a particular way" (p. 9). CLaSS schools can rest assured that all their students can and will achieve high standards of literacy.

These four CLaSS principals also point to ambiguity and uncertainty concerning literacy in non-CLaSS schools. For these schools, ambiguity and uncertainty are represented as failings and a negative selling point. By contrast, in CLaSS schools the professional development component is designed to clear up any ambiguity concerning literacy development in children. As a result, CLaSS schools have a higher cultural understanding of literacy teaching and the capacity to demonstrate their superiority. These images are clearly cultivated by the four Principals quoted in the above interviews.

<div align="center">New Professional Identity: Operating in the CLaSS Model</div>

We have seen that the four schools initially engaged CLaSS in response to perceived notions that the culture of each school was fundamentally flawed. In an attempt to remedy this flawed culture, the four schools have taken action to ensure CLaSS is implemented exactly as

prescribed. For the Principals this is the only rational response available to schools. Involvement with CLaSS has to be whole-hearted. The intensive allocation of resources required by CLaSS has been made possible by a single-minded focus on literacy improvement and whole school reform. The principals selected the right team and engaged various control technologies to ensure their ongoing compliance. The effect of this action has allowed schools to cultivate a new image for themselves and promote a new professional identity among the staff. It is accepted by these principals that CLaSS is their preferred model of whole school reform.

> CLaSS is a very healthy model that can be used in any area of school you want to look at and reform. (Principal A, paragraph 57)
>
> Our whole teaching and learning policy now is based around the CLaSS design. (Principal B, paragraph 120)
>
> …we are working towards ensuring that we apply the CLaSS model throughout the whole school. We hope to apply the CLaSS model when we focus on numeracy. (Principal B, paragraph 16)

Earlier in this chapter it has been shown that CLaSS requires schools to ensure that the CLaSS model is implemented with great fidelity and unquestioning compliance. Through the adoption of CLaSS strategies, Principals provide the whole community with a clear message that their school is locked into CLaSS and is serious about reforming approaches to teaching and learning. As a consequence, CLaSS schools cultivate an image of superiority over schools that are not committed to CLaSS and point to these schools' inherent inadequacies. That is, schools that do not embrace CLaSS, according to these principals, retain their fundamentally flawed cultures. As Principal B says:

> Schools will pick up their own program for the reasons they think that's going to work for them. But I think our teachers now, from the way in which we purchase resources to the way we actually manage our meetings, have a greater level of knowledge and

confidence and competence than staff in other schools. So that's a challenge for

them. My teachers would not go back and teach another way. They know that this is

the way to go and so our movement into numeracy has enabled the same design to

take place. (Principal B, paragraph 116)

Here, Principal B is drawing attention to the emergence, through CLaSS, of a new

professional identity for teachers. This new professional identity includes a new conception

of teacher autonomy defined by a wholehearted acceptance of CLaSS, the ability and

willingness to work in teams, and the capacity to respond to the highly specific assessment

data on the children's literacy levels required to drive one's teaching. As Principal D

explains:

You use the data to drive your teaching. So that was quite a different way of looking

at things than before. One of the things which I have found in trying to describe this to

people is when people come around to have a look. Say you get someone from the

Catholic Education Office who is not familiar with the CLaSS model or someone

from another school to come and have a bit of a look and they walk into a room and

see. Imagine this scene, the kids are working in a small group with a teacher or kids

working in the learning centres or whatever, and they say "Well this is the same as

Early Years" and we say "No no no! Let's just stop for a minute, go a little bit deeper

and have a look at what people are actually doing". They often say "What do you

mean?" So I say, go and ask the teacher why they are using that particular text with

that particular group of kids? Oh ok, so they do and they find that teachers are using a

particular text with a particular group of kids because what the CLaSS data shows. It

tells us that these children are at Point A and they have moved to Point B. Again we

have the data to prove it. The teachers and the parents know where they are up to.

(Principal D, Paragraph 18)

Data driven teaching within the CLaSS model is of fundamental importance and an unchallengeable component. When Principal A was asked how he would respond to poor data if that were to occur, he replied:

> We would have to find out why, so we would go through the model and see which part of the model we are not doing well. There needs to be constant improvement with CLaSS. We would analyze poor results and examine how well we are implementing the model. (Principal A, paragraph 150)

The message coming from the CLaSS documentation and the principals is clear: the data coming from CLaSS has priority over data from any other source. It is important to note that there is no questioning of the data themselves or of their relevance or value. For CLaSS schools, the gathering and analysis of data is an essential component of the reform agenda and, according to the principals, differentiates between a school's previous and current practices. Data driven teaching is said to differentiate CLaSS schools from other schools. Principal D tells us that CLaSS provides a different way of looking at things and hence a new way teaching:

> What we are saying is that you can actually ask a teacher here now why are you doing? And what you are doing with this group of kids? They can tell you exactly what is happening and back their decision with data. Some individual teachers at other schools could probably do that, but CLaSS is very systematic, and all our teachers are certainly very focused in their teaching and reliant on current data about their kids.
> (Principal D, Paragraph 18)

According to all four principals, CLaSS provides processes that, when followed correctly, afford teachers the confidence to talk with "indisputable" precision concerning individual students' literacy attainment. The ability, knowledge and skill needed to collect and analyze data in order to direct one's teaching is, from a CLaSS perspective, able to transform teachers' knowledge and practice. As Principal C reports:

Recently I went to the literacy meetings and I was really impressed with a staff

member and his ability to analyze the data and find some direction in his teaching.

Later he said to me that he has learnt more in the last three years [being on CLaSS]

about teaching and learning than he has in the last 20 years classroom teaching.

CLaSS is all there and very structured. Everything he needs to do is there. This is

what your literacy block should be, here are the elements it should have and this is

what you do. (Principal C, Paragraph 37)

According to Principal C, teachers can now carry out their duties with confidence and

certainty. Any ambiguity or uncertainty in regard to classroom practice is resolved through

subscription to CLaSS. The CLaSS model provides everything that the teacher needs to do in

order to operate within this new professional identity.

Associated with this new found professional assurance is a teacher's ability to use the

common language and share the common values that CLaSS promotes. As Principal D

explains, having staff use the same language is fundamental to the success of CLaSS:

The CLaSS design is good for getting people talking about their common values and

having those discussions. Getting people using the same language is really important.

(Principal D, paragraph 73)

Principal C also supports the view that the common language of CLaSS provides a basis for

uniformity and consistency of teaching:

Everybody knew what everybody was talking about because we had a common

language. And all the classrooms had a common CLaSS connection. It made things so

much easier. (Principal C, paragraph 51)

Teachers' individual differences, preferences and values appear now to become submerged

within the CLaSS culture. Their inner thinking may still be different but their outward

conformity to what CLaSS requires is evident. Principal C regards this kind of uniformity as

an important characteristic of the new professional identity:

CLaSS basically promotes good teaching practice. CLaSS makes teachers focus

on how they teach literacy and it has made them better teachers. The other thing I

found too is that before CLaSS you had parents coming to you and saying things like

'I don't want my child in a particular class for a particular reason'. With CLaSS that

doesn't happen because parents see all classrooms as equal and the same. The parents

know that the same things happen in each room. Parents can't really say that someone

is a better teacher than someone else. (Principal C, Paragraph 41)

It is seen as beneficial for parents not to be able to differentiate between the professional

performances of individual teachers. Every teacher within a CLaSS program can be relied

upon to walk the same path. Principals ensure that teachers who are at odds with the CLaSS

approach are excluded from areas of the school that are implementing CLaSS. Principal C

states that CLaSS makes teachers better teachers, and no one CLaSS teacher is better than

another. Principal B is adamant that teachers are now more confident and able to operate on a

higher educational level than they were before CLaSS was implemented:

My teachers are feeling more confident about their professionalism. My teachers are

on a higher educational level than they were prior to CLaSS. The talk around the staff

table, and socially, is about which strategies they are using with particular groups,

there is no general chit chat. The level of professional conversation has lifted because

they're wishing to share their successes and challenges. The professional learning

team meetings, which we have weekly, are the key to ensuring on-site professional

development for us. We are really trying to raise the bar all the time and ask questions

about why kids are doing what they're doing and if they're not doing certain things

we talk about how we can structure learning around kids. Professional conversations

are not only about your classroom; they are about learning generally and have been a

great thing for us. Teachers didn't talk much about their professional practice because

they were unsure about their practice. (Principal B, paragraph 37)

From Principal B's perspective, the general "chit chat" of the staffroom has been replaced with "professional conversations". Such conversations give the teachers, opportunities to constantly "raise the bar" and "talk about" learning in general. Such opportunities are only available to teachers who operate within this new professional identity and are no longer "unsure about their practice". Principal D explains that "good teachers" can use CLaSS and therefore make the transition into the new professional identity without any difficulty:

> . . . good teachers found that they could use their strategies in the CLaSS model, no
> problem at all. CLaSS gave them structure they could slot what they would like to do
> in and they could also discard things that actually were a bit wishy washy and leave
> them behind and say "Oh, I see now, that doesn't really work". (Principal D,
> Paragraph 22)

Principal D seems to imply that teachers not involved with CLaSS may be operating below their potential as they have not had the opportunity to discard their "wishy washy" practices. Principal D claims that a professional edge is now evident in all conversations among his staff:

> It's been great in just changing the culture of our school, to get people talking about
> learning and kids really learning. It has really helped the professional conversation in
> our school and as I said earlier even informal talk has a professional edge now.
> (Principal D, paragraph 186)

Likewise, Principal B regards this new found certainty and commonality as a key characteristic of a CLaSS teacher's new professional identity. Comments from Principal B point to the ability of CLaSS to generate common practice, common vocabulary and also common thinking among teachers. These elements are important for adopting a uniform and efficient approach to teaching. In the past, teachers may have discussed different approaches to teaching literacy; indeed teachers may have discussed a range of personal and professional

topics that influenced their approach to teaching generally but did not use the sanctioned language associated with CLaSS. Regardless of any potential educational value such discussions may have held they are now considered "chit chat" suggesting that they lead nowhere, and are no longer significant. With CLaSS, schools and teachers are given sanctioned knowledge and the technical language needed to enhance children's literacy. Knowledge and language outside of that which is sanctioned is considered to be of little value, especially language that is linked to the 'old way'. The new educational discussions that permeate staffroom are distinguished from the "meaningless chatter" of the past as they exist within the circle of discourse engendered by CLaSS.

Not only do teachers now use a common language, according to Principal B, but CLaSS also, enables teachers to think correctly about teaching:

> When teachers get together and chat professionally they are extending themselves into thinking correctly about teaching literacy and asking questions of our existing practice. There are many schools getting great results from this design. (Principal B, paragraph 108)

Principal B refers to his teachers' ability to think correctly about teaching as being a "good thing" as opposed to "chit chat" and the previous practice of "just teaching" what was outlined in the curriculum:

> Teachers are more concerned about what's appropriate to help the children be on their way with literacy. We are not just teaching because we found something in the curriculum content. We are thinking about the manner in which we teach and that is a good thing. (Principal B, paragraph 75)

For Principal B the difference between past and present practice is clear:

> Through the CLaSS model, all children are given sufficient time support. Teaching is focused. Home/school relationships are strong. Classroom strategies are consistent, and a model of strong leadership is given. (Principal B, paragraph 56)

Principal B appears to suggest that before CLaSS was introduced children were not given sufficient time and support, that teaching was not focused and that the model of leadership was weak. Principal B also seems to imply that in non-CLaSS schools, children are not given sufficient time and support, teaching is not focused and that the model of leadership is weak. Principal D is prepared to allow for some individual differences among teachers provided that these are peripheral to the CLaSS model:

> Oh sure yeah, and people do it differently. If you go down and watch the way say teacher X and teacher Y teach, they both teach in different ways, they use the same structure, same sort of, I guess, headings that are there when programming, you know, for guided readings and all that stuff, but they have their own personal teaching styles and known preferences of what they would like to emphasize, and that works.
>
> (Principal D, paragraph 26)

Principal D also draws attention to a strong culture of collegiality among those who are committed to CLaSS:

> The culture here is that we want people to know that we don't expect people to be good at everything. We believe that it's okay to say "I can't do this, can you give me a hand?" People will say "I need help with this, can someone come help me model this or can some one show me how to do this", that's something I talk to staff about very clearly, especially with potential staff in interview. That's very different from the way it used to be. I think a lot of our teachers were just working in isolation and not always being effective. (Principal D, paragraph 114)

But notice that Principal D is clear that help requested and help given needs to be seen in the context of implementing CLaSS more faithfully and more efficiently. In some ways, teachers' professional identity and collegiality are now subsumed within CLaSS. One can only become a better teacher by becoming a better CLaSS teacher. This transformation, as

has been noted, may come at some pain and personal cost to teachers, but the pain and

cost are worth it, as Principal B remarks:

> One of my teachers felt that she could nearly throw it in after the first six months
>
> because it was demanding more of her time. For teachers operating the old way it's
>
> easy to do curriculum coverage and teach it to the 25 or 30 children in front of you
>
> with the same material. (Principal B, paragraph 125)

Embracing CLaSS does come at a cost, and the ability to endure this cost, particularly by

teachers, is regarded by the principals as a rite of passage to a new professional identity. To

some extent, some staff have to be pushed through the rigours involved in implementing and

maintaining CLaSS, as Principal A explains:

> So we needed to push hard on professional development for the teachers in the early
>
> years of school, and then for the rest of the staff. (Principal A, paragraph 15)

Principal B makes the same point:

> We knew that it would take four to five years for real change to be established and
>
> become institutionalized within the school or any organization. We knew that we've
>
> been through the rough years. (Principal B, paragraph 197)

From Principal B's perspective the old way was easy. The beliefs and understandings of

CLaSS must dominate the practices and structures of the school. Principal B explains that he

was aware of the demands CLaSS places on teachers well before School B engaged CLaSS

and is adamant that the results override such concerns:

> There was a negativity about CLaSS across the diocese when it was first discussed.
>
> People had concerns that it was putting unrealistic demands on teachers. Even the
>
> school we visited told us that they felt that the first six months were pretty tough
>
> because it really questioned about the way they do their things. . . . Any change comes
>
> with a cost. But if you support the change and take the challenge the results are there.
>
> I think our results would prove that. (Principal B, paragraphs 84-85)

This new professional identity does not exist only in the principal's eye. There are clear and public indicators of its existence. For Principal D, the indicators of this new professional identity are visible within and beyond the school:

> People who come in from outside are pretty blown away at what our Prep kids are doing with their reading and writing. We have found that as a school it's just paid massive dividends for level learning of our kids and we love it. We are a much more effective school since taking on CLaSS. (Principal D, paragraph 182)

Principal B exhibits the same confidence about change that is both visible and permanent:

> Parents would say that there has been a change in the culture in the school. We don't have those teething problems that we may have had because children are feeling confident and competent. CLaSS has extended all the kids. (Principal B, paragraph 190)

For Principal B the real legacy of CLaSS is the enduring change in teachers' professional behaviour:

> If I left here or the CLaSS coordinator left here I believe that the CLaSS design would continue to happen and that would be dependent upon the way the new principal wanted to run the school, but my teachers would still go the same way. (Principal B, paragraph 178)

No mixed messages

As noted throughout this thesis, third age reform programs like CLaSS claim that successful reform is dependent of coherence between the multiple levels of schooling. Where there is a shared belief among the teachers and an alignment in professional practice (Hill & Crévola, 2001; Fullan, Hill, & Crévola, 2006) then successful reform will follow. Coherence with third age reform initiatives, argues Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2006), reduces the possibility of teachers receiving mixed messages about the educational direction of the school. Hill and Crévola (2001) contend that the perpetual turbulence created by initiatives based on first and

second age reforms that can be eliminated by providing a consistent message to teachers. However, Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2006) commenting on the performance of CLaSS and similar programs used in England, point out that

> For systems that have vigorously and successfully pursued school reform and have achieved a high degree of internal coherence, it is possible to quickly hit a ceiling and to struggle to show continued improvement. (p.27)

Beyond the positives

In order for schools to move performance to higher levels it is necessary, according to Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2006) to " go deeper and address the complex task of transforming classroom instruction" (p. 28). The direction they advocate is that for school reform to be successful requires school communities to be committed to processes that extend beyond coherence, alignment and fidelity to reform initiatives. That is, "the teachers need to be provided with the necessary information to make informed instructional decisions for all students on a day-to-day basis" (p. 28). Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2006) contend that such endeavours must not be confused with the prescriptive orientations characteristic of earlier ages of reform: "the knowledge base about classroom instruction is surprisingly tenuous and in much policy discussion about school reform, the classroom remains something of a "black-box". (p. 29). The Fullan, Hill and Crévola (2006) argument continues by claiming that the highly interactive and unpredictable nature of teaching in the classroom depends on the teachers' "seemingly intuitive capacity to draw on their experience to make lightening-speed decisions, micro-adaptations and on-the-run decisions in response to the unforeseen" (p. 30). Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2006) argue that redesigning classroom instruction is needed if classroom instruction to becomes a "precise, validated, data driven, expert activity" (p. 35). Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2006) insist that the breakthrough in school reform requires attention to "systems and design" (p. 39). Despite the "cold and technocratic" images associated with the terms "systems and design" Fullan, Hill and Crévola (2006) are adamant

that they are not referring to prescriptive approaches to classroom instruction. They

make the point that the transformation of classroom instruction will only happen through

meaningful engagement by teachers in the process. This means

> For novice teachers and for those less competent, such systems would provide a
>
> guarantee of a high standard of instruction for all students, whereas for the most
>
> experienced and competent, they would provide the opportunity to move to even
>
> higher levels of professional as co researchers and code signers of expert
>
> instructional systems. (p. 40)

Knowledge as cure

Lather (1996) situates such desire for certainty and control within the "humanist romance of

knowledge as cure" (p. 539). Novice or incompetent teachers will be compelled to accept and

support the values of CLaSS and then base their instruction from an informed base, as

opposed to their present uninformed base. Competent teachers, whose thinking and practice

already reflects the values of CLaSS, will have the opportunity to assist in setting the criteria

of competence. There is no doubt that CLaSS sees itself as having a positive impact on

teachers, schools and the community, but it exists within strict limits. As Fullan, Hill, and

Crévola (2006) explain:

> The vast majority of teachers want to serve the students if they can find a way to
>
> move forward…There are more non-blockers in the profession than blockers. If we
>
> can hook teachers on what is good for students, any remaining teachers will be
>
> stopped in their tracks. (p. 40)

The analysis of the principals' comments illustrates the clear operational and ideological

boundaries for the teachers' professional identity and practice to survive and augment. The

professional identity of teachers is allowed within the CLaSS mould only.

Control technologies

The amalgamation of the beliefs concerning the perception of a flawed culture; the necessity of a single-minded focus; the acceptance of disproportionate funding to satisfy the intensive resourcing required by CLaSS; the need for control technologies to ensure compliance; the commitment to managing people in order to remove threats; the subsequent cultivation of a superior image effectively place extremely tight boundaries on teachers. It will be argued that these boundaries inhibit discussion about literacy, literacy attainment, effective teaching and school reform amidst the school community. The new professional identity of teachers is dependent upon acceptance of the beliefs that CLaSS espouses and the discarding of any or all personal beliefs that do not align with them. It will be argued that a characteristic of this new professional identity is technical correctness. Critics of third age reforms argue that professional docility may be a more suitable description of this characteristic. Nevertheless, the level of conviction expressed by the principals in support of this new professional identity for teachers is significant for this study.

The next chapter will identify and examine in more detail the impact of these limitations and boundaries in relation to whole school reform and the professional identity of teachers. Some features are conspicuous by their absence from the discourse examined so far. It will be argued, for instance, that within the autonomy afforded teachers by CLaSS there is no questioning the nature of literacy and literacy attainment. There is no recognition of the need to learn from other schools and approaches outside of CLaSS. There is no evaluation of current practices beyond ensuring compliance with the CLaSS model. There are no opportunities for research and development of teaching practices. There is certainly no room for critical analysis.

Critics of CLaSS argue that such activities are fundamental to an alternative understanding of teachers' professional identity and are indicative of authentic school reform. However, this study will demonstrate that CLaSS effectively limits the authentic professional development of teachers and schools and weakens a school's capacity to reflect on substantive reform. The

hidden costs for schools to be involved with CLaSS will now be examined. Having

established the position of the principals and identified how CLaSS is implemented, it is

necessary to move to where the action is. While the principal shapes the discourse and is the

public face of CLaSS it is the CLaSS coordinators and CLaSS teachers who actually interact

with CLaSS at a functional level.

CHAPTER SIX

Moving to Where the Action Is

Introduction

In the previous chapter, the focus was on how the principals in the four schools responded to CLaSS, why they opted to implement it and how CLaSS changed their schools. A number of Discourse models were common to all four principals: responding to a flawed culture; single-minded focus; CLaSS as resource intensive; ensuring compliance; removing threats and managing people; and cultivating an image. Subsequently, a new professional identity for the teachers evolved.

The principals represent the public face of CLaSS. They talk about what CLaSS has done for their school. They refer to the "new image" for their school bestowed by CLaSS. This image is one of success, efficiency, and effectiveness in implementing school reform. Thanks to CLaSS the schools now have a clear sense of certainty and purpose about their literacy programs and understanding of teaching and learning. The principals define the Public Discourse of CLaSS. Through this discourse principals convey to parents and the wider community that the school is in control. Their role according to CLaSS appears to be more akin to that of a chief executive officer who sets the directions, provides the resources and deals with all the stakeholders. None of the principals saw themselves as being a hands-on practitioner or even suggested that they could take, or had taken, a CLaSS lesson. One did some teaching, if only to alleviate the cost of CLaSS. The CLaSS coordinators actually implement CLaSS and their role is different from that of the principal. CLaSS coordinators are responsible for the day to day operation of CLaSS and the behaviour and performance of the teachers. It is their responsibility to ensure that all the teachers regularly and consistently demonstrate that they advocate and operate out of the CLaSS "belief system".

The first section of this chapter focuses on the role of the CLaSS coordinators as the interface between the principal, CLaSS documentation and what happens in classrooms. CLaSS

coordinators are given at least .5 time release from classroom duties to carry out their role. However, this time is expected to be devoted to mentoring teachers in classrooms and generally ensuring that all classrooms are operating in the CLaSS model. Not surprisingly, the CLaSS coordinators' comments resonate strongly with the themes raised by the principals. However, they do not simply echo what the principals say. The CLaSS coordinators role is hands-on and not administrative. Through discussions with the CLaSS coordinators an understanding of how the themes identified in the principals' comments translate into action can be established.

The second section of this chapter focuses on the teachers who implement CLaSS. In many instances teachers' beliefs reflect those of the CLaSS coordinator. They display similar commitment, confidence, and faith in CLaSS. However, teachers are not clones of the CLaSS coordinator. Some experience CLaSS as challenging and difficult but are prepared to comply with expectations. Others worry about CLaSS and see conflicts between their own professional beliefs and judgements and what CLaSS requires. Some are even prepared to act on their beliefs. The data represents the teachers' "work stories". As mentioned earlier, these work stories occupy the discursive spaces that exist between the dominant Discourse of CLaSS and the teachers lived reality of working in the schools. The data is extensively examined in order to emphasis the value of the data. The data represents the personal values and beliefs that drive the professional actions of the teachers. While the data from the principals and coordinators readily accessible, the data from the teachers is more difficult to attain and is deserving of attention. It is important to hear what the teachers have to say about their lived reality of CLaSS and this chapter attempts to reflect and honour the value of the teachers work stories through detailed analysis.

<div align="center">CLaSS coordinators and Success</div>

Schools have to be totally committed to CLaSS if the desired reform is to be achieved. Along with the principal, the CLaSS coordinator makes vital contributions to the success of CLaSS.

The CLaSS documentation is clear on the role of the CLaSS coordinator as being primarily concerned with supporting the principal through ensuring that teachers are compliant with CLaSS and are provided with the necessary training and support (or mentoring and coaching). The relationship between the principal and the CLaSS coordinator, according to CLaSS, has to be completely unified and mutually supportive. The unity is necessary to ensure that the beliefs and understandings of CLaSS are presented to teachers in their entirety. There is no room for confusion about the beliefs and understandings the whole school should share. According to CLaSS (Hill, & Crévola, 2001, p. 8), teachers need to examine their own beliefs and understandings about literacy attainment and teaching "in the light of" the beliefs and understandings promoted by CLaSS and articulated by the principal and the CLaSS coordinator.

The CLaSS coordinators are the carefully chosen enablers of CLaSS, and are given considerable authority to ensure that compliance with CLaSS is achieved. The behaviour and performance of teachers are closely monitored by the CLaSS coordinators. While the principals and the CLaSS coordinators are in concert with their understanding of and commitment to CLaSS, the CLaSS coordinator is the interface of CLaSS with the teachers. In effect, the CLaSS coordinator is the face of CLaSS from an operational perspective. The CLaSS coordinators spend considerably more time with the teachers than principals do and are considered to be the "agent of change" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 41). In order to explore the context from which the teachers work, it is necessary to understand how the CLaSS coordinators execute their roles.

The CLaSS coordinators ensure the implementation of CLaSS through a series of procedural protocols. Such control technologies include ensuring that teachers have specific commonalities in regard to language, thinking, and actions. As a result of the way the coordinators strictly enforce protocols their role can be likened to that of the Field Sergeant;

ensuring subordinates understand their mission; providing appropriate resources; and

following the directions of superiors without question.

Flawed Culture

Whereas the principals talked explicitly about a flawed culture of the school as the impetus

for implementing CLaSS, the CLaSS coordinators focus on how the school has an improved

culture:

> . . . our results speak for themselves, because we have all seen such fantastic literacy
>
> results in the past four years, I don't think anyone wants to question it because we
>
> know it is working well for our school and for the children in our school. (CLaSS
>
> coordinator A, paragraph 69).

> Results tell us that the program is working. We have reduced the amount of kids that
>
> need Reading Recovery. It has reduced the amount of struggling kids that leave the
>
> junior school. We have results that are a lot better than they used to be. (CLaSS
>
> coordinator C, paragraph 50-51).

> I think it's pulled us into line with industry, that whole idea of making sure that you
>
> keep coming back and challenging ideas and encouraging people to think outside the
>
> square and revisit, instead of just being busy all the time at school. (CLaSS
>
> coordinator D, paragraph 113)

> . . . CLaSS teachers know why they're doing things. (CLaSS coordinator B, paragraph
>
> 120)

For the CLaSS coordinators, performance serves as a measure of success and productivity.

The "fantastic literacy results" are self evident and confirm that the program is working.

Teachers know what they are supposed to do and know why they are doing it. It is

particularly interesting that one of the CLaSS coordinators made a clear statement that

CLaSS schools are now in-line with industry. Like industrial workers, CLaSS teachers

understand what they are doing and are no longer just being busy – their business now has

direction and meaning.

Managing compliance

The CLaSS coordinators regard total compliance with CLaSS as the only possible way of

ensuring improvement. For principals, compliance was seen as the way of reforming their

schools. For CLaSS coordinators also, there is no room for doubt; total compliance with

CLaSS is required by all. CLaSS coordinators see compliance in terms of putting together the

practical ingredients that ensure success. Their critical role is to manage those ingredients and

insist on fidelity to the program:

> If you do not follow the elements you are not doing CLaSS. (CLaSS coordinator A,
>
> paragraph 25)

> We're committed 100% to the CLaSS model. Particularly in our junior school, our
>
> Prep-Year 2 is completely committed to it. The Year 3-4, I would say we use a
>
> majority of it. Particularly our structure, our focus groups, our planning, our
>
> assessing, is all based on CLaSS. (CLaSS coordinator A, paragraph 21)

> If you did not want to be part of it you had the opportunity to negotiate a move to
>
> another part of the school. This also gave people in other parts of the school the
>
> opportunity to move into the junior school. We agreed that we would do CLaSS and
>
> we make sure we do it. (CLaSS coordinator C, paragraph 9)

The implication for teachers is that their professional behaviour must now be totally

compliant with CLaSS. The agreement to implement CLaSS is binding and it is simply not

possible for teachers to renege. There is no need to discuss possible alternatives or debate the

value of past practices. Teachers must demonstrate that all their actions and attitudes

reflect the "shared" beliefs and understandings expressed in CLaSS. For CLaSS coordinator

D, only those who have truly implemented CLaSS are entitled to comment on it. It is

assumed by CLaSS coordinator D that only when CLaSS has been engaged properly do

participants have the appropriate level of understanding needed to fully appreciate the

benefits of CLaSS.

> So I think if you are going to implement the design you have to be true to the whole
>
> design, or you can't comment about CLaSS. I think CLaSS has had a bit of bad press,
>
> and when you get underneath, I get a little bit annoyed because you find out that
>
> people haven't implemented the whole design. (CLaSS coordinator D, paragraph 105)

For the CLaSS coordinators, efficient management is seen to provide a pathway to success.

CLaSS makes logical and reasonable requests of teachers and compliance becomes a matter

of commonsense. Further, the insistence on total compliance is defended. The following

comments by CLaSS coordinator B outline and validate the model of leadership exercised by

the authors of CLaSS.

> I think that's another thing about CLaSS too, I think in the early days when I first got
>
> involved and Carmel Crévola was the key person and the head of the team of
>
> facilitators and she kept it very tight and dominated training to ensure its long term
>
> success. I think that was necessary in the early days because I think she knew that
>
> when you are learning about something you really want it to be tight, no room to
>
> move. (CLaSS coordinator B, paragraph 117)

Here CLaSS coordinator B is sympathetic towards the industrial model that was alluded to

earlier by CLaSS coordinator D. The CLaSS model disallows watering down or tinkering.

What happens in classrooms should rightly be "non-negotiable" as the research has already

been done by the experts:

I think that she wanted to avoid the situation where if I took CLaSS back to my school setting and I watered it down just that little bit and the teachers that I work with water it down just a little bit more you start to lose the intent. I think that she was thinking "well this is the high tide mark that I don't want people to go beyond and I'll really keep it very tight up here". I think that she was expecting the message to go down to a certain level and this is where she wanted it to stop and then "non-negotiable". (CLaSS coordinator B, paragraph 117)

CLaSS coordinators respond to the authors' (Hill and Crévola) encouragement to "keep things tight" by ensuring that the teachers not only talk about their commitment to CLaSS, but also have classroom practices that are totally consistent with CLaSS. Such a position has implications for the relationships and interactions that occur between the CLaSS coordinators and the teachers.

Identifying and removing threats and managing resources

Being "in-line with industry" means that teachers have to follow the processes and operations required by CLaSS. There is no room for variations as they have the potential to interfere with productivity and must not be tolerated. CLaSS coordinators must ensure that they identify and remove threats to production. As well as removing threats CLaSS coordinators also must ensure that the resources CLaSS requires are provided and protected. Intensive human and physical resources are needed for CLaSS to be successful. The CLaSS coordinator manages these resources through a series of checks and frequent meetings. As CLaSS coordinator B explains:

The CLaSS model would suggest that the coordinator meet with the principal regularly. The coordinator and the principal meet every week and one of the principal's roles within CLaSS is to take the Principal's Walk regularly. This means the principal would be regularly in classrooms during the literacy block and he will

again be looking for specific things that he and I can talk about, or he can talk

about with teachers specifically. (CLaSS coordinator B, paragraph 21)

It should be noted that the Principal and the CLaSS coordinator are looking for "specific

things" that indicate that the teacher's practice is consistent with CLaSS. Considering the

previous series of quotations concerning keeping things tight and the need for "non-

negotiable" components, such behaviour can be regarded as a form of surveillance or

monitoring. This behaviour has its positive side. CLaSS coordinator A refers to the weekly

meetings as providing opportunities for the CLaSS coordinator and teachers to "bond":

I meet all CLaSS teachers every Wednesday and usually the principal attends; you

form a real bond which is really good. It's important that children know and they can

see that the teachers work together. I think that's been really important for CLaSS. I

think the overall structure, the way that CLaSS is set up is great and we work hard to

follow it properly. (CLaSS coordinator A, paragraph 122)

Monitoring and surveillance are necessary to identify and remove threats to production.

Despite the CLaSS rhetoric that such actions are designed to support teachers, they are

primarily used as a control technology. For example, CLaSS coordinator C is quite clear that

CLaSS cannot tolerate disruptive workers. The following comments from CLaSS coordinator

C are in response to questions concerning the staffing of the school in relation to CLaSS:

One person actually finished the three years and wanted to stay but was happy to

move into another part of the school. Another went to another school altogether. The

third moved after the first year to another part of the school and is still very "anti-

CLaSS". Since then the people who are in the program all want to be part of the

program and I haven't had any trouble. (CLaSS coordinator C, paragraph 21)

It should come as no surprise that the school has not had "any trouble" with commitment to

CLaSS considering the selection processes outlined by CLaSS coordinator C in response to

questions about dealing with wavering support:

We will not get into that situation because all the teachers that go into the junior

school have to make a commitment to CLaSS. We have had three new teachers go

into the program and we have not had that kind of problem. Before a teacher goes into

junior school they have a long meeting with the principal and myself. In that meeting

we actually say this is how we do things in literacy and ask them to tell us how they

feel about that. (CLaSS coordinator C, paragraph 60)

Before teachers go into the junior school (CLaSS), they have a long meeting with the

principal and the CLaSS coordinator. In the meeting, the teachers are asked how they feel

about the way things are going to be done. In one sense, this seems to be a reasonable course

of action for the leadership of a school to take. It is reasonable that the principals have such

discussions as they are ultimately responsible for what occurs in the school. On the other

hand such action can constitute an exercise of authority through the promulgation of CLaSS

policy. Considering the commitment to CLaSS shown by the principals and CLaSS

coordinators, the teacher has little option but to agree to the terms on offer. CLaSS

coordinator D provides examples of a "no-nonsense" approach to implementing CLaSS:

Well, I guess no-nonsense means that there are some things we don't even need to

discuss. We are not going to discuss that teachers are released to go and test children.

You wouldn't have a conversation with a parent about that, so there are things that

need to be done and teachers have to be given the license to do these things. (CLaSS

coordinator D, paragraph 77)

An interesting distinction needs to be made here. The "license" the teachers are given is in

reality a provisional license. The teachers are licensed to do things that are required by

CLaSS; it is not a license to practice out of their own professional paradigm.

Single-minded - no- nonsense approach

CLaSS coordinators operate with single-minded confidence using the new common

knowledge offered by CLaSS. Both principals and CLaSS coordinators show single-minded

confidence derived from their faith in CLaSS. For principals, CLaSS becomes the basis

for the school's identity and a way of promoting its literacy program. These elements are

important for principals in presenting the public face of the school. For CLaSS coordinators,

this new knowledge and confidence translates into "no nonsense" approaches to be used with

teachers:

> A coordinated approach and a no nonsense approach for promoting high literacy
>
> levels in the school, is the prime focus of the primary school. (CLaSS coordinator D,
>
> paragraph 73)

For the CLaSS coordinators, productivity can only be measured by the improved results. As

well as identifying and removing threats through managing human and physical resources,

the CLaSS coordinators must also ensure that goals of CLaSS override all considerations. To

ensure that this happens, the CLaSS coordinators are invested with much authority. The

CLaSS coordinators pursue the goals of CLaSS with single-minded vigour. CLaSS

coordinator D reminds us again of the importance of being single-minded about CLaSS:

> You need a very committed person, you have to do that and then I think you do need
>
> the principal and the coordinator to say 'This school is committed to this for five
>
> years'. Which is a very big thing to do in a school, I know that, and not be tempted to
>
> keep taking on new initiatives all the time because resources are limited. (CLaSS
>
> coordinator D, paragraph 81)

CLaSS coordinator D urges caution and suggests that the school should be wary of taking on

other programs and resist temptation to leave or water down CLaSS.

CLaSS coordinator C worries about teachers being tempted to engage other programs and

indicates that the teachers require constant reassuring that they are doing the right thing.

Other schools and programs are regarded as uninformed and can only serve to distract and

confuse teachers:

I worry that people will lose focus on CLaSS. If you start jumping from one

program to another you'll eventually lose the lot. I find that really hard. You are

constantly saying to people "trust what we are doing". (CLaSS coordinator C,

paragraph 78)

CLaSS coordinator B indicates that the principles that underline CLaSS can, and should, be

applied to all aspects of school reform. CLaSS coordinator B appeals to the value of having

common understandings, common terminology, and common reasoning as the most

important aspects of school reform and, therefore, valuable attributes of CLaSS:

CLaSS is a model for school improvement. It's not just a literacy reform model, and I

think you could take any area of the curriculum and if you looked at the beliefs and

understandings that underpin that and work on getting common understandings,

common terminology, common reasons for why you are doing what you are doing,

then you could apply it across a whole lot of curriculum areas if that's what you

wanted to do. (CLaSS coordinator B, paragraph 100-101)

It is becoming clear the CLaSS coordinators see the CLaSS model as a simple solution to

complex curriculum issues:

Yes that's right, and that's the way the numeracy is being introduced, too. 'Focus

teaching', that would be a big cry from CLaSS. Make sure you're focus teaching.

(CLaSS coordinator D, paragraph 129)

CLaSS coordinator A sees the problem in the even simpler terms of having children engage

in reading and writing as the school's priority:

You've just got to look at it too, your reading, your writing, your oral language, are

three of the most essential life skills. So you really need to have those skills in place,

before you can expect a child to put a report together in integrated curriculum or that

sort of thing, so it is certainly important, and I guess that's the way we view it. We

need to have our children reading and writing and that is our priority. (CLaSS

coordinator A, paragraph 113)

For the CLaSS coordinators, CLaSS only works if the CLaSS model is treated as non-negotiable. Teachers operate the model. They do not create it. They are not allowed to tamper with it. They are not always seen to have the knowledge possessed by CLaSS coordinators to engage in those kinds of conceptual discussions. As CLaSS coordinator D said, "There are some things we don't even need to discuss."

CLaSS coordinators are the "true believers" of CLaSS and the way they execute their role is critical to the success of CLaSS. The validation of CLaSS through the measurement of specific data is vitally important to the CLaSS coordinators and they make the maintenance of CLaSS a high priority. Indeed, CLaSS coordinators use the data they accumulate and their own anecdotal reflections to promote discussion regarding the improvements CLaSS has made to the school.

Cultivate an image of superiority over past practices

The principals actively cultivate an image of superiority over schools that do not use CLaSS. They want their school to see itself as doing and to be seen to be doing something different and standing out from other schools. It is important that they distinguish themselves from non-CLaSS schools and they do this by relying on the production of measurable outcomes. CLaSS is legitimatized more by the CLaSS coordinators and less through comparisons to other schools and more through the difference that CLaSS has made in the way teachers think, act and speak:

> In any CLaSS school, I think people would talk about the professional dialogue that
>
> would go on because people now have a common way of talking about what they
>
> have always wanted to talk about, what they knew was really important. (CLaSS
>
> coordinator D, paragraph 65)

It is clear to CLaSS coordinator D that only since implementing CLaSS has any

authentic professional dialogue occurred in the school. Similarly CLaSS coordinator A talks

about the direction the school has taken.

> There are lots of great things about CLaSS. I think that the way that our literacy
>
> results have improved, has been just overwhelming, from when we started CLaSS to
>
> now. I think CLaSS is solely responsible for that, in that it has given us so much
>
> structure in our literacy and direction with our teaching. (CLaSS coordinator A,
>
> paragraph 121)

CLaSS coordinator A suggests that the teachers lacked consistent direction with their

teaching prior to implementing CLaSS. CLaSS coordinator C suggests that organization is

the key to success and that CLaSS helps schools become organized. Following on, CLaSS

coordinator C talks about the virtues of data collection and how it "helps us" and is "good for

our teaching":

> The whole thing requires organization and that is what CLaSS does best. CLaSS helps
>
> you become organized. You don't actually waste a lot time with CLaSS model. We
>
> don't have blanket rules saying you must find out certain things by certain times but
>
> you are constantly talking to other teachers and testing particular kids for particular
>
> things. We only collect the data to help us. The more data you collect, the more
>
> helpful it is. Data collection is a tool for good teaching. (CLaSS coordinator C,
>
> paragraph 68)

In advocating the characteristics of the new professional identity of CLaSS teachers, CLaSS

coordinators claim that CLaSS teachers are, in a professional sense, "more than they were".

From the perspective of the CLaSS coordinators, CLaSS transforms teachers. Through

engaging CLaSS, the teachers are better teachers than they were before. In fact, as CLaSS

coordinator B states, teachers using CLaSS have ascended beyond the definitions associated

with "teacher" and are now "educators". Note that CLaSS coordinator B returns to common beliefs and practices as a key contributor to the success of CLaSS:

> Common beliefs and understandings are the key concept. Someone said that CLaSS is about knowing why you are doing certain things. It is the difference between being a teacher and being an educator, that's what you are aiming to do with CLaSS. (CLaSS coordinator B, paragraph 56)

CLaSS coordinators confidently describe the characteristics of the new professional identity of teachers within CLaSS. In a sense the CLaSS coordinators are saying that the teachers have been saved from their previous uninformed and pseudo professional life and through CLaSS are professionally born again. Teachers are willing to share their weaknesses, ask for help, and have a willingness to learn within their new professional identities:

> To get good results in classrooms, you really need to have support networks, like my CLaSS team. A lot of my job is to make people feel comfortable, willing to share, willing to say 'I'm weak in this area, I need help' because unless your teachers are strong and confident and ready to be challenged, ready to learn new things, you are not going to get a vibrant literacy delivery. (CLaSS coordinator D, paragraph 117)

This may seem to be an endorsement of teacher initiated professional growth, but, CLaSS coordinator B is clear that some pressure is necessary to produce this new professional identity:

> It's about supporting teachers and students to learn and to become more skilled, if you like, but at the same time posing the challenges too. CLaSS is about getting a balance between pressure and support. (CLaSS coordinator B, paragraph 29-30)

According to CLaSS coordinator B, a correct mix of pressure and support is needed for this transformation to occur. CLaSS coordinator D also sees it as necessary for teachers to understand "what we are on about":

The CLaSS design really hinges upon developing teachers' understandings on what we are on about. For example, that all children can achieve high literacy outcomes if they are given sufficient time and support (CLaSS coordinator D, paragraph 21)

CLaSS coordinator C informs us that only now (after CLaSS) do teachers really understand what is involved with reading and writing:

I think it is a whole lot of reasons. The weekly CLaSS meetings allow people to actually sit down with an agenda and talk about learning, not talk about the business or political side of things. They are also talking about and showing an understanding of reading and writing at a really deep level. This type of talk has really developed over the last few years. I think that many of us really taught children how to read in the same way we were taught to read. Now we all understand what is really involved with reading and writing. (CLaSS coordinator C, paragraphs 39-40)

The agenda for these weekly meetings is regulated by the CLaSS coordinators. The required weekly meetings are part of the mix of "pressure and support" that CLaSS coordinators provide. When commenting on the responses of visiting teachers to the school, CLaSS coordinator A draws us back to the main tenets of CLaSS as being organized and producing improved results:

They just come in basically to observe, and I think they can see just how well organized the classes are and just how the children know what to do next. So I think the organization of the kids is a really big plus for people to observe. Of course when we show them our results for the last few years, they are always impressed. (CLaSS coordinator A, paragraph 158)

In identifying and promoting the new professional identity of CLaSS teachers, CLaSS coordinators actively re-form the relationships between the leadership of the school and the teachers. The new professional identity requires teachers individually and collectively to take

responsibility for transforming themselves, through a series of admissions and the use of a common language:

> I watch the teachers in the literacy meetings and not one is threatened by another. Each teacher knows what they are doing and knows that the other teachers are doing the same thing. It also provides a common language for the staff and this is a great equalizer. They all understand each other. CLaSS also promotes a sense of shared ownership. Teachers are not just responsible for their own class but they are responsible for literacy as a group. (CLaSS coordinator C, paragraph 107)

Old ways of thinking and talking need to become redundant. It is the CLaSS coordinators' responsibility to make sure wrong impressions are countered and any negativity towards CLaSS is dispelled:

> The people that are involved in the model, well, they love it. They really believe in it and they really understand it. Everyone involved can see where the school is coming from. They all have the big picture. With CLaSS there was a bit of a political thing going on here and that influenced the way people saw the program. Some people only wanted to see the program as being very structured, or involving lots of rotations, or involving a lot of work. There was a group that always looked at it from the negative side. They didn't understand we are trying to work out what the children can do, identifying their needs and how we're going to address those needs. The people who didn't like CLaSS just couldn't get past those external things. (CLaSS coordinator C, paragraph 26)

Teachers who can't "get past those external things" are excluded from teaching at those levels where CLaSS applies. It is the CLaSS coordinators' responsibility to ensure that they do not contaminate the ideas of and interfere with the operations of CLaSS. Those teachers who are guided by the CLaSS coordinators to see past those external things are allowed to participate in CLaSS. The more the teachers participate in CLaSS, the more they will be

captivated and enlightened by its self evident truths. The conclusion one is tempted to

draw is that the coordinators believe that, "How could any one who truly knows CLaSS not

embrace it?"

Reliance on external authority

Each CLaSS coordinator refers explicitly to the authority that they need to have, and be

perceived to have, in order to implement CLaSS. CLaSS coordinators know that they are

invested with authority from CLaSS and the Principal to ensure compliance to CLaSS and

therefore facilitate change. CLaSS coordinator D is in no doubt that the CLaSS coordinator is

the one who bears day-to-day responsibility for the implementation and faithful operation of

CLaSS. This requires clear, visible and unquestioned authority:

> The other thing is to implement change you have to have someone with authority.
>
> Authority in the good sense that someone's the lead learner and other people actually
>
> have to listen to what that person says, so you can't opt out. It's not an option here.
>
> Saying 'Oh no I don't want to do that because it doesn't wash with me." doesn't work
>
> here. If you are in the team, you're in the team and there are some things you have to
>
> do. (CLaSS coordinator D, paragraph 34)

According to CLaSS coordinator D, "if you are in the team, you're in the team..."and as

CLaSS coordinator D continues, there are non-negotiable team rules:

> . . . it was really great to hear words like 'non negotiable'. CLaSS coordinator D,
>
> paragraph 33)

> . . . every classroom can be completely different but what we have in common is the
>
> structure and the focused teaching going on. The teachers are free to really work on
>
> what they like. There are commonalities, but the sky is the limit. You can do what you
>
> want as long as it follows the structures we have agreed to. (CLaSS coordinator D,
>
> paragraph 125 -129)

CLaSS coordinator B asserts that, for CLaSS coordinators to be credible and to be perceived as an authoritative figure within the school, the principal must make it known to the teachers that the CLaSS coordinator is the designated leader. Teachers need to know that the CLaSS coordinator has been given responsibility and autonomy by the Principal to ensure the changes in thinking, language and actions occur:

> But also you have to be seen to be given that authority particularly by the principal, because otherwise it's a new and a different role without a purpose or leadership. Some people can have that 'assumed leadership', but the coordinator has got to be seen to have that credibility and authority given by the principal too. The principal makes it known to all teachers that CLaSS is not an option. CLaSS is about your professional learning. That's what it's about and the bottom line with it is that we're wanting to do the very best that we can do for our students. That's what really the bottom line of it is and part of that is to assist each of us to become the best teacher we can be. (CLaSS coordinator B, paragraph 107)

<div align="center">CLaSS coordinators' Understandings of Their Role</div>

The maintenance of a collaborative team is a dominant theme in the CLaSS coordinators' summary of their roles. As each teacher has the potential to become a weak link, collaboration requires a level of pressure to be applied to teachers through expectation. As the CLaSS coordinators explain, the teachers need to be kept on track, the pressure needs to be maintained, meeting agendas are fixed, only proper CLaSS training improves teaching practice, and success revolves around comparative performance:

> I guess my role as CLaSS coordinator was just to get those girls (teachers) on track with the CLaSS program. (CLaSS coordinator A, paragraph 45)

> I would also be looking for those sorts of things. Does the text match with the data the teacher has? How is the teacher recording what she's doing and does it actually look

like that when you go into the classroom. I look for where support is needed. As

Carmel Crévola would say, 'Keep the pressure on all the time'. (CLaSS coordinator

B, paragraph 27-28)

I think that if, in the future, the CLaSS coordinator position went, that will be the

beginning of the end for CLaSS. The teachers that have had the proper training will

always have good practice. The teachers who are new to CLaSS and have not had the

official professional development will try and do the right things but in time it will

fade out. (CLaSS coordinator C, paragraph 95)

Following CLaSS coordinator C's comment, the question arises: if CLaSS is so indisputably

good, why are CLaSS coordinators worried that it will fade out?

As a CLaSS coordinator, I induct new members into the CLaSS team and we have a

CLaSS team meeting weekly. I set the agenda by being responsive to the needs of the

teacher. . . . I'll lead the team through investigating how we're going in comparison to

other years and other like schools, etc. I train parents to assist in the classroom with

the parent-helper program. I run information evenings for parents that might not be

able to attend in the daytime. I co-ordinate all resources and ensure that teachers have

got plenty of access to guided reading material, professional development reading.

We link with other CLaSS schools so we might have to co-ordinate meeting times and

things like that. (CLaSS coordinator D, paragraph 5)

Again, it becomes apparent that the social relations within the school undergo significant re-

forming as a result of engaging CLaSS. The CLaSS coordinators' authority is dependent

upon the principal. The chain of authority is clear and unbroken. It is clear that principals do

not tell CLaSS coordinators how to run CLaSS. But, the weekly meetings ensure a focus on

resources, monitoring outputs and total compliance. These weekly meetings clearly provide

an ongoing source of authority for the CLaSS coordinators in dealing with teachers and in

providing principals with knowledge about the successful operation of CLaSS that is

only available to those who are working in classrooms. The metaphor of the field sergeant

used in this study to describe CLaSS coordinators role also takes on elements of plant

foreman and production supervisor. The military and industrial models both rely on authority,

but in an industrial process there is need for feedback in regard to inputs, processes and

outputs:

> CLaSS also ensured that the principals had a support network because, for example, in
>
> our area there are not many CLaSS schools. So principals have to stick their necks
>
> out. For example, the principals put money and time into the coordinators' position.
>
> They have to feel like that it's a real priority for their school. So it's understanding the
>
> notion that people can't work in isolation, they need to be supported by other like
>
> minded people. Of course within the school, the buck stops with the principal, so they
>
> have to make sure that the coordinator is doing their job and then we (the principal
>
> and the CLaSS coordinator) have a weekly meeting to reflect on that, so it's building
>
> reflection time into the busy school life. (CLaSS coordinator D, paragraph 39)

The CLaSS coordinators have demonstrated that they are the master technicians of CLaSS.

The rational logic of CLaSS, they claim, should be strong enough to convince "good"

teachers to step into the light and leave their old inefficient ways of thinking, talking and

teaching behind. The improved outcomes that CLaSS produces, as expressed through

accumulation of data, also make it difficult for teachers to argue against it. If teachers are

reluctant to believe that CLaSS provides the best framework for all teachers to operate from,

the CLaSS coordinators use their authority and pressure teachers into using CLaSS. They are

confident that this pressure need only be applied for a short time as teachers will believe in

CLaSS as they come to see the inherent value of CLaSS through experience with it.

Some doubts and concerns

Nevertheless, despite the awareness of their authority, despite the no-nonsense non-negotiable stance, despite the results speaking for themselves, despite tight policing and surveillance, the CLaSS coordinators seem to have fundamental concerns over the fragility of CLaSS. As CLaSS coordinator B and CLaSS coordinator C explain:

> So it can easily fall over, it still is so vulnerable and if you have a situation like here, where there's only one teacher who's been involved in that intensive process and you are totally dependent on the role of the CLaSS coordinator for all professional development because you are not going to get it from anywhere externally, then it could easily fall over, it's hard work. (CLaSS coordinator B, paragraph 84)
>
> If the principal wasn't supportive and resources like the literacy coordinator's position disappeared, the program would fall over within a couple of years. (CLaSS coordinator C, paragraph 56)
>
> The teachers who are new to CLaSS and have not had the official professional development will try and do the right things but in time it will fade out unless we keep up professional development. (CLaSS coordinator C, paragraph 99)

From these statements, there appears to be a lingering degree of uncertainty surrounding the stability of CLaSS. Note that the concerns of the CLaSS coordinators revolve around dependence on authority exclusively, not the quality of the teaching. Interestingly, such comments are absent in the principal's transcripts. These responses are open to many levels of possible interpretation. The rationality of CLaSS is presented by the CLaSS coordinators as being logical and reasonable and they engage in discussions about CLaSS with great conviction. They have been given authority to ensure that the program is followed with fidelity. They openly use their authority to pressure teachers into following and staying on the "right path" as they oversee the practical day to day operations of CLaSS. Teachers, as part of

the CLaSS "team", have a specific function and way of speaking, thinking and acting

that they are expected and pressured to adopt. Teachers that cannot, or will not accept, this

code of conduct, regardless of the reasons, are "moved" away and regarded as "blockers" as

the school pursues its "shared vision". In this sense human relations are compromised without

hesitation in response to the imperatives of CLaSS.

CLaSS coordinators adamantly claim that only through a "shared" belief in the rationality of

CLaSS can the school be saved. The CLaSS coordinators work hard to ensure that this view

is shared among the teachers and the wider school community.

However, CLaSS coordinators see success as being reliant on the external authority of CLaSS

and therefore question whether, without that authority, teachers would have the conviction or

stamina to continue. It can be referred to as a test of faith. CLaSS coordinators express some

concerns about the school's ability and willingness to maintain CLaSS if the principal were to

leave the school and be replaced by somebody less committed to CLaSS Adding to this

anxiety is the prospect that the program could not continue in the way that it has if CLaSS

trained teachers or CLaSS coordinators were to leave the schools. The CLaSS coordinators

and principals are the conduits for external authority to drive change within the schools. The

CLaSS coordinators recognize this power arrangement and acknowledge its fragility. CLaSS

is not open to self criticism and disallows reflective practice, educational debate, and teacher

professional autonomy as part of the school culture. If the authority of CLaSS is eroded the

CLaSS coordinators fear that it would "all fall over". In a sense what the CLaSS coordinators

are saying is that the schools are, since taking on CLaSS, no longer equipped to deal with

complex educational issues on their own and must rely upon externally generated responses.

For example, when asked to comment on the importance of literacy in regard to accessing

other curriculum areas, and the minimal contribution other areas of the curriculum can

potentially have on literacy attainment, as expressed by CLaSS, CLaSS coordinator A

replied:

Yes I think so, I think that is a fair comment…. Actually, it's not a good thing

really. I have not really explored that idea. Now you've asked it makes me a bit uneasy.

(CLaSS coordinator A, paragraph 109)

Having a belief that literacy attainment can only be achieved through explicit data driven

"literacy" instruction and the belief that all other curriculum areas can be considered

secondary to literacy attainment is, according to CLaSS coordinator A, "the way we want to

view it." There is no need to act on professional or personal unease; simply return to the

values and beliefs of CLaSS whenever uncertainty occurs. The "new professional identity" of

teachers and the practices and structures of the school have been directed and informed by the

principal and CLaSS coordinator exclusively. Their leadership draws upon the externally

developed authority of CLaSS to initiate changes within the school. Nevertheless, as well as

being the strongest advocates of CLASS, the CLaSS coordinators are concerned that

involvement with CLaSS has reduced the school's capacity to generate responses to the

educational issues that schools face internally. The CLaSS coordinators believe that, by

engaging CLaSS, the collective and individual model of teacher professional identity

sponsored by CLaSS improves the teacher's technical classroom management skills. They are

also aware of their school's dependence on external authority for direction on broader

educational issues. From the CLaSS coordinator's perspective CLaSS has to succeed because

the capacity of the staff to create programs has diminished. That is, if CLaSS "falls over" the

staff would not have the professional skills and capacity to participate in the processes needed

to generate responses to the educational issues that the schools face are not available.

Teachers' Comments

Public Discourse Model

Support for CLaSS is evident among the teachers and certainly, teachers take some

responsibility for policing themselves in regard with compliance with CLaSS practices and

structures. It is clear that CLaSS it is not something that is simply done to teachers. Teachers

are an implicit component of the CLaSS model and publicly support it. The Public

Discourse model is concerned with the responses that are supportive of CLaSS. From within

the Public Discourse model, the rational perspective with its intrinsic logic for engaging

CLaSS is put forward. The teachers accept aspects of the renewed relationships and the new

professional identity that has been embedded in the school through CLaSS. In the following

section, the teachers tell of what it means to be a CLaSS teacher. It should be noted that all

the teachers sincerely engaged in and contributed to the Public Discourse model.

The removal of all doubt and uncertainty is a key component of Public Discourse model. The

teachers are adamant that CLaSS provides the only pathway to reform. Evidence of an

ongoing collective sense making process is seen, as the teachers legitimate the commitment

to CLaSS and declare their allegiances.

We know what we are doing

> …with CLaSS you know what we're doing. (Teacher A1, paragraph 39-41)

> I do like the structure and the routine. It keeps me in touch with where the kids are at
> and as I said, they know what they are doing, which I think is really important
> especially for little ones, because they have ownership and know what to do. (Teacher
> A1, paragraph 69)

> A lot of programs you go through tend to get a bit willy-nilly. In the past we would
> have set up basically whole group situations, whereas now I just go on the needs of the
> group with CLaSS. The children know what they are doing and I know what I am
> doing, it is really clear. (Teacher A2, paragraph 61)

> I feel much more confident about what I am doing and how I am doing it. It has been
> really good at bringing out the best in me. CLaSS has given me a lot of direction with

the teaching and I really feel good that I know what I'm doing. (Teacher B1, paragraph 103)

You are always discussing your kids' data, you usually bring along the data and we look at this and we look at that and what happens next and so on. I suppose it leads onto effective teaching. You can actually see kids who couldn't do that before now can do it and you think 'Oh this is great'. I've never actually probably been as focused as that before, probably the focusing is probably the most important bit. (Teacher C2, paragraph 120)

You can have your room running really well without thinking about it too much. CLaSS has a good structure. Yes. I don't think I would go the other way now having been in the junior school and used CLaSS. (Teacher D2, paragraph 9)

As I said before, the kids are so organized so they can come in and say 'right, I'm doing that and then I'm doing that' and off they go. Once you get all that set up you know it's all there and it keeps everyone on track, it is very organized and I would not go back. (Teacher A2, paragraph 113)

The following comments are indicative of the teachers' ideological readiness to accept CLaSS totally. The norms of conformity are expressed and the importance of common actions is highlighted.

We follow the program

We all stick very religiously to our CLaSS model and language roster, whole group, small group/whole group, small group. (Teacher A2, paragraph 9)

I mean if you are going to take CLaSS on and you want to see if it works, you've got to do it properly, no question. (Teacher A2, paragraph 17)

The understanding I received when I first started with CLaSS is that it is non-negotiable. The literacy block is non-negotiable. I was told clearly that this is the way CLaSS runs and that was that. My understanding is this is how CLaSS runs and if people start to deviate from the model it will not be effective. (Teacher B2, paragraph 52)

We didn't need people doing this if they didn't believe in it. I think that I am the only one in the team now who has been in there since the conception. (Teacher C1, paragraph 58)

It's a shame I suppose, that there's not more schools around here that are in CLaSS. (Teacher A1, paragraph 93)

Not only are the teachers committed to CLaSS, the Public Discourse model indicates that there is a level of contentment and satisfaction attained in the process of implementing and maintaining CLaSS. The teachers demonstrate a willingness to change their practice and the importance of external validation:

We like it

The meetings are really good and provide us with feedback and motivate us to keep true to the CLaSS design. (Teacher B1, paragraph 15)

. . . it is the only model like this that I have ever used so I cannot compare it with any other model. This is the only model I know and it seems to work really well. (Teacher B2, paragraph 20)

I am pleased with the feedback the school gets. The results we have for the last

few years are wonderful. I am really happy with the results my kids get and the way the

classroom is going. (Teacher B2, paragraph 66)

I really enjoy the fact that I can assess the kids at least twice a week and set work for

them and in my heart I know I've done the best I can do. I find the weekly meetings

really helpful and supportive. (Teacher B1, paragraph 83)

I think it is working really well. Everyone's in this together, everyone's doing the same

kind of thing. . . . We've all got problems, we've all got our gifted kids, and they all

have got to be catered for. I think parents are pretty happy with it. We hardly hear

anything about why are we doing this or why aren't you doing that like we used to get

years ago. The kids seem to be achieving a lot, even the kids I've got who are

struggling, they are making progress and that's great to see, but you are always just

keeping the momentum going and pushing them along. (Teacher C2, paragraph 110)

I think you would find within in each classroom, there is a lot of individual flexibility

about how each lesson is done. I have never felt restrained to make each classroom to

look exactly the same. I think it's allowed each teacher's personality to come into it.

(Teacher C1, paragraph 25)

In supporting the level of accountability CLaSS apparently brings to the schools, the teachers

speak of their loyalty to CLaSS and their loyalty to the new relationships and protocols that

have emerged.

Being loyal

I have talked with other teachers outside of school about concerns that they have with

aspects of CLaSS. When they start talking about how they make subtle and discreet

changes I really question them about it. If we start breaking CLaSS down we will

start to lose it and stop doing things in the right way. More good will come from

sticking with class than by not using CLaSS or breaking it down. I think it would be a

shame if we stopped using CLaSS because there have been some huge benefits.

(Teacher B2, paragraph 53)

It is interesting to note that discussions that question CLaSS have occurred outside of the

school.

I've never wavered from the program. I know some people have. They don't do

anything bad but they might say I am not going to do part of the program today like

guided reading. But at the end of the day the teacher has to be responsible for children's

learning. (Teacher B1, paragraph 23)

You have to understand that people are going to do that at some point. You just keep

encouraging them to follow the model and keep showing them the results. And say

things like "Look this is where we have come from, here are our previous results, now

look where the results are". The results are much better than before and this

improvement has got to do with CLaSS. It is a lot of work but it is worth it because it

works. (Teacher B1, paragraph 27)

We all stick very religiously to our CLaSS model and language roster, whole group,

small group, whole group, small group. (Teacher A2, paragraph 9)

. . . most of my teaching has happened in CLaSS schools. I still have lots of fun times in

the classroom with singing in the morning and stuff like that. I still do sport and

religion daily. (Teacher B1, paragraph 35)

I don't know if it has changed a lot of my ideas or focus on literacy. I think what has changed is the way we teach. (Teacher A2, paragraph 13)

External validation and official judgement is considered to be important to teachers as explained by Teacher D2:

I think we may have slacked off a little bit as a school. I think I still stick very closely to the design. I just really value the reporting back dimension of the design. . . . We used to send the results to Melbourne twice a year to analyze, but we don't do that anymore. People from Melbourne and the Catholic Education Office would come and talk to us and see how we were going. That has stopped but we are still pretty full on with CLaSS. (Teacher D1, paragraph 17-21)

Constant pressure

. . . having someone there overriding you is possibly... the biggest pressure. (Teacher C1, paragraph 33)

I probably felt pressure at times when it was testing time, when you get your children to benchmark and those sorts of things and whether you are not doing the right things and it's those sorts of pressures. I haven't felt pressured from the coordinator in that she comes in and out of our rooms and I've always been someone who has been quite open to have people in my room. I have my bad days and I have my good days and I am fairly honest about that. Some days work and some days don't. But I guess in some ways having someone there overriding you is possibly at the back of the mind, it is the biggest pressure. (Teacher C1, paragraph 33)

Elements of the new professional identity can be seen here as Teacher C1, despite feeling under pressure concerning compliance, claims that the learning and the results from such

pressure are well worth it. The extrapolation is "the medicine may taste bad but I know it

is good for me":

> It depends which way you look at it, too. I have also seen it as incredible support. The
>
> pressures are probably come from within me rather than from the coordinator. I would
>
> put the support element as causing some pressure, it's probably more when I've felt a
>
> bit under threat myself, but the support and learning far outweigh that.(Teacher C1,
>
> paragraph 34)

> Last year, the principal wasn't around very much. There were a lot of things going on
>
> and he was out of the school a fair bit. Ideally, the CLaSS coordinator should have time
>
> to come into classrooms and help monitor and maintain the small groups. In reality this
>
> doesn't happen. Which I was happy about. (Teacher D1, paragraph 33)

Finally, the Public Discourse model indicates the teachers' immediate and long term

acceptance of CLaSS

Looking forward

> The teacher I mentioned earlier. She said "No I am not changing my ways". I think the
>
> principal and the CLaSS coordinator just coped with it and at the end of the year they
>
> examined how she went. The results from the other classrooms were so much better
>
> than hers. . . . Yes that teacher is very good with what she does and I think that must
>
> have helped her out with her discussions with the principal, but the results were not
>
> there. (Teacher D1, paragraph 53-57)

> I could not ever teach the old way again. One teacher, one class, one topic. I will not go
>
> there again. CLaSS does promote a lot of interaction between the teacher and students.
>
> When I am working with a small group of children I facilitate communication rather

than teach. Good teaching involves working with the children. (Teacher B2,

paragraph 70)

If I move classes I think I would be willing to try elements of CLaSS again. (Teacher

D1, paragraph 41)

The Public Discourse model describes the visible activities of the teachers as they engage in

the common actions and agreed upon behaviours. The Public Discourse model of the teachers

is coherent with the conditions of engagement identified in the CLaSS documentation, as well

as the themes raised in the principal's and CLaSS coordinator's statements.

<p align="center">Personal Discourse Model</p>

In the following section responses that gave insights into the personal pedagogy of the

teachers will be explored. We start to hear about the things that should and should not be

said. We start to hear about what can be discussed within the school, but not too loudly.

Insights into the tensions involved with using the new framework and making decisions start

to emerge. The Personal Discourse model demonstrates how the personal practices and

structures of the teachers intersect with CLaSS. These intersections reveal new forms of

interactions, new values and a new identity for the teachers. Some of the Personal Discourse

model seemingly supports CLaSS. However tensions between individual decision making

and the CLaSS framework start to emerge. The Personal Discourse model identifies varying

levels of resistance from the teachers, slight modifications to agreed practices, overt and

covert criticism of CLaSS and even evidence of wavering support.

The Personal Discourse model also identifies elements of putting up with it and insights into

the endurance needed to maintain CLaSS. In many ways the following discourse indicates

teachers' forced acceptance of the non-negotiable aspects of CLaSS within their schools.

I don't think any one would openly not support it. (Teacher D1 paragraph, 32)

When I first came here I think there were some people who were given the
opportunity to stay or get out and moved to a different area if they didn't feel
comfortable with CLaSS. (Teacher C2, paragraph 85)

I started at the school when it started its third year of CLaSS and things were very
structured. It was made pretty clear that within the CLaSS model you will do things in a
certain way. We are more in control of the program now than before. We know what's
going on. It is actually a bit harder to make sure you are doing all of the components.
The guided reading and the parent helpers and those types of strategies. The
documentation has a good little diagram explaining how it all fits together. To make
sure we stick to the design is really important. (Teacher B1, paragraph 19)

The understanding I received when I first started with CLaSS is that it is non-
negotiable. The literacy block is non negotiable. I was told clearly that this is the way
CLaSS runs and that was that. My understanding is this is how CLaSS runs and if
people start to deviate from the model it will not be effective. (Teacher B, paragraph
52)

I suppose I came in, this is my third year of service, so I came in not knowing any other
sort of literacy reform. When I came in, they had already got things established. The
reading block was well underway and it was really easy to follow, very well structured
when I first arrived here. (Teacher A1, paragraph 5)

I joined the staff last year and I picked up very quickly that the school's commitment to
the CLaSS program is beyond question. I was told very strongly the reasons why the
school had adopted CLaSS and that the results the school has attained over the last

couple of years in regard to literacy development are beyond questioning. I don't

think any one would openly not support it. (Teacher D1, paragraph 37)

With the CLaSS program there is an expectation to operate differently to how you may

have operated in the past. (Teacher D1, paragraph 5)

It has been made very clear that this school engages the CLaSS program fully and the

whole staff has made a commitment to it and it is not negotiable. There is no other

option available. (Teacher D1, paragraph 13)

While we have heard of the teacher's loyalty and commitment to CLaSS, the Personal

Discourse model refers explicitly to the overt authority of the principal. The principals have

the power to affect the teachers' commitment to CLaSS significantly:

. . . the principal is the driving factor. (Teacher B1, paragraph 50)

I sort of felt comfortable with CLaSS probably because I hadn't had something else

before hand and the principal is so keen on it. (Teacher A1, paragraph 53)

I think initially, probably because the principal was so supportive, we did not have

many problems, I think if the principal hadn't been so supportive, it may have become

very tense. . . . We did have different people moved out of the area, given the option to

be in another area of the school. (Teacher C1, paragraph 50-54)

As far as leadership goes the principal is the driving factor and if the principal isn't a

real believer in CLaSS then nothing is really going to keep it in the school. This school

has been involved in CLaSS for a few years. If the principal hadn't been a good

motivator, the person pushing us along the program would not have been as
successful as it has been. (Teacher B1, paragraph 6)

I asked him to prove to me that it was better than what I was using. I think that when
you come into a school too you've got the professional commitment to say 'Ok, this is
running in this school, I've got to make it work for me' I mean if you don't like it
'wake up'. And I guess that's where I was last year. (Teacher A2, paragraph 105)

This Personal Discourse model provides tremendous insight into the context and culture that
permeates the school. The interactions that occur between individual teachers and principals
are clearly not discussions among equals. The conditions for teaching are firmly in the
control of the principals. As noted earlier, the principal and the CLaSS coordinators are in
concert and share this power. The CLaSS teachers as a group also have access to the same
power to self-and peer-regulate.

A lot has been said about the importance of the professional development component of
CLaSS and much value is afforded to the weekly meetings that occur in schools. While some
teachers express the supportive nature of those meetings, their Personal Discourse model
includes examples of how those meetings are recognized by them as control technologies
which serve to maintain CLaSS or, to use Ball's (2001) expression, "performativity".
Through the following examples, the effectiveness of the group as a control agent can be
seen.

What we need to do to keep CLaSS happening

The professional development we've had has been fantastic, literacy meetings every
Monday night have been really good Professional Development sessions. The meetings
are not for just sitting around having a chat. We talk about what kids are doing, but
we're talking about them in a very focused way. So we'll talk about, for example, a
couple of little girls in my room who are really struggling at the moment. We all sit

around and say 'how can we help this teacher, work with these little girls?' 'What ideas can we give?' I have said 'I'm struggling, I don't know what I'm doing, the kids are not moving along and I have done this or done that.' The group say 'All those things are very good, why not try this.' We talk about professional learning, about why we're teaching and how we're teaching. The professional development we have had from CLaSS helps us to have those conversations. (Teacher C1, paragraph 86)

The professional development and the meetings we have, the fact that everyone's totally honest [has been helpful]. If they don't get something they'll say it. If you don't agree with something we tend to sort of thrash that out too at the Monday night meetings as the professional learning team. It really is the best way to do anything because you are constantly in touch. (Teacher C2, paragraph 114)

When asked if teachers could use the weekly meeting forum to discuss matters relating to broader issues in educational and literacy attainment, Teacher D1 replied:

No definitely not. Those meetings are designed to discuss how CLaSS is being implemented and how people can engage with the design. It really was not a place to raise such issues. Basically at those meetings people would share examples of CLaSS best practice not any other best practice. (Teacher D1, paragraph 25)

Some sessions I found really good and then others I just didn't find very useful and motivating at all. We were supposed to have visits from CLaSS people to come in and have a look and see what we are doing and tell us if we are doing the right thing or something like that. Well that was one of their things that they boasted about, I find that a bit challenging. And sometimes what they are telling is not motivational or it's a bit

repetitive or you think 'That's so basic, why are they even telling us this?'

(Teacher A1 paragraph 85)

If someone's doing something really well we all try and go and spend time in that

classroom with that teacher. We especially do that when we have someone new to the

Prep-Year 1 and 2 area. (Teacher B1, paragraph 59)

Note the strong sense of collegiality and professional socialisation. The weekly meetings are

about making sure that CLaSS works well and that teachers fit in and feel comfortable with

CLaSS. Such comments about the meetings are indicative of the extent to which teachers

have bought into the Public Discourse model of CLaSS. It does provide all the answers. On

the other hand, it would appear that there are no other options and through the professional

socialisation provided by CLaSS teachers are directed into specific actions and ways of

thinking. CLaSS meetings are not settings where alternative ideas on literacy can be explored

or challenges made to the CLaSS model. As Teacher B2 says "Most of the time we're talking

about the children's needs and we don't have time to address our concerns" (Teacher B2,

paragraph 41).

Personal Discourse model provides examples of teachers' acknowledgement that other

programs beyond CLaSS may have something to offer. But, while being open to other things,

teachers can be still loyal to CLaSS:

I'm open to other things, but I can see myself teaching like this for a long time, and I

also think, whoever you're teaching next to, is probably going to change you a bit. See,

I've had two different people and I probably teach differently with one than I do with

the other although I'm on a bit of a learning curve as well. So yeah I could see myself

teaching like this for a long time. (Teacher A1, paragraph 89)

If something came along that I considered better I would probably take it on...well,
I'm very, very impressed with it, I'm not saying there is anything better. (Teacher A2,
paragraph 4)

Within the Personal Discourse model, we start to hear of teachers being prepared to identify
problems with CLaSS and even suggest that programs other than CLaSS may have some
value. Some aspects of CLaSS are problematic for the teachers. In particular, we hear of the
struggles teachers encounter as their professional and personal values are challenged or
displaced by CLaSS. In the following comments teachers express reservations or concerns
that would not be acceptable in CLaSS meetings or in conversations with principals or
CLaSS coordinators:

A day off it feels great

They talked about going through with each child and identifying their writing level with
them. The children should know the stages and things like that. I think that for,
especially new preps coming in, it's very hard to get them to say 'Well I'm in the
planning stage' I mean you need to have them all in the planning stage, I find anyway,
otherwise you've got kids going everywhere. (Teacher A1 paragraph 29)

I did find the structure hard to get used to at the beginning. I had a little buzzer that
would go off when I had to change activities and I would go 'Oh my god, I'm not there
yet'. But I've got that down pat now and the results are worth it (Teacher A2, paragraph
81).

The fact that it is non-negotiable is a little problematic for me. I know that for CLaSS to
work we all have to do it properly. I know that there are days when I really question our
commitment to CLaSS. Not all kids meet the benchmarks we set and I wonder why
when there are no visible inhibitors for their learning. (Teacher B2, paragraph 62)

I think, to be honest with you, there was resentment from everyone at first. I'll be very honest with you and within the meetings that was coming out. Some teachers didn't believe in it, didn't like the process, and didn't like the idea of it. It was too structured and they felt, some of them were doing a good enough job anyway. Some resented the fact that there was a lot of money going into this, that other people's practices weren't being recognized, that this was another new thing coming in. Most people have been in the process now, can see the value of it over a longer period of time. (Teacher C1, paragraph 46)

It is very rigid and I will say when we have a day off it feels great. For example, on Friday we've got Maths, we won't do CLaSS that day, but I might do something arty crafty in the morning or I might read a story. Instead of doing say the four rotations of activities, you might do a book response which is art/craft activity which is really good. It is just good to do that occasionally, the kids enjoy it and there is no pressure. (Teacher C2, paragraph 69)

Yes, it can sort of dominate you a bit. (Teacher C2, paragraph 73)

These comments can be interpreted by principals and CLaSS coordinators as understandable "grumbles" that they expect to hear from their "weary warriors". After all, CLaSS requires teachers to work really hard, and it is not surprising that they feel this way.

In the comments that follow, there are signs of subversion and criticism that have moved well beyond the "grumbles" above. These are rumblings of discontent that principals and CLaSS coordinators are unlikely to hear. There is no mutiny or intention to mutiny but the comments are indicative of teachers' sensing professional discord between their professional identity and beliefs and what CLaSS requires.

. . . I really hate some of the tests we use. . . .(Teacher D2 paragraph 34)

. . . everything else you do is shoved into other times. . . . Religious Education gets knocked around a bit. Sometimes we can go a week without doing an integrated study, because we couldn't get time. (Teacher C2 paragraph 25)

Testing, the testing drives me crazy. I really hate it. It takes so much time. (Teacher D1, paragraph 76-77)

I would cut back on the testing and increase the emphasis on running records. I would actually wipe most of the testing out the design. I really hate some of the tests we use. . . . It is tedious and you spend a lot of time on it. I think the kids get sick of it too. (Teacher D1, paragraph 82-86)

CLaSS is hard work! It is not easy. The first year of doing CLaSS was really hard. I think that for a new graduate it is a huge load. I had a lot of teaching experience before I took on CLaSS and I found to be a lot of hard work and incredibly exhausting. (Teacher B2, paragraph 28)

As well as identifying the problematic nature of some aspects of CLaSS, these instances of Personal Discourse model contain alternative perspectives of CLaSS. Teachers refer to inauthentic practices and relationships. They challenge and even dismiss aspects of CLaSS, as well as express alternative perspectives. For example, teachers are concerned about the welfare of the students and the depth of the curriculum:

I don't think it is really liked by the children. I guess a lot of what I do in the classroom is what I have always done. The expectations we have for the small children 4-5-6 year olds is way too high. I think we push the little kids along too fast and they don't get to

enjoy and experience learning and literacy. We have them here for 7 years, there is

a lot to learn and enjoy. (Teacher D1, paragraph 49)

There are some fundamental issues about teaching that CLaSS doesn't and can't

address. (Teacher B2 paragraph 34)

One teacher, who is an avid supporter of CLaSS and an advocate for subsequent compliance

to CLaSS, laments the lack of questioning by the school in regard to the "bigger questions"

about the apparent inability of the school to provide opportunities for all children to succeed,

despite commitment to CLaSS. In her professional judgement, CLaSS has not helped the

school to face up to some serious issues. CLaSS does not provide all the answers:

I have had experience of teaching five children with similar capabilities a specific

literacy skill yet one child won't get it [attain appropriate literacy skill or level]. I ask

why? There are some fundamental issues about teaching that CLaSS doesn't and can't

address. Some children reach benchmarks quickly and then plateau out. Why? We do

talk about individual learning plans but we do not ask the bigger questions about why

kids still struggle. (Teacher B2, paragraph 63)

Teacher D1 is less committed to CLaSS than Teacher B2. Teacher D1 is prepared to speak

openly about the inconsistencies between CLaSS and her professional practice and her beliefs

about the teaching of literacy. Teacher D1 does not offer an absolute answer to literacy

attainment but is prepared to trust her judgement to look beyond CLaSS:

The idea of CLaSS is to gather data on a child and focus some teaching and learning

activities on the needs of that child. That is not a bad thing but it is only part of what we

need to do with the children, especially with preps and literacy. (Teacher D1, paragraph

52)

Teaching children to read has great importance and I think really laying the foundations toward enjoying and understanding words and books is a key to developing literacy. I am not convinced that the CLaSS design helps establish those foundations with preps (Teacher D1, paragraph 45).

I think the CLaSS design has some merit for Year 1 onwards, provided that we get things right in Prep. I really don't think CLaSS is suitable for Preps. If I stay with Preps I don't think I'll be using it very much at all and it will be interesting to see the approach the new principal adopts towards CLaSS. If I moved year levels I think I would be willing to try elements of CLaSS again. (Teacher D1, paragraph 41)

Subsequently, we will see that Teacher D1 is prepared to act on her convictions and abandon CLaSS.

Teacher A1 qualifies her support for CLaSS, saying that CLaSS "is great for beginning teachers" with limited classroom experiences:

I did my rounds at some secondary schools as well as primary so I didn't see a lot of the prep or the early years literacy before I started teaching….It (CLaSS) is great for a beginning teacher, it really is. (Teacher A1, paragraphs, 13- 17)

Teacher C2 has more explicit concerns about the impact of CLaSS on other elements of the curriculum. This teacher believes that because of the school's commitment to CLaSS other key learning areas seemingly "go out of the window" and teachers "avoid" activities that could "distract you."

You end up avoiding activities that distract you from the focus. (Teacher C2, paragraph 81)

I know some people think that the Maths suffers. The Numeracy coordinators don't think literacy is as important as it gets treated. Michael Redman or Michael Ymer

[independent commercial mathematics education consultants] will say 'You've got

to do Maths every day' but that just doesn't happen and then something else goes out

the window too. (Teacher C2, paragraph 85)

It also becomes apparent that CLaSS has a significant affect on teachers and teachers refer to

the strains of constant pressure. This Personal Discourse model highlights the tensions

brought about by the dualism of professional judgment versus performative worth. Such

tensions lead teachers to actually waver in their support of CLaSS.

Wavering support

Yes, definitely, my support does waver and I do question. My negative feelings about

CLaSS are that it does take enormous amounts of time for preparation. The delivery of

CLaSS, I am okay with. It is just the amount of preparation is difficult to handle. If you

are not prepared for the day, CLaSS simply doesn't work. (Teacher B2, paragraph 36)

We just can't do it sometimes. I don't get stressed over it because if I feel like, we had

Monday out, we had Friday out because of whatever, it means that I'd take my

activities that I would normally do in one week over two weeks. You can't get too

stressed about it being a matter of urgency; the kids will learn when they are ready to

learn. (Teacher C2, paragraph 89)

These are not conversations that would be sanctioned in a CLaSS meeting. Sometimes,

teachers keep these reservations to themselves. Other teachers discuss them with colleagues

outside the school. They cannot be shared as part of the school's Public Discourse. On the

other hand, they do not equate to outright rejection of the CLaSS model, but they have moved

well beyond the complaints about tiredness and exhaustion and difficulties of adjustments

that characterized the earlier components of Personal Discourse model.

Practical Discourse Model

Beyond the various reservations expressed about CLaSS through Personal Discourse model, the following comments indicate preparedness on the part of teachers to depart from strict adherence to the CLaSS model, and to act on their professional convictions. These departures form a part of Practical Discourse model where teachers move beyond feelings and institute changes that are not sanctioned by the CLaSS model. These changes are usually covert. They are not shared in CLaSS meetings. But teachers are prepared to discuss these changes when it is safe to do so. It is through these departures that teachers' Practical Discourse model illustrates how some teachers in CLaSS schools express their own professional convictions and claim a small area of autonomy within schools that are, to all appearances, fully conforming to the CLaSS model.

This Practical Discourse model is concerned with the highly personal adjustments that are made to classroom practice as teachers operate out of their own belief systems and "attempt" to be consistent with CLaSS. These attempts are part of the visible indicators of conformity that teachers need to protect themselves and remain part of the team. Within the Practical Discourse model we see a split between teachers' own judgments about good practice and the rigours of CLaSS. It seems that the teachers' values and practices can be, and are, rearranged to a point.

In the following comments, we see varying levels of resistance and non-compliance in each of the four schools. Here teachers stand their own ground. This resistance is not easy. We see varying levels of anxiety from the teachers as they attempt to cope with the requirements of CLaSS and at the same time assert their professional autonomy. The teachers are finding the power to develop constructive responses to the demands of CLaSS. Ultimately, some teachers are not prepared to have their practice distorted any further.

Making changes

Ah, bits of it I leave out. I change bits around and also the teachers who have come in later, they've sort of been in Early Years and I think that we probably need a bit of that. It's mainly CLaSS. (Teacher A1, paragraph 21)

When I first came, I sort of used the CLaSS model strictly, I suppose, but I've sort of changed a bit. (Teacher A1, paragraph 33)

Yes the two-hour literacy block is very important and we changed the whole school timetable to make sure that interruptions are kept to a minimum. But there are special occasions when the literacy block happens later in the day, only when special things are on. We still do two hours but it's not the ideal time to do it. But sometimes we can't satisfy everybody and have to give a bit. (Teacher B1, paragraph 39)

Bend things a little

Yes, individuals can bend things a little to suit themselves. Yes, that's right but you still have to follow the design. (Teacher B1, paragraph 43)

That structure, whole-small-whole, I would say is in there and I haven't strayed from that at all but I haven't felt locked into that either. Probably, as each year has gone on, I have felt more confident in becoming more flexible. Initially, I was probably very structured and I continued to say 'I've got to follow this and if I don't have my whiteboard correct today' you know those sorts of things, or the classroom won't run as well, but as you become more confident in the structure, you become a bit more flexible. (Teacher C1, paragraph 29)

I've got to adapt it

> I'd say that I'm just not following that exact CLaSS recipe, which says 'Do two focus groups' I am only doing one…I've got to adapt it. The beauty of working with Year 2 is that the previous principal and the coordinator both agreed that you've got to make the model kind of fit your view as well. You can't just change your whole mould for that. (Teacher C2, paragraph 37-41)

Disguising some aspects

> If I wanted children to have take-home readers I had to do that at lunchtime or perhaps in the afternoon but definitely not during the literacy block. I will try to disguise some aspects of what I was doing (like guided reading or discuss with a child aspects of the book they enjoyed, to look like it belonged in the CLaSS design. (Teacher D1, paragraph 21)

I'd go crazy trying to do that...

> The CLaSS model says that you should do two focus groups a day. I'd go crazy trying to do that at the minute. I've got to get the kids settled to working. I've got to work with my focus group, then I've got to go around and see what the other kids are doing, then I've got to start doing the next lot of activities. So at the moment, unless I had four other bodies in there circulating with the other groups, I don't think I could do it. (Teacher C2, paragraph 29)

"Leave out. . . change bits. . . " (Teacher A1), ". . . give a bit, bend things a little. . ." (Teacher B1), "becoming more flexible. . ." (Teacher C1), "not following the exact CLaSS recipe. . . going crazy trying to do it all adapt it. . . " (Teacher C2), ". . . disguise aspects. . . " (Teacher D1), are all sentiments that indicate that the teachers find aspects of CLaSS inconsistent with their understandings and practices. Teachers struggle to reconcile their own values with the values of CLaSS. Some teachers, like those above, are prepared to take matters into their own hands.

. . . yes, you just refine your practice to fit into this model (Teacher A2, paragraph

43)

We are better at finding ways to get around the work. But not slackening off or not

following the CLaSS design. I suppose I'm still doing the work but finding ways of

dealing with it better. For example during my release time I strictly do literacy related

activity. However, you can't plan too far ahead with CLaSS either, you have to get data

from the kids to direct your teaching. So, I basically have to plan literacy lessons day

by day. You can plan incidentals like the reading corner and sport time and art. I focus

on making sure I have literacy covered and the rest is easy. (Teacher B1, paragraph 31)

It's a matter of grabbing a box of gear out of the library and using that for a week or a

month or whatever is going. I'm getting used to the idea of, not all kids go through all

of the activity, because you are pulling kids out for focus groups. It took me a while to

get my head around that one. Actually gathering the data and then using the data to

guide your activities was something I hadn't been doing a lot of before, not as part of

daily duties anyway. It is much easier now. (Teacher C2, paragraph 17)

Preparedness to modify CLaSS

There is preparedness among teachers to modify their practice in a response to the dualism

and tensions they experience while implementing CLaSS. The comments below indicate that

the changes the teachers make are not a result of flexibility coming from familiarity with

CLaSS. Being prepared to make changes is not a topic that is to be shared in the weekly

meetings and remains a covert activity. In fact, for Teacher D1 the inconsistencies between

personal values and CLaSS values resulted in that teacher deciding to abandon CLaSS.

I found it particularly difficult last year, I did try my best. However, midway through

the year I looked at where the children were in regard to literacy and was very

concerned. I therefore abandoned the CLaSS model and returned to doing things in similar way to how I had done before. For example, there is no room in the CLaSS model for the children to be on graded take-home readers. To my mind this is an effective and essential part of literacy development in young children. I really feel that one of my strengths as a teacher has been my ability to teach reading. I have been teaching children to read for a long time. (Teacher D1, paragraph 17)

For Teacher D1, there had been a return to the long held personal beliefs. Teacher D1 could not continue to operate from the "shared beliefs" CLaSS insisted upon. The cost of open defiance had social and professional consequences:

The situation was very uncomfortable and stressful. I was really anxious that I hadn't taught my children anything for the six months I followed CLaSS. The situation is not very good. I am not very popular with the principal or the CLaSS coordinator. (Teacher D1, paragraph 29)

Teachers have a professional capacity to make decisions about their work and they want their work to be valued. CLaSS brings with it a system that allows teachers to value what they do only in terms of accountability as prescribed by CLaSS. That is, if teachers reach the predetermined outputs they can consider themselves, and are considered by others, to be successful. This industrial model of accountability is not always taken seriously even by loyal followers, such as Teacher C2:

I said to the coordinator in the first six months, that I think I learnt more in six months with CLaSS than in 20 years in teaching. (Teacher C2, paragraph, paragraph 114)

Nevertheless, Teacher C2 is prepared to talk about and rely upon non-sanctioned ways of thinking about teaching and literacy:

You can't get too stressed about it being a matter of urgency; the kids will learn when they are ready to learn. (Teacher C2, paragraph 89)

I really do enjoy having that day off to do a bit extra with the kids. (Teacher C2,

paragraph 102)

Teacher C2 is telling us that stepping aside from the schools' defining feature can be

enjoyable. This teacher is perfectly happy to go along with CLaSS, but, the teacher and the

students are happy having the day off from CLaSS.

Two Systems of Rationality

The principals and CLaSS coordinators insist that, after implementing CLaSS, their schools

operate out of one system of rationality. They maintain that the beliefs and understandings

that constitute the rationality of CLaSS are "shared" by all staff. These "shared beliefs"

enable their schools to operate at a higher level of accountability, efficiency and effectiveness

than other schools. Such claims are backed up by improved data or greater outputs. The

"shared beliefs" involve teachers developing technical abilities and ways of thinking about

schooling that exceed their previously held ideas, thoughts and practices. After engaging

CLaSS we are told, the teachers are more informed about their practice and enlightened about

their sense of professional identity; they are CLaSS teachers. The teachers' Public Discourse

model points to acceptance of the distinct organizational characteristics and specific patterns

of teacher behaviours that are characterized by CLaSS. Yet, the teachers' Personal and

Practical Discourse models point to an intolerance of some of the organizational

characteristics of the CLaSS schools, and specific patterns of teacher behaviour that are

clearly not consistent with CLaSS. The analysis of the teachers' discourse reveals that two

contrasting belief systems or systems of rationality operate within the school and influence

the teachers' sense of professional identity. The themes of competing discourse and

professional identity are significant to this study and will be examined more fully in the

context of Managerial Discourse and Democratic Discourse. Initially, it is important to

demonstrate how the teachers' Public Discourse model is distinguishable from the teachers'

Personal and Practical Discourse Models

Teachers' Public Discourse model - we believe

Analysis of the Public Discourse model demonstrates that teachers accept the definitions and limitations that CLaSS places on practices and structures. For the most part, teachers are satisfied to interpret the major and minor educational dilemmas that they and their students experience through the dominant Public Discourse of CLaSS. The teachers' Public Discourse model demonstrates that the teachers respond to the professional directions and ideology of CLaSS. The teachers willingly comply with the beliefs and understandings of CLaSS. Teachers attend the weekly meetings, engage the prescribed teaching strategies and practices, use the correct technical language, and generally support CLaSS. The teachers' continual demonstrations of allegiance to the imperatives of CLaSS reflect the fundamental characteristics of their new professional identity. Through the teachers' Public Discourse model the teachers illustrate how they accept and faithfully interpret those specific patterns of behaviour expressed as "non-negotiable" by CLaSS. Through the teachers' Public Discourse model CLaSS is accepted as the only logical way for the school to reform and improve. All "good" teachers will, according to advocates of CLaSS, readily recognize and accept this.

Teachers' Personal Discourse model- limited agency

The teachers' Personal Discourse model reveals some of the tensions that occur through the interplay between the teachers' own system of rationality and the Public Discourse of CLaSS. The teachers talk in varying tones of quiet dissent, and point to specific aspects of the CLaSS rationality which they consider to be problematic or even flawed. The teachers' Personal Discourse model illustrates how the power relations within the school are interpreted and enacted. The teachers have limited agency in expressing ideas and opinions other than those sanctioned by CLaSS. For example, teachers know that challenging any aspect of CLaSS involves directly and simultaneously challenging the principal, the CLaSS coordinator and their peers. In effect teachers know that to be openly critical of CLaSS is to stand alone against the school community. Teachers demonstrate their understanding of the implications

of having one "shared belief". To challenge the beliefs and understandings of CLaSS is to position oneself beyond or below the accepted boundaries of the new professional identity. Discussions held between principals and questioning teachers are not discussions among equals. The hierarchical, vertical relations of CLaSS have redefined collegial relationships between the principal and the teachers. The principals are the expert manager and the authority of the teacher to make professional contributions to broader educational issues has been diminished. Challenging CLaSS is further complicated because individual staff members know that they are implicit in CLaSS since they agreed to be part of it. The teachers' Personal Discourse model also demonstrates the levels of tolerance teachers have developed for the beliefs and understandings of CLaSS. Responses to major and minor dilemmas from the managerial framework may not always be considered appropriate by the teachers. Yet, the teachers do subjugate their personal beliefs and understandings in order to "trust" CLaSS, albeit with some reservation. Awareness of the professional and social consequences associated with dissent provides some teachers with sufficient motivation to avoid confrontation. The teachers' Personal Discourse model provides insights into how teachers use their own beliefs and understandings to identify inadequacies or "spaces" in the Public Discourse and navigate through and around those spaces in order to avoid the consequences of collisions between what they believe and what they are expected to believe. In effect, the teachers' Personal Discourse model demonstrates that the teachers place value on their own system of rationality and beliefs and understandings above and beyond those sanctioned by the dominant discourse of CLaSS.

Teachers' Practical Discourse model - we take action

The teachers' Practical Discourse model demonstrates that the teachers' personal beliefs and values about literacy and teaching are strong enough to enable them to resist and even defy the rationality, practices and structures prescribed by CLaSS. The conflict and collisions the teachers experience as they navigate between two competing systems provides evidence of

how teachers are willing to take action based on their own system of rationality, beliefs

and understandings identified in the teachers' Personal Discourse model. In the analysis of

the teachers' Practical Discourse model the teachers' preparedness to allow their own system

of rationality to direct their discussions and actions is evident. The teachers' professional

needs and questions are not always satisfied by the response given by CLaSS. Despite the

teacher's best attempts to navigate through and around the dominant Public Discourse,

ideological collisions do occur. The teachers' Personal Discourse model reveals the highly

personalized adjustments made by the teachers as they struggle to reconcile their own

professional beliefs and understandings with those of CLaSS. These adjustments are minor

enough to go unnoticed or are sufficiently disguised to maintain an appearance of conformity

and compliance. In making such adjustments it can be argued that the teachers are resisting or

even rejecting some of the fundamental characteristics of the new professional identity

sponsored by CLaSS. More importantly, such adjustments and associated patterns of teacher

behaviour indicate that the teachers have a strong sense of professional identity characterized

by their own personal beliefs and understandings, and teaching and life experiences that they

are not willing to compromise.

Competing systems of rationality and professional identity

The three levels of discourse used to analyze the teachers' comments demonstrate that the

teachers work out of two systems of rationality. One system of rationality is prescribed by

CLaSS and is evident in the teachers' Public Discourse model. The other system of

rationality is derived from an eclectic mix of the teachers' own beliefs and experiences and is

evident in the teachers' Personal and Practical Discourse model. The Public Discourse model

supports the theme raised by the principals and the CLaSS coordinators that the schools

needed to be saved from a flawed culture. The flawed culture was characterized by a lack of

accountability, ineffective teaching practices and a lack of consistency. The teachers provide

testimony confirming the capacity of CLaSS to save the school and themselves from the

ineffective and inefficient past. The teachers inform us that since implementing CLaSS

the school is a better school and they are now better teachers. This system of rationality and

the professional identity sponsored by CLaSS will be discussed further through an

examination of Managerial Discourse and entrepreneurial professional identities.

The Personal and Practical Discourse models provide insights into the dualism and tensions

that teachers experience on a daily basis. CLaSS deliberately sets out to define and dominate

the professional identity of teachers; to varying degrees the teachers in this study resist and

even reject characteristics of the new identity. This resistance and rejection of CLaSS is

indicative of the teachers' capacity to operate from a system of rationality other than that

engineered by CLaSS. The competing systems of rationality and the professional identity that

are sponsored through the teachers' Personal and Practical Discourse models will be

discussed further through Democratic Discourse and activist identities. Through examination

of the managerial and Democratic Discourse and the professional identities they sponsor,

insights into the costs involved with engaging CLaSS beyond the physical and human

resource issues start to emerge.

<div align="center">Managerial Discourse</div>

Public Discourse emanating from and around CLaSS is consistent with the discourse of

managerial professionalism (Sachs, 2001). Managerial Discourses, according to Sachs (2001)

are founded on the ideology that efficient management is the key to solving complex

problems. In order for institutions and individuals within them to be efficient, managers need

to be given autonomy to enforce the imperatives of the initiative. Consequently, others within

the institution have to accept and respond positively to the organizational structures and the

authority of the principal and those deputized by the principal. Patterns of teacher behaviour

expected by Managerial Discourse are clearly defined and closely monitored. Managerial

Discourse requires teachers to develop a professional identity that is characterized by the

advanced technical abilities that have proven to be consistent with the beliefs and

understandings of the initiative. The CLaSS discourse sets the limits on what can be said, thought and done in respect to the schools' initiatives. Following on, Managerial Discourse engineers institutional configurations that support the school as a technical enterprise. That is, tight managerial control over inputs will provide predictable and reliable outputs. Further to this, such tight managerial control is regarded as being inherently good and much kudos is afforded to the school for adopting this tight approach from external authorities and the general public.

Entrepreneurial professional identity

Managerial Discourse holds firmly to the notion that the practices of private enterprise can be applied to the public sector, especially education. This is expressed as input/output models of production. Managerial Discourse points to the efficient, responsible and accountable version of service as a new model of professional identity. This new model of professional identity is referred to by Menter (1997 in Sachs, 2001) as the entrepreneurial identity. The implication for education is, that:

> a new kind of teacher and new kinds of knowledge are "called up" by educational
>
> reform – a teacher who can maximize performance, who can set aside irrelevant
>
> principles, or out-moded social commitments, for whom excellences and improvement
>
> are the driving force of their practice. (Ball, 2003, p. 223)

Sachs (2001) argues that the result of operating from an entrepreneurial professional identity is a distinct change in the roles of, and relationship between, the principal and the individual teacher. The principal moves from being a senior colleague who guides and mentors teachers, to become an institutional manager who ensures compliance with the imperatives of the initiative at all cost. Concurrently teachers move from being an autonomous professionals to "designer teachers" (Sachs, 2001) who subjugate personal beliefs and understandings in order to demonstrate understandings of, and compliance with, policy imperatives and perform at

specified levels of efficiency and effectiveness regardless of personal beliefs and understandings.

<div align="center">Democratic Discourse</div>

The Public Discourse of CLaSS is so strong that personal and practical distancing from it is not easily expressed by the teachers. However, in some cases there is evidence of open defiance as teachers abandon CLaSS and revert to patterns of behaviour that are based on their own beliefs and understandings. The Discourses the teachers use to resist and defy CLaSS are described as socially critical perspectives on education and are referred to as democratic schooling (Apple & Beane, 1999; Goodman, 1992; Sachs, 2001) Democratic schooling requires a Discourse that leads to debate about curriculum that is responsive to concern for social justice and encourages the development of "critical literacies" (Fairclough, 1992). Such discourse is based on the teachers' own reflexivity. Democratic Discourse is in distinct contrast to Managerial Discourse. Managerial Discourses require strict adherence to a limited number of clearly defined policies, practices, structures, and beliefs of a particular initiative. Democratic Discourse attempts to demystify professional work through facilitating the participation in decision making by students, parents and others and seeks a broader understanding of education and how it operates (Apple, 1996).

Democratic Discourse requires institutional configurations that can tolerate levels of ambiguity and uncertainty. The institutional configurations of schools sponsored by Democratic Discourses allow school communities to construct critical responses to educational and social issues. Diversity and differences are valued and balanced with a shared purpose. The institutional configurations needed for Democratic Discourse are founded on a vision that "extends beyond purposes such as improving the school's climate or enhancing student esteem" (Apple & Beane, 1999, p. 12) and require teachers to be activist.

Democratic Discourse and activist professional identity

Democratic Discourse has an emphasis on collaborative and cooperative action among teachers and other stake holders. Democratic Discourse suggests that teachers have a responsibility to the wider community that extends beyond than the single classroom and includes contributions to the school, the system and other students (Brennan 1996). Goodman (1989 in Smyth et al., 2000) contends that teachers need to work with in the tensions that exist between "individuality and community". The individualistic goals of neo-liberalism and neo-conservativism are balanced by values of compassion (Greene, 1991) and civic responsibility (Sholle, 1992).

For Sachs (2001) Democratic Discourse leads to communities of practice. Such communities of practice determine shared beliefs and understandings through community building conversations and activities. Such conversations and activities are characterized by debate and conjecture concerning educational issues, initiatives and individual opinions. From Democratic Discourse emerge activist professional identities. Activist professionals are not anarchist as they are cognizant of their responsibilities to external authority. However, they are committed to critical analysis and pursuing equity on a number of educational and social levels. An activist professional identity allows teachers to seek to ensure that institutional barriers and arrangements that impede or deny students access to educational opportunities are identified, challenged and eliminated. Activist professional identities are motivated by what Apple and Beane (1999) describe as a deep care for young people that require teachers to guard and protect them from all forms of inequalities in education and society.

Applying pressure to teachers

The Managerial Discourse concerning CLaSS, as expressed by the principals, is strongly supported by the CLaSS coordinators. Indeed, the teachers themselves are also implicit in the Managerial Discourse. The CLaSS coordinators as the operational face of CLaSS are in concert with the principals, they ensure CLaSS is implemented with pressure, precision and

discipline. The CLaSS coordinators meet weekly with the Principal and report on the level of compliance among the staff. A "no-nonsense" approach is taken when dealing with teachers concerning the implementation of CLaSS, and CLaSS coordinators do not hesitate to use their authority to apply pressure to teachers that show signs of resistance. Principals and CLaSS coordinators are adamant that through a total commitment to CLaSS, teachers will recognize the inherent truths about teaching and teachers' professionalism that the beliefs and understandings of CLaSS represent. The Managerial Discourse constantly refers to the need for the school to be saved and that only a firm commitment to CLaSS will save the school. This salvation offered by CLaSS is pursued with a single-minded focus. Rather than point to the previous flawed culture of the school as the principals did, the CLaSS coordinators point to how much the school has improved. All resources are managed in such a way as to ensure that CLaSS is implemented smoothly and all threats are removed. The institutional configurations of the school are engineered in such a way that the teachers' patterns of behaviour are clearly defined and tightly controlled. The purpose of controlling the teachers' behaviour is to attempt to define the teacher's professional identity.

There's no going back

The CLaSS coordinators are in constant contact and communication with the teachers and claim that after being involved with CLaSS and operating from the new professional identity, they would not go back to the "old ways". Interestingly, the CLaSS coordinators express doubts and concerns about the schools' ability to maintain control over teacher behaviour without the commitment of key personnel within the school and strong public allegiances to CLaSS. The CLaSS coordinators are concerned that unless tight control over teachers' behaviour is maintained the new professional identity will degenerate and be lost; teachers may start thinking about teaching and learning in the 'old' and 'uninformed' ways as they did in the time before CLaSS.

Reluctant compliance

The teachers' Public Discourse model reinforces the fact that the teachers are not hapless bystanders pressured into submission by the dominant Managerial Discourse and the authority of the principals and CLaSS coordinators; CLaSS is not something that is done to them. Teachers make significant contributions to the Public Discourse that dominates the school. However, contrary to the position taken by the principals and CLaSS coordinators, the teachers do not totally subjugate all their beliefs and understandings in favour of CLaSS. The Personal and Practical Discourse models gives testimony to the daily struggles and tensions that the teachers experience as they make sense of what it is to teach and be a teacher. The Practical Discourse model provides evidence of reluctant compliance and allows teachers to frame fundamental questions about what is to teach, what it is to be a teacher and the function of schools.

Conforming to imperatives

Managerial and Democratic Discourses sponsor the development of particular patterns of teacher behaviour which are reinforced by particular institutional configurations. Managerial Discourses require institutional configurations that emphasize hierarchical power structures, technical correctness and patterns of professional behaviour that conform to the imperatives of the enterprise. Such behaviours have been described as entrepreneurial. The entrepreneurial professional continually searches for viable applications of compliance to satisfy the imperatives of the enterprise. The teachers' Personal and Practical Discourse models constitute Democratic Discourses. Patterns of professional behaviour demonstrating consistent Democratic Discourse have been described as activist professional identities. Democratic Discourses require institutional configurations that provide opportunities for communities of learners to construct responses to education issues that are sensitive to local contexts as well as external demands.

Living up to expectations

Managerial Discourse and Democratic Discourse represent two belief systems that compete to define and control patterns of teachers' behaviour and the relationships that exist within the school. Ball (2003) contends that

> On the one hand, teachers are concerned with ensuring that they are seen to demonstrate practices that are within the metrics of accountability as expressed in the Managerial Discourse and on the other the level to which these metrics distort their personal beliefs and understandings (p. 223).

That is, the teachers' Public Discourse model demonstrates that teachers are willing to display the professional behaviours that are expected of them by CLaSS. The teachers' behaviour can be controlled. The teachers' Personal and Practical Discourse models provide evidence of the teachers' individual and collective capacity to maintain their own beliefs and understandings. The teachers resist the efforts of CLaSS to distort their own beliefs and understandings.

More than compliance

The dominant Managerial Discourse of CLaSS demands more of teachers than just compliance to a particular set of strategies and procedures. CLaSS is designed to ensure that the teachers operate out of one clearly defined system of rationality or single set of "shared beliefs and understandings." Through an amalgam of Managerial Discourses, specific institutional configurations and entrepreneurial professional identities CLaSS defines what it is to teach and to be a teacher. Acceptance of these definitions of service and associated behaviours are regarded as absolutely necessary if schools are to be saved from their inefficient and ineffective past and ensured of a success filled future. The Managerial Discourse of CLaSS simultaneously defines and resolves complex educational issues and dilemmas for teachers. These definitions and resolutions are not always accepted by the teachers. While the teachers publicly agree with the Managerial Discourse they also draw

upon democratic education discourse in an attempt to reconcile their patterns of professional behaviour. There is evidence of teachers attempting to make sense of what they are doing through talking to others about their teaching experiences, sharing their knowledge with others, and respecting the contributions of others, beyond the ideological parameters of CLaSS.

The Managerial Discourse of CLaSS is very powerful, and initiates and requires the development of particular institutional configurations that make possible its implementation and purposefully eliminates the conditions required for other Discourses to gain credibility or even to be heard. The themes of competing discourses, teacher professional identity, and institutional configurations will be explored in more depth in the coming chapters.

Summary

Reducing education issues and dilemmas into their simplest definition and engineering precise solutions based on models of efficiency and accountability are intrinsic characteristics of Managerial Discourse. Schools and teachers are expected to accept the beliefs and understandings of CLaSS, pledge their fidelity and demonstrate professional behaviours that reflect total compliance. After acknowledging that they operated from a flawed culture, schools develop a clear desire to create a new image of the school and a new professional identity for the teachers to distance themselves from the past. Schools respond wholeheartedly to the reality that CLaSS presents. Responses to this reality involve accepting that certain rules are required and need to be followed regardless of their appropriateness. For advocates of CLaSS it simply makes sense to define practices and action through focusing on the beliefs and understandings of CLaSS exclusively. Schools are attracted to CLaSS because, through Managerial Discourse, it articulates the complexities of the challenges facing schools into a few manageable problems to which schools can easily relate and provides a proven and accessible remedy.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Features of CLaSS

In this chapter, the aim is to bring together the findings of the research and broader

contemporary issues of schooling and teacher professional identity, Managerial and

Democratic Discourse, and institutional configurations with particular reference to Popkewitz

et al., (1982) and Sachs (2001). The first section of this chapter summarizes the

characteristics of CLaSS by highlighting the "selling" points that have made CLaSS attractive

to schools and schools systems. As informed by the CLaSS documentation and supported by

the principals and CLaSS coordinators, CLaSS "sells" itself on a number of basic tenets such

as: efficient management solves any problem; new roles and identities need to be developed

within schools; particular realities need to be asserted; prescriptions need to placed on what

can be done; limits need to placed on what can be said; actions need to justified by social

logic generated from a school's culture. Through examining how the characteristics of

CLaSS are enacted the particular institutional configuration of CLaSS schools can be

identified and explored. Through such examination it will become evident that the powerful

Managerial Discourse of CLaSS requires school communities to give something more of

themselves than reform based on adherence to rational principles.

The second section outlines the three broad, but different, institutional configurations that

characterized the six IGE schools studied by Popkewitz et al., (1982) for *The Myth of

Educational Reform: a Study of School Responses to Educational Reform*. In their evaluation

of Individual Guided Education (IGE) schools, Popkewitz et al. (1982) identified three

institutional configurations. The first is technical schooling in which techniques became the

focus of school activity. The second is constructive schooling (in which collaborative ideals

dominate). The third configuration is illusory schooling (in which activities and purpose seem

unrelated). After exploring the attributes of each of these institutional configurations, a third

section of this chapter will examine their relevance to Managerial and Democratic Discourse,

and the values and practices as referred to by Sachs (2001). The final section of this

chapter examines contemporary configurations of illusory schooling and how they relate to

CLaSS.

<div align="center">Section One - Characteristics of CLaSS</div>

As demonstrated in earlier chapters, the rhetoric and logical structure of neo-liberal and neo-

conservative ideology as expressed through Managerial Discourse is designed to dominate

CLaSS. The promises of stability and measurable progress offered by CLaSS, as expressed

through Managerial Discourse, are 'scientifically based" and therefore seemingly

indisputable. The beliefs and understandings that emanate from Managerial Discourse create

a social logic that is used to promote and defend CLaSS, and have an overwhelming effect on

schools, teachers and schools systems. The principals and CLaSS coordinators are adamant

that "good" teachers readily believe in CLaSS as a reasonable and rational solution to the

schools perceived problems. Through the promotion of particular beliefs and understandings,

CLaSS "sells" itself to schools as the only reasonable course of action for schools to take in

response to the demands placed upon the school.

Efficient management solves any problem

CLaSS promotes the imperative that all schools have a civic responsibility to be efficient,

effective and thus accountable. Lyotard (1979) explains that the optimizing of effectiveness

and efficiency is reliant on the relationship between outputs and inputs. For Managerial

Discourse accountability, effectiveness and efficiency are served well by standardized testing,

common teaching practices, and the measuring and reporting of students' growth in literacy.

CLaSS promotes efficient management as being characterized by decisive action that brings

about qualitative uniformity in teachers' behaviour and student performance. Through

effective and efficient management of all resources, including the teachers, the productivity

targets of CLaSS will be attained. Implementing CLaSS means all actions can now be

considered "accountable", and the school is saved from its previous wasteful and flawed

culture. The regulative regimes of CLaSS have implications and consequences for the roles, social interactions and professional identity of the teachers.

Call for new roles

The entrepreneurial identity encourages members of the organization to represent and make meaning of themselves and their work within the practices, structures and beliefs of the enterprise. Ball (2003) explains that entrepreneurial identities place greater value on the imperatives of the enterprise than any previously held notions of service. Bernstein (1996) suggests that in such instances "contract replaces covenant" (p. 169).

Within CLaSS, principals tend to move from being senior colleagues to taking on the role of institutional managers "involved with instilling the attitude and culture within which workers feel accountable, and at that same time committed and personally invested in the organization" (Ball, 2003, p. 219). As institutional managers, principals and CLaSS coordinators define the practices and structures that guide teachers toward acceptable levels of technical correctness. They enforce the contract they have with CLaSS to such a degree that they can be regarded as "technicians of transformations" (May, 1994, p. 619). Principals regard improving the technical aspects of teachers' behaviour through the implementation of CLaSS to save the school from the deficiencies and excesses of past teaching practices. Only after implementing CLaSS do teachers finally know what is expected of them. Teachers' work can be expected to intensify with a focus on efficient and well understood procedures which give certainty to the tasks teachers are required to perform. Time which in the past was spent deciding on which program to adopt, how much of the program to adopt, and how to implement new programs can now be dedicated to CLaSS. The real work of teachers is to improve student outcomes through improving teaching. According to CLaSS, only improved teaching practice as prescribed by CLaSS will lead to improved literacy standards. CLaSS provides tight boundaries in which teachers must develop particular expertise and attain excellence and so redefines how teachers practice individually and collectively. Ball (2003)

explains that "…we may not be expected to care about each other but we are expected to care about performances and the performance of the team and the organization…. We are expected to be passionate about excellence" (p. 224).Through such redefinition, Foucault (1979 as cited in Ball, 2003) advocates the position that managers as "technicians of behaviour" ensure teachers become ". . . docile and capable" (p. 219).

Ultimately, CLaSS encourages teachers to take on an entrepreneurial professional identity. In order to gain professional credibility from within the school and the wider school community teachers are required to present and represent themselves using the prescribed language and demonstrating behaviours and attitudes that reflect consistency with the correct technical implementation and understanding of CLaSS. As mentioned earlier, sometimes for some teachers, the modification of the beliefs and understandings can be enhancing and empowering. At other times, unable to relinquish their own beliefs and understandings, the teachers struggle with, or are unwilling to accept, the definition of what it means to be a teacher as defined by CLaSS.

Fabricating particular realities

CLaSS asserts a particular reality and ensures that schools have only a few clearly articulated and achievable priorities. Advocates of CLaSS point to the danger of imposing multiple priorities on schools. Leaving schools to work out their own priorities is symptomatic of the deficient and defunct practices of the past. Ball (2000) argues that such managerial practices involve the fabrication of representations or versions of the educational issues and dilemmas that schools face which are driven by the priorities of and constraints of the policy environment. CLaSS advocates that only a "narrow window" of opportunity exists to improve students' literacy attainment levels. As a result of this perceived urgency, the teachers need to be protected from being distracted from the core daily duties associated with the technical aspects of literacy teaching. The Managerial Discourse of CLaSS develops into a compulsory point of reference for all school actions and decisions: there is no sense in

discussing or pursuing alternatives. Improving literacy attainment rates is of paramount importance; every other consideration is considered to be secondary to this. The teachers' role and the purpose of the school are clearly defined and are focused on specific technical classroom practicalities. In a sense, the reality CLaSS presents teachers is a fabrication of educational accountability and school effectiveness (Ball, 2004). Further, Ball (2004) explains that "Fabrications are versions of an organization (or person) which do not exist – they are not 'outside the truth' but neither do they render simply true or direct accounts - they are produced purposefully in order 'to be accountable'. Truthfulness is not the point – the point is their effectiveness. . . ." (p. 224).

Prescriptions on what is to be done

Certain procedures are legitimized by CLaSS. Schools need to ensure that class sizes are as small as possible. Teachers must gather data and use it to establish four instruction groups within the class. Learning experiences must follow the prescribed "whole group-small group-whole group" sequence, and nine specific teaching strategies must be integrated into literacy activities. Advocates of CLaSS claim that these non-negotiable practices and structures have been shown to be successful in a wide range of schools and that there is no need to engage practices other than those sanctioned by CLaSS. Principals know what they are looking for when they go into a classroom. CLaSS coordinators are in daily classroom contact with teachers and regularly meet with the principal to report their observations and take action to ensure all teachers are demonstrating compliance. In this sense, the principals and CLaSS coordinators are trained by CLaSS to become, according to Jeffrey (2002), the "examiners and authoritative coaches" (p. 544) constantly assessing and modifying teachers' behaviour in terms of delivery and performance according to the imperatives of CLaSS. Alternative approaches are discouraged and guarded against. There is only one path to be followed if the school is serious and committed to enhancing children's literacy and improving the school.

Limits on what can be said

Teachers' professional discourse is both defined and strongly regulated by CLaSS. It has to be if teachers are to remain single-minded about their role and responsibilities. Regulating professional discourse ensures that teachers are saved from the distractions that characterized the inefficient practices of the past and are then "free" to concentrate on the important and defined issue at hand and improve their teaching by modifying their beliefs and understandings to ensure student success. Teachers' discourse is constantly monitored by CLaSS coordinators through team meetings. From the principal and coordinators' perspective there is no need to even entertain discussion regarding concerns about CLaSS or possible alternative approaches to literacy. Principals noted a change in the type of conversation taking place among staff after the engagement of CLaSS. From the Principals' perspective, language used by the staff became precise, technically correct, and indicative of the teachers' new professional identity. When considering the discursive interventions that accompany educational reform, the use of new language becomes important. As Ball (2003) suggests "To be relevant and up-to- date one needs to talk about oneself and others and think about actions and relations in new ways"(p. 218). As we have heard earlier from the principals, "wishy washy" discussions on professional issues no longer occur. Discussions that the teachers have that are not directly connected to measuring or improving students' outcomes are regarded as non productive and become redundant. Advocates of CLaSS point to acceptance of the new language as a clear indicator that the school is on its way to success. However, it remains that the limitations on what can be said reduce the teachers' opportunity to account for themselves on their own terms. Following on, it is argued that placing limitations on what can and cannot be said restricts discussions to a series of responses to "external requirements and specific targets" (Ball, 2003. p. 222).

Social logic defines practices and action

The Managerial Discourse embedded within the school provides a social logic that drives the day-to-day practice of the teachers. The regulative controls and pragmatics of CLaSS as expressed through the Managerial Discourse are specifically designed to ensure that the imperatives of CLaSS dominate and direct all actions and thinking of the teachers. Within sites of education reform "new roles and subjectivities are produced as teachers are reworked as producers/providers, educational entrepreneurs and managers and are subject to regular appraisal and review and performance comparisons" (Ball, 2003, p. 218). Any concerns the teachers raise that are not satisfied by the social logic of CLaSS are considered to be minor and the areas of concern need to be endured and tolerated in order to give effect to the school's commitment to literacy improvement. If success is not forthcoming, the program is not being correctly implemented. Broader issues relating to literacy including problematic aspects of literacy and assessment which are not sanctioned by CLaSS are specifically excluded from team meetings. CLaSS creates a predictable and supportive environment for teachers who have learned and accepted what they are supposed to do. Such action involves what Derber (1982) call the "the ideological co-optation of the moral and ethical consciousness of teachers" (cited in Smyth et al., 2000, p. 86).

Sites of Struggle

Analysis of the data demonstrates that, within the four focus schools, competing discourses have emerged over the professional identity of teachers. This study confirms that proponents of CLaSS are confident that its various control technologies and efficient management practices offer a set of scientifically based principles which enable schools to overcome the problems they face. Through its insistent calls for new roles, its fabrication of new realities, its prescriptions on what can be done, and its limits on what can be said, CLaSS defines teachers' practices and demonstrates in practical ways how teachers' professional behaviours can be regulated and controlled.

CLaSS coordinators strive to ensure that teachers take on the beliefs and understandings that characterize teachers' professional identity within CLaSS. The CLaSS coordinators comments' indicating that teachers' personal beliefs and understandings can only be contained, at best, within certain sometimes fragile parameters is significant. The coordinators, as we have read, indicate their concerns about CLaSS "falling over" if the principal loosens his commitment and "backs off".

Questions and issues relating to what it means to teach and what it means to be a teacher are not part of the dominant discourse. It is evident that controlling the teachers' professional behaviour does not ensure that a shared system of rationality, beliefs and understandings will exist among the teachers. However, containment of teachers' beliefs and understandings within the parameters that CLaSS offers is an acceptable position to Hill and Crévola (2001). CLaSS is designed to initiate and maintain significant change within a school's culture. For this to occur the Managerial Discourse promotes something beyond influencing teachers' beliefs and understandings. Despite the rhetoric of establishing a "shared belief" among teachers, CLaSS is primarily concerned with ensuring that the rationality it presents is the only acceptable rationality for all teachers; there is no other way forward.

The implementation of control technologies used to define teachers' professionalism within CLaSS may at times be extraordinarily powerful and even ruthless. It is well established that CLaSS distinguishes itself from other reform programs through its insistence that authentic reform requires the adoption of a single set of "rational" beliefs and understandings that shape the pedagogical practices and structures of a school. Through its discourse CLaSS provides teachers with knowledge designed to enable them understand and comply with what is expected of them professionally. This knowledge is predetermined by the experts external to the school, this knowledge is not contestable, and this knowledge is fixed. Popkewitz (1998) argues that, "With knowledge fixed, the soul is the site of the struggle for norms of achievement, competence and salvation" (p. 28). As soon as CLaSS has won the argument

and debate about what should be done and how teachers should behave, the struggle about what is to be believed is over. Controlling teachers' beliefs and understandings and determining the system of rationality that they are expected to operate from is central to this struggle. The struggle between Managerial and Democratic Discourses is a struggle for the soul of professionalism (Hanlon, 1998). Ball (2003) describes such struggles between competing discourses as a "struggle over the teacher's soul" (p. 217). CLaSS is more than a design for improving literacy outcomes and more than a design to initiate whole school reform. Ultimately CLaSS proves to be an effective control technology in regard to teachers' professional behaviour. CLaSS exercises significant influences on the nature of schooling and the professional identity of teachers. The Managerial Discourse of CLaSS takes on institutional characteristics that are more than simply "doing things differently" (Hill & Crévola, 2001 p. 7). The mission of CLaSS can be construed as prescribing the salvation of the school.

The need to provide salvation is a constant theme within the discourse of CLaSS. This current study argues that CLaSS can be read as a salvation narrative based on defining and controlling the beliefs and "souls" of the teachers in order to satisfy the imperatives of schooling as determined by CLaSS and its supporting authorities. Of course, it can equally be said that Democratic Discourse also promotes an alternative salvation narrative. The salvation narrative of the democratic schools is based on ensuring that all teachers have opportunities and time to explore their beliefs and understandings within a community of learners. In the democratic school, the community of learners is a community of equals, at least as far as teachers are concerned. The salvation narrative of the democratic school is concerned with questioning the requests of external authorities, not just satisfying them.

However, for CLaSS the individual teacher is not important as an individual, but vitally important in a collective sense as contributing to the greater good and assisting the mechanism for change (Jeffrey 2002, p. 544). Within CLaSS, individual teachers are both

necessary in this collective sense but also dispensable when, as individuals, they stand in

the way of approved directions for change. CLaSS offers schools a single and precise

pathway to salvation. This metaphor will be explored further in a subsequent chapter.

The Managerial Discourse of CLaSS promotes particular institutional configurations which

are common in schools that adopt reform programs. Popkewitz et al.'s (1982) study of

Individually Guided Education (IGE) helps to elucidate and define these institutional

configurations.

<div align="center">Section Two - Moving beyond assumptions</div>

For Popkewitz et al. (1982), the history of reform suggests that its effects cannot be

uncritically accepted. Regardless of the pedigree of the third age programs and the benevolent

intentions of the specific authors, consideration must be given to "unforeseen, unplanned, and

unwilled consequences" (Popkewitz et al., 1982, p.180). Further, Popkewitz et al. (1982)

demonstrate that intervention is permeated with unanticipated and sometimes undesired

consequences. Their study suggests that there is a distinction between the intent and effect of

school reform efforts. The curriculum reform paradigm upon which IGE was based is built

upon certain assumptions about educational change and reform. The Popkewitz et al. (1982)

study demonstrated that the assumptions that IGE was built upon, while reflecting the

understandings and beliefs of those who designed the initiative, did not ensure that the

anticipated outcomes were realized.

Placing rhetoric to the side

The enduring framework offered by Popkewitz et al. (1982) establishes a critical lens to look

at programs generated by any stage of school reform, that is, to ask what lies beyond the

rhetoric and to examine the life of teachers. Through examining the lived experience of

teachers through the typology offered by Popkewitz et al. (1982), a broader perspective of the

consequences of the innovation can be examined. The focus of this current study is concerned

with examining the consequences of engaging reform beyond determining the successes or otherwise of the innovation in regard to its primary goals and objectives.

Through focusing their analysis on the relations between the assumptions, expectations and language of the reform program and the assumptions, language and behaviour of teachers as they went about their work, Popkewitz et al. (1982) provide a powerful description of the lived reality of school life. They provide a framework that helps explain how the institutional characteristics of a school are influenced by the ideology of reform programs and how that influence in turn filters into and interplays with school leadership, classroom instruction, teacher identity and school culture. The framework provides the current study with a tool to define and organize the teachers' work-stories into particular Discourses.

The Popkewitz et al. (1982) study is relevant to this present study because many of the characteristics of (IGE) are consistent with the beliefs and understandings of CLaSS. For example, CLaSS, like IGE, places value on the gathering of data both as a measurement tool and as a way of determining instructional groups. In turn, further interpretation of the data helps decide which predetermined task the teacher should apply to each instructional group. The idea of ensuring students reach predetermined levels of mastery within given criteria is also a feature of CLaSS. However, there are some significant differences between IGE and CLaSS. Hill and Crévola (2001) contend that the need for accountability has increased significantly since the 1980s, and that success in literacy and numeracy should be the primary concern of schools, further highlighting the role of data collection as a key feature of school reform. While IGE and CLaSS are generated out of different ages of reform, the conceptual framework Popkewitz et al. (1982) developed and applied in order to identify key principles on which schools operate is of great significance to this study. The theoretical framework of Popkewitz et al. (1982) remains an important and valid tool for examining the wider impact of third age reform initiatives.

Institutional Configurations

This section will outline three broad but different institutional configurations that characterized the six IGE schools studied by Popkewitz et al. (1982). The practices that are associated with neo-liberal ideas and the subsequent impact of these practices on the formation of the principles which govern patterns of behaviour and the production of identity (Popkewitz, 2001) are important to the current study. Using the institutional configuration of schools it is possible to identify the influence of particular ideologies on teachers' patterns of behaviour.

These institutional configurations were intended to identify common institutional characteristics of schools. They were labelled technical, constructive and illusory. The configurations are intended to identify key underlying principles on which schools operate. They are not intended to represent a continuum. For example, while it may appear that Popkewitz et al. (1982) are themselves more comfortable with the underlying principles of constructive schools, it is not correct to assume that constructive schools are "good' or "better" schools while technical schools and illusory schools are flawed.

Through the comparison of technical, constructive and illusory schools the influence of ideology on the meaning of daily school activities in the focus school becomes apparent and allows a clearer exploration of the ideological underpinnings of CLaSS. In this study, the teachers' Public Discourse model points to institutional configurations and specific patterns of teacher behaviour that focus on efficiency, effectiveness and technical correctness. Yet, the teachers' Personal and Practical Discourse models point to the institutional configurations and specific patterns of teacher behaviour that tolerate high levels of uncertainty and construct local responses to problems. The configurations are extremely useful to this final section of this study.

It is important to note that Popkewitz et al. (1982) did not intend these descriptors to be absolute as each school reveals facets of each configuration. As with the schools in the

Popkewitz study, the schools in this study of CLaSS have characteristics of each

descriptor. As Popkewitz et al. (1982) explain, it is possible to find characteristics of each of

the three configurations of schooling in any, or all, of the schools. Nevertheless, the schools

were labelled according to the most dominant characteristic.

Technical Schooling

Of the six schools studied by Popkewitz et al. (1982) three were identified as technical

schools. Popkewitz et al. (1982) went on to identify five characteristics of technical schools

that contributed to the social logic that dominated the technical school and serve as a basis for

all action within the school.

Table 5.

Characteristics of technical schools as identified by Popkewitz et al. (1982)

1.	A curriculum development process dominated by assumptions of rational planning, and resulting in a professional search for efficiency which emphasizes intellectual certainty, standardisation and accountability.
2.	The organization of classroom discourse, schoolwork, and social interaction in such a way as to sustain and legitimize routines and technical procedures.
3.	The creation of a warm, supportive psychological environment that makes it pleasant for pupils to participate in the routine of school life.
4.	The assignment of peripheral status to ambiguity, creativity, and nonstandardised learning, which are not institutionally sanctioned even when they are personally valued by teachers.
5.	Professional and community support of standardisation and efficiency as normal and reasonable values in the conduct of schooling.

These five characteristics of technical schools appear to be readily applicable to the

characteristics of the four CLaSS schools in this current study. Current neo-liberal

assumptions concerning rational planning, professional efficiency, intellectual certainty,

standardisation, and accountability appear to be sympathetic to the Popkewitz et al. (1982)

idea of technical schooling. These assumptions feature strongly in CLaSS. CLaSS is

legitimized through the social logic that dominates the discussions and decision making of

those within the school. School communities gain a sense of security through the certainty

provided by the rationally based routines of CLaSS. Literacy attainment is the central goal of

CLaSS schools. In achieving this goal the school community can feel safe in the confidence that the whole community is taking the best course of action to make safe its children's futures. Everyone within the CLaSS school speaks the same language. There are standardised ways of thinking, speaking, acting, and teaching and learning. Technical schooling is an appropriate descriptor for the institutional configurations of CLaSS.

It may be argued that current emphasis on external accountability is even greater today in Australia and the USA than in the 1980s when IGE was operating. However, the point remains that a strong emphasis on accountability reinforces the values of technical schooling. The Popkewitz study offers two other categories for describing schools and schooling.

Constructive Schools

Popkewitz et al. (1982) argue that constructive schooling is quite different from technical schooling. As the name suggests, constructive schools construct their approach to schooling using critical reflection as a principle tool. They are characterized by high levels of community collaboration and reliance on the professional judgment of teachers to construct the curriculum and pedagogical ideologies that drive all aspects of school life. The following table characterizes constructive schooling as drawn from Apple and Beane (1999).

Table 6.

1.	Characteristics of constructive schools as identified by Apple and Beane (1995).
2.	Belief that children learn through participation, interpersonal skills are seen as the priority. Self discovery and multiple ways of knowing are emphasized.
3.	Teachers exercise control through appealing to students' interests.
4.	Pedagogical practices are supported by the community.
5.	Children's activities are monitored to assess the underlying attitudes and emotions that give purpose to their intellectual and social activities.
6.	Debate, reflection and controversy are important elements of school life.

Constructive schools may implement initiatives like IGE. However, a constructive school taking on IGE would interrogate the ideology of the initiative and apply only certain aspects that would suit the school's direction. Indeed, one would expect constructive schools to take seriously the need to adapt and re-shape structural elements of adopted programs to suit local needs and the culture of the school. Knowledge, work and professionalism are developed and contained within the constructive school.

Some teachers in CLaSS schools appear to say things that indicate that they see themselves as "constructive" teachers. Some principals might describe their schools as constructive schools and at the leading edge of reform. But, it is difficult to reconcile the tight structure that CLaSS requires and the limited opportunities for professional criticism and adaptation permitted in CLaSS schools with the underlying principles of critical reflection and provisionality that characterize constructive schools. On the other hand, some principals and CLaSS coordinators would look at the Popkewitz et al. (1982) definition of constructive schools and say, "That is not the way we want to go to. The way forward has been charted out for us. We have agreed on what has to be done. Discussion and debate are finished. We have to get on with the job. There is only one way to save the school". Where Popkewitz et al. (1982) see great value in teachers exercising professional critique and independence as they exercise their professional judgment, these CLaSS leaders would be concerned that these same qualities are likely to lead to ambiguity and fragmentation of the school's ideology and direction. For some principals and CLaSS coordinators, the values that Popkewitz et al. (1982) identify in constructive schools are not values that they would endorse as core values. This point will be discussed later.

Illusory Schooling

Illusory schools have the appearance of regular functioning school. That is, for the casual observer such schools present all the expected external and internal characteristics of a functioning school. However, these schools are unsuccessful schools and represent many of

the characteristics and behaviours CLaSS was designed to remedy. Popkewitz et al.

(1982) are quite clear that illusory schooling is not the same as dysfunctional schooling where

one can see poor leadership, bad teaching and a fractured school community. The teaching

program in an illusory school is presented as a normal program. Illusory schools appear to be

organized and purposeful. That is, student attendance is regular, teachers are committed,

administration is efficient, and the curriculum is followed. However, there is limited success.

Illusory schools are simply not delivering in regard to student outcomes and a lack of success

is prevalent for many students, while the situation is seen as acceptable to school leaders,

teachers and the wider community. This lack of success and its subsequent acceptance

according to Popkewitz et al. (1982) is an inevitable result of an ideology of knowledge and

success to which these schools are committed.

Illusory schools are characterized by three social messages emanating out of the rituals and

practices evident within them. The following table presents the characteristics of illusory

schools drawn from Apple and Beane (1999).

Table 7.

Characteristics of illusory schools drawn from Apple and Beane (1999).

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1. Illusory schools promote the idea that there is an unquestioned hierarchy of knowledge and skills divided into definable categories and that mastery of these rules and content is necessary for the successful participation in the social world. Teaching and learning practices at illusory schools focus on providing opportunities for the students to understand and master the rules and content pertaining to each category.

2. It is accepted that a large degree of social and cultural capital is needed to access the sacred rules and protocols mentioned above. This social and cultural capital is not available to most of the students of illusory schools. In Illusory schools, these categories of knowledge are inaccessible. Ultimately, there is an expectation that the majority of students of illusory schools will fail to master the content of the sacred knowledge. This failure of the student is not the responsibility of the school or the teachers. Indeed, the Illusory school presents extremely strong images that the institution is operating at optimal levels. Student failure is solely the result of the inadequacies of the students and the community from which they come. This is an acceptable fact of life for the illusory school; the school is competent - the failing students are not.

3. Illusory schools have a powerful consequence in low income communities. Only a few students will experience success, most children will not gain anything from the illusory school that will enhance their daily life as mature members of the community. Illusory schools legitimize a particular aspect of moral conduct and the direction of dominant elements in society.

Illusory schooling as described above seems inappropriate for describing CLaSS. Illusory schools present images of substance and worth but are, in reality, simply going through the motions of educational provision. CLaSS schools may see themselves as having once being illusory schools. They may claim that some characteristics of illusory schooling could have been applied to them before they engaged CLaSS. For the schools in this study, engaging CLaSS has allowed them to identify the illusory characteristics of their past practice and culture. Once these illusory characteristics are identified, schools can reform by initiating structures and practices that eliminate them and ensure that they do not return. In a sense,

configurations of illusory schools are what CLaSS schools want to be saved from becoming. The clearest distinguishing feature of CLaSS schools is the insistence that, through the engagement of correct processes, all children can be successful learners and CLaSS can demonstrate their success. CLaSS schools are committed to demonstrating success and therefore they cannot be described as illusory schools. However critics of CLaSS may draw comparisons between CLaSS and illusory schools and this will be explored shortly.

Section Three - Contemporary Configurations of Technical Schooling

Advocates of CLaSS might acknowledge that CLaSS schools share the same institutional configurations as technical schools. In some senses it would be appropriate to refer to CLaSS schools as technical schools. Neo-liberal ideology has gathered intensity since 1982. Over the last 20 years, the dominance of neo-liberal discourse in government and education policies has been noted by many educational researchers (Gee & Lankshear, 1995; Gertwitz, Ball & Bowe, 1995). With the neo-liberal ideological domination of the educational landscape it is not surprising that technical configurations of schools have greater support and more popularity than ever before.

In response to the domination of Managerial Discourses, configurations of technical schooling have consistently appeared in school reform over the last 30 years and have been the focus of analysis and criticism. According to Sachs (2001) and others (Marginson, 1997; McCarthy & Dimitriades, 2000; Smyth et al., 2001) contemporary configurations of technical schooling take on the labels of "managerialism" or "managerial professionalism." Managerial professionalism, according to Sachs (2001, p. 156) "is particularly distinguishable by imperatives for accountability". Technical school configurations or managerial professionalism and its associated discourse, influence the development of entrepreneurial identities (Sachs 2001).

Managerialism and designer teachers

A characteristic of the entrepreneurial identity is the noticeable consistency of conceptions and practice of those who identify with it (Sachs, 2001). Within CLaSS the need for accountability creates a compelling desire for teachers to have consistency in practice and thinking. Such consistency leads to the development of "designer teachers" who, according to Sachs (2001, p. 156) "identify strongly with the efficient, responsible and accountable version of service". Certainly many of the CLaSS teachers in this study demonstrated high levels of compliance to CLaSS, and readily saw themselves (and wished to be seen by others) as "performing at high levels of effectiveness and efficiency" (Sachs, 2001, p. 156). CLaSS is focused on compliance and performance in regard to the professional practice of teachers. At any time, teachers using CLaSS are expected to be accountable for their teaching practices and student performance. While it can be argued that this is true of any teacher, CLaSS expects teachers refer to specific data gathered on learners to justify any particular lesson. At any time they are expected to answer, and are assumed to be able to answer, the question, "Why are you doing this?" The specific classroom management activities in which teachers are engaged are not prescribed by CLaSS. Sometimes it was said by CLaSS coordinators that teachers can do what they like, provided they can use the CLaSS rationale to explain why they have chosen a particular activity for the children. An example would be: "Here are the data which indicate a particular deficiency. These are the activities I have chosen in the light of the data." "I talked about the data with the CLaSS coordinator and/or the other CLaSS teachers." "What the children are now doing is part of the small group (or whole group) activity." This is how teachers are expected to justify any performance to the principal, the CLaSS coordinator or the CLaSS team. Where there might be a question about what the teacher is doing or how well the activity is aligned with agreed CLaSS practices, the principal or the CLaSS coordinator is able to say "Let's refer this back to the weekly meeting". The

teachers' performances are open to appraisal and evaluation by the wider community. It is important to note that the pedagogical issues raised are reduced to a managerial debate reinforcing the hierarchical nature of the relationship between the principal and the teacher.

Collaboration and Cooperation

According to Sachs (2001), the entrepreneurial teacher works privately and in isolation. Findings from the current study disagree with Sachs on this point. Her focus on the individualistic characteristic of the entrepreneurial identity has not been found in the CLaSS schools. Within CLaSS there is no room for privacy or isolation. In CLaSS, teachers' areas of professional competence are narrowed and specific expertise is enhanced, teachers become more dependent on colleagues not in a collegial sense but in a sense of seeking reassurance that everything that they do is "right" (Osburn, McNess, Broadfoot, 2000). Although CLaSS insists upon collaborative approaches, all collaboration must occur within the CLaSS framework. Teachers have no option but to subscribe exclusively to the prescribed practices that constitute CLaSS. The fundamental role of teachers is to implement the goals, policy and programs of the school. Having issues up for debate is considered to be neither productive nor beneficial. Teachers' professional growth is best fostered through a single-minded approach that guarantees success within tight boundaries. There is no room to question the value, effects or cost of that success. The systems and routines that are expected to be implemented are extensions of the rationality of CLaSS. There is only the corporate position and teachers must be committed to that position. For the teachers, acceptance of this rationality means that they trade privacy and professional autonomy for public ordinance. Teachers must be entrepreneurial in their approach by accepting, and responding to, the externally designed regulative controls that make the school competitive. There is no room for individualistic pursuits or professional difference.

The continuing focus on non-performing schools in public debate about literacy and numeracy is the focus of the present section. It should be remembered that according to Popkewitz et al. (1982) the term "illusory schooling" is used to describe schools that do not deliver results despite their appearance of being organized and purposeful. Illusory schools are not succeeding but neither are they dysfunctional. In the current debate about school improvement, CLaSS makes the assumption that every school can become a successful or performing school if the appropriate structures and practices are implemented. Illusory schools have a program in place built around orderly structures which they claim provide the means for their students to be successful. However, lack of success is not attributed to the schools' program because there will always be some students who will be successful. But for the majority of students that are not successful the fault is considered to be directly related to the individual student's access to financial, social, and cultural capital. All these factors are seen to be outside the control of the school.

In striving for accountability and measuring success through student outcomes, particularly those relating to literacy and numeracy, schools have come under intense scrutiny (Connell, 1993; Freebody & Welch; 1993; Green, Hodgens & Luke, 1994). Literacy standards have become a matter for government policy and media attention. Declining standards of literacy and the associated failings of school systems, as well as the apparent ineffectiveness of child-centred language approaches, has been a constant media theme (Coomber, 1997). The economic cost of poor literacy and the need to monitor literacy standards has been the cornerstone of the neo-liberal inspired school reform programs. It is against this background of educational unrest that schools are publicly scrutinized.

Illusory schools and impression management

Neo-liberal reforms are criticized for maintaining an image of success and business, leaving no time for teachers to reflect and work critically on educational problems in their schools.

Smyth and Starr (1998) describe "illusory schooling" as "impression management". CLaSS schools are consumed with the production of data and the identification of improved student outcomes to use as proof of their accountability and efficiency. These four CLaSS schools promote the certainty of direction, uniformity in thought and practice and apparent success as a promotional tool and actively cultivate an image of superiority over other schools. Such a position allows critics to argue that CLaSS schools are concerned more with impression management than improvement. This may well be the case as the principals certainly publicize how successful they are because of CLaSS. However, being overly concerned with impression management does not mean that the CLaSS schools can be described as illusory schools.

Making a difference

CLaSS says that with the proper commitment and structures all children can succeed and, therefore, improvement in children's literacy attainment in every school can be achieved. CLaSS argues that the school program and teaching approach can, and must, be changed if the children's literacy attainment is to be improved. From a CLaSS perspective, all schools can make a difference to students' literacy attainment regardless of the students' access to financial, social, and cultural capital. CLaSS would say illusory schools have failed to utilize appropriate techniques of assessment and teaching and that illusory schools fail to make a difference in the lives of their students. They would argue that illusory schools do not fully understand the educative purpose of schools and operate out of a flawed ideology. CLaSS advocates would not accept the level of access a school community has to cultural, social and financial capital as an excuse for any lack of improvement. They claim that CLaSS offers a technology for assessment that guides teaching and learning. They insist that all schools can make a difference and improve the outcomes of all students. CLaSS does not ignore the disadvantage that will be peculiar to some areas, but it does offer a proven technique for

overcoming that disadvantage. CLaSS would say that it is impossible for any school, truly committed to CLaSS, to be regarded as illusory.

Can CLaSS schools be considered illusory?

Critics of CLaSS may argue that aspects of illusory configurations can be used to describe CLaSS schools. They may point to the level of impression management in which the schools engage, the high levels of compliance required, the monitoring and control technologies used throughout the school, and the emphasis on data collection as being consistent with the configurations of illusory schooling. But such a position is hard to maintain since CLaSS, is focused on success. The comments from the principals indicate that, prior to taking on CLaSS, illusory configurations would have been acceptable for describing their school. However, the assumptions made by CLaSS concerning rational planning, efficiency and accountability and the psychological value placed on routines for teachers and students, totally dominate the CLaSS schools. CLaSS provides a clear hierarchy of knowledge and skills, with literacy placed firmly at the top. CLaSS is clear that functional literacy (the ability to read and write to a prescribed level) is a pre-requirement for access to all other areas of the curriculum. As discussed previously, the achievement of functional literacy is the primary goal of CLaSS schools. CLaSS gives other curriculum areas peripheral status as they are perceived to be of minimal value in regard to literacy attainment (Hill & Crévola, 2001). These features of CLaSS correlate strongly with technical configurations of schooling. In fact, the intensity of conviction from which these elements are presented by CLaSS, and accepted by schools, suggests something beyond rational technical schooling. When compared to illusory schooling CLaSS emerges as a belief system embedded within a technical model of schooling. This belief system provides the necessary direction for schools, teachers and students to be saved from the flawed educational practices and understandings of the past. Students' potential capacity to participate, contribute and prosper in their adult life is seemingly threatened by ideologies that are not consistent with the neo-liberal ideals

expressed by CLaSS. Indeed, the purpose of schools and the professional identity of the teachers need to be saved from the contemporary illusory structures and practices to which the majority of schools and teachers seemingly subscribe.

Saving schools summary.

CLaSS does more than simply ask schools to follow the protocols and associated practices and structures it prescribes to improve literacy attainment levels. CLaSS offers salvation to schools. CLaSS insists that the teachers and parents understand that they (and more importantly the students) need to be "saved" from their own misconceptions and flawed ideologies. Further, it is necessary for schools to "believe" that exclusive compliance to CLaSS guarantees that salvation. It can be argued that in order to motivate and inspire schools and teachers sufficiently to engage reform initiatives, people need to be "won over" and convinced of the merits of any initiative. Of interest to this study is the effect reform programs have on schools when they begin to operate as belief systems.

Though it has been seen that technical schooling is an appropriate descriptor for CLaSS, the strength of the convictions espoused by CLaSS means that CLaSS becomes a belief system that promises more than improvement in literacy attainment levels and school reform. It has also been shown that configurations of illusory schooling are not suitable descriptors for CLaSS schools. Critics of CLaSS may attempt to draw a comparison between illusory schools and CLaSS, but CLaSS has a clear focus on success that distinguishes it from illusory schooling. Illusory schools do not promote salvation; they are satisfied with maintaining the status quo. Understanding illusory school configuration is important because advocates of technical schooling point to illusory schools as the very configuration that all schools need to avoid.

However, constructive schools do offer a belief system and offer schools hope and change. The belief systems espoused by the constructive school directly contest many of the beliefs

and understandings held by technical schools. Contemporary configurations of

constructive schooling have evolved into democratic schooling.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion

The relationship between technical and constructive schools and CLaSS is complex and will be examined in detail in this chapter. It will be argued that as schools contemplate reform they have to simultaneously engage the complexities involved in schooling, as expressed in Democratic School Discourse, and meet immediate concerns relating to achievement and accountability as expressed through Managerial Discourse. This chapter draws the study to a conclusion by examining CLaSS in the context of a salvation narrative. It will be argued that if schools are to become places of authentic reform, they need to identify and interrogate the salvation story that comes with reform programs. It will be demonstrated that involvement with third age programs like CLaSS is not as straightforward as schools might anticipate and there are substantive "costs" associated with engaging such programs, not least of these "costs" are the patterns of conduct that are required from teachers. These specific patterns of behaviour serve to present teachers with a focus on rationalization and disassociation of purpose in regard to their practice that restricts their opportunities to operate with professional autonomy. The notion of salvation stories will be used in this chapter as tool analyzing what is happening in these schools.

Constructive and Democratic Models of Schooling Versus Models of Technical Efficiency

CLaSS clearly sees technical efficiency as the best hope for schools and students. This chapter considers how the principal developers of CLaSS, Hill and Crévola (2001), might respond to the assertion linking CLaSS with the values and practices of technical schooling as described by Popkewitz et al. (1982). It will be argued here that Hill and Crévola (2001) would not be unhappy with the technical label being given to CLaSS as it provides a clear distinction from illusory schooling and constructive schooling. According to Hill and Crévola (2005)

It is now much easier to identify a robust technical core to literacy teaching and

learning in schools and that core is becoming increasingly more certain and

scientifically based (p. 12)

Hill and Crévola (2001) would claim that constructive or democratic schooling is not possible

in all schools and there is nothing in the past to indicate the values of constructive democratic

schooling as a template for system-wide reform. Hill and Crévola (2001, 2005) have said that

CLaSS has something important to offer all schools and therefore it is especially suitable as a

vehicle for system-wide reform. While acknowledging that constructive democratic schools

can be high achieving, Hill and Crévola (2001) have argued that it is a mistake to assume that

every school can become high achieving on its own. They have said that the history of

education is full of failed attempts to have every school aspire to be a democratic school (Hill

& Crévola, 2001). Having said that, Hill and Crévola (2001) also claim that, through CLaSS,

they are, in fact, making significant contributions to the preservation of democracy.

The next section examines the relevance of the values and practices identified by Popkewitz

et al. (1982) in constructive schooling to contemporary education debate.

Contemporary configurations of Constructive schooling

Constructive schooling as defined by Popkewitz et al. (1982) correlates with contemporary

descriptors of democratic schooling. Democratic schools, according to Apple and Beane

(1999), while being both humanistic and child-centred are committed to a vision ". . . not

simply to lessen the harshness of social inequities in schools, but to change the conditions

that created them" (p. 13).

The voices that engage in this dialogic interchange and promote this vision are in danger of

being drowned out by contemporary rhetoric of school performance and accountability.

While the ideals of democratic schooling may be paid lip service in government policy

statements, Apple (2001), Apple and Beane (1999), Ball (1990, 1995), Comber (2001),

Gerwitz et al., (1995), and Sachs (2001) would argue that the strength of the democratic

values that they advocate is weakened and compromised by overriding agendas of accountability and standardisation.

While the rhetoric of national and state governments has been seen to support strong notions of accountability through assessment, it pretends to support ideals of democratic schooling. This is evident through a focus in national and state documents on the importance of literacy and numeracy attainment for equity and social justice (Hill & Crévola, 2001). Although they are couched in terms of democratic citizenship, for example: "for a modern democratic society, high levels of literacy are crucial to the quality of civic, cultural and economic activity" (Department of Employment Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 1998, p. xx). There is considerable debate over the level of fairness, equality and equity that exist in contemporary societies within advanced economies, especially around the purpose and provision of education (Apple 2001; Ball, 1990b; Teese & Polesel, 2003). Therefore, it is argued, definitions of democracy used to drive educational policy and schools need to be vigorously explored and debated if schools are to be reformed.

Reducing exploitation, inequity and oppression

It can be seen that the discourse of democratic schools influences the development of activist identities (Sachs, 2001). As discussed earlier, democratic schools are concerned with reducing or eliminating exploitation, inequity and oppression. As Sachs (2001) explains, Democratic Discourses require the development of communities of practice. Within a community of practice, Sachs (2001) continues, the various levels and degrees of knowledge and expertise that exist among the teachers is regarded as a shared resource that has a clear emancipatory aim for the members of the community to which the school belongs. That is, guided by teachers, school communities can begin to explore how democratic notions of fairness, equality and equitability apply to their lives and initiate actions that are directed toward eliminating any such inequity and inequality.

Communities of Practice within the Democratic School Discourse

Further, Sachs (2001) argues that democratic communities of practice have a profound impact on teachers' lives and require sustained engagement and shared meaning. According to Apple and Beane (1999) democratic schools require a belief that communities of practice have the potential to allow teachers to articulate issues of professional practice through the characteristics shown in the following table.

Table 8.

Characteristics of communities of practice drawn from Apple and Beane (1999, p. 7)

1. The open flow of ideas, regardless of their popularity, that enables people to be as fully informed as possible.

2. Individual and collective capacity of people to create possibilities and solve problems

3. The use of critical reflection to evaluate ideas, policies, and problems

4. Concern for the welfare of others and 'the common good'.

5. Concern for the dignity and rights of individuals and minorities.

6. An understanding that democracy is not so much an 'ideal' to be pursued as an 'idealized' set of values that we must live with and use to guide our lives as people.

7. The organization of social institutions to promote and extend the democratic way of life.

In this study, we do hear teachers engage in Democratic Discourse, and some teachers in this study do question and analyze their actions to a degree. It could be argued that the CLaSS relies on community of practice as described above. However, as shown by the data examined in previous chapters, that the strongest links are those between CLaSS and the institutional configurations of Technical Schooling as described by Popkewitz et al. (1982).

Neo-liberal and neo-conservative support for technical schooling

It is important to acknowledge that the planners of IGE did not make provision for these differing institutional configurations to develop. Each school modified the reform program. In some ways each configuration had the potential to alter the intentions of IGE and that is the focus of the Popkewitz et al. (1982) study. Three of the six schools in the Popkewitz et al. (1982) study adopted a technical configuration, two schools were described as illusory and one as constructive but this was not an intended outcome. For this current study it is important to note that the increased domination of neo-liberal ideology in recent years places a greater emphasis on technical schooling. CLaSS responds to, and is supported by, neo-liberal ideology to a far greater extent than IGE. CLaSS ensures that schools take on a particular technical configuration and insists that schools accept and act out of the rationality it fabricates.

CLaSS presents neo-liberal ideologies and values as commonsense, rational and logical structures that should underpin the beliefs of all effective teachers. Proponents of democratic education argue that a school's engagement with any set of values should be vigorously debated rather than unconditionally accepted. According to Apple and Beane (1999), such a debate is at the core of democratic schooling. Moving into such a debate is resisted by CLaSS.

Access to funding

Technical configurations of schooling have become increasingly attractive to school and school system administrators as they attempt to respond to the demands of neo-liberal, neo-conservative pressures for scientifically-based proof of improvement. In a sense, the discourse of educational change can wash past local schools. However, it is not possible for school system administrators to be removed from these emerging neo-liberal and neo-conservative agendas because they are tied to funding. National literacy money does not come directly to schools. To access funding, school system administrators and schools have to prove compliance to neo-liberal inspired educational policy initiatives.

Intellectual certainty and economic prosperity

From the neo-liberal managerial perspective, to be part of society, children must be functionally literate and numerate to a specified level by a specified age. This goal can be reached through rational planning, economic efficiency, standardisation and accountability (Hill & Crévola, 2001, 2006; Fullan, Hill, & Crévola 2006). The intellectual certainty offered through the routines and regimes of CLaSS removes any ambiguity concerning the purpose of the school or the role of the teacher. In contrast, constructive schools claim that to engage society children must understand themselves and the world. The actual purpose of schooling then becomes the focus of educational reform. The difference between technical schooling and constructive schooling can be explained as polarised ideological positions.

CLaSS and self-regulation

Cognitive change and self regulation are strong features of CLaSS. Within CLaSS, self regulation is viewed as promoting greater fidelity to the CLaSS ideals and the exclusion of any critical evaluation. In a democratic school these qualities are seen as tools to grapple with ambiguity and to foster critical reflection. Indeed, in a democratic school, some healthy degree of conflict and contention would certainly be found and welcomed (Sachs, 2001; Apple & Beane 1999). In contrast, contention and conflict are viewed by CLaSS as unwelcome distractions from the core business of improving literacy attainment levels.

Beyond criticism

In CLaSS there is a distrust of ambiguity and a corresponding faith that precise implementation of CLaSS will bring about the predetermined and desired changes. CLaSS is beyond criticism, although the individual behaviour of teachers can be criticized. For the dominant Discourse "the possibility of hearing a wide range of views and voices is often seen as a threat" (Apple, 1999, p. 18). CLaSS is attractive to those involved with school reform who believes that standards, measurement and certainty are indications of improvement.

Taking on CLaSS enables schools to remove the threats associated with a wide range of views and follow the perceived one true path to genuine reform.

CLaSS projects an image of democratic change, which we have seen when principals and CLaSS coordinators talk about "this is the way we decided to go". Once that decision is said to have been made CLaSS, however, places strict limits on "who can say what" and what individuals can choose to do. These statements are the voice of the dominant culture. Functional literacy, the ability to read, write and spell, is regarded as the gateway to socio-economic security and the subsequent preservation of the economy on which society is built. However, Apple and Beane, (1999) argue that functional literacy is a gateway for some, not a gateway for all. These authors all point to the importance of students engaging in multi-literacy, and also affirm the importance of other key learning areas to the development of effective citizens. They also point out that deep engagement with these other learning areas enhances literacy attainment. Indeed, the actions that are initiated by the neo-liberal and neo-conservative agenda promote the attainment of economic imperatives above and beyond all other pursuits. Democracy, it is argued, can only be developed and maintained within a strong economy. Advocates of constructive democratic schooling argue that the preservation of an economy that requires varying levels of privilege and disadvantage to exist within society is irreconcilable with democratic principles and promotes socio-economic structures that are accessible only to privileged members of the dominant culture.

Falling standards

The contemporary public debate about falling standards and the need for schools to lift their performance and be accountable have provided a receptive context for programs like CLaSS. Although having intensified in recent times, such debates have been a constant part of educational debate for the last 30 years (Apple, 2000). During the late 1970s in the USA considerable advancements were made in regard to technology and scientific approaches to many aspects of life. At that time, there was increased dissatisfaction with, and criticism of,

education systems' reluctance to engage developing technologies and scientific understandings of teaching and learning in schools and thus improve student outcomes. IGE was developed in part as a response to that dissatisfaction. IGE proposed to define the "problems" facing education in the 1980s and provide a clear and direct path to improvement. Similarly, CLaSS galvanized contemporary dissatisfaction with education as embellished by concerns about the perceived inability of schools to continually lift literacy attainment levels. Both IGE and CLaSS offer salvation stories - as systems of rationally guided beliefs and actions - for communities to believe in and witness that something is being done and progress is being made to address a particular problem.

CLaSS offers something more than technical schooling

CLaSS is presented as the reasonable and logical development of the technical view of schooling in response to educational policy and mounting public criticism. CLaSS requires that the teachers and the wider school community adopt the beliefs that CLaSS espouses. Indeed, the acceptance of CLaSS and its associated ideology is regarded as simply applying a commonsense framework to schooling. Within the "commonsense" framework of CLaSS, teachers' classroom performance is clearly defined and presented. The resources that the teachers can draw on have been selected and set up in each school to provide teachers with a specific response to specific data. A teacher's role is to match the children with the resources judged to be appropriate for moving children forward to a given level. This is the system of rationally guided beliefs and actions that CLaSS expects teachers to accept and implement.

Measurable and predictable outcomes

According to Popkewitz et al. (1982), technical schools are different from constructive schools and illusory schools. In Technical schools the relationship between pedagogy and external factors is significant. Everything about technical schools points to proficiency and consistency. Technical schools are shaped in direct and exclusive response to neo-liberal policies and reform. The structure and practices of technical schools are uniform and

consistent. The scientific and systemic nature of the program ensures measurable and predictable outcomes in regard to teacher and student behaviour and performance. Technical schools engage in processes that eliminate discussion and thinking that may lead to the contradiction of their values or non-compliance in regard to sanctioned practices. Advocates of Technical schooling would argue that schools make a difference in regard to improving outcomes for all students. The logic then is to engage practices and structures, designed by experts, to control and define schools to make improvements that are necessary to satisfy external demands precisely as prescribed by external authorities.

Contrast with Democratic schools

In contrast, Constructive schools welcome the tension that is highlighted through debate and discussion. Indeed, such tensions are often celebrated and used as motivation to explore other possibilities. This interplay of contradictory forces gives form to the shape of the structure and practices of the Constructive school. Constructive schools question the stimulus for change and attempt to develop responses to educational policy and calls for reform with specific reference to the local context. Constructive schools are not uniform and consistent in structure and practice as they respond to a number of unique local, as well as, external forces. Advocates of Constructive schools would argue that teachers make a difference. The logic then is to allow teachers and communities to shape the structure and practices of the school and make improvements that satisfy external demands to the satisfaction of the local community.

Differing ideologies

The day-to-day decisions made by teachers at Constructive and Technical schools may appear to be the same. But the context and ideology out of which these decisions are made are different. In Constructive schools the classroom practices and curriculum choices emanate from different ideological views of teaching and learning and social growth. As a result the pedagogical principles of Constructive schooling allow teachers and students more options

for selecting, transmitting, sequencing, and evaluating the curriculum by teacher and students.

System-endorsed programs like CLaSS create tensions for teachers to maintain their professional autonomy. Constructive schools on the other hand resist pressures from the outside to give up professional autonomy for the sake of consistency and uniformity. There may, therefore, be conflict relating to professional issues between the teachers and system administrators in Constructive schools. System administrators are compelled to respond to Federal and State education policies that call for cost effectiveness, accountability and for a return to traditional curriculum approaches as funding levels are increasingly reliant on compliance to policy implementation.

Discussing, debating and thinking

In a constructive school teachers base their professional judgements on their knowledge of the academic and personal characteristics of students and have to constantly navigate between bureaucratic and professional decisions. In order to determine how to engage their own professional prerogatives and develop a course of action, teachers in constructive schools need to spend considerable amounts of time and energy discussing, debating and thinking about the effects of their actions, the needs of the students, and the demands of the system. It is important to recognize that constructive schools are not always smooth running and free of conflict. Conflict can have serious effects on teachers, their well being and the school's capacity to function. The Popkewitz et al. (1982) study refers to "teacher burnout" characterized by a decline in the amount of time and energy that teachers were willing to give to maintain the traditions and professional prerogatives that shaped the school. This area of weakness is seized upon by Hill and Crévola. In constructive schools, the focus on critique, evaluation and democratic decision making is ongoing, some would say "unrelenting". By contrast, in technical schools there is likely to be an extremely high level of demand on teachers' time and energy in getting started, but this comes with a promise of calmer and less

stressful times after the program and routines have become established. Of course, this ignores the fact that even after CLaSS procedures and structures have been established some teachers, as we have seen, will feel restricted from giving voice to deeply held beliefs.

Taking learning seriously

Even though there may be tensions, Constructive schools have a fundamental belief that learning should be enjoyable and engaging for teachers and students. This is not a sign that the schools are not serious about learning. Technical schools see enjoyment and "fun" as a reward to be appreciated after the hard work has been successfully completed. Constructive schools see "fun" as something that should permeate the entire educative process.

Hill and Crévola (2001) would argue that CLaSS schools are democratic in the sense that they have the best interests of children at heart and can prove that what they do is successful. Without literate and numerate children there can be no democracy. CLaSS, they might argue, is born out of the common good. After all, according to Hill and Crévola (2001):

> Values such as equality, fraternity and democracy are hard to sustain without highly literate citizens. And, of course, literacy is essential to economic prosperity, particularly through the formation of a flexible, dynamic and highly skilled workforce. (p.2)

For Hill and Crévola, (2001, 2006) Fullan, Hill and Crévola (2006) the ability to read and write is an essential component of an individual's capacity to contribute to the economy and to lead a productive life. A strong economy is a cornerstone of democracy. Therefore, ensuring that children learn to read and write promotes and maintains democracy. The critical reflection has occurred, problems and possibilities have been explored, and the way forward has been determined. Hill and Crévola argue that they, as experts, have covered all the bases. The message of Hill and Crévola (2001) is that "A CLaSS school is an informed school" (p. 51). This message can be seen as an invitation for schools to leave their uninformed ways and

be saved from the impossible task of improving themselves without assistance and supervision.

Democratic aspirations and other dangers

Hill and Crévola (2001) have argued that it is dangerous for schools to aim at being anything other than a technical school. Alternative goals, such as democratic schooling, can serve to distract schools and teachers from their primary role. Hill and Crévola (2001) warn school systems that exploration of democratic schooling can be the first step on the path to illusory schooling.

Maintenance of systemic reform initiatives requires that schools know that what they are doing is consistent with what the system has asked them to do. Technical schooling requires certainty while democratic schooling is dependent on teacher generated, or community generated, reforms that are founded on local priorities. From a systemic perspective, democratic schools cannot provide the consistency needed to satisfy system wide policy objectives. From the neo-liberal perspective, an unacceptable degree of uncertainty is attached to democratic schooling. Since democratic schools constantly explore options they may well operate successfully within uncertainty. School systems usually cannot afford that luxury.

As mentioned earlier, Hill and Crévola (2001) have an overriding goal of preventing schools from slipping into the illusory configuration. After all

> . . . it is not hard to find teachers who believe that the abilities and backgrounds of many students prevent them from making progress. In fact, it is not unusual to find whole school communities in which there is a culture of low expectations and of blaming factors beyond the control of the school for the poor performance of their students".(p.7)

CLaSS specifically guards against illusory schooling through highlighting the need for structures, goals and other identifiable measures of achievement. Hill and Crévola (2001,

2006) assert that the technical schooling paradigm is attractive to teachers, parents and

the school systems. Technical schooling satisfies the fears and uncertainties (falling

standards, illiteracy, unemployment, capital flight) of the community by recovering the

traditions and authority that many believe to have been lost. Hill and Crévola (2001)

champion "parents' rights" and reinforce the expectation that children learn to read as early

as possible after starting school. Hill and Crévola (2001) galvanise the dissatisfactions of a

number of dominant economic and political groups and offer a solution. Through CLaSS,

Hill and Crévola (2001) successfully address these dissatisfactions and this is the cornerstone

of why CLaSS is attractive.

Technical schools have simple rules to follow to ensure that they change and improve:

> School improvement means bringing about change, particularly in how teachers operate
>
> within the classroom. . . . (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 21)

As examined earlier, CLaSS insists on the acceptance of several "non-negotiable" elements

by participating schools in order to ensure that change occurs; the rules are clearly spelled

out. In contrast, constructivist schools are left to find answers about improvement and change

themselves. Hill and Crévola would look at the Popkewitz et al. (1982) study and draw

attention to the preponderance of Technical schools. They would argue that this is an entirely

expected result as successful school reform requires "the systematic review of different

aspects of their operations and engagement in structured approach to ensuring that all

students experience success" (Hill & Crévola, 2001, p. 1). Technical schooling provides the

structures and practices that allow schools to engage specific and scientifically validated

practices that bring about change. Success in system-wide school reform is only possible

through programs that have institutional configurations that are consistent with the definition

of Technical schooling, adopted by Popkewitz et al. (1982), through programs like CLaSS.

Defining successful reform as being technical in nature makes CLaSS an attractive option for

schools that are under pressure from external forces to demonstrate improvement. In regard to

literacy attainment, technical configurations of schooling reinforce that measurement of

the decoding and coding processes of words by children provides the necessary,

scientifically-based data that is necessary to direct instruction and allow for focused teaching.

The importance of teachers in achieving reform is recognized only in terms of the

contribution they can or are willing to make to contribute to attaining the goals of the

initiative.

Intelligent and reflective action of teachers

Democratic schooling emphasizes the importance of teachers' initiatives and responsibility in

regard to teaching and learning. The constructive school assumes that all teachers are capable

of intelligent and reflective action together with a commitment to social justice. The

combination of intelligence, professional skill and commitment to social justice provides a

basis from which teachers can, according to Sachs (2001), permit and promote transformative

attitudes toward the future to be a key goal of the school. Sachs (2001) also contends that the

illegitimate domination of some groups over others can be overcome through democratic

schooling. Sachs (2001) contends democratic schools with activist teachers aim to "shed the

shackles of the past" (p 157) that have traditionally prevented schools from focusing on

strategies and practices that reduce the exploitation, inequality and oppression that permeates

its community. In this sense, democratic schools and activist teachers have a clear

emancipatory aim (Sachs, 2001). Hill and Crévola (2001) question the assumption that all

members of the community have the capacity, or the inclination, to be involved in

emancipatory activity, and argue that the energy required to pursue this goal is more than

likely to detract from the core mission of schools. In democratic schools teachers are

encouraged and expected to defend their professional rights.

Aspiring to be democratic

Advocates of democratic schooling make the assumption that all schools have the capacity to

develop Democratic Discourse. The self narratives of teachers are acknowledged as important

aspects of developing the democratic school. The stories and discussions are embedded in the social justice, values and civic responsibility of the teachers. Sachs (2001), for example, asserts that, given the right conditions, Democratic Discourse and activist identities can develop in any school. This position is diametrically opposed to that of Hill and Crévola who are skeptical of this goal being set before all schools. While democratic schools pay attention to the ways knowledge is created the technical paradigm does not, Sachs (2001) and Apple and Beane (1999) have faith in the individual and collective capacity of teachers to analyze and solve problems; the technical paradigm does not.

Cold hard facts

Hill and Crévola (2001, 2006) insist that the most pressing priority of schooling is the immediate lifting of standards of literacy and numeracy and the sustaining of this improvement. CLaSS then takes the position that these indisputable facts be dealt with by immediate and efficient action since many schools are ineffective or have limited resources, and their literacy instruction up to now has been shown to be ineffective. Hill and Crévola (2001) point to large numbers of non-achieving schools working in socio-economically depressed areas, of schools struggling with limited resources and of teachers who are not expert literacy educators as "uncomfortable truths" (p. 3) that need to be addressed. Of proponents of democratic schooling, such as Sachs (2001), Apple and Beane (1999) and Boomer et al. (1992), Hill and Crévola might well ask: "Is it reasonable for all schools to aspire to be constructivist schools? Or is it more reasonable to expect that schools respond to the moral and economic imperatives involved with ensuring that their students' literacy attainment performance, in the short and long term, improves by adopting the well tested strategies and procedures embodied in CLaSS?"

Hill and Crévola (2001, 2005) would say Constructive schooling is only possible after students have been taught the basics. Constructive schooling is not achievable except by the few well-endowed and fortunate. Aspects of constructive schooling may be worth aspiring to

but is not possible in reality; and illusory schools fail to produce results. Technical

schooling would appear to be the only valid solution. As Hill and Crévola (2005) claim

> CLaSS is based on carefully evaluated, multi-site replications across hundreds of
>
> primary schools of a comprehensive approach to early literacy that has resulted in
>
> substantial improvements in student outcomes. The schools that have achieved
>
> these results have not been hand selected schools. They have been typical schools,
>
> many of which serve disadvantaged and struggling communities, but have become
>
> extraordinary in promoting learning for all their students. (p. 9)

Expressing unrealistic demands

Hill and Crévola (2001, 2005) and Fullan, Hill, and Crévola (2005) have argued that the goals

of democratic schooling place unrealistic demands on systems, schools and teachers. Based

on the interviews carried out with teachers in this study, it could easily be imagined that some

teachers would support Hill and Crévola by saying that:

- our responsibilities here and now are to student achievement;

- we can't wait for schools to be become constructive;

- Constructive schools tolerate ambiguity but we need structure, certainty and
  accountability;

- we know that CLaSS is sustainable and achievable;

- we are not sure school can keep their eye on high student performance and meet the
  high aspirations of every teacher at the same time;

- not all teachers want to be activists; and

- teachers are happy with certainty and routines.

CLaSS offers schools an embodied system of rationally based action (Lindbald & Popkewitz,

2004). According to CLaSS, ensuring that students can read also ensures that they can

eventually participate in democracy. Hill and Crévola (2005) argue that CLaSS is successful

and the community believes it and knows it to be true. They also maintain that the ability to

engage with different forms of knowledge is exclusively dependent on understanding the most basic forms of knowledge. Approaches to school reform that do not follow this premise are dismissed by advocates of CLaSS.

In the face of possible criticism from the advocates of democratic schooling, Hill and Crévola (2001, 2005) contend that CLaSS is indeed democratic as its teachers have lots of freedom. The success of CLaSS can be partly be attributed to the

> . . . subtle mixture of familiar tested methods and entirely new ways of operating that involve transformation both of school and system. (Hill & Crévola, 2005, p. 9)

However, it has been shown in this study that the CLaSS teacher's freedom is restricted to exercising operational parameters and that the regulations, sanctions, surveillance, rewards, and punishments evident in the Managerial Discourse, distort communication. The representation of sectional interests as universal "truths" serves to define realities which in turn show alternatives as unworkable.

There is little freedom for teachers to pursue their own ideas with CLaSS. This position is perfectly acceptable to Hill and Crévola (2001) who assert that the hard work has been done by the experts. As a consequence the technical aspect should now be engage; and teachers need only limited freedom within the technical paradigm. For Hill and Crévola (2001) "time is short and the stakes are too high to waste time re-inventing the wheel" (p. 21).

Hill and Crévola (2001, 2005) have justified this position by reiterating that schools, not teachers, are the most important component of reform. For Hill and Crévola (2005) there is no reason for teachers to be interested in the waxing and waning involved with the "ideological wars" that have, for so long, hindered efforts to change and improve teaching and learning practices around literacy.

Proving it

Hill and Crévola would see some similarities between illusory schools and constructive schools in that neither can produce the "results" that school systems require. They have

argued that commitment to democratic values and self evaluations, which are the

hallmarks of the democratic school, have not been able to demonstrate educational

improvement for *all schools*. They agree that some exceptional democratic schools are able to

demonstrate sustained improvement in children's attainment of literacy. But, faith in

democratic schooling is not justified for schools that have to work within the ordinary

limitations of staffing, leadership, budgeting and educational disadvantage. For the majority

of schools, Hill and Crévola (2005) see a technical solution, as exemplified by CLaSS, as the

only realistic way forward. According to Hill and Crévola (2005), panels of experts have

reviewed research findings into best practice in literacy and the use of scientifically-based

evidence to drive teaching "is moving decisions about best practice beyond ideological

preference" (p. 11).

Expecting all schools to adapt the values of the democratic school has, in their opinion, been

a recipe for failure across the school sector. The certainty and uniformity offered by CLaSS is

the basis of its strong appeal to governments and school sector authorities.

Salvation stories

In the final part of this thesis, the notion of a salvation story - as a system of rationally based

beliefs that inform practice and make plausible the engagement of particular behaviours and

ways of thinking – provides a powerful tool for analyzing how conflict and disagreement are

dealt with within CLaSS and within CLaSS schools. The salvation narratives that drive

CLaSS and Democratic educational discourse will be explored. Further, the tensions that

exist between these two salvation stories will be given attention.

A salvation story has been described by Popkewitz (2000) and Popkewitz and Lindblad

(2000) as an interpretation of systems of rationality and configurations of beliefs which

inform the cultural practices that are used to produce order and make plausible the

engagement of particular behaviours and ways of thinking. Salvation stories are a narrative of

the core beliefs and aspirations of specific ideologies. They govern the development of

educational policies and teachers' practices and identities. Salvation stories represent different and competing pathways to "redemption" from a flawed condition. They also present a remedy to protect those who "believe" from lapsing back to their former flawed condition and provide a basis to critique alternative salvation stories. More importantly salvation stories allow us to investigate the power and knowledge systems that divide the practices that qualify or disqualify individuals from action and participation.

Prioritizing assessment

Contemporary educational debates are firmly located in the neo-liberal terrain of traditionalism, standardisation, productivity, marketisation and economic needs. These values inform the particular salvation story that neo-liberal advocates offer to schools and school systems. Some of these same values have been seen to drive CLaSS and to give CLaSS its particular appeal. Through exploring the impact of neo-liberal ideas on educational policy and practice there is a clear establishment of a salvation narrative within CLaSS. CLaSS ensures that teachers and school systems prioritize assessment. Determining what children can do is paramount. CLaSS makes claims to the truth about literacy and teaching and learning in general. In accepting this truth, the ways teachers act, think and talk are expected to change and conform to a particular model. CLaSS claims that literacy attainment will provide power to all students and thus strengthen democracy. Schools and teachers in particular need only be concerned with following the sanctioned structures and practices of the system correctly. Teachers need only have faith and believe in the processes and ideology of CLaSS to ensure success for all students.

Valuing debate

Democratic school discourse makes competing claims about literacy and teaching and learning. The purpose of schooling from this salvation narrative is that problems facing schools are a result of multiple complexities. Some of the complexities are universal and affect many schools, while others are unique and specific to a particular school. From this

salvation narrative it is impossible to express the problems facing schools as a single problem let alone find one solution to this problem. Salvation, as offered by democratic school discourse, places value on debate and discussions among teachers to explore the complexities that each school faces and determines possible responses. In order for critical reflection and action to occur, the professional autonomy of the teacher needs to be promoted, preserved, and protected. Schools and teachers in particular should do all that they can to fully explore the complexities involved with issues facing their school and develop multiple responses to them.

Transformative attitudes

Apple and Beane (1999) point to democratic schools as being engaged in an interdisciplinary and problematic approach to teaching and learning. Students have an active role in their own education, with emphasis on initiative responsibility and interactions with their local community. Beane (1997) argues that through dialogue with the community the personal concerns of the students and their communities and the larger issues facing the world beyond the economic imperatives that drive third age reform programs can be revealed. According to Smyth et al. (2000), democratic schooling is the embodiment of the realization of an egalitarian view of schooling. In response to this egalitarian view of schooling Shannon (1991) suggests critical literacy education should then push

> the definition of literacy beyond the traditional decoding or encoding of words in order to reproduce the meaning of text and society until it becomes a means for understanding one's own history and culture, and for fostering an activism toward equal participation for all the decisions that affect and control our lives. (p. 518)

Ultimately, democratic schools look to challenge and change social conditions that are responsible for social injustice and inequity as well as pragmatically engage in demands placed upon them by external authorities.

Actions guided by salvation stories

Salvation stories are useful as they provide the opportunity to investigate and explore the complexities involved in engaging specific ideologies. They provide a framework that allows for insights into the created reality in which schools operate and teachers work. Through embodying systems of reasoning, salvation stories guide action and are used by systems' administrators, school leaders and teachers to refute competing narratives. Within a particular salvation story, a typically "reasonable person" (Popkewitz, 2001) can be identified and seen, and, within the same salvation story, reasonable behaviour and practices are classified and indicate and define success. They draw their strength from the successes that have been achieved by those sympathetic to that paradigm. Within a salvation story there is no possibility of falsification. Salvation stories do not permit dilution, and compromise is not acceptable. Competing salvations are strictly incompatible. Salvation stories insist on 100% commitment. Through critical analysis of salvation stories we can examine the effect of systemic reform in a broader global context.

Reasoned responses of CLaSS

At one level, the notion of competing salvation stories helps to explain the unresolved arguments between the proponents of CLaSS and those who support democratic schooling. No matter what objections the supporters of democratic schooling bring against CLaSS, Hill and Crévola (2001, 2005), operating from within their particular salvation story, can provide a totally reasoned response. Advocates of CLaSS simply don't accept that CLaSS is flawed. They do not believe that democratic schooling can offer a guaranteed improvement in literacy for the vast majority of schools. They are completely unmoved by individual instances of success which advocates of democratic schooling can point to. The success promised by CLaSS can, in their view, be achieved by schools in general only by adopting the clear and definite routines, regimes and most importantly, the beliefs and understandings, that CLaSS

requires. Indeed they would be alarmed if the practices endorsed by CLaSS were open to negotiation in schools.

Openness to negotiation and mediation are to be located within the salvation story represented in the democratic paradigm. In this sense, the counter-arguments advanced by Hill and Crévola (2001, 2005) reflect their commitment a competing salvation story which is incompatible with the democratic paradigm.

CLaSS exists within a salvation story

The salvation story that underpins CLaSS helps to define and resolve complexity and disagreement about literacy, literacy attainment and the purpose of schooling. CLaSS schools are able to disengage from complexity and disputation. Hill and Crévola (2001) see this as a necessary step to moving forward, whereas advocates of democratic schooling would be inclined see this as a step backwards (Sachs, 2001). In CLaSS schools, the place of schools and teachers is straightforward. The fundamental characteristics of schooling as a social, moral and political enterprise have been decided. Debate, reflection and questioning are disallowed by the paradigm from which CLaSS operates. The power arrangements remain unscrutinized, and the complexity of school reform is reduced to simple remedies.

At a second level, the notion of competing salvation stories helps to explain some of the behaviours reported and discussed in this thesis. Principals have sometimes removed teachers who displayed reservations about CLaSS from active roles in the early years. These principals might be seen as exercising power for power's sake or simply acting in an authoritarian manner. However, it may be more helpful to see their behaviour as reasonable and necessary in terms of the particular salvation story supporting CLaSS. Schools that have taken on CLaSS are committed to upholding the values and practices of CLaSS fully and without compromise because without this kind of support CLaSS cannot operate as a school wide literacy program. The roles of the principal and the CLaSS coordinator are to make sure that the particular behaviours and ways of thinking endorsed by CLaSS are carried out

faithfully. Teachers who are not comfortable with these beliefs and practices are a threat to these values and beliefs and diminish the likelihood of success that CLaSS promises.

Systems of rationality

When principals and CLaSS coordinators adopt the recommended approach to CLaSS, their behaviour should not be seen simply as personal preference but as a reflection of a specific system of rationality and configuration of belief that informs CLaSS.

It is also useful to use the idea of competing salvation stories to explain the behaviour of some teachers referred to in this study who have readily accommodated the specific behaviours and beliefs required by CLaSS. Some critics of CLaSS would say that these teachers have put aside their professional autonomy or subordinated their own judgements and professional beliefs in favour of CLaSS. For many of the teachers referred to in this study and in other CLaSS schools, it is possible to see their compliant behaviour not as some deficit in their professional behaviour but, rather, as the acceptance of the specific salvation story CLaSS advocates.

Exclusive nature of salvation stories

An important feature of salvation stories, as described by Lindbald and Popkewitz (2004), is that they are mutually exclusive and incompatible. In Public Discourse it is not possible to mix and match salvation stories without generating conflict and disagreement at a fundamental level. It can be argued that some teachers have tried to go along with CLaSS while also retaining a belief in their own capacity to adapt and reshape, even in minor ways, CLaSS practices in the light of their professional judgement. It makes good sense to argue that these teachers are attempting to hold on to values that belong to a competing salvation story, for example democratic schooling, while at the same time appearing to go along with values and practices endorsed by CLaSS. It is not surprising, therefore, that the few teachers encountered in this study who did make changes to and departures from CLaSS in their own teaching were reluctant to discuss their changes and departures with the principal and the

CLaSS coordinator. In all cases, these teachers recognized that they were making themselves vulnerable. They had no reason to expect that the principal or CLaSS coordinator would look favourably on what they had done. Indeed, they had every reason to believe that the principal and CLaSS coordinator would see their adaptations and departures as expressions of dissent and as a danger to morale. More importantly, within CLaSS there is no forum in which dissenting opinions and reservations can be made. If reservations are made within a CLaSS meeting they are interpreted as an admission of a teacher's short comings and will be interpreted by the CLaSS coordinator as a call for help. If such help is not accepted or welcomed a teacher's behaviour is considered to be against CLaSS and the mission of the school. Continuation of such unproductive comments warrants exclusion for the CLaSS team. This expected response can be seen as exemplifying what is likely to take place when two salvation stories collide. Salvation stories are always about belief and action. They are never about abstract propositions.

No room for mediation

Not referred to in this study are cases where the principal of a CLaSS school has supported teachers who want to discuss the possibility of adaptation to CLaSS in opposition to the CLaSS coordinator. In schools, outside the current study, where this has been reported, it seems that the principal and teachers believe that they can hold to some values of democratic schooling as they try to negotiate adaptations to CLaSS. In several of these cases, the CLaSS coordinator has resigned, arguing that the principal has failed to understand and live up his, or her, commitment to CLaSS. Where principals try to mediate between the CLaSS coordinator and the teacher who wants to modify CLaSS there is an inevitability of conflict with the CLaSS coordinator and those within the school system who promote CLaSS. According to Hill and Crévola (2001), the principal's role in the CLaSS school is not to mediate these disputes but to ensure that CLaSS is implemented fully and faithfully. Principals who see their role as mediators in these kinds of disputes are operating out of a

salvation story incompatible with CLaSS. From the point of view of the developers of CLaSS and the CLaSS coordinator these principals are simply mistaken and not informed about effective literacy teaching.

Producing order

When CLaSS operates within a salvation story, the social relations, meanings and assumptions of schooling are no longer problematic. The redefinition of teacher professionalism, and how it is practiced, has a significant impact on education. The bias of these assumptions are incorporated into CLaSS and used, without question. Ongoing questions such as, "How probing or searching is our definition of literacy?"; "What kind of literacy will our children need in the 21st century?"; "Are there forms of literacy we need to consider more deeply such as designing a website?"; "Who is deciding what is or is not appropriate and from what framework do we draw our conclusion?"; "What distinguishes teachers from other workers?", are no longer central to the discourse of CLaSS in the sense that they have already been answered. The energy needed to sustain such questions and subsequent debate, according to Hill and Crévola (2001), is better spent getting on with the work of improving children's literacy. CLaSS sees ongoing debate about literacy and the purpose of schooling as a distraction to teachers and a luxury that the school must avoid in order to achieve its core goals.

Patterns of conduct

The leadership in the CLaSS schools is not concerned with raising problematic issues relating to the nature of literacy or discussing alternative pathways to improving literacy. From the perspective of the school leadership, it is wasteful and potentially damaging to invest time in questioning the nature of CLaSS or the results of the prescribed assessment and teaching procedures. Teachers and students are restricted to one response: follow CLaSS. The performance targets for children are also prescribed by CLaSS. The tests used to manage school performance are prescribed and used promotionally. Alternative assessments are not

allowed. There is no need to discuss alternative forms of assessment or ways

approaching literacy. Teachers need only be concerned with student performance. The

authors of CLaSS have legitimized its pedagogical practices; as a consequence teachers and

students do not need to consider these as problematic. This legitimacy is used as a basis for

authority to ensure total compliance to CLaSS. To argue against or question CLaSS is

regarded as an unreasonable behaviour.

Disassociation of purpose

CLaSS schools are clear about what schools should do and how their success should be

measured. The literacy results produced, and the reason for their production, are beyond

question. CLaSS schools have a focus on producing results and the CLaSS coordinator's job

is to make sure that all the elements of CLaSS are in place and properly implemented in order

to produce these results. Hill and Crévola (2001, 2005) would say that, in their opinion, the

focus is justified because there is no other way to improve literacy performance. The CLaSS

coordinator's role, in particular, is certainly not to analyze or interpret the local context or the

particular skills of individual staff members. Responsibility for such interpretation is the

exclusive domain of the authors and their designated representatives. These representatives

are the CLaSS Facilitators. They are external to the school community and have received

more intensive CLaSS professional development than principals or CLaSS coordinators.

CLaSS has a clear line of authority and challenges to this authority are to be avoided.

Focus on rationalisation

CLaSS is clear about the parameters of success. Teachers must comply with CLaSS and

literacy levels must improve; there are visible indicators to measure teachers' and students'

level of conformity and improvement. The school's accountability is strictly defined in terms

of a CLaSS assessment framework, instruments, targets and behaviours prescribed by CLaSS.

Literacy performance is described rationally and scientifically by CLaSS for CLaSS schools.

The CLaSS coordinator is the conveyor and the embodiment of these standards of rationality

and scientific measurement. Discussion about alternatives is dismissed out of hand. CLaSS coordinators say that they do not want to hear about any alternative unless it can be proved to be more successful than CLaSS.

Lack of scrutiny

Specific teaching activities have a clearly defined purpose. If CLaSS is operating well, the teachers tell us that the children are settled and know what they are doing, Parents are satisfied, the staff feels that they are in control and everyone is speaking the same language. It is difficult to have a discussion within the school and not use the technical language of CLaSS. Conformity to the new language is seen as an indication of acceptance of the new and better ways of teaching and a sign of fidelity to CLaSS. Discussions that use language connected to the old ways are given little credibility or value. As shown in this study, teachers may hold contrary beliefs but these are held privately. Discussions among teachers, private or public, that question CLaSS are also seen as a sign of infidelity to CLaSS and associated new ways of thinking. Such discussions are discouraged in the CLaSS schools; indeed there is no forum in a CLaSS school where these issues can legitimately be raised.

Restricted opportunities

In CLaSS schools teachers need to be organized and busy and they should base every pedagogical judgment on recent data. Certain routines need to be established and maintained. The teachers say that maintaining CLaSS is exhausting work.

Weekly CLaSS meetings, typically of an hour in duration, are essential for operating the program. These meetings give rise to other actions that call on teachers' time and commitment. In particular, the production and collection of teaching resources require an extensive investment of teachers' non-teaching time. Every CLaSS meeting has a single focus on maintaining and enhancing CLaSS. The schools' leadership acknowledges the exhausting efforts of teachers, and both parties tell us that it (the hard work) is worth it. There is little energy or time left to scrutinise the ideology or practices of CLaSS.

Lessening discontent

In technical schooling, teachers come to believe that by implementing the mechanism of change they are making a difference to teaching and to students' learning. CLaSS heavily promotes the notion that success in literacy enables students to access other areas of the curriculum. Literacy instruction must be the school's priority and engaged with serious intent by the teachers and the students. The literacy block must extend over two uninterrupted hours. The whole school timetable must be centered on ensuring that the routines of CLaSS are maintained. Testing and data gathering must be unceasing and unrelenting. When some teachers in this study spoke of discontent, they made mention of the relief they feel when these routines were broken. In the business of schools, breaks in the routine were inevitable although infrequent and time outside of the literacy block gave teachers opportunities to maintain relationships with their students and have fun. Principals and CLaSS coordinators reinforced the idea that outside of the literacy block and in the context of "other" key learning areas teachers could be as creative and innovative as they wished.

CLaSS and success

Hill and Crévola (2001) argue that it is necessary for teachers to realize that the professional freedom, professional autonomy and criticism offered by democratic schooling do not guarantee educational achievement for all. Fullan, Hill and Crévola (2006) are happy for schools and teachers to incur the cost associated with narrowly redefining the school's vision and establishing entrepreneurial teacher identities as long as all the children will be successful. Meanwhile questions like: "How well equipped are CLaSS schools themselves to deal with complexity?" and "What have they sacrificed?" remain unanswered. CLaSS has a single focus on continuity and efficiency which is expressed through precisely defined approaches to teaching. What in the long term is the likely cost to CLaSS of its lack of critical reflection and self guided reform? This question is beyond the scope of this study but it is also a question CLaSS itself has been reluctant to raise.

Contemplating reform and redefining situations

This research argues the need for schools to redefine their situations when contemplating reform. The challenge for schools and school systems is to develop ways of anticipating and analyzing the risks that attend all educational theories, risks which significantly increase when a theory promises straight forward or "commonsense" solutions to complex problems. Schools and teachers need to identify the specific salvation story that underpins reform programs. Such risk analysis involves the critical investigation of the social and political context of reform programs, the research paradigms that support them, and the external authorities that fund them in order to assess the possible impact they will have on the school beyond the immediate goals of the reform. This needs to be recognized as part of the core business of schools.

This study is concerned with examining the cultural practices that are used to produce order and make plausible the acceptance and engagement of neo-liberal inspired reform programs, of which CLaSS is a pre-eminent example. The question for schools considering engaging CLaSS is not about choosing a literacy program; it is about choosing systems of rationality, choosing beliefs and understandings that define and prescribe how schools will go about the process of teaching and learning.

This thesis provides considerable authentic accounts from principals and teachers and shows how discourse indicates who is in power and how discourse can provide a window into teachers' perceptions of their professional responsibilities, not simply their questionings.

The critical choice: Are schools more than sites of learning?

The critical choice for schools is how to simultaneously engage the complexities involved in schooling, as expressed in this study by democratic school discourse, and meet immediate concerns relating to achievement in literacy. The path to redemption and salvation in this context is therefore fraught with dangers. The intention of this thesis is not to discredit CLaSS or even to demonize its salvation narrative. The path to salvation is never simple.

Choosing to ignore salvation narratives underpinning particular reform programs has hidden costs.

School reform is a symbolic as well as a practical endeavour. As Minow (1999) suggests:

> Schools provide society with the context to determine how individual freedoms should be rendered compatible with the common good, how generations relate to each other and whether commerce and industry should govern democracy or democracy govern commerce and industry (p 498).

This analysis of CLaSS as an example of a third age reform program demonstrates how the values of efficiency, standardization and accountability endorsed by a market economy are in tension with the values of democratic schooling. Minow (1999) contends that these competing salvation narratives need to be kept in creative tension rather than having one set of values over-ride the other. When schools are persuaded to buy into a programs like CLaSS that have been heavily promoted by systemic authorities they often appear unaware that they are buying into a system of rationality. If schools are to become places of authentic reform, they need to identify and interrogate the salvation story that comes with the reform program. Unless they can do this, schools are imprisoning themselves in a rationality upon which they may not have necessarily reflected. They will have lost the capacity for critical self-examination and are placing themselves in the position of waiting for the next reform program to be presented to them.

It is reasonable to expect that neo-liberal inspired educational policies will place ever increasing demands on schools, school systems and teachers to provide evidence of improvement in student outcomes and for schools to behave in business like ways. The expectation for schools and teachers to respond to educational issues through neo-liberal notions of measurement, accountability and performativity is likely to continue. As schools search for a response to this ideological pressure third age reform programs like CLaSS will become increasingly attractive. The guarantees that programs like CLaSS offer schools in

regard to responding to neo-liberal demands is difficult for schools to ignore. However, as this study has demonstrated, within the neo-liberal dominated landscape time for teachers to think and talk about their practice and the purpose of schooling with professional autonomy is regarded as an intolerable and unproductive extravagance that schools can no longer afford. In order for authentic reform to occur it is essential that schools retain an awareness of the all outcomes associated with engaging third age reform programs. School administrators, principals and teachers need the tools and skills promoted in this study to allow them to see the reality that lies beyond the rhetoric of individualism and accountability. This study has demonstrated that the work stories of teachers highlight the ramifications associated with engaging third age reforms, like CLaSS.

APPENDICIES

Appendix A – Ethics Approval

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne

⊕ ACU National

Human Research Ethics Committee

Committee Approval Form

Principal Investigator/Supervisor: Dr Lyn Carter   Melbourne Campus

Co-Investigators: Dr Max Stephens   Melbourne Campus

Student Researcher: Mr John Rafferty   Melbourne Campus

Ethics approval has been granted for the following project:
Dominant discourse and school improvement: The emergence of a dominant discourse associated with school programs, its adoption by schools and its effects on school improvement - A study of ClaSS

for the period: 8.4.2004 - 31.1.2005

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Register Number: V2003.04-67

The following standard conditions as stipulated in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* (1999) apply:

   (i)   that Principal Investigators / Supervisors provide, on the form supplied by the Human Research Ethics Committee, annual reports on matters such as:
- security of records
- compliance with approved consent procedures and documentation
- compliance with special conditions, and

   (ii)   that researchers report to the HREC immediately any matter that might affect the ethical acceptability of the protocol, such as:
- proposed changes to the protocol
- unforeseen circumstances or events
- adverse effects on participants

The HREC will conduct an audit each year of all projects deemed to be of more than minimum risk. There will also be random audits of a sample of projects considered to be of minimum risk on all campuses each year.

Within one month of the conclusion of the project, researchers are required to complete a *Final Report Form* and submit it to the local Research Services Officer.

If the project continues for more than one year, researchers are required to complete an *Annual Progress Report Form* and submit it to the local Research Services Officer within one month of the anniversary date of the ethics approval.

Signed: .... Date: 13 · 4 · 2004
        (Research Services Officer, Melbourne Campus)

Appendix B – Information to participants

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne

✚ ACU National

School of Education (Vic)

INFORMATION LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

TITLE OF PROJECT:
Dominant Discourse and School Improvement.
The emergence of a dominant discourse associated with school
programs, it's adoption by schools, and it's effects on school
improvement - a study of CLaSS

NAMES OF STAFF INVESTIGATORS or SUPERVISORS:
Dr Lyn Carter and Dr Max Stephens

NAME OF STUDENT RESEARCHER :
Mr John Rafferty

PROGRAMME IN WHICH ENROLLED:
Doctor of Education

This research project is concerned with determining the effects sector endorsed reform programs have on schools. This investigation relies on interviewing principals and teachers that are working in schools that have engaged a sector endorsed reform program and analysing the data from these interviews. In this instance the reform program in question is the Children's Literacy Success Strategy (CLaSS).

No risks are anticipated for participants of this research. The probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort experienced as a result of participating in this research are not greater than those encountered in ordinary daily life.

Participants will be asked to engage in an interview with the student researcher for thirty to forty minutes. The interviews will be audio taped. Some participants may be required for follow up interviews.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the complexity of schooling and the impact of sector endorsed programs on conceptions of teachers work, curriculum reform and school accountability. It seeks to question the philosophical positions that drive the development and appeal of sector endorsed reform programs. It seeks to ask what happens in schools and to schools when sector endorsed programs are adopted. This study helps open the reality of the lived experience in schools and allows alternative analyses of reform programs to occur. It is likely that the results of this research will be made public.

Participants in this research project are free to refuse consent altogether without having to justify that decision, or to withdraw consent and discontinue participation in the study at any time without giving a reason.

All interviews will be recorded on audio tape to ensure the accuracy of the data collection, capture the immediacy of the situation and protect the participant from misinterpretation. Transcripts of interviews

will be given to all interviewees to check authenticity, and all transcripts will be included as appendices.

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times and the real names of participants, schools or Diocese will not be revealed in the presentation of the data. Any information that might allow any link between particpants and the data will not be divulged.

Any questions regarding this project should be directed to the Principal Investigator or to the Supervisor and the Student Researcher

Investigator	Supervisor	Student Researcher
Dr. Lyn Carter	Dr. Max Stephens	Mr. John Rafferty
Lecturer	Honorary Research Fellow	Lecturer
School of Education (Vic)	School of Education (Vic)	Murray Education Unit
ACU	ACU	CSU
Locked Bag 4115 DC	Locked Bag 4115 DC	PO Box 789
Fitzroy	Fitzroy	Albury
VIC 3065	VIC 3065	NSW 2640
Australia	Australia	Australia
Phone 03 9953 3282	Phone 03 9953 3312	Phone 02 6051 6984

The final analysis of data and report on this research project will be available to particpants upon request.

This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University.

In the event that you have any complaint or concern about the way you have been treated during the study, or if you have any query that the Investigator or Supervisor and Student Researcher has not been able to satisfy, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee care of the nearest branch of the Research Services Unit.

VIC: Chair, HREC
            C/o Research Services
            Australian Catholic University
            Melbourne Campus
            Locked Bag 4115
            FITZROY VIC 3065
            Tel: 03 9953 3157
            Fax: 03 9953 3315

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. The Participant will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this project, you should sign both copies of the Consent Form, retain one copy for your records and return the other copy to the Investigator or Student Researcher.

Appendix C – Letter to Principals

⊕ ACU National

<u>School of Education (Vic)</u>

Mr John Rafferty
Doctor of Education Candidate
Australian Catholic University
Faculty of Education

Postal Address
PO Box 789
Albury NSW
2690
02 60 516 984

Dear Principal,

      I am looking for approval from you to contact teachers within your school in order to conduct research as part of the doctoral program I am enrolled in with Australian Catholic University. Please find enclosed the information letter I have prepared for potential participants. Please note that I will be approaching teachers that have had a commitment to the Children's Literacy Success Strategy (CLaSS) program.

My research is concerned with investigating the effects of the dominant discourse associated with reform programs and is not concerned with investigating the CLaSS program per se. The CLaSS program is, for the purposes of this study, simply a good example of contemporary reform programs. I am requesting permission to interview staff of your school who have shown a commitment to CLaSS and the results of the research will be freely available to you. At this stage I have not specifically identified the teachers that will be involved in this research.

Kind Regards

John Rafferty
Student Researcher

Dr. Lyn Carter
Principal Supervisor

Appendix D – Consent Forms

⊕ACU National

School of Education (Vic)

CONSENT FORM – PARTICPANT'S COPY

TITLE OF PROJECT:

Dominant Discourse and School Improvement.
The emergence of a dominant discourse associated with school programs, it's adoption by schools, and it's effects on school improvement - a study of CLaSS

NAMES OF SUPERVISORS:

Dr Lyn Carter and Dr Max Stephens

NAME OF RESEARCHER:
Mr John Rafferty

I .... *(the participant)* have read (*or, where appropriate*, have had read to me*)* and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction and I give consent for interviews between the researcher and myself to be audiotaped. I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw from the project before the 1st of September 2004. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: ....
(block letters)

SIGNATURE ....

DATE

NAMES/SIGNATURES OF SUPERVISORS:

DATE:

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER: ....

DATE:...

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne

⊕ ACU National

School of Education (Vic)

CONSENT FORM – RESEARCHER'S COPY

TITLE OF PROJECT:

Dominant Discourse and School Improvement.
The emergence of a dominant discourse associated with school
programs, it's adoption by schools, and it's effects on school
improvement - a study of CLaSS

NAMES OF SUPERVISORS:

Dr Lyn Carter and Dr Max Stephens

NAME OF RESEARCHER:
Mr John Rafferty

I .... *(the participant)* have read (*or, where appropriate,* have had read to
me*)* and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. Any questions I have asked
have been answered to my satisfaction and I give consent for interviews between the researcher and
myself to be audiotaped. I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I can withdraw from the
project before the 1st of September 2004. I agree that research data collected for the study may be
published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: ....
                                                                              (block letters)

SIGNATURE ....

DATE

NAMES/SIGNATURES OF SUPERVISORS:

DATE:

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER:...

DATE:...

Appendix E – Question Schedule

- The CLaSS documents talk directly about the role of the principal as motivator, and about enduring through the hard times, were there hard times during the implementation of CLaSS here?

- What would you expect a principal to do in the face of strong or enduring resistance?

- Have any teachers/colleagues wavered with their support? If so how is this (or would this be) handled?

- Why do you think schools move away from CLaSS?

- What would happen if a cluster of schools or classrooms said they are dropping CLaSS?

- The two hour literacy block seems to be quite rigid and structured (data driven lessons etc). What would you imagine a classroom would look like during this time?

- Has CLaSS altered the structure and practices of your classroom? Indeed has your professional behaviour changed since engaging CLaSS?

- Where would rate your classroom practice in relation to the CLaSS model

- What is the best aspect about CLaSS?

- What is the most challenging aspect of CLaSS?

- If a new situation arises and you could set your school/classroom practice totally independently, what would the literacy program look like in your school classroom?

Appendix F – Data Sample

Interview Principal C:

Interviewer: Why did the school decide to take on CLaSS?

Principal C: My first year at St Josephs was 2000. We had five new staff members, which was a pretty large turnover of staff. The results off literacy testing and pre-testing were very disappointing. We came together as a staff and I showed the results of the testing I asked the question, what are we to do with this school? Everybody then had the opportunity to brainstorm all their thoughts, and we probably came up with about 30 different options. Then we decided to do a categorisation of these options. We needed to determine which ideas were workable and which were rubbish. So we cut that list down to about six or seven plans of attack. Then we went away and did more research on the six or seven options we saw as workable. Now I had been using CLaSS program for the previous three years at my other school. I had used CLaSS at my previous school. I have seen the results the program provides and it was the best reform program I seen in Australia. The school decided that was one of the things we would do in 2001. We also began mongrelised version of Reading recovery in 2000 and officially went on Reading recovery in2001.

[Setting the scene. Responding to a flawed Culture.]

Interviewer: So we have a new principal and five new staff members. How did the initiation of CLaSS begin?

Principal C: We spent a lot of time talking about the history of the school ethos of the school. I was also the first lay principal as well. The sisters had been here110 years. It was important to acknowledge their legacy, we learnt a lot about St Joseph's School and what it was about.

[Fidelity to the model]

Interviewer: What was the priority for you in the initial stages?

Principal C: The priority was to change the culture of the school concerning teaching and learning. Prior to the engagement of CLaSS there was not a great emphasis on teaching and learning classrooms. So we needed to really push hard on professional development for the teachers, and then the whole school. The CLaSS formula has a really good supportive, professional development component. Our budget was quite solid. We were able to commit heavily to bringing huge amounts of literacy resources and teachers had to control over what materials they needed

[Renewed Vision, proper knowledge, proper knowledge,]

[Setting the scene, Responding to a flawed Culture,]

Basically we ran an audit of the whole school, and we purchased materials accordingly. We had to do that and we set a three-year plan. We had to improve our literacy results over the next three years and commit to spending money to do it.

[Single minded focus]

Interviewer: Was there any pre-testing carried out before you arrived, what was established the practice?

Principal C: Nothing like that happened. I was familiar with pre-testing from my previous school and I initiated it here. These test involved teachers having to be actually released from face-to-face classroom duties and given time so they could observe the children properly. It can get expensive it has to handle carefully.

[resource intensive]

Interviewer: How do you handle it?

Principal C: I prefer to arrange for teachers to be individually released from face to face teaching when testing. Whilst it is a cost of the school I think that it's really valuable. The teachers need to be with their children and have one-on-one time with them for testing.

Interviewer: So CLaSS offered lot of things for you that suited a particular need.

Principal C: Yes, very much, particularly with professional development and the teachers were willing to change.

Interviewer: What was your role in running CLaSS?

Principal C: My role is to be the convener and ensure that things are actually happening well. I need to meet with the CLaSS Coordinator weekly. We need to have a literacy meeting as well, each week with all the Prep to Year 2 teachers. The CLaSS Coordinator actually controls that meeting, but I am involved in it as well. I overview the results and discuss those with the CLaSS Coordinator. We also organise across the school to have all running records completed. The results of records are sent to a computer and I can connect up and examine the results of any child in a school and see what running record level they are on as well as their associated levels.

Interviewer: The CLaSS documentation talks about the principal as being a motivator listener problem solver does that fit in with what you do in those meetings?

Principal C: Yes, very much with the motivation side of things. I had two teachers, that were excellent Prep and Year One teachers, they had seven and eight years experience. So they were solid teachers really good people. They were not sure as to why we had to have CLaSS bought into the school. They asked lots of questions which was really healthy. We talked through a lot of issues relating to how the structure of the classroom, would change in the result program. These teachers were saying this was going to affect them in a lot of ways, there would be more parents in rooms for longer than previously experienced. They were willing to take all the issues on board and I remember this one statement after the a few months into CLaSS - 'I've never had children on such a high reading level at this stage of the year' I was really pleased to hear that. After those initial difficulties they really came out with the goods and are strong supporters of the program.

Interviewer: The CLaSS documentation, sometimes talks about low expectations and complacency as being an unavoidable consequence of a lack of pressure. Had you interpret that? Have you handle wavering commitment among the staff

Principal C: That is a really good point. Revisiting the provision and mission statement of the school was a perfect opportunity to reinvent ourselves as a school. We had to start with vision, we asked the community what was our vision? We're obviously had to understand and hear about the vision and mission of the sisters. One of the issues we

came up with in our school was we clearly wanted to be committed
excellence in teaching and learning. Every parent was involved in this
process, every school board member, and even every child in the school
was asked what they wanted from their school. That was all complied into
our vision statement, which took over seven months to do. In the very
first statement (vision and mission documents) we state we are committed
to excellence in teaching and learning. As a result, anything less is
not good enough - CLaSS provides a path to excellence in literacy
development, we are committed to it. I guess that we push this really
hard.

Interviewer: I get the idea then that your commitment to CLaSS helps
achieve that goal.

Principal C: We have one obligation with CLaSS, we do this for the
betterment of our children.

Interviewer: Has there actually been any staff with wavering commitment.

Principal C: No, I cannot say we have not had a block at during that
time. It has been really healthy that we actually produced good results.
CLaSS helped us address the problem. Everybody had to own this problem
before we could make a decent change. They (the whole staff) were happy
with the option we decided to go with. They had to agree with it before
we went ahead with it. So the process we went through is pretty healthy
and everyone is on board.

Interviewer: I would happen if someone really did become a blocker

Principal C: I would go back and revisit the reasons why we are doing
CLaSS with that person. The reason is to enhance the literacy standards
of the children, the whole community agreed. We have no excuses, we know
CLaSS works and we are committed to it for the betterment of the
children. It would be a difficult point to argue against.

Interviewer: What approaches are used by schools that do not use CLaSS.
I think all schools might have the pursuit of excellence in teaching and
learning at the core of their vision and mission statement with no
connection to CLaSS. There are a number of pathways for schools to take
to improve literacy. What attracts schools to use CLaSS?

Principal C: CLaSS is a very healthy model that can be used in any area
of school you want to look at and reform. Schools need to put a lot of
professional development towards, whatever they are going to do. They
need to have a lot of parent in-put they will need to have teacher
commitment, they will need to have appropriate resources, and they will
need to have good checking mechanisms to ensure what's going on. To say
that CLaSS is the be all and end all is not true. All reforms needs to be
supervised and provide quality instruction. CLaSS gives you a clear
pathway.

The CLaSS model actually insures that each of those components need for
reform happen. The Principal gets CLaSS professional development; the
CLaSS coordinator gets ongoing professional development and the teachers
get professional development. All this together combines to ensure that
we all walk the right path.Where CLaSS professional devlopemnt is

Setting the scene

Fidelity to the model, Setting the scene,

Renewed Vision

Responding to a flawed Culture

proper knowledge, proper knowledge,

Removing threats and managing people, Waivering support

new outlook higher cultural perspect

Ensuring compliance
Setting the scene

concerned and our understandings literacy is concerned we all hear the same thing.

Interviewer: So what you are saying is, if any reform program is to be successful it should have the core components contained in ClaSS?

Principal C: Yes, absolutely. I think any program that has those facilities occurring will be successful

Interviewer: It has been said, somewhat informally, that Diocesan schools not adopting ClaSS should not get literacy funding. What is your position on this?

Principal C: No, every school has its own needs. Literacy funding needs to be supplied to schools. It is up to the schools as to how they run their literacy. It is a huge ask on us to get Melbourne for the professional development. Teachers leave here at 6 a.m. in the morning to actually get Melbourne on time for the PD. Then they won't get home on until 7:30 p.m. It is a huge commitment. Financially it is very difficult as well, as these teachers have to be replaced during the day. But when you are committed and they have to do it.

Interviewer: Are principals of schools, who don't use ClaSS interested in what you do? All do ClaSS principals stick together a bit.

Principal C: It is interesting, before I first started the project I wanted to learn more about it as well. I made links with three ClaSS schools and asked about what was involved. Then as part of our Professional Development we actually sent our ClaSS teachers to ClaSS schools and non-ClaSS schools, just to actually compare early years literacy. That was really important in finding little differences. There are a lot of similarities between ClaSS and non-ClaSS schools, but there are some important differences.

Interviewer: What are some of those differences?

Principal C: Probably the team meetings are really essential in finding out how to solve particular teaching and learning problems with particular children. That probably doesn't happen in schools that do not use ClaSS. The testing is similar. The professional development component is very different. With ClaSS professional development is a big issue. We all hear the same thing, while other schools would not have the consistency that we have.

Interviewer: You get a consistent message from the professional development component?

Principal C: Yes that's right.

Interviewer: The weekly meetings are for teachers in the early years. How does ClaSS, fit within the rest of the school?

Principal C: When we initially started talking about ClaSS and what would be involved as far as resources go the middle a primary people want to make sure they have enough resources for their teaching as well. That

Setting the scene, Ensuring compliance,

Single minded focus

resource intensive

Cultivating image and putting down

resource intensive

was done. We had to ensure that they received professional development as well as they felt that might be left out. We had a fit in the Year 3-6 Teachers. Again, you it was really healthy for the early years teachers to come back from professional development with renewed ideas.

Over time it has been interesting to see teachers coming back from professional development training really fired up about an idea and after a couple of weeks of bubbling along there is a bit of a dip. The enthusiasm goes because they are not sure on how to continue with some of the theories theories. That's why we need to constantly keep meeting and talking about what should be happening in our classrooms. That tends to revitalise teachers and keep them on a steady flow.

Interviewer: As the children from the CLaSS classrooms moved through the school, did you notice any effect of this in the middle and upper primary classrooms?

Principal C: P-1-2 results had been outstanding, particularly in last couple of years. The flow on effect is that the children are more capable in year three to year six, which is a real bonus. Reading recovery certainly supported children with difficulties. We are trying to change some of the teaching and learning styles in Year three to Year 6. In P12 it is needs based teaching. So you have maybe five small groups in each CLaSS literacy block. That is not the way for the Year 3-6 teachers. Traditionally they have operated they remain more whole-class focused. So now and then from prep to Year 6 we teach whole class focus-small group focus- whole CLaSS focus. The Year 3 and 4 teachers think it is fantastic, and a working have a good knowledge of that model. In year five any six you want the kids to be a little more independent with their learning and to be able to work individually preparing themselves for secondary school as well as some group work. We need to work through a few of these issues with the upper primary. CLaSS has some benefits in those rooms too

Interviewer: Do you actually advocate CLaSS to other principals?

Principal C: We don't have a lot of discussions about CLaSS really with other schools. We seek out the schools that are doing the program well and talk to them. I have not really advocated the program to other schools.

Interviewer: Us there any need for such advocacy?

Principal C: Part of the professional development team's in the diocese is to provide schools with information about programs. They do that well. I would like so more formal advice about some of the newer programs. I am a little reluctant to jump on the first bandwagon. I like to see results. It was very helpful having the CLaSS coordinator in the CEO because that person could come in and actually check to see how the program was running. That person could have conversations with the principal and go into classrooms and check to see how things were travelling.

Interviewer: What was the measure your applied during this checking?

Principal C: The result from each year are graphed and compared with each

previous years. The results carefully chart any improvement. Some of the graphing I don't totally agree with, because part of it is dependent on the children you have in your classroom. For example, three children on integration will affect the results greatly. Because these children might not have the capability needed to achieve average status.

Interviewer: Was there ever a time when the test results were not what you expected?

Principal C: Probably the only concern we had was when we lost a couple of teachers who had been from the early years team. We had put bit more professional development to the new teachers. The new teachers had missed out on some of the professional development that was presented in the first couple of years. We had to revisit professional development constantly with new staff. As support from the CEO stopped our CLaSS coordinator had to do more professional development for the whole school. That was our biggest challenge and a plateau effect happen to our results.

Interviewer: Was there any other differences?

Principal C: We lost our CLaSS coordinator and she was a gun. Fortunately, the person who picked it up is also very strong, and everything was in place for her to continue. We have a lack of freedom with our staffing schedule this year coupled with this the school is getting bigger and that means it's difficult to provide the release time needed by the CLaSS coordinator.

Interviewer: So how does the new coordinator operate?

Principal C: She works really hard and I am trying to give her more time to develop professional develop opportunities for the rest of the staff.

Interviewer: Many schools in the diocese picked up CLaSS initially that some of then dropped-off and don't follow the program any more. What he thinks of the schools dropped the program?

Principal C: A lack of support from the office may have been part of that. The message may or may not have been sent out that CLaSS wasn't that important. Probably though the biggest challenge, I found and I think the same would be found by most principals, is the challenge of getting teachers to Melbourne for the professional development. It's just a huge cost itself. The cost involved with getting emergency teachers in for the day is huge. I know there was talk of getting professional development occurring in one of the bigger centres nearby to make it easier on country people but that has not come to fruition unfortunately.

Interviewer: The costs to be involved in the program can be prohibitive?

Principal C: Yes, definitely general funding is being reduced over the past years to causing a bit of extra angst with trying to balance the budget.

Interviewer: So to stick with the parameters set by the program takes some financial backing on the part of the school?

Fidelity to the model

resource intensive

resource intensive

resource intensive

Principal C: Yes, it is financially challenging for sure especially considering you are trying to get in as many resources as you can.

Interviewer: What's the future of this school with ClaSS?

Principal C: The ClaSS program here is very strong. We are in the third year now and we have to take responsibility for our own professional development from here on. It's important we keep our ClaSS grouping and relationship with other ClaSS schools very strong. We need to stick with other ClaSS schools and see what they are doing well and keep improving ourselves. This is probably the area we got the most out of any way – our teachers visiting other ClaSS schools was fantastic professional development. There are a couple of schools that do ClaSS really well and we try to visit them often.

Interviewer: That is interesting. Is there an implication that there are some schools who use ClaSS better than other schools.

Principal C: I guess it comes back to leadership and I know that he principals of those schools and at a very committed to ClaSS. In fact there commitment to ClaSS is quite outstanding. But also know another school that doesn't use ClaSS they use Early Years and we will go and visit them as well.

Interviewer: What measure do you apply when rating schools?

Principal C: The results will come if the teachers are using the a good model in the classroom. That's what I'm interested. That's why we go to schools. To see how they get improved results.

Interviewer: I'm in conclusion is ready nearby to add about the ClaSS program.

Principal C: I think it's important that we continue with the level of personal development in the school. I'm really pleased that even if the new teachers have coming to the school are enthusiastic about what we do and how we do it. That enthusiasm comes from the existing staff. Whilst it is a challenging model and an expensive model. I think that it's very worthwhile because it benefits the children so much.

Interviewer: Do you identify yourself as a ClaSS school?

Principal C: Yes we do. Although, we don't publicise our test results. New teachers and new parents have ClaSS explained to them. During introductory tours for new enrolements, we explain the ClaSS model carefully and make a point of letting prospective parents know that we do literacy particularly well.

Interviewer: What would happen if the results were lower than expected?

Principal C: We would have to find out why, so we would go through the model and see which part of the model we are not doing well. Their needs to be constant improvement with ClaSS. We would analyse poor results and examine how well we are implementing the model.

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