Curriculum Reform Coverage in *The Montreal Gazette*:

A Content Analysis of Two Phases of Implementation

Rachel Scherzer

A Thesis in the Department of Education

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Arts (Educational Technology) at

Concordia University

Montreal, Quebec, Canada

April 2012

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
School of Graduate Studies

This is to certify that the thesis prepared

By: Rachel Scherzer

Entitled: Curriculum Reform Coverage in *The Montreal Gazette*: A Content Analysis
             of Two Phases of Implementation

And submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts (Educational Technology)

Complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect
to originality and quality.

Signed by the final Examining Committee:

	Chair
Dr. Saul Carliner	
	Examiner
Dr. Ann-Louise Davidson	
	Examiner
Dr. Richard Schmid	
	Supervisor
Dr. Vivek Venkatesh	
	Supervisor
Dr. David Waddington	

Approved by   _____
                Dr. Richard Schmid
                Chair of Department or Graduate Program Director

_____ 2012   _____
                                            Dr. Brian Lewis
                                            Dean of Faculty

Abstract

Curriculum Reform Coverage in *The Montreal Gazette*:

A Content Analysis of Two Phases of Implementation

Rachel Scherzer

In 2000, the province of Quebec launched a substantial curriculum reform combining a "back to basics" approach with progressive principles that drew some initial approval in the media. During its implementation, however, the reform became an increasingly contentious topic, culminating in the education minister publicly suggesting it was a failure less than a decade later. In order to identify and evaluate the leading sources of discord, this study looked at opinion statements about the curriculum reform appearing in *The Montreal Gazette*, and compared findings with the literature on educational change as well as key planning and policy documents. It found that discourse about the reform in *The Gazette* was largely negative in the years leading up to implementation at the elementary level, and pessimism intensified ahead of the later implementation at the secondary level, as did misinformation about the reform's principles and practices. Furthermore, many of the contested aspects were anticipated by the literature. At minimum, improved communication and collaboration seems necessary in order to nurture the dissemination of the new philosophy of education and the pedagogical practices it entails, and to prevent the reform from falling victim to premature perceptions that it has altogether failed.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Introduction

Though the ambitious curriculum reform launched by the province of Quebec in 2000 initially drew some cautious support, the subsequent decade saw an onslaught of criticism. By early 2010, the reform effort was effectively labeled a failure when Education Minister Michelle Courchesne called for a return to "the good old system" in a radio interview (Lewkowicz, 2010).[1] There was a perceived need for change in the Quebec school system in order to increase academic rigour, modernize the curriculum, and remedy the province's high dropout rate by making learning more engaging for students, and the new curriculum was designed to address all these issues. The gap between early endorsement of the reform in its theoretical form and later demands for abandonment of the effort suggests a tumultuous if not ineffective implementation process, and an understanding of what went wrong is necessary to improve further or future reform efforts. This study looks to the province's only English-language daily newspaper, *The Montreal Gazette*, for insight into the sources of contention in the course of the reform's implementation at the primary and secondary levels through a content analysis of reform coverage. As an enduring record of events and opinions throughout the implementation

---

[1] Despite Michelle Courchesne's assessment of the reform, the effort was not abandoned. The curriculum reform in Quebec underwent further modifications under the subsequent education minister, Line Beauchamp, who took over the post in August 2010 and became the sixth education minister to inherit the reform agenda.

process, the newspaper offered a unique historical perspective of public discourse that revealed a general trend of increasing distrust, negativity and misinformation in commentary on multiple aspects of the reform.

Overview of the Reform

The curriculum reform was part of a larger package of systemic changes[2] designed to

---

[2] The report of the Task Force on Curriculum Reform titled R*eaffirming the Mission of Our Schools* (also known as the Inchauspé Report) defined curriculum as follows:

> The word "curriculum" refers to all those activities designed to provide students with learning in a given education system. By the same token, it refers to the choices that were made in determining the relative importance or place of each of the subjects to be taught...The word "curriculum" also refers to the overall content on the basis of which the programs of study are designed. By extension, it encompasses three of the elements that structure the actual curriculum as it is dispensed in the classroom: the system for establishing programs, the evaluation of student learning and the certification of studies. (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 13)

In this study, curriculum reform is understood as distinct from other components of school reform in that the changes concern the programs of study (i.e. the Quebec Education Program for the elementary and secondary levels), including the development and delivery of instruction and the assessment of educational outcomes. This study is concerned only with the curricular component of the larger systemic reform that took place in Quebec, and so in this document "the reform" refers specifically to the curriculum reform unless otherwise noted.

overhaul and modernize the Quebec education system unveiled in October 1996 by Pauline

Marois, who was the province's education minister from 1996 to 1998. Some of the changes,

like the introduction of full-day kindergarten for five-year-olds in 1997, were somewhat less

contentious than others such as the 1998 shift from denominational school boards to linguistic

ones—a move that saw the overall number of boards reduced and schools closed as the system

was streamlined and the student population redistributed. At the same time, the government

attempted to decentralize educational decision-making through such measures as the creation

of governing boards composed of parents and community members in addition to educators

and school staff. By the time the new curriculum came into effect in September 2000, politicians,

educators and parents were already wary of the onslaught of alterations to the education

system the president of one teachers' association described as "too much, too soon, to be

considered digestible" (Wilson, 1997, p. B3).

The curriculum itself was developed through a multi-stage process of research,

consultations, and planning, beginning with the public hearings held by the Commission for the

Estates General on Education on the future course of education in Quebec over six months in

1995. The report produced based on its findings, *The State of Education in Québec* (États

Généraux sur l'Éducation), defined the goals of education as follows (Gouvernement du Québec,

1996):

- *Instruction*: Defined as "intellectual development and the teaching of basic skills."

- *Socialization*: The transmission of "cultural heritage" and "the values on which our

  society is based."

- *Preparation for the exercise of various roles in society*: Encompassing employment as well as citizenship in a democratic society.

These fundamental goals were adopted and further fleshed out by the Task Force on Curriculum Reform, a group convened by the government for the purpose of proposing how the curriculum should be shaped based on the recommendations of the Commission for the Estates General on Education. Its 1997 report *Reaffirming the Mission of Our Schools* (popularly referred to as the "Inchauspé Report" after task force chair Paul Inchauspé) set forth the principles, structure and content that form the basis of the QEP. The report recommended that the curriculum and instruction focus on students' intellectual development and skills for lifelong learning in addition to mastery of key areas of knowledge (Inchauspé, 1997). In accordance with its mandate, it sought to address the issue of Quebec's diverse student population and high grade retention and dropout rates by raising standards in core subject areas while helping more students meet these standards through instruction that stimulates intellectual curiosity, is culturally and socially relevant, and upholds "commitment to democracy" (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 33) as a common, secular value.

To this end, the Inchauspé Report proposed a more interdisciplinary model of curriculum along with a set of broad skills to be developed within all subject areas, which the report referred to as "cross-curricular learning" (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 52). These cross-curricular skills and the types of content the task force suggested for their application are compiled in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Components of Cross-Curricular Learning as Proposed by the Inchauspé Report (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 116-125)

Cross-Curricular Skills	Suggested Cross-Curricular Content
- Intellectual Skills - Methodological Skills - Social Skills - Language-Related Skills	- Consumer Education - Health Education - Environmental Education - Citizenship Education - Media Education - Educational and Vocational Information - Intercultural Education - International Understanding - New Information and Communications Technologies

The task force also advocated grouping grades into cycles with specific learning targets. The rationale was that replacing a single-year grade with a two-year cycle would allow greater continuity and flexibility in instruction and also better accommodate learners' needs and the pace of their development, all of which was expected to increase student success and decrease grade retention. The task force further envisioned increased collaboration between educators for each cycle in order to foster innovation and create a network of support for students (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 38-39). This radically different approach to the content and organization of the curriculum would ultimately become an integral part of the QEP.

The Inchauspé Report was a preliminary document and by no means a fully realized map of the new curriculum. It acknowledged that a curriculum revision would have ramifications for the evaluation of learning, the designation of teaching methods and materials, pre-service teacher training and in-service professional development that would require further planning on the part of the government. It also noted potential problems in implementation, namely the need for a curriculum that provides enough structure to maintain standards without being so rigid that it discourages creativity and adaptability, the need to ensure the suitability of "direction, coordination and control functions" (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 75) in the process of reform implementation, and the need to include teachers in the development of changes in order to facilitate and encourage the application of the reform in practice.

These points raised by the task force were only partially addressed in the government's subsequent educational policy statement, *Quebec Schools on Course*. This document stated the mission of Quebec's schools in the terms that would appear in the QEP, endorsed the principles of a more rigorous approach to core content complemented by cross-curricular skills, a stronger cultural component, a commitment to student success, and fostering the skills and attitudes associated with lifelong learning (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 1997).

The questions of evaluation, educational materials, teacher training and professional development were raised in a section titled "Necessary Adjustments" (p. 29), but primarily as details to be sorted out at a later time. The document did recommend the creation of an advisory committee to assist the government in the management of teaching materials, and contained a pledge to create a provincial curriculum board charged with the development, implementation and monitoring of the new school program (p. 28), which was slated to be

6

applied in grade-one classes as of September 1999 (p. 103).

The Québec Education Program that was drawn up with the input of the curriculum advisory panel assembled in early 1998, the Commission des Programmes d'Études (CPE), was actually introduced in schools in the fall of 2000—although commentary in the media suggests many would have preferred more lead time. The QEP defined the mission of schools as "to provide instruction with renewed conviction," "to socialize, to prepare students to live together in harmony," and "to provide qualifications through a variety of options" (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p. 3). It grouped the core curriculum into five subject area: languages; mathematics, science and technology; social sciences; arts education; and personal development. The components of cross-curricular learning proposed by the Inchauspé Report were sorted into "cross-curricular competencies" (which the QEP defines as "set[s] of behaviours based on the effective mobilization and use of a range of resources" (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p. 12)), and "broad areas of learning" ("which correspond to various student needs or interests and also reflect social expectations regarding education" (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p. 42)). These are listed in Table 2 below.[3]

---

[3] Illustrations of the components of the QEP and their relationship to one another can be found at: http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/dfgj/dp/programme_de_formation/primaire/pdf/educprg2001/summary_table.pdf (elementary level) and http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/DGFJ/dp/programme_de_formation/secondaire/pdf/qep2004/summaryQEPfirstcycle.pdf (secondary level).

Table 2. Cross-Curricular Competencies and Broad Areas of Learning in the QEP (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001)

Cross-Curricular Competencies	Broad Areas of Learning
• Intellectual Competencies • Methodological Competencies • Personal and Social Competencies • Communication-Related Competencies	• Health and Well-Being • Personal and Career Planning • Environmental Awareness and Consumer Rights and Responsibilities • Media Literacy • Citizenship and Community Life

The new curriculum was paradoxically touted as a "return to the basics" and at the same time a modernization of education (Thompson, 1996, p. A1). It was to be modernized in purpose by preparing students as participants in a knowledge-based economy and a pluralistic, democratic society. Even more impactful was its progressive and constructivist approach to learning and teaching, which the QEP explicitly acknowledged as influences (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p. 4-5). This was to be a shift not only in the daily affairs of education but in the very culture of schooling.

Those involved in education were generally approving of the curricular changes at the outset. They commented that the government's plan "incorporates the best suggestions for curriculum reform made over the past five years" (Moore, 1007, p. A8), "has much merit" (Wilson, 1997, p. B3) and "deserves to fare better than its predecessors" (Chambers, 1997, p. B3). It was in the course of its implementation that criticisms were increasingly levelled at the

changes being made, and the voices expressing their apprehension and displeasure were not limited to teachers, unions and administrators. What seems sound in theory does not always translate easily into practice, or as McGill University education professor Norman Henchey explained, "The real world of education is shaped by a series of tensions between different systems of rhetoric and technique" (Henchey, 2000, p. A8).

Education is public and political, and it would be unrealistic to expect societal consensus regarding its aims or methods. However, if Quebec's print media is to be believed, an array of individuals did manage to form some degree of consensus regarding the existence of serious shortcomings in the province's most recent curriculum reform.

The Present Study

This study is premised on the idea that opinions expressed in the media are an often overlooked part of public discourse on education and can provide an additional avenue for gauging people's reaction to educational reforms. It is common for contemporary studies of educational change to access opinion on reform efforts at the site of implementation, i.e. within schools, and their findings are reported to the limited audience that reads educational research. The media, in contrast, is a public forum in which many different kinds of people participate, whether actively or as spectators. Opinions expressed in this venue enter into the public consciousness and the public record.

The study consists of a content analysis of items (news stories, op-eds, letters to the editor, editorials, etc.) about Quebec's curriculum reform appearing in *The Montreal Gazette* around the time of its implementation in primary schools (1996-2000) and in secondary schools

(2003-2006). By isolating positive and negative opinion statements, it identifies those aspects of the reform that were well-received or rejected by various actors at various times and investigates how public discourse about the reform unfolded and evolved in the media. Furthermore, this less conventional approach to accessing information about people's perceptions of and responses to educational change serves to demonstrate how other sources of opinion about the reform such as the media can contribute to our understanding of how reforms succeed and fail.

Literature Review

The review of the literature will take both a conceptual and methodological focus. The first section features an overview of considerations in the implementation of educational change commonly raised by key authors of historical or theoretical accounts of contemporary North American school reform. This is intended to situate the 2000 curriculum reform in Quebec by highlighting the characteristics of preceding reform efforts as well as the knowledge and theories that emerged from them. It also serves as a point of comparison in the analysis of the Quebec reform.

The second section synthesizes recent scholarly studies of the implementation of educational change to ascertain what research methods they employ. It also evaluates the relative advantages and disadvantages of these methodological approaches to educational research and the analysis of media content employed in the present study.

Challenges of Reform Efforts

A number of authors have studied educational change efforts carried out in North

America over the past century and reported on the reforms' successes, failures and challenges.

A survey of the literature seems to suggest the successes are limited and fleeting, and what

emerges is a narrative of educational change stymied and challenged at every stage. The

challenges begin in the planning stage, with the difficult task of defining the goals of education

and developing a curriculum and pedagogy tailored to them. In implementation the problems

seem to lie primarily in praxis, or in more practical terms, transmitting reform directives from

the government down to the classroom. Once implementation is well underway there is a need

to evaluate the success of a reform effort, but it can be difficult to develop appropriate

measures. Yet another complication is the tendency of those planning reform to set schedules

or benchmarks for its completion, while educational change is a complex and often lengthy

process. As a result, what might more appropriately be approached as a formative evaluation of

a reform in progress is at times more akin to a post-mortem of a finished reform. The following

explores the issues involved in the three stages of planning, implementation and evaluation in

greater detail.

Planning

The planning stage of school reform is problematic since there is little consensus

regarding the aims of education, let alone how to achieve them (Cremin, 1961; Dewey,

1916/1997). In *How Teachers Taught* (1993), Larry Cuban explained that twentieth-century

education was shaped at various times and to different degrees by the drive to implant the

young with pre-existing religious and cultural knowledge, values and beliefs, the need to train

children in the skills and knowledge needed to function within the dominant culture and become good workers and citizens, and the desire to nurture the abilities of each individual student. Labaree (1997) similarly conceptualized the primary purposes of education as democratic equality (including notions of citizenship, equality and "prepar[ing] people for political roles"), social efficiency ("designed to prepare workers to fill structurally necessary market roles" for mutual economic benefit with society) and social mobility ("prepar[ing] individuals for successful social competition for the more desirable market roles") (p. 41). According to Labaree, the democratic equality view of education has led schools in the United States to focus on producing American (or Americanized) citizens through an educational system that offered both equal treatment and equal access for students of any socioeconomic status, and later of any sex, religion, age, ethnicity, or ability (p. 44-45). In the interest of social efficiency, meanwhile, schools emphasized job training and also differentiation between educational levels, including between and within institutions at each level (p. 47-49). Labaree departs from Cuban, however, on the third driver of education. While both focus on the individual, the goal of social mobility contains overtones of utility and competitiveness not inherent in the goal of bringing out the best in each child. Labaree associated the goals of democratic equality and social efficiency with a view of education as a public good, and social mobility with education as a private good. His intention was to warn of the dangers of excessive emphasis on social mobility, which he argued subordinates learning to the acquisition of credentials needed to get ahead. More relevant here, though, is Labaree's observation that these goals are in conflict with one another and that their coexistence makes it impossible for any of them to be fully attained since any gains in one will necessarily compromise another.

The conceptualizations presented by Cuban and Labaree echo elements of Dewey (1916/1997), who described three popular—and disparate—sources of aims in education: nature, i.e. individuals' natural physical, cognitive and intellectual development; social efficiency, comprising vocational training and citizenship; and culture, which for Dewey also involved "complete development of personality" (p. 121). Dewey objected to the imposition of an overarching and predetermined purpose for education, arguing instead that "the object and reward of learning is continued capacity for growth" (p. 100), which is aligned with the QEP's goal of "the development of flexible intellectual tools that can be adjusted to changes and be used in the acquisition of new learnings" (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p. 4). Dewey favoured the flexible and responsive determination of current and local needs on an ongoing basis, noting that "the statement of aim is a matter of emphasis at a given time" (p. 111), and is prompted by the desire to rectify a presently perceived deficiency or flaw.

Dewey is regarded as a pioneer in progressive education, which despite its recognized problems has been a recurrent solution to the woes of education in the twentieth century. The Quebec curriculum reform itself was strongly influenced by progressive ideas, a full century after the publication of "My Pedagogic Creed," Dewey's essay delineating his beliefs. Progressive education has sought to address different problems through different means at various times, but Diane Ravitch (2000) sums up four main principles behind the movement: 1) a scientific approach to education; 2) education based on the "innate needs and nature of the child"; 3) the moulding of the young according to the present requirements of society; 4) education as an important force in social change (p. 60). This is an apt synthesis of the threads taken up at one time or another, and ironically it comes from an author who saw progressive education as a

source of problems rather than solutions, and characterized it as anti-academic.

Even supporters have been well aware of the "self-contradictory" (Cremin, 1961, p. 22) nature of progressivism, which according to Labaree (1997) stems from its attempt to reconcile the goals of democratic equality and social mobility (p. 63). Regardless of its muddled aims and manifestations, Ravitch acknowledged the contribution of progressive educators (but not progressive *education*): "emphasizing students' motivation and understanding and making schools responsible for the health and general welfare of children" (p. 463). In contrast, Ravitch commends the so-called traditionalists' role in "insisting upon the democratic responsibility of the school to promote the intellectual growth of all children" (p. 463). If, as Dewey suggested, new aims are defined in response to a perceived problem with the current state of affairs, how is it that champions of tradition like Ravitch call for "more attention to fundamental, time-tested truths" (Ravitch, 2000, p.453) as a solution?

Inherent in this statement are the assumptions that traditional models of education are established, familiar, and proven. This sense of trust and familiarity has been cited as one of the reasons it is difficult to change what has been termed the "common script" of a "real school" (Metz, 2008) and "the grammar of schooling" (Tyack and Tobin, 1994; Tyack and Cuban, 1997). These predictable and recognizable methods and structures in education have been generally accepted or assumed as the norm (Tyack and Tobin, 1994). Staples of education such as single-grade classrooms, rows of desks, lectures and report cards are so entrenched and taken for granted that "it is the *departure* from customary school practice that attracts attention" (Tyack and Cuban, 1997, p. 85) because it so fundamentally violates popular notions of what school is and therefore should be. Cohen (1998) expressed a more dire form of the same idea when he

said that reforms have been viewed as an "imposition" by parents, teachers and students who "have deep loyalties" to those aspects of education that are the targets of change (Cohen, 1989, p. 48). Indeed, the real school acts as a template for education for all who have experienced it, and can be especially persuasive for those who were able to perform and achieve within it. This includes those who help shape the educational agenda (Metz, 2008, p. 147), and teachers, for whom this model also acts as a ready reference for navigating educational practice and making sense of reforms (Cuban, 1993; Tyack & Cuban, 1997; Cohen, 1998; Labaree, 2008).

The Quebec Education Program was founded upon all the aforementioned goals of education. It strived to promote a varied menu of democratic ideals of citizenship and equality, vocational skills, cultural awareness and appreciation, fundamental knowledge, lifelong learning, and student success leading to the acquisition of academic credentials. It also involved drastic changes to the traditional grammar of schooling, such as grouped grade levels, integrated subject areas, a broader and more flexible array of educational materials, and an emphasis on learning skills. In light of this, one could surmise that it would be difficult to find ready acceptance of the new curriculum among the general public, and especially among supporters of traditional education.

Implementation

Mandated reform efforts seem prone to friction from the very beginning of implementation because they are formulated by one group and subsequently imposed on another. While educational change does also evolve naturally and organically within districts, schools and classrooms, Elmore and McLaughlin (1988, p. 10) noted that there has been increasing emphasis on reforms originating in policy since the 1960s. Using various cases of

progressive reform as examples, Labaree (2008) looked for evidence of effective

implementation of educational change through four levels of the education hierarchy, reform

rhetoric, formal structure, classroom practice, and student learning. He found that efforts

tended to either rely on the policy and structure of schooling to shape teaching and learning or

leave the structure of education intact and seek to change what happened in the classroom.

While neither of these partial solutions seemed successful, Labaree observed that classroom

practice was where reform tended to get stuck. In addition to the absence of the usual external

motivators of the workplace (e.g. promotions and raises) in the teaching profession, teachers

have some deeply personal reasons for being wary of change.

In many cases, reforms demand a shift not just in day to day practices, but in the beliefs

and attitudes about education that underpin how things are done. Labaree asserted that

teaching methods are so intimately linked to teachers' identity that an attempt at "changing

how they teach is akin to changing who they are" (2008, p. 130). This is evidently beyond the

scope of what simple instructions or guidelines contained in reform directives or manuals can

achieve. While teachers are often faulted for failing to conform to reform efforts, policymakers

are accused of planning change that fails to account for the realities of the classroom, from

which they are far removed (Fullan, 2007; Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

Adequate communication and collaboration have been suggested as possible means for

mitigating the situation. In *The New Meaning of Educational Change*, Fullan proposed

"addressing [conceptions and behaviour] on a continuous basis through communities of

practice" (2007, p. 37). He implied that beliefs are not readily changed at the outset, but this

may come about through contact with new ways of doing things, reflection on practice, and

collaboration with others, and that this is key for enduring change. There are other supporters

of the value of communication and collaboration within the field of education, including Cohen

(1989) and Tyack and Cuban (1995), but it was Peter Senge (1990), writing about organizational

learning in the corporate world, who eloquently captured the ideal end of cooperation in an

endeavour: commitment to a common vision. Commitment, said Senge, involves "feeling fully

responsible for making the vision happen" (p. 218), in contrast with enrolment (the desire to

realize a vision without a sense of personal ownership) or mere compliance. Senge later applied

these concepts to education in *Schools that Learn* (2000), in which he described "a process of

involving everyone together in deciding and developing the future of the school system" (p. 290).

If the solution is so simple, how is it not standard practice? Fullan (1997) explained that much of

teachers' time is taken up by the basic day-to-day tasks of their profession, and they "constantly

feel the critical shortage of time" (p. 24). In other words, large workloads and time constraints

make it difficult to allocate additional time to formal collaboration, and this is only amplified by

the demands placed on teachers during periods of change. Cuban (1993) summarized the major

disincentives for teachers to adopt change as "the personal cost in time and energy and the lack

of help to put complex ideas into practice" (p. 265). If collaboration is viewed as a form of

support, then a lack of time to communicate and share with colleagues likely compounds the

challenges in attempting change.

The larger community's role in implementation has not been given nearly as much

attention in accounts of reform as what goes on within schools and within the administrative

structures underpinning them. Historians often note when there was dissent or cite it as a factor

in the demise of a reform, but stop at explicitly discussing the mechanisms through which the

general public exerts an influence on reform, whether positive or negative. There is, however, recognition of the value and importance of external support. For example, on the topic of progressive reforms in American education, Counts (1929) remarked, "Unless it reaches down into the substratum of society and taps the deep-flowing currents of social life, it can only be another pedagogical experiment…destined for an early grave" (p.68). Tyack and Tobin (1994) spoke of the same idea from the perspective of reaching out to the public rather than taking a cue from it: "Failure to enlist the support and ideas of the community was especially harmful for fundamental reforms that violated the public's notion of a 'real school'" (p. 477). Taken together, they suggest that listening to and communicating with the wider community can help build a broader base of support for reforms, and especially ones that are a more marked departure from the familiar approaches to education.

Evaluation

The final stumbling block in educational change is tangible evidence of the success of a reform; a lack of this evidence can lead to the abandonment of a reform effort. Labaree remarked that reform "needs to transform the learning that students take away from their classroom if it is going to be declared a success" (2008, p. 109). This learning is normally measured using standardized tests administered at certain points in students' academic careers, but that is but one definition of learning and of success and is not necessarily the best indicator of whether a reform has met its goals. Tyack and Cuban (1996) instead used a triad of criteria in their evaluation of case studies: "fidelity to the original design; effectiveness in meeting preset outcomes; and longevity" (p. 61). While this three-pronged approach is perhaps more robust, problems still remain. As a measure of success, fidelity seems to value rigidity over timely and

18

flexible adaptations that may need to be made during implementation and in accordance with local conditions. "Preset outcomes" is likely to involve academic achievement, regardless of whether this is commensurate with the stated goals of a reform. Looking at the stated aims of the Quebec Education Program, for example, class marks and scores on standardized tests might be indicators of knowledge acquisition, but they cannot adequately capture whether students have been instilled with the values of democracy and responsible citizenship or are prepared for their desired role in the economic life of society.

Longevity may be a more realistic measure of the success of a reform, but it does not allow policymakers to quickly gauge results. Various timelines for the implementation of educational change have been proposed. At the shorter end of the spectrum, Fullan (2007) suggested two to four years are needed to achieve "moderately complex change" and five to ten years for more complex efforts (p. 68). In contrast, Mort and Cornell (1941) found that the diffusion of reforms can take up to fifty years (as cited in Tyack and Cuban, 1995). Others do not quantify the amount of time required to fully implement educational change and simply refer to the implementation process as lengthy, which is not particularly revealing given that Fullan (2007) described it this way as well.

Further complicating the evaluation of change is that reforms can look different in practice from how they were originally mapped out. This results from partial adoption of changes, the blending of new practices with existing ones, including artifacts of previous reforms, and the adaptation of reforms to the local context (Cuban, 1993; Tyack and Cuban, 1995; Fullan, 2007). Representing the policymaker's perspective, Elmore and McLaughlin (1988) asserted that variability in implementation is both inevitable and informative. Whether it stems from

resistance to change or, more constructively, from its flexible application to the situation at hand to increase educational effectiveness, variability acts as feedback and "provides opportunity for policymakers to capitalize on the conditions that support productive variation and to minimize or correct conditions associated with disappointing or inappropriate practice" (p. 52).

Cohen (1989) offered a unique perspective on the evaluation of reforms that is instructive for practice. He challenged reformers' assumption "that they worked close to the culmination of a great but swift change" when in fact they "are probably working near the beginning of a great, slow change" (p. 53). Unlike a reform that is fixed and complete, an effort that is in progress requires ongoing reflection, planning and adjustment. It involves openness to criticism and recognition that missteps are part of the process. To judge a reform effort as a finished reform, cautioned Cohen, is to "create an illusory sense of failure" (p. 54).

Current Investigations of Reform Implementation

A review of contemporary research assessing curriculum reforms reveals that very few studies use documents as a main source of data. There is a preference for qualitative investigations based on relatively small case studies, with some studies using questionnaires for the collection and statistical analysis of data from a larger sample.

To ascertain which methodologies were commonly employed in investigations similar to

the present study, 41 studies of curriculum reforms from 2000 onward[4] were selected from

among the results of an ERIC search using the subject headings "Educational Change AND

(Curriculum Implementation OR Curriculum Development)" in combination with

"implementation" as a keyword. The 41 articles were chosen because they studied the

implementation of broad-scale reforms affecting at minimum an entire district and seeking to

reconceptualize teaching and learning throughout the curriculum, so that the nature of the

change was more or less comparable to that of the Quebec reform. While 41 articles might

seem like a small number for just over a decade worth of research, it is important to keep in

mind that educational research tends to look at contemporary issues, and so research was

carried out for the most part in those locales where educational change had recently been

initiated. In at least 29 of the 41 studies, the research project was undertaken within ten years

of the launch of the reform in question, and often within six years or less.

All but eight of the studies used a school setting as the site for their research, which

meant that the participants were almost exclusively teachers and administrators. Some studies

also included students or parents, and to a lesser degree other individuals directly involved in

education such as consultants and government officials. All eight studies that did not use

schools as research sites employed only documents for their investigation. They looked at policy

documents, books and other studies to examine the larger social and political context of

educational change, effective and ineffective implementation strategies, and governmental

---

[4] The 41 articles considered here are listed in Appendix I.

orientations and planning. In two additional instances, researchers used data gathered for other

studies to answer a new research question. Documentary research was also used for

longitudinal and historical studies. There is clearly a niche for documentary research as it seems

particularly well-suited for the investigation of particular types of research questions. It is also a

means for accessing a large variety of data from a diversity of sources, yet it is not as popular as

other approaches.

Educational research in general seems to favour interviews, questionnaires and

observation as primary sources of data, and documentary research is most often used in a

limited and complementary fashion. There is support for this observation elsewhere. The

National Science Foundation (NSF), for example, produced a handbook for the evaluation of its

educational projects in which it listed document studies under "other qualitative methods" that

it described as "less common but, nonetheless, potentially useful" (Frechtling & Sharp, 1997,

Chapter 3). In *Documentary Research in Education, History and the Social Sciences*, McCulloch

(2004) asserted that "a number of commentators in recent years have noted a distinct lack of

interest in the use of documents in educational and social research" and that this disinterest

"has been reflected partly in the scarcity of documentary-based studies, and also in the scant

attention given to documents in most social research methods texts" (p. 10).

McCulloch traced the origin of the decline in the use of documentary research to the

middle of the twentieth century, when social science researchers "who were preoccupied with

individual, personal issues" turned to interviews in order to gain direct access to the people and

issues of interest, and "those researchers who were more concerned with the overall

development of states and societies rediscovered the use of statistical data" (p. 19-20).

Researchers increasingly modeled their research on the methodologies of other disciplines that were closely related to their lines of inquiry, including psychology, sociology and anthropology.

There are also disadvantages to documentary research, most notably that the gathering and analysis of texts can be time consuming and often involves sifting through large amounts of material, of which only a fraction might be relevant to the research question (McCulloch, 2004; Frechtling & Sharp, 1997, Chapter 3). McCulloch remarked that researchers have found the process "mysterious, frustrating and boring" (McCulloch, 2004, p. 22). However, the news is not all bad. Researchers may have viewed documents as records of the past and therefore less suitable for contemporary social research, as McCulloch explained, but the National Science Foundation saw value in a "record or history not subject to recall bias" and deemed documentary research "useful for determining value, interest, positions, political climate, public attitudes, historical trends or sequences" (Frechtling & Sharp, 1997, Chapter 3). The findings of documentary research encompassing multiple sources or in combination with other research methods, according to McCulloch, strengthen social science research through "triangulation and methodological pluralism" (McCulloch, 2004, p. 110). It is in this spirit that this study seeks to fill the methodological gap and offer a companion to other investigations of the Quebec reform, as well as similar educational change efforts elsewhere.

Method

This study consists of a content analysis of articles appearing in *The Montreal Gazette* during two distinct phases of the curriculum reform's rolling implementation. The first period

spans from the announcement of the impending reform on October 24, 1996 until the end of

2000, which is the year the reform was introduced in primary cycle one (grades one and two).

The second period, 2003 through 2006, includes the preparations for and introduction of the

reform in secondary cycle one (grades seven and eight). These two periods were chosen to

capture reactions to, hopes for and concerns about the reform during the planning stage and

during initial implementation. This also allows a comparison between the two phases to learn

how the process and opinions evolved over time.

The Gazette was selected because, as the province's only English-language daily

newspaper,[5] it serves the Anglophone population beyond Montreal's boundaries, thereby

making it as much a provincial publication as a local one. It enjoys the third-largest average

weekly paid circulation among all eleven Quebec daily newspapers, and the fourth-largest

among all Canadian local dailies (Canadian Newspaper Association, 2010).

Articles from the publication were gathered using ProQuest's Canadian Newsstand

database. The search string *(reform* AND (curricul* OR school* OR education* OR program*))*

was used to search within the citation, abstract and text of articles appearing in *The Gazette*

between October 1996 and October 2010. The explicit mention of the current curriculum reform

in Quebec within an article was chosen as the inclusion criterion in order to distinguish

statements that are linked to some aspect of the curriculum reform itself from statements

---

[5] There is one other English-language newspaper in Quebec that publishes more often than once a week:
The Sherbrooke Record, which has a much smaller circulation and no weekend edition.

about the Quebec school system in general. This yielded 82 items from 1996 through 2000 and 35 items from 2003 through 2006, for a total of 117 items. Within the items, opinion statements that dealt exclusively with features of the larger structural reforms were not considered. Since the items included in the study all referenced the curriculum reform, the remaining opinion statements about aspects of education in Quebec were taken to be linked contextually if not explicitly with that component of the larger systemic reform.

The approach to content analysis was based on the model Holsti (1969) proposed for research seeking to "describe trends in communication content," in which "the content data serve as a direct answer to the research question, rather than indicators from which characteristics of the sources or audiences are to be inferred" (p. 43). Because of this, according to Holsti, the main concern of the researcher is sampling and reliability, and he provided guidance regarding the formulation of questions, appropriate sampling, and rigorous and well defined category construction that was adhered to in the present study.

Coding took place in two stages.[6] In the first stage, the unit of analysis was the item, and a priori coding was used to identify key characteristics of each article as a whole. These included the source, date, type of item (e.g. news story, op-ed, letter to the editor) and author (e.g. journalist, teacher, parent).

In the second stage, thematic statements were used as the unit of analysis (comprising

---

[6] The complete code list with definitions is included in Appendix II.

sentences or portions of sentences to capture a grammatically complete assertion). A combination of codes developed based on issues identified in the literature on educational change and emergent coding was used to classify text segments within the articles based on:

- *Who is making the statement, i.e. whose voice is represented in the text*

In some cases the opinion is directly attributed to a primary source such as when the author of an item states an opinion or provides a direct quote. At other times a statement is indirectly attributed, such as when an author refers to or summarizes the opinion of someone other than himself or herself. In all cases, the individual or group presented as holding the opinion is considered to be the voice.

This set of codes was developed by compiling a list of the different groups whose opinions appear in the texts examined. An individual had to be presented as belonging to a particular category in order for the relevant code to apply. For example, a teacher might also be a parent, but the "parent" code would not additionally be applied unless it was mentioned that he or she had a child, in which case it would be deemed that the individual was speaking in the capacity of both an educator and a parent.

The codes for "voice" are: Academia; Educational Association; Parents; Government; Journalist; School Administrator; School Board; Student; Teacher K-12; Union; Unspecified; and Other.

- *What aspect of the reform the statement is about*

An initial group of broad themes in educational change were identified from the literature

on the topic, and adapted as they were applied to text segments with a view to developing a set of distinct codes that comprehensively captured the issues touched on within the material. While care was taken to eliminate ambiguity within the codes and redundancies between them, multiple codes could apply to a single text segment, whether overlapping or sequentially. For example, the code "time" could conceivably be a component of teachers' "working conditions," another code, yet time is a standalone code because it plays a role in reform in numerous other ways, including the schedule for implementation, the number of hours allotted to instruction in a given subject, and the speed with which new teaching materials can be prepared.

As an illustration, compare the text segment "It'll be a lot of work and some of them are tired...but that's why the reform will be implemented gradually over the whole year" (Lampert, 2000, p. A4), in which the impact the reform will have on teachers' working conditions is given as the reason for extending the time period over which the reform is to be introduced, with the text segment "We voluntarily spend hours in activities with students that make them better citizens of their community" (Barry, 2003, p. A30), in which the statement is equally about the time teachers invest in their pupils and the uncompensated time that is part of the working conditions of the job. In the former the two codes apply sequentially and in the latter the codes overlap, yet in both cases they are distinct codes.

The refined set of "topic" themes consists of 15 codes: Aims of Education; Communication & Collaboration; Community, Society & Culture; Curriculum Contents; Financial Resources; Governance & Bureaucracy; Language Issues; Material Resources; Planning & Preparation; Quality of Education; Standards, Assessment & Outcomes; Teaching Methods; Time;

Tradition & Innovation; and Working Conditions.

- *Whether the statement speaks positively or negatively about an element of the reform or an observed or potential outcome from it*

The codes "positive" and "negative" were applied to statements based on whether the source expressed a favourable or unfavourable view of the themes touched on. This included more concrete assessments of the present situation or past events, such as "Dunn said the reform package is a good one and said there has been a positive reaction to it among board and school administrators" (Wilton, 2000, p. A5), as well as speculation about what might come to be, as with the statement "reform of this scale cannot work without support, respect and trust" (Weiner, 1997, p. A6).

In some instances neither the content nor context of a statement indicated a negative or positive bias, and these were coded as neutral. They were included in the statistics on the frequency with which themes were discussed, and they were also used to study the polarization of attitudes toward the reform over time.

Coding was carried out using the qualitative data analysis software HyperRESEARCH. Analysis of the coded opinion statements occurred in two stages. In the first pass, data on the frequency of the occurrence of single codes and of overlapping combinations of codes were compiled for each year, for each implementation period, and overall. These were also converted into percentages in order to determine the proportion of articles or text segments containing certain codes or code combinations.

The data were used to answer the following questions:

Data	Questions
Number of items	➢ In which years were the largest and smallest number of items mentioning the curriculum reform published? ➢ Was the number of items more or less stable, and if not, how did they change over time?
Types of items	➢ In what kinds of items were opinion statements found (e.g. editorials, op-eds, news stories) and with what frequency?
Authorship and voice	➢ Who authored the items containing opinion statements? ➢ Whose voice is represented within items, and with what frequency?
Positive and negative statements	➢ Were opinions generally more positive or more negative? ➢ How did the share of positive and negative statements change from year to year and from one implementation period to the next? ➢ Did the share of neutral opinions change over time, and if so, was there a corresponding change in the share of positive and/or negative statements that would suggest a shift in opinion?
Positive and negative statements by topic	➢ Were there certain themes that were talked about more positively or more negatively than others (i.e. were there aspects of the reform that earned more approval or were more contentious)?

Data	Questions
Positive and negative statements by voice	➢ Were there certain groups that talked about more positively or more negatively about the reform than others (i.e. did certain groups more strongly support or object to the reform)?

In the second stage, the content of coded text segments was examined in an attempt to explain the findings. Wording, tone, context and other elements provided additional information that aided in interpreting the data. Concrete explanations (e.g. a key event in the implementation process that corresponds to a phenomenon in the data) and hypotheses are presented with the statistical findings.

Presuppositions

About the Researcher

My perspective on the curriculum reform and its implementation is informed by familiarity with the educational theories and pedagogical philosophies that underpin the Quebec reform. The Quebec Education Program itself has been an instrumental part of some of my academic research projects and my research activities with the Center for the Study of Learning and Performance (CSLP) at Concordia University. I therefore have an appreciation of the rationale and intent of the changes to the province's curriculum, and would like to see the reform succeed. At the same time, I understand the challenges of implementing such an in-depth reform both theoretically through the literature and practically through contact with secondary teachers who were eager to share their experiences grappling with the reform (whether prompted or not) in the course of my activities with the CSLP. This study was also

initially intended to include items from the newspaper *La Presse*, which would represent the French-language counterpart to *The Gazette*, and so I had gathered and read the coverage of the curriculum reform from 1996-2010 in that publication as well prior to coding and analyzing the *Gazette* articles. In sum, my knowledge of and experience with the issue at hand was by no means limited to the information and opinions presented in *The Gazette*.

Media Bias

It is taken as a given that media coverage cannot be entirely objective, and that editorial decisions are made that affect what does and does not get published. Edelman (1988) extended the "ambiguity and subjectivity" of news media to audience perception when he said that "interpretation invades every phase of news creation and dissemination" (p. 95). This study, however, does not seek to assess the correspondence of opinions presented in the news media to some essential truth about the curriculum reform. Indeed, the only assessment of this type that could reasonably be made is the accuracy of perceptions of the content of policy documents such as the Quebec Education Program itself. What this study is concerned with is the nature of discourse on the reform and the range of opinions that exist in the public record.

Limitations

As a small-scale qualitative study, the results of this study are not intended to be generalizable to other contexts, but the study does identify content in *The Gazette* that may be of interest to researchers investigating topics related to the Quebec curriculum reform or media coverage of educational change. The use of a single media source also means that the findings have not been formally corroborated with other news media in Quebec, and this would be worth exploring in future research, as would expanding the study to include the full period of

implementation from 1996-2010, and even beyond.

The single greatest limitation in this study was the obstacles to triangulation. The coding scheme was developed based on issues identified in the literature on educational change in general and also themes that emerged in the texts under analysis, but it would have been preferable to have a second coder to evaluate the categories and test the application of the codes to the texts. The study could have benefitted from the addition of interviews or another news source, but that would drastically expand the scope of the study. Other studies could be used if there were a sufficient number of similar studies in the Quebec context, which may become the case over time. That being said, the categories employed in this study were generally low inference apart from possibly the "positive" and "negative" statement tone codes, and the findings of the study correspond fairly well to the literature on educational change and to Quebec planning and policy documents related to the curriculum reform.

Findings

Distribution and Composition of Published Items

The majority of the 117 items in *The Montreal Gazette* meeting the criteria of explicitly mentioning the 2000 curriculum reform in Quebec appeared in the newspaper during the first implementation period. From 1996 to 2000, 82 such items were published, representing 70.09% of items from the two periods. Just 35 items, or 29.91%, were published from 2003 to 2006.

In both periods the number of items peaked in the year the reform was actually introduced in Quebec schools. Thirty-three of the 82 items from the first implementation period

were published in 2000, when the new Quebec Education Program was launched in elementary cycle one. In 2006, the year the reform reached secondary cycle one, 17 items touching on the curriculum reform appeared in *The Gazette*, accounting for 48.57% of the 35 items from the later period.

In the secondary implementation period, this 2006 increase is the only dramatic spike; the number of items in the years leading up to 2006 is relatively stable, with only a slight increase in the year immediately preceding the introduction of the new curriculum. In contrast, however, the figures for the elementary implementation period seem to fluctuate more, with a second, smaller spike in 1997 (see Figure 1). In both periods it seems logical that there would be an increase in published items in the year prior to the curriculum's introduction in light of the impending changes. The increase may also be due in part to the fact that in both instances the reform was slated to be implemented at least one year earlier than it ultimately was, and *The Gazette* documented resistance to the reform and calls for its postponement in 1999 and again in 2005.

Figure 1. Number of Items by Year
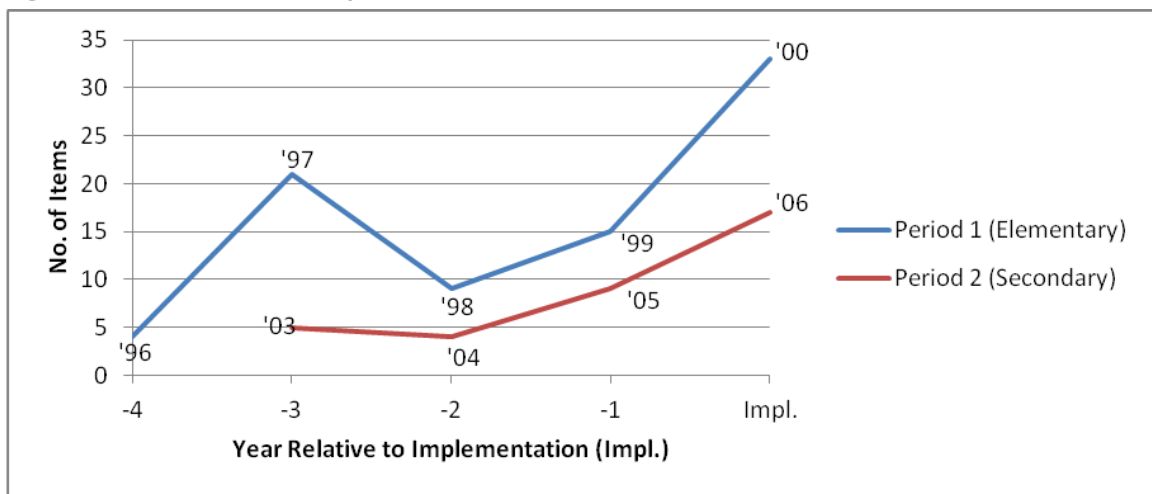
The more marked spike in 1997 is perhaps best explained by a series of developments

that put education in the news and in the public eye. On October 24, 1996, Education Minister

Pauline Marois announced the government's planned curriculum overhaul as part of a package

of largely structural changes to Quebec's education system. The curriculum reform itself was

quickly overshadowed by drastic changes scheduled to come into effect sooner, such as the

introduction of full-day kindergarten, the modification of school governance to grant greater

autonomy to schools and greater responsibility to parents, and most notably the controversial

shift from denominational school boards to linguistic boards. This momentous change was

especially contentious because the ensuing consolidation and streamlining of school boards

involved the redrawing of districts and school closures, and so had a direct and tangible impact

on families with school-age children. In 1997, the curriculum reform that was still on the horizon

was often mentioned as a footnote to all the other, more immediate changes that garnered

more attention in *The Gazette*.

Nearly half of the 117 items in *The Gazette* were news articles, although the earlier

implementation period had a greater variety of opinion-based items than the later one, where

news stories accounted for 54.29% of all items (see Figure 2). These news stories act as more of

a secondary source of opinion by providing direct and indirect quotes to help frame events, but

these opinions are also valuable as they do become part of the public discourse on education by

virtue of appearing in the publication.
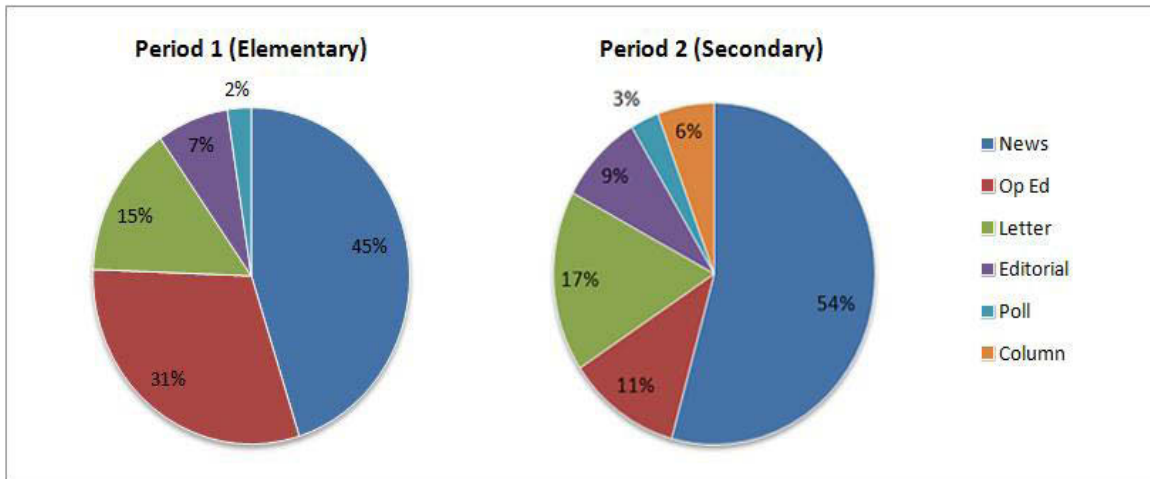
The remaining types of items are ones that permit their authors to directly express personal opinions, including op-ed pieces, letters to the editor, editorials, columns, and polls. The percentages of letters, editorials and polls were generally comparable across the two periods, but *The Gazette* ran far more op-ed pieces in the first period and no column discussed the curriculum reform during that same time.

While percentages are useful for examining the breakdown of types of stories in the two periods, they minimize the stark differences that emerge when the number of each type of item is compared. *The Gazette* published 37 news stories between 1996 and 2000, but only 19 between 2003 and 2006. There were 25 op-ed pieces between 1996 and 2000, but just four between 2003 and 2006. Again, this can be attributed to increased interest in education due to the many changes that were taking place in Quebec's education system in the early years, or it may be possible that the newspaper, its readership, or both suffered education reform fatigue over time. This could be gauged by examining coverage of educational issues in other periods to

establish whether 1996-2000 was an abnormal spike or 2003-2006 was average or an unusual

low, but this determination is beyond the scope of the present study's purpose.

Authorship and Voice

In the present study, authorship refers to the person identified as having written a given

item. This could be indicated in the byline, noted immediately after the byline or at the end of

an item, revealed in the text of an item, or occasionally omitted altogether (in which case it was

coded as "Author - Unspecified"). Voice, meanwhile refers to the individual whose views are

explicitly expressed in the text of an item. Items therefore often have only one author, but

multiple voices may be represented within their text, and the author's voice may not be among

them if he or she does not state a personal opinion. See Tables 3 and 4 below for data on

frequency of authorship and voice for each individual implementation period and overall.

The news articles in *The Gazette* were written by journalists, so the number of items

written by journalists roughly corresponds to the number of news items. The small discrepancies

were due to one news story published without a byline in 2000 coded as "Author - Unspecified,"

and two items penned by journalists in 2006 being columns rather than news stories.

Because journalists are normally expected to remain impartial when reporting a news

story, the number of items containing a journalist's voice is considerably smaller than the

number of items authored by a journalist. While 36 items were written by journalists between

1996 and 2000, only 11 explicitly conveyed a journalist's opinion. Between 2003 and 2006, 21

items had journalists as their author, but opinions were expressed by this group in 10 items. In

other words, despite the largest number of articles being written by journalists in both

Table 3. Authorship of Items in *The Montreal Gazette*, Ranked by Frequency and Percentage

Period 1 (82 total)		%	Period 2 (35 total)		%	Periods 1 & 2 (117 total)		%
Journalist	36	43.90	Journalist	20	57.14	Journalist	57	48.72
Academia	13	15.85	Teacher K-11	7	20.00	Academia	13	11.11
Unspecified	10	12.20	Editorial Board	4	11.43	Editorial Board	13	11.11
Editorial Board	9	10.98	Other	1	2.86	Teacher K-11	13	11.11
Union	7	8.54	Parent	1	2.86	Unspecified	11	9.40
Teacher K-11	6	7.32	Unspecified	1	2.86	Union	7	5.98
Ed. Assoc.	4	4.88	Academia	0	0.00	Ed. Assoc.	4	3.42
Parent	2	2.44	Ed. Assoc.	0	0.00	Parent	3	2.56
Government	2	2.44	Government	0	0.00	Other	2	1.71
Student	1	1.22	School Admin.	0	0.00	Government	2	1.71
Other	1	1.22	School Board	0	0.00	Student	1	0.85
School Admin	1	1.22	Student	0	0.00	School Admin.	1	0.85
School Board	0	0.00	Union	0	0.00	School Board	0	0.00

Table 4. Voice in *The Montreal Gazette*, Ranked by Number and Percentage of Items Containing

Period 1 (82 total)		%	Period 2 (35 total)		%	Periods 1 & 2 (117 total)		%
Teacher K-12	21	25.61	Teacher K-12	21	60.00	Teacher K-12	42	35.90
Government	16	19.51	Government	13	37.14	Government	29	24.79
School Board	16	19.51	Union	12	34.29	Union	28	23.93
Union	16	19.51	Journalist	10	28.57	School Board	23	19.66
Academia	15	18.29	School Board	7	20.00	Journalist	21	17.95
Unspecified	13	15.85	Parent	6	17.14	Academia	21	17.95
Journalist	11	13.41	Ed. Assoc.	5	14.29	Unspecified	17	14.53
Parent	10	12.20	Unspecified	4	11.43	Parent	16	13.68
Ed. Assoc.	8	9.76	Academia	3	8.57	Ed. Assoc.	13	11.11
Editorial Board	6	7.32	Editorial Board	3	8.57	Editorial Board	9	7.69
School Admin.	6	7.32	School Admin.	3	8.57	School Admin.	9	7.69
Other	4	4.88	Other	3	8.57	Other	7	5.98
Student	2	2.44	Student	0	0.00	Student	2	1.71

implementation periods, the number of items containing a journalist's voice ranked seventh in the first period (appearing in 13.41% of items), fourth in the second period (28.57% of items), and fifth overall (17.95% of items). This suggests that journalists largely refrained from overtly taking a position on the curriculum, but they still formed opinions and found outlets for expressing them in the press.

Opinion is to be expected in an op-ed, but many of these types of statements are also found in news stories. They provide color or emphasize a point in soft news stories, but these editorializations are not always subtle or supported. A case in point is a feature about a Montreal-area school piloting the reform in 1999. The article contains a number of fairly positive quotes about the new curriculum and pedagogical approaches and also notes a few potential challenges and concerns. Although there is no indication any of these issues are severe or present enough to derail the reform, the journalist concludes by introducing the key changes to come with the statement, "If all goes according to government plan - and that is a big if - by 2005, schools in Quebec will look and feel different than the school of today. At least in theory, here is what is in store from kindergarten to Grade 11" (Zacharias, 1999, p. B1).

The content in hard news stories less often suggested a positive or negative stance on the part of the reporter, but statements meant to summarize or explain a situation could sometimes be construed as the journalist's own voice because the information or interpretations are not attributed to any specific source. An example of this occurs in a 2000 story that identifies a specific barrier to parent involvement in education: "But staying on top of curriculum reform, maintenance and board decisions can be pretty time-consuming in the era of working mothers and single parents. Only a minority of parents, in fact, have so far taken full

advantage of the new opportunities for input" (Lampert, 2000, p. A1). Because nothing else in the text mentions, elaborates on or supports this statement, it seems the journalist herself is suggesting that the government's new model for collaborative school governance is apt to fail due to socioeconomic factors.

Just as with other opinions in the press, journalists' statements express the observations, hopes, or concerns of a member (or members) of the community and are part of public discourse about education. At the same time, they can be more challenging to evaluate because the precise source of the statement is not always clear, yet the journalist's voice is authoritative.

The point of view of the newspaper was also conveyed through editorials written by its editorial board, and while there were only nine of these in the first period and three in the second, these contributions increase the number of items authored by and containing the voice of those affiliated with *The Gazette*. Journalists and editorial staff together authored almost 60% of all items, and as a combined category their voice appears in 25.64% of items. This makes newspaper staff the second most often occurring voice, as opposed to fifth most often for journalists alone, so the newspaper's voice was prominent within its pages.

Educators and administrators at the post-secondary level constituted the second-largest single group of authors in the first implementation period. The 13 items they contributed to *The Gazette* between 1996 and 2000 include five op-eds from a McGill University education professor, three op-eds from the chancellor of McGill, and five other op-eds and letters from instructors at universities and CEGEPs. Not a single item was authored by this group between 2003 and 2006, and only three items in this later period contain opinions voiced by those in academia. In the first period, 18.29% of items contain academics' opinions, yet 13 of these 15

items are those authored by this group, leaving only two items in which their opinions are cited

by others. Since no items were authored by this group in the later period, the three items from

this time containing their voice are evidently authored by others. In other words, early on in the

reform effort, *The Gazette* acted as a platform for people involved in post-secondary education

to analyze and comment on the reform, but this diminished over time. At the formative and

largely theoretical stage of the reform, academics were well positioned to lend their expertise in

the field of education to the interpretation of the impending changes. The op-eds by this group

at the time would have been a source of expert opinion for a readership first learning about the

reform and what it might entail.

Politicians and those affiliated with government were also important sources of

information about the reform, although indirectly. Their voice appears in the second-largest

number of items in both periods. In many instances, their role was to announce and describe

the changes that were being made to Quebec's education system, as well as to explain how the

changes were expected to be beneficial and address criticisms and concerns. There were some

instances in which politicians criticized aspects of the reform, but this will be addressed in

greater detail later on.

Only two items were written by this group, and both were op-eds appearing early on. In

1999, a teacher and member of the Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation (a government-appointed

advisory group) contributed a piece in defence of standards in education. The following year, a

former member of Quebec's National Assembly wrote a condemnation of what he saw as fad

reforms as well as of the Quebec premier the current reform was introduced under, Lucien

Bouchard. Aside from these two instances, government voices appeared entirely in items

written by others.

Despite not directly authoring very many items in *The Gazette*, primary and secondary

teachers' voices were well represented in the press. In fact, teachers' opinions were cited in

more items than those of any other group, and this trend held true throughout both

implementation periods. Although their views were communicated in the same number of

articles between 1996 and 2000 as between 2003 and 2006, the percentage of total content

actually increased dramatically over time—from 25.61% to 60%—due to the smaller number of

items about the reform in the later period. Teachers are among the most directly and acutely

affected by educational reforms because of their impact on teachers' work environment and

duties. They are advised on how to perform their jobs and are accountable for producing results,

in addition to being stewards of the reform within schools. Teachers were vocal on the topic of

the reform, and also able to provide a firsthand account of how the changes were unfolding and

what their impact was. Researchers and journalists alike tend to go to teachers for insight into

what went on not just in schools, but behind the closed doors of classrooms.

Teachers' unions also represent the voices of educators, and while they were not among

the leading authors of items, their views were among the most often cited. This is not surprising

considering their role as advocates for teachers and their interests. In the first period, only

teachers themselves were heard in more items in *The Gazette*: 16 (or 19.51%) of items

contained the opinions of people representing unions. In both the later period and overall,

unions were edged out by government by a narrow margin.

Those groups who rarely authored an item or whose voice was infrequently heard are of

at least as much interest as those groups that were most prominent. Students are also very

much affected by the reform, but they are seldom heard from. The one item this group

contributed was a letter in favour of various proposed changes to the school system written by a

CEGEP student in 1997. Aside from this, a student's voice was heard only one other time, in a

2000 article about parents' and students' concerns regarding split-level classes that was based

on a fourth-grader's emotional letter to *The Gazette* on the topic. In the opening paragraphs,

the article quotes the nine-year-old's description of her reaction to finding out she was to be in a

combined class with students in the grade below: "All we did was hit our desks, throw our things

on the floor, cry, crumple our papers and I even finished a Kleenex box" (Lampert, 2000, p. A3).

Although the reform has a direct impact on students, they are more difficult for

journalists to access than adults such as teachers and parents. Newspapers are also more adult-

oriented, and so young students are far less likely to be consumers of this medium, let alone

contributors to it. Children are also afforded less expertise and authority than adults, and so

rightly or not they are generally not involved in program planning or evaluation—in the press or

elsewhere. The perceived success of the reform lies in how well students perform and not in

how they feel about it. Any of these could be a factor in the absence of students as authors or

voices on the topic of reform.

The Gazette accessed teachers as a source of information and opinion about reform,

just as studies of reform do, but school administrators were less often involved in the discussion

in *The Gazette*. A school administrator was the author of an item only once, and their voice is

found in only nine of 117 items, or 7.69%. The literature on reform often recognizes the

leadership role of administrators in reform implementation, but they do not appear to be

recognized as directly involved in its delivery in the same way teachers are in *The Gazette*. Items

were far more likely to cite commentary from school board representatives, who were quoted directly or indirectly in 19.51% of items between 1996 and 2000, 20% of items between 2003 and 2006, and 19.66% overall. This group can be said to speak to school administration as well, although from a position that is higher in the hierarchy of governance and more closely linked to policy than practice when it comes to reform implementation. This still does not explain school administrators' almost nonexistent contribution of items, and school board representatives did not author any items in either period under study. It is possible that their position in the middle of the educational hierarchy and at the intersection of policy development and policy implementation made them less likely to feel a need to criticize or defend the reform. Alternatively, for the very same reasons they may have been less apt to publicly take a position on either side of the debate.

Negative and Positive Statements

Statements were coded as positive or negative if they contained a favourable or unfavourable observation about an aspect of the reform or if they speculated about a possible positive or negative situation or impact that could develop in the implementation of the reform. Any statement that described an observation or outcome without judgment as to its value or detriment was coded as neutral. These often consisted of recommendations that that did not assess the likelihood of compliance or of a positive or negative outcome.

Some degree of inference was required here, but statements were counted as positive or negative only if the context or logic unambiguously suggested a particular interpretation of the sentiment behind the statement. For example, when the president of the Quebec School Boards Association "wonder[s] how the government hopes to bring in a new curriculum next fall

without coming up with the money for textbooks" (Zacharias, 1998, p. A5), she is clearly dubious regarding the possibility of a positive outcome, and so this is not neutral speculation. The same individual later authored an op-ed in which she wrote, "The English-language school system must be a full partner in this process; it must receive support from the government to implement these, and any other, reforms in a coherent and timely fashion" (Cumyn, 1999, p. B3). In this instance she makes a statement about what she believes needs to occur in order to achieve a positive result, but does not suggest that this will or will not happen. It is therefore deemed a neutral statement of opinion.

Negative statements far outnumbered positive ones across the board. There were a total of 227 positive statements made about the 15 different topics; 120 between 1996 and 2000, and 107 between 2003 and 2006. In contrast, there were a total of 762 negative statements about the various topics. Of these, 388 appeared in *The Gazette* between 1996 and 2000, and 374 appeared between 2003 and 2006. While the number of positive statements and negative statements each remained fairly even across the two implementation periods, there was evidently a larger concentration of opinion statements in the later implementation period because the number of items published then was much smaller. In the earlier period there were an average of 1.46 positive statements and 4.73 negative statements per item, but these figures jumped to 3.06 positive statements and 10.69 negative statements per item in the later period.

This trend is reflected in the percentage of items containing positive or negative statements as well. From the first period to the second, the percentage of articles containing at least one positive opinion increased from 35.37% to 54.29%, while the share of articles containing at least one negative statement increased from 59.76% to 88.57%. This pattern is

especially discernable among negative opinions, whose frequency expressed as a percentage shows an almost unbroken upward trajectory across the years (see Figure 3 below).

The number of neutral statements did decrease between the two periods, from 76 between 1996 and 2000 to 35 between 2003 and 2006, but the percentage of neutral statements was generally stable (40.24% in the earlier period and 41.88% in the later period). It may be that the balance shifted from providing more neutral information about the coming changes to appraising outcomes, resulting in increasingly opinionated pieces in the later period. It could also be that over time individuals reacted to and formed opinions about aspects of the reform and were more inclined to voice their views, or that *The Gazette* increasingly found these views newsworthy. The fact that the share of opinion pieces such as op-eds, letters to the editor and editorials did not increase over time—yet news items did—lends some credence to the latter, although any combination of factors could have played a role.

Figures 2 and 3 below depict how the tone of items in *The Gazette* shifted over time. Figure 2 is a simple representation of the total number of negative, positive and neutral statements, while Figure 3 is based on the percentage of items in *The Gazette* that contained at least one instance of the relevant statement type. In Figure 3, the points where lines converge therefore represent times at which there was greater balance in opinion among articles. Divergence of the three lines indicates a tendency for items to contain certain types of opinions and not others. Together, the two figures provide a more complete picture of the distribution of opinions over time.

Figure 3. Number of Negative, Positive and Neutral Statements
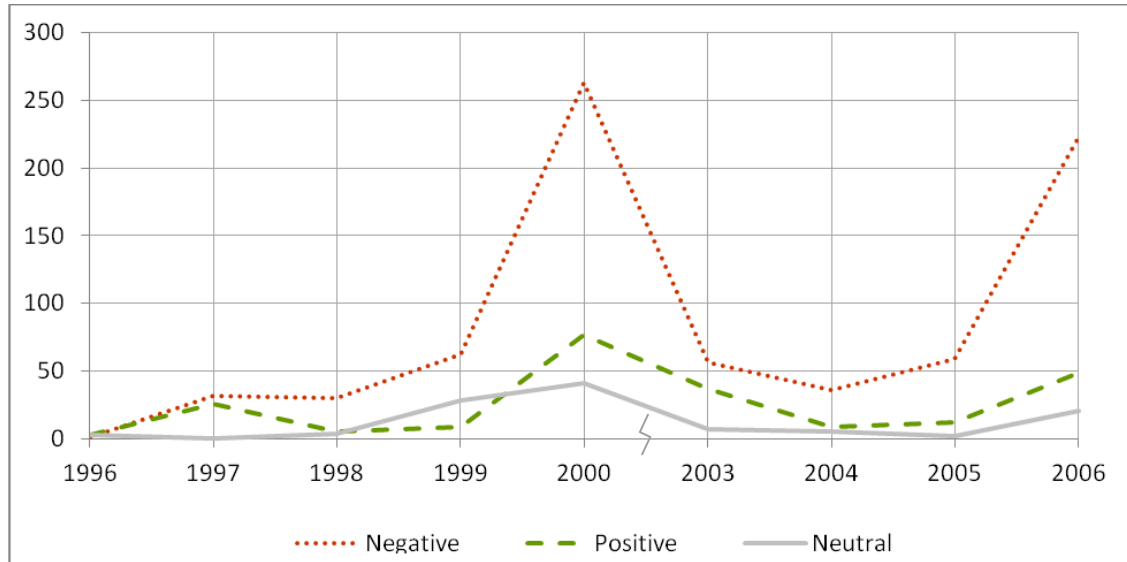
Figure 2. Percentage of Items Containing Negative, Positive and Neutral Statements
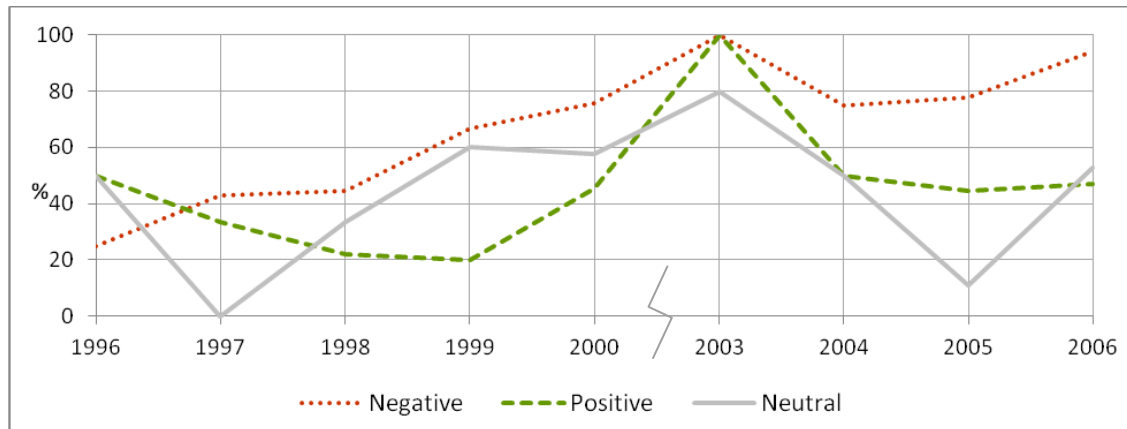
There are two clearly discernable spikes in negative opinion in Figure 2, and these correspond to the two years that the new curriculum was introduced in schools, first at the primary level in 2000 and then at the secondary level in 2006. These are the points at which the changes associated with the reform and its implementation would be most acutely perceived. Positive opinion did increase at these times as well, which suggests that there were some statements of support. These came primarily from the government and school boards, who

were seeking to advance the reform effort, although teachers also endorsed the changes to a lesser degree. In Figure 3, negative opinion peaks in 2003, which is the midpoint between primary and secondary implementation. Here it coincides with a peak in positive opinion and a smaller spike in neutral opinion, which suggests that items at this time were more likely to weigh the pros and cons of the reform and explore possible courses of action and outcomes. In both figures neutral opinion falls off in the later stage of implementation, beginning in 2000 in Figure 2 and in 2003 in Figure 3. This mirrors declines in both negative and positive opinion in Figure 2, but neutral opinion bottoms out far below negative and positive opinion in Figure 3, which confirms that opinion was more polarized at this time. A similar lack of neutral opinion can be observed in 1997, just after the initial announcement of the coming curricular changes. This was also a period of significant reaction and debate.

Most and Least Unsatisfactory Topics and Dissatisfied Groups

For each topic, the positive and negative opinion statements were tallied separately to observe whether the topic was discussed primarily positively or negatively in a given year or period. This was used as an indicator of which issues were most and least contentious in *The Gazette* at various times. The same was done for the voice codes to ascertain which groups' statements in *The Gazette* were most positive and most negative. Because the opinion expressed in *The Gazette* was in general decidedly pessimistic, with negative statements almost always accounting for more than 50% of statements made by a particular group or on a particular topic, it is more accurate to refer to topics as "least unsatisfactory" and groups as "least dissatisfied" than to discuss what was most satisfactory and who was most satisfied.

The Issues

Six topics were spoken about negatively in at least 80% of opinion statements: governance and bureaucracy (89.71%); time (89.47%); material resources (88.10%); standards, assessment and outcomes (87.40%); working conditions (86.76%); and financial resources (83.33%). While all six were contentious issues in both periods, half of the topics constituted the top three garnering the most disapproval from 1996 to 2000 and the other half made up the top three for 2003 through 2006. This is illustrated in Table 5 on page 45.

In the earlier implementation period, the three topics with the highest percentage of negative statements were financial resources (100%), material resources (95.24%), and governance and bureaucracy (92.86%). Time and working conditions were close behind at 90% and 87.50%, respectively.

The Top Three Negatives - 1996-2000

1. Financial Resources

Government spending on education is a perennial issue, and at the time Quebec announced and began implementation of its package of reforms, it was in the process of scaling back spending in order to address its deficit. The province's education budget was affected by these cuts between 1992 and 1998 (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2004a), and so voices in The Gazette from 1997 to 2000 wondered how the planned changes could possibly be introduced without adequate funding to support them. Various actors expressed concern that the success of the reform would be compromised by insufficient funds for professional development and reasonable wages for teachers (Wilson, 1997, p. B3; Henchey, 1999, p. A10;

Table 5. Share of Negative Statements for Each Topic

Period 1	%	Period 2	%	Periods 1&2	%
Financial Resources	100.00	Standards, Assessment & Outcomes	93.51	Governance & Bureaucracy	89.71
Material Resources	95.24	Time	88.89	Time	89.47
Governance & Bureaucracy	92.86	Working Conditions	86.11	Material Resources	88.10
Time	90.00	Governance & Bureaucracy	84.62	Standards, Assessment & Outcomes	87.40
Working Conditions	87.50	Curriculum Contents	82.76	Working Conditions	86.76
Language Issues	80.00	Material Resources	80.95	Financial Resources	83.33
Standards, Assessment & Outcomes	78.00	Planning & Preparation	78.31	Tradition & Innovation	75.00
Quality of Education	77.78	Communication & Collaboration	78.26	Communication & Collaboration	74.26
Tradition & Innovation	76.32	Tradition & Innovation	73.08	Language Issues	73.68
Community, Society & Culture	72.22	Aims of Education	70.59	Planning & Preparation	72.78
Communication & Collaboration	70.91	Quality of Education	60.61	Curriculum Contents	72.13
Planning & Preparation	67.44	Community, Society & Culture	60.00	Quality of Education	68.33
Curriculum Contents	62.50	Financial Resources	55.56	Community, Society & Culture	67.86
Teaching Methods	61.76	Teaching Methods	51.35	Aims of Education	63.33
Aims of Education	53.85	Language Issues	50.00	Teaching Methods	56.34

Seidman, 2000, p. B1), and for the necessary material and human resources to deliver and

support the new curriculum, such as textbooks, computers, librarians, and subject specialists

(Zacharias, 1998, p. A5; "The Cost", 1999, p. B2; Abley, 2000, p. A6; Seidman, 2000, p. B1).

Finances were not at the forefront of concerns in *The Gazette* between 2003 and 2006.

During this time, the handful of negative statements were primarily regarding the government's

investment in reform; some felt that the reform was an unduly expensive endeavor (O'Neil,

2005, p. A20; Lewkowicz, 2006, p. A15), while a teachers' union felt greater investment was

required in order to improve education in the province (Branswell, 2006, p. A5). The need for

fair recognition of and compensation for teachers' work were also mentioned (Barry, 2003, p.

A6; O'Neil, 2005, p. A20; Branswell & Dougherty, 2006, p. A1). These negative statements were

balanced by the 44.44% of articles from this period that discussed the finances of education in a

positive light. They optimistically noted how much the government was earmarking for

textbooks, teacher training, and supports for students with special needs in order to facilitate

the implementation of the reform in secondary schools (Lampert & Dougherty, 2003, p. A8;

Branswell & Dougherty, 2006, p. A1; Branswell, 2006, p. A5). Government spending on

education did increase steadily between 2000 and 2006, but only by a modest average of 3.8% a

year (Gouvernement du Québec, Institut de la Statistique du Québec, 2011). While this might

have helped assuage concerns about the funding of education, it is also possible that as the

reform progressed attention turned from the potential cost of the many government initiatives

to the actual impact of specific changes in people's experience of the education system.

50

2. Material Resources

Access to textbooks and teaching materials for the new curriculum was of great concern during the early implementation period. In addition to the problem of funds allocated to the purchasing of textbooks at the government and school board level (Cherney, 1998, p. A3; Zacharias, 1998, p. A5; "The Cost of Cutting Back", 1999, p. B2), items from 1998 and 1999 pointed out that textbooks and other teaching resources for Quebec schools are often developed in French first and then translated into English, resulting in delays and shortages of materials for the English school system (Wiener, 1998, p. A12; Zacharias, 1999, p. B1). In 2000, the items published in *The Gazette* demonstrated greater awareness of the reform's underlying philosophy and pedagogy, and the discussion turned to the implications of a shift away from textbooks in favor of locally-developed materials tailored to students' needs and research projects associated with discovery learning. While it was suggested that this might level the playing field between the French and English sectors (Seidman, 2000, p. B1), the predicted increased reliance on libraries and the internet as research tools led some to question the availability and quality of these resources in schools (Wilton, 2000, p. A3; Seidman, 2000, p. B1; Seidman, 2000, p. B4; Sarah, 2000, p. B5).

In the second period, when the reform was about to be introduced in the province's secondary schools, only one article mentioned a lack of textbooks (Lampert, 2005, p. A8). In contrast with the earlier period, funding for textbooks and newly developed materials were reported as forthcoming around this time. Instead, the most prominent issue during this later implementation period was a lack of resource materials to help teachers navigate the new curriculum, and the materials that did exist were allegedly too "philosophical" (Lampert, 2004, p.

A9). The article that made this claim mentioned that this problem existed during implementation in elementary schools, but no item from that time mentioned confusion arising from a lack of clarity in teachers' guides. This does not mean such guides were necessarily available or comprehensible to the majority of teachers between 1996 and 2000; it may be that this simply was not alluded to in *The Gazette* at that time.

3. Governance and Bureaucracy

This code captures the complex power struggles between various groups of actors and reveals a highly polarized hierarchy with a great deal of finger-pointing within its ranks. At the heart of this conflict is the divide between the developers of policy (government and school board "bureaucrats," and "academicians" (Wiener, 1998, p. A12)) and its deliverers and recipients (teachers, students and parents), as well as disputes as to who possesses the expertise to fulfill various roles in the development and implementation of curriculum.

The government is repeatedly depicted in *the Gazette* as "addicted" to reforms (Chambers, 2000, p. B3), which are developed "by bureaucrats light-years removed from the classroom" (Fonda, 1999, p. B3) and subsequently "rammed through" (Dascal, 2000, p. B2) and "shoved down teachers' throats" (Seidman, 2000, p. B1). There are several complaints in both implementation periods that the reform in general was poorly planned and executed, but in only one instance did a speaker express that it was ill-conceived: a parent commissioner at a school board dismissed it as "just another philosophical concept the government is imposing on us" (Seidman, 2000, p. B1). A former chancellor of McGill University, meanwhile, asserted that the negative impact of the education reform "stem[s] from its not having been thought through, not the inappropriateness of the objectives" (Chambers, 2000, p. B3), which columnist Don

Macpherson later generalized as characteristic of the Quebec government beginning with the

Parti Quebecois, "which became known for plunging headlong into initiatives without proper

preparation" (Macpherson, 2006, p. A15).

The view that Quebec's education ministry was out of touch with reality was perhaps

best summarized by union president Michael Wiener when he contrasted "education

bureaucrats'" unrealistic drive "to transport schools to a higher plane of existence" with

teachers "back on Earth" struggling to come to grips with an impending school reform (Wiener,

2000, p. B2). Again and again, items in *The Gazette* referenced a perceived disconnect between

not only government and teachers, but between the teachers and anyone in a position that did

not put them in direct contact with the day-to-day functioning of a classroom. This includes

parents ("Teachers Upset", 2000, p. A6), the hypothetical school-board official who "flees the

classroom after one day back in the real world of teaching" (Wiener, 1998, p. A12), and

administrators who "don't teach" and in some cases "don't even know what a kid looks like"

(Lampert, 2000, p. A4). So great was the sense that something was amiss in Quebec's schools

and only those immediately involved could truly be aware of it that when Education Minister

Francois Legault visited a handful of schools and declared teachers generally pleased with the

reform, a union president suggested Legault "didn't talk to the right people...he talked to the

reform's spectators" (Gordon, 2000, p. A7).

Teachers and their unions, meanwhile, reportedly lacked opportunities for involvement

or input in the policymaking process (Wiener, 1998, p. A12) and were excluded from

consultations in the amendment of the reform ("Teachers Upset", 2000, p. A6). This gave the

message that the reform was not theirs at all, but a government directive—something imposed

on them from above.

Voices in *The Gazette* indicate teachers felt disenfranchised, disrespected and

underappreciated in relation to the reform itself and also more generally. In 1999, Quebec

educators entered into negotiations with the government regarding a wage increase

commensurate with their actual workload, which they believed the government failed to

recognize, and which would only increase under the planned curriculum changes (Wiener, 1999,

p. A10; Seidman, 1999, p. A5). Even at the launch of the reform, teachers had received less

training than administrators, according to Pierre Weber, president of the Quebec Provincial

Association of Teachers (Lampert, 2000, p. A4). These problems persisted, and as late as 2006

teachers were "frustrat[ed] due to a lack of funding, training and materials" (Branswell &

Dougherty, 2006, p. A1), yet the government remained unresponsive to teachers' critiques of

the reform and suggestions for improvement (Lampert, 2006, p. A6).

Teachers evidently did not trust the government, and this distrust was reciprocated as

well. Wiener suggested that the curriculum that was in place before the 2000 reform was

designed to be "teacher-proof" because "the teacher is assumed to be a cretinous lout who may

be trusted (barely) to follow the directions on the package and deliver the curriculum, as if it

were a pizza for which only the minister had the recipe" (1998, p. A12). The new curriculum, in

contrast, contained a great deal of information about the aims and desired ends of education,

but did little to tell teachers how to get there. The flexibility demanded by its "competency-

based approach and its focus on the learning process" (Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p.4) led

the government to call on teachers' "autonomy, creativity and professional expertise" (p. 5) for

its translation into practice. The ministry's more hands-off approach to the new curriculum,

however, paradoxically prompted teachers to claim that they were insufficiently prepared and supported. *The Gazette* mentioned that some teachers and union leaders did recognize the difficult position the government found itself in when trying to strike a balance between "spoonfeeding teachers" and providing them minimal guidance while entrusting them with interpreting the curriculum guidelines and translating them into practice (Lampert, 2004, p. A9).

The government's approach with the new curriculum signalled its faith in teachers' expertise in pedagogical matters, and the numerous instances in which the authority of those who do not spend time in the classroom in direct contact with the curriculum and with students was called into question suggests that others held a similar view. Even parents' membership on the governing boards created as part of the school reform's shift to school-based management was called into question because "the responsibilities given to governing boards, like curriculum and time allotments, presume a degree of expertise which few parents possess (Wiener, 1997, p. B3) and because "they are parents. They are not teaching professionals" (Clark, 1997, p. A11).

Why, then, are teachers reportedly excluded from policymaking and relegated to program delivery alone? This has traditionally been the case, as can be inferred from the various accounts of top-down attempts at reform as well as references to the tensions between policymakers who develop programs from a distance and the teachers who are expected to put them into practice (see, for example, Cohen, 1989, p. 50 and Tyack & Cuban, 1995, p. 60-61). In a chapter concluding his study of 110 years of American education reform efforts, Cuban (1993) observed that "absent, more often than not" was "teacher participation in the process" (p. 252). An impulse to maintain this status quo has existed in Quebec as well. A 1997 brief by the Centrale de l'Enseignement du Québec, a teachers' union, supported the continuation of a clear

division of roles within education. *The Gazette* reported that the document stated that "the curriculum should be left to Education Department bureaucrats, that school boards should continue to manage schools and their staffs, and teaching staffs should be 'left the responsibilities that come from their competence and training'" (Clark, 1997, p. A11). This view is problematic because it implies teachers are not competent or trained in curricular matters. And with teachers kept at a distance from curriculum development, their voices are less likely to be heard despite their unique position as end users of curriculum and firsthand observers of the curriculum in action.

The Top Three Negatives - 2003-2006

1. Standards, Assessment and Outcomes

The *Gazette* articles suggest that educational standards, assessment and outcomes were a persistently and pervasively problematic area of the reform. No other topic in either period garnered as many negative comments, and the 72 negative statements on this topic between 2003 and 2006 alone far exceed the average of 24.93 negative statements per topic for this period.

Several of the contentious issues regarding standards, assessment and outcomes were common to both the elementary and secondary implementation periods. One of these was the policy regarding student promotion from one grade to the next. Under the reform, the government grouped individual grade levels into three two-year "cycles" at the elementary level and one three-year cycle and one two-year cycle at the secondary level. Because students were given one cycle to meet the relevant curricular objectives rather than one school year in order

to accommodate variations in developmental and learning pace, students were not permitted to

be held back a grade level mid-cycle. This was popularly interpreted as a more widespread

policy of "automatic promotion" (Wiener, 2000, p. B2) associated with the ministry's objective

of increasing student success. As Alain Marois of the Alliance des Professeures et Professeurs de

Montreal teachers' union put it, "We promote and promote, but we have no assurances that the

student is learning. This reform is geared toward producing nice statistics, but in real life

students do fail" (Lampert, 2003, A6).

Teachers were also asked to enact the reform without an accompanying clear and

detailed plan for evaluating student learning and achievement in line with new curricular

approach at the elementary level in 2000. The Quebec Education Program (Gouvernement du

Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001) stipulated that assessment at this level should be both

summative and formative, and aligned with the nature and objectives of the curriculum. Beyond

that, it left room for local flexibility in devising methods for evaluating student learning, noting

that "various tools and means, not all of which need be officially recognized, may be used…" and

listing types of assessment other than traditional report cards that fit with "the learning-

centered approach" (p. 5).

In 2003, the government produced its *Policy on the Evaluation of Learning*

(Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2003c) and accompanying *Implementation*

Plan for the Policy on the Evaluation of Learning (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de

l'Éducation, 2003b) in recognition of the lack of a "unified vision of the evaluation of learning"

(Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2003c, p. 5) that encompassed all the

various levels of education and types of students. It was also the first document to address the

evaluation of the general population of primary and secondary students[7] after the introduction

of the 2000 curriculum reform. The ten "orientations of evaluation" laid out by the *Policy on the*

Evaluation of Learning became the basis for the principles contained in the Quebec Education

Program for secondary schools, which continued to focus largely on formative and summative

evaluation, adaptability, and fidelity to the organization of the curriculum (Gouvernement du

Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2004c).

Neither the policy document nor the implementation plan stated exactly how evaluation

would take place or what it should look like. Instead, they described the development of

evaluation methods and instruments as a shared responsibility for the government, the school

boards, school principals and teachers. The policy document said that principals would

incorporate teacher input into the selection of a report card for their schools, but suggested that

it would be desirable for school boards to design a single report card that all of its schools could

use (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2003c, p. 40). In the implementation

plan, the government took on the role of informing schools and school boards about the policy

and working with them to "develop examples of evaluation instruments" (Gouvernement du

Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2003b, p. 4). Schools and school boards were delegated the

task of providing relevant professional development for teachers and overseeing the application

of the evaluation policy.

---

[7] The evaluation of students with special needs was addressed in the 2000 policy document *Adapting Our*

Schools to the Needs of All Students.

In addition to incorporating the principles of the policy, the new curriculum for secondary education emphasized the vital role of "the concerted judgment of competent professionals" that was to inform "pedagogical and administrative decisions" (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2004, p. 13). In other words, the government opted to avoid "spoonfeeding" teachers and instead entrusted them with decisions on the matter of evaluating students. It appears that teachers did not feel adequately prepared for this responsibility, and at the end of 2004, with the reform slated for implementation at the secondary level in the fall of 2005, *The Gazette* reported that teachers were "still unsure how to grade students because the reform's education policy is unclear" (Lampert, 2004, p. A9). This was also cited as additional evidence of unpreparedness when teachers were calling for the postponement of the reform at the secondary level as the 2004-2005 school year drew to a close (Lampert, 2005, p. A8).

At the elementary level, report cards aligned with the new curriculum began to go home to parents in December 2000. These report cards and later iterations evaluated students' performance in the reform's new "competencies" and de-emphasized comparisons against classmates in favor of reporting on a student's personal progress in various dimensions of the curricular goals. They eschewed percentages and letter grades and instead experimented with various systems of codes, symbols, and color codes, which raised the ire of parents who had trouble understanding them and also teachers who had to explain them. This was a persistent problem that was experienced directly by more groups than most of the issues with the reform, and it was repeatedly revisited in commentary over the years. In 2006, several articles spoke of "incomprehensible" report cards (Lampert, 2006, p. A8) filled with "vague symbols" and "jargon" (Branswell, 2006. P. A1), and remarked that parents "are no longer to determine whether the

child is succeeding or not" (Branswell, 2006, p. A8). One article reported that even Education

Minister Jean-Marc Fournier "asked others to explain, and they couldn't" (Lewkowicz, 2006, p.

A15). It went on to quote Fournier as saying, "J'ai eu du mal à les comprendre. Je n'étais pas le

seul" ("I had difficulty understanding [the report cards]. I was not the only one.").

Other issues in standards, assessment and outcomes were specific to the secondary

school context, where exams and standardized testing are the norm. Exams are perhaps not the

most fitting measure of learning outcomes for a curriculum that emphasizes collaboration,

exploration, and cultivating learning skills, but as the president of the Quebec Provincial

Association of Teachers pointed out in 2004, "That philosophy conflicts with the reality in high

schools, where marks are needed for admission to college" (Lampert, 2004, p. A9). Anxiety

about college admissions made the perceived neglect of content knowledge in favour of more

general learning skills all the more alarming (Branswell, 2006, p. A8), especially when paired

with disappointing results on standardized tests designed to measure the impact of the reform

at the grade-six level (Branswell & Dougherty, 2006, p. A1) and the news that Quebec had

slipped in the rankings of the Trends in International Math and Science Study (TIMSS), an

international comparison of student performance in math and science administered to students

in fourth and eighth grade every four years (Branswell, 2006, p. A5).

2. Time

From the outset, there were complaints that the government's reform plan was "rushed

and poorly thought out" ("Education Reform", 1997, p. B2). As problems and dissatisfaction with

the elementary-level implementation mounted, there was speculation as to whether the

government should proceed with the reform as planned at the secondary level with so many

issues yet to be resolved.

Items in *The Gazette* called for more time for teacher training and the development of materials (Lampert, 2004, p. A9; Brown, 2006, p. A23), and to better plan out details of the new curriculum such as how students would be graded (Lampert, 2003, p. A6). The lack of available time for these tasks was also cited as a reason to delay the reform at the secondary level.

The other major theme regarding time was the additional demands the reform placed on teachers, who already felt "overburdened"(Wiener, 1997, p. B3) and underappreciated. Teachers spoke of all the additional duties they perform and time they invest outside of class time, including "lunchtime and recess in remediating kids" and "hours in activities with students that make them better citizens of their community" (Barry, 2003, p. A30). "Everyone seems to think that teachers are suckers and will work endless hours for free after our paid day is over," lamented one teacher in a letter to the editor (O'Neil, 2005, p. A20). These conditions were not necessarily specific to the reform, but were exacerbated once teachers were expected to invest more time and energy in developing new strategies and materials to meet a myriad of substantial goals set forth by the Quebec Education Program, evaluating outcomes that are often difficult to measure, and working in partnership with colleagues and parents all the while.

Time was not one of the top three most negatively spoken about topics during the earlier implementation period, but that is not to say it was not at least as problematic then. The exact same points were raised during implementation of the reform at the elementary level, and in fact 90% of time-related statements from that time were negative, compared with 88.89% during secondary implementation. Time was persistently at issue; there were simply obstacles that were even more contentious in *The Gazette*'s coverage during the earlier period.

61

3. Working Conditions

All the top issues cited as a source of strife coalesce under the topic of teachers' working conditions. As previously mentioned, even prior to the start of the reform some teachers desired greater recognition for the true scope and value of their work, and often commensurate remuneration as well. It was expected that the changes to Quebec's school system would not only increase teachers' responsibilities, but change the very nature of their work. One high school principal who recognized this fact remarked that "change is very threatening to people and the reform redefines teaching even more than [it redefines] the curriculum" (Seidman, 2003, p. F1). A high school science teacher also summarized the difficulty inherent in what was being asked of educators: "The changes in personal beliefs required regarding the purpose of education and our role as educators can be a giant leap, even inconceivable for some" (Brown, 2006, p. A23).

The same teacher goes on to note a lack of training and support that only made the transition more challenging. A Université de Laval study corroborated that "teachers felt unsupported and badly prepared" (Lewkowicz, 2006, p. A15), and the curriculum guide that did exist just prior to the planned launch of the reform at the secondary level was "so philosophical, teachers say they're still not sure how they will explain it to high school students" (Lampert, 2004, p. A9).

Teachers responded to the changes with confusion, fear, and even anger. One high school teacher wrote to *The Gazette* to say, "I think the government needs to look not at school reform to increase student success … but at the way it supports its teachers in the classroom" (Barry, 2003, p. A30). "The government doesn't need to fix my teaching; it needs to send some

representatives to spend a year with a teacher, (7:30 a.m.- 11:00 p.m.), to see what reforms are really needed," she concluded.

This quote also serves to highlight how alienated teachers felt regarding reform planning and curriculum development, which is captured by the "governance and bureaucracy" code in this study. The perceived undervaluing of teachers in Quebec paired with the strains they face on the job led one *Gazette* columnist to discourage his son from becoming a teacher: "the more I thought about what the career involves today, the more I had second thoughts" (Aubin, 2006, p. B7). Later the same year, a union leader echoed the sentiment with similar observations and a grim pronouncement on the state of teaching in Quebec: "The working conditions offered to teachers are more discouraging than encouraging to enter the profession" (Branswell, 2006, p. A5).

Shifts in Opinion

There are two distinct subsections among the voices in *The Gazette*: those that were fairly consistent in tone, and those that swayed somewhat between positive and negative statements at various times during the implementation of the reform. The former generally maintain a particular stance or outlook regarding the reform and do not move more than one position from one implementation period to the next when ranked by percentage of negative comments, while the latter seem to be more reactive to particular issues or events as they developed and change positions more markedly. In some cases, however, this changeability may also be due to the varied composition of individuals within one category of voice.

63

Consistent Voices

The voices that were generally consistent in their ranking by percentage of negative statements were: Unspecified (94.29%); Union (92.21%); Family (88.89%); Teacher K-12 (78.45%); Government (57.41%); Student (50.00%); and School Administrator (35.71%).[8]

Unspecified

The "Voice - Unspecified" code in this study comprised those instances in which a statement is not attributed to a particular individual or no information is provided regarding the background of the person making a statement. Many of these are letters to the editor or responses to polls that do not disclose the speaker's relationship to the reform (e.g. teacher, parent, community member). Others are generalized statements such as "there are some people who think…" (Henchey, 1998, p. A8) or "…follows complaints that…" (Lampert, 2006, p. A8). In several instances the statements are in an op-ed by an author for whom no biographical details are given, but whose role is identifiable by other means (e.g. the author has been identified as a union leader in earlier newspaper items or the author is a more or less public figure such as the dean of a post-secondary institution); such statements are coded as both unspecified voice and any other appropriate voice code. In this way such items can be considered in the same way the wider public would receive them and also based on the speaker's actual stake in the reform.

---

[8] Because there was little variability between the two periods, the percentages indicated here represent the share of negative statements for elementary and secondary implementation combined.

The unspecified speaker's statement is almost invariably negative in *The Gazette* because in most cases it appears in items intended to convey an opinion on a current popular topic. Letters to the editor, op-eds and public opinion polls all invite people to voice an opinion if they so desire. In this case it appears people felt more compelled to use these avenues to express skepticism, disappointment and frustration than to endorse elements of the reform. It similarly seems that the negative opinions of unspecified groups were referred to in support of authors' observations of and arguments against the changes.

Union

Unions' negativity regarding the reform stemmed from their role as advocates for teachers. Their commentary revolved around the impact the changes had on teachers and what needed to be done differently in order to improve the situation for them, including giving teachers a better wage, providing them with more training and materials, and creating a more realistic timeline for the implementation of the reform to ease the strain on teachers and give them time to prepare. This group did occasionally express approval of some aspects of the reform or its progress, but the very nature of unions' purpose demands that they be critical.

Parent

The opinions of individual members of the general population of parents were absent from *The Gazette*. The parental commentary instead came from only two sources: parents involved with the school system in an official capacity (e.g. member of a school's governing board or parent representative with a school board), and references to the broad general mass of parents (as in "parents were alarmed" (Lewkowicz, 2006, p. A15)).

The vast majority of comments made by or attributed to parents appeared in *The Gazette* in 2000 and in 2006, which are the years the reform was actually launched in schools at the elementary level and at the secondary level. For many parents, this would also have been their first real contact with the reform. While there were some concerns regarding the new curriculum's impact on the quality of education just prior to the start of the 2000-2001 school year, almost every negative comment from December 2000 onward focused on the newly developed report cards that went home to parents. The most pressing issue appeared to be that the "non-traditional" report cards were challenging for parents to understand due to an abundance of educational "jargon" (Lampert, 2000, p. A4; Lampert, 2006, p. A8). Without letter grades or percentages, parents said they could not ascertain their children's academic performance or how the children fared in relation to their cohort. They also deemed the new assessment criteria and "competencies" overly subjective and feared their children would not be graded fairly (Lampert, 2000, p. A3; Lewkowicz, 2006, p. A15).

Teacher K-12

Despite all the attention paid to how teachers were suffering under the reform, teachers themselves were not overwhelmingly pessimistic on the topic. Roughly 78% of their comments were negative in both implementation periods. While this may seem high, this places them at or near the middle of the ranked list of voices by percentage of negative statements. Out of the 13 categories of voices identified in this study, teachers placed sixth between 1996 and 2000, and seventh between 2003 and 2006. The stability and relatively more balanced view could be due to the fact that while there were many detractors, there were also those who felt changes were in order and agreed with the reform in principle but had specific issues with its

planning and implementation. Criticism should not be equated with outright opposition. It seems there were many teachers who agreed with the pedagogical principles of the reform but objected to the lack of support and guidance in their implementation or felt it imposed an undue burden on them in daily practice.

While some felt that the reform revolutionized teaching and learning, there were educators who claimed to have been teaching in the spirit and methods of the reform for some time. One elementary teacher was quoted as saying "People are getting the impression that the reform at our level is like an A-bomb and we're starting fresh. But most of us in the biz, we've been doing this for a while" (Lampert, 2000, p. A4). The tone of vindication is palpable in articles that predict that some teachers "will stumble across the happy discovery that the new curriculum is old hat for them, that it's high time the government bureaucrats figured out that what they have been doing in the classroom has been right all along" (Zacharias, 1999, p. B1) or declare that teachers' "'best practices' - which have sometimes been carried out behind closed classroom doors, where they stray from the official school curriculum - have now been validated and endorsed by the government bureaucrats" (Seidman, 2000, B1). The president of the Quebec School Board Federation ventured that the "fatigue" educators were experiencing at the time was due "to their enthusiasm over the new reform and their wishes to move ahead, not to difficulties in putting it into effect" (Gordon, 2000, p. A7). Regardless of the accuracy of this observation, there is evidence that teachers were not uniformly or solely frustrated with the dicta of the new curriculum.

Government

One might logically assume that the government, meanwhile, would be generally

positive about the reform. It was a government initiative, after all. The government voice did

occupy a spot near the bottom of the list (10th in 1996-2000 and 11th in 2003-2006), but

statements from politicians and those affiliated with the government were more often negative

than positive (61.29% negative in 1996-2000 and 52.17% negative in 2003-2006). This is because

while the Parti Québécois government championed the changes it proposed, the Liberal

opposition critiqued them. A 1999 brief by the Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation recommending

adjustments to the reform and its implementation also contributed a number of negative

statements, although its goal was not simply to criticize, but to assist the ministry in refining the

reform. When the Liberal Party took power in Quebec in 2003, it planned to proceed with the

reform but sought to delay implementation at the secondary level so that it could address the

issues it had raised before it was elected and help ensure the success of the initiative. These

measures included allocating more resources for teacher training and the development of

curriculum materials.

School Administrator

The only group that was primarily optimistic about the reform was school

administrators, with only 33.33% of their statements between 1996 and 2000 and 37.50% of

statements between 2003 and 2006 being negative in tone. They were not well-represented in

The Gazette, and in both implementation periods all opinion statements from this group were

clustered in only two years.

There was a notable degree of consensus among school administrators, who tended to

approve of the aims of the reform as well as its observable outcome from their perspective.

They commented that students seemed more engaged in learning and were spending less time

in the principal's office (Seidman, 2000, p. B1; Branswell, 2006, A1). They were also sympathetic

to how teachers were faring under the new curriculum, and tended to frame their observations

in terms of access to resources such as training, books, and school librarians (Zacharias, 1999, p.

B1; Seidman, 2000, p. B4). This is in keeping with their primary duties and concerns as

administrators within a school environment, and as previously mentioned, since they were

charged with a leadership role in delivering government directives to the teachers in their

schools, they were not in a position to be overtly critical.

Student

As previously noted, there were only two instances of a student voicing an opinion

about the reform in the pages of *The Gazette*. Both of these were during the earlier

implementation period, and one was positive and the other was negative. These two statements

provide little information about how students spoke about the reform, and the only conclusion

that can be drawn with any confidence is that students' voices were hardly present in this forum.

Inconsistent Voices

The voices that varied most in their ranking by percentage of negative statements from

the first period to the second were: Editorial Board; Other; Academia; Journalist; Educational

Association; and School Board. Of these, Editorial Board, Academia, Journalist, and School Board

moved up in the list, indicating that the opinions of these groups became increasingly negative.

Conversely, Other and Educational Association moved downward, indicating that the opinions of

these groups became more positive over time. This is illustrated in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4. Change in Percentage of Negative Opinions by Voice

Period 1 (1996-2000)	%
1. Other	100.00
2. Unspecified	93.55
3. Union	91.67
4. Parent	86.67
5. Educational Association	80.00
6. Teacher K-12	77.78
7. Editorial Board	75.00
8. Academia	71.88
9. Journalist	63.16
10. Government	61.29
11. School Board	56.00
12. Student	50.00
13. School Administrator	33.33

Period 2 (2003-2006)	%
1. Academia	100.00
2. Unspecified	100.00
3. Editorial Board	93.33
4. Union	92.68
5. Parent	91.67
6. Journalist	87.50
7. Teacher K-12	78.75
8. School Board	68.75
9. Other	66.67
10. Educational Association	60.00
11. Government	52.17
12. School Administrator	37.50
13. Student	0.00

Editorial Board

Editorial board contributions were in the form of opinion pieces on various topics of current interest. The editorials published in *The Gazette* seem closely tied to the sentiment of the day regarding Quebec's education system and the reform. There was some early appreciation of the sensible changes that were proposed ("Passing Grade", 1996, p. B4), followed by a critique of how poorly planned and rushed they were ("Education Reform", 1997, p. B2), and then questioning of the worth of the reform in light of diminished student performance ("Less Reforming", 2005, p. A26), with various other popular topics in education reform in between. That the number of editorials touching on the topic of curriculum reform decreased from the first implementation period to the second while the number of negative statements drastically increased indicates a much larger concentration of criticism within each individual editorial over time. This is in keeping with the general finding of diminishing attention

to curriculum reform in *the Gazette* as time went on, coupled with mounting negativity in those items that do speak to the issue. Since the editorial board represents the voice of the newspaper, it is possible that shifts in the editorial content reflect the newspaper's general sense of the newsworthiness and efficacy of the reform effort.

Other

The "Other" code was used for individuals who did not fit into other codes and occurred only once or twice and so did not warrant a code of their own. This includes a librarian, a writer, a psychologist, and several other specialized occupations. These voices appeared in items exclusively in implementation years, with the exception of one instance in 2005. They commented on specific topics relevant to their occupation, and they nearly always offered a critique based on their expertise. Their numbers overall were so small (eight in the first period; six in the second period) that the decrease in negative comments from one period to the next was due to two positive comments at the time of secondary implementation, and is likely not significant.

Academia

As mentioned, education experts from post-secondary institutions provided explanation of and commentary on the proposed changes from their announcement through to initial implementation, but this voice fell silent from 2003 through 2005. There was a greater variety of opinion in the earlier period as they weighed the pros and cons of the new curriculum, but all four statements from 2006 were negative in tone. Another difference between the two implementation periods is that early on, opinions from this group were more often than not in

items they directly authored; during the secondary implementation period, only two of the four statements appeared in an item authored by them. A possible explanation for this is that they filled a void early on when the reform was more of a theoretical construct and as education specialists and experts they were uniquely positioned to analyze and interpret it, whereas later on attention turned to frontline observation of the reform in practice by those involved in the its implementation.

Journalist

It was noted earlier that journalists on occasion color their coverage of events by their choice of words, and it was these heavily nuanced articles that produced positive and negative statements in journalists' voices. From the first period to the second, the number of negative statements by journalists increased modestly from 12 to 14, and the number of positive statements dropped from seven to two. It appears that it was not so much that journalists became more pessimistic in their coverage of the reform, but that they ceased to be as optimistic. This could also have been influenced by the subject matter journalists were reporting on, which became increasingly negative over time as well, rather than mere editorialization on the part of reporters.

Educational Association

This is yet another category that brings together varied voices with different purposes. It includes any organization or committee dedicated to a dimension of education at the elementary or secondary level. It consisted largely of the Quebec School Board Association (later the Quebec English School Boards Association) and the Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation, but

also included school governing boards, parents' committees, and a curriculum implementation committee, among others.

This is another group that provided only a small amount of commentary on the reform and mostly in implementation years. While they represented different groups and interests, they were generally advocating improvements to the curriculum and its implementation, and so the tone of statements from this group was more critical than approving. Various organizations did mention early on that they agreed with the principles of the reform, and later that they saw a benefit to students. With only ten statements from this group in each period, the shift from 80% negative to 60% negative is not very significant.

School Board

There is a sense in the literature and in coverage of the reform that school boards are more closely aligned with the government in their role in policy and curriculum development and dissemination. School boards were heard from quite often in *The Gazette*, and the percentage of their statements that were positive and negative is similar to the figures for government statements.

Those affiliated with school boards weighed in on the organization of the new curriculum and its associated pedagogical approach, the timing and method of its introduction, and the resources that would be required. These statements were most often favorable of the reform, and where actual or potential problems were noted it was normally followed up with a positive course of action to amend the situation or an optimistic comment.

Summary of Findings

There was a discernable increase in negative opinion over time, and particularly in implementation years (i.e. 2000 and 2006), which is when the impact of the changes was most apparent to the largest number of people. The immediacy of the reform seemed to provoke a pessimistic reaction. These were also the years that saw a spike in the amount of discussion of the reform in *The Gazette*, although there was another large increase in 1997 that can be explained by the fact that the curriculum reform was announced at the end of 1996 and was often discussed in conjunction with other changes to Quebec's school system during that period. The coverage in 1997 was also marked by speculation and the gradual release of information as the government planned out the new curriculum. The overall number of items discussing the curriculum reform was rather small in years leading up to implementation, and diminished drastically in the later implementation period. This, combined with the large amount of criticism, produced a considerable concentration of negative opinion over time. Neutral opinion, consisting mostly of speculation, peaked in 2000 and then declined until 2005. This was likely due to reporting in the earlier years of future changes whose outcome could not be determined at the time.

Opinions were conveyed through editorials, op-eds, letters to the editor, columns and polls, as well as in news articles, which made up a large proportion of the items. In most instances news stories reported the opinions of various individuals and groups, but journalists increasingly colored news with their own commentary on the reform. Teachers were the leading source of opinion on the reform. Their views were often cited in items written by others, but they also authored a modest number of letters and op-eds. Teachers' points of view were also

represented collectively and prominently through the opinions of unions. In both cases the opinions were largely negative. The government was an often heard voice, with opinion that was more evenly split because it included the government in power that was backing the reform as well as members of the opposition and other politicians who were criticizing the effort. Academia acted as expert opinion in the earlier phase of implementation, and authored op-eds and letters interpreting and explaining the principles of the reform, often in a positive light. They were only minimally heard in the later period, during which their opinions were more negative and often cited as a secondary source. The voices of students were all but absent from discourse about the curriculum reform, and school administrators and the newspaper's editorial board participated only minimally.

While at least half the opinions on all topics were negative, in the early years there was a great deal of concern about the availability of funding and material resources to support the implementation of a curriculum reform of this scope. There was also a sense that the reform was something devised and imposed by governments and bureaucrats not in direct contact with the realities of the education system, and the distribution of decision-making responsibilities among the government, school boards, schools, teachers and the various committees and organizations involved in planning and implementation was called into question.

In the years leading up to implementation at the secondary level, standards, assessment and outcomes emerged as the most contentious issue, fueled by the perception that the new curriculum was less academically rigorous, that student performance on standardized tests suffered under the reform, and that report cards inadequately communicated to parents the information they were most interested in knowing about their children's progress. From the

outset there were allegations that the reform was being introduced too quickly, without adequate time to ensure that all parties were fully prepared and that the necessary supports were in place, and this persisted and intensified as secondary schools began to be affected as well. Teachers similarly continued to object to the impact the reform had on their working conditions. Already feeling stretched thin and poorly compensated, teachers were faced the prospect of a reform that disrupted traditional teaching practices and put the onus on them to guide students toward achieving a set of vague and confusing goals—all without sufficient training or support.

Discussion

The findings of this study establish that the opinions in public discourse, at least in *The Gazette*, were decidedly critical of the Quebec curriculum reform of 2000. This does not necessarily means that the reform was a failure even though some individuals seem to have implied that it was, but it does suggest that the reform effort might have failed to address the challenges of educational change documented by others. This chapter discusses criticism of the Quebec reform in the context of issues acknowledged in the literature on school reform as well as in the province's initial planning document*, Reaffirming the Mission of Our Schools* (also known as the "Inchauspé Report"), with a view to determining what might have gone wrong and what possible solutions could be explored in future research and policy.

Quebec Curriculum Reform in Light of the Literature

All the broad issues in the effective implementation of educational change identified in

the literature emerged as undercurrents in the mounting dissatisfaction with the recent curriculum reform in Quebec. Discourse in *The Gazette* debated how the province's schools should best satisfy the aims of education and where they failed to do so, the validity of traditional and progressive practices, the definition of roles, responsibilities and relationships within the educational hierarchy, and measures of the reform's success or indicators of its failure.

The Quebec Education Program established three primary goals of education: instructional goals comprising "cognitive development and mastery of knowledge"; socialization, including transmitting "the heritage of shared knowledge" and preparing students for democratic citizenship; and qualifications for employment at the end of students' schooling (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p. 3). Both Dewey (1916/1997) and Labaree (1997) have pointed out that an attempt to simultaneously realize these three goals will naturally produce conflict because each emphasizes different values and dictates a different approach to teaching and learning. If, for example, schools are indeed increasingly focused on the accumulation of credentials as the end goal, as Labaree argued, then grades and degrees will be prized over intellectual competency and knowledge attainment since having the credentials is more important than how this was achieved. Credentialism also contravenes the principles of democratic citizenship because it is associated with competitiveness and self-interest. Labaree described the situation as "a balancing act among competing pressures… that satisfies no one and aims only to create the minimum conflict" (p. 71). These conflicting aims did turn up in the discourse about the reform in the form of debate about the merit of vocational education, the role of the arts, religion, home economics and sex education in the curriculum, the minimum

77

requirements for graduation, and student performance on international standardized tests of math and science knowledge.

The reform sought to improve education, and there was support for this goal. The problem seemed to lie in defining what constituted improvement. In an op-ed, McGill University education professor Norman Henchey wrote, "Too often, innovation is a substitute for improvement because schools do not have systematic knowledge of how good their goals are and of how well they are achieving them" (Henchey, 2000, p. A8). There were clearly those who felt that the innovative new curriculum did not constitute an improvement, and labelled it a fad, a fashion, an experiment, and even an "erosion of pedagogical integrity" (Wiener, 2000, p. B2). The backlash against curricular and pedagogical changes stemmed at least in part from a preference for the status quo of education, whether out of partiality to the form and function of the "real school" or out of doubt and trepidation regarding the new approach. The ire raised by the revised report cards was a prime example of this. The traditional system of grading students and reporting on academic performance was incompatible with a curriculum that focused on competencies and dispositions not easily demonstrated in testing situations or communicated objectively through numerical or letter grades, and that valued measures of self-actualization over comparisons against a peer group or external standard. The new report cards attempted to capture this focus by replacing number and letter grades with rubrics, color codes, symbols and descriptive commentary, which parents found difficult to understand and also unfamiliar. The common complaint was that the new system of grading was unduly subjective, yet it seems odd that a letter grade was considered preferable. One parent remarked, "If your child gets a C, you know you have work to do…With the term 'making progress,' you don't really know" (Lampert,

2000, p. A4). A letter grade in and of itself does not communicate a course of action; it does so only because parents are accustomed to it and it signifies something to them, whereas the commentary does not as of yet. Letter grades and percentages are an integral part of the "real school" experience, but rubrics and descriptive feedback are not. This is but one example of a controversial change in the grammar of schooling, but the language used to describe various elements of the reform is rife with terms and statements favouring a particular standard for education such as "time-honoured" and "traditional tricks of the trade" (Wiener, 2000, p. B2), "good old top-down teaching" (Syrah, 2000, p. B5), and "It's what we grew up with. It's what we're used to" (Lampert, 2000, A1). New approaches are also dismissed through terms and phrases such as "glitzy, politically correct idea" (Simonelis, 2000, p. B2), "new gimmicks" (Cameron, 2000, p. A13), and "just another philosophical concept the government is imposing on us" (Seidman, 2000, p. B1).

This sense of the reform as something formulated behind closed doors and imposed on schools also permeated discussion. While teachers did sit on committees involved in the planning of the changes, including the Task Force on Curriculum Reform, only a select few were directly involved in the process in this capacity, and comments in *The Gazette* indicate that teachers felt excluded from the process. This, combined with the perceived lack of training and preparedness, seemed to render the fundamental shift in the culture of education demanded by the reform insurmountable for many. The Quebec Education Program relied on teachers' "professional expertise" at both the elementary and secondary levels (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p. 5; 2004, Forward), yet teachers would have benefited from greater clarity regarding was expected of them. One teacher and writer

79

identified the crux of the problem in an op-ed: "Terms like 'child-centred,' 'cross-curricular' and 'hands-on' express philosophy, not content. The reform appears to focus on the how of learning, leaving the what rather loosely defined" (Sarah, 2000, p. B5). In other words, it appears the government failed to strike a suitable balance between a fully fleshed-out and prescriptive curriculum and a descriptive one left to teachers' interpretation. It is obviously easier to convey a checklist than transmit a philosophy.

There were teachers who, even prior to the reform, already employed the instructional methods associated with progressive education, such as assigning more self-directed, interdisciplinary, or project-based work. This was noted by teachers in a reassuring fashion, as when a grade-one teacher was quoted as saying, "People are getting the impression that the reform at our level is like an A-bomb and we're starting fresh…But most of us in the biz, we've been doing this for a while" (Lampert, 2000, p. A4). Journalists, on the other hand, tended to oversell the progressive pedagogy as ideal or correct in those articles early on that favoured it:

> In schools across Quebec, our teachers' dirty little secrets are out. Their "best practices"- which have sometimes been carried out behind closed classroom doors, where they stray from the official school curriculum - have now been validated and endorsed by the government bureaucrats who oversee our children's schooling. (Seidman, 2000, p. B1)

There was an erroneous perception that the new approaches to teaching were advocated to the exclusion of more traditional, didactic ones. It would be unreasonable to expect any one instructional method to be effective across all contexts, and the only "best" approach is one that is most effective given a particular time, place, subject

80

matter, aim, teacher and group of students. In other words, teaching must be adaptive

and flexible, and the validity of multiple strategies was recognized by the QEP at the

elementary level (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p. 4-5) and

even more explicitly in the later document for secondary education:

> While it is the responsibility of the Ministère de l'Éducation to establish the aims
>
> of the education system, it is up to school staff to define ways to achieve them.
>
> However, since students cannot, logically, learn to think if their activities are
>
> limited to rote exercises, even without specifying any particular approach, the
>
> program has implications for pedagogical practices. It is not so much a question
>
> of following one school of thought or another, but of creating learning situations
>
> and pedagogical contexts that promote the development of competencies.
>
> (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation , 2004, p. 9)

If the government wanted to encourage the use of varied teaching strategies to

achieve the aims of the curriculum, it seems improved communication was in order. The

reform might have been less intimidating if it was clear from the outset that it did not

represent an absolute rejection of past models of education. Those teachers who were

less accustomed to the new approaches might have benefitted from examples of less

familiar teaching methods and support and guidance in trying them out. Indeed, they

asked for this in *The Gazette*. Those teachers who already employed different

techniques were available as a resource for the sharing of practices with other

educators and as a local support network, rather than allowing such instruction to

continue occurring in isolation. In *Schools That Learn*, Senge (2000) stressed that a vision

imposed from above cannot succeed, that developing a shared vision "requires time, care and strategy," and that it "[has] a way of spreading through personal contact" (p. 72). He also advocated team learning, which he described as "small groups of people transform[ing] their collective thinking, learning to mobilize their energies and actions to achieve common goals and drawing forth an intelligence and ability greater than the sum of individual members' talents" (p. 7-8). Evidently it would be easier to rally teachers around a reform they had a hand in shaping, at minimum through feedback, but collaboration could at least be fostered at the school level to achieve a sense of collegiality and support.

Communication with the public is also critical in order to earn trust and support and prevent misinformation, at the very least to mobilize mutual cooperation toward the aims of education. Political parties also have a vested interest in public opinion because voters' decisions can be based in part on their perceptions of an incumbent government's performance in this area and on their agreement with parties' educational platform at election time. Mario Dumont, leader of the Action démocratique du Québec, frequently leveraged dissatisfaction with the changes to Quebec's school system to advance his political party in the media, and particularly ahead of the 2007 provincial election through which he became leader of the opposition in the Quebec National Assembly.

There were a number of instances of misinterpretation of the reform in *The Gazette* that became incorporated into popular discourse over time and went largely undisputed. The grouping of grades into cycles in the QEP for the purpose of setting two-year targets for student

progress was discussed as though the government promoted multigrade groupings in the classroom. This arrangement is not a novel concept in education, but more recently it has been used primarily in smaller or rural schools where the student population was not conducive to single-grade classes. A 2003 Quebec government document defined the multigrade class as "a model chosen by school boards in response to falling enrollments in some elementary schools" (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2003a, glossary). It was not mandated by the provincial government itself.

Another misinterpretation related to the cycles was regarding the policy of not having students repeat a grade mid-cycle. This was understood as a policy of automatic promotion in the name of the QEP's stated "theme of the education reform": "success for all" (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p. 3). The main rationale for the cycles was that the arrangement "takes into account the need for a long-term approach in developing competencies" and "corresponds better to the students' learning rate" (Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 2001, p. 5). Under the reform, students were given two years to reach a particular set of educational benchmarks instead of one, in the belief that children could take more than the ten months in a school-year to arrive at certain targets and still be on track. In the simplest of terms, with a two-year time frame, failing a student in the middle of a cycle is akin to failing a student mid-year under the previous system. Contrary to popular belief, grade retention was not eradicated in order to achieve some superficial appearance of success; it was still possible in between cycles (e.g. after grades two, four, and six at the primary level).

One of the most insidious and persistent misunderstandings regarding the reform has stemmed from the focus on competencies, which were believed to replace basic content

knowledge with the acquisition of learning skills. This was despite the QEP's defining of

"essential knowledges" in five subject areas, and the fundamental fact that thinking and learning

cannot be devoid of content. Even if some of the "subject-specific competencies" were skill-

based, it would not be possible to apply these skills without manipulating, operating on or

synthesizing factual knowledge. There were attempts by school administrators and individuals

within school boards to clarify the role of the competencies and their relationship to knowledge

acquisition, but it was unions and teachers who were most concerned that students were not

learning what they should, which is ironic considering that teachers are ultimately responsible

for lesson planning. This did not inspire confidence in parents, who later began voicing the same

fears about students' stores of knowledge. A 2006 Gazette article described the problem

according to the head of the Fédération Autonome de l'Enseignement, a union representing

about one-third of Quebec's Francophone teachers: "…essential knowledge is getting the short

shrift in favour of so-called 'competencies' - and the missing knowledge is noticeable in students

that have learned under the reform for the past seven years" (Branswell, 2006, p. A8).

The evidence of missing knowledge to which this statement referred was students'

academic performance, particularly on the Trends in International Mathematics and Science

Study (TIMSS). The study, which assesses the performance of grade four and eight students in

math and science every four years, revealed that Quebec students had slipped in the

international rankings between 1995 and 2003. "This decline coincides with implementation of

the curriculum reforms and might be evidence that the reforms have not reformed math and

science achievements. What's certain is that students are not moving ahead and that the

reforms must bear some responsibility" (Lewkowicz, 2006, p. A15), said one high school teacher

in an op-ed urging parents to speak out against the reform. Teachers and parents were not the only ones using grades and test scores to measure the worth of the reform; a government report produced just before the start of the 2006-2007 school year recommended "evaluating the effect of the reform on students…by administering standardized, province-wide tests in French, English and math in Grade 6" (Branswell & Dougherty, 2006, p. A1). This was a curious choice of measurement seeing as the government itself had suggested in the QEP that other means of assessment were better suited to the type of learning and cognitive skills encouraged by the new curriculum. It also assumed that implementation of the reform was complete, and that what it was assessing was student achievement under the new curriculum rather than in a period of uncertainty and transition as the school system attempted to adapt to change. If the latter was the case, then the further change that would naturally be suggested by unsatisfactory test scores would only prolong the period of adaptation.

Public Opinion, the Media and School Reform

While this study is not concerned with establishing the specific role the media plays in shaping or reflecting public opinion, in light of both the intense negativity of the opinions appearing in *The Gazette* and the potential for negative public opinion to impair or halt a school reform effort, it bears commenting briefly on the state of public discourse and opinion about educational change in Quebec. In 2007, the Canadian Education Association (CEA) surveyed Canadians about their attitudes toward education, including their views on reform efforts and the need for change. The CEA report *Public Education in Canada: Facts, Trends and Attitudes* (Canadian Education Association, 2007) pays special attention to the unique features of Quebec opinion. The study found that the province's residents were the least satisfied with their schools

but also the most confident in them (p. 10). When asked about educational change in the past decade, they agreed in greater numbers than residents of any other province that "changes were heading in the right direction" (p. 14) and also that past changes were unsuccessful. While these findings may seem contradictory at first glance, they mirror public support in *The Gazette* for the need for change and for the principles of the 2000 curriculum reform, and subsequent disappointment with how the reform was implemented.

The more general Canadian findings also corroborate certain aspects of the literature and shed light on the findings of the present study. A large majority of respondents in the CEA survey indicated that they would be more accepting of changes that were proven effective either through their application elsewhere or through experiments, but less than half endorsed changes originating "exclusively" from provincial governments (p. 9). This explains the general scepticism about the Quebec reform, which took its cues from research and other reform efforts, but was perceived as something the government suddenly proclaimed in 1996 and then cobbled together in the years that followed. A corollary to the support for reforms that have had some success in other locales is aversion to reforms that have failed elsewhere. When a reform effort in Geneva was aborted in 2005 due to what a high school teacher described in *The Gazette* as "a dose of common sense and mounting public pressure," the teacher declared it "another nail in the reform coffin" for Quebec (Lewkowicz, 2006, p. A15). There is a long history of failed and faded reforms, which can perpetuate fear and doubt when new changes are announced.

The timing of the study in relation to the Quebec reform and the temperature of public opinion at the time were not lost on the CEA. The report noted that "reforms have been debated extensively in the media and contested by teachers in a public way" and that the media

coverage "may be influential in Quebec residents' above average view that there have been too many changes in education and their generally negative perception of these changes" (Canadian Education Association, 2007, p. 10). Canadians cited their experience as parents and students as the most common source of their opinions about education, and rated the media as only "somewhat important" (p. 9). However, the media was a key source of information regarding current events in education for those who did not have personal ties with schools, as evidenced by the tendency for survey respondents to believe that the recent changes in schools were only moderate or minor (p. 14) and by the finding that "the public expresses the highest satisfaction with public education when they have direct experience through their local schools" (p. 11).

Education is not the only domain in which the media plays a role in the proliferation of misinformation and dissatisfaction. In the province of Quebec, a recent study of "reasonable accommodation" or equitable provincial policy regarding cultural, religious and linguistic groups, turned to the media to analyze how specific cases have been presented and understood. The report, titled *Building the Future: A Time for Reconciliation* but more popularly known as the Bouchard-Taylor Report, found "striking distortions between general public perceptions and the actual facts as we were able to reconstitute them," and concluded that "the negative perception of reasonable accommodation that spread in the public often centred on an erroneous or partial perception of practices in the field" (Bouchard & Taylor, 2008, p. 18). Although these findings implicate the media in feeding misinterpretation and dissatisfaction among the public, the media is but one mechanism for the dissemination of information. It stands to reason that if the public were better informed about and less critical of issues, there would be fewer opportunities for the media to report negative opinions and possibly give the impression that issues are more

87

contentious than they would otherwise be.

Reform Implementation and the Inchauspé Report

The Inchauspé Report was remarkably prescient in its identification of potential

problems in the development and implementation of a new curriculum, many of which

ultimately became prominently contentious in discourse about the curriculum reform in *The*

Gazette.

The highly contested report cards distributed to parents, for example, were not at all

aligned with the recommendations of the Inchauspé Report, which acknowledged that parents

wanted "more uniformity in report cards, to ensure better legibility and presentation"

(Inchauspé, 1997, p. 90). The task force that produced the report favoured the creation of a

more or less standardized report card tailored to the objectives of the curriculum, but that could

also be easily understood by parents. At the same time, it recognized that in some cases "the

status quo should be maintained, since both parents and schools have agreed on a form of

report card that they wish to keep" (p. 90). As a solution, it proposed that the government

produce "two or three model report cards that are simple, clear and easy for parents to read" (p.

91), and that any other format would require the consent of parents and the school governing

board. In the press, however, teachers complained that they lacked exemplars or guidance well

into the implementation process, and the general reaction to the report cards that schools and

school boards experimented with indicated that the assessment tools fell far short of satisfying

the requirements of simplicity, clarity, or ease of comprehension.

As regards standards in education, the Inchauspé Report took great care to build a case

for both essential knowledge and cognitive development in the curriculum, and cautioned against excessive emphasis on either one. It argued that the Quebec school system has valued the transmission of knowledge over the development of cognitive skills, but pointed out that basic knowledge remains a prerequisite for more advanced skills. The task force elucidated the relationship between the two:

> Results are never instantaneous, and are not necessarily an integral part of the process. Although developing students' creativity is a praiseworthy goal, creative writing workshops will not produce the intended results if the basic rules of grammar and composition are neglected. Similarly, being able to think for oneself is an outcome, not a starting point. Students who are asked to think for themselves without any preparation will produce only banal results. (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 24)

Items in *The Gazette* continually picked out the project method as a representative characteristic of the new pedagogical approach, which, along with allegations that the curriculum taught thinking skills but not content, gave the impression that Quebec schools were superficially and unjustifiably concerned with doing, to the neglect of knowing. Perhaps the problem stemmed from how the Inchauspé Report's call for "more stringent programs with clearly defined requirements...as a bulwark against the lowering of standards" (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 23) translated for the most part into clearly defined skill sets rather than knowledge in the QEP.

The other purpose for well defined curricular goals and standards was to assist teachers—the main audience for curriculum documents—in decision-making and planning. The

task force stated certain requirements of the QEP to this end:

- It must provide information that enables teachers to clarify the situation

  and function of the subject in the curriculum as a whole: its place and role in

  achieving the objectives of the cycle, its place and role with respect to

  preceding and subsequent subject matter (disciplinary consistency), its

  place and role in the field of knowledge at that specific cycle or level

  (consistency and integration with other subjects in the same field), and

  possible links with other subjects taught at the same level (interdisciplinary

  consistency). (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 76)

- The program must clearly show the objectives of the course and explicitly

  state the elements of knowledge to be acquired and the level of

  competence to be attained. The elements of knowledge include the notions,

  concepts and skills inherent in the discipline, while the level of competence

  refers to either the level of knowledge acquisition (e.g., familiarization or

  mastery) or the level of skill to be measured at the end of the year.

  (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 76)

- The program should be drafted in a style that is free of technical jargon and

  terminology taken from educational schools of thought. (Inchauspé, 1997, p.

  77)

These minimum requirements were not fully realized; nor was the lay version of the

curriculum document the task force recommended be produced in order "to provide specific

information to allow parents, the general public and students to understand what will be taught in a given year or cycle, and the requirements to be satisfied at the end of that year or cycle" (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 78). The earliest document of this type in the archive of the education ministry's website is dated August 2005, and outlines the primary program introduced five years earlier.

The impact of the general lack of adequate communication of the curriculum could have been lessened, at least as far as teachers were concerned, with appropriate support as advocated by the Inchauspé Report. The Task Force on Curriculum Reform was aware of the scale of the reform and said that the changes involved "[would] not occur without causing a certain amount of upheaval in the teaching profession" (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 103). The report contained several measures designed to alleviate the strain or imposition on teachers, including the creation of "an educational innovation organization at the service of teachers" based on "research into teachers' needs, together with a critical analysis of educational production and methods" and "support for innovation" (p. 83). It also observed that "working teachers are practically excluded. In the logic of the existing system, they tend to be considered as appliers, not experts" (p. 82), and suggested that "a professional will rarely apply a change effectively if he or she was not a party to it" (p. 75). In order to remedy this situation, the report stated that teachers should at the very least be brought into discussions prior to implementation to assess the feasibility of the proposed changes, but should ideally be fully involved in program establishment and implementation. Here again, evidence in *The Gazette* pointed to an overall lack of support and exclusion from the planning process, which would contribute to a sense of the reform as something sudden and hasty despite the decade of research and discussions that

went on within the government prior to the announcement and implementation of the reform

(p. 20).

That the very issues the Task Force on Curriculum Reform sought to resolve through its

recommendations in the planning stage became contentious issues in discourse about the

reform during the implementation stage suggests that information about potential problems

was available but often overlooked. This interpretation places responsibility for the perceived

failure of the reform or aspects of it with the planners of educational change, which in this case

is Quebec's education ministry. Another factor at work here is the misinformation and lack of

awareness regarding the details of the reform that was also observed in coverage of education

topics in *The Gazette*. In this case, it is entirely possible despite the great degree of pessimism

that the reform did not fail at all and that it is in fact too soon to assess its degree of success,

although widespread negative opinion could bring about the early demise of a reform effort.

Some Concluding Remarks

While this study set out to identify the groups that were most unsatisfied with the

reform and the most contested aspects of the reform, it quickly became apparent that the

overall tone was negative and the entire effort seemed to be problematic. The study maps out

public discourse about educational change and the at times visceral reaction to it, but as a small-

scale preliminary investigation it is unable to precisely assess the accuracy of public opinion and

can only propose some possible solutions to explore. Future studies can address this through

further comparison with coverage of the reform in the French-language media in Quebec, or an

experimental design that delivers what was perceived to be missing and measures the impact.

This could entail the delivery of training, materials and other supports teachers said they sorely

required to see whether this produces more robust and sustainable change, or it could be a

campaign of public information to see if it is possible to improve opinion and rally support for

the reform. The intention of this research is not to dwell on the negativity of the past, but to

contribute to the search for workable solutions for the future, equipped with some insight into

what the public wants for its schools and how it wants this realized.

References

Abley, M. (2000, April 9). Curriculum reform might not boost arts programs. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A6. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202479851).

Aubin, H. (2006, June 3). Teachers get no respect: Quebec undervalues its teachers and our education system shows it. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B7. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 1048350961).

Barry, D. (2003, June 25). Reforms should focus on teachers [Letter to the editor]. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A30. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 353730461).

Bouchard, B., & Taylor, C. (2008). *Building the future: A time for reconciliation.* Retrieved January 22, 2012, from http://www.accommodements.qc.ca/documentation/rapports/rapport-final-integral-en.pdf

Branswell, B. (2006, October 5). Teachers finding it tough, union says: Working conditions discouraging: CSQ boss. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A5. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 1141772791).

Branswell, B. (2006, November 17). Curriculum reform gets an F. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A8. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 1164723811).

Branswell, B. (2006, November 27). Grading curriculum reform: Quebec tweaks as reactions range from A+ to calls for moratorium. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A1. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 1169775361).

Branswell, B., & Dougherty, K. (2006, August 25). Reforms said to hinder special-needs students: I'll try to improve on curriculum: Minister. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A1. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 1109991981).

Brown, C. (2006, March 9). Education reforms recognize that kids learn at different rates. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A23. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 1001050021).

Cameron, N. (2000, December 10). Educational reformers get failing grade. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A13. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202883101).

Canadian Education Association. (2007). *Public education in Canada: Facts, trends and attitudes.* Retrieved January 22, 2012, from http://www.cea-ace.ca/publication/public-education-canada-facts-trends-and-attitudes-2007

Canadian Newspaper Association. (n.d). Daily circulation report 2010. Retrieved from http://www.newspaperscanada.ca/daily-newspaper-paid-circulation-data

Chambers, G. (1997, July 11). New curriculum should reflect all communities. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B3. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 12947164).

Chambers, G. (2000, December 15). A government addicted to reform. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B3. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202891221).

Cherney, E. (1998, February 11). Book shortage nothing new to us, teachers say. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A3. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 198574311).

Clark, C. (1997, September 18). Teachers' union, minister at odds over reforms. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A11. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 14636649).

Cohen, D. K. (1989). Teaching practice: Plus que ça change…. In P. W. Jackson (Ed.), *Contributing to educational change: Perspectives on research and practice* (pp. 27-84). Berkeley, CA:

McCutchan.

Counts, G. S. (1929). *Secondary education and industrialism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Cremin, L. A. (1961). *The transformation of the school: Progressivism in American education 1876-1957*. New York, NY: Knopf.

Cuban, L. (1993). *How teachers taught: Constancy and change in American classrooms 1880-1990* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Cumyn, A. (1999, January 26). The education challenge: With its new mandate, the government has a chance to repair the damage. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B3. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 197876061).

Dascal, H. (2000, December 22). Another disaster [Letter to the editor]. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B2. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202903131).

Dewey, J. (1997). *Democracy and education*. New York, NY: The Free Press.

Edelman, M. (1988). *Constructing the political spectacle*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Education reform worth doing well. (1997, February 7). *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B2. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 21567844).

Elmore, R. F., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1988). *Steady work: Policy, practice, and the reform of American education* (R-3574-NIE/RC). Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation. Retrieved from ERIC. (ED296020).

Fonda, N. (1999, September 24). Educating the bureaucrats. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B3. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 198261291).

Frechtling, J., & Sharp, L. (Eds.). (1997). *User-friendly handbook for mixed method evaluations*.

National Science Foundation, Division of Research, Evaluation and Communication. Retrieved February 26, 2012, from http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/

Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Gordon, S. (2000, December 8). School reform gains new backing. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A7. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202876521).

Gouvernement du Québec. Institut de la Statistique du Québec. (2011, July). *Tableau statistique Canadien* (ISSN: 1715-6459). Retrieved from http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/publications/ comparaisons_econo/tsc_an.htm

Gouvernement du Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. (1996). Les états généraux sur l'éducation. Retrieved from http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/etat-gen/menu/expose_a/tabmat.htm

Gouvernement du Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. (1997). *Québec schools on course: Educational policy statement*. Québec, QC: MEQ. (Document no 97-0541). Retrieved from http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/REFORME/pol_eco/anglais/ecole_a.pdf

Gouvernement du Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. (2001). *Québec Education Program: New directions for success together*. Québec, QC: MEQ. (Document no. 01-00611). Retrieved from http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/dfgj/dp/programme_de_formation/primaire/ educprg2001h.htm

Gouvernement du Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. (2003a). *Attracting, developing, and retaining effective teachers in Québec*. Québec, QC: MEQ. (Document no. 2003-03-00958). Retrieved from http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/sections/publications/ publications/EPEPS/Form_titul_pers_scolaire/AttirerFormerRetenueEnsQualiteQuebec_ a.pdf

Gouvernement du Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. (2003b). *Implementation plan for the*

policy on the evaluation of learning. Québec, QC: MEQ. (Document no. 03-00066). Retrieved from http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/lancement/pea/13-4602-01A.pdf

Gouvernement du Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. (2003c). *Policy on the evaluation of learning*. Québec, QC: MEQ. (Document no. 03-00065). Retrieved from http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/sections/publications/publications/EPEPS/Formation_jeun es/Evaluation/13-4602A.pdf

Gouvernement du Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation. (2004a). *Education indicators: 2004 edition*. Retrieved from http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/stat/indic04/en/pdf/complete/ indicator_color.pdf

Gouvernement du Québec. Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec (2004b). *Québec Education Program: Secondary school education, cycle one*. Québec, QC: MEQ. (Document no. 03-00691). Retrieved from http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/DGFJ/dp/ programme_de_formation/secondaire/qepsecfirstcycle.htm

Henchey, N. (1998, September 20). Don't ignore school changes. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A8. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 198921801).

Henchey, N. (1999, September 26). Schools task is far from over. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A10. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 198265461).

Henchey, N. (2000, February 6). What the young should learn: Rhetoric-reality gap gets in the way. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A8. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202368981).

Holsti, O. R. (1969). *Content analysis for the social sciences and humanities*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Inchauspé, P. (1997). *Reaffirming the mission of our schools*. Québec, QC: Government of

Québec. Retrieved from http://www.mels.gouv.qc.ca/reforme/curricu/anglais/
school.htm

Labaree, D. F. (1997). Public goods, private goods: The American struggle over educational goals. *American Educational Research Journal*, *34*(1), 39-81.

Labaree, D. F. (2008). Limits on the impact of educational reform: The case of progressivism and U.S. schools, 1900-1950. In C. Crotti & F. Osterwalder (Eds.), *Das Jahrhundert der Schulreformen: Internationale und nationale Perspektiven, 1900-1950* (pp. 105-133). Berne: Haupt. Retrieved from http://www.stanford.edu/~dlabaree/selected-papers.html

Lampert, A. (2000, August 26). Parents, students girding for fight. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A1. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202702591).

Lampert, A. (2000, October 15). Split over two-grade classroom: Educators say it works, but parents and students decry shared instruction. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A3. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202786001).

Lampert, A. (2000, December 2). Not as simple as ABC. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A3. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202867591).

Lampert, A. (2000, December 6). Teachers call for more time: Overworking and undertraining staff will cause province's curriculum revision to fail: Unions. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A4. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202875471).

Lampert, A. (2000, December 9). New report cards receive mixed grades: Some parents find symbols confusing but, combined with interviews, that will end, teacher says. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A4. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202881321).

Lampert, A. (2000, December 29). Letters, numbers get an A: Majority prefer traditional report
cards, poll shows. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A1. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian
Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202909841).

Lampert, A. (2003, April 19). Educators divided over possible delay in curriculum changes under
Liberals. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A6. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand
Major Dailies. (Document ID: 328741701).

Lampert, A. (2004, November 29). Teachers stumped by curriculum reform. *The Montreal
Gazette*, p. A9. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document
ID: 754114811).

Lampert, A. (2005, May 6). Teachers look at more strike dates. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A8.
Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID:
834547041).

Lampert, A. (2006, February 2). "No proof" curriculum reform is broken: Minister. *The Montreal
Gazette*, p. A6. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document
ID: 981103901).

Lampert, A. (2006, May 25). Parents to help decide which report cards make the grade. *The
Montreal Gazette*, p. A8. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies.
(Document ID: 1042762881).

Lampert, A., & Dougherty, K. (2003, June 23). Teachers still chafing at reforms. *The Montreal
Gazette*, p. A8. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document
ID: 352992241).

Lewkowicz, F. (2006, March 5). It's time we jumped off the education-reform bandwagon. *The
Montreal Gazette*, p. A15. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies.
(Document ID: 998420431).

Lewkowicz, F. (2010, February 19). Why don't Quebecers care about education news? Except, of

course, when the news involves Jewish schools. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A17. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 434907633)

McCulloch, G. (2004). *Documentary research in education, history, and the social sciences*. New York, NY: RoutledgeFalmer.

Metz, M. H. (2008). *Real school: The universal drama amid disparate experience*. In J. H. Ballantine & J. Z. Spade (Eds.), *Schools and society: A sociological approach to education* (pp. 137-150). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Moore, L. (1997, June 21). Educators like new report on curriculum. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A8. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 12605283).

Mort, P. R., Cornell, F. G. (1941). *American schools in transition: How our schools adapt their practices to changing needs.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

O'Neil, M. (2005, October 4). Curriculum contributes to obesity [Letter to the editor]. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A20. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 907128701).

Passing grade on school reform. (1996, October 26). *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B4. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 22256922).

Ravitch, D. (2000). *Left back: A century of failed school reforms*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Sarah, R. (2000, September 23). Basic skills are as essential as ever: Quebec's education reform is off and running, the government tells us, but there is reason to be concerned about exactly where it is heading. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B5. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202751501).

Seidman, K. (1999, October 23). Anglos likely to get report cards: But a final decision on strategy will be made after a vote by teachers, union says. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A5.

Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 198309321).

Seidman, K. (2000, September 9). Schools hoping for class act: The new curriculum is here at last. It's child-centred and may make lessons more relevant. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B1. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202727741).

Seidman, K. (2000, September 9). Cash-strapped libraries reeling Series: SCHOOL'S IN. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B4. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202727791).

Seidman, K. (2003, May 1). School reform rupture: Pierrefonds Comprehensive holds lessons for minister. *The Montreal Gazette* [West Island Edition], p. F1. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 333915411).

Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art & practice of the learning organization*. New York, NY: Doubleday/Currency.

Senge, P., Cambron-McCabe, N., Lucas, T., Smith, B., Dutton, J., & Kleiner, A. (2000). *Schools that learn: A fifth discipline fieldbook for educators, parents, and everyone who cares about education*. New York, NY: Doubleday/Currency.

Simonelis, A. (2000, September 28). Beware of glitzy learning. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B2. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202759341).

Teachers upset over meeting excluding them. (2000, December 7). *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A6. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202875841).

The cost of cutting back. (1999, March 9). The *Montreal Gazette*, p. B2. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 197945711).

Thompson, E. (1996, October 25). Marois stresses "back to basics". *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A1. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 22255557).

Tyack, D., & Cuban, L. (1995). *Tinkering toward utopia: A century of public school reform*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Tyack, D., & Tobin, W. (1994). The "grammar" of schooling: Why has it been so hard to change? *American Educational Research Journal*, *31*(3), 453-479.

Wiener, M. (1997, March 2). School reforms should be slowed. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A6. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 21586586).

Wiener, M. (1997, July 3). School-based management is no panacea: Quebec is moving too fast to implement a plan that is questionable. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B3. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 12785573).

Wiener, M. (1998, November 15). Let teachers have a say. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A12. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 199017271).

Wiener, M. (1999, October 17). Teachers have waited too long. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A10. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 198297441).

Wiener, M. (2000, May 22). No success without failure. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B2. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202548371).

Wilson, J. (1997, July 9). Too much, too soon: Good ideas, but government moving too fast with education reforms. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B3. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 12910073).

Wilton, K. (2000, February 22). Lessons to be outgraded. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A5. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202392181).

Wilton, K. (2000, May 5). School librarians face axe: Parents, teachers vow to help fight English

board's plan to eliminate staff. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A3. Retrieved from ProQuest

Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 202521971).

Zacharias, Y. (1998, November 17). Schools "tragedy" feared: Parent bodies chorus their

concerns, saying $400 million more needed. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. A5. Retrieved

from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies. (Document ID: 199019581).

Zacharias, Y. (1999, September 18). The millennium school: Meadowbrook School is on the front

line as Quebec searches for a way to teach children what they need to know in the next

century. *The Montreal Gazette*, p. B1. Retrieved from ProQuest Canadian Newsstand

Major Dailies. (Document ID: 198251391).

Appendix I: Studies of Curriculum Implementation since 2000

Reference	Location	Reform Year	Study Year(s)	Method(s)	Site(s)	Subjects/ Participants
Al-Daami, K. K., & Wallace, G. (2007). Curriculum reform in a global context: A study of teachers in Jordan. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 39*(3), 339-360.	Jordan	1988		Questionnaire, interviews	52 schools	500 elementary teachers, 2 ministry officials
Altinyelken, H. K. (2010). Curriculum change in Uganda: Teacher perspectives on the new thematic curriculum. *International Journal of Educational Development, 30*(2), 151-161.	Uganda	2006	2007	Interviews, observation	8 schools	44 teachers, government officials, academicians
Arslantas, H. I. (2011). Evaluation of elementary school inspectors' occupational helps and guidance to teachers about new curriculum. *Educational Research and Reviews, 6*(2), 215-223.	Turkey	2005	'08-'09	Questionnaire	Public schools	60 teachers
Bantwini, B. D. (2010). How teachers perceive the new curriculum reform: Lessons from a school district in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development, 30*(1), 83-90.	South Africa	1997	2006	Questionnaire, interviews	Primary schools	88 primary teachers

Benavot, A., & Resh, N. (2003). Educational governance, school autonomy, and curriculum implementation: A comparative study of Arab and Jewish schools in Israel. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 35*(2), 171-196.	Israel	1996		Documents (data)	173 junior high schools	N/A
Broadhead, P. (2001). Curriculum change in Norway: Thematic approaches, active learning and pupil cooperation - from curriculum design to classroom implementation. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 45*(1), 19-36.	Norway	1997		Interviews, questionnaire, observation	8 schools	2 gov. representatives, former Minister of Education, 54 primary/middle school teachers
Brundrett, M., Duncan, D., & Rhodes, C. (2010). Leading curriculum innovation in primary schools project: An interim report on school leaders' roles in curriculum development in England. *Education 3-13, 38*(4), 403-419.	England	2009	2010	Interviews	3 primary schools	1 headteacher, 1 deputy headteacher, 1 curriculum coordinator, 1 teacher (per school)
Carless, D. (2005). Prospects for the implementation of assessment for learning. *Assessment in Education Principles Policy and Practice, 12*(1), 39-54.	Hong Kong	2001		Documents (literature/studies)	N/A	N/A

106

Cheung, A. C. K., & Wong, P. M. (2011). Effects of school heads' and teachers' agreement with the curriculum reform on curriculum development progress and student learning in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Educational Management, 25*(5), 453-473.	Hong Kong	2001	2006	Questionnaire, focus groups	132 primary schools, 108 secondary schools	>26,000 senior administrators, teachers
Dello-Iacovo, B. (2009). Curriculum reform and "quality education" in China: An overview. *International Journal of Educational Development, 29*(3), 241-249.	China	Various	2006	Documents (literature/studies)	N/A	N/A
Desimone, L. (2002). How can comprehensive school reform models be successfully implemented? *Review of Educational Research, 72*, 433-479.	US	1997		Documents (literature/studies)	N/A	N/A
Flett, J. D., & Wallace, J. (2005). Change dilemmas for curriculum leaders: Dealing with mandated change in schools. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 20*(3), 188-213.	Australia	1993	1998	Observation, interviews	1 secondary school	Principal, vice-principals, teachers, parents, students
Flores, M. A. (2005). Teachers' views on recent curriculum changes: Tensions and challenges. *Curriculum Journal, 16*(3), 401-413.	Portugal	2001	'02-'03	Interviews, questionnaire	1 school	Headteacher, department heads, teachers

Fok, P. K., & Kennedy, K. J. (2010). Teachers, policymakers and project learning: The questionable use of "hard" and "soft" policy instruments to influence the implementation of curriculum reform in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership, 5*(6), 1-14.	Hong Kong	2001		Documents (literature/studies, policy documents)	N/A	N/A
Helvaci, M. A. (2009). An evaluation of changes in the curriculum in elementary school level in Turkey. *Education, 130*(2), 308-322.	Turkey	2005	2006	Questionnaire	85 elementary schools	85 elementary school principals
Hooghart, A. M. (2006). Educational reform in Japan and its influence on teachers' work. *International Journal of Educational Research, 45*(4-5), 290-301.	Japan	2002	2003	Questionnaire, observation, documents, interviews	Elementary and middle schools	96 teachers, administrators
Jeffers, G. (2011). The transition year programme in Ireland. embracing and resisting a curriculum innovation. *Curriculum Journal, 22*(1), 61-76.	Ireland	1974	2001	Documents, interviews, focus groups	6 secondary schools	Minster of education, 16 principals and program coordinators, 111 students, 10 parents, 113 teachers, 9 policy shapers

Kalin, J., & Zuljan, M. V. (2007). Teacher perceptions of the goals of effective school reform and their own role in it. *Educational Studies, 33*(2), 163-175.	Slovenia	1997	2003	Questionnaire	Primary and grammar schools	468 teachers
Korkmaz, I. (2008). Evaluation of teachers for restructured elementary curriculum (grades 1 to 5). *Education, 129*(2), 250-258.	Turkey	2005	2007	Questionnaire	Primary schools	210 primary teachers
Lance, A. (2006). Power to innovate? A study of how primary practitioners are negotiating the modernisation agenda. *Ethnography and Education, 1*(3), 333-344.	England	2003	'04-'05	Interviews, focus groups	1 primary school	1 head teacher, 8 teachers, 50 students
McCormick, J., & Ayres, P. L. (2009). Teaching self-efficacy and occupational: A major Australian curriculum reform revisited. *Journal of Educational Administration, 47*(4), 463-476.	Australia	2000		Questionnaire	40 secondary schools	503 teachers
McCormick, J., Ayres, P. L., & Beechey, B. (2006). Teaching self-efficacy, stress and coping in a major curriculum reform: Applying theory to context. *Journal of Educational Administration, 44*(1), 53-70.	Australia	2000	2001	Questionnaire	40 secondary schools	413 teachers

Nargund-Joshi, V., Park Rogers, M. A., & Akerson, V. L. (2011). Exploring Indian secondary teachers' orientations and practice for teaching science in an era of reform. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 48*(6), 624-647.	India	2005		Observation, interviews, documents	1 private boarding school	2 secondary science teachers
Ng, S. W. (2009). Why did principals and teachers respond differently to curriculum reform? *Teacher Development, 13*(3), 187-203.	Hong Kong	2001	2007	Questionnaire, focus groups	240 primary and secondary schools	8965 senior administrators and teachers
Niesche, R., & Jorgensen, R. (2010). Curriculum reform in remote areas: The need for productive leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration, 48*(1), 102-117.	Australia	2000		Questionnaire, interviews	Primary and secondary schools	15 principals, 43 teachers, 5 administrators
Osei, G. M. (2004). The 1987 junior secondary-school reform in Ghana: Vocational or pre-vocational in nature? *International Review of Education, 50*(5-6), 425-446.	Ghana	1987	2001	Interviews, observation, documents (policy documents, newspaper articles)	3 junior secondary schools	200 students, 50 teachers, 30 parents
Palandra, M. (2010). The role of instructional supervision in district-wide reform. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 13*(2), 221-234.	US	'00-'05	2007	Personal narrative, questionnaire	Elementary schools	Researcher, teachers, administrators

110

Potvin, P., & Dionne, E. (2007). Realities and challenges of educational reform in the province of Quebec: Exploratory research on teaching science and technology. *McGill Journal of Education, 42*(3), 393-410.	Quebec, Canada	2000	'04-'05	Observation, interviews	1 secondary school	6 teachers, 2 lab technicians, 1 pedagogical counsellor, 1 principal
Priestley, M., & Humes, W. (2010). The development of Scotland's curriculum for excellence: Amnesia and deja vu. *Oxford Review of Education, 36*(3), 345-361.	Scotland	2004		Documents (literature/studies, policy documents)	N/A	N/A
Roehrig, G. H., Kruse, R. A., & Kern, A. (2007). Teacher and school characteristics and their influence on curriculum implementation. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 44*(7), 883-907.	US	2005		Interviews, observation	12 high schools	27 high school teachers
Rogan, J., & Aldous, C. (2005). Relationships between the constructs of a theory of curriculum implementation. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 42*(3), 313-336.	South Africa	1997	'01-'03	Interviews, observation, documents	12 secondary schools	Teachers, students principals

Ryan, T. G., & Joong, P. (2005). Teachers' and students' perceptions of the nature and impact of large-scale reforms. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy, 38*. Retrieved from http://umanitoba.ca/publications/cjeap/pdf_files/ryan-joong.pdf	Ontario, Canada	1997	2003	Questionnaire	12 secondary schools	16 teachers, students
Shachar, H., Gavin, S., & Shlomo, S. (2010). Changing organizational culture and instructional methods in elementary schools: Perceptions of teachers and professional educational consultants. Journal of Educational Change, *11,* 273-289.	Israel		(Start & end of 3-year project, year unknown)	Questionnaire, documents (journals)	6 elementary schools in 2 districts	6 principals, 165 teachers, 6 school consultants
Shen, J., & Ma, X. (2006). Does systemic change work? Curricular and instructional practice in the context of systemic change. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 5*(3), 231-256.	US		'87-'88/ '99-'00	Documents (survey data)	>8,300 schools	>40,000 teachers
Tasdemir, A., & Kus, Z. (2011). The content analysis of the news in the national papers concerning the renewed primary curriculum. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice, 11*(1), 170-177.	Turkey	2004	'04-'07	Documents (newspaper)	N/A	N/A

Thomson, P., McGregor, J, Sanders, E., & Alexiadou, N. (2009). Changing schools: More than a lick of paint and a well-orchestrated performance? *Improving Schools, 12*(1), 43-57.	England			Documents (reports, newsletters, websites, news clippings), interviews, focus groups	40 primary and secondary schools	Senior management, school governor, teachers, students
Tong, S. Y. A. (2010). Lessons learned? School leadership and curriculum reform in Hong Kong. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, 30*(2), 231-242.	Hong Kong	2009		Interviews	9 secondary schools	9 principals 18 panel chairs and deputy panel chairs, 37 teachers,
Wallace, J., Sheffield, R., Rennie, L., & Venville, G. (2007). Looking back, looking forward: Re-searching the conditions for curriculum integration in the middle years of schooling. *Australian Educational Researcher, 34*(2), 29-49.	Australia	Various	1996 & 2006	Interviews, Observation	9 middle schools	1996: Teachers, students, administrators 2006: 6 teachers
Walsh, T. (2007). The revised programme of instruction, 1900-1922. *Irish Educational Studies, 26*(2), 127-143.	Ireland	1900		Documents (literature/studies)	N/A	N/A
Zhong, Q. (2006). Curriculum reform in China: Challenges and reflections. Frontiers of Education in China, *3,* 370-382.	China			Documents (literature/studies)	N/A	N/A

Appendix II: Code List

Code Name	Code Definition	Example
Author - Academia	Item written by a person associated with a post-secondary institution	(Indicated primarily in byline, occasionally within text)
Author - Editorial Board	Item written by a member of the newspaper's editorial board	(Indicated in byline and/or by item type)
Author - Educational Association	Item written by a person affiliated with a formal organization related to the field of education	(Indicated primarily in byline, occasionally within text)
Author - Government	Item written by a person who is a politician or otherwise a member of or affiliated with the government	(Indicated primarily in byline, occasionally within text)
Author - Journalist	Item written by a newspaper reporter	(Indicated in byline and/or by item type)
Author - Other	Item written by a person not falling under one of the broad codes	(Indicated primarily in byline, occasionally within text)
Author - Parent	Item written by a parent or guardian of a school-age child	(Indicated primarily in byline, occasionally within text)
Author - School Administrator	Item written by an administrative staff member within a primary or secondary school	(Indicated primarily in byline, occasionally within text)
Author - School Board	Item written by an individual affiliated with a school board	(Indicated primarily in byline, occasionally within text)
Author - Student	Item written by a youth enrolled in a primary or secondary school	(Indicated primarily in byline, occasionally within text)
Author - Teacher K-11	Item written by an educator presently or previously employed in a primary or secondary school	(Indicated primarily in byline, occasionally within text)

Author - Union	Item written by a person affiliated with a teachers' union	(Indicated primarily in byline, occasionally within text)
Author - Unspecified	Item whose author is not clearly identified as belonging to a specific category of individual	(No indication as to authorship)
Statement Content - Observation	Statement is about something that has actually occurred or is perceived to have occurred	they have been inundated by phone calls from teachers and parents wondering what the reforms will mean to them
Statement Content - Recommendation	Statement makes a suggestion concerning the future	School should be something other than a uniform school implanted wall to wall over the entire territory
Statement Content - Speculation	Statement is about something that might possibly occur or might possibly have occurred	This should help keep teenagers in school and improve their skills in the work force
Statement Content - Warning	Statement cautions about a possible negative outcome or situation	Many of these reforms are necessary and urgent, but will not be successfully implemented in the absence of sufficient resources.
Statement Tone - Negative	Statement is disapproving or speaks of an undesirable event, situation or outcome	The timetable she set for her various reforms is unrealistic
Statement Tone - Neutral	Statement does not clearly indicate approval or disapproval, or anticipate a positive or negative outcome; no clear judgment made	The curriculum reform is scheduled to be phased in over six years and will require considerable investment in professional development for teachers and new curriculum materials

Statement Tone - Positive	Statement is approving or speaks of a desirable event, situation or outcome	indications are that the report incorporates the best suggestions for curriculum reform made over the past five years
Topic - Aims of Education	Statement related to the overarching purpose(s) of schools in society	"We're putting the accent on the essential courses because we want to have children who will be prepared for the...knowledge economy," she said.
Topic - Communication & Collaboration	Statement related to the sharing of information and cooperative activities	With administrators and teachers working together, it is possible that we can have a school system as good as can be found anywhere in the world
Topic - Community, Society & Culture	Statement related to social and societal features and considerations	A curriculum is an important reflection of a community - its links to the past, its vitality in the present and its hopes for the future
Topic - Curriculum Contents	Statement related to subject matter within the curriculum	Overall, the recommendations satisfy us because we have hoped that French, math and English as a second language would be given more weight; that's something we have asked for
Topic - Financial Resources	Statement related to funding of education and other financial considerations	new programs need to be written, which means retraining for teachers, but the budget for professional development was slashed in half

Topic - Governance and Bureaucracy	Statement related to the hierarchical structure and division of roles and responsibilities regarding the planning and implementation of educational change	the CEQ said it believes the curriculum should be left to Education Department bureaucrats, that school boards should continue to manage schools and their staffs, and teaching staffs should be "left the responsibilities that come from their competence and training."
Topic - Language Issues	Statement related to considerations and concerns associated with English and French as languages of instruction or Anglophone and Francophone populations and their schools	he hopes the Education Department will not neglect the English-speaking sector in preparing new curriculum materials, as it has sometimes done in the past
Topic - Material Resources	Statement related to the physical resources that might be used in education (e.g. books, computers, furniture, basic supplies)	"Teachers found that finding resources was the most frustrating part of the new curriculum. We need more books in the area of non-fiction."
Topic - Planning & Preparation	Statement related to the process of designing, organizing and setting the stage for the curriculum and its implementation	She denied however, that September's Grade 1 class is being used to test the new system. "Our children are not guinea pigs."
Topic - Quality of Education	Statement related to the merit and rigor of academic programs	Any program, no matter how lofty its ideals, is only as good as its teachers
Topic - Standards, Assessment & Outcomes	Statement related to goals for or measures of the performance or achievement of individuals, groups or organizations	"We evaluate their ability to solve problems, but we don't look at their calculations,"

Topic - Teaching Methods	Statement related to instructional strategies and approaches or their philosophical underpinnings	Teachers who have accustomed themselves to one set of materials and one teaching style must come to grips with another
Topic - Time	Statement related to considerations of time, including scheduling, pacing and the allocation of time as a resource	The timetable she set for her various reforms is unrealistic
Topic - Tradition and Innovation	Statement related to educational conventions or novelty	"Education has to move into the 21st century," said Horner. "It has to get away from this idea of little desks with little clerks sitting at them."
Topic - Working Conditions	Statement related to the work environment of an individual or group or how the workplace and tasks are experienced	Then there are those teachers who cast a cynical eye on yet another storm of reform that is set to engulf them and knock them off-balance in the classroom.
Voice - Academia	Opinion of a person associated with a post-secondary institution	(Indicated contextually)
Voice - Editorial Board	Opinion of a member of the newspaper's editorial board	(Indicated contextually)
Voice - Educational Association	Opinion of a person affiliated with a formal organization related to the field of education	(Indicated contextually)
Voice - Government	Opinion of a person who is a politician or otherwise a member of or affiliated with the government	(Indicated contextually)
Voice - Journalist	Opinion of a newspaper reporter	(Indicated contextually)
Voice - Other	Opinion of a person not falling under one of the broad codes	(Indicated contextually)
Voice - Parent	Opinion of a parent or guardian of a school-age child	(Indicated contextually)

Voice - School Administrator	Opinion of an administrative staff member within a primary or secondary school	(Indicated contextually)
Voice - School Board	Opinion of an individual affiliated with a school board	(Indicated contextually)
Voice - Student	Opinion of a youth enrolled in a primary or secondary school	(Indicated contextually)
Voice - Teacher K-12	Opinion of an educator presently or previously employed in a primary or secondary school	(Indicated contextually)
Voice - Union	Opinion of a person affiliated with a teachers' union	(Indicated contextually)
Voice - Unspecified	Opinion not clearly attributed to a specific category of individual	(Not indicated)