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CURRICULUM MAKING: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMING

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ABSTRACT:

This chapter provides an introduction to the European case study chapters in this volume on curriculum making. The chapter explores different conceptions of curriculum and curriculum making. It offers a critique of existing thinking about curriculum making as something that occurs within reified levels within an educational system. Such thinking often construes curriculum making as occurring through linear and hierarchical chains of command from policy to practice. Drawing upon previous conceptualizations of curriculum making, the chapter develops a new approach to understanding curriculum making. This is a heuristic rather than a normative framing; it is essentially non-linear, framed around the concept of intertwined sites of activity – supra, macro, meso, micro and nano – within complex systems, with curriculum making framed as types of activity rather than institutional functions.

KEYWORDS:

(Please supply up to 6 keywords for your Chapter)

1. Curriculum
2. Curriculum making
3. Social practice
4. Curriculum levels
5. Sites of activity

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Introduction

One of main and recurring research themes in the field of curriculum studies has been how different social actors, as individuals and as groups or bodies, understand or envision curriculum in different ways for different historical, political, sociocultural and/or biographical reasons. Such research contradicts widespread perceptions of curriculum as (merely) an official text designed by government official authorities to be faithfully implemented and passively "received" in schools; it illustrates how curriculum work involves highly dynamic processes of interpretation, mediation, negotiation and translation, across multiple layers or sites of education systems. For example, official curriculum texts – that is, government prescription – are already products of interpretation when committees or bodies developing them try to operationalize them into forms usable in schools for subsequent enactment into practice (e.g. Westbury, 2000). Other examples include how school leaders and teachers engage into further cycles of interpretation as they re-interpret such official curriculum in and for their local contexts in schools, seeking to make further sense of the national specifications and the official guidance produced; and in classrooms, as teachers and students negotiate and produce curriculum events via daily pedagogic transactions (Doyle, 1992a). This kind of transactional process emerges amidst a number of conditions, including the room for manoeuvre and conceptual resources afforded by policy, and the beliefs, values and professional knowledge of the participating teachers and other stakeholders involved. In summary, teachers and school leaders are more than simply passive conduits implementing – or to use today's fashionable policy parlance, delivering – somebody else's curriculum product; instead, they are <u>making</u> the curriculum within their own contexts alongside a number of other social actors, including their students.

Moreover, such research has provided ample evidence challenging a long-debated concept in the field of curriculum studies, that of "teacher-proof curricula", highlighting how they are underpinned by an unattainable ideal of fidelity in implementation and by a constricting theorization of what teachers (and students), as social actors, are and do in schools. As has been noted by various researchers (e.g. Stenhouse, 1975; Bowe, Ball with Gold, 1993; Cuban, 1998), teachers will always find ways to work around even the most prescriptive policy and, moreover, highly experienced teachers can be the most effective at doing this (Bowe, et al., 1993). The notion of "teacher-proof curricula" emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in mainly Anglo-Saxon contexts, to denote efforts of reform that constricted teacher influence by drawing firm connections between curriculum objectives, content and assessment (Eryaman & Riedler, 2010). Fifty years on, as we write this chapter, the concept seems to remain a dominant rationality of curriculum policy and reform, a

context which invites us to challenge such certainties by reflecting on the ways in which curriculum is made within different settings, and more specifically in the multifarious and complex educational contexts included in this book.

Against this background, and to frame the central task that underpins this book, we draw on the following insight, that curriculum:

> …is a complex system involving teachers, students, curricular content, social settings, and all manner of impinging matters ranging from the local to the international. It is a system that needs to be understood systemically. The question is not which of the various factors explain high achievement, the current crime-solving model at work in the literature, but, rather, how it all works together. (Connelly, 2013, ix).

The book is an attempt to explore this sort of complexity by drawing upon examples of curriculum making across different national systems in Europe that illustrate both similarities and – in some cases – quite stark differences. We have been inspired by work, which has sought to understand curriculum through analysis of curriculum across different levels, layers or domains (e.g. Goodlad, 1979; Doyle, 1992a; Thijs & van den Akker, 2009; Deng, 2012). In this chapter, we seek to elaborate how such thinking can be revisited to account for what we have started to explore elsewhere, that curriculum making occurs "across multiple sites, in interaction and intersection with one another, in often unpredictable and context-specific ways, producing unique social practices, in constant and complex interplay, wherein power flows in non-linear ways, thus blurring boundaries between these multiple sites" (Priestley & Philippou, 2018, p. 154). More particularly, and rehearsing critique of earlier "levels" thinking (e.g. Goodlad, 1979; Doyle, 1992a), we argue that the metaphor of "levels" assumes and encourages thinking about curriculum matters along linear (and often hierarchical) administrative lines or jurisdictions. Instead, we aspire to push analytical work to account for curriculum making of different texture emerging within and between different layers or sites of social activity, defined by the nature of such activity, rather than by the administrative system level, within which it is normatively expected to occur. A key point is that the use of such a framing is not normative; instead, we seek to provide a heuristic framing that can be applied to different contexts, allowing the flexibility to explore and analyse the differences that exist between these contexts.

In this introductory chapter, we first explore the concept of curriculum making. We then develop the multi-layer framing in more detail, explaining how it will be applied, before introducing the chapters that will form the rest of this volume.

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Curriculum making: curriculum as social practice

The development of more nuanced understandings of curriculum making has arguably become more important than ever in recent years as research has shed light on complexities unaccounted for by modernist understandings of schooling and curricula. However, "curriculum making" is a term with a long and complicated history, ascribed diverse meanings that have been changing over the years, in many ways reflecting and contributing to theoretical shifts in the field. Two examples are given here, as a way to illustrate the very different uses of the term, before we present our own conceptualization of it. "Curriculum making" appeared with what has been denoted as the emergence of curriculum studies as an academic field in North America, namely in the publication of two articles by Franklin Bobbitt, wherein he envisioned a "scientific method" for curriculum making. This would shift the focus of curriculum from subject-matter, academic subjects, syllabi and textbooks to human activity, by particularizing "with definiteness and in detail the objectives, and to do this in the light of actual human needs", rather than by using "the fortunately moribund conception of mere blind subject-teaching" (Bobbitt, 1921, p. 607-8). While attempting to shift curriculum discussions from academic content knowledge to current social and economic needs as exemplified in human/child activity through the idiom of "science", this tradition ultimately resulted in highly technical, managerial and prescriptive curriculum work, produced by "experts" outside schools and classrooms and encouraging administrative hierarchies, at the bottom of which teachers and students were to be found. Compare such theorization with the image of teachers as "curriculum makers" proposed by Clandinin and Connelly (1992), which re-theorized classroom teachers as making curriculum in negotiation with others' mandates and desires (Craig, 2010), but mainly by drawing on their own "personal practical knowledge" and in interaction with the knowledges brought into the classroom through their students, the latter acknowledged as emerging beyond the school as familial and community curriculum makings (Huber, Murphy, & Clandinin (2011).

The mobilization of education in general, as well as school curricula in particular, for social and economic "engineering" purposes at a national level, has remained a constant in school curriculum history; however, the ways in which these have been influenced by significant discourses produced and disseminated by major institutional actors on the world stage – the OECD, the European Union, UNESCO, *inter alia,* have significantly changed the nature of curriculum policy. There are changed expectations about how policy is mobilized to frame practice in schools, with a shift from input regulation to output regulation (see: Nieveen & Kuiper, 2012; Leat, Livingston & Priestley, 2013).

This is not merely a superficial shift in emphasis, but a major transformation of the technical form of the curriculum, with profound effects. As Luke (2012) reminds us, while debates about curriculum tend to be about content and goals, the technical form, that is "core categories and levels of specification used by state systems" (p. 4), is a significant influence on curriculum making. Thus, national curricula thirty years ago tended to resemble the rationality of, for example, England's 1988 National Curriculum, through detailed regulation of inputs (e.g. specification of content). Later variants of national curriculum, increasingly commonplace around the world and termed the "new curriculum" (Priestley & Biesta, 2013), have tended to place less emphasis on the specification of content, instead focusing on the importance of the development of skills, and the autonomy of schools and teachers in making the curriculum locally.

Subsequent research suggests that the putative autonomy afforded by the new curricula is perhaps more rhetorical than substantive, as governments have tended to replace the former regulation of input with pervasive regimes of output regulation, particularly via the measurement of schools' performance in respect of attainment data, self-regulatory performance indicators and external inspections and audits (e.g. see Wilkins, 2011). Indeed, the outcomes steering associated with the new curricula has been claimed to have eroded teacher autonomy more comprehensively than did the former input regulation (Biesta, 2010), leading to cultures of performativity (e.g. Keddie, Mills & Pendergast, 2011) – what Luke, Woods and Weir (2012) describe as "a host of 'collateral' effects that include narrowing of the curriculum, teaching to the test, teacher deskilling and attrition, documented test score fraud and manipulation at the state and school level – with no visible sustainable effects at improving equity outcomes" (p. 20). Furthermore, it can be argued that ostensibly more permissive curricula actually have much in common with their prescriptive predecessors. Both are premised on an assumption that curriculum practice in schools can be determined, or at least led, by national policy.

Both approaches have tended to be dominated by thinking about curriculum making – amongst policy makers and widely by teachers and leaders in schools – as implementation from policy to practice. Such a view positions teachers as being limited as professionals, and curriculum consequently as a regulatory mechanism (Doyle, 1992b). In both cases, curriculum making has been dominated by simplistic metaphors, which underplay and misrepresent its complexity as social practice (see: Priestley & Philippou, 2018). Such narrow conceptualizations of implementation are unhelpful, and they constrain the development of more sophisticated understandings about how curriculum is made in diverse settings and about how curriculum making occurs as a non-linear

recontextualization process (Bernstein, 2000). As evident in previous research, and as noted above, even under the most prescriptive "teacher proof" curricula, spaces exist for teachers to mediate the curriculum. Such mediation often occurs in constructive educational ways, and sometimes in strategic ways which deliberately undermine the aims of curriculum policy (e.g. Osborn et al., 1997). Curriculum research has long suggested that teachers do not implement policy; they enact, translate, mediate it (e.g. Braun, Maguire & Ball, 2010), through a process of iterative refraction (Supovitz, 2008), filtered via existing professional knowledge, dispositions and beliefs. For example in the USA, Goodlad and colleagues (1979, p. 21) noted that activity at the instructional often emerges from "interpretation of what is desired by unseen, remote decision makers" and Doyle (1992a, p. 69) characterized curriculum making as "a deliberative process of interpretation, judgment and responsibility". Similarly, Stenhouse's (1975, p.25) concurrent work in the UK context pointed to the importance of teachers' curriculum development work to "translate ideas into classroom practicalities help the teacher to strengthen his [sic] practice by systematically and thoughtfully testing ideas". This, and similar writing, argues powerfully for the role of the teacher as a curriculum maker, often drawing on previous theorizations of education that construct teachers as important actors (e.g. Dewey, Tyler and Schwab: see Craig, 2010). These arguments resonate as well with older critiques of curriculum implementation that warn against the "fidelity perspective" and position curriculum as an *enactment* or *social practice* instead. In the latter view, curriculum is a process of interaction of teachers, pupils, materials and the official context in class, entailing the construction of personal meaning by the participants in the process (see: Snyder, Bolin & Zumwalt, 1992; Doyle, 1992a, b). Arguments accounting for such complexity have been advanced by various writers, for example in theorizing curriculum change as transformative rather than incremental (Macdonald, 2003), as a transaction (Doyle, 1992a), or as dynamic knowledge work achieved through negotiation (Tronsmo & Nerland, 2018).

The use of metaphors to capture the essence of curriculum making has been prominent in much writing. We have previously used the metaphor of the spider's web to convey the complexity of curriculum making (Priestley & Philippou, 2018), building on a tradition of using metaphorical language in curriculum theory to re-imagine curriculum (e.g. cf. Kliebard, 1975). Curriculum making is itself a powerful metaphor, capturing the essence of much curriculum work as dynamic, ongoing and purposeful. The use of this metaphor raises for us a number of questions. Curriculum making by whom? For whom? For what purposes? Where and when? And what is being made? Many definitions of curriculum are less than adequate in helping us to address such questions, focusing on curriculum as content – as a product. A more constructive definition is to view school curriculum as

"the multi-layered social practices, including infrastructure, pedagogy and assessment, through which education is structured, enacted and evaluated" (Priestley, 2019, p.8). There are three dimensions worthy of comment here. The first is the notion of curriculum as social practice; it is something that is done, or more aptly, made by practitioners and other actors working with each other. The second point concerns the multiple layers or sites of education systems, across which curriculum is made in its various forms, for example schools and district offices, policymaking arenas, and national agencies. The third point relates to the sort of practices which comprise curriculum: incorporating the selection of knowledge/content, but also including pedagogical approaches, organization of teaching (e.g. timetabling), and the production of resources and infrastructure for supporting curriculum making in schools. We will return to these issues later in the chapter, in particular expanding on the way we conceive of the layers through which curriculum making occurs.

Levels, layers or sites?

The chapters in this volume all utilize a particular typology for curriculum making, which construes the curriculum, as a collection of social practices, as something that is made – which happens – across multiple layers of social activity. As indicated previously, this is a heuristic rather than normative framing of different layers, comprising what have been termed supra, macro, meso, micro and nano levels. We adopt this terminology, while acknowledging that this typology is far from straightforward; the chapters have different theoretical orientations, as might be expected in an edited collection comprising contributions from different authors and unsurprisingly also offer slightly different interpretations of the concepts encapsulated in the "levels". In the following sections of our introductory chapter, we explore different conceptions of the typology, offering a critique of some of the existing thinking, and seeking to elaborate it through the development of an approach that more aptly captures the complexities of curriculum making in complex modern education systems. Part of this discussion involves consideration of the terminology – and associated metaphors – used in describing curriculum making.

Our theorization of curriculum making builds upon earlier thinking about levels or domains of curriculum making: some approaches have utilized the same terminology (e.g. Thijs & van den Akker, 2008), but do not, as we will illustrate in this volume, quite capture the multi-directional, non-linear and dynamic nature of curriculum making as social practice we have found to occur in a related special issue (Priestley & Philippou, 2018), and indeed in this volume. Others offer quite different framings, using alternative terminology (e.g. Goodlad, 1979; Doyle, 1992a; Deng, 2012). These

typologies perhaps more successfully convey the "the central condition for curriculum making, that all levels from curriculum planning down to classroom interaction are systematically interwined [sic]" (Hopmann & Ricquarts, 2000, p.97) and arguably less linear. However, they tend to be framed with fewer layers, typically two or three, which might militate against analysis of the full range of social practices that comprise curriculum in complex contemporary educational systems.

Approaches to defining levels

The Thijs and van den Akker typology, as noted, utilizes the same terminology as our approach, but with reference to curriculum levels, and related curriculum products (Table 1 below).

[TABLE ONE HERE]

This visualization is helpful, in that it describes the different institutional settings, within which curriculum is made. However the approach is open to criticism on the grounds that it reifies the institutional settings, ostensibly offering a linear view of curriculum making as implementation from policy *to* practice. It does not provide, for example, the means to theorize actors formally employed within certain levels as contributors to other sites of curriculum making, which do not identify with a "system level", for example teachers as curriculum policy makers, as is currently the case in the Netherlands (as described in this volume) and Wales (e.g. Priestley, Crick & Hizli Alkan, 2019). Nor does it allow for easy analysis of curricular components such as "the professional infrastructure, workforce capacity, school governance and management structures that likewise are geared to enable instructional quality" (Luke, Woods & Weir, 2012, p. 22).

The second approach is typified in work by Goodlad (1979), and subsequently has been articulated by scholars such as Doyle (1992a, b), and Deng (e.g. 2012). Goodlad initially posits what he terms three "levels" of curriculum – the societal, institutional, instructional – subsequently adding a fourth level, the personal. Goodlad's model was seen as linear and as hierarchical, partly due to use of the term "levels", despite his emphasis on the transactional (negotiation) and two way flows of communication (1979, p. 22), and the positioning of the levels as institutional sites, rather than as forms of activity. Other authors, drawing upon Goodlad's work, have lent credence to these criticisms of hierarchy. For example, Griffin (1979) presents Goodlad's three-level typology explicitly as institutional settings or actors: 1] societal – local and national boards of education, departments of education, federal agencies; 2] institutional – school faculties, central office, committees, etc.; and 3] instructional – teachers.

Subsequent theorization has sought to dispel the accusations that curriculum making is construed as hierarchical. Doyle (1992a) spoke of the "curriculum in motion" (p. 67), with curriculum making as "a deliberative process of interpretation, judgment and responsibility" (p. 69). He posited two levels of curriculum making: institutional and classroom levels that represent "distinct but interrelated domains of curriculum discourse, and thus, different types of curriculum processes" (p. 69). At the institutional level, he pointed to two aspects: 1] the abstract or ideal, a conversation connecting schooling and society; and 2] the analytical or formal, which translates policy into instruments. The former is goals – often tacit and not written; a paradigm of expectations which define how schooling is framed. Doyle saw the institutional curriculum as a starting point for the "complex transformational process through which curriculum policy is translated into instruments for use in classrooms" (p.71). In his view, however, this is not a linear or hierarchical process; using the concept of curriculum events – classroom transactions that occur as students and teachers negotiate learning in the context of formal structures and policy intentions – Doyle positioned teachers as active "curriculum makers who guide students through the texts, shape the interpretations that are allowed on the floor, and, importantly, define the tasks that students are to accomplish with respect to these texts" (p. 76).

Following Doyle, Westbury (2000, p. 33) posits curriculum making as occurring at two levels: institutional (policy and programmatic); and classroom. The former connects schooling to societal concerns and involves the translation of ideas into programmes; the latter entails the development of curriculum events (Doyle, 1992b). Similarly Deng (2012) offers three levels for curriculum making: 1] societal (ideal or abstract); 2] programmatic (technical or official); 3] classroom (enacted). Again, this is far from a linear process, in Deng's view; translation across levels means that a school subject, for example, is not the same as the discipline[s] it derives from. As with Doyle, Deng is clear that classroom curriculum making (the enacted curriculum) cannot be disentangled from pedagogy. According to Deng, Gopinathan and Lee (2013), "classroom curriculum making entails transforming the programmatic curriculum (embodied in curriculum materials) into 'educative' experiences for students" (p.7).

The above approaches to defining layers or sites or domains of curriculum making have in common a desire to distance themselves from linear and hierarchical curriculum making. They all stress the messy and often contingent processes that define curriculum making in different settings, and emphasize the inevitability of interpretation, mediation and translation as curriculum making occurs. Moreover, they tend to emphasize the cardinal importance of teacher professional judgment; for

example, according to Doyle (1992a, p.77), "to teach effectively, teachers must be responsible curriculum theorists". These approaches are more silent on some of the activities that constitute curriculum making in different settings. Where, for example, where does the creation of infrastructure to support curriculum making sit? These are created by government fiat – so do they qualify as part of institutional curriculum making? They operate, however, at the level of schools, facilitating the development of practice in schools and classrooms – so are they instead part of classroom curriculum making? The same could be said of curriculum brokers found in some countries (e.g. Leat & Thomas, 2018) – private consultants employed by schools to facilitate curriculum development. Our framing of curriculum making levels or layers as sites of activity seeks to address these issues.

Sites of activity

In this section, we set out the sites of activity heuristic, as a precursor to the analysis that follows in each of the country case chapters in the book. The typology, in common with other models, places the supra and macro sites at the top of diagram. This should not be taken as implying a hierarchy of levels or layers, but it does reflect existing discourses of top-down and bottom-up curriculum making and relates to Doyle's (1992a) observation, quoted above, that Institutional curriculum is often a starting point or a framework for curriculum making in schools and classrooms. Indeed, it would be quite possible, and often desirable, to use the heuristic to analyse curriculum making from the inside out, or bottom up, given the two way flows of influence, information and activity between the various layers. Nor do we position the sites as institutional levels or even institutional sites of formal or prescribed activity. Instead these are forms of activity that operate in education systems as curriculum is made and remade in different settings; as sites of social activity with changing social actors, who are moving between sites, are being present in more than one, or actually becoming a site themselves depending on the social activity they are engaging in. Our approach is depicted in Table 2 below.

[TABLE TWO HERE]

In developing our heuristic, we have sought to capture the following:

- Curriculum making constitutes different kinds of activity of social practice across different layers in any education system, including discourse generation, policy production, programme design, pedagogy, et cetera; or, as Westbury (2008, p. 49) stated, "loosely

coupled settings for curriculum decision making are in fact contexts associated with very different activities".

- Curriculum making produces different forms of curriculum in different settings. These different forms have been conceptualized in various ways, for example: prescribed, described, enacted, and received; or official, taught, and experienced. We note here, for example, Goodlad's (1979) notion of multiple intended curricula: nationally prescribed, locally approved, school courses, and instructional practice/materials.
- Curriculum making is undertaken by different actors for different purposes in the various settings where it occurs, for example, as we note above, discourse generation, policy production, programme design, pedagogy. We note here that this theorization allows for the possibility that there might be two-way or even multiple-way relationships between or cutting across layers. For instance, policy making may be informed in a particular context by both supra discourses and by diverse local imperatives; similarly, curriculum making in schools is likely to be shaped by a variety of mediating factors, only one of which may be a top-down policy prescription.

Through its focus on sites of activity rather than institutional settings, this heuristic is designed to be context neutral as far as possible. Thus, for example, we aim to show in the book how meso activity might differ between different country cases, due to the existence of quite different kinds of institutions performing the meso activities listed in Table 2. Again, we emphasize that the model is not a normative framework stating how curriculum making should occur; instead it is an analytical tool for understanding how curriculum making occurs and emerges in different contexts – and for understanding the considerable variation from country to country.

Supra curriculum making

It is not our intention here to provide a detailed narrative about how supranational activity operates, as that is covered in the chapter by Lingard. Instead, we seek here to outline the main features of supra curriculum making. We see supra curriculum making, in common with Thijs and van den Akker (2009), as being transnational in scope, that is curriculum making that is external to state or national education jurisdictions. We do not, however, see this simply in terms of products such as transnational policy frameworks, but instead more broadly in relation to the transactions that occur in such settings, and emergent discourses, influences and flows of ideas that percolate through educational and other communities. Supra curriculum making corresponds to some extent with the

institutional level identified by scholars such as Doyle (1992a) and Deng (2012), in that it represents the shared conceptions and tacit understandings that drive education policy. Key actors include organizations of very different nature, for example some focusing on education, such as UNESCO's International Bureau of Education, and others on economic or political priorities, yet exerting significant influence on education, such as the OECD and the World Bank. Supra curriculum making also involves regional transnational organizations such as the European Union, as well as bi-lateral agreements or bodies between certain countries and international networks of academics and policymakers or activist organizations (e.g. on Children's Rights, Human Rights, Environmental matters). Activities include the production of exemplar curriculum and competency frameworks, country reviews, international examinations or national examinations of international currency (e.g. International Baccalaureate, IELTS, IGCEs), international benchmarking (such as PISA) and the generation of general discourses, all of which serve to influence curriculum making within national education jurisdictions through "hard" and "soft" policies as well as diverse lending and borrowing processes. We would also include here the curriculum making activities of transnational commercial operators such as Pearson, insofar as they are specifically contributing to the generation of transnational discourses about education, while recognising that these international organizations also focus on the development of curricula at local levels (e.g. through running schools).

Supra curriculum making illustrates clearly the dynamic interplay between sites of activity, as well as complex global power regimes sedimented historically and often re-establishing neo-colonial relations. For example, the recent Education 2030 forum (e.g. OECD, 2018) included key actors from the OECD, as well as senior policy makers, academics, consultants and think tank analysts from dozens of countries (with unequal influence within the OECD), many of whom might be considered to be national, macro actors. The key point here is that it is not the organizations or actors *per se* that designate curriculum making as supra, but the form that the activity takes, viz. the generation of transnational discourses that influence education systems around the world. Analysing these activities as supra curriculum making allows us to understand the nature of the discourses, the channels through which they are generated and disseminated, the factors and system dynamics that affect the flows of ideas, and their effects, including homogenization or standardization of education discourse around the world.

Macro curriculum making

The term "macro-level" is generally associated with national level policy making, for example to develop policy frameworks, but we would argue that this does not have to be always the case. First, as we noted above, national level policy actors can become involved in supra and national curriculum making simultaneously. Second, not all national level curriculum making is macro activity; for example, many national agencies run development programmes to support curriculum making in schools or groups of schools. Third, curricular policy making can occur at the regional or even local levels in devolved educational systems. As has been argued earlier, and also shown in some of the chapters, social actors typically employed in other system levels might participate in macro-as-national curriculum making as well (e.g. teachers working in national committees).

We would therefore argue that it is the type of activity that characterizes it as macro, although we acknowledge that this is normally undertaken at the level of the state. We would follow, here, scholars such as Deng, who characterizes institutional level curriculum making as comprising two processes. The first of these are "ideal" or "abstract" national or community level conversations that provide a normative framing of "broad goals and general approaches" (Deng, et al., 2013, p. 6), and provide "a means of drawing attention to educational ideals and expectations (presumably) shared within a society and putting forward the forms and procedures of schooling as responses to those ideals and expectations" (p.6). The second is the production of programmatic curricula, which sit "at the intermediate levels between policy curriculum making and classroom curriculum making [and translate] the ideals and expectations embodied in the policy curriculum into programmes, school subjects, and curricular frameworks" (p. 7).

Scholars such as Sivesind and Westbury (e.g. Sivesind & Westbury, 2016) have utilized the term state-based curriculum making, including "routine educational and administrative activity of many ministries and boards of education as they support and ratify ongoing revisions and changes in subject areas and courses of study" (Sivesind & Westbury, 2016, p. 744). Such activity would include the establishment of infrastructure for meso curriculum making, for example Scotland's Regional Improvement Collaboratives, which were set up by the Scottish Government, but which operate regionally to support curriculum making. Macro curriculum making fundamentally involves questions about framing and regulation, whether this be achieved through tight prescription of inputs, or through the evaluation of outputs, or in some cases a combination of the two. A central issue is the degree to which district governments, schools and teachers are allowed autonomy over curriculum making – what Hopmann has termed licencing (Hopmann & Riquarts, 2000). Nevertheless,

regardless of the degree to which central governments exert control or extend autonomy within school systems, we would agree with Westbury that:

> Whatever their format or intention, state mandated programs of study present authoritative statements about the social distribution of the knowledge, attitudes, and competencies seen as appropriate to populations of students. In addition, they can mandate or recommend programs of study and/or methods of teaching that reflect, for example, an understanding of science as inquiry, effective, or best practices. (Westbury, 2008, p. 47)

As we have already noted, the past three decades have witnessed increased interest by many national governments in regulating education through curriculum policy, including in federal countries such as Australia, where national governments have only limited jurisdiction over state education systems. And as Westbury (2000) has also noted, in many countries, particularly in the Anglo-American tradition, renewed interest in state-based curriculum making:

> is inextricably associated with notions of "modernization" and "reform" of the schools. Both the reforming rhetorics and the systemic technologies that are the focus of much of traditional curriculum theory exist to change and redirect schools as institutions, not to maintain and support them or to nurture the ongoing, routine work of their teachers! (p. 22)

Meso curriculum making

Conversely, we would argue that meso curriculum making is absolutely concerned with supporting schools. As we have observed, many curriculum level models are relatively silent on the social practices that fulfil this type of activity. Meso activity would include the production of guidance and materials to support curriculum making in schools. It would also include the provision of leadership for curriculum making, the undertaking of programmes to develop the curriculum in schools, and, in the spirit of Stenhouse's (1975) famous aphorism that there can be no curriculum development without teacher development, the provision of teacher development programmes linked to curriculum making. The key point of definition here is that meso curriculum making sits between the production of policy, in what Bernstein (1996) termed the official recontextualising field, and the curriculum making arenas in practice settings such as schools – the pedagogic recontextualising field. These are functions often performed by organizations that also often have macro curriculum making functions, for example Ministries of Education, or institutes and agencies associated with Ministries. Again we emphasize that it is the form of the activity, rather than the actors or organizations taking

it, that determines whether we see it as meso curriculum making. Here we differ from Thijs and van den Akker (2009), who describe whole school curriculum development solely as the meso-level.

Meso activity, as will be illustrated in the chapters that follow, is highly varied. Examples include the prodigious publication of curriculum guidance by Education Scotland, Scotland's national development agency; according to the OECD (2015), the Education Scotland website included around 20,000 pages of guidance. Other examples, included in this volume, are the subject-area counsellor in Cyprus, the role of curriculum support teams in Ireland and the mechanisms for collective sense-making found in Finland. We would also suggest that meso curriculum making does not always exert a positive effect on education. Negative effects can include bowdlerization of complex ideas that become reduced to slogans, and a confusion of key messages as guidance materials proliferate.

Meso curriculum making is not the sole responsibility of official bodies, although clearly these have a role to play. We would also include the role of private consultants, curriculum brokers and third sector organizations. For example, in Scotland, a coalition of social justice oriented organizations known as the IDEAS[1] network has played a key role in supporting schools to develop the curriculum, around, for instance, themes such as global citizenship and children's rights. We would also include the role of university researchers (who of course also often participate in supra and macro curriculum making). For instance, in Wales and Scotland, one of the authors has been active in developing and running programmes to both develop teachers' curriculum making capacity and to foster curriculum innovation (e.g. see Priestley & Drew, 2019).

Micro curriculum making

In our conceptualization, micro curriculum making occurs in schools, and sits external (albeit connected) to classrooms. Thus we are not including here the sorts of day-to-day interactions that occur in teaching, but instead the sorts of activity around development, whether undertaken by teams of teachers at a whole school or departmental level, or by individual teachers as they plan lessons. Such activity can be informed by classroom events and characteristics, and can be facilitated by meso curriculum making. Nevertheless, it is activity that sits distinctly in schools; activity that involves the operationalization or customization of national and regional programmes into schemes of work and pedagogical programmes that make sense in particular schools. This activity will vary

[1] http://www.ideas-forum.org.uk/

greatly between countries, and indeed from school to school. In some schools or countries, there is little gradation of collaborative working between teachers, for example, and the curriculum making that occurs is an individual endeavour as teacher work in isolation to make sense of national curriculum frameworks. In others, teacher professional communities are heavily engaged in making their curricula, for example as documented in Norway by Tronsmo and Nerland (2018).

Moreover, the way in which school-based curriculum is viewed by practitioners varies greatly in different settings. Westbury (2000), for example, contrasts the Anglo-American and German Didaktik/Bildung traditions.

> What is essential is the idea that public control of the schools means that, whatever the character of the curriculum that is developed for a school or school system, teachers as employees of the school system have been, and are, expected to "implement" their system's curricula-albeit with verve and spirit-just as a system's business officials are expected to implement a system's accounting procedures or pilots are expected to follow their airline's rules governing what they should do … Teachers are, to use Clandinin and Connelly's (1992) apt metaphor, seen as more or less passive "conduits" of the system's or district's curriculum decisions. In the German case, on the other hand, the state's curriculum making has not been seen as something that could or should explicitly direct a teacher's work. Indeed, teachers are guaranteed professional autonomy, "freedom to teach," without control by a curriculum in the American sense. The state curriculum, the Lehrplan, does lay out prescribed content for teaching; but, this content is understood as an authoritative selection from cultural traditions that can only become educative as it is interpreted and given life by teachers-who are seen, in their turn, as normatively directed by the elusive concept of Bildung, or formation, and by the ways of thinking found in the "art" of Didaktik. (p. 17)

As we noted earlier, teachers mediate the official curriculum, a process subject to a host of different variables, including their beliefs (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson, 2015), school culture (Cuban, 1998), the nature of their networks (Hizli Alkan & Priestley, 2019), external demands such as accountability, and the resources available to them (Luke et al., 2012), and notions of teacher professionalism (Kontovourki et al., 2018), to name a few.

Nano curriculum making

We conclude here with some discussion of nano curriculum making, with the caveat that this will not be illustrated to any great extent in the chapters that form this book. The book relates primarily to curriculum making in the context of global, national and local contexts, but does not explicitly address issues around classroom enactment. Nevertheless, it is helpful to elucidate what we mean when we say nano curriculum making. Thijs and van den Akker utilize the term "nano-level" to indicate products that are developed at the level of the individual in the classroom, for example personalized work plans. We, in contrast, and in common with the descriptions of other layers, see nano curriculum making as being about activity. In this case, we refer to the activity that takes place as teachers and students interact. Fundamentally, this is about the transactions that take place minute by minute in classrooms, with a focus on how teachers and students negotiate the often conflicting demands created by the intersection of official goals, teacher lesson plans, student biographies and the contingencies of daily classroom life. Such transactions are invariably uncertain and messy, emergent and will often diverge considerably from the intentions set out in national policy. Many scholars have commented on this messiness. For example, Doyle (1992b, p. 51), described lessons as "socially constructed classroom events in which teachers and students work together to meet curriculum goals". He cited a range of scholars, whose definitions capture well the notion of the nano curriculum event, including: Zumwalt – "an evolving construction resulting from interaction between teacher and students"; and Elbaz – "a set of enacted events in which teachers and students jointly negotiate content and meaning". Pedagogy is similarly "a social context that has fundamental curricular effects" (p. 492) and "the curriculum is what teachers and students experience" (p. 493). We emphasize once more that we define curriculum making as social practice; thus nano practice in classrooms is greatly influenced by teacher and student biographies. This focus on the relational, and curriculum as biographical text, serves to break with the individualistic/psychological undertones of restricting a "nano-level" to an individual, internal process of learning. Work on curriculum making, denoting the possibility of teachers making curricula in and through their own and their students' lived experiences in classrooms, resonates with nano curriculum making as proposed here (e.g. Clandinin & Connelly, 1992).

The chapters

We now proceed to set out the structure of the remainder of this volume. Space precludes detailed summaries of the chapters, and we will let the authors speak for themselves. The first chapter, by Bob Lingard, explores the global context for curriculum making, identifying key actors and activities. This sets the scene for the nine country cases. Here we make no attempt to organize these

thematically, instead taking a tour through each case according to their geographical positioning. We start in the eastern Mediterranean with the Republic of Cyprus, moving west to Portugal, and then north to the Czech Republic, the sole post-communist bloc country in our volume. From there we move north and west, taking in the Netherlands, England, Scotland and Ireland, before concluding in Scandinavia with Sweden and Finland. The cases offer a rich tapestry of different traditions and practices, but with considerable convergences in many instances. The book concludes with a chapter that explores the issues that arise from our exploration of different curriculum making jurisdictions in Europe.

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Level	Description	Examples
SUPRA	International	Common European Framework of References for Languages
MACRO	System, National	Core objectives, attainment levels Examination programmes
MESO	School, Institute	School programme Educational programme
MICRO	Classroom, Teacher	Teaching plan, instructional materials Module, course Textbooks
NANO	Pupil, Individual	Personal plan for learning Individual course of learning

Table 1: Curriculum levels and curriculum products (Thijs & van den Akker, 2008, p.9)

Site of activity	Examples of activity	Examples of actors
Supra	Transnational curricular discourse generation, policy borrowing and lending; policy learning	OECD; World Bank; UNESCO; EU
Macro	Development of curriculum policy frameworks; legislation to establish agencies and infrastructure	National governments, curriculum agencies
Meso	Production of guidance; leadership of and support for curriculum making; production of resources	National governments; curriculum agencies; district authorities; textbook publishers; curriculum brokers; subject-area counsellors

Micro	School level curriculum making: programme design; lesson-planning	Principals; senior leaders; middle leaders; teachers
Nano	Curriculum making in classrooms and other learning spaces: pedagogic interactions; curriculum events	Teachers; students

Table 2: Sites of curriculum making