

Science and Mathematics Education Centre

Understanding Policy: An Interpretive Moment

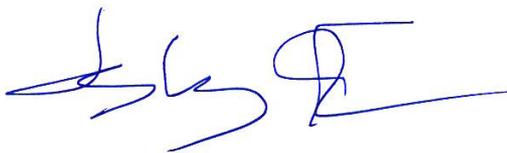
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of
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Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published by any person except where due acknowledgement has been made.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'L. French', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Signature: Lesley French

Date: 15 June 2011

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my husband Brendan Sharpe, who has given me the space to think and write, as well as years of loving support– so that I might have an interpretive moment.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the following people for their individual contributions and the collective difference that they have made to my work.

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Finally, I wish to acknowledge Brendan's patience of the long journey I have been on and for tolerating the philosophers who came with me.

Abstract

This study considers the meaningfulness of policies and proposes that a trustworthy interpreting of a policy can be undertaken by assuming varied philosophical perspectives. It presumes that policies may mystify an interpreter, and, therefore, the purpose is to demonstrate that the meanings given to a policy should always be open to question.

In interpreting policy, philosophical perspectives can be used as frames to disclose understandings that may not be at first available to an interpreter, particularly where a single meaning dominates or where meanings might be absent or vague. By applying varied perspectives to a policy, there is potential for meanings that are considered truthful to be displayed and many possible trustworthy understandings to be disclosed.

In this study, the Tasmanian public education policy *Learning Together* is interpreted using frames in which philosophical ideas are used heuristically as metaphors. The first frame is language, and specifically metaphor as discussed by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, the second engages ideas from selected works of Michel Foucault, and the third takes up ideas from the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer. Each frame enables differing understandings of the *Learning Together* policy to emerge, revealing how language, power and self-understanding might influence the meanings given to that policy.

This approach can be understood as philosophically interpretive as it acknowledges the complexities of understanding in the first decade of the twenty-first century, where assumptions of indisputable truths or realities are under question. It can be thought of as philosophising as it fosters more reflective understanding of policy and enables greater consciousness of the diversity of meanings that may be attributed to policies.

Contents (volume 1)

SECTION 1: PUZZLING ABOUT POLICY	1
Chapter 1 Introduction	2
Context and background	8
Purposes of the study	16
Significance of the study	13
Key questions	15
2 Perspectives on policy	18
Engaging with policy – sedimentations & displays	18
Approaches to interpreting policy – uncertainties & questions	22
Interpretive purposes and possibilities	27
A pause to reflect	29
SECTION 2: DEVELOPING & APPLYING AN INTERPRETIVE APPROACH	30
3 Choosing to interpret the Learning <i>Together</i> policy	31
Learning together – an experience of policy	31
Learning Together – documenting a vision, goals & strategies	38
Learning Together – perspectives on policy, education, politics & language	42
A pause to reflect	58
4 Philosophical referents & an approach to interpreting policy	51
Problematizing epistemological certainty	51
Interpreting from the inside and from a distance	55
Disclosing truthful meanings through language	58
Frames & framing	60
Developing an interpretive approach	67
Four phases of interpreting	70
A pause to reflect	74
5 Applying an interpretive approach, Phase 1: Lakoff & Johnson (1980)	76
Metaphorical structure, orientation & ontology	76
Seeking a frame of metaphors	79
Displays of meaning	97
Questions about power – a critical turn	101
A pause to reflect	103
6 Applying an interpretive approach, Phase 2: Foucault	104
Foucault’s interests in power, knowledge & subjectivity	104
Epistemes and discourses	106
Escaping a conceptual prison	117
Learning & being subject – shifts in discursive regimes	129
Questions about self – a subjective turn	132
A pause to reflect tense	135

7	Applying an interpretive approach, Phase 3: Gadamer	136
	A hermeneutic frame – playing within a circle of meaning	137
	Anticipating, pre-judging and understanding	141
	Interpreting from a distance	157
	A pause to reflect	169
8	Applying an interpretive approach, Phase 4: Trustworthy understandings of Learning Together	170
	New metaphors & displays of meaning through language	170
	Meanings from frames of metaphors, texts & narratives	170
	Meanings from framings of discourse, strategies & technologies – learning societies & lifelong learning	177
	Meanings from framings of moments – opportunities to be conscious	191
	Pausing to reflect on understanding	192
	A pause to reflect	195
SECTION 3: INSIGHTS INTO INTERPRETING		196
9	Reflecting on critical and interpretive approaches	197
	An allegory as an extended metaphor	197
	Allegory of the town	198
	Being philosophically interpretive	203
	Trustworthy interpreting	214
	With Kögler to sideshadow me in the landscape	215
	A pause to reflect	216
10	Conclusions – a moment to philosophise on unfolding narratives	217
	Tentative understandings	217
	Interpretive moments	221
	Possibilities for policy	228
	Rethinking my allegory	230
	Taking in a sweeping vista	231
REFERENCES		233
APPENDICES (volume 2)		
A	<i>Learning Together: A vision for education, training and information into the 21st century</i>	
B	<i>Learning Together: Draft proposals for education, training and information into the 21st century</i>	
C	Extract of Table of metaphors scanned from <i>Learning Together</i>	
D	Personal account of involvement in the writing and implementation of the <i>Learning Together</i> policy	
E	List of education policies and curriculum documents of Australian states	

Tables

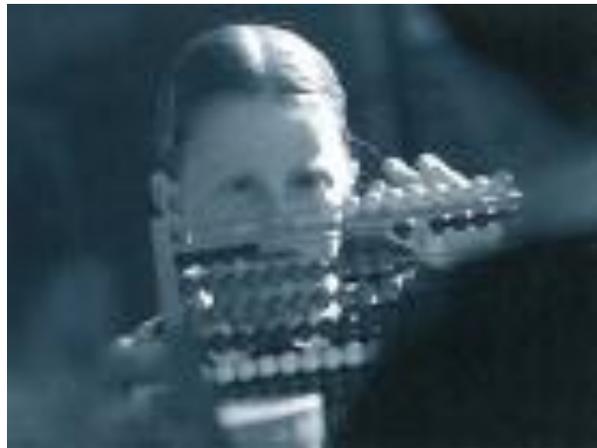
1.	Interpreting metaphors of <i>Learning Together</i> in the first interpretive phase	97
2.	Conceptual groupings of metaphors from <i>Learning Together</i>	99
3.	Interpreting metaphors of <i>Learning Together</i> using a frame from Foucault	132
4.	Interpreting metaphors of <i>Learning Together</i> using a frame from Gadamer	168
5.	Metaphors emerging from final interpretive phase	192

Figures

1.	Extract of Learning Together: Draft proposals for education, training and information into the 21 st century.	33
2.	Extract of Learning Together: A vision for education, training and information into the 21 st century.	33
3.	Kögler's diagram of a critical-dialogic circle.	63
4.	An approach to interpreting a policy.	72
5.	The interpretive approach applies to Learning Together in this study.	210

Section 1

Puzzling about policy



Intellectual puzzles then, will contain different sets of ontological and epistemological assumptions and prescriptions, and will suggest distinctive types of social explanation.
(Mason, 2010, p. 18)

Chapter 1

Introduction

This study develops a way of interpreting policy and applies it as an approach to one specific education policy, the Tasmanian Government's statement on public education, *Learning Together: a vision for education, training and information into the 21st century* (Department of Education Tasmania 2000b). The purpose is to show a way in which it might be possible to come to understand a policy (Yanow, 2000). It unfolds such an approach by elaborating interpretations that are trustworthy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 289-331). My quest throughout is to find a means to uncover and display truthful meanings of that particular policy, including those that might be initially hidden, vague or sedimented (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 166). To do this, I take up ideas from differing philosophical perspectives and apply them to the *Learning Together* policy. Two philosophical stances that serve as the background to this study are critical and hermeneutic perspectives on knowledge, values and experience (Kögler, 1999, p. 2). These perspectives enable me to conceive of a policy as having numerous potential interpretations and help me to explore notions of truthfulness (Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 158-59) and offer a trustworthy interpretation of the *Learning Together* policy. The interpreting of this policy inevitably leads to questions about the way in which other policies might be interpreted (Yanow, 2000), and I come to understand that many meanings may be possible from one policy. Some meanings might be easily displayed to the individuals and communities for which a policy is intended (Yanow, 2000, p. vii), while others may be absent or concealed (Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 166).

Early in the study, I recognised that I had a significant dilemma by acknowledging my own ontological stance as a researcher who was also a participant in policy development. I found that I was already positioned as to how I understood policy, and that my positioning shaped how I might come to understand a particular policy. In asking myself questions such as "what might this policy mean?" I realised that the choice I made about how to approach the interpreting of a policy had already been influenced by my understandings and experiences of public policy development and implementation. My understandings were strongly influenced by my experiences in bureaucracy and politics, but also by being a member of my community. I wondered how I would be able to stand aside from what I had already taken for granted and get different insights into a policy. Might there be a variety of philosophical perspectives that could give me deeper or different understandings? It is in

response to this dilemma that I considered approaches to interpreting policy that might disclose multiple and shifting interpretive possibilities. This caused me to question how potential meanings become highlighted or hidden, and led me to think about the language of the policy and, in particular, the potency of language tropes such as metaphors. Given the undeniably political and bureaucratic context of policymaking, I saw some potential for inquiring into the policy's language to uncover meanings of it.

To apply my way of thinking about policy, I chose to interpret a policy in which I had been personally involved. The philosophical approach applied in this study has four phases. Each takes differing philosophical perspectives – differing but linked by language and assumptions about knowledge, values and experience. In the first phase, I consider how meanings of a policy might be easily interpreted or masked by the language of that policy. In the second phase, I consider how one particular set of meanings about a policy, in this case, meanings related to power, were not evident, and I focus on such meanings in relation to the policy. In the third phase, I consider how self-understanding might position an interpretation of a policy. The fourth phase enables me to reflect on my understandings of the policy.

The policy, *Learning Together: a vision for education, training and information into the 21st century* (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b) put forward an overarching vision and strategic plan for education in the state of Tasmania, Australia. (See Appendix A for complete text of the policy.) This policy choice provides opportunities to develop understandings of education, politics, self and policy, and demonstrates a way that other policies might be interpreted for meaning. Therefore, the interpreting of this policy is set against a background of Tasmanian Government education policy, as well as a landscape of personal involvement in the development of this specific policy. It also takes place within a broader context of educational policy-making at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The choice of *Learning Together* was prompted by the personal and public stories I have to tell about it, arising from my participation in the policy's development and implementation when I was an advisor to the then Tasmanian Minister for Education (Appendix D). In this study, as I delve into the meanings that I understood the policy to contain, I grapple with my own increasingly uncertain understandings of the policy and its purpose. In exploring my perspectives, I come to recognise that my understandings of this policy are tentative and constantly shifting. At times, I am inspired by its influential messages of coherence and collaboration, yet at others, I am more sceptical about its potential to achieve what it claims it can do. I fear that problems or issues that need to be addressed might be hidden by the policy's positive messages. Each of these ways of thinking about *Learning Together* lead to differing understandings.

I consider how my personal understandings of *Learning Together* originally came about. It seems that to some extent they emerged from my lived experience of the policy writing and implementation, and were shaped also by how I understood my involvement within varied political, social and educational communities. This causes me to wonder what meanings do others give to the policy and what might shape their understandings of it? Are their meanings based their own set of experiences and existing knowledge of the world in which they live? How, I wonder, are meanings of any policy shared, and how do they endure? These questions raise doubt as to how the term *meaning* is understood.

The metaphor of the title held its own puzzlement. Was the policy's metaphorical title, *Learning Together*, implying a different understanding of learning in Tasmania in the future? Given that an individualised way of thinking about learning has dominated the history of schooling, this title, if taken literally, suggests that it might no longer be common or desirable to learn *alone*.

Meaning is a contested term with an array of possible explanations drawn from many disciplines and fields of knowledge. In this study, meaning is closely linked to understanding. Following Richard Sokowloski (2000), meanings become evidenced to us when they are disclosed through some form of disclosure, or "display of a state of affairs", that we find truthful (pp. 158-59). A display of truthful meaning occurs in a context of accepted values and beliefs, which allow that meaning to be presented to us and understood as credible. There is always potential for differing meanings to be displayed to us. As interpreters, we need to be able recognise the truthfulness of the many meanings of a policy that may be disclosed to us. They are those that are evidenced as having a truth that we regard as intelligible and authoritative.

That means that the policy should be interpreted in a manner that can be regarded as trustworthy, following crystallisation as suggested by Laurel Richardson (2005). Like the facets of a crystal, any approach to the study of social life should acknowledge the infinite perspectives that might be brought to it, and necessitates thinking not only about what we see but also how we see it (Janesick, 2000, p. 392). The trustworthy interpreting of a policy requires truthful disclosures of meanings, including those meanings that might be concealed by being absent or vague. To achieve a trustworthy interpretation of a policy requires that we understand how various frames we bring to our understanding of that policy influence our interpretation of it. This includes the basis on which we come to understand that which we know, have experience of and value.

In this study, I reflect on the policy *Learning Together* in four phases. These phases consider the policy through language, particularly the metaphorical use of language. However, the study is not structured as an analysis of language, such as critical discourse

analysis where the focus is on micro levels of discourse with metaphors that fall strictly within social and political domains; or conceptual metaphor theory, using metaphor as a means to map language and thought (Hart, 2008, pp. 3-4). The purpose for which I make use of metaphor in each of the four phases of this study is to offer a way to interpret the policy from differing perspectives, not presume that one approach was superior to the others. I unfold my interpretations in order to understand the complexity of policy and my always-partial grasp of its possible meanings as viewed through frames of metaphors.

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) proposed that metaphors frame our understandings, and they may highlight or hide potential understandings. In particular, metaphor is not merely regarded as illustrative language but profoundly constitutive of the deep structures that form our conceptual frameworks. For this reason, in the first phase I look for metaphors in the language of the *Learning Together* policy, using metaphor as a lens, or a frame, for interpreting meaning. *Learning Together* not only has a strong metaphor for a title, but the text appears rich in metaphors relating to education, learning and schooling. From this phase, I reveal a framework of concepts. That framework emerges from my interpreting of metaphors directly from the language of the policy as well as those that emerge from my reflections. For this reason, I employ Lakoff and Johnson's approach to depicting metaphors and metaphorical concepts using small capitals, as in LEARNING IS LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY. Metaphor is also central to the interpretive strategies used in the next two phases. Just as I use metaphor, after Lakoff and Johnson (1980), as a frame for interpreting meaning of language of *Learning Together* in the first phase of this study, in the second phase I view the policy using metaphors based on ideas from selected writings of Foucault. These works were *Discipline and Punish*, first published in 1975 (Foucault, 1995); *Governmentality*, published in 1979 (Foucault, 1991); *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*, published in 1980 (Foucault & Gordon, 1980); and the three volumes of *History of sexuality*, the first of which (*An introduction*) was published in 1976 (Foucault, 1990); and the final two consecutive volumes, *The Use of Pleasure*, published in 1984 (Foucault, 1985), and *The Care of the Self*, published 1986 (Foucault, 1986). One such metaphor, PANOPTICON, the institutional model prison form employed during Tasmania's nineteenth century convict era, was used to describe how relations of power in an educational institution could serve to observe, control and remediate those subject to it. The third phase, using metaphors drawing on ideas from Hans-Georg Gadamer (1999), was initially prompted to address my dilemma of being an interpreter who had a personal involvement in the writing and implementation of the policy. Gadamer's work gave me metaphors of FORE-STRUCTURES and HORIZONS, which reveal how the personal values, experiences and understandings of an interpreter can frame the epistemological assumptions

they make. In the fourth phase, I consider meanings that have been displayed and suggest new metaphors. In these phases, I use these theorists' differing stances on the relationship between language and meaning as strategies to undertake the interpreting. In particular, I embrace metaphors drawn from the language used to describe their differing theoretical positions, and applied them to *Learning Together*.

My choice to use ideas as metaphors to frame my interpreting in this study was not accidental. During a visit to New York late in 2003, I met and spent one brief, yet intense, day with Maxine Greene, eminent educational philosopher and resilient octogenarian New Yorker. My meeting with her helped shape this inquiry: our conversation ranged over many topics, questions and anecdotes. She spoke for some time about how metaphor is able to give powerful meaning to one's experiences of the world. Greene (1978, p. 2) used the description "landscape of learning" to portray the importance for educators, indeed for all human beings, to have conscious understandings of our histories and lives, the experiences that enable us to change and grow. I came away wondering what my "landscape of learning" might be and what bearing it might have on the meanings I gave to *Learning Together*. From her writing and our conversation, I took this metaphor LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING to guide my study. She gave me a rationale for grounding this study in my personal and lived experience, as both a policy interpreter and policy actor. In this way, my study also involves a personal search for meaning which has enabled me to deepen my understandings of interpreting policy, education, politics and self.

It seemed to me that my experiences of policy-making during the development of *Learning Together* had been significantly shaped by my LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING. I wanted to understand something of what that landscape was, and how, in turn, my landscape influenced my understandings, values and consequent experience of the world. It became clear to me that I had some passion for this policy and regarded it very optimistically. I also had a nagging concern that I may be blinded to its inadequacies or "mystified" as Greene (1978, p. 54) suggested. The policy might evoke meanings that were potent and positive to me, yet I might not see how it was negative or inconsequential to others. I was struck by the powerful metaphor of *Learning Together* and how I had taken this compelling metaphor and its associated entailments so much for granted.

Building on my conversation with Greene, I focused strongly on interpretive policy analysis following Dvora Yanow (2000). According to Yanow, we communicate daily through language, objects and acts that represent values, beliefs, feelings and meanings and we can understand these as artefacts (p. 16). Symbolic language, such as metaphors, are policy artefacts that, like data, might be collected for interpretive analysis (p. 27). Metaphors could be inquired into to see what meanings they express and communicate about a policy as

well as how meanings might be interpreted by communities and individuals for whom they are significant. This study, therefore, used the strategy of metaphors as policy artefacts that enable me to access possible meanings of the *Learning Together* policy.

The first section of this thesis presents an overview of the landscape of the study. Chapter 1 introduces the study and outlines its purposes, significance and structure. In line with the metaphor of a LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING, Chapter 2 explores the ground in which my interpreting takes place, the knowledge domain relating to *policy*. Chapter 2 also presents an overview of how the term *policy* was used in this study and outlines contemporary interpretive policy approaches. This chapter follows the approach used by Bridge (2002) in his unpublished doctoral thesis, where a traditional approach to a literature review is replaced by an unfolding of the theoretical referents that inform the study (p. 16). These referents relate to his chosen field of inquiry, inclusive schooling, but the exploration of them provokes questions that forms and progresses the interpretive approach taken in his study.

The second section of the thesis applies the interpretive approach to policy I have developed. Chapter 3 introduces *Learning Together*, the policy I chose. Chapter 4 outlines the interpretive philosophical background, drawing on work by R. Sokolowski (2000) and Hans Herbert Kögler (1999) that prompts and develops my approach to interpretive policy analysis and the interpretive strategies used in the study. Chapters 5–8 document the application of this interpretive approach to *Learning Together*. In Chapters 5–7, I take three opportunities respectively to reflect on *Learning Together*, linked by reflective ‘turns’ initiating each ensuing approach. This begins in Chapter 5 with discussion of metaphors, as described by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), which I have identified from the text of the *Learning Together* policy. These metaphors are grouped to form a frame of concepts through which I am able to interpret the policy. The second opportunity is outlined in Chapter 6, as I take an interpretive turn that involves using metaphors drawn from the writing of Michel Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990a, 1991, 1995). A frame of metaphors, including POWER/KNOWLEDGE, GOVERNMENTALITY and PANOPTICON allow me to reveal different meanings and an alternative interpretation of the *Learning Together* policy. Following another turn, Chapter 7 introduces the third interpretive opportunity and I draw a frame of metaphors from the ideas of Hans-Georg Gadamer (1999)¹, such as HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE, DISTANCIATION and SELF-UNDERSTANDING. These allow me to reflect on how meanings of a policy might emerge from self-understanding. Following each opportunity, I propose new

¹ A link between Gadamer and Foucault is through philosopher Martin Heidegger (1962). Heidegger tutored Gadamer at Freiburg University and Gadamer is regarded as developing his thinking in relation to understanding, while Foucault (1990a, p. 250) acknowledged the overwhelming influence of this “essential philosopher” on his own writing.

metaphors and discuss understandings I have gained; and in Chapter 8, I suggest possibilities for truthful understandings and rethink my understandings of policy, education, politics and self.

A third section of this thesis is formed by Chapters 9 and 10. In Chapter 9, I reflect on my interpreting of this policy through the metaphor of A LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING. This allegory allows me to understand my interpreting as living within a personal landscape of understanding, and I conclude with personal possibilities and public opportunities for interpretive practice. Chapter 10 brings the study to a close and explores relationships between meaning, understanding and interpretive practice. In this chapter I conclude that the trustworthy interpreting of a policy requires truthful disclosures of its meanings from differing perspectives. I use the metaphor of a MOMENT in which I am able to come to “consciousness” (Greene, 1995, p. 26) for the interpreting I have undertaken, and re-visit a notion from Heidegger (1962, p. 147), that of “being-in-the-world” in the sense that we are always in relation to the world as we come to understand it. Specifically, I portray my approach as philosophising and come to understand the interpreting of policy as a multi-faceted and ever-shifting phenomenon.

Context and background

This study is sited in philosophically critical and hermeneutic fields of thought and knowledge within a temporal context that I refer to as “the late modern era” (Bridge, 2002, p. x). Emerging from scholarship in these areas is a growing set of methodologies for inquiry, including critical hermeneutics (Kögler, 1999) and interpretive policy analysis (Yanow, 2000), and I unfold an approach to interpreting policy that brings together critical and hermeneutic perspectives. This approach is used as a means to gain insight into how shared and individual knowledge, experience and values influence our interpreting of the world, and specifically policy. The use of policy from hermeneutic and critical perspectives is intended to disclose meanings of the policy relating to language, subjectivity and self-understanding. In seeking an interpretation of a policy that acknowledges the complex and shifting contexts of interpreting in this late modern era and how meanings may be multifaceted and subject to change, this study focuses on how differing perspectives, illustrated by frames of ideas, might reveal or mask differing epistemological, ontological and axiological dimensions of meaning.

This study and its interpretive approaches are prompted by the “crisis of representation” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3), which is used a metaphor for an uncertainty that arises from the way fieldwork and research writing both attempt to represent truths that

they cannot claim to represent. In line with this metaphor, this study suggests that it is no longer possible to assume that meanings of a policy can be represented as stable and fixed within established fields of political, philosophical or social knowledge, neither is it possible to study and interpret a policy such as *Learning Together* without acknowledging the nature of personal claims to knowledge.

The frames applied in each phase demonstrate the complexity of the ever-changing temporal context of this study and the dilemmas that emerge from that context as we seek trustworthy interpretations. By applying to the policy *Learning Together* the approach and strategies I outline here, I unfold a living experience of policy interpreting, in that I mediate “between interpreted meanings and the thing toward which the interpretations point” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 26). Frames that are interpreted meanings constituted of metaphors, are used to interpret *Learning Together*, the thing toward which the interpretations point. New frames of metaphors emerge from this policy out of my mediation. The study reveals my personal professional involvement in the development and implementation of this policy and my evolving understandings of it over time. This personal context is evident in how the experience of the policy’s original development influenced my understandings of it and how I attempted to gain some distancing from it through interpretive strategies, both at that time and throughout my study. My interpreting is undertaken against a peripatetic working life and as such revealed the bearing of diverse work experiences, key professional relationships, and personal and shared values on language and understanding. Retrospectively, this inevitably discloses much about me individually, but also a great deal about my engagement in other contexts, through traverses across the worlds of policy, politics and education.

The application of the interpretive approach in this study concerns the interpreting of an education policy, *Learning Together* (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b), therefore the study is also situated in the context of a government education system in the state of Tasmania, Australia over the decade of 1999–2010. The *Learning Together* policy was written, published and implemented at the turn of the new millennium, and it endured as the overarching educational policy statement for the Tasmanian State Labor Government for six years. The policy encompassed the broad array of portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Education in Tasmania, and provided a shape for the future, public education, information services and training provision within the state until 2006.

Tasmania provides an appropriate context for this study as it is experiencing a period of positive economic development, social transformation and technological innovation. Paralleling events in many Western societies, education has been sequestered as a key political strategy through which governments attempt to enhance economic sustainability

and social cohesion. This study evokes what I consider to be trustworthy interpretations of *Learning Together*, its intentions and possible consequences in the Tasmanian education system.

Purposes of the study

The purpose of this study is to develop a way of interpreting policy for meaning that would account for varied philosophical understandings. Using an interpretive approach to policy, I seek to gain greater insight into policy, as a multi-faceted and ever-shifting phenomenon. In applying this philosophy as an interpretive approach, I am able to reveal personal and public meanings of the *Learning Together* policy in a coherent and compelling fashion. The term *interpreting* is used deliberately throughout this study as both a noun and a verb, to describe the active and ongoing nature of my task. I *am* interpreting, and my interpreting can be unfolded. *Interpretation* is used only to denote that a range of trustworthy meanings have been reached.

When I began my doctoral studies, my intention was to interpret current education policy in major Western democracies and analyse assumptions about the purpose and nature of education, with the proposed outcomes of my study being to consider implications for future policy development in education. I expected to undertake a simple qualitative process to interpret some education policies, including *Learning Together*, and decide how useful they might have been in achieving their stated visions. I would have followed this by extrapolating findings to further similar policies, with the overarching purpose of answering the question: “Did these policies achieve their stated visions?”

Then, in conversation with Maxine Greene in her New York apartment in 2003, I was struck by two comments she made, one which rejected philosophy as needing to be undertaken with an “abstracted head” and the other, that “we couldn’t bracket out biography”. Both related to her conviction that researchers always have unavoidable personal engagements in the research they undertake. Both quotes are closely associated with the metaphor of a personal LANDSCAPES OF LEARNING that she uses in her book of the same name (Greene, 1978, p. 113). Her comments caused me to rethink the approach that I intended to take in researching these policies and, especially, my connection to the *Learning Together* policy. It made me reflect on how meanings that might be interpreted from a policy come to be. I began to wonder how it would be possible to inquire into this policy, or any other, without acknowledging the understandings that I already had, resulting from the *Learning Together* policy development process. My inquiry shifted from wondering whether

these policies achieved their stated purposes, to thinking about what meanings policies might have and for whom.

I thought about my experience of *Learning Together*. Initially *Learning Together* seemed to galvanise goodwill among teachers, schools and the community, as it suggested opportunities for positive change and collaborative, or at least consultative, decision-making. This was in contrast to the many educational policies I had experienced which were little more than attempts at controlling what educators and students did in an overt fashion. However, I did wonder how much the meanings that I gave the policy were shaped, optimistically, by my personal involvement. The possibilities of *Learning Together* might only be what I saw as possibilities. I wanted to know what influenced my interpreting, and if my understandings of the policy were shared by others. That meant understanding how this policy made sense to me and how might it make sense to others within the Tasmanian community and beyond. It also meant having insight into what influenced my interpreting and if there were other ways, as suggested by Greene (1978), to grasp the potential meanings of this policy.

The point is that learning must be a process of discovery and recovery in response to worthwhile questions rising out of conscious life in concrete situations. And learning must be in some manner emancipatory, in the sense that it equips individuals to understand the history of the knowledge structures they are encountering, the paradigms in use in the sciences, and the relation of all of these to human interests and particular moments of human time. It should be possible as well for people to learn the significance of technique and to understand the dangers of instrumental controls through confrontations with some centers of technology, even with bureaucracies. The idea is to enable them to pose searching and significant questions with respect to what works upon them and conditions them to learn how to recognise mystification, whatever the source. (Greene, 1978, p. 19)

I came to appreciate that my lived experience of *Learning Together* had been potent. It had made me feel positive about the future of the state's public education system, and I was unaware of any negative aspects to it. I was starting to see that I was unable to "bracket out my biography" (Greene, 2000, p. 113) and continue to pretend that personal perspectives on education, learning and my community had not framed my interpreting of *Learning Together*. I could not interpret with an abstracted head and pretend that the policy had not influenced my values and beliefs in turn.

Greene's call was to learn from lived experience, to emancipate ourselves through such learning and to strive to recognise any mystification that might be created by bureaucratic technique. For me, these purposes came to underpin my choice of interpreting something in which I had had such close involvement. How could I come to interpretations

of any policy that I could trust? I wanted meanings that had some authority, some “truthfulness” (Sokolowski, 2000, pp. 159-160), otherwise they were meanings for me and me alone. There was a point at which my meanings, if I thought them to have any capacity to endure, needed to be demonstrated through some evidence.

A purpose of this study is to attempt to understand any differing meanings that a policy might offer and see how interpreting a policy from differing perspectives might come to influence those meanings. It seeks to go beyond traditional quantitative and qualitative analyses of *policy*. In particular, it proposes that if philosophical ideas are used metaphorically to form frames through which a policy can be interpreted, differing meanings of that policy might be revealed. Using an interpretive approach, the *Learning Together* policy is illuminated from contrasting perspectives on knowledge and existence, in this case, in relation to power and self-understanding. Through an ongoing project of interpreting, it suggests that such a policy might be understood in multiple ways.

This study particularly takes up metaphor as a strategy for interpreting. I chose metaphor, not to demonstrate that it was the epistemological ground of my philosophy, but to attempt to bring to light a potential conceptual structure of a policy’s language. Metaphors and their entailments offer me symbolic structures that might represent a variety of epistemological premises, ontological ideals and ethical stances. Brought together as a frame, they can reveal a set of associated concepts that form a background to the policy and a window into knowledge, experiences, beliefs and hopes that may have shaped it.

In the course of this study, I come to see that an attendant purpose is to reflect on my dual experiences as a researcher and as a participant in the policy’s development and implementation. I am able to reflect on both the interpretations I have made of *Learning Together* and the manner in which I have interpreted this policy. This discloses significant self-understandings, and revealed how particular traditions of thought and belief systems influenced my self-knowledge. I endeavour to reveal any assumptions and ponder any ambiguities I may have unfolded from the policy’s language or my own understandings, as well as highlight what I see as new possibilities for understanding for others and myself.

Susan Sontag dedicated the task of her inquiry in her book *Illness as metaphor* (1978, p. 4) as being an elucidation and liberation from the lurid metaphors of which the kingdom of illness has been landscaped. My task, too, was ultimately liberation, not merely elucidation. For me, as for Sontag, the purpose of liberation overruled and sidelined elucidation – indeed the elucidation is only engaged in on the promise of liberation. As I embarked on this study, I came to recognise that I needed an approach to my research that would enable me to escape my own preconceptions, probe the metaphors I use and contemplate any meanings that seemed too believable or smooth. For that reason, at various

moments on my interpretive path, I turn to the works of interpretive theorists Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990a, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer (1999) for insights. Each give me an opportunity to think about the interpreting that I had undertaken, with the intention of contributing to more nuanced meanings of this policy.

Significance of the study

The significance of this study is the manner in which it considers what a policy might mean. It proposes that a policy might be understood by thinking philosophically about it. Unlike a traditional policy analysis that focuses on determining efficiency and effectiveness, this study offers an innovative approach that links together several philosophical perspectives to reveal understandings of language, power and self-understanding. In particular, the study considers the primacy of a policy's language in creating meaning. It also makes known the personal perspectives of me as an interpreter who was also a participant in the policy's writing and implementation. Further, it considers power as an ever-present possibility. This study attempts coherently to take account of the personal, social and political complexity of policy texts and policy development.

In applying this way of thinking about and interpreting policy, the study represents an innovative approach to the interpretation of education policy. It is significant for its focus on how a policy might be interpreted using differing philosophical stances to uncover potential meanings, but also because the approach used particularly acknowledges the involvement of self-understanding and historically situated subjectivity in the interpretive process. While similar educational policies have been researched from an array of theoretical perspectives, such a focus on personal meaning has not been undertaken in this field, and the weaving together of metaphoric analysis, self-reflexivity and policy interpretation is unique.

The study enables potential meanings of the policy *Learning Together* to be revealed by unfolding both a conceptual structuring of the policy and a researcher's self-narrative of interpreting it. The study details how perspectives that can be described as critical and hermeneutic (Kögler, 1999), offered by the writing of two philosophers, Gadamer (1999) and Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990a, 1991, 1995), could illuminate differing interpretations of the policy. Language is the focus of the interpretive task, with specific use of metaphor as an interpretive strategy. The study engages with emerging research areas of interpretive policy analysis (Yanow, 2000) and critical interpretation (Kögler, 1999).

Some Australian commonwealth and state governments in the past decade have developed overarching policies for their public education systems (Appendix E). These policies have attempted comprehensively to address the provision of education in its

broadest sense, bringing together, under single policy statements, rationales for school education, vocational education and training, tertiary pathways and early years education and care. Such policies go beyond a focus on only one discipline or policy area, such as mathematics or inclusive education, and incorporate broad visioning and statements of democratic values.

A common theme of such policies has been how education might contribute to the democratic, social and economic aspirations of a state and its citizens, and this has often been expressed using terms such as “lifelong learning” and “learning society”. This theme was also taken up by a number of contemporary international and national statements and policies (Delors, 1998; MCEETYA, 1998). These terms, which might be thought of as metaphors, have been used to describe desirable educational outcomes that could potentially help to create societies that are more democratic, more socially just and connected, and stronger economically. Metaphors such as “learning society” and “lifelong learning” have been used to shape and justify the construction of wide-ranging policy statements (Greene, 2000) and their use seemed to signal a shift in thinking about education from the perspective of the institutional form of education to the perspective of the individual.

The title *Learning Together* is an example of such a metaphor. It was used in this policy to propose an essential role for education in shaping the future of Tasmanian society. This metaphor frames *learning* differently from previous characterisations, representing it as an activity to be undertaken collaboratively. In this study, the metaphor causes me to question what the concept *learning* might mean and ask how it was understood. Is it a solitary or collaborative activity, or both? The study highlights the metaphors evident in the policy, but it also goes beyond and challenges the conceptual framework they establish. I am able to look afresh at these metaphors and reveal what they highlight and what they hide.

This study also focuses on interpreting as a living experience. While “insider” or participant-researcher approaches to policy interpretation have been used in some economic and social policy analyses, this study is significant for the use of this approach in relation to the interpretation of education policy. In particular, this study examines how interpreting relies on both an “already there” ontology – a historically bound language context – and the future projection of possibilities.

This study also forces me to reflect on my own conceptual frameworks. I question how I originally understood *learning* and other concepts that I identified from the *Learning Together* policy. This shifts me from understanding *learning* in terms of being collaborative or solitary to questioning *learning* as a mechanism of power focused on domination, what Foucault (1982) referred to as a “technology of the self” (p. 16). This critical turn causes me to recognise how my interpreting is contained primarily within personal horizons of

understanding (Gadamer, 1999, pp. 302-307). My initial interpreting of the metaphors framed my understandings and showed my horizons, and it was only by engaging with others who offered a different perspective – for example, considering power (after Foucault, 1995) – that I have gained greater insights and broadened those horizons. These insights are ultimately fresh self-understanding as I develop new meanings of the policy.

Many interpretive studies adopt only single philosophical perspectives, and I might have chosen one approach only, such as to use critical perspectives as Foucault's work has been described, or philosophic hermeneutics as attributed to Gadamer (1999). Others, such as Kögler (1999), have attempted to combine differing theoretical stances in order to articulate a comprehensive philosophical positioning that accommodates differences between philosophical positions. This study does not seek to homogenise alternative standpoints, or prove one superior to another, or inadequate in themselves. It takes differing perspectives in turn as a means of illuminating the complexity and tentativeness of interpretation in order to reveal new nuances and insights.

Key questions

The key question of this study (How might a policy be interpreted in a critically and hermeneutically sensitive manner?) had its origins in the question: What are the meanings of a policy (Miller, Van Maanen & Manning, 2000, p. v)? For Yanow (2000), this question could be answered by considering the symbolic artefacts of the policy, and determining how these artefacts represented meanings, in particular to communities of meaning.

Policies such as *Learning Together* that outline an overarching statement relating to a specific domain of government activity, might be understood in many ways. Such policies might be portrayed as economic rationalist statements aimed at creating efficiency and productiveness (Pusey, 1991, p. 180); as coherent, univocal manifestos infused with political rhetoric (Budge, 2001, p. 8); as utopian visions of social reform (Halpin, 1999) or governmentality (Foucault, 1982); or as specific pragmatic interventions into local issues and concerns (Milofsky, 2007, pp. 174-75). Indeed, they may be given a multitude of intentions and meanings.

Yet, my inquiry takes a slightly different slant. It has as its core a belief that as *policy* may be understood in multiple ways, from a variety of perspectives, there may also be multiple meanings of a policy. However, some meanings may be absent from our purview, or so sedimented, that is, layered over by other meanings, that they are difficult to recover into our conscious understanding. Of interest in this study were those meanings that were

absent, vague or obscured from our consciousness by the effects of power relations or a lack of distanciation from very personal perspectives.

As I recognise the potential of metaphor to my interpretive task, an initial focus is the question: What might be the meanings of *Learning Together* as revealed through consideration of its language, particularly metaphor? With the recognition that metaphors both highlight and mask concepts such as *power*, this focus soon shifts to the ways in which a policy might be interpreted and the possibility that a number of contrasting perspectives might reveal a richer, more diverse, set of meanings.

Applying my philosophical approach involves iterative interpreting of the policy *Learning Together* and demonstrates how personal and public meanings of this comprehensive educational policy statement could be possible. It enables me to unfold, following William Schubert (1986, pp. 118-124), differing epistemological, ontological and axiological understandings that might frame these meanings. Through this iterative questioning, the policy had the potential to have meanings that were unintentional, did not clearly represent stated objectives of the governments and bureaucracy, or are concealed. This stands at odds with taken-for-granted notions of a policy as a direct statement of intended action and reveals inadequacies relating to conventional policy analysis. The four central questions are: What are possible meanings of this policy? Are there other possible meanings of this policy that are concealed from my consciousness, particularly in relation to power or self? How might this policy be understood from my personal perspective or from the personal perspectives of others? And how might these perspectives impact on the interpreting of meaning?

In adopting several philosophical perspectives, this study also came to contemplate the interrelatedness of meaning, understanding and interpreting. Each interpretive perspective held the potential to ask different questions and prompt new answers. A new question, How might differing interpretive stances enable new and varied meanings to be revealed? was foregrounded. A further question, What might limit or enable our interpreting? opened up the possibility that the meanings we come to are shaped by the interpretive frames which we bring to our interpreting, and our interpretive questioning might ignore some meanings and reveal others.

To this end, the ideas of Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990a, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer (1999) are used alternately, as each provides differing philosophical questions to unsettle any assumptions that may influence my interpreting *Learning Together*. While I am pursuing ideas about power through the work of Foucault (1980, 1991, 1995), questions relating to my subjectivity arise. This, in turn, raises questions about my self-understanding and how this framed my interpreting of the policy. This multi-pronged approach enables me

to escape the confines of any prescribed methodological stances or philosophically obligated processes that might have resulted from a choice of one single perspective. Language, power and self-understanding become of interest as each thinker in turn allows me to ask differing questions about the policy, its metaphoric possibilities and my interpreting of it.

My approach to interpreting highlights the influence of individual perspectives on interpreting as well as the historical situatedness of our understandings. It is an approach undertaken with the intention of giving greater insights into how we make meaning for ourselves and with others within communities. It considers how we might gain greater understanding of how to interpret policy from philosophical perspectives, engaging language and, particularly in this case, metaphor. I choose to keep one eye on the well-worn path, but like Robert Frost (2002), I opt for some paths less travelled.

Chapter 2

Perspectives on policy

Policies themselves ... are ... necessarily clear or closed or complete.

(Ball, 1994, p. 11)

This chapter is an unfolding of the theoretical referents that inform this study. It follows the approach of Doug Bridge (2002) in his doctoral thesis in which he explored referents relating to his chosen field of inquiry, inclusive schooling. In doing so, questions emerged that shaped the interpretive methods he used (p. 16). This chapter parallels his approach as it sets out referents for the study that in turn pose questions and prompt the interpretive choices I make. It begins by scoping definitions of the term *policy* and finds that my understandings of it are rendered less certain as its possible definitions become increasingly varied. If the term can be understood in multiple ways, then meanings of a policy can be equally varied. What are needed are diverse approaches to interpret policy that acknowledge potential for a broad array of meanings.

Engaging with policy – sedimentations and displays

Despite the terms *policy* and *public policy*² being used abundantly in the public arena and freely applied in the realms of government and academia, the explanations given to these terms are often ambiguous, conflicting or indistinct. I am constantly fascinated by the conversations that I have with those who inquire about my work as a policy and research advisor as they expose quite diverse understandings of the term *policy*. For example, a politician might speak of *policy* in terms of documents distributed in an election or a standpoint of a party or government platform. Members of the public, who are the intended audience of a policy, often come to know about it only through media reports or a written communication about that policy from a government agency. On the other hand, a bureaucrat might regard a policy as a set of directives that governs their work in a particular area and might seek to clarify the political status of those directives at a certain time through dialogue

² In this study, my interest is policy made in the public domains, therefore I use the term *policy* throughout.

with a government minister. At other times, those whose work a policy affects can experience it directly as an imposition. An example was reported in local Tasmanian media about the impact of the reforms in the senior secondary sector of public education, called the Tasmania Tomorrow reforms, on teachers and students (ABC News, 2010). Further, a policy might have a symbolic significance for an individual within its sphere of influence, but have no apparent direct or indirect influence on their daily life. For example, the Australian Government's policy to establish the *MySchool* website, with performance data on almost 10,000 Australian schools, may have impacts on teachers, principals or bureaucrats but have little impact on the day-to-day experience of a student.

There are definitions of *policy* that seem to be commonly used, such as those related to action by government or documentation that outlines such action. Others are more elusive, but no less important in this study. These are meanings of *policy* that can be thought of as being absent or concealed, when compared to more generally applied meanings (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 166), as they may be vague or sedimented in that they are less obvious yet have a continuing strong influence over our current understandings of a term,. Such meanings act like strong magnets buried in the ground where "they generate a cultural field of force". I begin my exploration of common understandings of this term, by looking for sedimented meanings.

To gain some insight into sedimented meanings of *policy*, I searched for traces of its history and usage. The word *policy* appears to have emerged into use in Middle English in the fourteenth century (Policy, n.d.). From this point, policy came to be used to describe the planning or administration of aspects of social and civic human life. Over time, the term has encompassed a range of interrelated meanings for concepts such as *government*, *the state*, and *political organisation*. It is possible to trace an etymology of the word policy back to the Latin *politeia* or "citizenship" and the title, *politia*, of *The Republic*, the early account of the nation state attributed to Plato. An alternative etymology of the word comes from the Latin term *politus*, meaning "polished" or "refined". The sedimentation of this meaning of policy is evident as it relates to organisations or governance, where a policy represents ordered and structured actions or a coherent text, rather than random and unplanned responses.

Another branch of the word's possible origins refers to documents such as contracts or promissory notes, where a policy is that which gives proof, although these meanings are now mostly obsolete. However, in current practice, a policy is generally referred to as something that is documented, a usage which could link to this etymology. This may also account for the common notion that a policy is invariably regarded as a "text". As suggested by Sokolowski (2000, p. 164), this brief study of the word's origins provides some insights into sedimented meanings of the term.

Contemporary understandings of the term policy are highly varied, and can range from the ambiguous to the authoritative (Colebatch, 2006, p. 314). For example, policy can serve as a “shorthand description for everything from an analysis of past decisions to the imposition of current political thinking” (Bridgman & Davis, 2004, p. 6). For Bridgman and Davis (pp. 6-10), policy always relates to public and formal decision-making and action and could be thought of in three ways: as authoritative choice, hypothesis and objective. Authoritative choice implies some objectification of a policy, such as labelling a field of activity, naming an outcome, process or a program. Hypothesis involves the notion of proposition, which might include governments making decisions, formal authorisation, theorising or modelling, and general expressions of purposes or desired state of affairs. Policy as objectives involves action, at times proposed, and at others understood in retrospect. A policy may be considered purposive activities relating to problems or concerns toward specified goals, for example “a principle or course of action adopted or proposed as desirable, advantageous, or expedient; *esp.* one formally advocated by a government, political party” that implies a “method of acting on matters of principle, settled practice” (Policy, n.d.). For Hal Colebatch (2009), policy implied authority, expertise and order (p. 8). Policy might also be characterised as a proposition or intention and this concurs with Bridgman and Davis’s view (2004, p. 3) that a policy can be understood as a government’s authoritative statement about what it proposes to do, based on hypotheses about cause and effect and structured around objectives. Therefore, policy is often represented as government activity that is positive and directional, stating governmental choice and intentions to act to achieve outcomes. A less technical explanation is “whatever governments choose to do, or choose not to do” (Dye, 1985, p. 1). Each of the above accounts of policy has a strong action intention, and Bridgman and Davis (2004, p.69) developed this practical focus by proposing that policies were enacted through instruments, such as advocacy, money, government action and law. For Colebatch (2009, p. 20), policy can be assumed as a settled, considered choice, while administration is the execution of these choices, and Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry (1997, p. 1) propose that a policy could be how we individually and collectively act on principle or a promise we make to ourselves. There are also meanings that characterise policy as an orientation. It can be depicted as “prudent conduct; politic or expedient behaviour; prudence, shrewdness, sagacity” and “political prudence; skill or shrewdness in public affairs” (Policy, n.d.).

Each of these typical ways of thinking about *policy* takes for granted that a policy has a rational foundation and a pragmatic and positive focus on present or future action. These definitions can be understood as being grounded in epistemological certainty, where the inherent properties of policy are objective. Definitions that portray policy as a course of

action, a method or decisions of government imply it is a firm reality that might be observed or experienced. Yet some meanings I have noted are more ambiguous. Stephen Ball (1994) took a different approach, proposing that policy could be described by the contrasting, and overlapping, metaphors of POLICY AS A DISCOURSE and POLICY AS A TEXT (p. 21). He made a distinction between the two with POLICY AS A TEXT allowing policy actors to interpret a text in a variety of ways, and POLICY AS A DISCOURSE indicating how power relations might frame the interpreting of a policy text.

These distinctions do not appear to have the same grounding in reality because their inherent properties, such as hypothesis, promise and intention, are not as easily observed or experienced. These meanings hint that there are much more complex ways to understand the term. It is possible to question the reason or logic of a policy, for example, the Apartheid Policy of South Africa in the twentieth century. It is also possible to identify policies that do not have positive and pragmatic focuses on action, or policies which maintain the status quo. As Taylor et al. (1997, p. 22) point out, non-decision-making may have as much significance as action in a policy domain. If a policy is understood as *not* doing some action, or *intending* not to, that also opens the possibility for many other meanings. There is an epistemological uncertainty that arises from describing a policy without using definitions that seem epistemologically certain, that opens up new ways to understand what policy, and therefore specific policies, might mean. If we accept there are multiple and diverse possibilities for understanding policy, that implies that a single policy might also have multiple, and even disparate, meanings. As the potential meanings that we might derive from an individual policy could differ greatly, a policy researcher is prompted to explore diverse ways to understand policies and what they mean.

Just as varied meanings of policy arise from differing theoretical standpoints, I explore how varied understandings of a policy might be made available if the policy were interpreted from a range of perspectives. For example, if we reasonably assume that the values that shaped a policy arose from political judgments that were then acted upon by administrative pragmatism, and were subsequently implemented in a specific domain, say of public education, it becomes possible that the policy may have a great many meanings. Depending on the perspective taken, those meanings might have a basis in the domains of politics, education or policy administration, and they also might be understood differently in each of these domains (Yanow, 2000, p. 37). They can depend on varying social and language contexts in which a policy is interpreted, as well as out of a multitude of individual interpretations, each with their own context. The meanings that might be available to an interpreter may be superficial or profound, simple or complex, fleeting or long-lasting. Indeed, the “public” nature of policy offers many potential interpretations of that term, in

that a policy may be understood, experienced and valued differently in a vast array of ways by a public made up of many individuals or interested groups. The term *public policy* hides a range of meaning assumptions, in particular about the nature of “the public”.

There is an apocryphal quote attributed variously to Winston Churchill, Benjamin Disraeli and Otto von Bismarck along the lines of “Never watch sausages or laws being made”. To this quote I now add policy to form my own truism “Never watch *policy*, sausages or laws being made”. Through involvement in policy development and implementation, I had come to question whether my understandings of policy were based on rationally founded knowledge or the experience of a certain reality. At one time, it might have seemed obvious to me to describe a public policy as purposefully created by a government to outline intended acts in relation to certain groups or individuals. However, my personal experience of policy processes lead me to doubt such simplistic explanations. In particular, I had experienced the development of a policy that seemed to emerge from a whole *mélange* of personal meaning perspectives, taken-for-granted knowledge domains and individual and group interests. This experience provokes me to be open to other possibilities there were for interpreting policy, and particularly those that might lead to new understandings and richer interpretations.

Approaches to interpreting policy – uncertainties and questions

This study considers potential meaning possibilities of a policy. For Ball (1994), the meanings that we give to policy affects “ ‘how’ we research and how we interpret what we find” (p. 15). What we think policy as a concept is about determines how we go about our inquiries. For example, if we think a policy is an object, we might examine it minutely or from a distance, or as a whole or a set of parts. If we regard a policy as a set of actions, we might apply cause and effect as principles for our research. If we consider a policy as a proposition, our research may take a longitudinal approach that looks for how that proposition is achieved over time. There is a body of research relating to both policy development and policy interpretation that can be found in sociological and political science writings from the 1960s and ’70s which is usually referred to as policy research (Taylor et al., 1997, p. 17; Marshall & Peters, 1999, p. xix), and a review of this work reveals that policy researchers have followed differing interpretive routes according to their particular understanding of policy. In this research, it is possible to see the relationships between what a policy is understood to be and how the interpreting of that policy is approached.

As Marshall and Peters (1999, p. xxxi) noted, much analysis of public policy has been undertaken within economic, social and critical research traditions. For example, Yanow and

Schwartz-Shea (2006) observe that analyses have explored questions such as how effective a policy might be in terms of cost and benefits (p. 382), whether resources have been distributed equitably (p. 235), how social life and institutions might be organised by a policy (p. 14), or how a policy could advantage or disadvantage particular groups or individuals (p. 42). These approaches have generally assumed that policies have a relatively stable set of constitutive elements and that policy analysis can be defined as a standard set of procedures (Miller, Van Maanen & Manning, 2000, p. v). Such traditional policy analyses include instances where policies are quantitatively evaluated in relation to resource allocations, inputs and outputs, or qualitatively evaluated in relation to identifiable outcomes, such as social, economic and “triple bottom line” assessments (Brown, Dillard & Marshall, 2006). Qualitative indicators can involve a significant amount of quantitative data, gathered through surveying or by coding transcribed interviews, with data then statistically interpreted without any attempt to understand the living experience of a policy process or its implementation. They are based on presumptions about the nature of policy, the correct approach to analyse them and the bases on which our knowledge and experience of them should be judged.

As I described previously, a policy might be thought of as formal and public plans of action with reference to organisations and governance structures (Hill & Hupe, 2002, p. 208). A great deal of research has been undertaken relating to specific organisational policies, such as curriculum implementation in education, or by comparing “like” policies within the same field. For example, in the field of education, there is much research into policies of “inclusion” (O’Hanlon, 2003), while in the domain of economics, there is a body of work on monetary policy (Rabin & Stevens, 2002). Much research has been undertaken to prove that certain policies have been effective, that policy goals and criteria have been achieved (Taylor, et al. 1997, p. 25). The research examines a policy statement to see what is intended and then the policy’s implementation is judged against these intentions, with evaluative strategies being put in place to determine efficiency and wise use of resources. Rational findings of this kind are regarded as being useful in enabling policy-makers to ensure that decision-making is based on evidence or facts. The intention of this research is often stated as ensuring that governments or organisations can become better at solving pertinent policy problems. This approach assumes, that by examining the development and implementation of a policy, it is possible to determine truths about the nature of the organisation of the civic and social life of a community. By establishing such truths, any policy can more appropriately address the context and issues for which it has been designed, and therefore, policy development and implementation can be made more efficient. Interestingly, while the meanings of *policy* that relate to contracts and promissory notes have

been regarded as obsolete (Policy, n.d.), they may still have a powerful influence on current approaches to policy research.

For Levinson, Sutton and Winstead (2009, p. 768), policies have been consistently portrayed as objects, generally represented by written texts, and Taylor (1997, p. 26) proposes that it would be difficult to imagine a policy with no written textual form outlining its intentions and proposed actions. Where a policy is understood as an object, it is assumed to represent the world factually, which might lead to an assumption that there is one true understanding of a policy to be found (Knight, Smith & Sachs, 1990, p. 133). This can be thought of as an epistemologically positivist or post-positivist approach to the interpreting of policy. Positivist and post-positivist research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 27) arises from beliefs that it is possible to know one single coherent truth or at least one that is “true” within a particular context. In doing policy analysis of this kind, a researcher takes a value-neutral position in relation to that which they research and presumes that it is possible to strip away any subjectivity, such as biases, they might bring to the task of interpretation. Indeed, following Moyle’s (2002, pp. 32-42) exploration of policy research from positivist and interpretive perspectives, I suggest that even where policies were regarded as tangible objects for research, the form of the object to be researched can be varied: including documents; documented action towards goals; a record of a unified voice, or a formal public plan of action.

Positivist and post-positivist approaches to policy analysis have been useful in determining the effectiveness or efficiency of a policy, and may be useful in the short term to determine the most efficient means to a given end (Fay, 1975, p. 51; Smith, 1982). These approaches, however, do not question the morality and legitimacy of a policy’s goals, as noted by Taylor et al. (1997, p. 18). In seeking an original or true meaning for a policy, they may fail to acknowledge that policies can have multiple interpretations and that such interpretations might never be authoritative, nor might they admit that diverse factors can make up the policy milieu. Particularly, they ignore how policy intentions might be arrived at by compromise, or otherwise, between participants and do not critique how what is “desirable, advantageous, or expedient” (Policy,n.d.) is judged. Yet, policies are not created in value-free voids with no competing interests or the influences of power, nor is it possible to assume that the meanings they might have were predetermined or fixed. By taking an epistemologically positivist or post-positivist approach, it might be possible to decide whether a policy was efficient or effective. This often happens, however, without attempting to have a sense of the social world in which the policy transpired, or how the interpreting of a policy may be influenced by individual views or group political values, or other

considerations of that which Yanow (1996, p. 3) referred to as “the human quality of policies”.

The implication of taking such positivist and post-positivist approaches to understanding policy is that it is possible to ignore multiple ways in which a policy may be understood, experienced or judged. These may change according to the perspectives of the participants in the policy’s development, the communities in which the policy is implemented or the reflective stance of an interpreter. Each differing meaning of policy can give rise to alternative interpretations when applied to a specific policy.

The need for new approaches to policy interpreting, in turn, suggests new ways of understanding policy. A variety of meanings for *policy* arise which emphasise more interpretive stances, including *policy* as a “problem to be solved” and “textual interventions [put] into practice” (Ball, 2000, p. 1833). Taylor et al. (1997, pp. 16-17) provide a useful set of observations as to the scope and complexity of understandings of policy. They propose that policies are more than texts, multi-dimensional and value-laden and that they exist in context. They view policy-making as state activity and policies, not as being self-contained within specific fields of public activity but interacting across fields, and suggest that policy implementation is never straightforward and that policies result in unintended as well as intended consequences. Further, policies can be regarded using a binary such as *material/symbolic*; that is, a material policy might be a policy which addresses the distribution of resources, benefits or entitlements or the application of effort, while a symbolic policy lacks such material commitments but addresses the political and social climate in which a policy is considered by altering or legitimating particular views. Policies might also be thought of from both aspects of this binary simultaneously.

If policies can be understood as complex, contested and layered, and if the term *policy* might not accord one simple definition, then a range of possible meanings of a policy are possible. If policy is thought of as much more conceptually complex, approaches to interpreting policy need to reflect that complexity. What is needed are contemporary approaches to policy analysis that challenge previous positivist and post-positivist assumptions and acknowledge a multi-faceted concept for policy. This means that the choice of interpretive approach needs to take a researcher beyond only considering a policy’s pragmatic purposes, construction and outcomes. A thoughtful approach to interpreting policy could look at what meanings a policy might have, not to determine in a procedural way if visions, goals and strategies were achievable or if they had been realised.

To admit that the meanings of policy are varied, allows for interpretive approaches, and consequently interpretations, that may be very varied, disparate, conflicting and even contradictory. In particular, if we understand that a policy may have a range of meaning

possibilities, that view necessitates that we understand how those meanings might come to be available to us. In this study, it means finding ways to reveal the framing that might give rise to any meanings. If a policy is only understood rationally as representing a reality, then any approach to analysing it should be directed at finding the most “truthful” interpretation. Alternatively, if a policy is accepted as having many possible policy realities, then a chosen interpretive approach will acknowledge the tentativeness of any supposed “reality” that it proposes.

Exploring possible policy meanings involves understanding any origins of a policy’s issues and concerns within social and historical contexts, judging what is considered good or worthy in relation to these issues and concerns, and illuminating how experiences give rise to our understandings of them. Therefore, I develop a way of the interpreting of a policy, that builds on but moves beyond existing policy research approaches. There are growing bodies of research that examine policies from varied paradigmatic perspectives – what Yanow (2000, p. 26) termed critical and interpretive viewpoints. To this end, there are growing numbers of examples of how researchers are seeking methodologies that consider the nature and purpose of any policy change, the moral order of the reforms put forward, and the relationships between such reform and existing social patterns of inequality (Ball, 1994, p. 26). For some researchers such as Fischer (1989, p. 941), there is a need for “an interdisciplinary ‘policy sciences of democracy’ ”, while others stress the need for such research as a struggle against oppressive social structures and practices (Taylor et al., 1997; Halpin & Troyna, 1994, p. 72). My task became to find an approach to the interpreting of policy that addressed not only my epistemological concerns about not being able to determine a policy’s single truth, but also axiological and ontological concerns.

In my quest for such an approach, I follow Greene (1978) as she asked us to re-consider how we understand, how we were with each other and how, in Thoreau’s words, we should “live deliberately” (Greene, 1978, p. 162). Greene’s concern was about the potential for mystification, a reference to the Marxist view that capitalist or social dynamics may limit critical consciousness and deny individual choice. For me, such mystification might come about as governments worldwide continue relentlessly in their ongoing attempts to write highly specified education policy documents, setting down absolute purposes, arbitrary standards and outcomes and idealised pedagogical approaches, what Greene (1978, p. 63) described as cultist in efficiency and scientific managerialism. I recognise that such attempts assume the need for technique to govern action within bureaucracies, and ignore how meanings are evoked and understood by, and between, individuals and communities.

Interpretive purposes and possibilities

As I have already noted, accepted approaches as to how policy research should be undertaken were contested and problematised in this study. In line with the philosophical background I outline in the following chapter (Chapter 3), and with reference to the ambiguity with which I hold the term *policy*, this study employs new, diverse interpretive forms (Yanow, 2000, p. viii-xi) to provide more meaningful interpretations of a policy than traditional policy analysis approaches may have done. While “policy analysis” was used by Yanow in her overview of interpretive methods, “analysis” is a term commonly employed by researchers employing strategies that could be termed “positivist” and “post-positivist”. This is not what I intend for this study, where the philosophical setting influences the choices of strategies I use. My intention is not to seek a single definitive answer as to what a policy means, but I employ strategies that might allow for significant meanings to be realised. There are various methodological approaches that offer possibilities for contextually sensitive interpretations already applied by other policy researchers including narrative inquiry (Moyle, 2002), metaphor and myth analysis (Yanow, 1996), and discourse analysis (Ball, 2006). The approach I use allows me to take differing standpoints as required, and, in contrast to policy analysis which implies a search for one definitive answer, I seek meanings that are insightful of the complexity of human experience and understanding.

As Yanow (2000, p. x) outlined, much analysis has portrayed policy as being written from authoritative positions, based on positivist ontology, without acknowledging the interpretive decisions a researcher makes about reality. Yanow went on to note, with Schwartz-Shea (2006, pp. 40-44), that an analysis might critique the enactment or outcomes of a policy, yet assume that the intentions of a policy were coherent and the matters they address were in the public interest. For example, policy authors can appear to be committed to the public good, even if this commitment is later demonstrated as being erroneous. This makes interpreted policy meanings seem substantive and unambiguous. This is a totalising tendency, encountered in economic and social policy research, which misleads policy researchers to think that a policy will only have certain meanings, relating to cost (or benefit), effectiveness and efficiency, available to them and leads to the approach to interpreting a policy being limited in terms of possible meanings. This is not to reject such forms of analysis as unimportant and irrelevant, but to admit, as Yanow (2000, p. 93) does, that they have the potential to reveal only some of the interpretations that might be possible for a policy. I also acknowledge that any interpreting of a policy provides only a partial account of a policy’s nature, purpose or impact.

My purpose is in keeping with emerging practices of interpretive policy analysis as suggested by Yanow (2000), who poses questions such as, “What are the meanings of a

policy?” as alternatives to other questions focused on more definable outcomes such as, “What are the costs of a policy?” or “What are the effects of a policy?” My rationale for choosing this interpretive approach is that traditional policy research methods might provide only a narrow range of understandings in relation to a policy. In effect, a traditional analysis may totally ignore what were my purposes; that is, to understand any intended and unintended meanings of a policy. My interpreting assumes that policies are complex and messy in intent and implication. What a policy might mean now may not in any way relate to its stated intentions, or what it may come to mean in the future. When interpreting meanings of a policy, an interpreter should be able to go beyond its policy’s “instrumental rationality”, which Kincheloe and McLaren (2000, p. 282) described as too much of a focus on “how to” rather than “why should”. This means getting beyond any obsession with analysis method over *purpose* of an analysis.

Yanow (2000) suggested that policies and their effects may be inquired into using techniques based on interpretive philosophical stances such as hermeneutics, rather than positivist or post-positivist stances that seek certain verifiable truths. Such approaches call on different questions and approaches to study into policies, and shift “the discussion from values as a set of costs, benefits, and choice points to a focus on values, beliefs, and feelings as a set of meanings” (p. ix). In doing so, the making of meaning of human action is privileged over instrumental, technical and rational notions of human behaviour. In line with this study’s philosophical framework, outlined in Chapter 3, these approaches are used to seek meanings that are truths of disclosure, after Sokolowski (2000, p. 158), where meanings are evidenced by being disclosed to us rather than being tested and verified or falsified.

Language is a key strategy for interpreting, as it is the primary manner in which a policy presents itself (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 157). It displays meanings but also conceals them. Language expresses the way things are and the ways things have appeared to ourselves and others, but language also holds the capacity to conceal meaning. It can obscure ways of understanding something, by bringing others into light, or keeping them absent or vague. We take for granted that a policy, outlined in a text and through other language strategies, has meaning. In this study, language provides for display of a policy’s potential meanings.

I seek to demonstrate a broader view of the interpreting of policy, not merely as an alternative to traditional methods, but as a purposeful democratic project of liquid modern times (Bauman, 2000, p. 2). I want open up different ways of knowing, and acknowledge that each of us has diverse experiences of policy; it is my commitment to inclusive values, a desire to want to see what a policy means from other perspectives, especially where the voices from these perspectives have been silenced. Such practice, as Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (1999, front matter) pointed out, has the potential to enable all communities for whom

a policy has meaning, but especially the most marginalised, to be legitimately engaged in the realisation of that policy. As Roe (1994, pp. 3-4) suggested, conflicting policy narratives that result from interpretive work can be effectively used to create or discover more meaningful policy metanarratives, offering new world views by which we might order and understand human experience.

A pause to reflect

The premise of this study is that a policy may have multiple diverse, divergent or even overlapping meanings. They may be coherent or incoherent, competing or aligned, consistent or inconsistent. They may vary according to local, national and global contexts, individual and shared intentions, personally held understandings and shared traditions of language and social practice. For this reason, interpretive approaches to policy are needed to evoke the promise of multiple meaning possibilities as well as to pose dilemmas that offer more trustworthy interpretations of a policy.

Section 2

Developing and applying an interpretive approach



Chapter 3

Choosing to interpret the *Learning Together* policy

To undertake translation of “the crude, abstract simplicities of policy texts into interactive and sustainable practices of some sort involves productive thought, invention and adaptation”.

(Ball, 1994, p. 19)

This study considers possible meanings of a policy by exploring differing theoretical backgrounds and applying associated interpretive approaches. In particular, it considers a specific policy *Learning Together: a vision for education, training and information into the 21st century*, an education policy governing public education provision in the state of Tasmania, Australia (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b). In this chapter, I give a description of the policy and outline my involvement in its development and implementation.

Learning Together – an experience of policy

I chose the policy *Learning Together* because it has personal significance and also because it was among the first education policies of its kind in Australia to propose a plan for education that was system-wide. Distinctively, *Learning Together* embraced a visionary set of goals as well as institutional pragmatism. It seemed to merge enlightened human perspectives with practical initiatives, and go beyond hard-edged strategic planning or curriculum statements. (See Appendix E for a chronology of public education policies in Australia and Australian states.)

Paralleling events in many Western democratic sovereign states, education in Australia has been appropriated as a key political strategy, through which governments have attempted to enhance economic sustainability and social cohesion. The Australian state of Tasmania experienced a period of positive economic development, social transformation and technological innovation during the first decade of the twenty-first century, and education has been named by politicians as a key driver of future economic productivity by the

Tasmanian Government (Bartlett, 2008). Because of this focus on the link between education and prosperity, *Learning Together* provides a fascinating opportunity for interpreting. Particularly, it raises important questions about policy, politics, self and education. The following overview of the policy and its development chronicles my involvement with its development and implementation.

Learning Together prefaced a significant period of government policy development about education and training in Tasmania. At the time of its launch in Hobart in 2000 by the then Minister for Education in the Tasmanian Labor Government, Paula Wriedt MHA, *Learning Together* was described as an overarching statement that would create a strategic and cohesive vision of educational provision in Tasmania. It was preceded by a draft version of the policy, *Learning Together: Draft proposals for education, training and information – into the 21st century* (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b) (Appendix B), which was disseminated for comment throughout schools and other educational and departmental settings across the state six months previously. Following a consultation period that generated much dialogue and debate in Tasmanian educational circles, the final policy was re-written in a distinctly different tone to that of the original draft. (See extracts in Figures 1 and 2 below.) As an overarching policy, *Learning Together* was intended to embrace education policy, resourcing and practice across all aspects of the Tasmanian Department of Education. This included schools, libraries, community-based information technology centres, childcare facilities and training providers.

As one very senior departmental officer reflected:

Learning Together was a very significant policy document for education in Tasmania. The Minister for Education (Paula Wriedt) was keen to have a policy that reflected her personal values and aims and objectives for education in the State. She saw this policy as establishing her over-arching philosophy for her portfolio responsibilities. In many ways it was her answer to critics who believed that she was being too heavily influenced by bureaucrats and departmental policy priorities: in this statement she established her personal credibility and intellectual weight ... she also wanted the document to set future directions as well as provide a coherent vision that would unite education and training from birth through to post-compulsory years with some common values and objectives. At the same time she was conscious of a need for policy to be well communicated and not to be outside the realm of those it was intended to influence. *Learning Together* was therefore deliberately written in non-bureaucratic language and designed to be accessible to parents, students and the broader community as well as teachers and professional educators.

(Alison Jacob, former Deputy Secretary of the Department of Education, personal communication.)

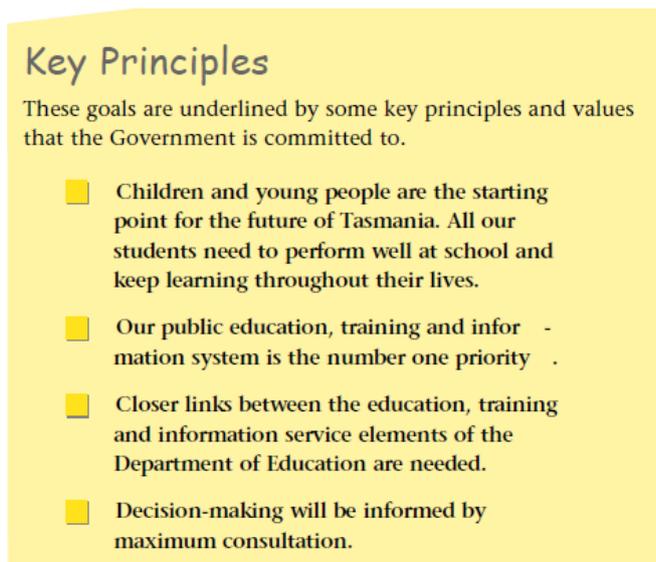


Figure 1. Extract of *Learning Together: Draft proposals for education, training and information – into the 21st century* (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. 2).

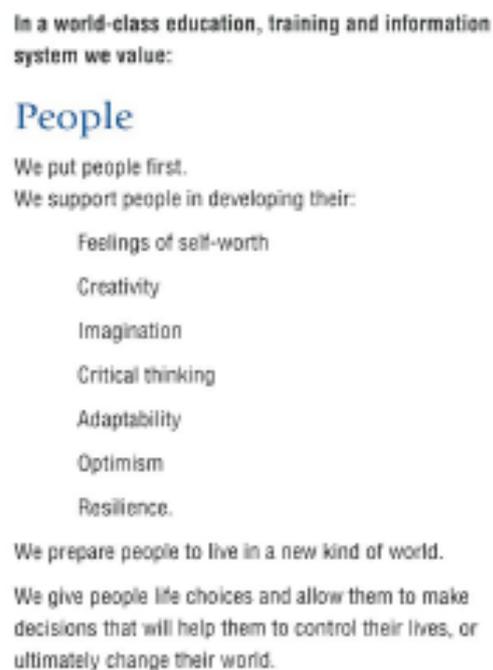


Figure 2. Extract of *Learning Together: a vision for education, training and information into the 21st century* (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 9).

Learning Together's structure comprised vision, values, goals, strategies and initiatives. As its development involved a series of consultative processes, it sparked a public dialogue relating to government education policy in Tasmania. The open manner in which the policy

was debated, and the enthusiasm with which the title of the policy was adopted by educators and the media was taken to signify that an important positive focus on education was underway in the Tasmanian public context. The final version of the policy proposed further opportunities for dialogue between policy-makers and the community. *Learning Together* appeared to capture a mood with educators and the broader community. Perhaps there was a shared sense that the policy was a meaningful educational reform agenda or that education policy ought to reflect a coherent ethical framework, a *sensus communis*, or common prudence, held by the community (Vico, Pinton & Diehl, 2000, p. 53). The title was particularly powerful as it evoked a metaphorical depiction of Tasmanians collaborating through education, that of *LEARNING TOGETHER*, which suggested that learning was relevant to social cohesion. It also gave an impression of a pragmatic approach to educational provision.

The policy *Learning Together* was initiated at a time when the state's Labor Government, which had been elected two years earlier, was also attempting to put together an overarching state plan for the next twenty years, through a community consultation process called "Tasmania Together". *Tasmania Together* invited comment on a broad range of social and economic issues relevant to the state, and that were expected to influence its future. It was intended that *Tasmania Together* would establish strategies that would address key issues and concerns toward a target of the year 2020 (Tasmania Together Progress Board, 2002). The Community Leaders Group of a number of Tasmanians who were representative of the island's community, was appointed to oversee the process.

This plan to set forward possibilities for the future of Tasmania had seemingly captured the public imagination. Print and web-based materials, setting forward key questions and inviting Tasmanians to a series of forums across the island, were published and disseminated. Consultation was conducted over several months, involving many individuals, groups and communities. Its stated intention was to turn their hopes, desires, interests, opportunities and dilemmas into a series of goals, that would be prioritised and benchmarked for future progress reporting. *Learning Together* emerged around the same time, and while not synchronised tightly with *Tasmania Together*, it appeared to be shaped by a somewhat similar sensibility.

Learning Together remained the major policy framework for the Tasmanian Department of Education for the following six years. It stood as a rationale for a range of policy statements and directives across the Department's work units and was referenced numerous times in annual reports and parliamentary records, as well as in media reports and speeches. The logo developed for the policy was included on all major hard copy and electronic publications developed by the Department, and the term *Learning Together* was

adapted in a variety of ways for policies that followed it, such as *Tasmania, A State of Learning: A strategy for post-year 10 education and training* (Department of Education Tasmania, 2003b). Its endurance as a policy framework in Australian education was quite remarkable, mirroring as it did the eight-year tenure of Minister Wriedt in the education and training portfolios. While other states had system-wide policies (Appendix E), there was no clearly comparable educational policy statement of such long-term influence in an Australian state in the past two decades.

Learning Together was the touchstone for educational policy directions and initiatives for the years of Minister Wriedt's ministry and had a significant influence on all areas of education and training. Indeed it would be true to say that all initiative and funding priorities directly related to the priorities and values of *Learning Together* during Minister Wriedt's term of office.

(Alison Jacob, former Deputy Secretary of the Department of Education, pers. comm.)

Learning Together first came to my attention while I was employed as a statewide curriculum officer for the Studies of Society and Environment Learning Area within the Department of Education. My personal interaction with the policy process relating to *Learning Together* began as I participated in a process of consultation on the draft (Department of Education, 2000a, pp. 52-57) when it was circulated within Departmental and community stakeholders. Shortly afterwards, I quoted this document quite extensively in my application for the position of ministerial advisor to the Minister for Education. However, it is my strong recollection that my deep engagement with the policy only started when I took up that role in August 2000. From that point onward, I was intimately involved in the development of the final draft of *Learning Together*, participating within the Minister's Office in defining, interpreting and shaping it. As Education Advisor, I was required to oversee its implications for budgets and implementation across all of the Minister's portfolio areas, with the exception of training. As part of my daily work, I came to know this policy intimately as I lived, breathed and slept it through its gestation, launch and initial implementation. I saw the policy written and the strategies realised. I understood how I, like others in similar advisory and senior bureaucratic roles, was significant in shaping it. It is only a few privileged individuals in most large organisations whose purview encompasses the array of functions of that organisation and who are able to witness the implementation of a policy across its breadth, and it was into such a position that I ventured for the next few years.

There were opportunities for input by many policy actors and participants throughout the policy's development. The text was developed in a lengthy series of meetings within the ministerial office with drafts forwarded to Departmental officers for comment along the way.

There was a strong view among the central writing group that the policy's language had to suggest openness rather than certainty, with its strategies suggesting possible ways forward on policy issues but not being closed to others. This seemed to be prompted by a sense that the time was ripe for a frank dialogue on education matters within the state. The consultation was an acknowledgement of diverse perspectives within the educational community on issues that the policy could address and the message was that differing views would be appreciated and, where possible, accommodated (Spender & Stewart, 2002, p. 56).

The final *Learning Together* policy was published in early December 2000 and launched in a series of public and media events across Tasmania, with a package of print and multi-media publications distributed to every school, library, training and educational site. There were multiple copies of a full-colour booklet, a video, wall posters and a set of brochures to be disseminated to all employees, families and other community members. The policy publications themselves had strong visual appeal and the final policy document, *Learning Together*, was deliberately illustrated with the intent of connecting with readers where possible. Such connections were fostered by policy language that was accessible; images that were targeted to its audiences; a consultation process with feedback directed to the Minister's office; and by ensuring that many aspects of the work of the Department were addressed in the policy initiatives.

This policy development process, at times, was a source of intense frustration, yet my personal memory was overwhelmingly of great satisfaction and pride. When published, the policy's core audiences responded extremely positively to it. The metaphor of the title *Learning Together* appeared to be particularly successful in suggesting ideas about dialogue, inclusiveness and diversity. While there were clear strategies outlined in the policy, the text seemed to affirm that there were no taken-for-granted answers or simple centralised solutions to the dilemmas and concerns of the public education system. This indicated a valuing of local solutions and the potential for diverse responses and multiple approaches to education strategy. To me, the policy's potential positive nature was evident and many school-based educators were engaged by it and found it liberating, as it seemed to suggest more input into system-wide educational decision-making than ever before. There were, however, those who found the policy superficial and others who felt threatened by it. It raised concerns for some, particularly those who ran departmental business units, as the long list of strategies required significant commitment and demanded extensive input.

From my insider's perspective, *Learning Together* overwhelmingly reflected the character and disposition of its instigator, Paula Wriedt, MHA. In 1998, at the age of 26, Wriedt was appointed Minister for Education and became Tasmania's youngest-ever female member of Cabinet. A highly capable and determined politician, she went on to be one of the

longest-serving education ministers in Australian political history – a period of eight years. Demonstrating a politically pragmatic and media savvy approach to policy-making (Watt, 2006, p. 27), *Learning Together* was intended to provide a way forward for public education in the state of Tasmania, a way that was collaborative and supported by the community, particularly by educators. In the first instance, this specifically meant the employees of the Department of Education, who would ultimately put into place the initiatives outlined in the policy. Politically, Wriedt seemed to have tapped into a mood that had grown in the public education sector during her years as Opposition spokesperson, and capitalised on the reaction to a hastily conceived and poorly received policy development process by the previous Liberal Government.

Yet I had a growing sense in my work that a policy may have meanings beyond political interests. From my personal perspective, Wriedt's interests were not merely political but intent on good policy development, whatever that may have meant. From my position, I witnessed many occasions where she stated her desire to do policy work that impacted positively on people's lives and lift Tasmanian education standards to higher levels. "We must inspire all Tasmanians with a passion for learning and with a desire to explore every learning possibility open to them." (Wriedt, pers. comm., 1 December 2000). For her, the policy would also need to be "more than a set of motherhood statements" (Wriedt, pers. comm., September 2000) and would outline some very concrete strategies for action that were regarded as achievable. It seemed, from her perspective at least, the vision was realistic, there *had* to be actions that mattered and the policy *had* to capture its intended audience's attention (my emphases).

My invitation to participate in a continuing interchange about Tasmanian education between the Minister, bureaucracy, educators and wider community challenged previous assumptions about institutional relationships within the Tasmanian education, training and information systems. Any notion that the bureaucracy would take feedback on the policy and subject it to its own authority and control was shattered when the Minister proffered an invitation for all feedback to be forwarded to her office. This took away potential for any initial filtering of responses and gave a very clear message that a range of perspectives and ideas were being sought.

Learning Together was at the centre of my work as a ministerial advisor for three years as the strategies and initiatives were implemented in the Tasmanian public education system. It continued as a personal reference point in my work over the subsequent three years. Following a move to a teaching position at the University of Tasmania, I took up a voluntary position with the *Learning Together* Council, a ministerial advisory group that oversaw the execution of the policy strategies. During 2006, the *Learning Together* policy

was replaced by another policy, one which also evoked a metaphor. This time the policy was called *Students at the Centre*, resulting from a change to a new Minister for Education, which led to a highly controversial post-compulsory education reform process entitled Tasmania Tomorrow.

Throughout my involvement in *Learning Together*, as I moved on to other educational and work settings, and as the policy was supplanted within the education system, I questioned how it was understood within the Tasmanian community. It seemed that interpreting the policy in terms of its language might be one way of revealing its meanings. After all, the metaphor of the title *Learning Together* had seemed to resonate with many people. Analysing the text through an initial scan of potential metaphors prompted me to think more deeply about the meanings that I gave to these metaphors and therefore the policy itself. As I contemplated their possible meanings, more questions arose about the policy and my interpreting of it. To think about its language, I turned first to the structure of the policy itself.

Learning Together – documenting a vision, goals and strategies

The *Learning Together* policy incorporates a vision statement for the public education, training and information systems, supported by a statement of values, a list of five broad goals and numerous policy strategies that are intended to enact that vision. In the context of the Tasmania *Together* policy development, Michael Watt (2006, p. 6) remarked that it gave the impression of being part of a larger statewide planning approach. It appeared to fit with a disposition that Tasmanians at that time had towards a political environment that was open and consultative, following an election that dismissed a Liberal government that had done much significant policy planning for the state, but was regarded as having done it behind closed doors. The Liberal government, headed by Tony Rundle MHA, had lost the 1998 election following a proposal to privatise the state's electricity utility. It was a proposal that was part of a broader set of plans called *Tasmania: Directions Statement* (Department of Premier & Cabinet Tasmania, 1997), about which an apocryphal story was told of it being developed by a small group of advisors in the Premier's Office (Cheek, 2006). *Directions* responded to the highly regarded Nixon Report, which suggested much-needed reforms of the state's public sector. At the time of its publication, I wondered if *Learning Together* had captured the hopes, desires, concerns and issues of educators and community members by promising a consultation process, or by its vision, goals and initiatives.

The *Learning Together* document (Appendix A) opens with a statement from the Minister for Education, praising the capacity of those who worked within the Tasmanian

Department of Education and recognising the current strengths of the overall education, training and information system. It invites all in the community to work collaboratively to achieve the vision of a “world-class future” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 1). This statement proposes *Learning Together* as “very much a ‘living’ and evolving document” with the goals and strategies to be supplemented with “new strategies to deal with changing times” (p. 2). These statements underscore the unfinished nature of *Learning Together*, deliberately emphasising the potential for a dialogue about education.

Learning Together named five goals that would lead to achievement of the vision of world-class education:

- Goal 1 – continually improving and responsive services – that ensure that all Tasmanians develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need;
- Goal 2 – enriching and fulfilling learning opportunities – that enable people to work effectively and participate in society;
- Goal 3 – safe and inclusive learning environments – that encourage and support participation in learning through all of life;
- Goal 4 – an information-rich community with access to global and local information resources – so that everyone has the opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, a healthy democracy and a prosperous society; and
- Goal 5 – a valued and supported education workforce – that reflects the importance of teaching as a profession. (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 10)

These goals define the policy’s major priorities, linking back directly to the vision and values and grouped the strategies together. At the same time as the Tasmania *Together* project sought to describe values for the state of Tasmania in order to shape policy-making, *Learning Together* also articulated a set of values. They were a valuing of:

- people and their self-worth, creativity, imagination, critical thinking, adaptability, optimism, resilience; their futures and the future which they create for themselves, others and their world;
- achievement and how all members of the society are supported, enabled and expected to learn throughout life;
- flexibility and innovation and particularly how solutions are created within local contexts, to address, value and celebrate local needs;
- organisation and planning as means for strategically consulting on, improving and developing services on a basis of quality, equity, efficiency and effectiveness;
- a fair go, based on a vision of a truly democratic and civil society where all people are able to access high-quality services, regardless of their personal backgrounds or location, where needs, including high resource needs, are met, and where a safety net supports and includes anyone who may be at risk of not being able to fully realise their aspirations. (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 9)

Under these goals, 134 strategies are listed. The term I use here is “strategies” although many could best be called “initiatives”. The policy document includes the following strategies: a review of Kindergarten to Year 10 curriculum, with development and implementation of a co-constructed³ *Essential Learnings* curriculum; a review of post-compulsory education, *A State of Learning*, in particular an extension of the compulsory school age to age 17 and a review of Year 11 and 12 curriculum provision; the establishment of the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority, a synthesis of all post-compulsory qualification recognition and accreditation into one body; and *Education for All*, a significant restructuring and policy statement regarding inclusive schooling.

Some of the strategies are substantial initiatives. They could shape whole programs or impact on the educational experiences of many students, which requires significant input of resources. Others address the needs of specific target groups or suggested approaches to more specific problems. Examples of these are initiatives for post-compulsory education, the early years, the school sector, post-compulsory vocational education and students with disabilities. Others are innovations focused on future directions, such as collaborating with the University of Tasmania to improve teacher training.

The Minister’s two major bureaucracies, the Department of Education and TAFE Tasmania, were to implement the strategies. *Learning Together* also includes an evaluation framework, intended to ensure that the intentions of the document’s vision are honoured and that the strategies for achieving the vision are appropriately implemented. While each strategy might be seen as significant and worthy, the collection of them together in a single policy designed to inform all public education, training and information services, was innovative in the Tasmanian context.

Similar approaches were emerging in other Australian states and Western democratic states at the end of the second millennium as governments sought to apply strong strategic planning to their provision of education and training (Appendix E). *Learning Together* seemed different from other similar policies because of its ongoing commitment to consultation and its explicitly stated values base.

The *Learning Together* policy included authoritative statements about the vision, goals and strategies, yet the actual list of goals and strategies, as they refer to the complexities of education and training in the state, can be regarded as somewhat selective. At best, it addressed major issues for educators and students in a fragmentary manner and

³ Co-constructed was a term used to describe how the curriculum was developed in a partnership between teachers, school communities and education curriculum bureaucrats, implying shared input and responsibility for content and accountability measures.

some key matters got no reference at all. It did not focus on some growing concerns, such as the impacts of adolescent mental health issues or an ageing teacher workforce. While other issues were ignored, the policy strategises in relation to some issues that were beyond the purview of the state education and training bureaucracies and out of their legislative and institutional control. For example, there was no capacity for the Department of Education to accelerate students into university courses (Goal 3) as universities made, and continue to make, decisions about entry to their own courses (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 12). There was also a covert aspect to the policy's development that unsettles my rosy reminiscences of its openness. There may be a record of consultations, but the names of the team who workshopped the text of *Learning Together* on a regular basis is not on the public record. Rarely are the many authors of public policies noted or acknowledged, beyond the politicians or senior bureaucrats whose names are publicly noted.

Despite my misgivings, it seemed many educators and the media warmed to its affirming language and its visual appeal. As a published text, *Learning Together's* colours and images promote personal connection with the reader. The purpose of this was to present a policy document that placed a high value on the people connected to the Department of Education rather than conveying an image of an abstracted bureaucracy. Subtle two-tone blues are layered on a crisp white background, with an eye-catching logo incorporating images of people of all ages participating in educational activities. I remember the graphics being of tremendous importance as the photos needed to show a wide range of people, and hopefully appeal to its intended audiences, who were participants in public education in the state. There are images of people of all ages, from young to elderly, participating in activities. These reinforce the policy's stated focus on people and their experience of learning and it took the policy beyond discussion of structures and functions of an impersonal institution.

As a key visual rendering, the "lifelong learning" timeline (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, pp. 6-8) evokes the value of inclusivity, encompassing education in terms of babies and toddlers, school-aged children and adolescents and young adults through to more mature members of the community. It proposes a broad conception of learning on one's own and collaboratively, with experiences shown from reading to arts-based practice to interaction with computer technology. The implicit message of this portrayal is "we learn across our lifespan and not merely at school". These graphics bring to mind the terms *lifelong learning* and *a learning society* in a manner that represents the LEARNING TOGETHER metaphor of the title. In this way, this metaphor could be seen to weave literally and figuratively through the text. Graphics are also used throughout the Overview (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, pp. 6-7) to clarify how final policy came out of

the consultation. A diagram of a pyramid (p. 5) illustrates how the strategies link to the goals and vision and how the system might be held accountable. It symbolises a coherent intention and gives legitimacy to the policy's content and its development processes. The pyramid diagram can be interpreted as being more than just an illustration of the elements of the policy process, as it also appears to communicate that values of consultation and collaboration should be at the core of policy-making processes.

At first glance, *Learning Together* is unambiguously a statement of intended direct action of a government. The opening statement by Minister Wriedt seems to distinguish it as a politically motivated policy. The foreword states that it supports the political agenda of the Tasmanian Labor Government, with the vision, goals and strategies in line with the Government's values and intentions to improve systemic provision of education. It does not, of course, explicitly state its intention to portray the government positively in order to enhance its electoral standing.

As Bridgman and Davis (2004, p. 3) noted, policy can be an ambiguous term. Many policies are end-statements of an issue debate or documents that summarise positions on a given issue, and a policy document is usually taken to be a clear expression of authority by a government. In that form, a policy statement is designed to solve, rather than pose questions. In contrast, by offering ongoing dialogue about education, *Learning Together* is quite distinctive as a policy statement as it seems to be a policy that seeks possibilities rather than one that needs to be policed.

Learning Together – perspectives on policy, education, politics and language
From my perspective, *Learning Together* went beyond a political statement about a society's educational purposes, or how these linked with socio-economic imperatives. It fostered discussion about education in the state of Tasmania and created new ways to understand the policy relationships between government, bureaucracy and community. At that time, *Learning Together* came to represent a fresh metaphor, one that might encourage bureaucratic decision-making to be more democratic. It tested taken-for-granted assumptions about education and what they meant for the lives of the people of Tasmania, and made these assumptions fluid (Bauman, 2000, p. 2).

While *Learning Together* seemed different to other education policies promulgated in Tasmania in the past, it was not clear to me *how* it went beyond usual pragmatic accounts of how limited resources were to be allocated and managed in order to meet practical educational purposes. To think about this, I might have undertaken an evaluation in which I judged whether the vision had been achieved, if progress had been made towards its goals or which strategies were most effective. Of greater interest to me is what are meant by ideas

such as educational quality and learning that appear to be key to *Learning Together*. If I think that *Learning Together* offered possible futures or new realities to Tasmania's citizens in the domain of education, I need a way to go beyond a blithe acceptance of those realities. What distinguishes this study is the amalgam of the public and very personal perspectives that I have in relation to the policy. Owing to my deep involvement in its development, the public context of *Learning Together* is also a private world for me. To do this, I need to understand how I came to think about the policy in the way I do. Are the meanings that I interpret from the policy meanings it actually has, or are they meanings I apply to it? I come to question how a policy could ever be interpreted and understood without applying a number of perspectives to it. Key perspectives include the socio-historical context in which it might have meaning and the personal involvement of the interpreter.

While thinking about a policy as an object or actions might be useful, these explanations do not capture the personal perspectives I initially had of the *Learning Together* policy. From a viewpoint as a policy-maker at the time of its publication, *Learning Together* seemed to be strongly propositional in nature. That is, it stated a promise to orient the actions of the Department of Education according to a proposed vision, objectives and a desired set of values, mirroring a definition of policy put forward by Bridgman and Davis (2004, pp. 6-7). It is my recollection that this intentionality of the policy resonated more strongly with the target audiences, including myself, than the merit of any of its individual strategies. If this policy is a proposition, is it a practical plan, an idealistic utopian vision, or indeed a piece of political spin-doctoring, an example of "mystification", following Greene (1978, p. 19), that is, a statement created and published to simplify the complex? What I need is a means to go beyond analysis of whether there is smooth articulation between goals and strategies or if the policy goals and strategies achievement have been achieved. I want my understandings to go beyond whether the goals are reliable indicators of quality education or if the vision has quality. To achieve that, I needed to examine the assumptions that underpin my interpreting of *Learning Together*.

In this sense, *Learning Together* has much to offer. Its publication came at a time where Australian governments seemed to be attempting to respond to the complexity of public educational practice through their policy-making. This policy posed a potential new understanding of public education in Tasmania, and yet, as I became aware of this, I also came to reflect upon and question it. These questions probed my taken-for-granted assumptions. One interpretation I had at that time was that *Learning Together* suggested that a vision for education in Tasmania should change to a vision for learning. *Learning* was something that was represented as a lifelong activity (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, pp. 6-7) but also one with society-wide implications (pp. 16-19). *Learning* was as a

means of assuring educational achievement for individuals, educational quality within a system, but also democratic engagement and social cohesion. If *learning* was to become a way of being, was “learning collaboratively” a legitimate vision for this community? *Learning Together* also offered an alluring utopian vision of consultative decision-making that I believed should be scrutinised.

My interpreting of the policy began informally with a suite of questions that emerged at the same time as I recognised that the policy gave a new way to conceptualise Tasmania’s system of state government education. What hopes and dreams about education, democracy and community might *Learning Together* have for members of the Tasmanian education sector and in the broader community? What shapes these meanings? What traditions and histories of this island community, and of other places and times, have contributed to it? What might be the influence of this policy into the future? What might this policy contribute to future policy-making in education in the state of Tasmania? What purposes might the policy fulfill and for whom?

From a personal perspective, I can bring to the interpretive process my unique personal insights into its development and implementation and this raises important puzzlements for me about the relationships between policy, politics, self and education. Even from the very beginning, I could see a range of interpretive perspectives that I might bring to bear on the policy in order to understand its many facets, promises and tensions. Interpreting *Learning Together* in this study opens up new possibilities in attempting to answer many of these questions and there are questions that helped me shape my emerging inquiries. What meanings might *Learning Together* have? What shaped those meanings and how is it possible to become aware of these? What might the language of *Learning Together* reveal or mask?

I acknowledge that to pursue such questions, I might interpret the policy in various ways. I might consider it in terms of the language it uses, and particularly its metaphors and narratives; I could draw out its critical possibilities, especially its political slant and democratic desires; I might draw its attention to its potential for an ontology of “learning”, surpassing more traditional origins of education in rational epistemology based on science and economics; and I might explore its unusual privileging of local and personal viewpoints, in particular, my own. Each of these perspectives seem a worthy interpretive focus and I recorded my initial considerations of them in narratives summarised in Appendix D.

The policy uses affirming language, which creates a positive tone. The goals and strategies employ active verbs, and each strategy describes a realistically achievable action or tactic. The policy has a focus on possibilities rather than problems and notes opportunities where they were available, with the language constantly referring to people and their needs

and concerns. This positive tone supports such a speculative vision as “a world-class education, training and information training system” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 2), yet what the vision means could be dramatically different. A world-class education and training system might mean that the Department of Education needed to have a service culture highly focused on achievement (Martinez & Hobbi, 2008, p. 132), or its meaning might be about education being at the core of a participative democracy characterised by strong social capital (Cox, 1995). For example, the first goal uses language that projects toward the future. “Continually improving and responsive services” could be about the potential of collective human responsibility or it could be a technical phrase reflecting modern organisational development literature in the field of business. This shows how it is not possible to assume that the language represents any true meaning directly.

Language gives me other strategies to think about meaning. Tropes such as metonyms and metaphors abound, offering a range of narrative possibilities for the policy. In *Learning Together*, “the State” can be a metonym for numerous things: the geographic sovereign area of Tasmania, the executive government or the public service. It could also be a metonym of the central character cast in one of the policy’s narratives. This also brought other aspects of the policy’s language more sharply into focus. In search of possible meanings of *Learning Together*, interpreting metaphors, metonyms and narratives become useful strategies.

Indeed, the policy suggests some powerful metaphors, most notably *learning*, rather than *education* or *schooling*, is the policy’s key reference point. This is a subtle but interesting shift as it gave the policy a distinctive standpoint which seemed to re-orient the provision of *education* away from the institution of *schooling*. The use of the term *learning* links to relatively recent concepts such as “lifelong learning” (Chapman, Gaff, Toomey & Aspin, 2005, pp. 113-15), and “knowledge societies” (Bohme & Stehr, 1986, p. 5; Delors, 1998). It contrasts with *education*, with its etymological roots in the Latin *educare* “bring up”, *educiere* “to bring forth” and *ducere* “to lead” (Education. n.d.). *Education* appears to be something from the outside that happened to an individual. Further, *schooling*, from its etymology related to place, holds a strong trace of institutionalisation. In this way, *Learning Together* makes claims about the importance of learning in bringing about new economic, social and educational realities in Tasmania. It evokes TOGETHERNESS as a metaphor for learning and, in doing so, puts what Bridge (2002) called an emotional “spin” on policy-making. There is a sense that learning is something to be done with others and, to be educationally successful, this would not be a solitary endeavour. In this way, the *Learning Together* title offered a metaphor about togetherness and education that might bring the bureaucratic units of public education, training and information in Tasmania into one coordinated and coherent structure.

This emotional spin may be the result of political imperatives; perhaps the need for the policy to “be all things to all people”. It may also mark a change in how education is understood within a democracy at the start of a new millennium. Educators and policy-makers are increasingly invoking a relationship between learning and the sorts of values and beliefs that promote democratic practice (Barber, 1998; Delors, 1998). If *learning* could be understood as having both personal significance as well as contributing to strengthening societal bonds, then similar principles might be applied to the development of a policy. An open, consultative and problem-solving approach can be considered what Aspin (2007, p. 222), describes as a learning stance and when applied to education policy-making, this would be congruent with a “learning society” (Barber, pp. 239-41).

As a statement about the importance of education for Tasmania’s society, economy and culture, *Learning Together* outlines a government’s intentions relating to education at a particular time within a particular political and social context. It gives insight into what was known about education and what might be known. It is possible the policy matched an authentic narrative of education in Tasmania, one that was easily recognised by staff of the Department of Education. It is doubtful that this narrative was one of students or parents. Yet at the same time, *Learning Together* describes change to a current situation, thereby completely undermining the notion that there is any one solid educational reality in the state. By suggesting an overarching vision of a coherent departmental structure focused on a goal of world-class education, it takes up the assumption that currently there is not one. *Learning Together* stated a policy position but also appeared to shape the context of such policy-making in the future in a very influential way. It focuses not only on *what* changes could be made but also on *how*; in particular, it describes how the Department could implement the policy to achieve this vision.

Most public policy development, whether in areas such as health, education, fiscal strategy, employment and welfare, inevitably has bearing on other policy areas, with commitments and actions across the broad domain of public sector activity and decision-making. While particular policies might address specific economic, social and environmental matters, they will invariably mention budgetary allocations, policy actions or infrastructure utilisation. Alternatively, they might set goals that are broader than the domain in which they are primarily sited. It might be easy to ascribe the potential policy stories of *Learning Together* solely to the domain of educational thought and action. Yet the policy implications of this policy go beyond education. For example, *Learning Together* includes strategies and initiatives in relation to training and information services for the whole community. In proposing a comprehensive role for education in terms of the future of Tasmania, the

potential policy stories of *Learning Together* are taken from the sole territory of educational provision into the broader domains of economic and social policy.

If we think of *Learning Together* as narrative, it is possible to think about characters. The policy's primary characters are those who work in the Tasmanian public education system, as its strategies refer to teachers and other public sector workers in government school and training settings. These are those that "the State" might direct. However, through its initiatives, the policy mentions experiences and desired outcomes for students, as well as potential benefits of the strategies for the broader Tasmanian community. There are even references made to childcare provision, an area which the Government had little capacity to dictate policy and practice, other than undertaking licensing of the sector. The policy's references to childcare relate to professional learning for carers and the co-location of childcare centres in schools, where the focus is not children, parents or childcare workers, while the policy directs bureaucrats to develop these as policy areas. In terms of steering individuals and organisations outside the public sector, the policy initiatives offer opportunities and choices, but the policy does not direct their actions.

Learning Together offers possible narratives framed by science, law and efficiency. There is an attempt to link the vision, goals, strategies and initiatives with an accountability framework, in order to deliver a more efficient and effective education system. This mix of strategies and accountability measures could be considered scientific in that they attempt to set out a process of causality that legitimates certain courses of action. There also are narratives about economic rationalism and pragmatism. Through the development of the *Learning Together* policy document, a narrative emerged that gave a rationale for departmental business units to be more unified. While this coherence came to be a central notion of *Learning Together*, my personal recollection is that it was a theme that evolved from the process of the policy development rather than being the guiding ideal throughout. Despite this intention not being explicitly stated, it emerged in the policy discussions that followed the policy's release. A single cohesive view of the department's work – learning – quickly became accepted by the policy's audience in a manner that Gramsci (1971, p. 419) described as commonsense and obvious, even though the rationale only existed within the policy text. I was interested in determining if efficiency imperatives prompted this policy response, driven by an assumption that the organisation could operate more smoothly if organisational relationships are more coherent. This narrative appeared framed by language drawn from knowledge domains of science, law and efficiency. I wondered what might shape a policy, because how a state frames its plans and actions will inevitably influence how individuals in that state think and experience the world. In interrogating what is meant by education and policy-making in relation to *Learning Together*, I have sought to scrutinise

any claims of meaning based on science, economics or any other logic, that might have been accepted without question. An interpretive understanding of policy would test any such assumptions and, therefore, I regard potential understandings as unfoldings of tentative, not certain, truths.

Another interpretive slant I could take related to *Learning Together* is as a signifier of trouble. *Learning Together* is not a cohesive document that addresses every key educational issue of that time. It misses a number of crucial matters and includes others that seem to be insignificant. For example, the draft policy raised the issue of school utilisation and closures, yet the final document overlooked this issue. Some informal feedback at the time was that the final policy was a feel-good document, designed to “spin” a positive story on government education. At very least, this prompts me to be skeptical about the stated intentions of the policy. Two differing portrayals might be possible: one, that of a purposeful, decisive policy development process; the other, jumbled, disorganised and emergent. What constitutes that “trouble”, who makes that judgment and what motivates a judgment that a policy issue is trouble, are questions that I need to ask of *Learning Together*.

The influence of politics on *Learning Together* also is an interesting potential interpretive direction. It is a common view of politics as governments invariably act to enhance their electoral success, and *Learning Together* might be a blatant attempt to garner votes. Despite being a commonly held view, it simplistically portrays how governments undertake policy development. An incumbent government might make choices about policy direction motivated by what is electorally pragmatic, but their choices can be driven just as readily by what public sector departments promote. To go against such advice can be dangerous territory for a minister under the Westminster system, given the imperative of ministerial responsibility. Also, what might enhance results in an election setting might not be important at other times in a government’s term.

Indeed, politics offers a multiplicity of meanings. *Learning Together* could be understood quite differently by an active member of a teacher union than by the minister, advisors or bureaucrats who developed it, or even by a parent with little interest in politics. For the union member, it might be loaded with political intent, yet for the parent, it may hold promise of their child with disabilities being included in mainstream schooling. Thinking of policy only in terms of conventional politics may ignore other ways of understanding the possibilities of a policy or policy development processes, beyond mainstream politics.

Even in the depictions of *Learning Together* used so far, I have assumed far too much about rational political intent. I took for granted that there was a government view that was coherent and agreed, yet that would mean all relevant and interested elected party representatives, as well as the party machinery and membership, had opportunity for input

into it. From my close personal perspective, I was never aware that the *Learning Together* policy was closely based on, or referenced against, any Australian Labor Party education platform at state or national level. The policy also seems to suggest that all participants in its development had consistent views on, and intentions for, education. My view is that this was not the case, yet there was much debate between political and bureaucratic policy actors as to what should be included or excluded. This hints at quite a different notion of party and institutional politics, perhaps one more focused on power than debate.

The writing of *Learning Together* involved local, specific and unrecorded discussions. On many occasions between the publication of the draft and the launch of the final document I took part in conversations with teachers, principals or others where *Learning Together* was invoked as a rationale for the need for a particular initiative or policy direction. This was despite the particular initiative or policy direction not being included in the draft, nor making it to the final document. An example was a request for more money for school sport.

Learning Together does not mention the topic of school sport but for some in the education community, the policy was a clear validation of further funding. This shows me how a policy might be written and read yet also intuitively provoke many other meanings for its audiences in ways that are not clearly understood. I see it is crucial to think not only about how the policy portrays public education in Tasmania but also how metaphors and narratives are conveyed.

Further, *Learning Together* could be thought of as a visual text, and from the perspective of an outsider to a policy's development, the wording, text layouts and illustrations of a policy are often regarded purely political or bureaucratic choices. Yet a policy's production results from what Bevir and Rhodes (2005, pp. 169-87) called "interpretations of interpretations", ending up like a cannibalised product (Ball, 2006, p. 45). Cannibalisation is possible in the writing process through multiple authorship and comprehensive consultative processes, and choices of text elements are not just made in formal political or departmental settings. With *Learning Together*, there were many others who made vital decisions about what the policy says and looks like, whose primary interests were not policy or politics. These were participants in the policy development process such as graphic designers, editors, typographers and photographers, each of whom had their own assumptions, beliefs and intentions, whether political, aesthetic or otherwise. I do not dispute that *Learning Together* was the result of input from many sources or many voices, and I can distinguish a range of influences that impacted on it. Some are easily attributed to the views of certain lobby groups or come from particular political policy positions, yet it is more difficult to recognise less material influences or attribute these influences to individuals or groups.

What the policy supposedly envisages is a coherent depiction of education in the state that might contribute to the future of Tasmania. This seems to be based on the following assumptions: that education is good and will benefit the community and its individual members; that there is such a thing as a community in Tasmania; and that the community and the individuals within this community can, and should, be in general agreement about the nature and import of education. In this way, it seeks to create a different reality of education in the Tasmanian government sector but also more broadly for the island's community. The anticipated changes are outlined through the articulation of what appear to be worthy goals and values. There is also the proposed strategic consultative process, which recommends fresh approaches to the operational and strategic policy work of the Department of Education into the future. Many similar policies might seem strongly framed by economics and efficiency. However, the meanings that I initially gave *Learning Together* were a comforting story of a coherent institutional structure, which fed into a longing for a narrative of stronger communities in my community.

A pause to reflect

It is clear that, even at first glance, *Learning Together* has much complexity to offer to an interpreter of policy. It was a key policy in a time when policy-making in education in Australia was moving to a greater focus on learning as a means of assuring educational quality but also in fostering education as democratic practice. It proposes a utopian vision of what education can offer a society and, as such, begs to be questioned from perspectives relating to power and politics. *Learning Together* is unusual in that I have such intense personal perspectives in relation to it, and I grapple with my capacity to distance myself from my experience and knowledge of it. My choice of *Learning Together* for interpreting raises important questions about policy, politics, self and education.

Chapter 4

Philosophical referents and an approach to interpreting policy

To take a stranger's viewpoint on everyday reality is to look inquiringly
and wonderingly on the world in which one lives.

(Greene, 1973, p. 267)

This chapter maps the broad philosophical framework in which this study takes place and argues for an interpretive approach to understanding policy. In developing the approach to interpreting possible meanings, which I apply in Chapters 5–8, I recognised the complexity of the relationship between language and meaning. This relationship shaped the conditions of my work in this study, enabling me to display initial understandings of policy and the interpreting of policy, and orienting me to follow certain interpretive paths in future chapters.

Problematizing epistemological certainty

This study is conducted in what Giddens (1991, p. 150) termed the “late modern” era in which taken-for-granted world views that have held sway in modern times are under scrutiny. At a time when the testing of modernist epistemological assumptions is having implications for interpreting (p. 162), I undertook this research with the desire to understand how to interpret the meaning possibilities of policies (Yanow, 2000, p. 8). The purpose of my interpreting in Section Two of this thesis is to consider what potential meanings there might be of a specific policy and, in doing so, attempt to come to trustworthy interpretations of that policy. The study seeks tentative understandings of this policy through an approach that is interpretive.

Traditionally, the field of policy research has overwhelmingly favoured analytic approaches that lead to generalisable findings. A great deal of contemporary policy research has determined what policies mean by evaluating their economic or social outcomes (Yanow, 2000, p. viii). It has often involved considering available quantifiable information to draw conclusions about effectiveness and efficiency. Lincoln and Guba (1985, pp. 289–331) questioned other potential meanings, such as those that are related to how power is

enacted or which seek insight into the personal perspectives of policy participants; are these regarded as being less significant or untrustworthy? It could be that an interpreter might find such meanings hard to verify, or that they are based on data that is considered unreliable, or also that these meanings have fewer practical implications since such research does not provide easily generalisable conclusions that might be of worth to policy-makers or analysts.

This study problematises understandings of *meaning* in relation to *policy*. It takes an approach that seeks to reveal meanings of a policy that might not be available through more traditional approaches. I could have inquired into a policy through traditional research strategies available from a discipline such as sociology, political science or education. Or, my journey in this study might have followed a path that compared or contrasted that policy against other *like* policies. However, in taking a less traditional approach, I unfold some possible meanings for this policy and demonstrate how the term *policy* can be ambiguous and complex. Many research approaches use only one particular philosophical stance; therefore, exploring philosophically different ways of understanding a policy may have profound implications for interpreting other policies. Common definitions of *meaning* and *understanding* both refer to *sense* or *signification*. I use “meaning” to indicate sense and purpose while “understanding” is oriented toward capacities or abilities of comprehension, reasoning and intellect. While “meaning” and “understanding” may be near equivalents in common usage, I draw a distinction that highlights their interplay but distinguishes between them. Meanings give possibilities for interpreting (making sense), while understandings are these possibilities to which we have given form or language, either individually, between ourselves and others, or across social and cultural groups. For Schubert (1986) and Smith and Heshusius (1986), meanings emerge from various perspectives through questions about what is considered to be real (ontology), what is thought true (epistemology) and what is considered good (axiology).

During the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries it could be said that there has been a fragmenting of our social, intellectual and cultural lives, following a seemingly rational stable era of modernism. This era of thought and sensibility is commonly referred to as the post-modern era (Davis, Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 2000, pp. 157-58). There is also a wider set of terms used to describe this fragmenting, among them *late modernity*, *poststructuralism*, *posthumanism* and *postmodernism* (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999, p. 10). Whichever of these terms is used, what is implied is that the taken-for-granted constancy of modernism is ending. Recognising that modernity might not have been surpassed, Bauman (2000, p. 2) termed it a time of liquid modernity and others have named it “late modern” (Giddens, 1991; Bridge, 2002).

Positivist and post-positivist policy research approaches that arose in the modern era seek certainty and fact and presume a context and value-free milieu, where the world, may be revealed as being constant. To that end, researchers propose findings that are generalisable; that is, able to be applied over and over again in largely unchanging circumstances. However, the fragmenting we are experiencing in this postmodern or late modern era has shown that solid rational representations of the world are inadequate as they are unable to address such shifting interpretive contexts.

Bauman's (2000, p. 2) notion of "liquid modernity" is especially useful in illustrating how our search for understanding of our world might be impacted upon by changing times and sensibilities. Bauman rejects the use of both terms *postmodern* and *late modern* for these changing times, as, for him, they seem to imply that modernist concepts, or projects, such as community, family and individuality, are coming to an end. I disagree, however, that *late modern* implies this and I use it to describe the temporal context in which my study takes place. Using the metaphor of FLUIDITY, Bauman proposed the notion of liquid modernity as a way of signifying the loosening of substantial social and economic ties that have given a seeming solidity to our lives in pre-modern times. He construes modernism to be characterised by "solid" or "heavy" (pp. 8-9) relationships and institutions, and modernity as a period where domination of our lives has occurred through control of space. Bauman instead prefers liquid modernity, as it is characterised by a set of dilemmas that arise out of the mobility, flexibility and de-socialised individuality of the present time. He suggests that, particularly at the end of the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty-first century, many of the concepts that shape our identities, such as the strong social bonds of family and community, have become liquefied. First, "solid" class, economic and national structures have liquefied and have been followed by the dissolving of "solid" personal and community relationships, making our social and familial bonds fluid. That means they are ever-changing or are being replaced by others that are more unstable and ephemeral. If there is fluidity in our personal and shared epistemological and ontological understandings, then interpreting in such times also becomes problematic.

I have used Bauman's (2000, p. 2) notion of liquid modernity as it reflects the unique context in which my interpreting occurs. It illustrates how I am caught within and between modernity and postmodernity, where epistemological certainty and uncertainty are in play. Modernity seemed to enable space for knowledge creation to establish truths. However, the solid foundations of space that seemed to allow for epistemological certainty in this era failed to account for the complexity that came as time was freed from space. As we became able to move around our world more quickly, through actual and virtual means, we came to encounter diverse values and beliefs, different experiences and new understandings. The

temporal and spatial circumstances of the liquid modern context are unique because they are characterised by both well-established and emerging theoretical positions on knowledge, experience and values. Fields such as sociology, education, politics and philosophy retain their established assumptions, yet many of the foci of their interests – understanding of self and social worlds, institutions such as schooling and government, practices of democracy and interpretation – seem to be undergoing rapid and unprecedented change. This makes traditional research approaches problematic.

Therefore, a study into policy in a complex, liquid modern era needs to go beyond empirically positivist epistemologies and modernist axiologies that had underpinned scientific inquiry approaches in the past. In particular, because of the lived nature of *policy* as a phenomenon, any research into a policy needs to adequately account for the human experience of it rather than pretend that policy is an object only to be understood through a scientific method or technique (Van Manen, 1990, p. 3). In this study, it means acknowledging and incorporating my own, the researcher's, personal ontology and requires me to orient myself as a researcher in order to illuminate my own experience and understanding of the policy in question. This particular policy presented itself to me as a remarkable and promising opportunity for study into policy. It appeared to be well accepted by its intended audiences, what Yanow (2000, p. 10) refers to as its "communities of meaning". I saw the opportunity to describe the development of this policy as potentially illuminating educational and other policy-making, and, in particular, showing how a policy could be developed to be positively received by relevant "communities of meaning". My initial interests were its language, scope, and structure. Based on anecdotal feedback at the time of its publication, the metaphorical title had been particularly engaging and the consultation process was regarded as being innovative as it was politically, rather than bureaucratically, driven. While I recognise that I had personal stories to tell about this policy, I began to see, as I wrote and re-wrote them, that my narration of these stories, and my subsequent understandings of the policy, altered over time. This raises important questions for me about interpretive practice and about how I make meaning, especially related to the language of the policy. I have come to acknowledge that my circumstances and perspectives not only change over time, but the meanings I give the policy change as well. As my understandings alter with each new reflection, this influences my interpreting as new and re-considered understandings give me fresh perspectives from which to think about and question the policy.

At the beginning of my research, the policy I was studying seemed to be merely an object or artefact that might uncover insights into what it meant to write and enact policy. My experience of its development raised significant questions for me about the purposes of

such policy documents. Those questions included: Who was this document written for? What was its point? And, how effective was it? However, over time, my study has taken on another set of purposes. It focuses more on the meanings that the policy might have and how they are understood. In particular, my positive experience of the development of this particular policy had suggested that the policy enabled, rather than constrained, the thoughts and actions of those for whom the policy had meaning. Yet, others may see the policy quite differently to me and see meanings that were limiting rather than enabling.

I also initially understood the *Learning Together* policy as predominantly a government's political statement about education goals and strategies for achieving these goals, or a set of actions. However, as I moved along the pathway of policy development to public implementation, it became clear soon after the policy's launch that it had a symbolic significance for me and others that was potentially much more than a strategic plan that told people what to do. People called upon the metaphorical name of the policy to justify a whole range of things they wanted to do or had done. "It fits with (or comes from) *Learning Together*" was the sort of statement that would often be made to me. I noted that the metaphor of the policy's title seemed to have grown so all-encompassing that it could have masked other ways of thinking about education. I came to wonder about the power of language to shape our perceptions of our world. This shifted my focus to think about how policies were interpreted for meaning, by myself, by those in communities for which a policy might have meaning, and, in particular, by researchers. This caused me to broaden my thinking about how to undertake the interpreting of a policy. In particular, I came to wonder about epistemological, axiological and ontological contexts, whether personal or shared, that might influence any interpreting.

Interpreting from the inside and from a distance

My personal involvement began to present significant challenges for my project. From the beginning, I wished to tell my stories to show the possibilities offered by the policy. However, I sensed that my personal perspectives were also limited. They may mask other ways of understanding the potential and dilemmas that such a policy might present. Further, I had misgivings about only telling stories that served my interests. I wanted to stand at a distance from the policy in order to "pose searching and significant questions" (Greene, 1978, p. 19) so that I might understand what was working upon me and "recognise mystification". As I developed my research, I also became more skeptical of my own interpreting of the policy and the warm glow that the policy's promise of collective educational success had given me initially, then cooled and was replaced by hesitancy and

doubt. The policy's language, that I had regarded as open and welcoming, came to look like a mechanism for constraint, or again, as mystification. It was for this reason that language became of such interest to me. It showed that my understandings of the meanings of the language of the policy were changing.

As Gergen and Gergen commented (1991, p. 1042), many researchers have become sensitive to the relationships between themselves and the subjects or objects of their research and have come to acknowledge an interdependent relationship between researcher and researched. Because of this, they are creating innovative approaches to interpreting so that they might negotiate meanings in a manner more appropriate to a "liquid modern era" (Bauman, 2000). In particular, they have sought to use interpretive processes that involve some reflexive space between themselves as researchers and that which they are studying, approaches that might be thought of as dialogical (Bahktin, 1981). Thinking of research as dialogical is founded on a belief that any process of interpreting language is not unidirectional because language is always understood in relation to something else, either in response to something or anticipation (Bahktin, Holquist & Liapunov, 1990).

This study has a distinctive focus on me as a researcher who is an "insider" in relation to the policy in question (Collins, 1986; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000, p. 590). My insights go beyond those of a participant-observer (Cushing, 1979), and as an "insider" I was able to reflect upon my understandings as a participant immersed in the writing, development and implementation of the policy.

If you lift an ethical object of study out of experience to teach or learn about it, it is no longer the same thing. It makes a difference if the language we study is our language, for in studying we are speaking it. It makes a difference if the history we study is *our* history, for in studying it we are living it.

(Meyers, 2003, p. 29)

This study provides a rare insight into my own – one person's – experience of policy interpretation. While many have attempted to "understand and become aware of our own research activities as *telling ourselves a story about ourselves*" (Steier, 1991, p. 3),

Janet Miller (1998, p. 149) was concerned about "troubling" stories in education, that assumed singular versions of story and self. The place and role of the "researcher-as-insider" is a contested one, because the research binary of *objective–subjective* continues to be powerful (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000, p. 590). Personal perspectives can be biases that lead to the masking of insights or a narrowing of focus. However, it is possible to get beyond this binary and avoid being captured by its authority.

Qualitative studies have increasingly sought understanding from “the inside” (Brewer, 1986; Merton, 1972; Louis & Bartunek, 1996; Evered & Louis, 1981; Schein, 2004). The complexities of the insider’s view provides much more than external perspectives that might inform a researcher’s work (Danzinger & Chih Lin, 2000, pp. 55-56). Mostly the purpose of an insider’s view is to gain a sense of the reality for the individuals studied, to explore and understand meaning from their perspective, and to learn how these meanings influence and shape behaviours and outcomes (Anderson & Jones, 2000; Hicks-Bartlett, 2000; Newman, 1996; Stack, 1996). In relation to policy, that might mean understanding both local knowledges of policy-relevant publics and having the analytic distance of a stranger (Yanow, 2000, p. 81).

However, generating any analytic distance at the same time as being an insider can be difficult to achieve, even in well-fashioned research. It is also problematic to accept an insider’s view unquestioningly, even if we accept that to *not* account for an insider’s perspectives is a limitation on our interpreting. For Halpin & Troyna (1994, p. 8), insider research could be regarded as individualised and idiosyncratic regardless of whether the researcher is that insider or not. Muller (2001, p. 137) noted the importance of critical policy analysts undertaking analytic work using language forms such as narrative in the interests of equality and democracy, yet also recognised the risk of *doxa*, the Platonic term which refers to belief or opinion mistaken for analysis, where participants are too close to the accounts.

Yet it was not simply the case that I can divide myself between the insider as participant and the outsider as researcher. The two are entwined. As Weston (1996) noted: “A single body cannot bridge that mythical divide between insider and outsider, researcher and researched. I am neither, in any simple way, and yet I am both” (p. 275). There is no mythical line that divides me as a researcher from me as a participant. I was neither inside, nor outside, but both inside and outside at the same time. The only thing that allows me to avoid *doxa* and come to trustworthy understandings is when I take an ethical stance that upholds my responsibility to understand both inside and outside, as well as other potential perspectives. Therefore, this study explores the territory of the insider–outsider binary and unsettles it, coming to new understandings of the promise of the participant-researcher beyond its authority and constraints. The purpose of recognising the participant-researcher interpretive dilemma I face is not merely to lay differing perspectives on the table or to accept them blindly, a stance I reject. By acknowledging that I was both insider and outsider all at once and attempting to understand the differing perspectives in as comprehensive a manner as possible, I was able to be more open to meaning possibilities. This also helps me clarify any backgrounds against which these possibilities disclose themselves to me, such as my existing self-understanding and worlds of knowledge, experience and values that I share

with others. My focus shifts from merely regarding policy as an object for interpreting, to considering how self, context and interpreting a policy are interrelated. For example, if I wish to know how effective a policy is, what are my understandings of “effective”, and on what are they based? If a policy seemed to have particular meanings, on what beliefs and values might they be based? What personal and shared experiences, histories and traditions play a part in forming the beliefs and values on which my understandings are based? I wonder if there are shared values and beliefs of which I was not consciously aware and I want to understand the influence of these on my interpreting. How could I be more conscious of my understandings and unmask the background against which my interpreting takes place so that I might open up potential new meanings?

Disclosing truthful meanings through language

To do this, I take a stance on “truthfulness” (Sokolwksi, 2000, p. 158) that aligns with interpretive philosophy rather than objectivist science. By “truthfulness”, I mean how the meanings of a policy are displayed to us in a way that is stable and able to be accepted as genuine, what Sokolowski termed “a truth of disclosure” (p. 157). Language is the means by which meanings are displayed in this study. After Bahktin (1990), I follow through a dialogue that allows me to unravel meanings of the policy by anticipating and responding to its language. This is a difficult interpretive route, bringing challenges and adding complexity to my task. Yet it is my desire to follow a path that directly acknowledges how even the most distant stranger (or researcher) would bring their own backgrounds of values and beliefs, knowledge and questions, and intentions and purposes to their work. One way to think of these backgrounds is as “frames” (Yanow, 2000, p. 12) that come into view when we reflect on our interpreting.

I attempt a delicate tiptoe along this path, seeking insights into my insider knowledge and assistance in achieving some distance as an outsider by creating interpretive frames that draw on selected work of philosophical thinkers, including Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer (1999). An understanding of the term “frame” is crucial and Yanow (2000) differentiated between frame as noun and frame as verb.

Whether we treat “frame” as a noun or as a verb [has] implications for the form of our interpretive study. “Frame” as a noun suggests a comparative analysis across communities of meaning, as a (relatively) fixed point in time, of the various ways in which a policy issue has been “framed”, that is, interpreted and understood. “Frame” as a verb suggests a more dynamic analysis of changes in issue “framing” over time, possibly within a single community of meaning. These two types of study suggest different

constituencies: the duration and depth of the latter suggest perhaps a more academic interest in understanding interpretive processes; the former suggest more of an issue focus, whether for academic or policy-making purposes (or both).

(Yanow, 2000, p. 13)

I use “frame” as both noun and verb. Selected works of Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer (1999) offer up ideas that can be used as metaphors and put together as frames to interrogate the language of the policy. Further, I frame, that is bring these frames into use as I interpret, disclosing meanings, and revealing how I understand my world and interpret my experiences. Because I declare that, in liquid modern times (Bauman, 2000), my understandings are tentative and subject to change, my task can be considered as seeking a way to understand something as truthful (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 156). A liquid modern truthfulness needs to accommodate ongoing understandings of our world and ourselves within it, as well as address the epistemological uncertainty brought about by multiple perspectives. Between two diverse sets of perspectives, those that put forward positivistic notions of reality in contrast with those that endorse postmodern relativism, my task is an attempt to build a bridge that is somewhere between where “scientific or philosophical knowledge is either *overestimated* (by philosophical foundationalism) or *underestimated* (by the postmodern critique of reason)” (Kögler, 1999, p. 10, *emphases in original*).

My exploration of the possibilities for disclosing truthfulness (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 158) of a policy is about developing interpretations that might be considered trustworthy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 289-331). What is meant by “true” is therefore not limited by the scientific rationality that dominated the modern era, but relates to it. What is “true” in this sense is what has the capacity to be enduring and may be subject to tests of scientific rationality, but not be restricted by them. “Truthful” meanings are distinct and authoritative, in that they can be sustained and returned to over and over again (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 157), yet are not solely subject to scientific verification. These meanings have a “truth of disclosure”, differing from a “truth of correctness”, as they do not involve testing an assertion to see if it is true or false. Meanings that are displayed in this way can be candidates tested for truth of correctness and subject to the rigour of science and its methods, as for Sokolowski, disclosed truths come before and after the truth of correctness. In this study, I understand truthful meanings, as they are disclosed to me. A truth of disclosure relies on evidencing or “the bringing about of truth” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 160) and might include what is present as a display, but also what it concealed, by being either absent or vague (p. 166). Every meaning can become a display of a state of affairs to be tested as a

proposition, claim or judgment (pp. 158-59), as in the truth of correctness, or they can be unfolded as intelligible, and seen, in a sense, as they are. Many meanings are sustained and returned to over and over again, while some may disintegrate as they are displayed or when they are contrasted with meanings that are sustained and intelligible.

With the truthfulness of disclosure, the ontological predates the epistemological rather than the other way around, as has been the case in the truth of correctness in science and mathematics during the modern era. In using this stance in relation to truthfulness, I also require ways of determining what might evidence something as a truth of disclosure. For Sokolowski (2000, p. 161), evidence is the successful presentation of something that is intelligible, “of something whose truth becomes manifest in the evidencing itself”. This involves a perfecting of the thing itself in that it is presented and known. “A truth of disclosure” also is made possible from our way of being, our desire for reason, yet we are not just recipients of meanings. When we understand, we are active in that we are evidencing (pp. 161-62). For Greene (1978), this was why we should strive to become “wide-awake” (p. 17) so that we can be more “cognizant of our standpoints and open to the world”. My striving to be “wide awake” is to understand the possibilities and dilemmas of this policy. It enables me to understand myself and my world, and particularly policy more fully and more sincerely. I observe Bahktin’s (1993) idea of interpretive research as dialogical.

I used Sokolowski’s (2000) accounts of “truthfulness” and “sedimented meaning” with the recognition that it is possible to interpret these accounts as epistemologically positivist or post-positivist. However, they assisted me to demonstrate that the meaningfulness of an object that we interpret invariably takes some substance or form that we can recognise as meaning, regardless of our epistemological stance. Sokolowski’s representations might be related as much to meanings that are fleeting, partial or disclosed only to certain local subjects as it is to scientific and quantifiable interpretations.

Frames and framing

Therefore, for meanings of a policy to be displayed, I rely on meanings presenting themselves to me, as well as me being active in their evidencing. As I note above, the ideas of frames and framing are useful in expressing how this might occur. How we frame our experience and understanding of our world arises from, and entails, complex interrelationships between language, thought and experience. Lakoff (2004, p. xv) proposed that we can think of having frames or mental structures, arising from our epistemological, ontological and axiological stances, that shape the way we *see* the world. As such, they are a remarkable amalgam of personal and shared meanings, drawn from our immediate milieu

and millennia-old backgrounds of language and social practices. This is not to imply that they are static or continuously mutable, but to acknowledge that they manifest our own knowledge, experience and ethics in relation to our shared worlds.

These frames influence our personal meaning making as they enable us to grasp what is disclosed to us. In some cases, frames are easily determined, say, for example, those that are strongly influenced by religion or culture. At other times, they are indistinct or highly individual. The frame that an American who witnessed the terrorist bombings of 9/11 might bring to an issue relating to people of Muslim faith may be powerful, but with the passing of time, the influence of a frame arising out of that experience may have become less dominant. If we are able to identify, even momentarily, any frames we might have that shape our perceptions and actions, like Yanow (2000, p. 13) we can use frames to help us interpret the meanings of policies.

Where meanings have disclosed themselves to us, we can think about what frames may have given rise to these meanings. It is possible that insights into frames will enable us to grasp more intelligible meanings that can be sustained, or determine if these meanings might disappear with greater scrutiny. My intent is to disclose a policy's meanings, particularly where they are embedded in language and social practices that are rarely subject to everyday critique or against an implicit pre-understood background. This requires an approach that opened up the possibility of many potential personal and public meanings, not just one or two. At times, meanings of a policy may be personal, while at others, they may take on the display of authorised public meanings.

The frames I use in this study are those that are formed from metaphors used heuristically as a means of displaying meanings (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 163). Frames can be thought of as guiding how a policy is understood and enacted in a public sense, and as Abolafia (2004) noted, "alternative frames may have significantly different policy consequences" (p. 351). It may be that frames that are displayed by an interpretive approach may determine whether a policy is either maintained or contested. A policy analyst using an interpretive approach may, through their work, reinforce or break old frames, project newly imagined policy projects and fine-tune these in practical "real-world circumstances" (p. 364).

Some policies do not address one sole set of concerns but attempt to answer a vast array of questions that generally fall under the auspices of one institutional structure, such as a government department. This requires a methodological approach that acknowledges how intricate and mutable the frames that can be brought to interpreting this policy might be.

The complexity and scope of policy analysis – from an interest in the workings of the state to a concern with contexts of practice and the distributional outcomes of policy – preclude the possibility of successful

single theory explanations. What we need in policy analysis is a toolbox of diverse concepts and theories. (Ball, 1993, p. 10)

To enable me to disclose possibilities for meaning and bring into display a truthful and trustworthy interpretation of this policy, I choose to follow Greene's (1973, p. 20) call to seek to understand "from as many vantage points as possible, living experience, the ways there are of being in the world". I deliberately chose the "vantage points" I use, which is undertaken within a broad interpretive framework that references Kögler (1999). Kögler called his approach as critically interpretive, drawing on the ideas of Gadamer (1999) and Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995). Kögler attempted to fuse a dialogic understanding of individual subjectivity as portrayed by Gadamer (1999, p. 292) to a poststructural approach to discourse analysis and the practices of power (Foucault, 1995). Kögler's aim was to achieve distance from the pre-understood backgrounds against which we might interpret, as well as become aware of how social power acts on meaning. He merged a hermeneutic approach from Gadamer and a "critical poststructuralism" (p. 2) from Foucault, in order to fuse *interpreting* understood as dialogue together with *interpreting* understood as the critique of power (p. 171). (See Figure 3, below.) Selected works of both thinkers reflect on the role of language in revealing understandings of self and the human social world. For Kögler (1999), interpreting can be thought of as "critical hermeneutics" (p. 262); *hermeneutic* because it enabled consideration of the prejudgments and horizons of our self-understanding (after Gadamer, 1999) and *critical* because it enabled us to expose and analyse underlying structures of discourse and practices of power (after Foucault, 1972, 1977, 1980).

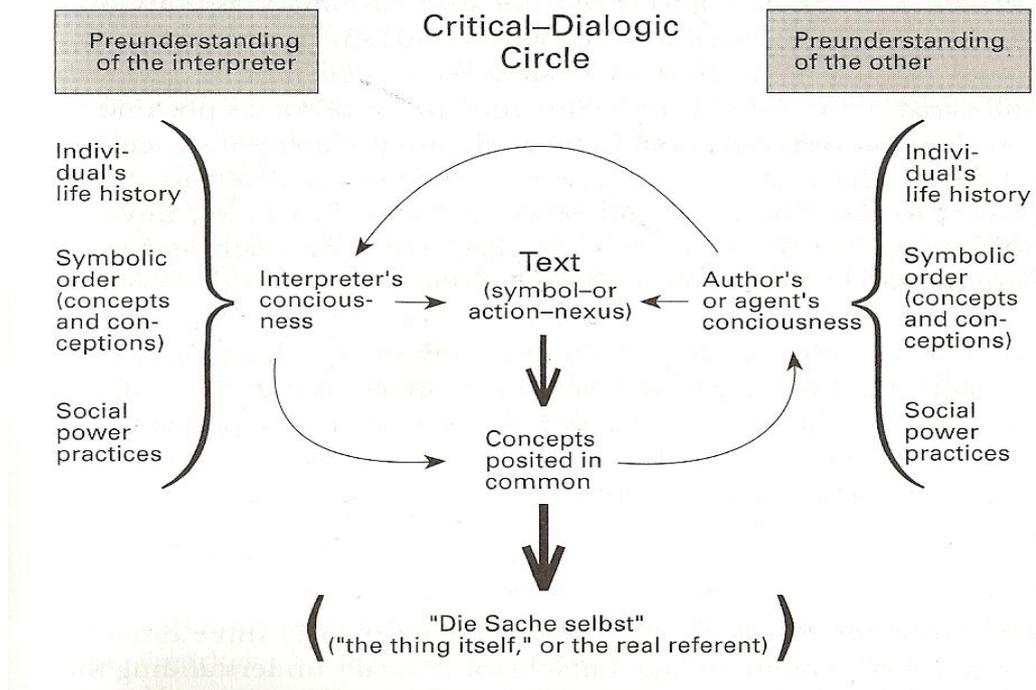


Figure 3. Kögler's diagram of a critical-dialogic circle (Kögler, 1999, p. 171).

This study does not apply his approach but uses it as a referent. My interpreting acknowledges the important link Kögler (1999) made between these two theorists perspectives; that is, how meaning might be shaped and influenced by social power and self-understanding. Kögler's approach gives me a rationale for using multiple perspectives or "vantage points" (Greene, 1973, p. 20) and it also provides insights into fundamental differences of the two approaches. It is not an attempt to do what Kögler did, but to draw on the usefulness of his approach. His work highlights to me the same reflective dilemma I faced when initially interpreting this policy. Given the deeply political context of myself and the policy in question, I had no way to grasp how deeply the operation of power may have penetrated into my self-understanding (Kögler, 1999, p. 248). Therefore, my interpreting of the *Learning Together* policy requires ways to disclose meanings relating to power and self-understanding that, as much as possible, reveal the extent and nature of this penetration.

As "vantage points", I use ideas from Gadamer's (1999) hermeneutics and selected ideas from Foucault's mid-career studies of power and discourse (1970, 1971, 1972, 1975) and its intensification in his late work on subjectivity (1985, 1986a). Foucault enables me to ask questions about how power is represented in a policy that has political origins. Gadamer's ideas enable me to gain greater insight into my own situatedness. Kögler (1999, vii) saw the potential for an approach that combines their differing perspectives to enable

interpreting that was both hermeneutic and objectifying. The notion of vantage points lets me think about how varied interpretations of a policy might throw up differing conceptual sources or conflicts, and prepares me to negotiate a way through those differences.

“Whoever understands must understand differently if one wants to understand at all” (Gadamer, 1999, p. 321). This approach requires that I was thoughtful of how we can be captured in social and historic traditions of thought and language but, at the same time, not deny our individual agency to resist relations of power that seek to dominate or subjugate us. Therefore, my understanding relies on engagement with others, and Foucault and Gadamer became like accompanying theorists, each bringing differing perspectives to my study. My approach draws on Kögler’s fusion of Gadamer and Foucault’s ideas; with my purpose bringing together of differing “frames” as potent strategies for interpreting this policy. The contrast between these frames is central as each frame unsettles the other.

This approach also gives me a means by which I might make sense of my experiences and the interpretations I make of this policy as an “insider” (Yanow, 2000, p. 19) and “policy-relevant actor”, against those of myself as “analyst-researcher” who is involved in the interpreting of it. It is my attempt to resist being placed in a position external to the policy which I study, yet at the same time needing to be candid about my intricate personal involvement in it. This is vital if I am to disclose meanings that can be thought of as truthful. My involvement in the policy I interpret in this study throws up other profound puzzlements. Greene, in *Landscapes of Learning* (1978), appealed to our potential as individuals to act ethically in meeting the challenges of the personal and public dilemmas we face. She went beyond considerations of what might be currently deemed to be significant for economic, political or social reasons and asked us to be aware of what really matters to our world and to each other – what she terms being “wide-awake” (p. 17) through “consciousness” (p. 20). It raises specific questions, not only about how a policy has meaning for a community and what values underpin public education policy and practice, but also about my own beliefs and beliefs about education, politics and policy.

Language is central to my quest for “wide-awakeness” following Greene (1978, p. 17). I begin my formal inquiries using metaphor heuristically. Metaphor is chosen to reflect a particular privileging of language in relation to meaning-making and truthfulness, as meanings are presented especially in words (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 157).

Through language it becomes possible for us to express the way things are and to convey this mode of presentation to other people and to ourselves at other places and other times. The words we exchange capture the way things have appeared to us, and if we are authoritative in our disclosures they capture the way things are. At the same time, the words are flavoured with the style with

which we have disclosed the things in question, so they indicate to the reader or listener something about ourselves as well.

(Sokolowski, 2000, p. 158)

The manner in which metaphor is used in the first instance is according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980). For them, language, and particularly the trope of metaphor, provides the deep conceptual frameworks we use for understanding our world. Lakoff and Johnson's understanding of metaphor is the first frame I use in my interpreting and through it I draw out a potential conceptual structure. There is capacity within this frame to find alternate meaning possibilities, but there is also a positivistic epistemological certainty about the interconnectedness of language, experience and reality, which ignores the potential for relations of power or individual meaning frameworks to be interrogated. By objectifying metaphoric conceptual structures at the heart of understanding, Lakoff and Johnson's work could imply a theory of language where meaning exists external to the interpreter.

I take a turn that considers power as an interpretive possibility. By using metaphors to express selected philosophical ideas of Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer (1999), I construct new frames for interpreting that allow me to think about both power and individual meaning-making, and each time a frame is used, it is subject to reflection and critique. Metaphors from Foucault's work on power (1970, 1971, 1972, 1975) and subjectivity (1985, 1986a) are useful to construct a frame to raise questions about how power acts to mystify our understandings of language and symbolic worlds. It is how I avoid automatically accepting these frames as universally understood symbolic worlds, particularly where such worlds do not acknowledge power and its practices. It is also how I guard against "mystification" which Greene (1978, p. 42) believes prevents us from being "wide-awake".

Again, I sense a lack in my interpretive approach, and I take another turn to focus on individual perspectives that are implicit in the background of our meaning making. To address this, a frame of metaphors is drawn from ideas out of selected works of Gadamer (1999) and used to interpret. Gadamer's quote "being that can be understood is language" (pp. 474-75) attempts to describe the lifeworld and pre-understanding of an interpreter and it sets out a linguistic ontology that leads to his dialogic interpretive approach of a hermeneutic circle.

Building on the strategy of metaphor from Lakoff and Johnson (1980) that I begin with, I bring their thinking to bear on my interpreting by considering a policy using metaphors drawn from their work. These metaphors not only opened up opportunities for me to explore further the metaphors I already interpreted from this policy, they also provided me with differing metaphors to continue my inquiry. My interpreting goes on to explore through certain theoretical interests of Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer

(1999). Each thinker provides me with differing epistemological, axiological and ontological perspectives and I was able to come to individual and shared meanings of that policy.

The philosophical origins of this critical interpreting can be traced to the German philosopher Heidegger (1962), who tutored Gadamer and influenced Foucault. Heidegger proposed that we always exist *in relation* to our context and that interpreting is our “being-in-the-world” (p. 147) or *dasein*, bringing our context and ourselves into dialogue. As this study interweaves understandings of language, thought and experiences, it reaches out to phenomenological, hermeneutic and critical sources. My bringing together of different frames, and particularly those of Gadamer (1999) and Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995), reflects my unease with adopting wholly one epistemological or ontological stance. My desire for diverse perspectives is driven by a desire to avoid “encirclement” by impersonal technique (Jacques Ellul, quoted in Greene, 1978, p. 9). I avoid choosing a single interpretive frame that might be regarded as “godlike”. Rather, I choose to regard each interpretive frame I use as pertinent to context and purpose. This comes from a view that holds that any research approach is a function “of certain protocols and procedures developed at a particular moment in the history of thought” (Greene, 1978, p. 10).

This study sought to evoke a trustworthy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 289-331) interpretation of a policy based on the notion of “truthfulness of disclosure” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 158). The meanings of a policy are revealed through three differing frames, which are used as sequential processes of interpreting. It is an approach that aims to provide rich insights into a policy’s possibilities and implications, perhaps it arises for me from a fortunate moment of consciousness, akin to Greene’s “wide awakeness” (1978, p. 42). By taking a multi-pronged interpretive approach in this study, I was able to strengthen notions of trustworthiness. Trustworthiness is based on the understanding that no judgment was to be value-free, de-contextualised or totally objective (Oleson, 2000, pp. 223, 230). In much human science research, validity has been the measure by which worthy research is judged. Mills (2000, p. 90) demonstrated how it is possible to question the notion of validity, as well as the importance of generalisability within research (which refers to how findings within the specific context of research are able to be applied to other settings not studied). Some forms of qualitative research might be more about finding answers appropriate to the matter at hand than establishing findings that are generalisable.

Just as Ludwig Wittgenstein (2009, p. 256) stated that we have no access to another’s private inner language on which to found any empirical claims to know about the world and make sense of our experiences, I do not assert any privilege to the veracity or validity of the findings of this study. They result from interpretive strategies, which do not claim to display a truth of correctness and thus they have not been subject to tests of verification based on

scientific rationality. Trustworthiness is a much more suitable response to questions of validity where the purpose of the research is understanding, rather than generalisability (Mills, 2000, p. 78). In a context of local policy development, this study *might* have posed new dilemmas for me, particularly as a “policy-relevant actor” and analyst/researcher as I unashamedly interpret using frames that arise from my perspectives, and I do not attempt to verify my findings as they make no empirical claims. However I adopt trustworthiness as a touchstone or criterion for testing my study. Rather than applying scientific principles of validity, generalisability and veracity, trustworthiness is a more appropriate concept in this context as it is founded upon a desire to only claim that which was in line with this study’s tentative epistemological stance. Corresponding to this stance, the interpreting I undertake provides opportunities to deepen understandings of political and personal perspectives related to policy interpreting and led to new understandings of how policies might be interpreted. Concomitantly, it offers some diverse possibilities for understanding policy.

Developing an interpretive approach

Having considered a theoretical framework for interpreting policy, I apply my understandings of it to a particular policy. The interpretive approach I detail in this chapter is based on the philosophical background that I have outlined and is specifically applied to the interpreting of the education policy *Learning Together* in Chapters 5–8. In inquiring into my understandings of that policy, I reference the work of Yanow (2000), who suggested that the phenomenon of policy can be interpreted according to symbolic artefacts as they are all potential carriers of meaning. Policy artefacts, that is, a policy’s symbolic language, objects and acts can be regarded as a policy’s “architecture of meaning” (Yanow, 2000, p.viii) and they enable interpretive policy analysts to gain insight into how a policy’s meanings are come to be.

Text is gobbledygook unless the reader possesses an interpretive framework to breathe meaning into it.

(Anderson, 1977, p. 423)

This study is concerned with how the potential meanings of policies are framed as expressed through the “architecture of meaning”, constituted by their symbolic language following Yanow (2000, p. iii). My interest is how the interpretive framework I use reveals relationships between language and meaning. As I interpret language artefacts and understand them in relation to what is valued, known and experienced, I make meaning. This approach involves me as an interpreter in trying to understand any meanings that are

available, including the possibility of uncovering abstract and tacit meanings. The approach proposes that such meanings produced tentative and contextualised knowledge, which is always uncertain and open to change. *What* the policy artefacts mean is of interest to me, but also *how* they provide meaning as “the medium of communication is intimately connected with the message it communicates”⁴ (Yanow, 2000, p. 17). For this study, symbolic language in the text of the chosen policy is analysed and is the prime focus of four phases of interpreting.

Such interpreting also is always open to study and coming to understand more about possible interpretations of a policy makes me more aware that the manner in which I interpret also creates meaning. Throughout this study, I use the metaphor of A LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING to characterise the framework of understandings, beliefs and values that I bring to my interpreting. I make sense of what Van Manen termed a “lifeworld” (1990, p. 2) that is already revealed to me through interpreting these artefacts. As Mercado (1996) noted, our lives are constituted by experience and reflection where knowing is not artificially separated from encounters with things and feelings. In this instance, my lifeworld is made available through language.

For Yanow (2000), interpretive policy analysis had five steps. These steps informed my study, providing possible reference points as a path to follow and aligning my own approach. The five steps were:

1. identifying the artefacts that carry significant meanings
2. identifying relevant communities of meaning/interpretation/speech/practice
3. identifying discourses, that is the specific meanings communicated by artefacts and their entailments
4. identifying points of conflict and their conceptual sources
5. intervening through
 - a. showing implications of differing meanings for policy formulation and action
 - b. showing differences as different ways of seeing
 - c. negotiating/mediating/intervening to bridge differences

(Yanow, 2000, p. 22)

Yanow (2000, p. 22) noted that the steps were much more intertwined in practice than they were distinct. My approach does not mimic Yanow’s steps but references them, identifying metaphors as the language artefacts of the policy which are interest to me. While Yanow, in step two, looked for relevant communities of meaning, interpretation, speech or practice, I was interested in identifying understandings that may be shared or personal. I do not seek out communities to interview, survey or inquire into in other ways, but I make

⁴ Following Marshall McLuhan’s famed statement “the medium is the message” from his book *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964).

judgments as to the shared nature of knowledge, experience and values. In interpreting the policy's artefacts, it is possible to discover intended meanings and display new ones (p. 17). Following this, I identify meanings as they seem to be communicated through my interpreting and I seek to identify differences, including conflicts. Finally, I give thought to the implications of those meanings and what they tell about interpretive practice (p. 22).

There are a number of ways in which I encounter metaphors as the symbolic language of this policy, and in particular I scanned the published policy text (Appendix A) and the text of the draft policy (Appendix B) to create a table of metaphors (see Appendix C). Other associated texts include my personal narratives (Appendix D), press releases, media reports, formal research reports, and consequent bureaucratic documentation which recorded the implementation of that policy, but the primary text of the policy was the main source for my interpreting. Each of these other texts has had some influence on my understandings, either by providing context or reinforcing the conceptual framework I develop.

Metaphor may be interpreted quite differently according to how we understand the association between language and meaning in relation to particular worldviews (Lakoff, 2002, pp. 370-73). They can be understood as symbolic artefacts by individuals and groups (Yanow, 2000, p. 31), or they might enable us to define words (Lakoff, 2002, p. 419) relative to conceptual categories. While I focus on metaphors that I distinguish in the policy's text, this approach is not intended to be a discourse analysis or other analytic linguistic method. Metaphors are used heuristically in this study as a strategy to enable me to form understandings (Yanow, 2000, p. 12). They are used to bring together language, cognition and action to shape perceptions and give rise to meanings.

As noted above, my interpreting of this policy resembles aspects of Yanow's (2000) interpretive policy analysis, yet the path I choose is not easily compartmentalised into such clear, delineated steps. It is, however, possible to identify up to four broad phases. Each phase involves considering the policy through its language and, specifically, using the strategy of metaphor. The approach I use involves a series of re-readings, or re-interpretings, through differing frames. In each phase, metaphors are not regarded as objective units of analysis. They are heuristics by which meanings are evidenced, or brought into truth by being disclosed. Following each phase, I reflect on the epistemological, ontological and axiological assumptions that frame my interpreting. Indeed, my understandings evolve as I interpret, with understandings from one phase of interpreting mingling with understandings developed in following phases. In this way, the four phases bestow different perspectives on the language of the policy. They also mark this study's progress chronologically.

Four phases of interpreting

The first phase involves interpreting the policy using metaphor as described by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). Their work positioned metaphor as having a central role in framing deep conceptual understandings, and for me, metaphors are the artefacts that hide or highlight meanings of a policy. In this first phase, I identify specific meanings communicated by the metaphors and their entailments. By listing, then grouping the metaphors and determining any potential concepts that might underpin my understandings of them, I hope to reveal a landscape of the meanings that I had so far given to the policy. From this phase, a framework of concepts is revealed that display some meanings of the policy but also conceal others. This alerts me to other potential meanings that might be vague or which are yet to be evidenced to me.

In the second phase, metaphors from the mid-career and later writings of Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) are used as another frame to re-interpret the policy. In particular, this phase focuses on meanings that may have been concealed in the first phase, especially those meanings related to politics and how institutionalised forms of power shape our understandings without us being consciously aware. Metaphors, such as PANOPTICON, the institutional model prison form, are applied to look for evidence of how relations of power that might exist in an educational institution can observe, control and remediate those who are subjects of that institution. As noted by Nealon (2008, p. 2), Foucault's own research approaches of archaeology and genealogy can be likened to the interpretive processes I use to uncover sedimented meaning. This phase prompts me to question the meanings I have already interpreted and how they have been displayed to me, causing me to question the limits of my subjectivity and ask how personal meaning perspectives can ever be accounted for. The third phase uses metaphors expressing insights from the writing of Gadamer (1999) to reveal further meanings of the policy. This phase was initially conceived to address my dilemma of being an interpreter with a personal involvement in the writing and implementation of this particular policy. Metaphors of FORE-STRUCTURES and HORIZONS reveal how the personal values, experiences and understandings of an interpreter act to frame the epistemological assumptions they make. Gadamer's work gave me insights into how deeply embedded I was within my interpreting. The fourth phase is used to gather my thinking on the policy's together and reflect on what I have come to understand about *Learning Together's* meanings.

In each phase, metaphors are the strategy for the interpreting of this policy. By thinking about the metaphors that the interpreting of the text evoked in the first instance, I am able to re-think my understandings and reveal further meanings. Each interpretive phase gives rise to differing insights and fresh questions, as in their writings, each theorist used

particular philosophical questions and positions that offer me a frame for uncovering meanings. At each phase, I attempt to distinguish points of tensions or divergence between the ideas frame drawn from that particular theorist and my previous understandings.

In concluding my research, I move from interpreting to bringing together a set of understandings in an attempt to display different meanings for policy, politics, education and self. I link these to the metaphor of A LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING drawn from Greene (1978). New understandings and possibilities become my new “landscape”, this time of meaning, showing my evolving epistemological, ontological and axiological understandings.

While each of Yanow’s (2000) steps might be identifiable within my work, the following chart (Figure 4) gives a heuristic framework distinctive to my study. It outlines out the interpretive approach I use in this study and shows how the text of the policy *Learning Together* is engaged with through the various interpretive frames.

1. Frames for interpreting the policy <i>Learning Together</i> .	2. Interpreting metaphors and meanings of a policy	3. Coming to understandings	4. A trustworthy interpretation
<p>Phase 1 – A metaphor of metaphor</p> <p>A frame of <i>metaphor</i>, as described by Lakoff & Johnson (1980), is used heuristically to reveal metaphors from the text of the policy. This frame was based on understandings that metaphors arise out of experience and form the conceptual basis of our understanding.</p>	<p>From interpreting using metaphor as a frame, new metaphors emerge and new meanings are able to be displayed. I reflect on what is evidenced by this interpretive frame, as truthful (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 166) but also what is concealed by it. I turn to consider how power is masked in <i>Learning Together</i>.</p>	<p>Phase 4</p> <p>I consider emerging understandings of policy, education, politics and self.</p>	<p>Leading to a trustworthy interpretation of <i>Learning Together</i></p>
<p>Phase 2</p> <p>A frame of metaphors, drawn from philosophical insights developed in selected works of Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) on power and subjectivity, is used heuristically to interpret the policy.</p>	<p>Using Foucault’s ideas as a frame, new metaphors emerge and new meanings are able to be displayed. I reflect on what is evidenced by this interpretive frame and I turn to consider how my interpreting is influenced by any pre-understood language background.</p>	<p>This interpreting leads to me consider epistemological understandings (what is known, or considered true about this policy), ontological understandings (what is real or experienced) and axiological understandings (what is valued).</p>	
<p>Phase 3</p> <p>A frame of metaphors, drawn from philosophical insights developed in selected works of Gadamer (1999) on self-understanding, is used heuristically to interpret the policy.</p>	<p>From my interpretation of the policy, using Gadamer’s ideas as a frame, new metaphors emerge and new meanings are able to be displayed. I reflect on what is evidenced by this interpretive frame.</p>		

Figure 4. An approach to interpreting a policy.

Metaphors give symbolic significance to our thoughts and hold within them potential both for insight and obfuscation of meaning and motives. A metaphor is generally regarded as a linguistic device of poetry or rhetoric, where the extraordinary rather than the ordinary is evoked through words. One example is the use of the term “the dotcom bubble”, a metaphor used to describe the growth in value of information technology stocks over a short period of time in the late 1990s. The words might be used in a newspaper article to conjure up an image for readers that the growth was fast, dramatic and unsustainable like a bubble.

However, for Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphors were much more than striking and evocative language. They pervaded the everyday lives of human beings and held sway over thoughts and actions in ways in which we are, by and large, unaware. In particular, metaphors were proposed as the deep structure of the conceptual frames that assisted us as humans, to comprehend our experiences of living in the world. These frames underpinned the understandings we had of our experiences in the world in relation to language, and cultural and social practices and traditions. For example, metaphors of difference related to ethnicity, disability or gender may contribute significantly to the frames that individuals employ to interpret their worlds. In some cultural settings, being a woman might be framed through metaphors which limited or enhanced opportunity and action in crucial ways. Only in the past fifty years in western democratic societies has a metaphor such as CAREER WOMAN been a linguistic, and therefore ontological, possibility for most women. DISABLED has been a resilient metaphor for people who are not easily included by supposed societal norms, but those to whom the metaphor has been applied have challenged, rejected or claimed it as their own. Likewise, the metaphor BLACK has been subject to many decades of critique and transformation, and its entailments continue to change, including examples most recently following the election of Barack Obama to the White House.

In seeking a trustworthy interpretation of a policy, this study involves one further strategy. In choosing to focus on one specific policy, *Learning Together*, I have opportunities to tell about and reflect on a moment of political and educational decision-making that many researchers may not have. Yanow (2000) provided a rationale for the personally focused interpretive approach taken within this study, suggesting that to start an interpretive policy analysis, a researcher should seek to access local knowledge (p. 38). For me, local knowledge is “local” in an “issues” sense rather than a geographical one (p. 17). However, as a participant, an author and a contributor – an “insider” in a process of policy-making – I was apprehensive about my capacity to distanciate myself from my study. I risk being solipsistic if my claims to know about interpreting policy

only relate my personal understandings without being contested or challenged. Yet, by engaging in an approach that is interpretive I opt for a chance to go beyond my own understandings and address any perceived biases or prejudice. It is possible that I may surpass my personal perspectives and be open to more understandings, by adopting an approach Morson (1998) suggested researchers might use, called “sideshadowing”.

Alternatives always abound, and, more often than not, what exists need not have existed. Something else was possible, and sideshadowing is used to create a sense of that “something else”.

(Morson, 1998, p. 601)

In this study, sideshadowing is undertaken by employing frames from differing perspectives in each of the four phases I have described in Chapter 4. The strategy of sideshadowing means that each time a new frame is used, there is a shadow from the interpreting that has come before. There is also the expectation that another interpretive frame might be used in the future. This adds a responsiveness to the interpretive process, a reminder to be always open to other possibilities because there could always be a shadow “from the side” (Morson, 1998, p. 601). It force recognition of how any interpreting is subject “to the ghostly presence of might-have-beens or might-bes” (p. 602), spectres that could reveal or hide possibilities and alternatives. It helps the vague or absent to become present, if only as shadows, and sharpens my sense to meanings being evidenced. It is used as a method to address any tendency I may have to over-simplify my interpretive explanations or make too readily coherent what perhaps ought be recognised and accepted as incoherent or messy.

A pause to reflect

In this chapter, I take the idea of *metaphor* from Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and use *frames* as discussed by Yanow (2000, p. 12). As an interpretive strategy, frames may open up, but also limit, possibilities for understanding a policy, and I was interested in how frames that we bring to interpreting might be shaped by our epistemological, ontological and axiological stances. As experiences, values and existing knowledge of our world intricately intertwine to create new meanings, we apply our re-interpreted understandings again (Yanow, 2000, pp. 11-13; Schön & Rein, 1995). For example, if a person’s frames are defined by negative metaphors of failure and loss, they may see the world vastly differently, and perceive less positive choices for action, than someone whose metaphors provoke optimistic frames of the world. In this way, the ongoing experience of interpreting may, subtly or dramatically alter the meanings we give to our lifeworld. While metaphors are simple to identify from a policy’s language and apply as

frames, researchers should attempt to understand what frames they might bring to their interpreting and how their interpreting changes these frames. That is why I not only apply frames but constantly reflect on my personal framing of the policy at hand. The frames an individual brings to the creation or interpreting of a policy may significantly influence their experiences of policy-making and their capacity to propose, anticipate and shape future directions and initiatives. Through a policy's development and subsequent interpretation – post-implementation of the policy – an individual's frames may change, leading to new understandings of the meanings and impact of a policy.

Chapter 5

Applying an interpretive approach Phase 1: Lakoff and Johnson (1980)

In this first phase of interpreting the policy *Learning Together*, I make use of the idea of metaphor. I assume that the words and phrases of *Learning Together* can be understood using metaphors as described by Lakoff and Johnson in *Metaphors we live by* (1980). These metaphors are then used as heuristics, or frames, for interpreting the policy. The understandings I develop as a result of my interpreting enable me to understand philosophical, ideological and theoretical stances that may have contributed to the development of the policy. These understandings reveal traces of personal epistemological, ontological and axiological assumptions that serve as background to my inquiry.

Metaphorical structure, orientation and ontology

I chose the idea of metaphors as frames for this first phase of interpreting because of the potential they had to in relation to this specific policy. Metaphors are ways in which we make sense of our experiences and the world (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 4). There is an extensive body of research that has explored links between metaphor, language and understanding (Brown, 1976; McCloskey, 1985; Morgan, 1986; Lakoff, 2004). Understood in this sense, metaphors are not merely matters of figurative language peripheral to “real” knowledge, but are central to our conceptual frameworks. Metaphors are intrinsic to our conceptual systems and embedded so deeply in our thoughts that we do not generally recognise their presence, pervasiveness or influence on our thinking. Yanow (2000) noted that policies might be researched using metaphors as interpretive strategies (p. 41). I first considered using metaphor when I recognised that *Learning Together* had a strongly metaphorical title. The following paragraphs outline a theoretical framework for metaphor, primarily based on Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) work used in this first phase of interpreting.

Four features, outlined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), characterised how metaphor impacts on our thinking. “Any adequate theory of the human conceptual system will have to give an account of how concepts are (1) grounded (2) structured, (3) related to each other, and (4) defined” (p. 106). A policy such as *Learning Together* might be interpreted to disclose metaphorical expressions that addressed each of these features, particularly grounding, structure and relationships between metaphorical concepts. Rather than seeking to define concepts, I applied Sokolowski’s (2000, p. 157) “truthfulness of disclosure” as referred in Chapter 4. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) also defined three main types of metaphor: structural, orientational and ontological. In structural metaphors “one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another” (p. 14), forming a structure that can be mapped and interpreted for meaning. Through these structures, we make sense of and come to understand our experiences and our world. Lakoff and Johnson refer to this as “metaphorical systematicity” (p. 7). An orientational metaphor refers to a directional or spatial orientation (p. 14), while an ontological metaphor embodies tangible presence (p. 25). In this study, my initial focus was on how the metaphors of *Learning Together* were structured, while referring, where relevant, to whether the metaphors were orientational or ontological.

For Lakoff and Johnson (1980), metaphors were both systematic, as they applied orderliness to how one concept referred to another, and partial, as they only ever partly referred to other concepts (p. 193). Metaphors have entailments, that is, statements which are consequent to a metaphor and which can be metaphorical and non-metaphorical. A metaphorical entailment extends a metaphor through other metaphors, while a non-metaphorical entailment does not employ metaphor to extend the metaphor’s meaning (pp. 93-4). Lakoff and Johnson’s example of ARGUMENT IS WAR demonstrates how a metaphor and its set of entailments creates a structural metaphor, as shown by statements such as, “He *attacked* my point” or “She *defended* her position”. *Defence* and *attack* become entailments of the structural metaphor WAR and contribute to our understanding of *argument*. Using the WAR metaphor hides other possible concepts that might stand metaphorically for an argument, such as CONVERSATION or DANCE. Structural metaphors involve an arrangement of sub-metaphors and entailments that are consistent and coherent. Consistency and coherence are integral to Lakoff and Johnson’s theory of metaphors. Where a concept is elaborated through a structured set of metaphors, we can say the metaphors have consistency. They have a recognisable structure. As an example, the concept of argument can be understood using the metaphorical expression ARGUMENT IS WAR. The structure of this can be set out using metaphors and their entailments, such as POSITION, ATTACK, and WON that are consistent with WAR (p. 7).

It is possible for there to be apparent inconsistency between metaphors and entailments, yet, a metaphor is regarded as being structural where there is general coherence between the metaphors and entailments. An example of this is the structural metaphor LEARNING IS A JOURNEY. Some of the metaphors and entailments within the text of *Learning Together* contribute to this structural metaphor even though they are inconsistent with the metaphor of JOURNEY. For example, the entailment LEARNING SHOULD BE DEEP is coherent but not consistent with the JOURNEY metaphor. A journey is generally long, but not deep. The entailments suggested by JOURNEY are A JOURNEY CAN BE STRETCHED or A JOURNEY CAN BE EXTENDED, but it is unusual to refer to a journey being deepened. If we see the unity between a journey which covers a path, a surface, and depth as bounded by a surface, then the entailment LEARNING SHOULD BE DEEP, while not consistent with the JOURNEY metaphor, is coherent as there is a logic to explain it. Consistency and coherence between structural metaphors allow a range of metaphors to make up an overarching portrayal, which was the case with *Learning Together*.

The second type, orientational metaphors, “have to do with spatial orientation” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 14), although these also may involve temporal concepts. These metaphors often use the terms *up*, *down*, *ahead* and *behind* or other terms denoting physical location. For example, I recognised the metaphor LEARNING IS UP as an orientational one as it indicated that *learning* is a positive concept. It also contributed to the structure of other metaphors, such as LEARNING IS A BRIDGE or LEARNING IS A JOURNEY. In *Learning Together* the metaphor LEARNING IS UP was also linked to LEARNING IS SUCCESS and LEARNING IS A JOURNEY ACROSS A BRIDGE. Crossing a bridge requires us to go “up and over”, and SUCCESS is generally oriented up (p. 14). The images these metaphors evoked were coherent with one another and provided an UP orientation that brought with it strong positive value that appeared natural. In this way, this orientational metaphor allowed new meanings of the policy to come to light.

The third type is an ontological metaphor, which gives a concept certain characteristics that are tangible, such as substance, boundary or objectivity (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 25). LEARNING IS AN EVENT is an example from *Learning Together* as it can be regarded as bounded by time, place and activity, while another, LEARNING IS A PATHWAY, is commonly found in contemporary educational policy (Rooney & Solomon, 2004). LEARNING IS A PATHWAY has interesting links back to medieval ideas about *learning* as it brings to mind the idea of peripatetic students moving from place to place, learning from master scholars as they went (Doll, 2002, p. 29).

Seeking a frame of metaphors

My strategy was to scan the text of *Learning Together* and express each metaphor and metaphorical entailment following Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 4). At the same time, by taking account of the types of metaphor that I could identify from the text of *Learning Together*, I had a means to understand potential meanings more deeply. This was undertaken in a manner analogous to N. Quinn's (1997) schema analysis in which she considered a corpus of texts and found eight classes of metaphors for marriage. My scan revealed two dominant metaphors: LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER, which was derived directly from the title of the policy; and LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY, a structural metaphor evoked by the metaphor of the title with extensive entailments found throughout the text. A further scan of the text found numerous other metaphors such as LEARNING IS WORK and TEACHING IS MENTORING. Each metaphor was listed and categorised (Appendix C) then this list was reviewed to reveal relationships between them. I acknowledged such relationships where two metaphors seem to be consistent or coherent (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 44). *Consistency* is where a concept is elaborated through a structured set of metaphors; and those metaphors have consistency, while *coherence* is where metaphors, and associated entailments, may not be consistent with each other, but they may demonstrate a logic that contributes to an overall metaphorical structure. This review revealed that the most dominant metaphor in the text, LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER was an ontological metaphor whilst LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY was a key structural metaphor. As I identified other possible structural metaphors, I attempted to show how each metaphor was internally coherent or consistent and how there might be coherence and consistency between metaphors.

The resulting list of metaphors was reviewed and groupings of metaphors emerged. Mapping of the metaphors suggested that the metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY could be constructed of two related metaphors LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE and LEARNING IS ACTIVITY. Every metaphor was mapped according to how they related to these two metaphors, resulting in two extensive lists of metaphors and entailments under each heading. Those metaphors that did not cohere or weren't consistent with either LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE and LEARNING IS ACTIVITY were placed in a third list. At the same time as I explored the list in this manner, I became aware of a set of other groupings that cross-referenced with this list. I named these using what seemed to be relevant terms such as *democracy*, *partnerships* and *schooling*. Thus my analysis involved listing each metaphor and entailment in one or both of the columns headed LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE and LEARNING IS AN ACTIVITY, while at the same time listing them in groupings where appropriate. Lastly, each of these groupings was further clustered according to broader thematic associations, following Quinn (1997). I chose an

approach to interpret the text to capture subtleties relating to the metaphoric use of words and phrases in a way that allowed me to recognise commonalities, groupings and links between metaphors and thematic groupings.

While I might have used qualitative data analysis computer software such as NUDIST, NVivo or other qualitative data analysis packages (Bernard & Ryan, 1998), I chose not to. The use of a software package may have made the task of distinguishing metaphors and putting them into thematic groupings more time efficient; however, such software relies on applying defined commonalities and groupings for analysing data. This may have prevented me from making the subtle alterations I needed to those groupings as my interpreting progressed. Further, Bazeley (2007, p. 7) noted that such software packages may have distanced me from the data or limited the flexibility of the approach of listing the metaphors I found in the text. This free-flowing approach also gave a depth and richness to my interpreting that otherwise may have been absent using computer software, or which may have been limited by the time it took to develop (Welsh, 2002).

That I chose this means is acknowledgment that interpreting by use of metaphors as a strategy “is always value constituting – making sense in a particular way, privileging one ordering of the ‘facts’ over others” (Richardson, 2000, p. 927). While the approach I used uncovered potential meanings from the text, it also revealed much about my own situatedness in relation to this policy. I began to grasp that my initial understandings of *Learning Together* had been premised on my engagement with it both as a writer and member of the education institution. Any interpretations I had made of the policy seemed influenced by my understandings of the context in which the document was generated, and by my ongoing reading of it and involvement in its implementation. This placed my own epistemological, ontological and ethical framing squarely in the foreground of the interpretive process.

This scan helped me gain insight into the epistemological and ontological grounding of my frame of metaphors. Humans try to give reason to experience (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. x) and they do this through language. Therefore, metaphors are integral to how we understand and explain our lives, both individually and collectively, using language. Metaphors are not merely individual and separate responses to experience. While a metaphor such as LEARNING IS A JOURNEY is grounded in our experience and arises from causation (p. 69), it is also based on individual and shared understandings of language. The idea of objectively interpreting a metaphor is not possible, as they are partly emergent, arising from our experiences and ways of explaining and understanding those experiences, and are partly metaphorical, as they arise from other metaphors and metaphorical concepts used to understand our experiences.

Because defining concepts (JOURNEYS, MADNESS, WAR, HEALTH) emerge from our interactions with one another and with the world, the concepts they metaphorically define (e.g. LOVE) will be understood in terms of what we will call interactional properties.

(Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 119)

For example, a concept such as *schooling*, which was a major concern of the *Learning Together* policy, emerges from our experience of being taught in institutions, and is itself a metaphor that defines other concepts such as *learning*. The interactional properties of the metaphorical concept SCHOOLING and other coherent metaphorical concepts such as EDUCATION enable us to understand the concept *learning*. My association of metaphors relating to “togetherness” and “community” could be construed as arising from my own positioning as an educator with a passionate interest in how schooling might be a democratic project (Purpel & McLaurin, 2004, p. 61). My assumption here was that creating community requires a commitment to togetherness. However, it could be that “togetherness” and “community” take on particular meanings within frames that educators commonly use to view their work and that my analysis was shaped by this. Therefore, a method of free-flowing analysis not only enabled me to see connections between ideas, but it assisted me in further revealing my own understandings. In this way, I could see that I had “grounded” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 56) my interpreting of metaphor as much in my own understandings as in meanings which I drew from the text of *Learning Together* itself.

Metaphorical concepts that systematically shape language to explain our living experiences are powerful and, indeed, can be overwhelming. Metaphors can highlight aspects of a concept (e.g. SCHOOLS ARE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS) and hide other aspects (e.g. SCHOOLS ARE PEOPLE) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 10). Our understandings are influenced by drawing attention to, or away from, how we perceive some experiences. Some of our perceptions become more important than others. If we think of a school using the metaphor of a LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, this may focus attention on the physical features and artefacts of a school at the forefront of any understanding we may have of the concept *school* and away from human relationships and ethical values.

Since metaphorical concepts are only ever partial and metaphors do not give full and complete descriptions or explanations of our experiences and understandings, no set of structured, orientational or ontological metaphors are able to fully articulate a concept in every situation or context. As an example, LEARNING can be understood in relation to a range of experiences which can be represented metaphorically, such as SCHOOLING, WORK and TRAINING. LEARNING would be only partially defined by one or all of these conceptual metaphors that structure it. As Lakoff and Johnson noted (1980), this

understanding of metaphor is useful as it enables us to reject an objectivist version of truth, what I refer to as a “truth of correctness” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 157) where the definition of something determines its reality and therefore our understanding of it. A standard view of *definition* means believing that “experiences and objects have inherent properties and that human beings understand them solely in terms of these properties” (p. 119). If we follow this standard view, a concept would be defined and applied where the inherent properties were necessary and sufficient. Yet a concept such as LEARNING is only partially defined by inherent properties and most of these can be understood metaphorically. LEARNING involves *activity* and *relationships*, each of which is bound in a complex set of understandings emerging from metaphors and experiences.

Experiences (love, time and argument) are “conceptualized and defined in terms of other basic domains of experience like journeys, money and war. The definition of sub-concepts like BUDGETING TIME and ATTACKING A CLAIM should fall out as consequences of defining the more general concepts (TIME, ARGUMENT, etc.) in metaphorical terms.

(Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 117)

In the same way, while we may be able to define *learning* through inherent properties such as *work* and *achievement*, we can only partly comprehend it in this way as our comprehension of *learning* is grounded in both experience and metaphor. *Work* and *achievement* are bound up in other metaphors and experiences. For me, *work* evoked the metaphor of WORK IS FUN arising from personal experiences, but for others, a more appropriate metaphor may be WORK IS PROGRESS. In *Learning Together*, the concept *learning* was structured primarily in terms of metaphorical concepts for other natural kinds of experience, such as JOURNEY, RELATIONSHIPS and ACTIVITY.

My use of metaphors as frames to interpret *Learning Together* was based on a presupposition that we cannot reflectively understand our experiences without an awareness of how we use metaphor to structure the concepts by which we understand those experiences. There is no pure or certain way of knowing our world. Our understanding of it would never be separate from metaphors that gave language to it. By more comprehensively understanding how we use metaphors, and the language contexts within which they arise, we can make sense of our experiences and the world, and share this sense with others. Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 192) refer to this epistemological stance as “experientialism”. Experientialism differs from an objectivist point of view on human understanding, which is used to argue that metaphors are merely figurative, rather than literal, ways of using language. It also rejects a subjective position used to argue that it is impossible to determine absolute truth, as all experience and ways of understanding experience are situated and understood only from an individual perspective (pp. 185-225).

In this first phase of my interpreting, I came to understand that metaphors give meaning to our experiences and provide structure to our understanding. They also shape and influence new meaning-making. This can be understood as an ongoing explaining, sharing and questioning of our living experience that resists objectivist notions of truth in which pure meanings can be discovered and upheld. Instead, we form new metaphors as our experience of it changes. In this way, the metaphorical concept LEARNING can be understood differently as my experience changes. For example, after engaging with *Learning Together*, I began to use a new metaphorical expression LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY rather than a more recognisable LEARNING IS A JOURNEY or LEARNING IS A PATHWAY, which imply a more individualistic notion of *learning*. In doing so, I explained *learning* in a new way and shared my understanding through language. By implication, I questioned the legitimacy of the more customary way of speaking metaphorically about *learning* as a JOURNEY or PATHWAY.

Using metaphors and their entailments to create a frame of concepts enabled me to stand at some distance from a policy document in which I was intimately involved. The many readings and writings, and re-readings and re-writings that I undertook throughout the development of the document entrenched an acceptance of the surface meanings of the text deeply in my consciousness. Therefore, I found it difficult to detach myself from that experience and the way in which I explained that experience to myself. Using the strategies of this phase, I began to read the text with fresh eyes, bringing new understandings and questions to words and phrases that I knew well. These strategies enabled me to ask myself if there were metaphorical concepts that I could interpret from *Learning Together* that would highlight or hide other ways of knowing and understanding *learning* or other key concepts. The purpose of my analysis was to understand the influence of these metaphorical structures on interpreting the policy. Using the understandings of metaphor described above, I identified metaphors and explored how they created a frame by which I could gain insights into the meanings of *Learning Together* (Appendix C).

The first set listed metaphors that referred to the policy as a whole. They were:

1. *LEARNING TOGETHER* IS A LIVING EVOLVING DOCUMENT
2. *LEARNING TOGETHER* IS A LONG-TERM STRATEGY
3. *LEARNING TOGETHER* IS A BRIDGE
4. *LEARNING TOGETHER* IS A VISION OF A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM
5. *LEARNING TOGETHER* IS LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY

The first four of these metaphors, briefly elaborated below, drew on direct quotes from the text of the policy. The fifth metaphor is then investigated in more detail.

It was stated in the ministerial preamble to *Learning Together* that the policy is “very much a ‘living’ and evolving document” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 2). The first metaphor in this set, *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A LIVING EVOLVING DOCUMENT*, suggested another coherent metaphor of *POLICY AS TEXT*. It was possible to think of a text as a static object, but the reference to “living and evolving” brought entailments to the fore that represented the consistent metaphor *TEXT* as a growing, organic entity. This metaphor was both ontological, in that it implied characteristics of physicality and presence, and orientational, as suggested by the word “evolving” which implied movement. I interpreted this metaphor to mean that there would be an ongoing consultation throughout the implementation period of the policy, in order to change it if necessary.

The second metaphor, *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A LONG-TERM STRATEGY*, was drawn directly from the text of the ministerial statement. It related to a structural metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A STRATEGY*, implying entailments of the metaphors *POLICY IS PROPOSITION* and *POLICY IS AN ACT* rather than *POLICY IS AN OBJECT*. The entailment *LEARNING TOGETHER IS LONG TERM* elaborated this metaphor and I interpreted the reference to time as characterising this metaphor as an orientational one.

The third metaphor, *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A BRIDGE*, was used in the ministerial statement but it was also referred to again in the latter part of the policy in relation to the reporting framework (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000, p. 30). This metaphor gave the inference that the policy was an object – a bridge. Further, when considered in conjunction with the account – positioned at the end of the policy – of the policy’s purpose, the metaphor implied not a static object of a bridge, but the story of passage over that bridge. That suggested other metaphors such as *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A NARRATIVE* and *POLICY IS ACT*. This metaphor was interpreted as orientational in that it suggested movement.

The fourth metaphor, *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A VISION OF A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM*, incorporated a number of interrelated metaphors. They included *POLICY IS PROPOSITION*, *EDUCATION IS A SYSTEM* and *EDUCATION IS AN INSTITUTION*. Each of these metaphors contributed to a dominant structural metaphor, *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A VISION*. This metaphor was interpreted as ontological as it appeared to be derived from sensory experience.

Each of those four metaphors was significant in its own right in terms of enabling meaning to be made of *Learning Together*. However, it was the fifth metaphor, *LEARNING IS LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY*, which provided me with the most significant

opportunity to interpret this policy as it offered an overarching metaphorical structure to which most of the other metaphors could be related. LEARNING IS LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY was the only metaphor identified that related to the title of the policy, as well as to the goals and initiatives detailed in the text. It presented possibilities for interpreting the text of the policy in depth and suggested a metaphor that provided the structure for incorporating most of the other metaphors I revealed. I arrived at this metaphor following an initial scan of the text that disclosed the following metaphors:

LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER⁵

LEARNING IS BEING TOGETHER

LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

LEARNING IS A PATHWAY⁶

LEARNING IS A JOURNEY

LEARNING IS WORK

Before I moved to investigate the structure of LEARNING IS LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY, I explored the closely related metaphor of LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER, which, as it related directly to the title, was the most obvious conceptual metaphor evident in the *Learning Together* policy. This metaphor was elaborated and entailed through many of the metaphors and metaphorical concepts within the policy's text. It dominated the framing of the policy, providing a contrast that made it stand out; and it was distinctive, presenting a less conventional way of conceiving of the concept *learning*. This metaphor masked other possible metaphors, such as LEARNING IS LEARNING ALONE. Conceptually, this differed from a variety of standard portrayals of *learning*, particularly the dominant traditional view of an individual following a solo educational path. As Dwight and Garrison (2003) remarked, in our traditional education systems "Students are neither trained nor encouraged to go their own course" (p. 702). LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER can be interpreted as an ontological metaphor, indicating that togetherness is a good way to learn, as differentiated from learning alone. This influenced the reading of the initiatives in the policy in two ways. This reading implied that success in learning would be more likely by learning together.

In highlighting collaborative notions of *learning* and hiding individualistic ones, the metaphor LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER connects with potent political, social and psychological concepts, such as *democracy*, *community* and *reciprocity*. Yet this metaphor might also could be interpreted as a call to individuals and business units of the

⁵ The first three metaphors link to the overarching metaphor LEARNING IS LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY.

⁶ This and the following two metaphors are addressed later in the chapter.

Department of Education, suggesting they would operate more effectively if there were greater collaboration, which was an understanding I had because of my role in the ministerial office. Because my interpreting of the policy became focused on *learning*, this metaphor did not draw attention, as it might have done, to any potential intention of the policy to restructure the Department of Education or reframe its employees' work. Most readers might apply understandings and values about *learning* to their understanding of the policy, rather than understandings and values relating to *institutional change*. If *learning* implied collective benefits, and these were understood as a greater good than individual benefits, then any concomitant institutional change would also be implied as good. In this fashion, the structure of this metaphor and its entailments highlighted positive implications relating to potential organisational changes and masked any negative ones. In particular, the entailment COMMUNITY IS GOOD underpinned the metaphor LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER. For Delanty (2003, p. 2) *community* is often presented as a strongly positive concept, such as a utopia, yet it can also have negative meanings, particularly where there are those who are included in a community and others who are excluded (Bauman, 2000, p. 101). As *Learning Together* was a politically motivated government policy, it was possible to challenge that "learning together" was always a positive notion or at least to query whose interests were being met by regarding it positively. Emerging from the study were puzzlements that were not satisfied by a smooth and uncritical interpreting of the language of this policy. What might have made possible a shift in understanding *learning* as something that we did primarily as individuals, to a more collaborative idea?

LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER was the most obvious metaphor in the text of *Learning Together*; however, the repetition of the term *learning* in this metaphor created a baffling conceptual loop that implied there was already a well-established *learning* concept to which the metaphor referred. Previous discussion demonstrates that my understanding of this concept was in flux. To assist me, I sought to build the structure of the metaphor LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER by elaborating a number of related metaphors and their entailments. These included LEARNING IS PARTICIPATION, LEARNING TOGETHER IS CULTURAL ACTIVITY, LEARNING IS PREPARATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY and LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY. Supporting the overarching structural metaphor was a set of interrelated entailments that proposed *learning* to be relational or participatory and something that an individual did not do alone.

A conceptual metaphor of LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY was emerging to demonstrate how *learning* was central to our relationships with others and to enabling communities and societies to function (Sfard, 1998). It offered the strongest conceptual structure related to LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER and masked the idea of sole

educational pursuits that have been traditionally associated with learning (Dwight & Garrison, 2003, p. 702). The metaphor LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER brought together the concepts of *collaboration* and *activity*, avoiding the conceptual loop I described earlier. An extensive set of entailments for the metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY was found throughout the text of the policy – in the ministerial statement, overview, goals, strategies and evaluation framework. LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY gave meaning and organisation to the metaphor LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER through the concept of *collaboration*, yet it also added the concept *activity*. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the concept of *learning* was linked directly with that of *activity* through the rise of schools, possibly from the connections between pedagogy and curriculum made by medieval scholar Ramus (Doll, 2002, p. 29). The form that the *activity of learning* has generally taken in the modern era is *education* through schools and other similar institutions.

Interpreting the structure of the metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY led me to consider metaphors of TOGETHERNESS and ACTION in relation to the concept *learning*. “Certain concepts are structured almost entirely metaphorically” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 85). As *learning* is not clearly delineated in our experience, I was attempting to comprehend it in an indirect way through metaphor. The concept of *learning* can be regarded as a gestalt, giving rise to the metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY and other related metaphors, including LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE and LEARNING IS ACTIVITY and their sub-concepts and entailments. “Some gestalts are relatively simple (CONVERSATION) and some are extremely elaborate (WAR). There are also complex gestalts or “metaphorically structured concepts”, which are structured partially in terms of other gestalts. *Learning* could be understood as a complex gestalt arising from relationships between, or partially structured by other gestalts, in this case, *collaboration* and *activity*. The combination of two complex and elaborated metaphors created new metaphors with fresh entailments.

I considered the two metaphors LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE and LEARNING IS ACTIVITY more deeply, by listing metaphors and entailments I interpreted from the text in two columns, each one headed by one of these metaphors. This enabled me to think about the ontological and orientational implications of the metaphor and it seemed that LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY and LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER were both orientational and ontological metaphors. COLLABORATIVE suggested tangible characteristics, such as proximity, boundary or physical presence, giving ontological grounding, while ACTIVITY implied movement and therefore orientation. I added a separate column for any metaphors for *learning* that did not appear to relate to either *collaboration* or *activity*. Further, I grouped together statements that did not appear to be

linked to *learning* as a metaphorical concept. From this extensive table of metaphors and entailments, I looked for relationships between the metaphors and drew out any consistencies, inconsistencies, coherence or incoherence within and between the metaphors. This showed relationships of a direct and indirect nature between the metaphors, that might constitute the structure of the metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY.

Of these two metaphors for *learning*, LEARNING IS ACTIVITY stood out in the text of *Learning Together*, but the metaphor of LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE was also strongly evident. While these two metaphors initially did not appear consistent with each other, they were coherent through a number of other conceptual metaphors. *Work* and *engagement* were two such concepts. *To collaborate* involves *work*, and activity links to *work* through exertion. Further, *collaboration* involves *engagement* between individuals to do or achieve something, while *activity* requires forms of *engagement* between individuals or an individual and an object. If *to collaborate* was understood as “to work together with others”, this implied the metaphor LEARNING IS WORK. This was coherent with the metaphor LEARNING IS ACTIVITY where work is activity.

To further elaborate the two metaphorical concepts, COLLABORATION and ACTIVITY, I identified and discussed a set of related metaphors and entailments for each metaphor. They were:

LEARNING IS PARTICIPATION
LEARNING IS PREPARATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY
LEARNING IS KNOWING TOGETHER
LEARNING IS ATTENDING (AS IN SCHOOL)
LEARNING IS ENGAGEMENT (WITH OTHERS)
LEARNING IS TOGETHERNESS
LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY
LEARNING IS AN INCLUSIVE ACTIVITY
LEARNING IS AN EXCLUSIVE ACTIVITY
LEARNING IS A PROCESS
LEARNING IS A PROCESS WITHIN A COMMUNITY
LEARNING IS SERVING INTERESTS
LEARNING IS A RESOURCE FOR A COMMUNITY

TOGETHERNESS, COLLABORATION, COMMUNITY and PARTICIPATION were considered as metaphors that were consistent, as they all related to individuals interacting with others, with learning as the central focus. The two metaphors LEARNING IS AN INCLUSIVE ACTIVITY AND LEARNING IS AN EXCLUSIVE ACTIVITY appear contradictory and

while they are not consistent, they can be coherent, through the connection of ACTIVITY. Other coherent metaphors and entailments included LEARNING IS ATTENDANCE and LEARNING IS ENGAGEMENT. They were coherent, but not consistent with LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE, as they linked through the concept of *proximity* but did not use coherent language. These two metaphors were also coherent with LEARNING IS ACTIVITY as they implied activity and prompted me to question what was engaged with, or, alternatively, attended to, and by whom. Both ENGAGEMENT and ATTENDANCE could be related to solitary events; for example, we can engage with a book and therefore we are alone. However, *engaging* with an object invariably requires some form of relationship, and attendance implies either being part of a larger group or being in proximity to, or *together*, with others.

From my analysis of the text of *Learning Together*, I determined that the structural metaphor of LEARNING IS ACTIVITY was consistent and coherent with the following metaphors and entailments:

LEARNING IS WORK
LEARNING IS PREPARATION FOR WORK
LEARNING IS PRODUCTIVE
LEARNING IS PERFORMING
LEARNING IS RESPONDING
LEARNING IS PARTICIPATION
PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOLING IS LEARNING
LEARNING IS CREATING VALUE
LEARNING IS AN EVENT
LEARNING IS A PRODUCT
LEARNING IS AN OBJECT
LEARNING IS HIDDEN
LEARNING IS A HIDDEN OBJECT
LEARNING IS A BUILDING
LEARNING IS UP
LEARNING IS A BENEFIT FOR SOCIETY AND INDIVIDUALS
LEARNING IS LIFELONG
LEARNING IS WORK
LEARNING IS CREATING
LEARNING IS PERFORMING⁷
LEARNING IS AN OPPORTUNITY

⁷ Another related metaphor might be LEARNING IS PERFORMING (as in “to an acceptable level”).

LEARNING IS SUCCESS

LEARNING IS A BENEFIT (LINK TO TEACHING IS A CONTRIBUTION)

LEARNING IS LITERACY

LEARNING IS ENRICHMENT

LEARNING IS A RISKY ACTIVITY (IT REQUIRES SAFETY)

LEARNING IS A JOURNEY (ACROSS A BRIDGE)

LEARNING IS A PROCESS

These metaphors portrayed the concept of *learning* principally as *work*, *productive*, and *preparation for work*. *Learning* was characterised by a variety of actions, *preparing*, *creating*, *responding*, *participating*, *collaborating*, *performing*, *working* and *creating value*. It also involved *risk*. The *activity* of learning was both an “object” and an “event”. As an event, it was a *journey*, a *production* or a *performance*, while as an *object*, the activity of *learning* was symbolised as *achievements*, *benefits*, *enrichment* and *successes*, such as such as *literacy*, *work opportunities* or *resources for a community* or individual. As an object, *learning* that had characteristics of quality or quantity could be present or absent. It could also be contained in *schooling*.

Interpreting *Learning Together* in this phase suggested that the metaphor LEARNING IS ACTIVITY and its entailments were more prevalent than LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE and its entailments. This indicated a strong conceptual link between *learning* and *activity*. Indeed, how I understand *learning* as it was contained in *schooling* was what I understood to be *educational*. While this conceptualisation seemed like commonsense, I reflected on my determination to see these metaphors as frames rather than realities. This gave me the possibility of questioning how we had come to differentiate and objectify *learning* as *educational* and embedded in *schooling*. Why had *learning* in relation to *education* become differentiated from the moment-by-moment interaction that all human beings had with their world, that ongoing relationship that was constantly shaping thoughts and actions. What lead to *learning* being a distinguishable object? It showed how the metaphor LEARNING IS ACTIVITY had masked other ways of understanding *learning*.

In elaborating the overarching structural metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY, I understood the concept *learning* as being primarily related to relationships between individuals or various groups within communities and societies. In regard to *Learning Together*, this meant within Tasmania’s education and political communities. *Learning* could be thought of as a postulated concept meaning that it can be comprehended only in the context of certain other concepts; in this instance, *activity* and *collaboration* and their associated sub-concepts. New metaphors that emerged from my

new understanding were LEARNING IS KNOWING TOGETHER, LEARNING IS COMING TO KNOW TOGETHER and LEARNING IS COMING TO UNDERSTAND TOGETHER. These contrasted with more traditional conceptions of *learning* as being for individual benefit and of a solitary nature.

I had so far focused on a shift from *learning* as collaborative concept away from understanding it as it related to *individuality*. As Doll (2002, p. 29) notes, from ancient to medieval times *learning* was “highly individualised and restricted”, without the sequence and structure that is recognisable in education today. Students travelled on foot between teachers or “masters”, following their own intellectual paths and making choices based on particular personal, rather than collective, needs. In *Learning Together*, I came to recognise metaphorical expressions which diverged from the dominant portrayal of *learning* as collaborative and which proposed more solitary ways of thinking about *learning*, *education* and *schooling*. LEARNING IS A PATHWAY and LEARNING IS PERSONAL FULFILMENT were two metaphors identified that implied learning alone. Interpreting *learning* in this way primarily highlighted *activity* but not *collaboration*.

Contemporary technology is opening up new possibilities for understanding *learning* as a solitary or collaborative pursuit. As schooling in the twenty-first century grapples with the educational implications of information technology, it has been suggested that the use of hypertext (text containing links to other texts) in digital communication forms has created a new “hyperpedagogy” (Dwight & Garrison, 2003, p. 718). Hyperpedagogy refers to individuals learning by following personal paths, based on choices they make when they click on hypertext embedded in digital products. This means that learning experiences are primarily undertaken by oneself, following idiosyncratic routes through cyberspace. However, other research on organisational learning and the opportunities offered by information and communication technology challenges previous assumptions (Akgün, Lynn & Reilly, 2002; Kasl, Marsick, & Dechant, 1997; McCain, 1996). The internet and contemporary digital social media such as Facebook and Twitter, have fostered an explosion in collaborative networks online, many of which can be referred to as “communities of learning” (Roth & Lee, 2006). These communities create shared knowledge, practice and understandings (Schön, 1973; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Wikis, easily created interlinked web pages, are examples of such online communities, employing innovative communication technology and engaging in mutuality in decision-making and verification of knowledge.

I noted tensions between collective and individualistic interpretations of the idea of *learning*. As already noted, *learning* has been portrayed as a personal capacity over centuries, with teacher as dispenser and student as receiver. It has also been framed as “individual consciousness” (Greene, 1971). While individuals have been physically *with*

others in learning environments (Resta, 1995), there has been less acceptance that individuals could *learn* together. While it is common to recognise different contexts where learning experiences might occur, such as online or in a group, the assumption that knowledge can be created through collective approaches or that learning can be mutually expressed is still a tenuous one. Would I ever be able to share my learning with others? If it was impossible to *learn* together, from where do new meanings of *learning*, such as a collaborative meaning, arise? How would a policy such as *Learning Together*, through its metaphorical structure, create new insights into the concept *learning* and prompt me to think differently about it? I wanted to know more about how language, and particularly metaphor, contributed to such new meanings.

The concept of culture, related to the field of sociology, has invariably been premised on the potential for ideas and thoughts to be created within human social groupings. For Griswold (2004, p. 3), groupings represent themselves to themselves or each other particularly through expressive forms such as norms, values, beliefs or symbols. Culture has also relied on an assumption of forms of collective consciousness as “groups and societies need collective representations of themselves to inspire sentiments of unity and mutual support, and culture fulfills this need” (p. 55). Conversely, in the field of psychology, the interests of individual behaviour, mental processes and consciousness, focus on learning in relation to the individual, or learner (Gardner, 1991; Vosniadou, 2001) to some extent ignoring the social context within which the individual might be participant. A debate of this kind may seem a superficial one. After all, does it matter if *learning* is a collaborative or individual process, or if what we learn is shared or held individually? Yet such seemingly different metaphorical portrayals of *learning* have been and continue to be central to significant debates about education within Western societies throughout the modern era, and can be recognised in arguments as to whether learning is for personal benefit or public good (Dewey, 2010; Ayers, 1968; Reid, 2003). However, many educational policies and curriculum statements do not attempt to acknowledge or address this tension, and the differentiation between these two diverse metaphorical renderings is rarely made explicit.

My concern has been to understand what the influence of differing metaphors of *learning* might be on understanding the meanings of the *Learning Together* policy. If *learning* was regarded as individualistic, I wanted to know how the policy *Learning Together* lead me to a more collaborative sense of learning. I also wanted to know what might be the consequences if the policy highlighted *learning* as collaborative, if this led to an overshadowing of individualised notions of learning in educational settings. Regarding both queries, my study offered a means by which these contrasting perspectives could be better understood, but still did not provide definitive answers. It

could be that I might find that the two meanings of *learning* were not necessarily at odds. In this way, interpreting policy using a frame of metaphors began to create new understandings.

In my interpreting to this point, I had demonstrated the overriding dominance of the metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY in the policy and how this metaphor acted to mask other ways of understanding *learning*. What emerged was an understanding that this metaphor and its structure only partially explained the concept of *learning* in this policy. It became clear that it was always possible to interpret other related or contrary metaphors for *learning* from the text of *Learning Together*. In particular, metaphors and their entailments that linked with the overarching conceptual metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY could be found that related to concepts such as *teaching*, *school*, *community* and *partnerships*.

Linked to LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY, the metaphor TEACHING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY opened up a new way of thinking about *teaching*. The metaphor and its extended structure reframed the concept of *teaching* from a one-way method of transmission of information from teacher to student, to one that was grounded more in relationships. This supported the dominant metaphor of LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY. In the same way, *teaching* could also be elaborated as two metaphors, TEACHING IS COLLABORATIVE and TEACHING IS AN ACTIVITY. A range of metaphors and entailments ensued from my interpreting, including TEACHING IS LEADING, TEACHERS ARE PARTNERS and TEACHING IS A CONTRIBUTION. Each emphasised the relational nature of teaching, as they implied an “other” with whom teaching was negotiated, and contributed to TEACHING IS COLLABORATIVE. Metaphors such as TEACHING IS BUILDING A BRIDGE, TEACHING IS RESPONDING, TEACHING IS DELIVERING and TEACHING IS ORGANISING LEARNING structured the metaphor TEACHING IS AN ACTIVITY.

TEACHING IS BUILDING A BRIDGE came, of course, from the metaphor of a bridge with the associated narrative presuming a link between the supposedly current “first-class” learning achievements of the Tasmanian education system (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 1), overseen by the state government, and potential achievements in the future which might be claimed as “world-class”. The metaphor of BUILDING created a subtle shift from metaphorical entailments that had represented *teaching* and *learning* as relational to those more about *activity*. The BUILDING metaphor introduced an objective element to the metaphoric framework that I had been constructing. This led to an entailment that learning was a step-by-step, or finite, process and suggested a positivistic epistemological stance. Knowledge was definable, like a building, and therefore could be acquired. This contrasted with the metaphor TEACHERS

ARE PARTNERS, which suggested that the relationship between a teacher and a student was more even. This example demonstrated how an overarching metaphorical concept such as *collaborative activity* lead to entailments that were quite inconsistent and incoherent with one another, yet the structure of the overall metaphor remained plausible.

A similar conflict arose for the concept *schooling*. Relational metaphors such as SCHOOLS ARE PEOPLE, SCHOOLS ARE LEARNING ORGANISATIONS and SCHOOLS ARE PARTNERS contrasted with more physical metaphors such as SCHOOLS ARE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS and SCHOOLING IS A CONTAINER. However, the metaphor PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOLING IS LEARNING created a link between the concrete and relational aspects of this concept in a way that was coherent, yet not consistent. The metaphor of LEARNING ORGANISATION is widely found in contemporary educational literature (Garratt, 1986; Senge, 1990) and is often used interchangeably, or in conjunction, with the metaphor LEARNING COMMUNITY. It implies that, given that a school can be understood as an organisation or community, there is a capacity and an intention for those within that community or organisation to learn in a collective manner. I linked the use of the metaphor LEARNING ORGANISATION with the metaphors of COLLABORATION and ACTIVITY in that *learning* is activity that can be organised. This suggested further metaphors, such as A LEARNING COMMUNITY IS A LEARNING ORGANISATION, A LEARNING COMMUNITY IS AN ORGANISATION and A COMMUNITY IS A LEARNING ORGANISATION.

CONTAINER was an ontological metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 93) that also could be applied to schools. It proposed that *schools* and *schooling* were objects which held relationships and activities within them. Understood in this way, schools were containers for students, teachers, learning, potential, teaching, collaboration and activity. The SCHOOLING IS A CONTAINER metaphor was consistent with A COMMUNITY IS A CONTAINER metaphor, as communities contain people, viewpoints, services, actions and objects. It was also coherent with SCHOOLS ARE LEARNING COMMUNITIES, where learning communities *held* people who taught and learnt, as well as ideas, learning objects, opportunities and services.

In *Learning Together*, I found metaphors that related to *community*, including: COMMUNITY IS A RESOURCE, COMMUNITIES ARE CULTURES, and COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS ARE PARTNERS. The term *community* was used both metaphorically and as a metonym, referring to the whole Tasmanian community, all of the Tasmanian people and, specifically, the education community (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, pp. 9, 33). Used as a metonym, it added substance to the metaphor LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER as it framed the policy's potential audiences in an inclusive way. Further, "education community" (pp. 2, 5, 11, 29, 34) and "education and training

system” (pp. 19, 24) were terms used interchangeably to refer to a composite, and seemingly cohesive, group of educators and educational policy-makers.

The metaphor WIDER COMMUNITY appeared to refer to those beyond or outside schools, particularly community groups, organisations and businesses. It may have been that the metaphor WIDER COMMUNITY was used to capture those who were disconnected from schools, as new audiences for this educational and political policy. A generally obvious, but usually unstated, goal of a politically constructed policy is to achieve political success with the voting public. Framing the policy’s audience as the WIDER COMMUNITY may have assisted this. The policy used this metaphor numerous times and in this way the metaphor COMMUNITY masked both the interest groups served by the policy and those that were ignored. For example, the policy addressed teachers and principals, but not business groups. Further, it mentioned parents and other school employees but did not deal with their particular issues. There was also the suggestion that schools should serve a set of other interests, particularly “successive governments” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 2), going beyond the interests of students and their families. This highlighted the contestable nature of differing viewpoints and ethical standpoints in the policy.

These elaborations of the metaphor COMMUNITY as WIDER COMMUNITY and SCHOOL COMMUNITY seemed to be congruent with the strategies outlined in *Learning Together*, as its stated intentions were to establish more inclusive educational decision-making. Yet, as I have previously noted, COMMUNITY can mask negative associations. The metaphor of COMMUNITY could stand for a group of people united by geography or activity, or it may mean those who share similar understandings, values and expectations. In *Learning Together*, the pervasive manner in which COMMUNITY was used masked negative aspects of the concept *community*. The term *community* can prescribe, and proscribe, domains of knowledge and values, and ways of being, to the point of there being “no difference that counts” (Bauman, 2000, p. 100), because difference requires confronting or “facing up to the otherness of other”.

Education and training communities might privilege professional knowledge and practice, in contrast to broader communities for whom the meanings of education may be not easily defined. Indeed, geographical boundaries might not fit neatly with shared cultural or socio-economic groupings. As Bauman (2000, p. 101) noted, community solidarity is assumed to be positive, but it may also mean that those who are not part of a community are “excluded out”, or those who are “included in” are subject to the annihilation of otherness. In demonstrating this, Bauman, after Levi-Strauss (1992), referred to strategies of swallowing and ejecting, with the community that excludes, using anthropogenic or “eating up” strategies; and the community that includes, using

anthropoemic, or “vomiting out”, strategies. To only frame *community* as a good concept did not reveal potential negative actions, beliefs or values of communities. I could see that my interpreting was beginning to dig beneath the meanings of metaphors that had appeared at first smooth and positive.

In the text of *Learning Together*, metaphors of PARTNERS and PARTNERSHIPS were consistent with the metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY and its sub-metaphor of LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE. These metaphors were mostly evident in relation to strategies and initiatives where teachers, schools and community organisations might act collaboratively. EDUCATION IS PARTNERSHIP was a structural metaphor that was subsidiary to LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY. Other metaphors in *Learning Together* that connected to the concepts of *partnerships* and *partners* were TEACHERS ARE PARTNERS, SCHOOLS ARE PARTNERS and PARTNERSHIPS ARE LINKS FOR LEARNING. The metaphor of A BRIDGE portrayed the idea that students needed support to learn successfully. As part of this metaphor, PARTNERSHIPS were specifically referred to as LINKS FOR LEARNING. THE BRIDGE was used to describe how TEACHING, SCHOOLING, COMMUNITY and PARTNERSHIPS supported students and enabled LEARNING and ACHIEVEMENT. In the same sense, PARTNERSHIPS were “means” for enabling LEARNING, although PARTNERSHIPS could also be outcomes, of *learning*, or “ends”. I understood *learning* as a concept postulated in terms of another concept, *partnering*, and saw a shift from that enduring assumption of modern education that the *learning* occurs alone and the outcomes of learning are always individual ones.

Table 1, following, lists the key metaphors from the policy *Learning Together* to form a frame of structural metaphors, prior to my outlining a set of metaphoric concepts that underpinned this frame.

Table 1. Interpreting metaphors of *Learning Together* in the first interpretive phase

Metaphors of Learning Together

LEARNING TOGETHER IS A LIVING EVOLVING DOCUMENT

LEARNING TOGETHER IS A LONG-TERM STRATEGY

LEARNING TOGETHER IS A BRIDGE

LEARNING TOGETHER IS A VISION OF A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

Metaphors of learning

LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER

LEARNING IS LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY

LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

- LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE
- LEARNING IS AN ACTIVITY

LEARNING IS A PATHWAY

LEARNING IS A JOURNEY

LEARNING IS WORK

LEARNING IS BEING TOGETHER

Other metaphors from Learning Together

TEACHING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

SCHOOLS ARE LEARNING ORGANISATIONS

A LEARNING COMMUNITY IS A LEARNING ORGANISATION

EDUCATION IS PARTNERSHIP

POLICY IS NARRATIVE

Displays of meaning

To finalise this phase of interpreting *Learning Together* through the frame of metaphor, a further strategy to display meanings of the policy was required. Sets of metaphors had emerged from my interpreting to this point, which I had categorised according to concepts (Appendix C) and I organised these into broad conceptual groupings, shown in Table 2 below. This strategy offered opportunities to see how the metaphors related to each other and to concepts with which I associated them. This strategy was used so that I could question how the metaphors and conceptual groupings came to be organised in the manner they were, and understand more deeply the bases of my interpreting of *Learning Together*. The conceptual groupings were labeled with words and phrases drawn from the text and personal language frameworks, and it became clear to me during this process that

I could not clearly delineate between my existing personal vocabulary and the terms used in the text. Given my involvement in the writing of *Learning Together*, as well as my engagement in educational discourse over many years, I was unable to easily differentiate at first glance what existed prior to my interpreting of this policy and what was created in the interplay between text and myself as interpreter. Such demarcation was neither realistic nor possible in the context of this phase of interpreting, and I doubted if any interpretive approach could remove personal influence completely. I address this doubt more fully in Chapter 7.

I had entitled the conceptual groupings using the following terms, some of which might be understood as concepts: *education and schooling, community, place, democracy, individuality, economy, knowledge and progress, relationships and communication, intentions and purposes, formations and systems, accomplishment, and reciprocity*. I was struck by how there were no metaphors relating to the concept *power*, although it was not noted in my interpretive frame at that time. The label selected for each grouping of metaphors gave insights into what I assumed to be significant knowledge, experience, values and beliefs. Further insights would be provided by exploring how these terms were commonly used, and looking at the terms within each grouping and how, and if, they related to one another.

For example, within the grouping *democracy*, I included *democracy, participation, rights, responsibilities, decision-making and choice*, terms considered by Gutek (2004, p. 187) to be aligned to moderate or liberal democratic ideologies, having their source in values and beliefs that arose during the Enlightenment. They were values and beliefs that denoted a way of understanding democratic life in which individual being was at the core of democratic practice and “Man” was a thinking, choosing actor within a societal context. Some of the expressions I used related to very individualistic democratic values and practices. Others were more oriented toward collaborative democratic values and practices and included *equity, diversity, access and inclusivity*, terms which represented more pluralist perspectives on democracy (Farenga & Ness, 2005). The blend of two related, yet divergent, sets of metaphoric references under the grouping *democracy* brought to the fore inevitable questions about how the groupings came to be.

Table 2. Conceptual groupings of metaphors from *Learning Together*

<p><i>Education and schooling</i></p> <p>education training schooling teaching learning curriculum post- compulsory lifelong learning learning environments</p>	<p><i>Community</i></p> <p>togetherness connectedness partnerships community people parent society culture heritage</p>	<p><i>Accomplishment</i></p> <p>competency standards quality performance effectiveness achievement success excellence comparability accountability improvement expertise competitive recognition</p>	<p><i>Intentions and purposes</i></p> <p>vision goals world-class first-class aspiration purposes opportunities potential enabling progress development outcomes consequences</p>
<p><i>Democracy</i></p> <p>democracy rights responsibilities decision-making choice participation issues equity diversity inclusivity access policy</p>	<p><i>Individuality</i></p> <p>knowledge being skill behaviour values/ethics character need interests gender feelings creativity imagination critical thinking resilience</p>	<p><i>Formations and systems</i></p> <p>systems programs processes facilities resources strategy flexibility delivery service practice support security safety change orientation/direction surface structure</p>	<p><i>Economy, knowledge and progress</i></p> <p>professional learning professionalism leadership management employment work industry economy institutions technology</p>
<p><i>Place</i></p> <p>locality space/place local Tasmania national global</p>	<p><u><i>Power</i>⁸</u></p>	<p><i>Reciprocity</i></p> <p>contribution engagement involvement enrichment satisfaction trust</p>	<p><i>Relationships and communication</i></p> <p>dialogue communication consultation information story</p>

⁸ The term *power* is struck through in this table to represent its absence in my scan of the text (see Appendix C for an extract of this scan)

The grouping *community* included metaphors which emphasised the connections and links between people. I regarded this particular grouping as a “social capital” view, after Cox (1995, p. 18), whose idea of *community* was about “the social glue, the weft and warp of the social fabric which comprises the myriad of interactions that make up our public and private lives – our *vita active*”. What I called attention to here was a relational metaphor of *social capital*, where the attributes of relationships were considered as well as the interplay of cultures and norms. I noted that there were tensions about the idea of community, and similarly, the term “social capital” was contestable. Cox questions the “widespread assumptions that communities and families automatically enrich society by providing models of ‘good’ relationships and civic virtue” (p. 28). An alternative definition of social capital that focuses on more structural aspects of social life is one included in another Department of Education Tasmania (n.d.) policy statement, *Strengthening Family School Relationships*, as “the sum of norms and social relations that are embedded in social institutions, structures and processes” It was my reading of Cox’s work that prompted me to think beyond a structural explanation of social capital that focused on cultures and norms or merely provided a sum of interactions. Given that *Learning Together* related to an educational institution, it was vital that a multifaceted understanding of social capital was used here, to show how institutional structures could “either enhance or deplete social capital by incorporating different types of civic cultures and norms” (Cox, 1995, p. 28).

Intentions and purposes, the title given to a grouping relating to cause, design and purpose, suggested an orientation to change or transformation. The use of the term “transformation” to describe technological change in many fields of human activity such as business, ICT and New Age philosophy in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (Rochon, 1999; Hawken, Lovins, & Hunter Lovins, 2008). Terms such as *aspiration*, *enabling*, *vision* and *potential* have been linked to terms such as *progress*, *development* and *consequences*. The former set suggested a future orientation and multiple possibilities, while the latter could be regarded as being linear, teleological or determinist. My rationale for this grouping was to recognise that there were ideas in the policy about the concept of *change*, yet at the same time, that concept was ambiguous, caught between modernist certainty and non-foundational possibility.

There was a range of other groupings. *Place* was a grouping of spatial and geographical concepts. Similarly, the terms included under the heading *education and schooling* were mostly nouns referring to either sectors or aspects of schooling, with “lifelong learning” the only reference to an ideological stance. *Accomplishment* was the title given to the grouping relating to how success might quantify or qualify *education*, *schooling* or *learning*. Such terms include *competency*, *accountability*, *effectiveness* and

performance, which call to mind modernist theories of economics and the human sciences, such as economic rationalism. The grouping *individuality* incorporated terms related to the capacities, conditions and attributes of an individual, while *reciprocity* captured those terms that indicated mutuality or relationship. *Formations* and *systems* referred to organisational terms about processes and arrangements, such as *delivery* and *resources*, and also to qualities of these, such as *flexibility*, *safety*, *security* and *support*. The *economy* and *knowledge* grouping included terms relating to business, industry, governance and commerce. *Relationships* and *communication* were listed separately to *individuality* and *community*, although the terms included under this heading could be strongly related to both of these other groupings. I chose this term because of the relational nature of the grouping, where each evoked notions of people interacting or exchanging ideas.

Questions about power – a critical turn

As I thought about my frame of these groupings, I posed more and more questions about how particular epistemological, ontological and axiological stances were in play. The concepts and metaphor I identified relating to *democracy* generally represented participatory and pluralist stances, but I was aware that *democracy* could also be understood from highly individual perspectives. It was possible that my understandings influenced how I saw *democracy* in *Learning Together*. I considered how that related to my experience of the world of politics, my previous work in social studies education, or my involvement in *Learning Together*. I felt that I favoured a participatory and pluralist view over an individualistic viewpoint. Other groupings that seemed strongly framed by my personal and work history included *community* and its concomitant grouping *individuality*. I wondered why I was drawn to naming the groupings using terms such as *community*, *participation* and *individuality*. What made me focus on these terms, and were these ideas deeply part of my understanding of myself? Were there terms that did not connect to my understandings? I looked more closely at my interpretive frame to identify what was evident to me and what was not foregrounded at this time. In particular, *power* stood out as a set of ideas that was not evidenced in my interpreting.

For this reason, I then included the heading *power* in the frame of groupings. I created its own grouping, but with the heading struck through as a way of showing that meanings related to *power* were not displayed by my interpretive approach, even though I felt it could be implied by other headings, such as *democracy*, *formations* and *systems*, *economy* and *knowledge*, and *interaction*. I became conscious that my initial readings of the policies and consideration of metaphors did not reveal evidence of *power*, and I began

to question why. In becoming awake to its absence, I was also concerned about how I understood *power* and its relationship to *politics*, as *Learning Together* was a politically driven policy. Superficially, I understood “power” as the “ability to do or effect something or anything, or to act upon a person or thing” (Power, n.d.). On reflection, I saw I could cluster a number of the terms from other groupings under the heading of *power*. For example, *togetherness*, *connectedness*, *partnerships*, *consequences*, *rights*, *responsibilities*, *leadership*, *management* and *strategy* could be interpreted as being implicated in *power*. I came to understand that a metaphor of *Learning Together* could be POWER but that it was hidden. Indeed, it appeared to be masked by other metaphors relating to *community* or *democracy* for example, and this made me aware that what I understood by *power* was unclear.

As I questioned how *power* was represented in *Learning Together*, I also came to question how I understood the other conceptual groupings, such as *community*, *authority*, *autonomy*, *individuality*, *collaboration*, *democracy*, *intention* and *individuality*, which had emerged from my interpreting of the metaphors. Since I commenced my research into *Learning Together*, over a four-year period, I had left, then returned to, a political work context. It was possible that my understandings had altered with this departure and return. I might have new understandings that were not present to me when I first interpreted *Learning Together*. It was also impossible to limit my questions of how I understood *power* to only my work circumstances. Yet, politics had an inextricable place in my life and self-understanding. That I did not notice *power* as a concept at first glance when thinking about *Learning Together* showed me how my interpreting might be superficial or limited. It could be that the policy was framed in a way that did not reveal this concept, or it could be that I did not yet recognise my understandings of *power*.

Yanow (2000, p. 80) stated that what is not said, that is the silences in policy discourses, are as deserving of analytic attention as what is said. She regarded the task of qualitative interpretation as being to unmask such myths and give voice to the silences. Yanow warned us of the “choice myth” (p. 81) where policies might seek legitimacy and public support by creating myths to explain incommensurable values. One myth might be “rational goal setting” (p. 82), a common bureaucratic and corporate ritual where policies are able to mask political and agency realities and create silences. Being so closely part of the development of a policy might make someone such as myself subject to, and indeed an originator of, such a myth.

My study took a critical turn as I considered the possibility that *power* should be a grouping of the metaphors from my interpreting of *Learning Together*. I chose to use selected insights from the work of French philosopher Michel Foucault to raise critical questions about the policy and what it might tell about this education policy. Taking this

critical turn was an attempt at revealing both how the meanings of this policy were structured and how these impacted on my understandings. This allowed me to create some distance from my own embeddedness in this policy and its development. I could bring to the surface my subjectivity, and open myself to the kind of self-reflexivity that was required to bring about new understandings and possibilities. This strategy enabled me to consider the manner in which power was manifested in *Learning Together*, following Kögler's (1999, p. 311) premise that it "is a permanent possibility".

Each of the groupings I had outlined might be regarded as displaying potential meanings of *Learning Together*. By grouping key metaphorical concepts under these headings, I highlighted them to better understand *Learning Together*. While the policy document made explicit a set of values, these concepts allowed me to see more closely a set of values that were, in part, contrasting to those stated in the document. What was of most interest was that these might not have been explicitly avowed by the writers of the policy, nor were they to the forefront of my mind as a reader.

A pause to reflect

In this chapter, I have reflected on *Learning Together* using a frame of *metaphorical groupings* based on the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980). I chose *metaphor* as a "way in" to think about this policy because of the strongly metaphorical nature of the policy's title. This revealed for me a set of groupings by which I could draw out potential meanings. In this phase, I uncovered epistemological understandings of this policy as the set of groupings implied some certainty in terms of what the policy meant. My interpreting posed important questions about the policy's axiological framing, particularly where *power* was not clearly evident in it.

Chapter 6

Applying an interpretive approach Phase 2: Foucault

In Phase 2 of interpreting *Learning Together* I look for a new way to probe the framework I had created in Phase 1. I use ideas from the work of Michel Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995), particularly that from his middle and late periods of writing as noted by McHoul and Grace (1995, p. 4). These insights of Foucault enable me to stand at a thoughtful distance from my previous interpreting and challenge any pre-determined positions I have. Foucault's work causes me to question the framework I have established and consider what has led me to these metaphors and groupings. In particular, I use some of Foucault's philosophical ideas as if they were metaphors to create a new frame for interpreting this policy. By taking a differing perspective, I am able to stand at a distance from my previous interpreting and recognise how unaware I am of any socio-historical positioning, particularly in relation to the concept of *power*.

Foucault's interests in power, knowledge and subjectivity

Foucault had particular interests in ideas he termed *power*, *knowledge* and *subjectivity* (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000, p. 4) and the following questions from McHoul and Grace (1995) were helpful in understanding the nature of his concerns.

Who are we in terms of our knowledges of ourselves?

Who are we in terms of the ways we are produced in political processes?

Who are we in terms of our relations with ourselves and the ethical forms we generate for governing these?

(McHoul & Grace, 1995, p. x)

These questions served as background to my interpreting of *Learning Together* using the insights of Foucault as they explore the ideas that shaped the frame of metaphors I used. They were Foucault's shifting, yet entwined, interests – discursive practices that shape how we know ourselves as subjects, the manner in which we are controlled and judged through relations of power, and the control we apply to ourselves.

These questions caused me to reflect on the epistemological, ontological and axiological bases of my interpreting of *Learning Together*.

Learning Together was a policy created within a political context and it clearly had political as well as bureaucratic policy purposes. As Lakoff and Johnson suggested (1980, p. 10), metaphors that present themselves to us may mask other metaphors and therefore possibilities for understanding. In my interpreting, metaphors that had strong political nuances were not overt. Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) caused me to consider why political perspectives of the policy had not been fore-grounded in my interpretation thus far. Although I had no memory of any stated intention during the writing process of *Learning Together* to highlight some meanings and hide others, in retrospect I saw that choices of particular words and phrases could focus audiences on positive “feel-good” messages relating to ideas such as *democracy*, *community*, *individuality* and *participation*. In particular, I noted that the grouping *democracy* featured prominently in my interpreting and that metaphors that directly referenced or entailed *power* were not evident. I came to this conclusion because of the significant list of metaphors I related to the grouping of *democracy* and the absence of metaphors that I could categorise under the heading *power*.

For what reason was I seemingly so unaware of the policy’s political nuances? As the policy was a political strategy, surely *power* and politics could be considered as concomitant, as in the theorising of Marx and Weber (Nash, 2000, p. 4). Kögler (1999) suggested that individuals are not oriented in their pre-understanding to consider the effects of power on meaning formation, and “the influence of power on meaning remains concealed from the object herself” (p. 251). My perspectives may have been either limited or enhanced by the existing conceptual structures I gave to the policy. I needed a strategy for thinking critically about the policy that would appraise the groupings of metaphors and bring forward others that may have been concealed. I became aware that I might find new understandings of the policy using other frames of metaphors from the one I had applied. Therefore, I needed different ideas and insights to address my concerns. I looked for new metaphors that I might use to think about *Learning Together* and the notion of *power*. I chose Foucault’s work in this phase as he took up the theme of *power* significantly in his mid-career writing (1970, 1972, 1975, 1976).

In examining *Learning Together* in this second phase, I initially used Foucault’s insights in two complementary ways. The first was to think about how relations of power limited or enabled knowledge available to me from interpreting the language of the policy. The second was to understand how knowledge and relations of power may have interacted to make individuals, including myself, subject. This involved considering how various technologies were produced by discourses and then considering our agency as

subjects in relation to this production. These two approaches drawn from different periods of Foucault's writing have often been regarded as dealing with conflicting ideas, and his mid-career work has been described as a "totalising cage" (Nealon, 2008, p. 3), referring to how his account of power appears to deny individuals the capacity to resist the production of their subjectivity. Other commentators (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000, p. 150) have also noted how his work at this time failed to address the way in which individuals acted autonomously, this "nagging question of resistance" (Nealon, 2008, p. 4), while the later work emphasised independence and a capacity to resist. Resistance was about cultivating lives as works of art in which we undertook ethical projects of aesthetic self-authoring. The conflict was between how an individual might be both subject to power that is pervasive, yet able to have the agency to resist it. Later in this chapter, I attempt to bring together what have generally been regarded as inconsistent aspects of Foucault's work through understanding this conflict as an intensification (Nealon, 2008, p. 5).

Foucault's (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) work offered me a new set of insights relating to ideas such as *episteme*, *discourse*, *power/knowledge*, *governmentality*, *bio-power*, *biopolitics* and *subjectivity*. These ideas and insights were applied as new metaphors to form my next frame to rethink the interpretation I had made so far. They allowed me to consider the initial metaphors that I had interpreted and opened the possibility for others which would prompt new understandings of the policy. I drew on these ideas to prompt my re-interpreting of *Learning Together* in this phase as I required new insights, and not necessarily to reflect the chronology of Foucault's own consideration of them, noting the continuity and discontinuity that characterised his work (McHoul & Grace, 1995, p. ix).

Epistemes and discourses

The first of Foucault's ideas that I used in this phase were *episteme* and *discourse*. While the term "episteme" was used in Foucault's earlier work (1970, p. xxiii) for the body of ideas, or system of understanding, that shaped the perception of knowledge at a particular period, my interest is how this idea influenced his understandings of power in relation to knowledge. Foucault himself was inconsistent in how he applied the term *episteme*, at times confusing it with discourse, while also using the terms "regime of knowledge" and "regime of truth" (Young, 2003, p. 174) interchangeably for both episteme and discourse. In this study, I have chosen to use episteme to describe the broadest range of systematic ontological and epistemological assumptions about what it means to exist within a particular period of time. As Young (2003, p. 59) notes, Hegel had referred to a similar

idea as shapes of consciousness. The dominant episteme of an age was formed by various discourses and was akin to a worldview (Foucault, 2002, p. 417). Just as discourses of science and economics have dominated in the modern era, their dominance has been allowed by a background worldview that has enabled them to emerge.

“Discourse” was used by Foucault to describe language and social practices that convey norms of human behaviour and ethics. *Learning Together*, as a politically driven educational policy plan of a government, could be viewed as emerging from discourses of education and politics within a modern traditional episteme. These linguistic and social practices meant that we are subject to disciplined ways of knowing, being and valuing and they allow us to be judged and controlled. Following Foucault’s mid-career work commencing with *The order of things* (1970), a discourse is “what can be said” (p. 49), as well as who can speak and with what authority. They define well-bounded areas of social knowledge that constrain and enable what can be written, spoken and thought about given social objects or practices in any given historical period (McHoul & Grace, 1995, p. 31). Some contemporary academic disciplines, such as found in the social or human sciences, can be considered discourses, while Foucault also uses the term for the knowledges that collect within and across a broad set of disciplines (p. 42).

From my interpreting, discourses of education, politics, science, economics and culture and attendant knowledge domains of *technology*, *democracy*, *bureaucracy*, *community*, and *individuality* underpin the current episteme as evidenced to me from my interpreting of metaphors in *Learning Together*. For example, the metaphors LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY and TEACHERS ARE PARTNERS could be linked to knowledge domains such as *community* and a discourse of *culture*, while TEACHING IS DELIVERING and LEARNING IS A PRODUCT can arise from the discourse of *economics* and the knowledge domain of *technology*. Discourse was considered to have a number of identifiable components (McHoul & Grace, 1995): “*objects* (the things they study or produce), *operations* (the methods and techniques or ‘ways of treating’ these objects), *concepts* (terms and ideas which are routinely found in the discipline and which may constitute its unique language)” (p. 44). If *student* was thought of as an object of the discourse of *education*, then *schooling* could be considered an operation, *teaching* and *learning* might be *concepts*. In line with this, theoretical options that this discourse allows include individualised and collaborative approaches to *teaching* and *learning*. By using the idea of *discourse* as a metaphor, new metaphors and therefore understandings of *Learning Together*, become known.

Epistemes therefore encompassed *discourses*, establishing the contexts in which objects of discourses come to be. This surfacing of objects could occur at differing points in history, expressing not certain nor stable interpretations of those objects, but statements

that proposed rules about them. These statements went beyond descriptive statements and could include ethical choices, remedial decisions, institutional regulations and teaching models (Foucault, 2002, p. 37). If *discourse* was a specific body of knowledge made up of these statements, the statements were historically specific in relating “what can be said” and “what can be thought” about becoming civilised (McHoul & Grace, 1995, p. 36). Statements could group together into “a set of relations” (p. 145), with discursive formations and practices produced by this set of relations (p. 10). The statements in a set of relations associated in a multitude of ways, as much from interruptions, transformations, contradictions and differences as they did through constancy or regularity. Discursive formations were orders of discourse (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000, p. 21), or processes that produced objects of discourses such as madness, health, or sexuality. In *Learning Together*, it was possible to identify a number of discursive formations, including literacy, disability or citizenship, produced by contemporary discourses such as education, science, politics, economics and culture.

Foucault’s (2002) early interest in discourse went beyond identifying its elements, as he believed that this was not how a discourse became known. Instead, a discourse became available through the set of rules that defined criteria for the objects and concepts. These criteria related to formation, transformation and correlation (McHoul & Grace, 1995, p. 44). Rules of formation were concerned with how the discourse enabled formation of the object, in this case the object being *student*, the operation *schooling* and the concepts *teaching* and *learning*. These object and concepts, and therefore the discourse of education, became available through metaphors I had already identified. By considering metaphors such as SCHOOLING IS A CONTAINER and SCHOOLING IS DISABLING, and relating them to metaphors such as TEACHING IS ENABLING, LEARNING IS UP and LEARNING IS A PATHWAY, I was able to create new conceptual metaphors, such as LEARNING IS PROGRESS. Further, I could recognise how the rules that defined criteria for the objects and concepts of the discourse of *education* were changing.

Citizenship could also be understood as an object that was discursively formed. Discursive formations do not rely on a set of relations being unified as a whole or contiguity between statements but on the differential relations between them. That would mean that statements in a set of relations could maintain coherence by showing some regularity. For example, individualistic notions of democracy could be considered to be contradictory to collectivist ideals. An individual has a democratic right to vote, but their exercise of that vote might privilege individual interests over the public good. Yet we have generally accepted the constant interplay of these competing aims of democracy. Regularity comes from maintaining the premise that greater involvement by citizens in decision-making processes within our Western democratic society is a good thing. In

accepting the notion of regularity, we accept the pendulum-like swings from conservative to liberal governments that commonly occur within democratic states.

Therefore the objects of a discourse could be discursively formed despite arising from a set of statements that were not unified, but demonstrate regularity. As an example, the discourse of *education*, as it was available to me in *Learning Together*, revealed a set of relations that produced quite divergent concepts such as *choice*, *partnership* and *accountability*. These concepts had inconsistencies, yet they could still be thought of as coherent within the discourse of education, as they were regularly “said” with “authority” in policy documents within that discourse (Western Australian Department of Education and Training, 2009; NSW Department of Education and Training, 2010). Another object formed discursively was *community*. In *Learning Together*, *community* was generally portrayed as a positive and constructive term through the use of notions of togetherness, partnership and collaboration. Yet *community* might not always be desirable but might instead be a denial of difference or a means of making others like ourselves (Bauman, 2000, p. 101). Indeed, recent shifts in understandings of *community* may be read as giving greater privilege to *difference* over *mutuality*. *Diversity* was also identified as discursively formed in *Learning Together*, particularly the significant mentions of disability education. I interpreted this as emerging from a discourse of *culture*, particularly a contemporary emphasis on valuing cultural difference that can be recognised in many contemporary legislative and policy statements (Tasmanian *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998*; Department of Education Tasmania, 2003a, 2003b, 2008a, 2008b, n.d.a, n.d.b). Western democratic societies such as Australia have over recent years established institutionalised stances on diversity in relation to welfare, discrimination and employment, as well as a range of government policies and services. The discursively formed object of *diversity* could be at odds with others such as *community*, especially where *community* might privilege mutuality over difference. Understood this way, in *Learning Together* there was an inconsistency between statements that formed these two discursive objects. “What was said” about *democracy* seemed to be that having a diverse society was regarded as desirable over having a homogenous one; however, at the same time, the policy was aimed at creating social cohesion and strong communities. In this manner, discursively formed objects may demonstrate inconsistency, but contribute to the overall coherence of a discourse.

With regard to the rules of transformation, Foucault proposed that a discourse had thresholds as to its capacity to modify itself. If *education* was a discourse, then it could be either within or beyond its capacity to transform itself and its attendant components. *Learning Together* could be a policy that revealed a discursive shift in relation to concepts such as *learning* and *teaching*, to emphasise collective rather than individual

interests. Yet this might be limited by the capacity of the discourse of *education* to transform.

According to Foucault (1973, p. 138), the rules of correlation govern how a discourse relates to other discourses. In relation to *Learning Together* and the metaphors I already outlined, discourses that may have correlated with the discourse of *education* included *work* and *individuality*. *Learning Together* could reveal those correlations with other discourses, such as *democracy* and *technology* and interpretations of the policy would differ depending on how knowledges were produced by the discourse.

Using Foucault's ideas as a frame, I considered what the concept *education* might mean if it was thought of using the metaphor EDUCATION IS A DISCOURSE. I had assumed that *education* meant certain sets of ways that people were civilised, but what did it mean if *that* particular truth of the term education was thought of in terms of its historical position, and particularly at a time of "liquid modernity" (Bauman, 2000, p. 2). Danaher, Schirato and Webb (2000) referred to Foucault's observation that bodies of knowledge and truth thought to be eternal could end (p. 7) and the certainty with which I had assumed I understood education now had no basis in absolute truth. As a concept, it needed to be understood as "a function of what *can be* said, written or thought" (McHoul & Grace, 1995, p. 33). I have referred to truth already in this study using the notion of truthfulness (Sokolowski, 2000) and particularly "truthfulness of disclosure" (p. 158), where what is true can last but is always context-dependent. Just as Foucault understood the possibility that truth changed across history, while truthfulness that comes to us through disclosure can endure over time, there is always the potential for other truths to be evidenced (Sokolowski, 2000 p. 159). Therefore, I could think of EDUCATION IS A DISCOURSE as a metaphor for a specific body of knowledge relating to the concept *education* within the historical context of the late modern era (Bridge, 2002, p. x).

If education is a discourse, the metaphors I had already uncovered give some insight into the statements of what can be said and thought about education. The metaphors of most interest to me were those related to the object *student* that I identified, and associated concepts of the discourse, such as *learning* and *teaching*. The concept *learning* was particularly on display as revealed through the dominance of the metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY. My interpreting opened up varied ways of thinking about *learning* with metaphors such as LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE and LEARNING IS ACTIVITY disclosing ways in which the policy was historically situated. Each of these two metaphors represented *learning* differently and that demonstrated to me how *education* as a discourse might be transforming. In particular, LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE presented a more contemporaneous way of understanding the concept *learning*, by proposing *learning* as being reciprocal and mutual. As I have already

discussed, this has not been the dominant sense of *learning* as it has been understood throughout the modern era. LEARNING IS ACTIVITY more closely expressed understandings of *learning* of this era, with these understandings able to be traced to the pedagogical wandering of individuals in medieval times (Doll, 2002, p. 29) as well, perhaps, as the pragmatic beginnings of workhouse schools in the nineteenth century.

My re-interpreting of these two metaphors, LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE and LEARNING IS ACTIVITY opened up new possibilities for understanding *learning*, and therefore *schooling* and *teaching*. In line with Foucault's (2002) ideas, more collaborative understandings of *learning* are acting to transform the discourse of *education*, but this transformation is limited by prevailing ideas of individualism and action. It was also possible to recognise how other discourses work to correlate with the discourse of education, with references to *work* and *individuality* evoked by the metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY. In this way, *Learning Together* gave me an opportunity to think about *education* as a discourse at a particular moment in Tasmania. What emerged for me was that the discourse of education was not static, nor were the objects, concepts, operations or theoretical options of the discourse inert. If anything, *Learning Together* revealed, and contributed to, a discourse that was undergoing modification, in a similar manner to that which medicine had been undergoing since the 1960s (McHoul & Grace, 1995, p. 54). That modification demonstrated, following Foucault (1965, 1970, 1973), how political practice intervened at the level of the rules of formation of a discourse. For me this modification also offered new possibilities. If the object produced from the discourse of *education* was *learner*, rather than *student*, then an alternate operation might be *pedagogy*, as understood in a very broad sense, and theoretical options might be *democratic schooling* or *social justice pedagogy*. I came to see how interpreting *Learning Together* depended on the knowledges that were produced within the "now" in which *Learning Together* was developed, but also the "now" in which I interpreted it.

Changing statements of what could be said and thought about *education* in this transforming discourse formed a new object, *learner*. I identified three disciplines of knowledge, *psychology*, *philosophy* and *sociology*, as they were identifiable as the primary disciplines through which education has been written and spoken in the twentieth century (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000, p. 22). Yet the disciplines of economics and neuroscience have also been used extensively in late modern era to research and explain aspects of education (Furlong, 2010, pp. 85,144). These disciplines offered emerging ways of knowing about education that could influence us to think differently about the concept *learning*. For example, using economics, *learning* could be considered as a cost, an opportunity, or a benefit, while using neuroscience, it might be considered a physiological response.

Indeed, narratives from the discourse of economics have often been cited as justification for social and education policy (e.g. McCain & Mustard⁹, 1999). Pusey (1991), Epstein and Kenway (1996), Lingard, Knight and Porter (1993) and Marginson (1997) have all argued that public policy-making by governments have been increasingly shaped by economic rationalist imperatives. Policy narratives of efficiency are affiliated to those of science and economics in much contemporary education policy, and, as discussed in Chapter 2 of this study, it has been assumed that there was a direct cause and effect relationship between policy initiatives and policy outcomes. For example, Marshall and Peters (1999, p. xv) suggest that policies were responses by nation states (and interestingly economies as distinct entities from states) to demands brought about by technological change, knowledge production and national innovation. For a state to remain strong, it needed to maintain and legitimate its activities and practices, that is, its public policies, by being efficient. The relationship between science, law and efficiency became increasingly legitimate, with science and law determining what was meant by efficiency, and conversely, science and law being legitimised because they were the basis of efficiency. The assumption that there was a reality created by narratives of efficiency, science and law was a powerful one and it framed much public policy analysis. In similar fashion, psychology and economics have provided increasingly potent ways of understanding *learning*. As I have already noted, for Foucault, historical context was always a limit (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000, p. 7) and just as psychological theories of the twentieth century such as behaviorism, might now seem less than adequate to understand *learning* in the twenty-first century, so too might theoretical options such as economic rationalism and neuroscience be limited in their capacity to explain a late modern production of *learners*.

While discourse has been discussed in some depth in the preceding paragraphs, my purpose has been to establish a grounding for thinking about *Learning Together* using Foucault's ideas (1980; 1985; 1986; 1990; 1991; 1995) in relation to knowledge, power and subjectivity. Foucault used the term "power/knowledge" to demonstrate how knowledge and its concomitant power were understood within historical and contemporary contexts. I used POWER/KNOWLEDGE as a metaphor in the frame of ideas I drew from Foucault. In *The archaeology of knowledge and the discourse on language*

⁹ McCain and Mustard (1999) provide a good example in education where there is a narrative link is drawn between funding for programs and initiatives which promote quality education and care in the very early years and longer term economic and social benefits. They proposed that more money spent by governments on children in their early years would lead to greater educational and employment success for the child and better social and economic outcomes for the state, thereby saving more money in the longer term at a ratio of 1:7. A strong state, in this sense, is one that can show that its public policies, in this case funding for young children, are leading to recognisable results.

(2002), Foucault gave a detailed analysis of the question of representation and the nature of knowledge and ideas. Knowledge and power implied one another¹⁰ with knowledge fields and power relations being correlated, and power producing knowledge – *power* and *knowledge* did not exist without one another. Foucault’s concern was not with the usefulness or otherwise of such knowledge, but with how such power influenced our understanding and made us *subject*. What was meant by “being subject” was the manner in which our identities were shaped within the cultural fields in which we were positioned (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000, p. 33). It was when Foucault (1977, p. 28) posed questions such as “What processes and struggles constitute power/knowledge in relation to a corpus of knowledge, and what forms and domains of knowledge are made possible, or determined, by these traverses?” that he was asking how knowledges and resultant power/knowledge produced our subjectivity.

Specific knowledges were distinguishable in *Learning Together* in relation to the discourse of *education* in the state of Tasmania, as were sets of power relations from which the discursive formation of students could have been produced. These power relations showed how processes and struggles constituted power/knowledge about education. They related to the organisation of schooling and pedagogy, and from the evidence displayed the metaphors, I interpreted struggles over issues such as equity, accountability and behaviour management. These references were evident in the metaphor LEARNING IS AN INCLUSIVE ACTIVITY and entailments such as THESE DECISIONS SHOULD BE BASED ON EQUITY, COMMUNICATION IS REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES and RESPONSES TO BEHAVIOUR CAN BE EFFECTIVE. What was revealed by these metaphors was a struggle between a notion of inclusiveness that valued difference and approaches to behaviour that required normative management.

There were examples of power/knowledge that particularly highlighted economic and psychological knowledge and formed *learning* and *teaching* in ways which privileged these knowledges over others. What could be said about *learning* was evident in *activity* metaphors such as LEARNING IS WORK and LEARNING IS RESPONDING, while what could be said about *teaching* was also about activity with metaphors of TEACHING IS ORGANISING LEARNING, TEACHING IS BUILDING A BRIDGE, TEACHING IS RESPONDING and TEACHING IS DELIVERING.

¹⁰ This compares with the aphorism “knowledge is power”, commonly attributed to seventeenth century philosopher and scientist Frances Bacon. However the closest attributable reference in Bacon appears to be “Human knowledge and human power meet in one; for where the cause is not known the effect cannot be produced. Nature to be commanded must be obeyed; and that which in contemplation is as the cause is in operation as the rule” (Bacon, 1863, pp. 67-68).

What could not be said, or what was not authorised, was more difficult to determine. *Learning Together* did not promote any critique that would question its political or policy position, neither did the policy adopt particularly radical axiological stances. As evidence of this, few of the metaphors I had interpreted could be related to social justice values. Social justice was still an emerging pedagogical field at the time of the development of *Learning Together* and what constituted social justice critique could differ greatly from issue to issue. For example, while gender studies had been heavily promoted in Australia in the 1990s as a cross-curriculum perspective of the short-lived National Curriculum project, it was not mentioned in this policy. The only mention of gender-related issues was through the entailments MORE LEADERS SHOULD BE WOMEN and WOMEN MAY NEED MENTORING IN ORDER TO BE LEADERS. Nor was the issue of cultural diversity mentioned, which would be most likely to be framed as Aboriginal studies. Disability issues were featured in *Learning Together*, as evidenced by metaphorical references such as WORLD-CLASS (EDUCATION) IS SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS and INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS IS GOOD. These, however, only related to the inclusion of students *into* schooling, not schooling changing to address them.

It was a stark contrast between metaphors such as LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY and LEARNING IS A PRODUCT, and TEACHING IS DELIVERING and TEACHERS ARE PARTNERS that demonstrated how traverses across discourses existed within the policy itself. Again, these contrasts demonstrated that what constituted power/knowledge in *Learning Together* was subject to struggle. *Production* and *delivery* arise from quite different epistemological, ontological and ethical stances to that of *collaboration* and *partnership*. The search I made for enduring meaning related to the discourse of *education* moved back and forth between a range of metaphors, creating tensions as the differing power/knowledges produced conflicting conditions for understanding. If what could be said about *learning* related to *collaboration* and *partnership*, how could I reconcile this with what could be said about *teaching* if it related to *production* and *delivery*?

To gain insight into these struggles within the modern episteme and to further understand how power/knowledge influenced my interpreting, I considered other metaphors such as GOVERNMENTALITY, BIO-POWER, BIOPOLITICS and SUBJECTIVITY, based on ideas from Foucault's later work. Each of us could describe a sense of being enmeshed in the workings of government at some time in our lives. Foucault (1991) gave his own explanation of this as what he termed "governmentality". Traditional theorising of the power relationships between human beings and government has been grouped loosely between the social contract model and the social welfare model. The narrative of

the social contract model was that, at a point in the dim past, citizens contracted to engage with the state through an agreed framework of rules and laws, and this agreement continues to govern interactions between citizen and the state in the present day. On the other hand, the alternative social welfare model was that the nature of the state was determined by who had won the “war” to be the governing party (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000, p. 83). Foucault took a differing viewpoint, dismissing any mythical agreement that we might have made to engage with the state through the rule of law. He also debunked the claim that governments, through their dominance, have complete control over how a society’s citizens were able to think and act. For Foucault, these were social stories, which tried to explain, within historical circumstances, the history of governing.

Foucault’s (1991, p. 74) account of governmentality acknowledged how power works on everyone, not just those who were dominated or exploited. He raised the notion that even those who appear to be in authority and able to control others lives were entrapped by the power/knowledge that gave them authority. They were just as subject to that power/knowledge as other individuals. Central to this was the idea of *subjectivity*. In an educational context, a school principal who appeared to have power over the working lives of teachers and the educational world of students, was, in fact, tangled in their own “relations of power”, and subject to discursive formations of objects such as *accountability* and *community*. While the metaphorical entailments LEADERSHIP IS NOT JUST THE PRESERVE OF PRINCIPALS and MORE LEADERS SHOULD BE WOMEN implied a democratic commitment to equity regardless of gender or place in the institutional hierarchy, it was possible to regard these two entailments quite differently in the light of another pair of entailments: SOME TEACHERS MAY NOT WANT TO BE PRINCIPALS and TO BE INCLUSIVE, TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS AND AIDES NEED TRAINING. The second set differed from the earlier reading relating to equity as they showed starkly how being a principal was not always the desire of all teachers. It also showed that even those purportedly at the summit of a leadership hierarchy were still subject to the disciplinary actions of power/knowledge. In this case, their subjectivity was through training.

Another idea from Foucault (1979) that I applied as a metaphor was BIO-POWER. Foucault coined the term to refer to how relations of power that were apparent in disciplines impacted both on the biological organism of the individual and the “living species body” that was the population (McHoul & Grace, 1995, p. 77). For Foucault, everyone was subject to bio-power. “The discipline of the body and the regulations of the population constituted the two poles around which the organisation of power over life was deployed” (Foucault, 1979, p. 139). Foucault’s interest was not only how the individual was subject to the effects of power, but also how the individual was involved

as a vehicle for power. Through bio-power, technologies controlled, regulated and defined the human body. These technologies emerged from a body of knowledge and through an administrative apparatus that enacted the discursive norms of a discipline. The relations of power of the modern episteme worked first and foremost to create individuals as self-regulating bodies, which were written upon productively by discourse and subject to technologies and forces emerging from bodies of knowledge such as politics, policy and economics. Foucault used the term “biopolitics” to describe this shift to the institutionalisation of knowledge, the rationality of the state and the subjectivity of individuals. Biopolitics was used to illustrate the relationship between bodies and institutions and how they were managed, organised and disciplined.

As *epistemes* are able to capture and limit our capacity to see various and alternative possibilities for being in the world, they hold within them ontological premises that shape our social stories of periods in history and determine what can be considered “a candidate for truth” (Kögler, 1999, p. 180). To explore how I might be captured or limited in my understanding, I expressed the idea of episteme using the metaphor of CONCEPTUAL PRISONS (p. 93). As the interested, subjective associations of power/knowledge, epistemes could hold us fast in a net-like configuration of swarming disciplinary mechanisms from which we should aim to free ourselves (Fairfield, 2002, p. 48). This entrapment was not so straightforward as it first appeared as a discourse establishes relations of power and constitutes possibilities of truth in a more complex manner than merely a coherent or contiguous group of statements. Discourses of education and science discursively form objects such as *economic rationalism*, *development*, *futurism* and *progress*. In *Learning Together*, inconsistent and incoherent metaphors can reveal how discursively formed objects such as *citizenship* might be formed by discourses which either overlap or compete, such as democracy or science.

The metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY could be considered akin to a CONCEPTUAL PRISON because other ways of understanding *learning* were masked by its dominance. There were metaphors from the discourses of economics and progress that offered other meanings, such as LEARNING IS A COMMODITY, which referred to the increasing commodification (Ertman & Williams, 2005, p. 9) of educational opportunities, and LEARNING IS COMPETITION, arising from increasing imperatives to compare between students and school. Further metaphors along these lines included LEARNING IS LIFELONG LEARNING, LEARNING IS TRAINING, LEARNING IS ENGAGEMENT and LEARNING IS EXCELLENCE. However, these were mostly hidden, perhaps because of the dominance of *LEARNING TOGETHER IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY*, and this demonstrates that discourse may entrap and limit our understandings.

Escaping a conceptual prison

Thinking with Foucault's ideas forced me to consider again the frame of metaphors and concepts that I had established in Phase 1, and I perceived that I was imprisoned by historicity. What struck me was how embedded I was within the prevailing episteme and how I was trapped within a modernist net of discourses. In attempting to place myself "outside my natural understanding", seeking a perspective of "exteriority" (Kögler, 1999, p. 183), I had the fleeting opportunity to escape the CONCEPTUAL PRISON from which this policy emerged and test my taken-for-granted assumptions about what could be said and what could not. In seeking such exteriority, I hoped to find insights into the origins and structures of my thought, experience and action and bring those insights into consciousness. It was my opportunity to understand how I was made subject.

Up to this point, my interpreting of *Learning Together* foregrounded the metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY. However, a new metaphor now came to mind. The metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A PANOPTICON* was drawn from Foucault's work *Discipline and punish* (1995) where he discussed the effect of an epistemic shift from the concept of governing centred on sovereignty to one of subjectivity. I used this metaphor to refer to how this policy might subject Tasmanians to a discourse of *education* and how it could be thought of using the metaphor of GOVERNMENTALITY. This was not to imply that this policy was written with such intent, as Foucault stressed how our understanding of our own subjectivity was masked. With this awareness I also revisited my original scan of metaphors and entailments (Appendix C) for new insights.

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1995) proposed that the disciplinary techniques used for controlling a plague outbreak in a town were not incompatible with the techniques used to deal with lepers. In particular, he outlined the techniques of branding, binary division and exclusion that had been used on lepers in preceding centuries. Binary division referred to how groups that appeared to be opposite were used to brand and exclude the "leper" or plague victim. The excluded were then subject to mechanisms of measuring, supervising and correcting in order to alter them (Foucault, 1995, p. 200). Foucault applied his understandings of these mechanisms to other projects of exclusion within the modern episteme. The binary divisions of good/bad, mad/sane, dangerous/harmless and normal/abnormal, could be substituted for the binary ill/well, as applied to the leper or plague victim. I recognised that binaries such as good/bad also could be found in *Learning Together*. Concepts such as *participation* and *service* became strategies as part of a broader mechanism to brand, divide and exclude and could be demonstrated through metaphors such as PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING IS A GOOD CHOICE and A SERVICE CULTURE IS GOOD. These metaphors highlighted what was acceptable and what was not within the Tasmanian public education system.

Foucault (1995) likened the application of the mechanisms used to brand, divide and exclude to those that transformed eighteenth century prison life from punishment of the body to punishment of the mind (p. 104). The penal model of the panopticon was proposed by Jeremy Bentham, the architect and prison reformer, as a new architectural design for the prison. In the panopticon, prisoners could be continuously monitored, in “sequestered and observed solitude” (p. 201). They were unable to determine if they were being observed, therefore the prison conveyed a “sentiment of an invisible omniscience” (Bentham & Božovič, 1995, p. 29).

I had assumed that *Learning Together* was an overarching strategic plan that was naturally for the good of the public organisation, its individuals and the society. Applying the metaphor PANOPTICON to the policy disrupted any blithe acceptance I had that it was unquestioningly good. I was forced to consider *Learning Together* in a new way, as how a government might control aspects of the lives of its constituents related to education. A statement of this type had not been outlined so comprehensively previously in Tasmania, and I now understood that the government was describing to the populace the role and purpose education had in the society. *Learning Together* also included an accountability framework, setting out a very explicit binary of what was good or bad, and building on this, I proposed a new binary, learning/not learning, based on metaphors such as LEARNING IS SUCCESS and A GOOD SOCIETY IS EVERYONE PARTICIPATING AND CONTRIBUTING. It was impossible to attempt to be “not learning” as emphasised by a further metaphor LEARNING IS LIFE. Other metaphors divided groups in society in the educated/uneducated, literate/illiterate, or into those engaged in education and training/not engaged in education and training. Supporting these binaries were metaphorical entailments TO BE EDUCATED IS TO BE WORTHWHILE FOR SOCIETY and TO BE EDUCATED IS TO HAVE SELF-WORTH. They demonstrated the privileging of being educated, while another entailment, NOT BEING LITERATE SIGNALS LEARNING DIFFICULTIES, further labelled anyone who did not fit the literate typology. My interpreting reflected what was normal and what was abnormal. Disability was “abnormal” as revealed in the related entailments PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES MAY NOT BE ABLE TO ACCESS LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AS EASILY AS OTHER TASMANIANS and THESE PEOPLE CAN BE IDENTIFIED. In this way, many policies can resemble A PANOPTICON in their attempts to determine, through observation and similar techniques, what could be said and what can't.

Foucault (1995, pp. 185-194) considered that three techniques of power, *hierarchical observation, normalising judgment* and *examination*, were central to how the panopticon exerted authority to divide according to binaries. To further explore the metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A PANOPTICON*, I applied these three techniques as

metaphors: *LEARNING TOGETHER IS HIERARCHICAL OBSERVATION*, *LEARNING TOGETHER IS NORMALISING JUDGMENT* and *LEARNING TOGETHER IS EXAMINATION*.

Foucault (1995) considered the first technique of power to be Bentham's hierarchical observation, where an organisational structure allowed for individuals to be observed at all times. This meant central observation points, with prisoners always in line of sight (Bentham & Božovič, 1995). For this reason, I contemplated *Learning Together* using the metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS HIERARCHICAL OBSERVATION*. The entailments *BEST PRACTICE EDUCATION CAN BE SHOWCASED* and *BEST PRACTICE EDUCATION CAN BE IDENTIFIED* sustained this metaphor, associating the success of the system with observation. What was meant by *success* also came under scrutiny. A number of metaphors and entailments implied that a policy such as *Learning Together* would, through organisation or structure, lead to success such as:

SUCCESS IS A STRUCTURE.

IT CAN BE BUILT ON TO BE WORLD-CLASS.

IDEALLY THESE SERVICES HARMONISE INDIVIDUAL GOALS, PARENTS' DREAMS, LOCAL AND STATE COMMUNITY DESIRES AND ASPIRATIONS, EMPLOYERS DEMANDS, AND TEACHERS, EDUCATORS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS SKILLS AND EXPERTISE.

As discussed Chapter 5 of this study, orientational metaphors evoke meanings about what is good and what is not, with *SUCCESS* invariably oriented UP. In contrast, these entailments could be understood differently if linked instead to the structural metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A PANOPTICON*. This metaphor was effectively masked by the pervasiveness of the metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY*. With all its entailments relating to positive notions of community, civil society and progress, it created a strong sense that the coordination of the educational activities of the Department of Education was both desirable and worthy. An alternative interpretation, using the *PANOPTICON* metaphor, might be that such coordination was an opportunity to scrutinise the workings of the organisation and its individuals more closely. Such scrutiny could be reported more easily between structural layers of the organisation, as these layers became more easily identified. The purpose of coordinating would be to control through observation, rather than encourage the democratic participation of the individuals in the system. Under this interpretation, the individuals in the organisation had structural and functional roles, as revealed by the following entailments:

PEOPLE ARE THE FOUNDATION OF THE EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS.
THE SYSTEM IS STRUCTURAL.
THE PEOPLE ARE BUILDING BLOCKS.

As the staff and students were the foundation of the system, this placed them, metaphorically, at the base of the hierarchy. Metaphorically UP, according to Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 18) was GOOD, while DOWN was not. If *Learning Together* was A PANOPTICON, people at the foundation of the system were subject to the gaze of those higher up in the hierarchy but could also be observed by the community at large. They were ever accountable for their actions: teachers for their teaching, students for their achievement. I considered who would be higher in the structure and assumed that it would be the teacher, as had been the case in traditional education institutional hierarchies. However such a distinction was not available to me from the text.

Learning Together was referred to as a LIVING AND EVOLVING DOCUMENT (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 2). EVOLUTION was a biologically based metaphorical concept that differed from the CONSTRUCTION concept that often founded metaphors of institutions. The entailment of *biology* helped to obscure a hierarchical structure. The manner in which the biological reference portrayed the institution suggested that there would be an ongoing process of change prompted by the policy in relation to the Department structure and functions. A set of metaphors and entailments hinted at an open and inclusive consultative process, but what was not clear was the means for ensuring that the evolution of the policy would involve such consultation. It could be assumed that CONSULTATION was the strategy for the evolution, but there was little detail of how a consultation process might operate, beyond platitudes, as is evidenced from the following entailments.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSULTATION ARE COMMUNICATION.
COMMUNICATION CAN BE TWO-WAY.
COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION ARE VITAL FOR LEARNING.
COMMUNICATION IS GLUE.
CONSULTATION IS GLUE.
SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS REQUIRE GLUE.
SOCIAL BONDS ARE GLUE.
COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION HELP ACHIEVE GOALS.

The metaphor CONSULTATION seemed to imply reciprocity, perhaps even a two-way dialogue, whereas alternatively it could mean one-way delivery of information. Consultation can be a two-way process in which each partner had an equal share of input

and response. Yet in hierarchical structures, consultation often means the upward provision of information, including observations or requests for response, and downward delivery of authoritative directions (Peters & Savoie, 1998). A consultation can be narrowly focused or only seek answers to questions that do not dissent from a policy's vision, values and strategies. Where a consultative dialogue occurs within a hierarchical structure, input from those higher in that hierarchy that are privileged over the views of those lower down in the structure. Those at differing places in a hierarchy might only be able to respond to the consultation in specific ways or at limited points, or may be restricted by expectations of their position or role.

Biological metaphors such as *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A LIVING EVOLVING DOCUMENT* created an interesting digression from the preceding discussion about hierarchical observation. In the discourse of science, observation refers to scientific knowing and classifying. Both of these techniques can be associated with the branding and exclusion of the "leper" or plague victim and mechanisms for measuring, supervising and correcting them. Through techniques that were termed consultation, individual staff or students might be branded or excluded by category. The following pairs of entailments demonstrated this categorisation:

BEGINNING TEACHERS NEED TO BE INDUCTED INTO TEACHING.

TEACHERS REQUIRE ONGOING FEEDBACK AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING.

SOME STUDENTS ARE AT RISK.

"AT RISK" IS NOT PARTICIPATING.

TEACHERS WHO HAVE BEEN OUT OF THE SYSTEM FOR A WHILE NEED

"REFRESHING".

"AT RISK" STUDENTS REQUIRE SUPPORT.

Being excluded would be regarded as being outside a category and this "outsideness" would be dealt with through supervision and treatment.

The metaphor *CULTURE* connected with the discourse of science, in particular, the discipline of biology, but also to the human science of sociology. Entailments such as *A SERVICE CULTURE IS GOOD* and *CULTURE CAN BE CREATED* linked to these disciplines. Culture might have referred to relationships, as in a culture of microorganisms, or a human sociological form of norms and mores. Regardless, *ATTENDING*, *PARTICIPATING*, *LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY*, and *BEING PROFESSIONAL* were all actions that defined what it meant to have relationships and be part of *A CULTURE*. There were some references to *CONSULTATION* creating a better *CULTURE* in the Department of Education, although it was not clear how this improvement came about. These metaphors and entailments enabled me to consider the Department of Education as a sociological culture,

as well as a biological web. They helped to create a metaphorical picture of an institutional structure, how it was to work and how individuals might engage with it hierarchically.

The addition of a performance framework in *Learning Together* indicated how the policy would define lines of sight by which observation of the members of the institution could take place. As was clear from Tasmania's convict history, Governor Arthur's reformed penal system did not lead to prisoners being less inclined towards criminal activity, but did induce mental health issues in many of them. My own ancestors continued to offend despite periods of incarceration (Parkes, & French, 1991, pp. 489-490), and some went mad (Coy, unpublished family history, circa 2000). Neither were those who were further up in the hierarchy left untouched by relations of power. At Port Arthur, guards who oversaw prisoners were prisoners themselves, "a few well conducted men" (House of Commons, 1834, p. 70) who were given the opportunity to take a step up the institutional ladder by agreeing to act as overseers. Even Arthur himself, the architect of the system, suffered at the hands of his colonial masters as his "Benthamesque" plan lost favour and he was effectively sidelined (Alexander, 2006).

My initial interpreting of metaphors from *Learning Together* naively assumed that organisations were, and should be, structured hierarchically. Much has been written about the strategic planning of large corporations (Schien, 2004; Cameron & Quinn, 2006), and a common assertion is that such processes always involve defining and structuring lines of accountability, a characteristic first noted by Weber (1947). There was an assumption that some form of structuring was necessary and good for an organisation and the individuals within that organisation. Also taken for granted was that some institutional organisation was necessary to bring about desired and expected actions and behaviours that would contribute to an institution's overall goals. This was like assuming that prisoners in a structured environment would reform where there was a hierarchy overseeing their rehabilitation. I needed other ways of thinking about why a public education department required one large coherent plan to coordinate all aspects of its work and the work of its employees, and if there were other ways of understanding hierarchical structure beyond improving efficacy or achievement. Foucault gave me insights into how power circulated through institutions and had impacts on every member of that institution, not just the supposedly oppressed or those at the bottom of a hierarchy.

Some other strategies outlined in *Learning Together* could be regarded as social practices that could work to enhance the effect of *hierarchical observation*. In relation to how the panopticon controlled prisoners, Foucault (1995, pp.185-194) proposed a second technique of power, *normalising judgment*, which referred to the way "normal", or otherwise, was decided, and it could be used to make students and teachers normal, rather

than abnormal. The technique was recognisable in *Learning Together* in strategies which implied identifying and acting upon students or teachers in certain ways, such as behaviour support, training and the inclusion of students with disabilities. By considering the metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS NORMALISING JUDGMENT*, I was able to gain insight into how *Learning Together*, and potentially other policies, characterised normality. Within *Learning Together*, there were strong assumptions about what it meant to be normal. If you were a teacher in the Department of Education, being normal was depicted as being inclusive, equitable and professional. If you were a student, being engaged in learning, particularly collaborative learning, was presented as normal. Each of these ways of being normal was addressed, even inculcated, through practices of education or training, as shown by the following entailments:

TO BE INCLUSIVE, TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS AND AIDES NEED TRAINING.
AT RISK MEANS NOT ACCESSING EDUCATION OR TRAINING OR NOT BEING
INCLUDED.

Being engaged in learning was represented as normal, while being disengaged was not. Being collaborative was normal, while individuality was not. Being educated was portrayed as being desirable (and therefore normal) for Tasmanians. In this way, the attributes of being normal or not normal were not only applied in an educational context, but also in terms of what it was to be a fully functioning and accepted member of society. In particular, *Learning Together* represented collaborative learning as normal, above individualised learning. Being normal was disciplined through an array of accepted language and social practices that linked collaboration and learning. It seems to make sense to learn “together”. However, through my reflection on Foucault’s (1995) ideas, and the application of the metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS NORMALISING JUDGMENT*, I understood that a collaborative concept of learning was a frame that was historically constituted and not above question. The policy’s title strengthened the perception that learning was collaborative, rather than individualistic.

While there was a set of values in the preamble to *Learning Together*, the potency of the overarching metaphor *LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY* gave insight into a broader set of normalised values and beliefs being understood in the context of the policy. These values and beliefs were not made explicit nor were they offered for critique, yet they appeared to be in concert with the vision and the goals of the document. They were founded on assumptions that learning was good and, particularly, learning collaboratively was good. Anyone accepting the policy’s premises assumed that students and teachers who were subject to its strategies would embrace the initial set of values, outlined in the policy, relating to community and democracy, including valuing people and “a fair go”.

The further set of implicit values set out other entailments that came to be judged as normal: LEARNING IS GOOD; LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY IS THE KEY TO LEARNING SUCCESSFULLY; and LEARNING IS NECESSARY FOR PARTICIPATION IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. What was meant by “learning successfully” was PARTICIPATING WITH OTHERS, as opposed to being INDIVIDUALLY SUCCESSFUL. Learning was so good, right and necessary that students became powerfully re-framed, using the metaphor LEARNERS.

It was not difficult to see how concepts of *collaboration* and *learning*, coupled with democratic values, could be regarded as unified, as NORMAL. Concepts such as *dialogue*, *culture* and *community* interpreted from *Learning Together* unified concepts of *collaboration* and *learning* and make them appear normal. Engaging in dialogue, being part of a culture and participating in a community were all seen as normal and they also underpinned the metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY*, while *difference* and *competition* were not evident. This fitted with a normality spoken and written about civil society by Cox (1995), where educated people *learn* how to be part of their society through the models of good relationship provided by family and community. This unification is similar to the contribution of education in creating the common or “public weal” (Vico, Pinton & Diehl, 2000), evoking a communitarian or liberal humanist philosophical stance. However, it could also call to mind characteristics of socialist ideology, where being collaborative in the interests of the public good and a strong society create quite a different social and political milieu. Being collaborative had a strong role in collectivist education, work and political action models proposed by Marx, and enacted and revised by Lenin in Soviet Russia and Mao Tse Tung in China (Cliff, 2003).

Also implied by *Learning Together* was a hierarchical structure of the Department of Education. In this structure, what was normal for staff, students and communities was differentiated in some specific ways. In relation to students and communities, I found entailments that referred to metaphorical concepts such as CHOICE, INDIVIDUALITY, EMPOWERMENT AND ASPIRATION, but not to teachers or other staff. The use of metaphorical terms such as WORKFORCE gave a clear indication that staff members of the Department of Education were valued first for the collective activity of their work and not necessarily their individuality. Staff members were there to serve as contributors to, and resources for, learning and were positioned subject to departmental values, intentions and plans. The entailment OUR TEACHERS AND STAFF ARE THE FOUNDATION OF A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION SYSTEM compounds this positioning of them, in much the same way as bricks might a building.

Students had roles as citizens or clients. They participated, as demonstrated by the entailment ENRICHING AND FULFILLING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES ENABLE PEOPLE TO

WORK EFFECTIVELY AND PARTICIPATE IN SOCIETY, or were recipients of a service, as shown through the entailment EDUCATION IS A SERVICE. I noted a re-framing of STUDENTS to LEARNERS, perhaps placing them in a more prominent place in the hierarchy than their teachers. Each of the roles mentioned in *Learning Together* – community members, staff, students, parents and other citizens – could be framed by the metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY and its entailments. Collaborative approaches to learning, and therefore teaching, were good and normal, as shown by LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY and LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY CREATES A LEARNING SOCIETY. Where individualistic approaches were mentioned, they were often presented as being for the benefit of groups or community, such as in the associated entailments INDIVIDUALS CAN HAVE LIFE AMBITIONS and THESE AMBITIONS CAN BE FULFILLED THROUGH PARTICIPATION. In these ways, my interpreting demonstrated what it meant to be a normal student and a normal teacher in different ways.

In order to fully enact the “invisible omniscience” (Bentham, in Bentham & Božovič, 1995, p. 29) of the panopticon, Foucault (1995) proposed the third of technique of power, *examination*. *LEARNING TOGETHER IS EXAMINATION* is the third metaphor that I used to think about the policy in this phase. Examination, according to Foucault (pp. 184–194), referred to the testing and judging of individuals within the institution and added the final element through which the panopticon became enacted.

I came to regard the accountability framework as a mechanism for examination. This framework set out a process for data collection relating to each of the goals and divided these into four dimensions that governed the data to be collected: *access*, *participation*, *achievement* and *satisfaction*. Together, these dimensions could be viewed as a deliberate attempt to broaden narrow positivist, quantitatively oriented strategies, such as test results and funding, often used to measure educational success (Teddle & Reynolds, 2000, p. 61). The rationale for four dimensions was emphasised by a quote, attributed to Einstein in the policy, “What counts can’t always be counted and what could be counted doesn’t always count” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 31), and at first glance, the accountability framework appeared very inclusive of difference. The metaphors SUCCESS IS PARTICIPATION, SUCCESS IS ACHIEVEMENT, SUCCESS IS ACCESS and SUCCESS IS SATISFACTION linked to other metaphors SUCCESS IS A QUALITY SYSTEM and THE SYSTEM IS A STRUCTURE. *Learning Together* might claim to be “world class” as it was broader in its assessment than previous frameworks for success might have been. For example, the inclusion of *satisfaction* indicated a valuing of the emotional needs of students, not just to outcomes like quantitative test data.

For Foucault (1972), every education system was “a political means of maintaining or modifying the appropriateness of discourses with the knowledge and power they bring

with them” (p. 227). Through his work, I had come to recognise that “power/knowledge”, as understood in relation to the Department of Education, was maintained and modified by the accountability framework and enacted through its centralised administrative and supervisory functions. As with many educational institutions of the modern era, policy¹¹ was an obvious instance in which the official discourse of the state relating to education could become the instrument and object of power, and this power operated at a number of levels within the hierarchy of a system (Codd, 1988, p. 243). Schools requested assistance and reported results from the periphery of the system to the centre, either directly or through well-defined structures. This hierarchy fragmented down to staff and students at the extremities, with parents not considered to be part of the organisation in any authentic sense. This was acknowledged in the draft *Learning Together* policy (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a). While at the time of *Learning Together*’s publication, some institutional changes had been made to distribute aspects of educational management to school communities and therefore allow for greater participation of staff, students and families, the main site of education policy and administrative decisions remained the bureaucratic centre of the institution. Information and directives for action flowed from this administrative hub to the extremities of the institution. However, in this phase of interpreting the *Learning Together* policy my understandings underwent a notable shift. These new dimensions of accountability could be understood as mechanisms of power/knowledge by which individuals could be tested and judged. In particular, the dimension of satisfaction gave a significant role to *learners* to undertake both their own assessment and that of the system.

This fresh interpretation portrayed how power relations acted through the institution, displaying a reorganisation, or redistribution, of “power/knowledge” (Foucault, 1995, p. 27). What constituted success, and therefore power/knowledge, as it related to the Department of Education in Tasmania, could be framed by the four dimensions of achievement, participation, access and satisfaction. A scan of previous Departmental policies (Cresap, 1990; Department of Education Tasmania, 1968, 1978, 1981, 1987) did not reveal a similar accountability framework for the whole institution, so it was possible that this was the first time that there was such evidence of power/knowledge. Looking at what the system tested and judged in the past and the present gave me some insight into the “processes and struggles” (Foucault, 1995, p. 28) that traversed the “power/knowledge relations” (p. 27) within the system.

In Phase 1, I noted how through the metaphor LEARNING IS LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY, *Learning Together* ostensibly promoted participation by individuals

¹¹ Policy here might also include core curriculum, transition education, systems of assessment or school management (Codd, 1988, p. 243)

and institution-wide dialogue in order to foster a strong and vibrant system. The metaphor PROFESSIONALISM IS DIALOGUE was one example of how I made this judgment, as were the entailments CONSULTATION IS IMPORTANT FOR SETTING VISION AND MAKING DECISIONS and DECISIONS ABOUT LEARNING RESOURCES SHOULD BE COLLABORATIVE. However, another reading of the metaphors showed that an interpretation that could be quite different. The following set of entailments from this metaphor are instructive in demonstrating that difference.

THESE DECISIONS SHOULD DEMONSTRATE A CLEAR LOGIC.

THESE DECISIONS SHOULD BE BASED ON EFFICIENCY.

THESE DECISIONS SHOULD BE BASED ON EFFECTIVENESS.

THESE DECISIONS SHOULD BE BASED ON EQUITY.

While the initial metaphor and entailments highlighted the importance of being consultative, the latter ones suggest another set of criteria was used to judge what was correct. Further, the accountability framework established for *Learning Together* sought to observe and direct those within the system by requiring all actions to accord with it. Data and other measures could provide evidence of how successful the implementation of the strategies had been. Each could be viewed as a tactic which controlled and oppressed difference and individuality. Indeed, for students, SCHOOLING IS A CONTAINER WHICH IS FILLED BY ATTENDANCE, and for teachers, QUALITY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE INVOLVES CONSULTATION; QUALITY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE INVOLVES MORE OPEN COMMUNICATION; and COMMUNICATION IS REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES.

Foucault's (1995) critique of the institutionalisation of power was initially undertaken in relation to how society disciplined and punished those who broke laws. His work posed questions about changes to the manner in which prisoners were convicted, incarcerated and rehabilitated (or otherwise) that challenged assumptions about right and wrong, as well as beliefs about cause and effect. While we might assume that law-breakers have been treated more humanely in the modern era, Foucault suggested that the reform of the penal system and its practices, rather than leading to less punishment, was actually about punishing better, "to punish with more universality and necessity; to insert the power to punish more deeply into the social body" (1995, p. 82). In an analogous fashion, a policy reform such as *Learning Together* could be as a mechanism that would enmesh individuals in universalised language and social practices of *learning*, rather than one that offered them democratic engagement or gave them greater freedom to make educational choices. In a political attempt to move away from the previous government's *Directions for Education Statement* (Department of Premier and Cabinet Tasmania, 1997)

as well as address perceived inequities of the existing hierarchical structure, *Learning Together* may have served to institutionalise rather than liberate.

This raised some puzzling questions. What brought about changes in the discursive relations of power within this institution? In particular, what led to the shift to *learning* being understood as a collaborative rather than individualised practice? What led to participation and satisfaction taking on an increased focus? Was heightened examination of participation and satisfaction within this Tasmanian educational institution indicative of a democratic shift? Might it not also mean that while individuals in the institution could have greater control over the functions of that institution, they could be just as disempowered by their newfound agency?

Using Foucauldian ideas as metaphors, I was able to understand *Learning Together* as a plan to insert control more deeply into schools, communities and individuals. This control brought with it a set of illegalities, or abnormalities, that were repressed, punished or controlled as a regular function (Foucault, 1995, pp. 298-99). Abnormalities could include being illiterate, innumerate, not attending or participating in schooling or vocational training, and not being a professional educator. The examination mechanism, that is, the accountability framework of the system, with its fresh focuses on access, participation, achievement and satisfaction, enacted new responsibilities on individuals, be they teachers, students or bureaucrats, and also new consequences. Following Smart (2002, p. 85), *Learning Together* could be regarded as an economy of educational technologies, a greater set of efficiencies and organisation, not a liberatory framework that would enable the citizens in Tasmania to engage more democratically in their society. This economy aimed at redistributing power and authority throughout the hierarchical structure created by a unified education, training and information system. This was quite different from the earlier interpretation I had made in Phase 1 that the policy was a metaphor for either new sensibilities about learning or an innovative way to understand the nature and purpose of an educational system.

Foucault (1974, p. 338) questioned how Classical thinking led to the creation of man in the modern era by accepting that ideas represent objects. He proposed that language spoke its own meaning and had no relationship to truth in an empirical sense because it could not be linked directly to representation between ideas and objects. For him, language spoke for itself and of itself (Foucault & Bouchard, 1980, p. 57). His thinking enabled me to see that ideas that we have created, such as *community* and *society*, were constructs, just as the figure of man was created in the modern episteme. I came to see that they were disputable epistemological concepts, the products of ethical, political and social commitments (Gutting, 2010). These concepts were known to me

because of what was believed and valued, making them contingent, rather than necessary, truths, and this meant they could, and should, be questioned.

Thinking with Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) enabled me to understand how ideas about education and schooling could be represented through metaphors interpreted from *Learning Together*. It also enabled me to recognise that this representation could be critiqued. In my early interpreting of the metaphors of *Learning Together*, I had accepted that the metaphors and conceptual groupings I revealed represented objects that existed in the real world. For example, I accepted that *democracy* was a given political mode and that *individuality* was an unquestionable concept of self. I came to appreciate that it was my belief that the policy *Learning Together* was an object that genuinely represented what was or could be real about education in Tasmania, not that it was real. In this manner, the language of the text of *Learning Together* could be interpreted as being representative of itself and only itself. *Learning Together* was its own truth and did not represent any real happenings but created its own story. It had no relation to living experience and could not have such a relation. Following Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995), any attempt to link the meaning of *Learning Together* with any objects, events or situations, was impossible. However, it could represent what we assume to be fundamental truths. If that was the case, the purpose for my previous interpreting was to reveal these supposed truths, such as *democracy* and *community*.

In particular, I saw that my interpreting of *Learning Together* had been limited by how I understood the idea of *power* in relation to policy and this policy. I had accepted without question the manner in which *power* was not found in the language of the text, through my interpreting of the metaphors. As I studied the text, I had found scant reference to *power* or associated concepts of *control*, *authority* and *compliance*. The language of *Learning Together*, as I understood it, masked any evidence of a discourse of *power*. Because *power* did not appear to be there, it did not exist as an idea. On the other hand, the language highlighted a discourse of democracy which privileged concepts of *dialogue* and *community* as positive and good. It was evidenced in language, therefore it could exist as an idea.

Learning and being subject – shifts in discursive regimes

By thinking with Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995), I was able to understand *Learning Together*, not as representing the past, present or future reality of Tasmanian education, but as revealing shifting, historically situated beliefs and values about education and community within an episteme. When Foucault spoke of historical

change, he spoke of a shift in a “discursive regime” (Foucault & Gordon, 1980, p. 113), such as globalisation replacing colonialism. In these shifts, he particularly considered how power, punishment and discipline had been administered differentially.

Foucault has often been understood as a theoretician of discontinuity or rupture, a misunderstanding that, in his own words, “has always rather bewildered me” (Foucault, 1980, p. 112). He explains that in “certain moments”, he did detect “these sudden take-offs” that “fail to correspond to the calm, continuist image”, but he also points out in medicine, for example, a “gradual transformation, within a period of twenty-five or thirty years,” of an entire “discursive regime” (p. 113). Similarly, in the emergence of a “new technology of sex”, he detected “a visible continuity” with Christian penance, but a continuity importantly qualified as one that did “not prevent a major transformation” (Foucault, 1979, pp. 116–117).

In the modern episteme, the discourse of education had enabled the intellectual technologies of *teaching* and *learning* that were outlined in *Learning Together*. As *Learning Together* could be understood as emerging from this modern episteme, during the late period of the modern era (Bauman, 2000, p. 2), the policy both revealed how values relating to schooling and civic life had evolved slowly over a quarter to half a century within the Tasmanian community, yet *Learning Together* also served to unsettle established understandings of education, democracy and community. While there was continuity in relation to the perceived functions of that institution, the Department of Education, there was also a rupturing of understandings of *learning*. Learning was spoken of in new ways. The policy offered language about a shift to how education was understood. It also suggested enhanced engagement by students, teachers and parents using the new metaphor LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY. It spoke of gathering together all educational units as one department, much in the same way a group of smaller communities might come together to make a town, with LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY as a new metaphor.

Edwards (2004) considered the establishment of educational aims by governments, such as that proposed by *Learning Together*, to be an example of a governing strategy, or intellectual technology, directed at the goal of a learning society. An intellectual technology acted as a discursive mechanism (p. 71) where power and knowledge conflated within disciplinary forms such as education. What it meant to be educated had grown in importance, just as what it meant to be a sexual being had altered. As was revealed by Foucault’s (1979) critique of the control of sexuality in the modern era, education, as characterised within *Learning Together*, could not only make individuals *objects* of disciplinary techniques, but also create them as self-scrutinising *subjects*. In this sense, control was exercised, not only by other’s knowledge of ourselves, through

hierarchical observation, normalising judgment and examination, but also how we monitored ourselves. Later in Foucault's work (1985, 1986a), he turned from thinking about subjectivity in relation to discipline and shifted to understanding subjectivity through biopower (Nealon, 2008). While sovereign power oppressed the body and social power reformed souls, discipline trained individuals through actions, not merely through suppression. But it was the emergence of *biopower* that saw the most intense, therefore most efficient form of power, which acted upon life directly. *Biopower* intervened on life at all levels, working through norms in order to propel life in certain directions.

Using BIOPOWER and BIOPOLITICS as metaphors gave me a unique opportunity to see the relationship between the institution of the Department of Education and the subjects of the policy. It was particularly striking that those subject to BIOPOWER, through which their bodies would be managed, organised and disciplined, were not only students and teachers, but the wider community. It was possible to recognise a theoretical option such as *pedagogy*, which has been apparent within the institutional form of schooling since its emergence, acting as a technique that enacted BIOPOLITICS. Metaphors such as LEARNING IS RESPONDING, LEARNING IS WORK and TEACHING IS LEADING demonstrated the externalised nature of the teacher-student relationship. One did unto the other and the other responded. Teachers employed *pedagogy* to inscript *learning* on their students but they, in turn, were scripted by it. Using the metaphors BIOPOWER and BIOPOLITICS also led me to consider again the concepts of *lifelong learning* and *learning society*. These could be re-interpreted to expose a potential shift from the pedagogical relationship between teacher and student to the pedagogical relationship that an individual has with themselves, as to engage in *lifelong learning* and be part of a *learning society*, individuals were increasingly taking on the responsibility for being educated. Other metaphors which supported this were LEARNING IS AN OPPORTUNITY and LEARNING IS ENRICHMENT. While these metaphors and related theoretical options of *choice* and *achievement* appeared to give individuals greater agency, at the same time they could also mean that individuals were more constrained by the disciplinary expectations of such freedom.

Foucault's (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) work posed the question, "How am I made subject?" It gave me the opportunity to think about how I was positioned in my interpreting of *Learning Together*. The conceptual framework I drew from it revealed me as subject to current and passing notions of education, democracy, knowledge and being human. Through *Learning Together*, it was possible to reveal gradual shifts and ruptures in understandings of myself as an educated being within a democratic community. In interpreting *Learning Together* with Foucault's ideas, I disclosed how the meanings I gave to the policy limited or liberated me and allowed new conceptual possibilities to emerge. In particular the metaphor of PANOPTICON and the techniques of

control, hierarchical observation, normalising judgment, and examination coalesced to create “the deployment of force and the establishment of truth” (Gutting, 2010). *Learning* became an instrument by which I might create my own subjectivity. Table 3 lists new metaphors that emerged from my interpreting in Phase 2, forming a new frame for me to understand *Learning Together*, based on ideas from the work of Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995).

Table 3. Interpreting metaphors of *Learning Together* using a frame from Foucault.

Second interpretive phase

EDUCATION IS DISCOURSE

LEARNING TOGETHER IS POWER/KNOWLEDGE

LEARNING TOGETHER IS GOVERNMENTALITY

LEARNING IS A TECHNOLOGY

LEARNING TOGETHER IS A PANOPTICON

- *LEARNING TOGETHER* IS HIERARCHICAL OBSERVATION
- *LEARNING TOGETHER* IS NORMALISING JUDGMENT
- *LEARNING TOGETHER* IS EXAMINATION

POLICY IS GOVERNMENTALITY

SUBJECTIVITY IS EXTERIORITY

Questions about self – a subjective turn

I noted earlier that some readings of Foucault refer to a disagreement between his mid and late work (1970; 1985; 1990; 1995) as to how individuals had agency to act in relation to the effects of power (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000). I might have chosen to conclude this chapter with a call to address this disagreement; instead I chose to embrace ideas from both periods of his work in line with Nealon (2008, p.17), who retraced Foucault’s writing across these periods and found what he termed an intensification. This intensification enabled the understandings available to us from his critique of power in institutions to be reconciled with those from his later consideration of individual aesthetic responses to subjectivity.

In the first phase of my interpreting, I sought to explore *Learning Together* from a perspective that might allow some distancing or “exteriority” (Kögler, 1999, p. 183)

from my initial interpreting of this policy. In doing so I focused on the meanings that might be apparent from interrogation of the metaphors of the text. During that early phase, I accepted that the meanings I made of *Learning Together* were always based on existing public knowledges or disciplines. Both when thinking about metaphors in the first instance and then considering new metaphors with Foucault in the second phase, I had not acknowledged the influence or impact of any personal experience or understandings on the meanings I came to.

Yet as I read Foucault and interpreted *Learning Together* further, I sensed an unease, a nagging that caused me to question what I perceived to be his stance on subjectivity (McHoul & Grace, 1995, p. ix). While discursive mechanisms such as the technology of a learning society may have captured me in the “conceptual prisons” of this modern episteme, my interpreting had so far been deficient in accounting for any personal explanation or grounding of my understandings of *Learning Together*. Schneck (1987) also recognised this problematic stance.

Interpreting is seen by Foucault to reduce the rich plurality of experience by means of intellectual repression. Interpreting reduces knowledge to the interpreting mind and in a sense erects walls of acceptability around what is permissible as valid knowledge.

(Schneck, 1987, p. 31).

Foucault enabled me to understand *Learning Together*, which was a political policy, from a distanced and externalised perspective on *power*, and I found this was necessary but not sufficient for me. While I was able to accept that individuals could be made subject by discursive mechanisms within an episteme, I sensed that the subjectivity that was revealed by a Foucauldian-style analysis could not avoid being mediated against a pre-understood background. If I did not acknowledge this background, then we were only ever able to *be* through language via discourses which were ostensibly exterior to us. I would be a mere construct of my socio-historic context and never able to make a difference. My dilemma was compounded by my complicity in the writing and implementation of the policy and the strong sense of agency I gained from this. Indeed Foucault’s question, “What difference does it make who is speaking?” (Foucault & Faubion, 1998, p. 222) loomed, because for me it did make a difference. While authors of government reports might disappear when a report is published (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000), my participation in the construction of the policy document did not disappear for me. It was alive in my mediation of the policy in the writing phase and remained alive, though in a different form now. For me as an author, this enlivening went beyond technologies of self in which discursive tools created me as a subject, such as the technology of policy in bureaucracies.

Yet this raised the dilemma of not having acknowledged any pre-existent ontology against which externally-determined subjectivity might be imposed. “(T)he early works of Foucault veer in the direction of emphasis on the objectivity of being human. Carried too far, such thinking allows insufficient space for the subjectivity of being human” (Schneck, 1987, p. 16). It seemed that, for Foucault, the subject could not pre-exist the social order. “Who and what the self is understood to be, and how the self interacts with others, varied significantly over history and between cultures” (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000, p. 122). This was my unease. I felt unable to fully extricate my “self” from my interpreting of this policy in a way which fully removed any personal perspectives that may have influenced the interpreting of it. This extraction might have seemed to be possible if I had not been so involved in the policy but I was not exterior to this interpretation.

I returned to the questions posed by McHoul and Grace (1995, p. x) at the beginning of this chapter in order to question my engagement with relation to *Learning Together* and pose further questions for myself. First, what framed my knowledge of myself in relation to *Learning Together*, and in particular, what shaped my subjectivity to it? Second, how was I produced in the political – in its broadest sense – processes that led to *Learning Together*, or in Foucault’s words, the “now” (1986a, p. 88) of politics and policy that I participated in? This question initiated a way for me, as a policy actor in a political context, to understand my experience of it better. Third, how might the ethical standpoints that I brought to my interpreting enable me to have personal agency and, perhaps, escape Greene’s “mystification” (1978, p. 42).

My life experiences and particularly my engagement in the policy’s development and implementation had shaped how I interpreted the policy. In Kögler’s (1999, p. 62) terms, my interpreting seemed to lack acknowledgment of a linguistic ontology¹², that is, disclosure of my being through language. Kögler provided part of the way forward by proposing that being able to become exterior to any interpretation (in this case how I understood *Learning Together*), was only possible through a hermeneutic grounding of that interpreting. He challenged Foucault’s claim that discourse analysis could be externally grounded in discourse, demonstrating that the involvement of language within understanding of language defeated this (Kögler, 1999, pp. 184-95). He suggested that we employ the alterity, or external point of view, provided by a discourse analysis to produce a different experience of ourselves (p. 212). Therefore, to gain greater insight into my interpreting of *Learning Together* I attempted to escape that conceptual prison established

¹² Gadamer’s (1999, p. xxii) statement, “Being that can be understood is language”, connects being, understanding and language, and situates understanding as both an ontological event and a linguistic one.

by late modern power/knowledge of *education* and *community* and understand my own situatedness, to better understand this different experience of myself.

The intensification that Nealon (2008) described also assisted me to gain some way in which to acknowledge my subjectivity, yet have agency, through resistance. That meant “tuning” that resistance, “finding channels, concepts, or practices that can link up and thereby intensify transversal struggles into larger, collective but discontinuous movements” (p. 106). I needed a way to fine tune resistance, to stand at a distance so that I could see how I was confined in my interpreting by an already understood ontology, based on pre-held understandings of experience and language. That was why I sought to find a way to reconcile the interpretive interest of Foucault on power with another on self, that of Hans-Georg Gadamer (1999). It was for this reason, having thought with Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and understanding both the potential and the limits offered by a discursive analysis of *Learning Together*, that I now followed Kögler’s (1999) path and turned to Gadamer (1999) to gain insight into the situatedness of my linguistic understanding.

A pause to reflect

In this chapter, I demonstrate that potential meanings of *Learning Together*, and specifically those about power, might be absent or vague and I come to consider how an interpretive view could foreground such meanings of this policy. This phase focused my consideration on axiological concerns, beyond the epistemological ones which characterised the frame I used in the previous phase. I outline a frame of metaphors of *Learning Together* using the interpretive frame based on selected insights of Foucault into knowledge, power and subjectivity and emerge a new set of metaphors. Yet the interpretive frame I use in this phase leads me to a further interpretive turn, in which self and self-understanding take on a greater profile.

Chapter 7

Applying an interpretive approach Phase 3: Gadamer

In this third phase of interpreting *Learning Together*, I consider how my self-understandings give meanings to the policy. Kögler (1999, p. 2) proposed a critical interpretive approach that enabled selected theoretical perspectives of Gadamer (1999) and Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) to be brought together, despite being divergent in some of their epistemological premises. For both Foucault and Gadamer, language was inescapable in any interpretive work as all understanding inextricably involved language (Kögler, 1999, p. 97). The manner in which I engage in my interpreting, cannot be separated from how I understood language and the personal epistemological, ontological and axiological stances I had. For Foucault (1973), language made us subject. His work on subjectivity allows me to explain how discursive technologies, and in his later work, technologies of the self (Foucault, 1991), might act on our understandings, particularly in relation to individual freedom and collective responsibility. Yet, to more fully account for meaning in relation to this policy, I need to look to how I understand through language. I look to myself in order to grasp the origins, situatedness and limits of my language background and how it shaped my understandings of *Learning Together*, and Gadamer's (1999) ideas provide me with the opportunity to understand myself anew through this policy text (Kögler, 1999, p. 27).

Up to this point, my concern has been primarily to understand what meanings *Learning Together* might have, and Foucault's work offered me a way to understanding how these meanings were founded in historicity. Yet, assuming Foucault's intensified understanding of the self and agency (Nealon, 2008), and following Kögler (1999), I seek to understand personal influences on my interpreting. My concern now turns to the manner in which I respond to *Learning Together* as I interpret. Power can be a "local, sometimes crazy (but still rational, all-too-rational) schema" (Nealon, 2008, p. 99) without any organising principle. While we may resist power (p. 98), the act of resistance may capture and limit our understandings. Rather than accept that I am made subject by it

in a way that leaves me dominated by the totalising effects of power/knowledge, I look to my personal knowledge perspective. In particular I search for “subjugated knowledges ... knowledges from below” (Foucault, 1997, p. 7) that may give me potential to enact agency and mobilise resistance in subtle and intense ways.

A hermeneutic frame – playing within a circle of meaning

A particular purpose for this turn to Gadamer’s (1999) thinking was to attempt to broaden the scope of my interpreting and test any limits that the framing I brought to it might have. I considered *Learning Together* with a frame of metaphors drawing on insights from Gadamer’s work for two reasons. First, I recognised that my joint roles as co-author and interpreter of this policy brought an inescapable personal meaning context to my interpreting. This meaning context was constituted by particular understandings of myself, and my lived experience of policy-making. This was especially in relation to this policy, as well as a lifetime in public service in Tasmania. Second, I wished to know how my particular perspectives interacted to mediate my understandings of the policy. Were there inconsistencies or ambiguities of which I was unaware? Were there commonly held, or universal, understandings that I had been socialised into, and how were these personal perspectives mediated through my interpreting of the policy’s subject matter (after Kögler, 1999, p. 79)?

In the first phase of this interpreting, I took the view of Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 56) that metaphor was deeply embedded in the conceptual structures of understanding. On reflection I saw that the way in which I read the text for metaphors brought into being those metaphors that resonated most closely with my personal experiences and values, and potentially reflected my conceptual knowledge structures. This revealed to me that my perspectives arose from both individual and shared cultural and language traditions. What I sought in this third phase was some insight into my own linguistic situatedness beyond those interpretations of the policy I had made that appeared abstracted. I turned to Gadamer (1999) and what has been termed his linguistic ontology (Kögler, 1999, p. 36) to learn more about what I brought to my interpreting.

While I had begun my interpreting with a desire to find one single perspective or a set of universal truths about *Learning Together*, I found it impossible to establish a single unified explanation of the policy. Indeed, my thinking with Foucault’s insights and then Gadamer’s had rendered the pursuit of any such goal irrelevant. As I have noted already, *Learning Together* was not a policy that began or ended with a one-author text. It emerged from a writing process that was messy and dialogical, with many authors contributing to the final policy. Within its pages, there were some traces of language

indicative of collective political, educational and social stances. *Learning Together* was a political document and it is possible to propose that the text was based on strong Labor Party values. Similarly, a significant focus on inclusion of students with disabilities might be said to exemplify strong social justice principles. Further, it offered contemporary philosophical positions on knowledge, values and experience. An example was the accountability framework of *Learning Together*, which has a sense of epistemological certainty. However, while the policy had seemed relatively coherent to me at first glance, I became increasingly aware that it was not possible to claim that it represented one clearly articulated theoretical position. Nor did I perceive any singular recognisable language world that was representative of the views of particular politicians, educational bureaucrats or ministerial advisors.

I aimed to be more conscious of my understanding of this policy by asking what my interpreting of *Learning Together* told me about myself. I began applying the frame of ideas as metaphors drawn from selected ideas of Gadamer (1999), and the first of these metaphors was that of a HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE. In Gadamer's terms, when we understood, we were always already drawn into an event through which meaning asserts itself, an event of understanding (p. 472). Subjectivity was how individuals were formed through mediating of experience through one's own mind or individuality and was overcome and drawn into these events of understanding.

In discourse fixed through writing, language shows itself as purified of all individual conditions and thereby represents the subject matter or thing itself [*die Sach selbst*]. The task of hermeneutics is to recover this hardened meaning through the "historical conversation which we are".

(Kögler, 1999, p. 79)

The conversation that we are is not one that ever ends. Events of understanding have meanings for us as individuals, but they also have meaning beyond our personhood, in the shared worlds in which we live. These meanings were co-constructed through dialogue in the "meaning-disclosing" hermeneutic circle (Kögler, 1999, p. 19). For me in relation to *Learning Together*, the shared worlds could be familial or community realms, or they could be the local, national or global domains of education, politics or culture in which I participated.

For this reason, interpreting was always unfinished and ongoing. Following Heidegger (1962), Gadamer (1999) lifted "hermeneutic circle" from its previous use in relation to scientific method (Mazlish, 2007, p. 95) and privileged it in terms of understanding as a dialogic, practical, situated activity. For Gadamer, to understand was to already be in the world with that which was to be understood. A hermeneutic circle folds back on itself, so that self and object are interpreted and re-interpreted. Heidegger

(1962, p. 27) used the term to convey how all understanding was “*die Sachen selbst*”; that is, the thing itself that is “always already” given over to that which is to be understood.

I used the metaphor HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE to think about *Learning Together*, and began by considering the policy as an object to be interpreted and identifying any prejudgments I might hold in relation to it. Beginning with “vague anticipations” (Grondin, 2002, p. 44) of the policy as a whole, I engaged with the text and subject matter of the policy to reveal my “prestructures” or “prejudices” (p. 50) of understanding. To help me, I considered some principles relating to a hermeneutic circle that could guide interpreting and I applied those principles to *Learning Together*. They were principles of *distanciation, productivity, questioning, application and self-understanding* (Gallagher, 1992, p. 123).

Gadamer (1999, pp. 302-307) used the word “horizon”, as a metaphor to explain how our understandings were contained within the limits of our perspectives but also to show how these limits might expand or move. The metaphor HORIZON assisted in illustrating how the meanings I had might be fused with the understandings of others (pp. 306-307). Through using HORIZONS and A FUSION OF HORIZONS as if they were metaphors, I attempted to bring my understandings into consciousness.

To understand what I meant by consciousness more fully, I sought guidance from Maxine Greene (1978). For Greene, much depends on how consciousness is conceived. It might be understood as pure interiority, as awareness, or indeed as “a mode of grasping, moving outwards, coming in touch with the world?” (p. 14). Greene took a view of consciousness not as inwardness nor as a ghostly entity, but as an engagement with the world, an enlivened and enlivening thrusting toward the world where, through living one’s life, aspects of the world were opened to each of us. Consciousness involved acting.

These acts include imaging, intuiting, remembering, believing, judging, conceiving and (focally) perceiving. Alone or in collaboration they bring individuals in touch with objects, events, and other human beings; they make it possible for individuals to orient themselves to, to interpret, to constitute a world.

(Greene, 1978, p. 14)

Gadamer (1999, p. 300) argued that we had a “historically effected consciousness” shaped by, and situated in, our particular history and culture.

In fact history does not belong to us; but we belong to it. Long before we understand ourselves through the process of self-examination, we understand ourselves in a self-evident way in the family, society and state in which we live. The focus of subjectivity is a distorting mirror. The self-awareness of the individual is only a flickering in the closed circuits of historical life. That is why the prejudices [prejudgments (*Vorurteil*)] of the

individual, far more than his judgments, constitute the historical reality of his being.

(Gadamer, 1999, p. 278)

With Gadamer's ideas to guide me, I aimed to follow a path of "self-distanciation" (Kögler, 1999, p. 7) to reveal any "natural understandings" that I had that impacted on my initial understandings. Using Gadamer's (1999) notions of linguistically disclosed pre-understandings, I attempted to bring forward what Kögler (1999, p. 9) referred to as the implicit-holistic background on which I based my interpretations. I aimed to understand any initial understandings that I had of the policy because "effective-historical consciousness influences what we consider worthy of investigation and how we go about investigating it" (Bernstein, 1983, p. 142).

I chose Gadamer as an interpretive theorist because he allowed me to distinguish how I was inevitably caught within my own meaning constitution. This gave me the opportunity to bring to the fore any pre-suppositions, those ideas I presumed to be known, and examine them. Gadamer (1999, p. 270) proposed that we should strive to break the spell of our fore-meaning and to consider the legitimacy of the fore-meanings dwelling in us. The pre-understandings I had of *Learning Together* already formed "prior and partial" truths (Malpas, 2009) and they also could shape my future understanding of the policy.

I was able to see that my initial interpreting of *Learning Together* was very superficial. I had taken for granted the veracity of the metaphoric scan that I undertook in the first phase of my interpreting and assumed that how I had categorised the metaphors into conceptual groups would help me to disclose meaning. In the second phase of my interpreting with Foucault, I came to acknowledge the naivety with which I had first interpreted the policy. I found I needed to consider the interpretive dialogue that there was between my position as "a lifeworldly situated subject" and as "a theoretically informed interpreter" (Kögler, 1999, p. 7). I had not considered the influence of my personal understandings on the meanings I came to and how these affected this dialogue. By thinking with Gadamer's insights, I had the opportunity to see how I had undertaken the interpreting of *Learning Together* at a much deeper level. I could link my "innerworldly experience qua (or, in the capacity of) experience" with the context of the "symbolic world-disclosure" (Kögler, 1999, p. 64) represented by *Learning Together*.

I regarded my interpreting of this policy as an "event of understanding" (Gadamer, 1977/2008, p. 58). *Learning Together* offered a set of possibilities for disclosing the world and revealing shared and individual understandings. It was not an exercise of interpreting only within the confines of language, but an acknowledgement that "all linguistic experience of the world comprehends the world and not language" (Kögler, 1999, p. 64). This process of hermeneutically reflexive critique offered much potential for

new meaning possibilities as it made me look again at the grounding of my original understandings, as well as at the interpretations I had already made of *Learning Together*. When new interpretations of the object of interest and new understandings of our histories and background come together, the metaphor FUSION OF HORIZONS can be used to represent the event of understanding that occurs. Following selected ideas from Gadamer (1999), I was able to draw from my own self-understandings and reflect upon meanings I had given previously to *learning, education, policy, politics* and *individuality*. Also, the new metaphors I arrived at from interpreting *Learning Together* promised different insights on education, humanness, language, society and myself. Bringing these together analogously as a HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE would not establish concretised truths nor entirely represent experience as it was, but would allow for increasingly rich disclosures of meaning.

Anticipating, pre-judging and understanding

What were the pre-understandings that I brought to this HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE? Gadamer (1999) did not seek to suggest any method for uncovering pre-understandings, just as he did not propose any method for coming to understanding. Gadamer's pre-structure of understanding consisted of prejudices (Grondin, 2002, p. 50), which influenced our "vague anticipations of the whole, which are, however, revised, the more we engaged with the text and the subject matter itself" (p. 44). I used the metaphor of VAGUE ANTICIPATIONS to denote fleeting moments where I had grasped a sense of what *Learning Together* might mean in its totality. The use of the term "vague" is analogous to the meaning given to it by Sokolowski (2000), in that some truths are not distinct, as they sedimented or their display is not intelligible (p. 166). VAGUE ANTICIPATIONS presented themselves from the very moment my formal process of interpreting began and continued to do so throughout each of the phases. What then were my VAGUE ANTICIPATIONS of *Learning Together*?

The metaphor of VAGUE ANTICIPATIONS meant re-visiting personal memories of the development of *Learning Together*, from long before I decided to interpret it for the purposes of this study. The search drew me back to when the policy document was written, workshopped and then re-written; into a time of passion, creativity and the hard effort of development and publication. I wondered again what the policy-writing team might have thought they were creating. Was it a strategic vision, as the title suggested, or a plan, or were we telling a particular story? Was it a story about education, particularly our community's response to education, or was it a story of Tasmania? Perhaps it was solely a political strategy. As we pored over drafts of the policy, we shared many policy

ideas, media reportage on education and anecdotes from our respective experiences as members of Tasmania's education community. These influenced our work as we crafted *Learning Together*, albeit a chaotic, ungainly fashioning. The discussions and debates we had arose in long and regular meetings around a large plain wooden table. The policy text was teased out, argued about, reflected upon and revised many times over. The document was built around already polished draft texts which came to us from the bureaucracy. Each of these could be regarded as having their own histories and sets of interests formed, as Gadamer might regard them, out of the prejudices and self-understandings of others. There were also influences from other political policy statements of that time, with a key one being the *Tasmania Together* (Tasmania Together Progress Board, 2001) policy process that was underway at the time to set out goals and benchmarks for a vision for the state of Tasmania.

From these memories, it was possible to distinguish some of the foci that I took in my interpreting of *Learning Together*. Initially, when I began my interpreting, I regarded the policy's text as a narrative, telling a policy story about education, training and information in Tasmania, as well as telling an array of individual stories relating to policy implementation and debates. The whole text, from beginning to end, including the Ministerial statement, statement of vision, values, principles, goals, strategies and evaluative framework, could be regarded as one relatively coherent tale. It described the Department of Education in Tasmania at that time, its nature, purposes and functions, and proposed what it could be. Soon I came to understand this narrative as more metaphorical than literal, dependent on a set of powerful metaphors. In particular, the metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER* of the title suggested that the policy was creating shared aims for education. There was also the metaphor *LIVING AND EVOLVING DOCUMENT* (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 2). The metaphors of *STRATEGY* and *STRATEGIC VISION* were also strongly apparent, as the policy had proposed setting forward detailed plans about how to achieve the vision of world-class education and training and had set out a "long-term strategy for education which will serve successive Governments" (p. 2).

For Gadamer (1999), prejudgments were crucial as they opened the possibilities of understanding with some degree of alterity or otherness (p. 354), without extinguishing the self (p. 271). I hoped to be more aware of my prejudgments, as these may not be the general understandings of the world of which I am conscious (Kögler, 1999, p. 27). I had to awaken silent features of my understanding (p. 28) and provoke assumptions I had made. In unfolding my background knowledge and making clear my prejudgments, I could see how my understandings had originated. The metaphor of *VAGUE ANTICIPATIONS* focused my attention on meanings emerging from the groupings I had made in the first phase. Further, I could see my choice of the frame of metaphors

prompted by Foucault, POWER, CONCEPTUAL PRISONS and THE PANOPTICON, may have resulted from VAGUE ANTICIPATIONS evoked prior to my interpreting, as I thought about the political nature of my work as an advisor. Examples of metaphors prompted by experience of policy development might be *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A POLITICAL STRATEGY* and *LEARNING IS LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY*.

The grouping of *politics* from the first phase of my interpreting revealed such assumptions. I often assumed that I had understood the term as it related to the legislative role of parliaments, yet as I reflected on it, I recognised that it had many meanings. I understood politics in relation to my very personal political milieu, mostly experienced within Tasmania. If I regarded *Learning Together* as a POLITICAL STRATEGY, what were the assumptions I made about what was meant by the terms “politics” and “strategy”. When I performed politics, it was a politics about relationships and perceptions, not a politics of legislation, which to me seemed merely an end point. Kögler (1999, p. 58), stated, “(u)nderstanding, whether scientific or lifeworldly, is oriented toward the comprehension of meaning”. He proposed that meaning was made through a relation to “being” that always exists in language, and specifically through the mediation of our pre-understandings in “dialogic play”. He built on Gadamer’s ideas, granting that our pre-understandings already contained notions of our being which shaped and influenced our meaning constitution. The stories we told of our initial understandings could be regarded as the play, or “the activity of the thing itself” (p. 58) and the dialogue play we engaged in with others became interpretive paths to follow in pursuit of understanding.

Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics gave an opportunity to engage in an interpretive act, to play within a circle of meaning, so that I might come to a “linguistic-ontological grounding of interpretive understanding” (Kögler, 1999, p. 113) of *Learning Together*. A quest for understanding required that pre-understandings are brought into consciousness, as they can be gleaned from our histories, current life-contexts and conceptual and symbolic frameworks, including language. Pre-understandings unify the orientations we have towards what we want to know. Hence Gadamer’s (1999, p. 470) much-referenced quote, “Being that can be understood is language”, in which he staked a claim for the ontological grounding of language. For me, this meant uncovering how my being, that is, my life experiences and understandings of that experience, led me to interpret *Learning Together* in the way I did. Therefore, I composed a partial life-history, as related to *Learning Together*, so that I could glean some further insights into any prejudices I might have had. The writing of this history led me to recognise the manner in which I framed education in Tasmania through language, but it also revealed relations of power, which Foucault had alerted me to, that impacted upon my understandings.

My experience of schooling and the education system in the state of Tasmania as student and educator had been eclectic and it provided me with a unique set of perspectives. As a woman from a rural, regional community, my struggle for an educational path through compulsory schooling and beyond had impacted significantly on my self-awareness. After growing up in the conservative and fertile agricultural region of the North West Coast of Tasmania and being the recipient of sound, if tediously pragmatic, schooling, I moved away to attend university. I had no choice if I wanted further education, although I left my home willingly. After completing a teaching degree, I taught in rural and semi-rural schools for a significant part of my teaching career. Rural landscape was both an inspiration and an imprisonment for me. It was as though the understandings I had come to through the physical and social landscape of my journey to be an educator (Greene, 1978, p. 19) were woven through the meanings I gave to the natural and human world.

As I wrote my own educational story, I became aware of a variety of moments where I experienced the challenges and barriers to educational, material and cultural opportunities for rural women of my generation. My consciousness of the challenges and barriers forced me to appreciate how, within communities, differences such as gender, distance and family tradition can limit many possibilities. In my pre-history, before my birth, were stories of how both my parents' educations were cut short, either by lack of expectation or money or circumstance. Further back, there were tales of disenfranchisement from education for all of my ancestors. This was the expected lot of displaced immigrants who came to Tasmania, as well as the lot of the outcast convicts and poor Scottish farm workers who sought or were given a better life in this state. In recent decades in Tasmania, the barriers to educational achievement had been documented in terms of statistics about participation, retention and achievement. The qualitative educational journeys of people like myself were rarely recorded. Such were the ongoing impediments borne out of such cultures and traditions that, if I were to name one strong personal message for me that *Learning Together* had, it was that it articulated some vital dilemmas that the Tasmanian community needed to face if it was to address educational opportunity for all Tasmanians.

Ultimately, I attained a somewhat privileged viewpoint through my journey. The opportunities I had been offered and grasped along the way meant that I experienced much success in relation to education. I was a qualified and registered classroom teacher; I had a certificate that stated I was an accredited principal; I taught in numerous school settings in primary and district high schools, across a variety of year groups and in a range of school settings; I taught both in Tasmanian government schools and in the United Kingdom; I lectured student teachers at university and received commendation,

certification and awards for my work; I advised a state government on education policy. My passage through these opportunities had taken me into various roles: as a professional learning officer, a teacher educator, a senior staff member and political advisor. My peripatetic career has taken me to many parts of the educational landscape in this state as well as a stint of teaching overseas. I felt I had mostly achieved an aim for my classroom to be a vibrant and engaging place and provided my students with meaningful and worthwhile educational moments. I believed that these moments were based on a strong set of personal and professional intentions, and I understood these as the throughlines¹³ (Blythe, 1998, p. 20) of my teaching. They were a search for personal identity, important shared values, and the learning of worthwhile knowledge and skills. The links between my passions and my teaching were often explicit, and in fashioning my classroom as a place of fun, risk-taking and thoughtfulness, I followed my desire to make a meaningful contribution to the lives of those for whose education I was briefly responsible. I aimed for good relationships within and beyond the classroom and felt that my LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING was brought alive by my meanderings through varied places and spaces in Tasmania and overseas. All of these enabled me to ground my understandings of education in what I considered genuinely worthy moments of teaching and learning. Through this history, I could see how my understandings of the experience of *Learning Together* were framed.

To give me more insights into my prejudices, I reflected on a personal account of my involvement in the writing and implementation of *Learning Together* (Appendix D). This account, an early informal interpreting of *Learning Together*, gave me great insights into how my ontology played out in the interpreting. From this précised life-history and the policy development narrative I wrote, it was possible to display prejudices that had a distinct impact on that interpreting. In both, I could recognise unquestioned beliefs in democracy, a strong valuing of relationships, a privileging of education as key path to personal growth and a commitment to community.

If I accepted that all interpreting was enmeshed in personal meaning contexts, I could see *Learning Together* has been understood differently by others whose ontology, axiology and epistemology differed. Contrary to traditions of scientific inquiry, this did not mean that my interpreting was invalid or mere opinion (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 8). My purpose within this study was to understand ways in which we can interpret policy, and to do so without encountering personal framework ignores the embeddedness of any researcher within their study and denies the involvement of the self in mediating

¹³ Blythe (1998, p. 20) used the metaphor THROUGH LINES to describe overarching understanding goals, thematised knowledge, values and experiences that could underpin a yearly classroom program.

understanding. Interpreting of *Learning Together* was undertaken within a Tasmanian context, by a Tasmanian with a life history connected deeply to this place and its communities. I had language and social frameworks that arose out of my lived experience of being from this place. I brought understandings to bear that might be different from a researcher from Toowoomba, Iceland or India. It therefore became a question, not of whether I should engage in the explication of my pre-existing understandings or not, but how I might best do this. For this reason, I unfolded a structured background of meaning that I brought to my interpreting.

I turned to the work of Gadamer's and Foucault's predecessor and teacher, Martin Heidegger to assist me. Gadamer and Foucault both draw some philosophic lineage from Heidegger (Elliott & Turner, 2001, p. 15). I see that lineage particularly in relation to how being or "man" was understood historically through language. Heidegger (1962), in *Being in Time*, discussed how individuals were always positioned ontologically within time and space. He explored what this meant in understanding oneself in the world (pp. 78-82) and his pursuit of this particular question of origins was relevant to the work that followed from both philosophers. Gadamer was significantly influenced in his exploration of "self-understanding" by Heidegger, who was his teacher and colleague at Freiburg University (Lawn, 2006, p. 19). His philosophical work drew directly from Heidegger, following his view that hermeneutics was more than interpreting of texts, or a method for the human sciences (Ramberg & Gjesdal, 2009), but involved an ontological stance. It was "about the most fundamental conditions of man's being in the world" (McGaughey, 1997, p. 141). Heidegger made a connection between interpretive processes such as those used to get meaning from a religious manuscript or research paper and the ongoing manner in which individuals encountered the world and came to understand it. Heidegger (1962) considered the question of "what it is to be" that was distinctive for human beings, and developed the notion of *Dasein*, or "being-in-the-world" (p. 147). He argued that any grasp of who we were was impossible without considering this "being-in-the-world". Heidegger also posited that our connectedness to the world constituted human existence or *Dasein*, and that a person could not exist in any sense removed from their connectedness to the world (Young, 2003, pp. 110-112). Therefore, for Heidegger, the concept of *Dasein* was critical as it concerned how understanding was situated. His concept of *Dasein* was premised on the experience of life as that of "factual life", with "facticity" as the governing concept. For Heidegger, this facticity was the "unrecognised and unthematized everydayness and the fallenness, thrownness and uncanniness (ruination) of life" (Nelson, 2001, p 151). "Facticity" meant "everydayness" but at the same time "uncanniness", a double meaning that was deliberately ambiguous. This meant that the background against which meaning was created was, on the one hand, the

sameness that made the day-by-day unremarkable, “a tranquillized self-assurance” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 233), and unfamiliarity, “not-at-home”ness. In coming to understanding, a person was a “being-in-the-world”, an actor acting in the world against a background of a fore-structure of understanding. Heidegger rethought the hermeneutic circle in a way that “all understanding was ‘always already’ given over to that which is to be understood (Kögler, 1999, p. 27). To understand an artwork, we needed to have some prior understanding of that work, in the least, a set of paintmarks on canvas or we could not even attempt to understand it. To understand anything at all, we must be already “ ‘in’ the world ‘along with’ ” that which is to be understood (p. 66).

Heidegger’s conception of fore-structure gave a background and intention to my interpretive approach. The idea of fore-structure was that understanding was *being* determined through our pre-understandings which were structured (Kögler, 1999, p. 88). If I was to have insight into my “self” in relation to my interpreting of *Learning Together*, and the understandings I had of this policy, I could start by understanding what I brought to that interpreting through the metaphor of FORESTRUCTURE. The fore-structure of our understanding could be understood as being made up of three features, designated as *fore-having*, *fore-conception* and *fore-sight*. Each feature contributed to a mostly hidden, but always there, framework for ontological pre-understanding, “our projection of being that was always already brought into every thematic interpreting” (p. 89). As three differing aspects of ontological pre-understanding, these features allow us to grasp meaning, which was when “something became intelligible as something” (Heidegger, 1962, pp. 192-193). The prejudgments and prejudices that made up our fore-structures could be thought of as being three-fold in character: “they are handed down to us through tradition; they are constitutive of what we are now (and are in the process of becoming); and they are anticipatory, always open to future testing and transformation” (Bernstein, 1983, p. 140). The distance of time enables the “true” nature of an object of interest to emerge and the making of meaning in relation to that object is never finished; it is always an infinite process, with the possibility that fore-structures only came to mean something over time.

As interpreting of *Learning Together*, my object of interest, was ongoing, my fore-structures could be best understood as the background against which my understanding of *Learning Together* projected itself. With the distance of time, I saw that my interest in *Learning Together* as a research object arose from a background relating to three knowledge domains continually encountered in my life; that is, the domains of politics, education and policy. There was also the motivation of a desire to be highly educated arising out a historical want for education (tradition), a keen curiosity about how my personal history intersected with that of my island home (being and becoming), and a

desire to create a future (transformation), which mirror the three features of FORESTRUCTURE,

Kögler (1999, p. 88) considered *fore-having* as the practical view against which interpreting was performed, the organised action context of the interpreter, such as their practical involvements and relations that gave rise to their point of view. *Fore-having* involved prior awareness of the world, against which we were able to interpret the world and the objects within it. It might not always be grasped explicitly but could be inherent in our understandings. In this way, a being *Dasein* (Heidegger) was aware of objects in the world, what they did and why they were there and their relationships to other objects. In order to understand *Learning Together*, I needed some fore-having of policy, education and politics. If others, who did not have the same understanding of politics as I had or who were not involved in the policy, interpreted the policy, their fore-having would have a different impact on their understanding.

To gain some insight into what constituted my fore-having in relation to *Learning Together*, I turned to the life-history and *Learning Together* narrative that I had written (Appendix D). I was able to think about the concerns and questions which motivated my intentions for this study and drove me to see it as meaningful. For example, I started to see how my work and social contexts influenced my interpreting. Immediately it was evident that the contexts of my study and my work were inextricably entwined, and it was difficult to extract one from another, such was the nature of how I lived and worked. My work on the *Learning Together* policy within the Minister's office built upon my previously professional work in other settings, such as in curriculum, professional learning and schools contexts. These were shaped by my studies and by my relationships within Tasmania and educational circles in this state. How I valued people and relationships both in my personal and work lives was evident in the life-history and narrative statements. I privileged relationships in a way where I negotiated the everydayness of my personal and work lives according to an expectation that others would act decently toward me. In hoping that my intentions and actions were open and honest and not in any way perceived to be manipulative or coercive, I seemed driven by a deep-seated need to have trustful relationships. This might indicate a naive view of relationships, perhaps one that came from growing up in a small inward-looking community, or obscure the potential for power to be used exploitatively upon me or others, or by me on others.

Through my writing, I also detected a recurring belief that people could choose to make a difference and did indeed make a difference. This was paralleled by a conviction that people were ultimately responsible for their choices and actions. I had strong values about the meaning of work and valued people less or more according to the work they

did. I did not value as highly those who did not work hard to achieve nor did I value those who only worked for their own interests. I reflected that both of these sets of beliefs might be traced to Protestant and Methodist religious beliefs of my forebears. There were also strong beliefs about the worth of participation in community, perhaps because of my parents' long involvement within their community. These beliefs were obvious in relation to my active engagement in the educational communities of which I had been a part and my intense interest in politics locally and as a broader theme in my life. I thought I had a right, and a reciprocal responsibility, to be socially and politically involved for the benefit, not only of myself, but also of my community. This sense of my rights and responsibilities were there in my actions, in my need to have a good reputation and to be accountable to my community in a genuine way.

The above comments suggest that I was very much a product of the context of birth and location in Tasmania. There were values of continuity, stability, connectedness, community, and also evidence of strong liberal humanist values relating to freedom and democracy (Gutek, 2004, p. 174) that I took to be founded on Protestant religious ideas. Gutek regarded modern liberalism as being underpinned by beliefs such as: an optimism about people and assumptions; that people were good and socially intelligent; that religion was a secular concern; that individuals had a right to own property; that human associations through politics, society, the economy and education were important; that individuals should play by the rules; that as a middle of the road ideology, being in the middle could be uncomfortable; and that progress was a good thing. Each of these was evident in my personal reflections and could be regarded as fore-having.

However, I could also determine threads of other philosophies, ideologies and theoretical positions. Some of these revealed a more socially critical standpoint. I spurned hierarchy and privilege without merit, and believed all had a responsibility to address inequality and act in the interests of others who were oppressed or less fortunate than ourselves. To uphold shared community interests over individual ones required political and social action that would expose deception, discrimination and partiality, in the same way as was proposed by the Marxist notion of material dialectics.

For dialectical philosophy nothing is final, absolute, sacred. It reveals the transitory character of everything and in everything; nothing can endure before it except the uninterrupted process of becoming and of passing away, of endless ascendancy from the lower to the higher.

(Lenin, 1980, pp. 7-9)

What might have contributed to such a critical rebelliousness? Perhaps the explanation was an Irish, Scottish and Cornish heritage, where music and stories of poverty and displacement were absorbed from grandparents whose ancestors been

transported to Tasmania or escaped from desperate agrarian existences in their homelands of Ireland, Scotland and Cornwall during the nineteenth century. It might also be explained as the critical edge that came from a struggle to be an educated woman from a conservative rural community during the socially progressive decades of the 1960s and 1970s.

I could recognise how my fore-having also impacted on my interpreting of another policy, *Tasmania Together* (Tasmania Together Progress Board, 2001), which was developed at a similar time to *Learning Together*. *Tasmania Together* did precede *Learning Together* and may well have been one of the impetuses for it, although I never had this confirmed. Described as the community's twenty-year plan for the state, it was launched by the Bacon Labor Government during its first term of office. *Tasmania Together* was a project to consult with Tasmanians on "what they want for their long-term social, economic and environmental future" (Tasmania Together Progress Board, 2001) and guide decision-making. Like the vision, goals and strategies of *Learning Together*, *Tasmania Together* resulted in 24 goals and 212 benchmarks after two-and-a-half years of community consultation. It seemed to capture a mood of optimism and possibility within the Tasmanian community, perhaps in contrast to years of economic uncertainty and population decline in the state (Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics, 2008). Even its detractors regarded it as having genuine promise as a state plan, as one of the inaugural *Tasmania Together* Community Leaders' Group members, and subsequent critic, Anna Pafitis (2005), stated:

Tasmania Together was a good idea. Any leadership that begins by seeking to understand the aspirations of their people is off to a good start ... A consultation process of this magnitude is unlikely to happen again in our lifetime, it is a potentially powerful body of information.

(Pafitis, 2005, n.p.)

In my work as Principal Education Officer for the Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) learning area, I was charged with engaging schools, teachers and students in this process so that they might contribute to the consultation. If a bit cynical about the political reasons for asking children's views, I did see the potential for young people in the state to have a voice where this was not previously considered. Personally, I was captivated by the open and genuine calls for input in the public relations campaign that accompanied consultation toward the proposed plan. For the first time in the decade since I had returned home to Tasmania from living overseas, I felt my home state may finally get some of the confidence and hopefulness it needed and deserved. And it seemed so simple to ask people what was important, determine some priorities and make a plan to achieve it over twenty years.

This experience of *Tasmania Together* consultation, followed by my involvement in the writing and implementation of *Learning Together*, provoked in me strong ideas about the potency of dialogue for creating possibilities and fostering inclusive communities. It also helped me to recognise the relationship between education and future prospects for the Tasmanian community. I was influenced by the parallel processes of *Learning Together* and *Tasmania Together* and, in inquiring into *Learning Together*, my intentions were first and foremost to demonstrate how powerful such consultation was. On reflection, I acknowledged that in my desire to read these processes as positive collaborative ones, the meanings I gave to my close involvement in them were more than I ought to claim and I saw that I did not consider how others in the Tasmanian community were involved or not. Over half a decade later, it was clear that numerous Tasmanians were unaware of the ongoing consultation of *Tasmania Together* or the *Learning Together* policy. If they were aware of these projects, they were either nominally informed of their progress or, in the least, sceptical of their outcomes or outputs.¹⁴ It seemed that a decade later, *Tasmania Together* had become a metaphor for inertia.

The example of my naive interpreting of *Tasmania Together* was aimed at illustrating how the totality of my fore-having impacted on understanding, and it raised dilemmas in relation to my interpreting of *Learning Together*. While I rejected none of my convictions, I did question the assumptions I made about the centrality of *work to being*, the privileging of *individual choice* and the meanings I gave to *community*. I stood at a distance and saw how I judged things to be worthwhile if they were pragmatic and things got done. I saw that I believed that there was such a thing as a Tasmanian community and that it corresponded to the form I gave it. I held that in questioning inequitable practices through a perspective, I thought that I was doing the right thing. However, I disclosed no personal interests that I may have had in questioning the authority and decision-making of education hierarchies.

What then, was my fore-having? In Heidegger's (1962) terms, it was my "referential totality" or "totality of involvements" (p. 145) that shaped the thing, in this case *Learning Together*, in advance of interpreting it. I outlined a set of involvements that lead to beliefs that *Learning Together* was a good and meaningful thing to do as a policy, that it was possibly meaningful for many people and that its worth could be demonstrated. I proposed that *Learning Together* also offered a means to stand against oppression and to hear voices in education other than those that had been heard under existing traditional

¹⁴ See Blog comments following the *Tasmania Together* article by Pafitis (2005) at <http://tasmaniantimes.com/index.php/weblog/comments/post-friday/> and 'Stateline' article (Fisher, 2005).

bureaucratic arrangements. My fore-having, as laid out above, demonstrated how my practical involvements were the foundation of my “being-in-the world” (p. 223).

Fore-conception was the second aspect of FORESTRUCTURE, which, according to Heidegger (1962, p. 191) were those linguistic possibilities which were drawn out of fore-having that an individual then employed in their implementation of the third aspect, foresight. In elaborating fore-conception, Kögler (1999, p. 92) referred to the notion of a basic vocabulary, also propounded by Rorty (2009, p. 364), that formed a horizon of meaning that existed in the dialogic situation created by a hermeneutic circle. They were possibilities enabled by the conceptual systems that operated within a culture. For example, a racially intolerant person could use language categories that pigeonholed people according to ethnicity, while a more tolerant person may differentiate people on an individual basis, using a vocabulary based upon the possibilities enabled by the concepts of diversity and difference. Both of these might exist within a society as there could be a range of conceptual groupings depending on cultural differences. Fore-conceptions revealed “fundamental and deep-seated ontological assumptions about nature, time, people and so on” (Kögler, 1999, p. 92).

In order to gain greater understanding of my fore-having, I narrated the life-history referred to earlier in this chapter, in which I outlined a rationale for my professional endeavours. While this life-history was written for the purpose of my interpreting, it built on a number of personal statements I had written over the past decade for various purposes, such as belief statements for professional learning and applications for promotion. In this life-history, I disclosed some personal history: that of Celtic convict and poor early settler descent, Methodist, and previous to that, Catholic familial religious backgrounds and a long heritage of subsistence farming. Each of these was a cultural referent that shaped my fore-having and I saw their traces in my personal values. For example, how I understood *education* related closely to the beliefs that came from my religious background and family education history.

As an author and now interpreter of personal stories, I saw symbolic expressions that revealed my personal, traditional and cultural assumptions. This reflection allowed me to make some sense of the symbolic organisation of cultural meaning and practices that influenced my interpreting. These could be understood as symbolic orders (Kögler, 1999, p. 3) and they are one means of identifying my linguistically-formed fore-conception. In reflecting on my life-history, questions arose about how certain symbolic expressions shaped my pre-understandings of *Learning Together*. I was able to wonder about how my initial meanings were symbolically represented. What linguistic forms did I use and what were the mediations (p. 67) that I applied in my interpreting? In the first instance, I used the English language, and its forms, specifically prose, metaphor,

narrative, formal academic writing and questioning. I also used sets of words that could be related to education and policy-making. In exploring *Learning Together* through a metaphorical systematicity (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 10) in the first phase, I could acknowledge that our “prejudices do not cut us off from the past, but initially open it up to us” (Linge, 1976, p. xiv). Thinking about my life-history in the second phase enabled me to identify the language forms and concepts that formed a background to my interpreting. I gained insight into some of my epistemological and axiological assumptions through the metaphorical references I used. Despite appearing to have the privilege of an “author” of some aspects of this policy, I became aware that I was captured within broader linguistic and social contexts that influenced the words I used for metaphors, categories and concepts.

There were metaphors that had come to me in my early interpretive encounters with the policy, that I could now understand as VAGUE ANTICIPATIONS. These included: *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A LIVING, EVOLVING TEXT*; *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A NARRATIVE OF TASMANIAN EDUCATION POLICY*; *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A POLITICAL STRATEGY* and *LEARNING IS LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY*. Each of these metaphors could be linked back to conceptual metaphors: *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A POLICY*; *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A NARRATIVE*; *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A TEXT* and *LEARNING TOGETHER IS DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION*. I accepted that they were coherent, but not consistent, metaphors. Policy is often characterised as a document (Bridgman & Davis, 2004, p. 3), generally as a text that related a particular policy narrative. This appeared to make sense. Yet the concepts of *policy*, *narrative* and *text* can be very inconsistent. A policy may or may not be a written text, a text did not have to be a policy, a narrative could tell a story and yet a policy may not necessarily tell a story. Despite this, I had accepted their relatedness. I could now see that I had taken for granted the meanings of the words that I later used to frame up new understandings of the policy.

It also became clear that my choices of labels for the grouping of the metaphors *education and schooling*, *community*, *accomplishment*, *intentions* and *purposes*, *democracy*, *individuality*, *formations* and *systems*, *economy* and *knowledge*, *locality*, *interaction* and *reciprocity* were clearly not random assignations of titles to groups of metaphors. Each was drawn from pre-existing language frameworks and involved choices grounded in how I conceptualised the world. Just as individual metaphors highlighted certain meaning, particular concepts also hid alternative meanings that might have been available to me. In probing *Learning Together* for metaphors, there were things that I brought into view and others I masked (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 10-13). Each metaphor and concept unveiled the horizon of meaning I had used. Words such as *policy*, *text*, *narrative*, *Tasmania*, *education*, *learning*, *collaborate* and *politics* were indicators of

personal interests, concerns and orientations, or what Gadamer (1999, p. 278) described as “prejudgments”. *Learning, schooling, childhood, community, progress, improvement, achievement, dialogue, and self and subjectivity* revealed that I had particular academic interests.

I revealed a particular interest in *community* which came from commitment to the specific communities of which I was a part. These included the town in which I lived and my workplaces. This was also closely related to the concept of *place*. At times, I laughed with colleagues about how I conversed with people whom I was meeting for the first time. Very quickly, regardless of the work-related nature of the interaction or otherwise, my questions were often along the lines of “Where are you from?” or “Where do you live?” and in Tasmania, “What’s your last name?” followed by “Are you related to ...?” or “Do you know ...?” Unwittingly I formed my understandings of people by their interpersonal connections and their locatedness within *place*. This was something I saw repeated over and over again by many other of my fellow Tasmanians. This pre-occupation with place could also be linked to spatial metaphors, such as HORIZON, that were also evident in my writing.

Gadamer (1999) recognised that language has several roles to play in shaping our understanding. It both limited interpretive reach by being a hermeneutical horizon and enabled the possibility of meaning (pp. 395-397). My quest to understand the language I used to interpret *Learning Together* brought to light certain ways of understanding the world and my being within it. How I used different concepts, categories and metaphors helped me to understand the language frameworks of my fore-conception. To this point, in each phase of my interpreting of *Learning Together* I recognised newly formed fore-conceptions. I could see that liberal humanist perspectives (Guttek, 2004, p. 174) were given preference as standpoints on politics and society, while there were traces of more conservative humanist discourses evident in terms such as *economy, progress* and *knowledge*. Other progressive perspectives were apparent in terms such as *reciprocity* and *community*, while *inclusivity* and *diversity* hinted at postmodern views. There were also elements of the text that I highlighted, diminished or ignored. Because the concept of *power* was not highlighted in the first phase of my interpreting, I brought a new set of metaphors from Foucault, changing my fore-conception prior to the next phase. I engaged different linguistic and conceptual frameworks as I interpreted. In this way, the fore-conceptions which shaped my interpreting of *Learning Together* were becoming illuminated through a distancing process that could give my interpretations “trustworthiness” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 289-331).

Fore-sight was the third aspect of FORE-STRUCTURE as “in every case interpreting was grounded in *something we see in advance—in a fore-sight*” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 191,

emphasis in original). Fore-sight could be understood as the interpretive direction or “point of view” I brought to my study.

It takes “the first cut out” of what has been taken into our fore-having, and does so with a view to a definite way in which this could be interpreted. Anything understood which was held in our fore-having, and towards which we set our sights “foresightedly”, became conceptualizable through the interpreting.

(Heidegger, 1962, p. 191)

For Heidegger, it could be understood as our “inmost potentiality-for-Being” (1962, p. 311). Such an orientation existed prior to any act of interpreting and enabled an individual to make sense of their experience. Heidegger used the German term *Vorsicht* which translates as implicit interpretive direction, or looking ahead (Aczel, 2001, p. 611). It oriented one’s understanding, by unifying and seeing in advance the object of interpreting.

According to Smith (2000), fore-sight guided our interpreting and made us aware from both a personal and a group point of view, while for Kögler, fore-sight was the semantic possibilities, or meaning perspectives, that were actualised within an interpretive situation (Kögler, 1999, p. 88).

Thomas Alexander (1995), understood fore-sight as “eros” (p. 75), as desire that impels a human being. Alexander regarded democracy as a collective project of creating a civilisation that fulfilled human eros, as without eros, humans are unable to overcome what they have taken for granted and move towards understanding. As Alexander said “all human existence is founded upon a need to experience meaning and value in an aesthetic, concrete manner”. Without fore-sight, that is, eros, fore-having and fore-conception had no purpose or direction and created no new possibilities. Through the dialogue of interpreting, semantic possibilities were problematised and potentially understood (p. 92). Indeed, I could account for my determination to understand the policy through my interpreting of it by thinking of fore-sight in this way. Eros opened up potential for interpretive possibilities and could explain why I did not just accept the policy at face value. My desire, eros, to understand *Learning Together*, impelled me to engage in an interpretive dialogue relating to concepts such as *democracy*, *learning*, *community* and *power*, unsettling my understandings and unlocking new meanings.

The notion of Eros was also consistent with Heidegger’s being-who-acts, where action required a world (Young, 2003, p. 110). Following Malpas (2009), if we are to understand anything at all, we must already find ourselves ‘in’ the world ‘along with’ that which is to be understood. How we were oriented to such an object of our attention in the world determined our understandings and interpretive possibilities. If we saw a range of

possibilities, we may understand broadly and act from our understanding of a range of possibilities (Young, pp. 200-201). In this manner, all aspects of understanding were future projective, and as Bernstein (1983, p.140) noted, “to accomplish an understanding was to form a project [*Entwurf*] from one’s own possibilities”. Such possibilities were not only the product of our historically understood situatedness, but were also constituted by being and becoming ourselves in the here and now. They shaped how we grasped our circumstances and were disposed towards interpreting into the future. Fore-sight both enabled and limited our awareness of possibilities and could be considered as that which might impel or provoke certain points of view. As Smith (2000, n.p.) noted pointedly, “the fore-sight of prejudice will produce very different results than the fore-sight of tolerance when interpreting texts and events”. Where a range of possibilities was not understood, then only one way of understanding something held sway. Heidegger (1962) calls this *Gestell*, loosely translated as “enframing” (p. 200), and regards it as the essence of modernity when it “holds sway”. What might *Gestell* mean in “late modern” times, as critical and hermeneutic perspectives brought new meaning possibilities to the fore?

What constituted my fore-sight in relation to *Learning Together*? In seeking to understand the interpretive possibilities *Learning Together* had for me, and what it might mean for others within my community, I was provoked to understand more about my self and how I had made meaning in the world. Drawing on my personal narratives (Appendix D), I recognised a deeply held desire to understand the world in different ways, that took me beyond the limits of my childhood geography, early schooling experiences and the realm of my family. I could see questions and new meanings about concepts such as *learning, community, democracy, individuality* and *power*. From my very first involvement with it, *Learning Together* seemed to hold rich possibilities for me. In my initial encounter with it, I saw it as being a powerful way of raising the profile of education so that Tasmanians would value education more highly. I also saw it as a way of bringing together the diverse organisational units which made up the Department of Education in a manner that seemed to be bureaucratic commonsense. I also wanted it to be an answer to every educational dilemma the government faced, from literacy teaching to the management of inappropriate behaviour. I could see that, by enframing *Learning Together* as a policy that offered a grand solution to solve a range of problems, I was limited in my capacity to grasp other meanings it might have. This enframing downplayed many other potential meanings, such as how the manner in which a well-regarded policy might enhance the political success of the Minister and the Labor Government. Therefore, by asking what I saw as possibilities from interpreting *Learning Together*, I was able to gain some awareness of my fore-sight.

Interpreting from a distance

In this way, I was able to reveal some of my pre-understanding of *Learning Together*, bring into “being” my fore-having, fore-conceptions and fore-sight and seek to overcome them (Kögler, 1999, p. 93). Just as Heidegger (1962) and Gadamer (1999, p. 188) all used the criterion of returning to the thing itself, in this study, I returned again to the policy *Learning Together*. I accepted, in the attempt to reveal my situatedness through examining my pre-understanding, that I was already engaged with *Learning Together*, the object of my interpreting in the world. I found that I could not assume that I could fully explain the FORE-STRUCTURES of my understanding prior to my interpreting of the policy, but that my interpreting did begin at the moment I encountered the text for the first time in my professional life. Prior to this, concepts such as *education, learning, community and policy* were already there within my self-understanding. They were part of a symbolic framework already in place and they formed part of my fore-sight that pre-disposed me to think about the policy. I could recognise that even as I was becoming conscious of my fore-structures, I was already moving beyond them. While it was unavoidable that my initial prejudices and prejudgments might be those I brought to bear on my understanding, I could also see that the possibilities of my interpreting were opening up further as I came to new and different work and personal understandings.

For Heidegger (1962), understanding was always available to us within horizons of time, of *being-already* (p. 364), *being-there* (p. 182) and *potentiality-for-being* (p. 310). Gadamer (1999) took up the notion of past, present and future horizons to explain how understanding came about through productive dialogue (p. 239). Understanding came from dialogue via disclosure of the differing HORIZONS of meaning that each participant brings to the discussion. Through careful and explicit disclosure of each differing horizon around a shared subject matter, agreement could eventually be achieved that enabled each party to transform their individual meanings and form new understandings. Where such agreement was not easily achieved, dialogue continued on, with differences being worked through until agreement was achieved, although always from the perspective of our own meaning horizons. I used the notion of *fusion of horizons* to enable me to think about the interpretive process I used in relation to *Learning Together*, and I could see that I produced new understandings by interpreting *Learning Together* from differing perspectives.

The initial HORIZONS of my understanding were transformed, in turn, by introducing the thinking of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) on *metaphor*, Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) in relation to *power*, and Gadamer (1999) on self-understanding. New meanings created a dialogue, an interplay (Gadamer, 1999, p. 557) between myself, the ideas of these thinkers and the policy *Learning Together* and my

interpreting could be characterised as a hermeneutic circle in which “performances of speaking, thinking, and acting” (Kögler, 1999, p. 53) created a framework of understanding, which transcended the contribution of each participant. The narratives, life-history, metaphoric scan and the interpretive writing of this study all constituted personal performances. Lakoff and Johnson’s, Foucault’s and Gadamer’s performances were also available to me in the various writings, in my interpretation of these works, and how they were interpreted by others.

As Johnson noted (2000, p. 33), Gadamer saw that understanding relied on an interpretive approach that was dialogical, practical and situated activity, not limited by any one method. In order to have some insight into how my interpreting of *Learning Together* could be represented as a HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE, I considered I might have employed some principles, proposed by Gallagher (1992), that characterised a moderate interpretive stance. These principles were *distanciation*, *productivity*, *questioning*, *application* and *self-understanding*.

“Hermeneutic work is based on a polarity of familiarity and strangeness” (Gadamer, 1999, p. 295) and to create the “true locus of hermeneutics” was to play in the “in-between”. Hermeneutic understanding needed a space in which it might take place and such distanciation could create that space. For Gallagher (1992), distanciation came about through “objectification”, “transcendence” and “the projection of possibilities” (p. 128). That which was to be interpreted must become an object, a “distanced objectivity”. In doing so, the object of our interpreting became unfamiliar, rather than familiar, leading to a “moment of ‘tension’ ” within the hermeneutical situation. To create a distance between myself and *Learning Together*, I employed frames of concepts as metaphors, then employed frames of Foucault’s ideas expressed as metaphors. Even from the very earliest engagement I had with the policy, I was already becoming distanciated from *Learning Together*. Through the act of its publication, *Learning Together* became distanced from those with personal involvement. It took on an autonomy, which no longer required a relationship with those involved in its writing. As a published entity, it was able to exist within school staffrooms, libraries, principals’ offices and in references in other publications. It has become the subject of conversation and was referred to and quoted within the media as well as in scholarly articles and other policies. It was a cited text or named as symbolic antecedent of other policy initiatives in a variety of departmental documents and websites. An example of this was in the references to *Learning Together* in the policy document *Tasmania, A State of Learning* (Department of Education Tasmania, 2003b) and the use of the logo in the published texts of this and other Department of Education policies at the time.

Significantly, my own circumstances in relation to the policy changed. I moved from a work situation, where it was always present to my daily concerns, to a new position lecturing at the University of Tasmania. My involvement with the policy was only as part of the newly-formed *Learning Together* Council, appointed by the Minister to oversee and evaluate the progress of the policy's implementation. Even this role ceased after two years. This meant I was removed from its direct implementation as government policy and from the political, work and social contexts of which I had previously been part. I returned to work in political circles after four years, but in a new portfolio area, that of Tourism, Arts and the Environment. Within Government, the importance of the policy had shifted significantly, as a new Minister for Education, with different policy imperatives, had been appointed in the interim. The writing and implementation of *Learning Together* was in the past, and thus, it was spatially and temporally distant from my world and I from its. It remained part of my study; however, I regarded it more as an entity which I might interpret. Indeed my distancing from *Learning Together* did not occur only at the specific times when my professional roles changed, but also at each iteration of the text. From the policy's genesis to its publication, as each new draft was finalised and the previous one superseded, there was an opportunity for a fresh perspective on it. Each rendering was unfamiliar, with a distinct change between the first published draft policy and the published final policy. Yet being distanced did not seem to negate, for me, a Gadamerian notion of belongingness from interpreter to object. I still felt an affinity with the policy, perhaps as Bernstein (1983, p. 142) suggested, of language and tradition that enabled me to make it intelligible. My interpreting did not just involve the identification of the *Learning Together* policy as a text, as the object that I interpreted. As Gallagher (1992, pp. 131-132) pointed out, the object may be a text, but it might be human activity or an event. It could also be seen as ongoing human activity, through the progress of its implementation in schools. Perhaps *Learning Together* could be viewed as an ongoing event, even a series of moments, as there was not only the launch but the re-referencing of the policy through new publications, a conference and teaching awards. While I had concentrated on the text, my involvement in the development of the policy, the public relations surrounding its launch and the oversight of its implementation all formed part of the horizons in which I interpreted *Learning Together*. Inevitably, I came to treat all three elements of text, event, and human activity, as analogous to the object *Learning Together*.

For Gallagher (1992, p. 130), distancing also came about through *transcendence*. I could see that in interpreting *Learning Together* I was attempting to transcend the original final text, yet I was not merely reducing its meaning to only those meanings which I gave it. As an interpreter, I aspired to transcendence by seeking to reveal my self-

understanding, yet at the same time, allow my interpretation of the policy to live “a life of its own”, beyond any original intention, audience or author, given to it by me or others. According to Gallagher, conservative hermeneuts assumed that any text had an original meaning and therefore an original intention. However, I had not assumed that an original meaning existed for *Learning Together*, nor did my interpreting intend to simply repeat or restore any original meaning of it. *Learning Together* was written in a way that involved the ideas and words of a multitude of authors, many of whom contributed one small part that was then worked into a supposedly coherent text by a writing committee and several key writers. Even though authorship of early drafts might have been identifiable, as the writing proceeded through each individual and group redrafting, the words of these authors became inextricably tangled and incontrovertibly altered. This process demonstrated the transience of the notion of an originator in relation to policy interpreting; *Learning Together's* authors, or originators, were multiple. Distanciation from an object that we are interpreting allows us to project our own possibilities, envisaging potential within a situation. “To be human is to be always in the process of becoming, to be in quest of openings, of possibilities” (Greene, 2009, n.p.). In projecting possibilities, we can transcend toward them (Gallagher, 1992, p. 129). Transcendence could only be arrived at by opening oneself up and at the same time allowing the object of the interpreting, in this case *Learning Together*, to have a say. While all interpreting carried within it notions of historically situatedness, transcendence occurred, not only in relation to objects such as texts, but also in relation to that which existed in the present and the future. Through distanciation, *Learning Together*, as the object of our interpreting, can become a *proposed world*, as suggested by Ricoeur (1981), one which I could inhabit and wherein I could project “my own most possibilities” (p. 142).

Projecting possibilities was about enabling reflexive self-awareness. I recognised that the possibilities of which I became aware were those that were available within my personal horizons of understanding and were not necessarily all the potential possibilities of *Learning Together*. The interpretive promises of *Learning Together* that were open to me were those based within my fore-structure of understanding, arising from my fore-sight, fore-conception and fore-having. It was through productive critique and dialogic reflection that I was able to actualise potential meanings and overcome any erroneous prejudices (Kögler, 1999, p. 29). “We can never transcend the realm of prejudices (because we were always implied in our understanding) but we can transcend those that have proven inept or fruitless” (Dostal, 2002, p. 45). For me, in the first instance, *Learning Together's* possibilities were numerous and focused on the creation of an educationally engaged community in my island state of Tasmania. The most apparent were: schools having stronger relationships with their local communities; a more

technologically adept and connected society; a more democratic organisational structure in the Department of Education; a more vibrant economy for Tasmania; greater valuing of educators and their contribution to education in the state; and an education system grounded in values statements. The interpreting process I undertook also enabled me to see even other possibilities, and some of these were more negative. They included *Learning Together* being a policy that: constructed mechanisms for greater control and management of educational provision; increased dominance of economic and political drivers for education; and established, without consultation, a values framework that privileged communal needs over individual interests. These newly projected possibilities brought into display prejudices which prevented me seeing more negative aspects of the policy. *Distanciation* could also create the space, between interpreter and object, in which insights could emerge.

Gallagher's (1992) second principle, *productivity*, was not merely readings of an object but what emerged between "real world" and "possible worlds" (p. 144). For Ricoeur (1981, p. 213), an object of interpretation was always latently productive and he noted that, with the space created by distanciation, interpreting through the HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE "produced" something new which was neither limited by one's own subjectivity nor that of its origins. In this manner, an object could become productive of its own world, there was the promise of "an unlimited series of readings" with multiple meanings having the potential to emerge (p. 139). Productivity not only reproduced and created anew, but transcended reproduction and creativity. I found myself able to come to many more interpretations of *Learning Together* by producing various metaphors and their entailments, and rethinking concepts of *education, community, individuality, democracy* and *power*. As *Learning Together* was referenced in other documents, new policy language, objects and acts (Yanow, 2000, p. v) were created. Some of these could be closely identified to the original policy's stated vision and aims, while others were neither consistent nor coherent with it. For example, *Learning Together* was used to justify particular departmental and stakeholder submissions to the government's budget process or other policy positions, where at times such justification was tenuous. Through my interpreting of *Learning Together*, I could see how a world was proposed for me, a world in which I might live, but also how, by that world being proposed, other possibilities of new worlds might be created in which the original policy and its initiatives might be rejected or developed. An example was evident in relation to one of *Learning Together's* key initiatives, the *Essential Learnings* curriculum. Following implementation of the curriculum initiative over a four-year period, there was the definitive shift away from the language of the curriculum in 2006. In most educational circles, this was regarded a rebuff to that initiative and its associated political baggage (Ward, 2006). It was

particularly interpreted as a rejection of the curriculum's strong emphasis on a values framework and inquiry learning approaches. In its place, a new *Tasmanian Curriculum* (Department of Education Tasmania, 2010, p. 21) was put in place, with an emphasis on "clarity of the language" (Ward, 2006). Similarly, *Learning Together* had replaced a previous policy *Directions for Education* (Department of Premier and Cabinet Tasmania, 1997) produced by a previous Liberal government. Both *Learning Together* and *Directions for Education* were broad-based policies outlining a somewhat politicised education vision, and *Directions for Education* also proposed a new approach to departmental organisational structure and interactional style. There was also support for broad-based consultation and for raising the value of teachers and educational achievement within the society.

Questioning was Gallagher's (1992) third principle and it proposed an interpretive stance that enabled me to explore the distance between interpreter and object. "We cannot have experiences without asking questions" (Gadamer, 1999, p. 362). Interpreting implicitly involved questioning and was about recognising *aporias*, or difficult perplexities of the object, rather than definitive answers (Gallagher, 1992, p. 146). Indeed *aporia* was a state that framed any interpretive study, where barriers to understanding were acknowledged as aspects of the traditions that shaped us and our individual pre-conceptions. Gallagher regarded questions as being interpretive when what was familiar was acknowledged as unfamiliar, which created a tension (p. 142). As questions arose from particular traditions of language and social practice, they themselves revealed more about the objects interpreted (p. 147). Questions were hermeneutic when they were not asked with preconceived answers in mind and were receptive to possibilities. To clarify, this idea of openness to possibilities did not create an irresolvable dilemma about fore-sight and its intentionality. While a hermeneutic question may have emerged from horizons of understanding already embedded with the meaning and direction already given to it by fore-sight, an answer was not already presumed. However, questions did project both what was known about an object of study and what was not known.

There were many hermeneutic questions through my interpreting of *Learning Together*. I was puzzled about the meanings the policy had in relation to *education*, *community*, *learning*, *democracy*, and *policy-making*. These arose from my fore-structures of understanding and threw out new possibilities at each interpretive stage. My questioning had taken me into domains of knowledge such as philosophy, politics, psychology and science, and each had their own stance on these concepts. The questioning caused me to reflect deeply on how I understood knowledge, language, power and dialogue and provoked for me new metaphors to think about the policy.

Questions ranged from inquiring into meanings of particular ideas in *Learning Together*, such as *learning*, to questioning what was meant by *interpretation*.

In particular I noted that, as my study progressed, questions that emerged from these interpretive perspectives became privileged over questions based in fact. For example, there were questions such as: How effective was *Learning Together* as an education policy? In what ways did *Learning Together* represent education and learning in Tasmania? and What did this aspect of *Learning Together* mean? These became surpassed by questions such as: What might *Learning Together* reveal about me? and How might I undertake a trustworthy interpretation of this policy? The latter questions sought neither a true nor false answer. They could be properly seen within a philosophically interpretive tradition as they questioned the nature of knowledge, and they had no place within other traditions such as empirical research or neo-conservative politics. Such questions gave me a strategy by which I was able to enter into dialogue, both with *Learning Together* as the object of my interpreting, and with my own positioning. While there has been no one method chosen for my questioning, a method of sorts has transpired from the interplay between myself, the object of the policy itself and the questions I brought to the process. I could have chosen to set out very specific questioning frameworks, giving methodological focus to my inquiry. However, if I had undertaken questioning as a method in this way, I may have limited the promise of transcendence, as noted earlier, in my interpretive response. Gallagher (1992, p. 148) regards such a fluid approach to questioning as “the art of thinking”, where the rigour of method was replaced by the creativity of art, where the creativity of art describes a process in which both interpreter and object were always open to the other.

As I interpreted *Learning Together*, I intended to be always open to other possibilities, without presuming that I alone spoke for the subject matter or had a convenient pre-disposed viewpoint. For example, in thinking with Foucault’s (1970) insights, I became aware that policy-making could be understood as being produced from within a modern episteme (p. xxiii), a product of the knowledge domain of political science, which itself was framed by sociological and economic discourses. However, as I demonstrated, by acknowledging fore-structures of understanding and a hermeneutic circle as an interpretive strategy, I could recognise that liberating myself of prejudices, as suggested by Gadamer (1999), was an inherent and obligatory part of any hermeneutic analysis.

Another fourth principle outlined by Gallagher (1992, p. 164) was that interpreting always involved some manner of *application*, which could be understood as a “tension”. On one hand, there was tension that resulted from an openness to interpreting, and on the other, tension emerged from a requirement to ground any interpreting in its application,

be it “performance, translation or reading to the present situation” (Gallagher, 1992, p. 150). Application was an attempt to remain true to the attendant circumstances, yet not limit the possibilities available to the interpreter by distorting the circumstances or object. For Gallagher, “interpreting that cannot be applied to the concrete situation remained meaningless and even risks obscuring what the situation calls for” (p. 151).

Gadamer (1999, p. 19) turned to the Ancient Greeks for insight into the tension of application and presents the Greek conception of moral knowledge, *phronēsis*. *Phronēsis* was about self-understanding, in particular how to portray the interplay between that which we grasped as the possibilities of our interpretations and the application of those possibilities. To Gadamer, *phronēsis* was a “moral practical” which went beyond technical knowledge, *technē*, or knowledge of means, and *epistēmē*¹⁵, theoretical knowledge. *Phronēsis* involved choice and deliberation, in the same way as Marcel (2002, p. 68) conceived of interpreting as engaging in a mystery, rather than the solving of a problem, which is more practical or technological in attitude. If *phronēsis* guided our interpreting, knowledge gained from this interpreting would not be technical, but would acknowledge that the hermeneutical situation, that is, the situation in which our interpreting took place, could not be escaped. Any understanding would be inextricably intertwined with self-understanding. The resulting growth in self-understanding and understanding was described through the metaphor of the “hermeneutic circle” (Gadamer, 1999, p. xxxii) as that of an ongoing dialogue between an interpreter, the object of interpreting and the traditions which formed the fore-structures of the interpreter’s understanding.

I could see that my interpreting of *Learning Together* might be comprehended as *phronēsis*, that is, moral knowing based in practical understanding through application, as my quest for understanding of *Learning Together* emerged primarily from moral aspirations rather than technical or theoretical ones. I had a desire to *know* in order to participate meaningfully in educational contexts within the communities to which I “belong”. The concept groupings of the metaphors of *Learning Together* also reveal moral concerns – *democracy, togetherness, connectedness, values and ethics, and rights and responsibilities*. *Learning Together* presented itself as a mystery to me, as an object for interpreting whose puzzlements could not necessarily be solved, but could be understood in a moral way, and those understandings could be applied. *Phronēsis* also acknowledged that my interpretations might evoke multiple perspectives and offered many possibilities. My moral purposes as an interpreter were to enable transcendence both of my understanding of *Learning Together* and my own self-understanding. Indeed,

¹⁵ *Epistēmē* – cf. episteme (Foucault, 1970, p. xxiii)

as I interpreted *Learning Together*, I came to understand that my study's very claims to knowledge could be based on the notion of *phronēsis*. *Phronēsis* could also be evidenced in my applied understandings of *Learning Together*. As *Learning Together* was put into practice, my metaphorical and discursive analyses of *Learning Together* played out in my university teaching and other policy development settings. I became deeply intrigued in the role of self-understanding in relation to pre-service teachers' understandings of themselves and their work, and developed an attentiveness to how power relations influence understanding of difference and diversity. In my role as a political policy researcher, I used stories and metaphors to create contexts for policy initiatives. In this way, I interpreted and re-interpreted my understandings of *Learning Together* again and again. Gallagher (1992, p. 151) posed a dilemma with regard to such practice, asking how far could one go without becoming unfaithful to the object of interpreting or the circumstance of its interpreting. It was not a question I have yet satisfactorily resolved.

I was able to further apply the idea of moral knowing of *Learning Together* to my understandings of the professional and personal landscape of my life. By reflecting on *Learning Together* and recognising any meanings that emerged from modernistic, Cartesian, technological thinking (Gallagher, 1992, p. 179), I was able to recognise that which might limit my own approach to educational policy-making and alert me to how other's perspectives may have limits. While I was unable to escape my own complicity within the creation of the publication and implementation of *Learning Together*, itself an educational plan, I could transform my understanding of it. I became aware of the modernist idealism of the vision and goals of *Learning Together*, and the economic rationalism of its evaluatory framework. I could see that the way in which the Tasmanian educational community was framed by it indicated strongly technological and teleological paradigms. To demonstrate these paradigms, I could draw on metaphors such as *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A STRATEGY*, and the structural metaphors of *LEARNING IS WORK* and *LEARNING IS PREPARATION FOR WORK*. However, I was able to recognise that the policy also showed aspects of critical interpretive thinking in the way it framed *education, community, democracy* and *self-understanding*. I was able to see beyond a technically bound representation of these ideas and question any taken-for-granted moral stances relating to these concepts in order to consider other ethical possibilities. For example, there were conflicting moral notions underpinning modern idealism and late modernity/postmodernity in *Learning Together* revealed by the values espoused in the text. In the phase of interpreting metaphors of *Learning Together*, I had disclosed values such as self-worth, creativity, imagination, adaptability, optimism, resilience, and personal choice. Each of these could be regarded as individual moral concerns. Flexibility, innovation and creativity, strategic organisation and planning were each

related concepts that underlined how the policy proposed expectations for individual achievement. The concomitant ideals of opportunity and potential supported a moral stance that privileged merit through self-improvement and personal progress.

Yet, by taking Foucault's stance, I had recognised that what was right and ethical could differ according to what was dominant power/knowledge (1995, p. 27) at that time in that place. *Learning Together* also highlighted the valuing of relationships, partnerships, community, democracy and civility. The policy endorsed mutuality between human beings and the value of critical thinking and these values contrasted with individualism. While metaphors such as LEARNING IS PERFORMING and LEARNING IS CREATING were oriented more to the individual, others such as LEARNING IS PARTICIPATION or LEARNING IS ENGAGEMENT oriented to shared interests. The *aporia* of education for the public good or private benefit was an oft-debated issue by education policy-makers, and the moral knowing I was able to take away from this interpreting of *Learning Together* gave me insights into how an ongoing contest between individualistic versus collaborative educational approaches had broad meanings and implications.

In my interpreting of *Learning Together*, I recognised values which acknowledged social justice, including "a fair go", equity, diversity and inclusiveness. This was underscored by the recurrence of the metaphor LEARNING IS AN INCLUSIVE ACTIVITY. There was also a tension between difference and mutuality in *Learning Together*. To me, this demonstrated that there had been an immense shift in attitudes over a century. The values of evangelism and humanitarianism which lead to the establishment of "poor schools" in the late nineteenth century, where children were rescued from poverty by education (Alexander, 2006) were not those which were at the core of schooling in the late modern era. In the latter case, the core visions for schooling had expanded to include valuing of individuality and achievement at the same time as embracing diversity as a means of addressing the impacts of socio-economic hardship (Thomson, 1999). As with the previous public good/private benefit discussion, the interplay of polarised values positions was to be found in many educational policies. This raised questions for me as to how educational policy-making had made any meaningful attempt to resolve such dilemmas. It was obvious that 150 years of school education in western democracies had yet to find any simple solution. Through applying my understandings of *Learning Together* I was able to consider how education could usefully ease this tension between difference and mutuality as it emerged.

Gallagher (1992) proposed that *phronēsis* as moral knowing required understanding that was neither separated nor unaffected, but belonged. This belongingness meant that any understanding was applied in context of self-understanding, rather than by the application of already given universal laws. Understanding emerged

from the particular rather than the universal (p. 153). It was shaped by traditions and, in turn, shaped those traditions (p. 156), as it transformed and transcended the individual and the object of study. For Gallagher, the hermeneutic circle created by the three transcended aspects of individual, tradition and the object of study must involve self-understanding, with the interpreter being integral to it and the production of any understanding. Using the example of individuality and diversity, I could see how my interpreting was profoundly shaped by personal experiences of school and life that mapped this struggle of values. Such interpreting was neither unidirectional nor monological, but reflective or dialogical (Gallagher, 1992, p. 157). As Gadamer (1999, p. 251) stated, “a person who understands, understands himself, projecting himself upon his possibilities”. Such projection arose in questioning as the most responsible form of thinking, resonating with the previous discussion of *phronēsis*. It was self-understanding through dialogue with others.

OTHER was another metaphor integral to my study that I drew from Gadamer’s work (1999). For my study, OTHER could be represented by the object *Learning Together*. Foucault’s and Gadamer’s ideas also constituted OTHERS. My journey to self-understanding may have begun as a monologue, a solitary journey through what I considered was a personal landscape, but through the HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE I had begun to better understand the traditions of interpretive philosophy. Through the distanciation they offered me and by applying the understandings they offered me, I had begun to project my own possibilities, to transcend myself through the transformation of the world in play (Ricoeur, 1981, p. 187). If my readings of *Learning Together* revealed my understandings, what were they? I could recognise a set of understandings of community and the power of unity in the creation of identity. I noted an affection for democratic politics and a hopefulness about the potential of learning as a pedagogy for democracy. I saw an inkling of dissatisfaction relating to *Learning Together*’s portrayal of difference and diversity. At the same time, I heard a quiet endorsement for choice, ambition and autonomy and a compelling and vigorous cry for responsibility regarding self and others and an echoing of poverty and educational disadvantage. Each of these interpretations was a possible, yet partial, understanding of myself and my world arising from *Learning Together*.

Following my interpreting with Foucault’s ideas, *Learning Together* could not be regarded a “true” representation of education in Tasmania, but rather as a representation of what was believed and valued, making it a contingent, rather than necessary, truth. Gadamer (1999), after his teacher Heidegger (1962), went beyond a notion of truth as “correctness” and portrayed truth as “unconcealment”. Indeed, for Gadamer as for Heidegger, the notion of correctness, or correspondence and consistency between

statements and the world, was only made possible by “unconcealment”. Unconcealment was not the same as transparency, but there was an interplay of concealment and unconcealment, where what was revealed also hides. Any such reconstruction would be impossible, but this interpreting of the text of *Learning Together* was about presenting possibilities for “me to understand” (Malpas, 2009). This linked with Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) notions of the capacity of our metaphoric framework to reveal and conceal concepts, and therefore understandings, and Sokolowski’s (2000) notion of truthfulness of disclosure.

My final metaphor was INTERPRETING IS SELF-UNDERSTANDING. I needed to understand how I was embedded in the interpreting of the policy. As I previously noted, my self-understanding was revealed through my interpreting of the metaphors and through the ongoing interpretations through selected works of Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer (1999). By disclosing my “self” and my conceptual frameworks, and continuing to question *Learning Together* using ideas from Foucault and Gadamer to assist me, my interpreting created and recreated myself. I also sought to know about how the policy framed the island of Tasmania and its educational imaginings because I wished to understand my own life histories, realities and desires. Taking the ideas I had utilised from Gadamer’s work, I mapped the metaphors that I had applied and a new overarching metaphor emerged, *LEARNING TOGETHER IS SELF-UNDERSTANDING* (Table 4).

Table 4. Interpreting metaphors of *Learning Together* using a frame from Gadamer.

Third interpretive phase

INTERPRETING IS A HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE

LEARNING TOGETHER IS SELF-UNDERSTANDING

INTERPRETING ENTAILS

- VAGUE ANTICIPATIONS
- BECOMING CONSCIOUS
- UNDERSTANDING PREJUDGMENTS
- UNDERSTANDING OUR FORE-STRUCTURES OF UNDERSTANDING
- FUSING HORIZONS

INTERPRETING IS DISTANCIATION

- INTERPRETING IS OBJECTIFICATION
- INTERPRETING IS TRANSCENDENCE
- INTERPRETING IS PROJECTION OF POSSIBILITIES

INTERPRETING IS PRODUCTIVITY

- INTERPRETING IS QUESTIONING
- INTERPRETING IS APPLICATION
- INTERPRETING IS SELF-UNDERSTANDING

INTERPRETATION IS SELF-UNDERSTANDING

A pause to reflect

Using Gadamer's (1999) ideas to guide me, *Learning Together* became a text that prompted a hermeneutic interpretation. I recognised that my interpreting was not a reconstruction of the original authors' intentions or prejudices, but an interpretive act of mine. Gadamer's philosophic hermeneutics allowed disclosure of a personal world of beliefs and values in relation to *Learning Together*, in this case, my world of Tasmanian government education as revealed through interpreting this policy at this time. I was able to move reflectively between the text and self and, after Malpas (2009), my interpreting of *Learning Together* established a *Learning Together* world.

Chapter 8

Applying an interpretive approach Phase 4: trustworthy understandings of *Learning Together*

... it is hardly possible to take up one's residence in the kingdom of the ill unprejudiced by the lurid metaphors with which it has been landscaped. It is towards a elucidation of those metaphors, and a liberation from them, that I dedicate this inquiry.
(Sontag, 1978, p. 8)

New metaphors and displays of meaning through language

To this point, my interpreting of the text of the policy, *Learning Together*, had evoked some potent ways of thinking about education, policy, politics, self and interpreting. Various metaphors and possible meanings had been explored through three interpretive phases. In this chapter, I offer a range of new metaphorical possibilities that disclose for me meanings of the policy *Learning Together* and understandings of policy and interpreting. This fourth and final phase includes meanings that were revealed in the course of my interpreting, having been previously sedimented or vague, as well as some that have endured through the study. I display these meanings through sets of metaphors, and their entailments and discuss my understandings of them.

Meanings from frames of metaphors, texts and narratives

The first set of metaphors I interpreted from *Learning Together* related to language, *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A METAPHOR* and *POLICY IS METAPHOR*. The structural metaphor of *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A METAPHOR* arose from the first phase of interpreting *Learning Together*. This metaphor offered the possibility of the structural metaphor, *POLICY IS METAPHOR*, with which it was coherent and consistent, and a related entailment – *TEXTS, NARRATIVES AND DISCOURSE AND CAN BE METAPHORICAL POSSIBILITIES OF POLICY*. In particular, the entailments reflected the initial metaphors through which I had

framed the policy through my first phase of interpreting (Chapter 5) and led me to three metaphors, POLICY IS TEXT, POLICY IS NARRATIVE and POLICY IS DISCOURSE. The metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A LIVING EVOLVING DOCUMENT* was coherent with POLICY IS TEXT; *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A BRIDGE* linked to POLICY IS NARRATIVE; and *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A LONG-TERM STRATEGY* was coherent with PUBLIC POLICY IS POLITICAL STRATEGY. These metaphors were connected through their structures to the concepts of *text*, *strategy*, *narrative*, *institution*, *being* and *learning*. I related the concepts *text*, *narrative* and *discourse* to common meanings of the term *policy* (as outlined in Chapter 2) and explored what meanings each of these metaphors might have, both in the context of the *Learning Together* policy specifically, and as possibilities for policy. In the first part of this chapter, I reflect on metaphors related to TEXT and NARRATIVE and the meanings they might offer.

The policy's statement "*Learning Together* is a living, evolving document" evoked the metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A TEXT*. When a policy is thought of using the metaphor POLICY IS TEXT, it can suggest a view of a document which, once completed, was fixed. Just as the term policy appeared to have once had meanings relating to promissory notes, policy still strongly indicated a document or text. However, as Ball (1994, p. 33) pointed out in his exploration of the English National Curriculum during the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was greater complexity available from this metaphor than I had first perceived. Policy texts could be cannibalised products, carrying meanings that emerged from the struggle and conflict that resulted in their production. These texts and the meanings they capture undergo "interpretations of interpretations" (Bevir & Rhodes, 2005, pp. 169-87), "secondary adjustment" (Riseborough, 1993), or "refraction" (Prosser, 1981; Freeland, 1986). So the metaphor POLICY IS TEXT offered meanings beyond that of an objectified document, which could be regarded as always partial.

For me, *Learning Together* was not a single-author text, nor did its intended audiences understand it all in the same way. If a policy was no longer thought of as a univocal statement or a single account, the potential interpretations of its language became more potent but also puzzling. Who contributed to policy development discussions, what were their contributions and how were these contributions evident in the language of the policy? I was also interested in how meaning was made of that language. What did an interpreter bring to that policy interpretation and what made a difference to their interpreting of the policy? I might have pursued a question such as, "Is the text of *Learning Together* an object of analysis itself or a window on the world?" but I deliberately avoided being drawn into a subjective-objective debate which would only result in a "yes" or "no" answer. I avoided accepting *Learning Together* as having hard objective meanings and my own readings of it as being soft subjectivity (McHoul &

Grace, 1995, p. 23). I trod a path which avoided taking me into such a debate, but adhered to an intention to explore my interpretive experience of it (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 192).

When *Learning Together* was considered using the metaphor of TEXT, questions arose, such as “what meanings might this policy text disclose?” and also “what meanings might this policy text have for others and how might these meanings differ from those I understand?” I subsequently scanned and re-scanned *Learning Together* as an interpretive tactic, and developed some sense of how language of the text symbolised meanings of the policy. In the first instance, the text gave context to meanings for the terms used in it – *learning, education, inclusivity, success* and *democracy*. Later I related these terms to groupings of concepts associated with *progress, economy, community* and *achievement*. Following Kögler (1999, p. 159), I was attending to the symbolic ordering that *Learning Together* presented to any interpreter. Kögler aimed to demonstrate that symbolic values were not arbitrary but were grounded in one’s experience and interaction with social, personal and natural environments.

Sumara wrote of the commonplace location, where a text became a focal or a “collecting place” (1999, p. 49) for my and others’ interpretations. It is an idea that represents the intricate intertextual relations that gather and evolve around an interpretive activity. The approach I took in this study had some links to theories that underpin critical discourse analysis, yet I wanted to be free of some of the categorical and philosophical imperatives that have led to criticism of discourse analysis as method (Titscher, Meyer, Wodak & Vetter, 2000, pp. 30-31; Rogers et al., 2005). I was able to go beyond one accepted interpretive viewpoint because of the multiple frames that I employed. This enabled me avoid being drawn into a methodological argument, such as whether to interpret the policy text through a linguistic approach or via sociological methods (Titscher et al. 2000, p. 2).

Moving from the metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A TEXT* to the metaphor *A POLICY IS TEXT*, I saw other possibilities for understanding *policy*. The metaphor *A POLICY IS TEXT* let me consider how the textual features both disclosed the policy’s historicity and engaged my own implicit-holistic background. The language of the policy became “the collecting place” (Sumara, 1999, p. 49) and my aim was a dialogically critical consciousness (Kögler, 1999, p. 116). Meanings of the policy that became available to me were possibilities that were “thrown” (Gadamer, 1999, p. 264) by what my background brought to the interpreting of the text, and by what shaped my subjectivity through dominant discourses of power/knowledge (Foucault, 1995, p. 27) within a late modern context. As with *Learning Together*, a policy text can create a world that we can inhabit and in which we can project our inmost possibilities (Ricouer, 1981,

p. 241). The realities of a world such as *Learning Together* offered became the possibilities of my understanding.

Rethinking the metaphor POLICY IS TEXT also led to an acknowledgment made by Codd (1988, p. 239) that a “plurality of readers must necessarily produce a plurality of readings”. This suggested a further metaphor for policy, that of POLICY IS NARRATIVE and a related group of metaphors: LEARNING TOGETHER IS NARRATIVE; POLICY IS NARRATIVE; and INTERPRETING POLICY IS SELF-NARRATIVE. Consideration of narratives could enliven the written words beyond a text, and this can often happen in subtle, yet profound, ways, such as by demonstrating complexity, uncertainty and polarisation (Roe, 1994, p. 160). The text that documented *Learning Together* potentially offered many narratives. There were easily accessed narratives of efficiency and pragmatism, narratives that problematised the policy and others that I told. The metaphor POLICY IS NARRATIVE, in particular has been dominant in policy studies. For example, Currie (1998, pp. 91-95) sees policy-making as a way of narrating nation states, while for Bhabha (1990, p. 4), the narrative space between cultures and traditions, texts and theories, and politics enabled the living and writing of national consciousness. I saw that policies might offer such narrative space.

One interpretation of the metaphor POLICY IS NARRATIVE is the idea that a public policy is made on behalf of the State to steer the conduct of individuals and organisations (Taylor et al., 1997). We take for granted that public policies are produced by the State but *state* is a term that is very much debated (Moyle, 2002, p. 62). The term *the State* can be understood as a metonym (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 35), then a public policy can be regarded as telling a story about “the State” and its relationship to its citizens. The individuals who take part in such a story are those who can be directed by the State or whose lives are influenced by the policy. They may be employees, such as teachers or nurses, or others, such as students, patients or organisations that are subject to the State’s authority through legislation, regulation or provision of a service. Other characters in a public policy story might be organisations, including schools, universities and hospitals, collectively referred to as the public sector because their actions are regulated by the State. They may not only be acted upon by a policy, but may also be the strategy by which a policy is enacted on other groups and individuals. In that way, these characters can also be thought of as bureaucratic instrumentalities of the State, just as bureaucracies can be, after Weber (Bendix & Roth, 1991). There could also be organisations in the private sector that are directed or steered by public policies, or that are themselves instrumentalities. In common usage, the metonym “the State” is often used to take the place of the institutions that make up a bureaucracy; or the constitutional arrangements of a democracy. For Taylor et al. (1997, p. 62) “the State” can be “a complex set of

arrangements” and some of these may well have conflicting interests. “The State”, as used in this study, is used to denote a politically defined sovereign area as in the State of Tasmania, but it might also be executive government or bureaucratic institutions.

In western societies, there is a narrative link between economics, truth and goodness that has become a strong one. Marshall and Peters (1999, p. xv) noted that while the science–law–efficiency connection might appear rational, a state must also ensure that its policies are accepted as truths and that they correspond to reality. Policy decisions need to make sense to those for whom the policy is intended and good, successful public policies will be narratives that resonate within their given context. A state that can match its policy metanarratives to “reality”, or alternatively change ‘reality’ to match its policy metanarratives, should remain strong. There have been significant roles for politicians, spin doctors and policy analysts in government departments in creating policy truths and matching these to realities; or matching realities to policy truths through narrative authority, media power or resources. Researchers such as myself also have a key role in participating in such narrations.

Yet, while economics and efficiency might seem to hold sway in framing the stories of contemporary public policy, there can be many other diverse and complex forces and relationships that may mould or influence policy responses (Kenway & Willis, 1990; Taylor et al., 1997). “State” officials who undertake policy research and propose options may knowingly or unknowingly bring, to their policy work, values and beliefs formed by profound personal experiences or skewed by contractual employment incentives. The strongly voiced views of citizens can compel, override and re-orient policy agendas, or the perspectives of politicians can be swayed by lobbyists, polling booth pragmatism, personal interests or their own firmly held principles. Further, policies might not have one certain story line, but can be narratives that problematise. A policy can be thought of as a text that poses a problem which must be solved (Ball, 1994) or signifies “trouble” (Ball, 2000, p. 1883). In this way, policy texts narrate political acts or “textual interventions into practice” posing problems that must be solved in context (Ball, 1994, p. 18).

I have been interested in both policy metanarratives and local stories. By considering the metaphors POLICY IS TEXT and POLICY IS NARRATIVE, I acknowledge that a policy’s language holds a range of assumptions about what is known, valued and experienced. These assumptions include how the language of a policy frames what we understand about our world and what we bring to our interpreting of that policy. This might be easily achieved but it can also be very difficult. While it may be possible to recognise the influence of a stakeholder, such as a teacher union, on a particular initiative or public demand for a certain policy position based on economic imperatives by

examining a policy text, it is more difficult to be aware of the meaning assumptions that can underpin our own personal understanding. As I have noted, many policy analyses which frame POLICY IS TEXT take for granted economic framings of policy, yet they ignore the framing emerging from much more individualised narrative perspectives.

Yet the metaphor LEARNING TOGETHER IS A NARRATIVE had resounded with me from my very first involvement in the policy as I had begun my studies by writing a personal narrative detailing my involvement with the *Learning Together* policy and my insights into the writing and implementation process (Appendix D). By telling what I considered a definitive tale of *Learning Together*, I hoped to present its possibilities and dilemmas and demonstrate inclusive ways to develop education policy within a community. My narrative was that the policy was widely consulted on, and this showed how a policy might be dialogically developed. By telling these stories, I sought to reveal the opportunities and the challenges of this process, as well as attempting to authentically represent the perspectives of as many different participants as possible. I had also begun writing a fictional narrative, what I termed an “allegory” (see Chapter 9), to enable me to reflect from a distance on my understandings of *Learning Together*. As I wrote these narratives, I found I was able to relate metaphors that I was finding in the text of *Learning Together* to those more closely connected to my own identity. My purpose in both cases was to reveal metaphor in the language I used as my stories were unfolded.

I wondered why I sought my own narratives to record and interpret, rather than the narratives of others who were part of the process. In the first instance, I knew that personal narrative study of education policy was uncommon. Moyle (2002) proposed that while a significant amount of existing research into education used narrative theory to inquire into teachers’ work in classrooms, few inquirers have ventured into the use of narrative to examine policy (p. 61), citing examples of the use of discourse theory (Ball, 1990, 1993; Reid, 1998; Luke, 1995, 1997; Taylor, 1997) and narrative theory (Roe, 1994). Given the limited policy research using narrative study, this suggested that researchers had rarely revealed their own personal narratives or how their personal perspectives impacted on their interpreting. Yanow (2000) noted that while there was a strong movement in fields other than policy to analyse actors’ and researchers’ stories for ways in which they express and develop their identity “this has been underplayed in policy analysis” (p. 58). She suggested that this is because policy was public, collective and action-oriented, and that where it has occurred, the narrative analysis has been on the issue-oriented stories of participants. Such analyses might capture the personal frames of policy analyst or actor, but not those of someone who has combined roles as researcher, analyst and actor.

Therefore, I wanted to reveal the researcher/analyst/actor's orientations I might have, as well as the philosophical stances, adherences to ideologies, and theoretical understandings towards education that I upheld. My study was going to be about a personal search for meaning, yet, what I undertook went further than I expected and took me into an exploration of meaning. At the time, I was unaware that my research would be of such a personal nature. As I interpreted the metaphors of *Learning Together*, I told stories of what they and the concepts they related to meant to me. I came to understand how these narratives and their metaphors linked to my self-understanding through how I narrated my identity. In *Postmodern Narrative Theory* (1998, p. 17), Mark Currie questioned how we understood identity and pondered whether our identity was inside us "like the kernel of a nut" or otherwise. He suggested that identity could be formed in relationships between ourselves and others, and opted for an explanation that identity was created as, and existed only in, narrative. That is, we tell our own stories about our self but also "self-narrate from the outside, from other stories" with other characters. Kim Atkins (2004) took up a similar theme, suggesting that a narrative model of identity may be more inclusive and exhaustive than causal models of identity used by contemporary proponents of personal identity theory in the domain of psychology (p. 354). For Atkins, human understanding is constituted by the narrative form; that is, we understand ourselves through our narrative identities and that these identities draw on the complex interweaving of narratives from first-, second- and third-person perspectives. Through these narratives, we can account for continuity through time and space within our lives. They bring together our internal lives, with meaning derived from our second-person communicative situation and the shared world meanings of the third-person perspective. These explanations gave me a means to explain how I narrated *Learning Together* to myself and others and how these narratives linked to the broader narratives of my world.

A new metaphor, INTERPRETING POLICY IS SELF-NARRATIVE, emerged. Interpreting *Learning Together* offered me an opportunity to understand myself better, and to understand my situatedness within my local and broader contexts. It helped me understand how I might think about the meanings of *Learning Together* in one way at one time, and yet over time my understandings might change significantly. I could see that there was some continuity in my thoughts about it and that my narratives could link to those belonging to others with whom I was in dialogue, and also with social, cultural and historical narratives of the world. This metaphor allowed me a way to come to consciousness (Greene, 1978, p. 15) and consider the ambiguities of my human, lived situation as a practical and embodied being within a spatial, temporal world (Atkins, 2004, p. 341). Through the metaphor INTERPRETING POLICY IS SELF-NARRATIVE, I was able to bring together Gadamer's (1999) thinking about self-understanding and Foucault's

(1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) historically constituted subjectivity into a narrative of philosophical interpreting.

Meanings from framings of discourse, strategies and technologies – learning societies and lifelong learning

I had searched for meaning from *Learning Together* by thinking about language and particularly metaphor, text and narrative, yet I came to see how my understandings were also framed by the situatedness of language within traditions. The metaphor POLICY IS DISCOURSE overlapped with the metaphor POLICY AS TEXT in that it engaged language as a key strategy but also opened up other possibilities for understanding the policy beyond a single unified interpretation. It emerged from a non-foundational epistemology and enabled me to consider how truth and knowledge are produced by discourse and what other discourses are resisted. In particular, it offered me questions to ask in relation to what can be said and what can be thought, but also who can speak, when, where and with what authority.

In proposing the metaphor of POLICY AS A DISCOURSE I draw distinctions from the metaphor POLICY AS A TEXT. In this study, policy not only referred to a document, but also indicated that a text can have multiple meanings beyond an instructive list of governmental directives. It can narrate the intended, or otherwise, actions of a state toward aspects of the lives of its citizens and, understood as discourse, public policies can also legitimate and disallow existing and new practices by a government in domains such as education. Ball went beyond considering the varied processes of writing and realisation of the texts that policies result from. He also recognised that policy texts “enter rather than simply change power relations” (Ball, 1994, p. 20).

POLICY IS DISCOURSE also related to the metaphor POLICY AS NARRATIVE, following characterisations of a policy as a convergence of many voices into one (Moyle, 2002). While such narrative convergence served as a means of bringing to the fore “the diverse dimensions of debate pertinent to particular policy questions” (Hawkesworth, 1998, p. 94), this might still suggest that a policy held one objective meaning or a unified and fixed position. Multiple voices might bring diverse views to a policy and try to understand what these voices are saying, but we could still determine that the ultimate voice is the one that is the “truthful” interpretation. Butler (1993) saw this dilemma as arising from the modernist project because “in order to make the whole appear Rational, the contradictory stories of others must be erased, devalued, suppressed. Any appearance of unity presupposes and requires a prior act of violence” (p. 37).

The metaphor of DISCOURSE enable me to see that texts and narratives both required scrutiny as the characterisation of policy as homogenised or unified could not be

sustained. Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) proposed that policy involved struggle within three primary policy contexts:

The context of influence (where interest groups struggle over construction of policy discourses); the context of policy text production (where texts represent policy, although they may contain inconsistencies and contradictions); and the context of practice (where policy is subject to interpretation and recreation). Each of these three contexts has multiple arenas of action (both public and private) and each involves struggles.

(Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992, p.13)

This requires a response to “trouble” or “struggle” that reflects a critical stance about understanding the world.

I also proposed a further pair of structural and conceptual metaphors relating to POLICY IS DISCOURSE. They were LEARNING TOGETHER IS A STRATEGIC VISION and PUBLIC POLICY IS POLITICAL STRATEGY. They arose out of the metaphorical statement LEARNING TOGETHER IS A LONG-TERM STRATEGY used in the policy’s text that related to meanings of policy, politics and power. Superficially, the metaphor *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A STRATEGIC VISION* seemed obvious, particularly as Colebatch (2009, p. 8) noted that policy implied authority, expertise and order. This surface simplicity indicated how effectively metaphor could highlight some concepts and mask others. This metaphor seems to unquestionably speak that it was a policy that sets out one strategic vision (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 2) and the concepts of *strategy*, *intention* and *purpose* created an metaphorical impression of POLICY IS STRATEGIC VISION that was taken for granted. However, closer interrogation of the metaphor revealed that this claim was more tenuous than it first seemed. The policy’s initiatives, or means, and its outcomes, or ends, might be incommensurate. In the same way, following a path through a landscape may not turn out as we expect – we may find we have chosen the wrong path or that the path we have chosen takes us somewhere completely unexpected. Further, a strategy could be understood as a technique of power and create its own oppositional tactic of power, as described by Foucault (1995). The term *strategy* was used both in the text and in my interpreting of it. It referred to how the policy invoked an intentionality through the hierarchical structuring of the vision, goals and strategies. When I used the term *strategy* in this metaphor, I did not refer to the individual strategies named in *Learning Together* but to the overall strategic purpose of the policy. Following Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995), the strategies referred to in the body of the policy might be understood as *tactics*, a political or military term. Interestingly, *politics* is not a term used in the text of *Learning Together*, nor was it fore-grounded in my interpreting at first despite the document clearly having a political purpose. I linked the metaphor

LEARNING TOGETHER IS A STRATEGIC VISION to the conceptual metaphor PUBLIC POLICY IS POLITICAL STRATEGY, prompted by my knowledge of the politicised context of the policy, and backed by the Ministerial statement in its opening pages, which cited that the Government was accountable for the policy. The emergence of the metaphor PUBLIC POLICY IS POLITICAL STRATEGY only at this point in my interpreting could indicate how metaphors such as *narrative* and *text* highlight a dialogic interpretation for policy and mask a more positivist one.

My narratives of the policy's development seemed equally to support and diminish a claim that the policy was deliberately strategic. The draft of *Learning Together* (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a) did set out a number of educational dilemmas, and the final document ended up as a superficially teleological statement about objectives, structured around a set of goals and strategies and accountability mechanisms. Yet the origins of the goals and strategies remained obscure. I had only hazy memories of long afternoons spent playing with, and teasing out, ideas and words, sentences and paragraphs. This drafting was preceded by, as well as followed by, input from departmental officers, consultants and editors. The process seemed to rely on logical and sequential reasoning at some times and on intuitive responses at others. There was no testing of our taken-for-granted assumptions, only an ongoing collaborative review. Written in this fashion, the text seemed conflicting and disjointed, yet in retrospect I re-read it has having a greater order. Perhaps my desire to see order through metaphor "enlivened" the intuitive nature of the writing process, and made the vision seem more planned and intentional.

One way to think of STRATEGY is to use the term *teleology*, or how means and ends are connected, following *telos*, the word of Greek origin that refers to end, purpose, ultimate object or aim. For Burbules (2004, p. 5), the *teloi* are the set of ultimate ends that education ought to serve. They could be of two sorts: first, the universal, transcendent goods that go beyond societal or cultural norms, those aspirational purposes for education "to make us better people" (p. 4); and second, those that are normative, definable within a set of societal or cultural norms, making education, thus, a process of sociological reproduction. Initiatives such as the post-compulsory policy *Tasmania, A State of Learning* (Department of Education Tasmania, 2003b) promoted specific cultural norms, in this case a cultural expectation of being educated to engage effectively in work, while the *Essential Learnings* curriculum project endorsed socially focused aims such as participation. Burbules noted that, in late modern times any claim to universal truth and the existence of intrinsic values is open to challenge and norms can act to suppress difference (p. 6).

The metaphor LEARNING TOGETHER IS A STRATEGIC VISION suggested that *Learning Together* was teleological, as the policy had an overarching goal of “a world-class education system” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 2) and strongly endorsed values such as inclusivity, economic and social imperatives. Questions might be asked as to what was meant by “world-class”, given highly politicised debates on educational quality held in western democracies in recent decades. International rankings of national educational achievements, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) studies of literacy and numeracy outcomes¹⁶, and the use of excellence as a concept in fields of business and organisational management have encouraged global thinking of educational quality. A world-class education might be a transcendent goal for an individual, but also a set of norms shared across many countries. In contrast a world-class education, training and information system was a set of norms for the Tasmanian education system to reach or exceed, yet the document did not compare or contrast Tasmanian education with any other sovereign state. The question of being “world-class” had not been a central concern in Tasmanian educational discourse, nor did *Learning Together* prompt vigorous public debate in the community, despite the metaphor being key to the policy text and publicity materials.

Norms might also act as disciplining practices extending outwards from those who define the aims in the first place, such as educational decision-makers, politicians and educational curriculum designers, to those who are subject to them, such as students and teachers. Metaphors of INCLUSIVITY and entailments such as DIVERSITY IS INTEGRAL TO LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY highlighted how *Learning Together* aimed to embed pluralism and diversity in the values of the education system. In *Learning Together*, links between concepts of *community* and *inclusivity* and related metaphors are unambiguous. Metaphorical references that show an association between these concepts are: EDUCATION IS A FOUNDATION OF A COMMUNITY; INCLUSIVITY SUPPORTS LEARNING; and LEARNING SHOULD BE INCLUSIVE. *Community* is invariably viewed as a positive democratic concept, and *inclusivity* a central way in which community is fostered. Yet even when stated aims seem clear, the effect of such teleology might not be anticipated. Being inclusive and forming communities might not support a pluralistic and diverse democratic ideal. Bauman (2000, pp. 168-201) regards community as a much misunderstood concept. Communities privilege sameness and may exclude those who are not regarded as similar. Being included might mean becoming more like the community and less unique. Therefore attempting to create aims around plurality may impose other

¹⁶ PISA is an internationally standardised assessment that was jointly developed by participating economies through the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD and administered to 15-year-olds in schools (PISA, n.d.).

sets of norms, which might still privilege particular groups over others. In relation to the first, participation in further education or training appeared quantifiable, but the quality of that participation might not be the standard for each person. The benefits of achieving the second were not easily defined either. Thinking critically was a key element of being educated, therefore this capacity reproduced a key social order. Yet critical thinking might also enable an individual to transcend societal norms and question the very nature of democratic life – with negative outcomes for the society.

Any strategy may propose less, or more, definable aims – that is, weak or strong teleology (Burbules, 2004, p. 4). At times, aims might be linked strongly to ends, an example is the initiative to track and benchmark formal participation in post-compulsory education and training. It was direct, targeted and ostensibly achievable. Post-compulsory engagement was presented as critical “for Tasmanians to continue developing the full potential of their skills and abilities beyond school” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 17). The Essential Learnings curriculum’s focus on “critical thinking” can be used to demonstrate weaker teleology. While the capacity to see a multiplicity of viewpoints, and liberate oneself from taken-for granted or hegemonic beliefs held within the society, might be fostered by a curriculum, it is difficult to determine whether a child develops this capacity. *Learning Together* did seem to allow a broader diversity of views to be heard throughout the organisational structure than previously. The statement that *Learning Together* was an “evolving document” (p. 2) hinted at openness and responsiveness, but it also hid the process for judging that evolution. Indeed, it could be said that the policy enacted a stronger teleology, within a more closely controlled structure that privileged politicians and educational decision-makers over students, teachers and families. A strategic vision with weaker teleology holds no less justification as an education goal, but might not appear to be objective in the same way as strategies with stronger teleology. I came to reflect that what we interpret as being strong or weak may not be easily determined. By thinking about the metaphor of STRATEGY through ideas on teleology I was able to question the basis on which my confidence about its intentionality came about. I became aware of how thinking of *Learning Together* as a metaphor of STRATEGY did not illuminate evidence of politics or power relations, and indeed may have masked them.

Foucault (1979, p. 93) asserted that “politics is war pursued by other means” and his thinking about governmentality and biopolitics, gave me a way to reframe political strategy, along with public policy, using his idea of *tactics*. The Enlightenment gave rise to public voices and individual freedoms, and a move away from the absolute power of sovereigns, as deemed by God. This power was replaced by power that circulated through discourses, institutions, and so on, within a state. The *telos* of God’s book, the Bible, was

replaced by power acting in fluid ways in which everyone was made subject. Policy became a key strategy by which power acted, and even though policy appeared to be controlled by governments, it also acted upon those who seemed to control it. The need to enact policy was itself evidence that those who wrote it were themselves subject to discursive mechanisms that controlled them and that they could not hold power as it was mobile and contingent (Danaher, Schirato & Webb 2000, p. 73). Tactics set in place manoeuvres that were in turn countered by opposing ones. Therefore policy could be an attempt to “govern the ungovernable” (Field, 2000, pp. 249-61).

I used a new metaphor, POLICY IS POLITICAL STRATEGY, to address a concern consistent with LEARNING TOGETHER IS A STRATEGIC VISION. This new metaphor implied that policy was both politically motivated and an institutional plan. I had already questioned dominant modern views of democracy that seemed to uphold values of personal freedom and individuality, yet employed such strong, institutionalised approaches to community (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000, p. 66). I could see that *Learning Together* outlined democratic values but also employed teleological initiatives to strengthen the institution of the Department of Education, particularly through the use of accountability. Such accountability could be likened to Foucault’s (1995, pp. 185-194) technologies of the PANOPTICON; *hierarchical observation, normalising judgment and examination*. (See Chapter 6.)

My understandings of *Learning Together* and *policy* deepened as I considered the metaphors LEARNING TOGETHER IS A STRATEGIC VISION and POLICY IS POLITICAL STRATEGY, and led me to another metaphor, PUBLIC POLICY IS POLITICAL STRATEGY. This metaphor offered me two related metaphors, LEARNING TOGETHER IS A PANOPTICON and A POLICY IS A TECHNOLOGY, which were consistent with PUBLIC POLICY IS POLITICAL STRATEGY and enabled me to disclose further meanings.

Edwards (2004) suggested that a government aim of the goal of a learning society, such as that proposed by *Learning Together*, was a governing strategy, or intellectual technology, after Foucault (1995), which acted as a discursive mechanism (p. 71). I used the idea of a governing strategy to demonstrate how the metaphor A POLICY IS A TECHNOLOGY gave new meaning to *Learning Together*. The terms *learning society* (Barber, 1998, pp. 239-241) and *lifelong learning* (Delors, 1998, p. 21) are relatively recent expressions in educational policies, and they expose an orientation to learning, as differentiated from an orientation to education¹⁷. The policy, through its goals, made strong statements about how to create a learning society and foster lifelong learning, embracing the idea of a *learning society* as meritorious and *lifelong learning* as desirable

¹⁷ I noted a shift to *learning* and *outcomes* in contemporary education policy in Chapter 2.

ontology for citizens of democratic states (see Chapter 1). Technologies, if understood as governing strategies, were enacted through “tools”, according to Edwards (2004, p. 74), which were areas of action, such as policy and research that could create a learning society by producing, signifying or dominating individuals in that society through education. These tools shape policy goals that create, denote and control what it means to be a member of that society; in *Learning Together’s* case, membership in a learning society means being engaged, educated, included, self-motivated and informed. Edwards suggested that “(r)esearch and policy construct the objects which become the subjects of investigation” (p. 74). He developed his explication of *learning society* and *lifelong learning* as technologies around selected work of Foucault (1980, 1990, 1991, 1995), which explored the Western subjects as constituted by techniques and practices. Foucault referred to these as the manner in which a technology of the self causes us to tell the truth about ourselves (Foucault, 1990, p. 184). In his earlier works, he had acknowledged how the techniques of production, signification and domination (Foucault, 2004, p. 177) (after Habermas, 1971) acted on individuals in human societies. Later he considered “the technology of the self” (Foucault, 1982) and how this intersected with the aforementioned techniques, particularly domination. By this, he meant that techniques of domination by others traversed the ways in which individuals conduct themselves. Just as coercion may control or drive individuals to do certain things, there is a complementarity to how individuals construct and modify themselves. Telling the truth about ourselves was one of these techniques used in a technology of the self, akin to a modern equivalent of the confessional or judicial plea. Using the metaphor of *technology*, I could open up other possibilities of understanding *Learning Together*.

As a technology, *Learning Together* created objects aimed at a LEARNING SOCIETY. The community was represented as local and unified, with its members willing partners in promoting learning. Students were needy and required opportunities; teachers needed support and valuing; principals should be mentored; and families and parents were passive, thankful and benevolent. The education, training and information systems were portrayed through the metaphor of SERVICE. School were a service to society, children and families. It was complex, in contrast to the training system, which was a strategic and planned system targeted to the needs of business and industry. The information system was in the service of the community, and as such was value free and accessible, with a range of local and global resources. “The Government” was characterised as a powerful, yet benevolent, source of information and support. Teachers were portrayed as willing actors on the policy strategies, mainly as users of the technological tools so that they could address a rapidly changing world. Children were compliant learning objects, who embraced education. Education offered better self-esteem and opportunities to develop

personal capacities such as creativity, imagination, critical thinking, adaptability, optimism, and resilience. The development of these capacities led to greater life-success through effective choices and also contributed overall to national accomplishment as “resources”.

This new metaphor, A POLICY IS A TECHNOLOGY, enabled me to question the *Learning Together* policy objectives.

- Were higher educational expectations good for individuals and society, both economically and socially?
- Would individuals in a society benefit from more access to, and participation in, learning?
- Was learning beneficial for a society?
- Would learning be made more accessible through higher expectations of being educated?
- Would access to information encourage democracy?
- Did participation in society necessarily involve participation in learning?
- Would valuing relationships in an educational institution lead to higher quality education?

Interestingly, in *Learning Together*, the term *policy* was rarely used. When it was used, it referred to the way a system governs planning and practice, while the draft document, on one occasion, referred to school-based policy-making. This caused me to reflect that rarely did policies name themselves explicitly as policies. It is possible that, in being ambiguous about its nature as policy, *Learning Together* may have had different intentions than were openly stated, some of which were hidden from view. Those who are objectified and made subject by a policy may be unaware of its existence, not interested or only partially informed as to the scope of its purposes and areas of interest.

Learning Together suggested that Tasmanians understand themselves as learners and Tasmania as a learning state. It positioned learners by encouraging them to be more productive, more autonomous, more flexible or enterprising and to care for themselves through learning. Applying *learning society* and *lifelong learning* as metaphors, I recognised that they both concealed and revealed other metaphors, entailments, concepts and meanings. The metaphors of LEARNING SOCIETY and LIFELONG LEARNING could be understood as techniques that served to construct objects, namely teachers and students, who were subject to the policy’s techniques. With *Learning Together* written in a modern episteme, techniques were drawn from the knowledge domains of economics, politics, science, and the human sciences. Each technique mobilised the subjects of *Learning Together* educationally, economically or otherwise.

Through metaphors such as LEARNING SOCIETY and LIFELONG LEARNING, the strategies and initiatives of policies such as *Learning Together* worked to re-order the social, economic and political practices of society, therefore they could be understood as intellectual technologies. Policies like *Learning Together* made individuals subject to them, objectifying their humanness so that it could be investigated and acted upon. The symbolic framings and storylines of *Learning Together* could be taken for granted, the results of “stable arrays or networks of relations” (Law, 2002, p. 91). In accepting such policies as strategies for governing, I could see that I rarely asked what research projects or policy traditions they might be based upon or what techniques they might employ in order to represent and order phenomena. In *Learning Together*, there was not a point at which the policy questioned if LIFELONG LEARNING or a LEARNING SOCIETY were desirable. However, I could see that in articulating the policy’s values, there was an attempt to be explicit about these as the underpinning values of this LEARNING SOCIETY.

I have already noted (Chapter 5) metaphors in *Learning Together* framed by economics, in particular those that suggest that participating in education and training activities contribute to individuals’ effective engagement in work and society. These metaphors drew on rationalist economic and political ideas, including that real participation as a citizen was founded on engagement in the workforce. Being educated equalled being a citizen, which equalled being a member of the workforce. A major criticism of the first draft of *Learning Together* had been how it overwhelmingly depicted “learners” as workers (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a), rather than individuals who were self-employed, financially self-sufficient or operated businesses. In the final version of *Learning Together*, learners were students who were prospective participants in paid employment or their own enterprises, or alternatively, they were the recipients of inclusive practices¹⁸.

Economics offered tactics such as management, effectiveness, competition, professionalism, activity and employment to the policy *Learning Together*. Other techniques, such as accountability, excellence, performance and improvement, could also be traced back to economic traditions. In examining how such tools were evident in *Learning Together*, it was possible to show how economic activity and circumstances were powerful frames for a technology of the self. It was assumed that an individual could willingly engage in learning activities to cumulatively construct a successful life. The subject engaged in employment was fortunate to have opportunities to utilise the important knowledge and skills they learnt within the education, training and information

¹⁸ Interestingly, those who are “included” would have their needs catered for and their outcomes monitored and reported. The “included subject” was either individualised and separated from, or homogenised with, the gainfully employed.

systems. Management enabled the learning of individuals to be constructed to meet social and economic needs, yet professionalism enabled individuals to see themselves as powerful within economic structures which might otherwise control and subjugate them.

While individual choice, civic good and societal prosperity were upheld as key outcomes of learning, what was not highlighted was how challenging it might be to make good choices as an individual within a context of changing work expectations and opportunities in liquid modern times (Bauman, 2000, p. 2). This was an example of how *Learning Together* did not make visible “certain features of persons, their conducts and their relation with one another” (Rose, 1998, pp. 10-11). Neither was the supposed benefit of strong economic growth to individuals, communities and the environment explored. The global financial crisis of 2008/09 demonstrates the fragility of belief in the capacity of individuals always to care for themselves. There had been exceptional economic growth in most western democracies in the previous decade, however this period of prosperity appeared to be over for the time being and the surging and ebbing of world economies led to dramatically fluctuating employment opportunities in many communities. This demonstrated how choice and agency were not solely under the command of autonomous individuals, nor were individuals always able to control their conduct or modify themselves in their best interests.

The shift to taking “care” economically of one’s self in this learning society also applied to teachers. Teachers were required to engage in professional development activities in order for them to manage their own learning and demonstrate “best practice” (Grierson, 2003). Teachers and students were both responsible for the choices they made and relied on following “good” advice about how to participate. In the words of Edwards (2004) “the enterprising self will make an enterprise of its life, seek to maximise its own human capital, project itself a future, and seek to shape itself in order to become that which it wishes to be” and is “both an active self and a calculating self” (p. 74). Yet these individuals could also be understood as being subject to a governing discourse which circumscribed the opportunities available to them or which limited their access to narrow ranges of skills and qualifications. The “truth” we told about ourselves was one of self-governing economic independence. It implied a form of free market contracting of lives.

The technology of the self had origins in the knowledge domains of psychology and sociology. The technological techniques offered by psychology included development, learning and behaviour. Development gave rise to change and progress of individuals. Learning promoted self-fulfilment and growth, and there was an unqualified conviction in *Learning Together* that individuals would inevitably get better through learning. Others techniques – creativity, resilience, trust, and imagination, also could be traced to psychology. No negative outcomes of learning, growth or development were put

forward for scrutiny. Learning became a technique for managing development and behaviour that allowed the gaze to remain outside the individual, while therapies and interventions were acted upon the individual. Other technological techniques in *Learning Together* were sociological, with terms used including social capital, heritage, culture, institutions, systems, relationships and education. Through these techniques, social life was ordered, and partnerships, decision-making, inclusiveness, communication, participation, contribution and valuing promoted social cohesion. Society was depicted as enabled or disabled and moral purposes were ascribed to the actions and intentions of individuals.

It is clear that central to the technology of the self in *Learning Together* was the technique of learning. Learning came to be understood as both a process, and a goal; it was an ontological condition (Edwards, 2004, p.76), in that we had both purpose and being through learning. We did not exist without learning and learning ordered lives. Learning permeated diverse aspects of personal and family lives – at school, at work, online, through all aspects of engagement in the social and democratic processes of communities. “Thus almost every aspect of human life becomes available for research and surveillance, as something from which [individuals] can learn in any context – the home, workplace, online, etc.” (p. 76). By learning, and particularly by learning collaboratively, which was a key policy technique of *Learning Together*, Tasmanians would be made better, more capable, and more able to cope with the challenges of the world and their lives. In this way, the society would be more democratic and more economically and socially successful. It would be able to match the value of excellence within a global context. As a society, Tasmania could claim comparability with other societies and its citizens could claim their global place as learners.

We know that the information age is likely to be very complex and diverse and possibly unpredictable. For many of us the description of the information age is both alarming and exciting. We feel a tension: we don't want to lose those things that we value in our present age but we also want to improve the world in which we all live. What will help us to resolve this tension is education.

(Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 9)

Learning Together offered an opportunity to address that tension and compete within contemporary economic, social and political contexts. By focusing Tasmania's education, training and information systems on the technique of learning, individuals within the society would be able to deal with their own intellectual or social shortcomings and contribute to solving society's social and economic deficits. Learning by the individual could become learning for the society, and the result would be an enriched, informed, improved, more cohesive society. Learning would be a natural social practice

enabling such deficits to be redeemed and allowing individuals to “adapt to change processes over which they have little or no control or choice” (Edwards, 2004, p. 77).

The domain of politics also constructed the technology of the self in *Learning Together*. It was a politically motivated document and terms such as *democracy*, *participation*, *contribution* and *leadership* hinted at how individuals and groups represented their political associations, impulses, and actions. The citizens portrayed by the policy were committed, active and responsible. However, citizens can also be uncommitted, inactive and irresponsible and still hold citizenship by birthright. The idea of the uncivilised citizen stood in opposition to the autonomous, yet civil and engaged participant of the policy. It is a homogenising notion of democracy that implied citizenship as a “transcendental category rather than a living experience” (Edwards, 2004, p. 76). Other terms such as *participation*, as implied by *Learning Together*, offered opportunity, not an obligation. *Contribution* was reciprocity to one’s community, something which all who were educated, knew to do and indeed regarded as a duty. *Leadership* was framed as supposedly knowing what to do and acting in the interests of the community but could be at the same time an enactment of domination.

As I have already noted, *power* (see Table 2, p. 99, and Appendix C) was not mentioned directly in the policy and was only indirectly referred to through the concept of empowerment. The assumptions of empowerment were that, through choosing and acting, individuals and groups would act for a “common good”. Schools and individuals were empowered and therefore had agency and impetus to make lives and communities better. This may not have been the case, nor might “being empowered” be positive. A citizen of the European Union might hold rights to citizenship, yet not engage with its identity or participate in its processes. In the same way, Tasmanians might have little commitment to democratic principles within their state or to the geographic, social or educational communities referred to in *Learning Together*.

My interpretation using the metaphors *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A TECHNOLOGY OF THE SELF* and *POLICY IS A TECHNOLOGY* portrayed the whole Tasmanian community as having shared social and economic intentions regarding progress and democracy, as well as a willingness to engage in political dialogue about future policy and practice in education. Tasmania could also be characterised as a community where individuals are mobilised by techniques such as learning and citizenship, and are positioned as motivated, autonomous selves acting for personal fulfilment and out of democratic responsibility (Rose, 1998, p. 151). In giving rise to the new metaphors, *POLICY IS A TECHNOLOGY* and *LEARNING TOGETHER IS A TECHNOLOGY OF THE SELF*, *Learning Together* could be regarded as a policy tool that positioned individuals as self-governing.

As such, it may have caused them to ignore how their own identity and participation was being mobilised by complex cultural and social relationships (Edwards, 2004, p. 76).

Through my interpreting of *Learning Together*, I also developed new understandings of, and possibilities for, politics. A policy can often be characterised as a distillation of politically-driven interests, on the part of either political agents or bureaucrats (Yanow, 2000, p. 37). This view of policy might lead to an approach to the interpreting of a policy that tries to understand what and whose interests these are. Such an approach could be thought of as a form of critical political theorising (Shaw, 2005). The central concerns of this approach are the perceived interests of policy actors and how these interests come to be enacted through a policy. This approach has some inadequacies as it can ignore how interest and influence might be unintentional or not merely driven by individuals, but might come from socio-historical factors, such as the discursive contexts of a policy.

Through my use of Foucault's (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer's (1999) ideas, I came to understand that politics is always implicit in policy, as power is always a permanent meaning possibility (Kögler, 1999, p. 311). This fits with descriptions of public policy as being direction of action from within a centralised bureaucratic or government mechanism (Kickert, 1991). As Lingard (1996, p. 86) notes, the Foucauldian power/knowledge couplet can, and should be, contested. For instance, as I had noted in relation to *Learning Together*, a public policy is not necessarily written in one place or at one time only, nor is it authored only by one policy actor or group. It is often hard to determine whose knowledge, values and beliefs are represented in a policy, and what influence they might have had on stories that the policy might tell. The "public" of the term *public policy* can refer not only to those whose lives are impacted on by a policy but also to the formal institutions or office holders that are responsible for writing and implementing that policy. Not only do government ministers and government departments develop, enact and administer policies, but many others within various stakeholder communities can have genuine influences on the development of a particular policy.

The question of who decides, either explicitly or implicitly, what a policy entails can be open to multiple interpretations. If a policy has multiple authors, then it can be given various meanings both by the communities and individuals at which it is aimed and by others who interpret it. What then are the sources of its authority, legitimacy and authenticity (Bridgman & Davis, 2004, p. 4)? Its intended meanings may not always be fully disclosed by a policy's authors, implementers or anticipated audiences. Some perspectives may not be even represented or may be given primacy over others. Might a policy have one coherent set of meanings or could it be that there will always be

meanings that are multiple and competing? Indeed, in many conventional policy analyses, questions of what a policy means may not even be posed as there is a greater interest in whether the policy is effective or practical.

In contrast, if the interpreting of a policy considers only political interests, it may also miss “non-decision making” (Taylor et al., 1997). Simply, it may be that an interpreter may not appreciate any unintentional silences in a policy debate or grasp how the quiet voices of many may converge into one (p. 26) in a policy. Policy consultations require the “hearin’ ” of various stories from participants, each of which contributes to the eventual policy metanarrative. As a policy is developed, discussions that occur can often be local and specific, and are mostly unrecorded. Such discussions may subtly shape a public policy dialogue or significantly influence it. This may occur through the media or through other means such as in a school staffroom. There is often a focus on what a policy will include but not on what is missing.

While *Learning Together* might be seemingly born out of liberal humanist traditions of thought which privileged values such as “pluralism”, within the policy itself were contradictions about the changing nature of democratic practice in a world of rapidly diversifying viewpoints. There was an ongoing contest in my interpreting of the policy between individual and communal democratic perspectives, which demonstrated that, for me, there was not only one rational way of understanding and behaving as a democratic being. Put simply, I found that acknowledging and valuing diversity, by very definition, called into question traditional conceptions of democracy that were founded on the notion of individuality.

This juxtaposition created both tensions and opportunities for me in my attempts to recognise and appreciate my changing understandings. For example, within contemporary political contexts, “choice” and “responsibility” may have meanings congruent with conservative democratic traditions that value individualism, tradition and self-determination. Yet other concepts, such as “equity” and “social justice”, evoke different ideas about democracy, relating more to mutuality than individuality.

Through Foucault’s (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) ideas I have come to understand the relationship between policy and politics as complex, yet always potent. I recognise that the evolving relationship between policy and politics in a late modern context, is one way in which relations of power act to subjectify humans. However, I also understand this developing relationship as a way in which individuals might have real agency, not merely by resisting power or disciplinary practices, but by finding channels, concepts and practices that will “tune” power to allow critique to be possible and local knowledges to emerge (Nealon, 2008, p. 106). With Gadamer’s (1999) ideas, I understand that the interpreting of policy, with regard to politics, is always undertaken

within a context of pre-given and shifting prejudices and understandings. Politics, and my politics in particular, are ever in play as I come to understand policy and myself more deeply.

Meanings from framings of moments – opportunities to be conscious

My interpreting *Learning Together* at this point evoked another new metaphor, *LEARNING TOGETHER IS AN INTERPRETIVE MOMENT*, and an entailment, *INTERPRETING IS BECOMING CONSCIOUS*. Early in my interpreting of *Learning Together*, I wrote a fictional narrative, an allegory, using the metaphors of *LANDSCAPE* and *TOWN* to depict my educational and personal context and to enable me to illustrate the milieu of my study. I did so in the hope of illuminating deep insights into the policy and to provoke any tensions and dilemmas for me in my understandings of it. This approach was prompted by the metaphor I drew from Greene (1978) of *A LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING*, as well as Gadamer's (1999) metaphorical reference to horizons of understanding. The narrative had many purposes. It evoked my orientations and commitments in this study – to my story, that of Tasmania and its education system and the connections between these stories and other philosophic and educational contexts. The metaphorical narrative was more than a description of a space; it was also a way of representing my evolving understandings, I could see them as events which were rich with potential meaning, not merely as a collection of static fixed interpretive objects. Through the allegory of the landscape and my passage through it, I came to understand *Learning Together* as a metaphor of *AN INTERPRETIVE MOMENT*. This metaphor was of my interpretive passage, situated within specific time and space, yet it fused with moments, eras, narratives, metanarratives and lives beyond my own. I explore this final metaphor and entailments further in Chapter 9, when I reflect on the interpretive approach I have used in this study.

I have listed in Table 5 below some key metaphors that emerged from my interpreting of *Learning Together* to this point. This is in preparation for the remainder of the chapter in which I illustrate the potential that these metaphors offer towards understanding what *policy* might mean.

Table 5. Metaphors emerging from final interpretive phase.

LEARNING TOGETHER IS A METAPHOR
POLICY IS METAPHOR
LEARNING TOGETHER IS A TEXT
POLICY IS TEXT
LEARNING TOGETHER IS A NARRATIVE
POLICY IS NARRATIVE
INTERPRETING POLICY IS SELF-NARRATIVE
LEARNING TOGETHER IS A STRATEGIC VISION
PUBLIC POLICY IS POLITICAL STRATEGY
POLICY IS A TECHNOLOGY
LEARNING TOGETHER IS A TECHNOLOGY OF THE SELF
LEARNING IS LIFELONG LEARNING
TASMANIA IS A LEARNING SOCIETY
CITIZENSHIP IS A TECHNIQUE
LEARNING IS A TECHNIQUE
POLICY IS OPPORTUNITY
POLICY IS POSSIBILITY
LEARNING TOGETHER IS AN INTERPRETIVE MOMENT
INTERPRETING IS BECOMING CONSCIOUS

Pausing to reflect on understanding policy

Through my interpreting of the policy *Learning Together*, I found that my understandings were still subject to flux. In this chapter, I offered differing metaphors of policy in an attempt to display (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 159) my understandings of it. Through unfolding my developing understandings, I came to recognise that this policy has, and potentially all policies have, dynamic and shifting meanings. Following Sokolowski, I found there were meanings of *Learning Together* that were concealed, absent or vague (p. 166) and found new ways to disclose them.

Contemporary policy research was able to provide some important perspectives for understanding *Learning Together* and, in turn, I came to deeper understandings of the term *policy*. My interpreting in this study addressed a perceived inadequacy of that contemporary work in terms of understandings of the term *policy*, and the new metaphors I came to through my interpreting gave me possibilities for understanding *policy*

differently. Many contemporary characterisations of *policy* (see Chapter 2) do not capture the complexity of how the term is used in late modern times, where the meanings a policy might have are increasingly contested (Yanow, 2000). It was clear that understanding a policy in terms of positivist or post-positivist epistemology alone was inadequate. If I accepted that a policy may have many meanings beyond those that were quantifiable or verifiable, I needed to think of the term *policy* differently.

Indeed, I came to understand that the term *policy* may have multiple and competing meanings. Ball (1990, p. 3) revealed his theoretical uncertainties as to the meaning of the term and posed a profound dilemma for those who might wish to establish a definition of the term *policy*, then move on to apply it within particular contexts. While being aware that his own work was, at that time, characterising policy into two distinct conceptualisations, *policy as text* and *policy as discourse*, Ball recognised that such a distinction was simplistic – the conceptualisations being “implicit in each other” (p. 3). He also warned against regarding policy only as a thing, and ignoring how policies are active in nature as processes and outcomes. While there may be many other meanings of the term *policy*, these two were particularly useful to me, being both contrasting, and overlapping, and they can be described using the metaphors POLICY AS A DISCOURSE and POLICY AS A TEXT (Ball, 1994, p. 21). They enabled me to frame *policy* as from hermeneutic and critical perspectives. When I began this study, these two metaphors of policy were concealed in the sense that they were vague, rather than absent. They were vague in that each was discernible in conventional meanings of *policy*, yet each required further elaboration to become differentiated from the other. Ball (1994) had made a distinction between the two. POLICY AS A TEXT allowed policy actors to interpret a text in a variety of ways, and POLICY AS A DISCOURSE indicated how power relations could frame the interpreting of a policy text.

Early in this study, Ball’s (1994) characterisations of policy using the metaphors of TEXT and DISCOURSE had potential as enduring meanings of the term *policy*, and I also chose to entail these metaphors in specific ways. This elaboration enabled me to go beyond the structure of these two conceptual metaphors to discover new understandings. To POLICY IS TEXT, I grouped two other metaphors, with their entailed meanings of POLICY IS METAPHOR and POLICY IS NARRATIVE. To POLICY IS DISCOURSE, I added POLICY IS TECHNOLOGY. I added two further metaphors, POLICY IS OPPORTUNITY and POLICY IS POSSIBILITY that arose out of the metaphors *LEARNING TOGETHER IS AN INTERPRETIVE MOMENT* and *INTERPRETING IS BECOMING CONSCIOUS*. My list of potential meanings became much more complex than those given to policy as it was addressed in conventional policy literature. I built three significant ways to understand policy that admitted the concept was ambiguous, which allowed me to develop multiple and shifting

meanings. In particular, I could propose explanations that were less driven by economics, science and rationalism than more epistemologically realist accounts.

My interpretive struggle has been to come to see policy in new ways. It is for this reason that I finally characterised policy through the pair of metaphors, POLICY IS OPPORTUNITY and POLICY IS POSSIBILITY. These two metaphors enable me to integrate the epistemological, ontological and axiological (Schubert, 1986, pp. 118-124) understandings I arrived at to come to a new philosophy for the interpreting of policy. For that reason, my interpreting has required a trustworthy approach. Therefore, I have attempted to adopt an epistemology of uncertainty, a critical axiological stance and a questioning ontology. I have come to understand the term *policy* as derived from the knowledge we have of it, what we have experienced in relation to it and the values that underpin our judgments of it. By attempting to capture ontological, epistemological and axiological perspectives on policy, I endeavoured to evidence the term with a richness and a “truthfulness of disclosure” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 158).

My way of interpreting policy allows that meanings of a policy may be understood not only epistemologically but also ontologically and axiologically. How we interpret policies should account for this by seeking a more trustworthy interpretation that applies differing perspectives. Considering self and power are two important ways to think about a policy that can assist in revealing particularly axiological and ontological meanings. This was particularly notable in relation to *learning*. *Learning Together* took up *learning* as its central thematic principle for educational policy-making. I could see that *learning* need not only be about the acquisition of knowledge, but can also be understood as a lived experience and as a commitment to community or democratic participation. Yet, it could also be understood as a technology, through which self was made subject to prevailing discourses such as economics and science. Alternatively *learning* could be an interpretive strategy by which we are able come to understand ourselves more deeply.

My involvement in the *Learning Together* policy’s development and implementation may have come and gone for me without much reflection, had it not been for the significance that I accorded it as a task, both personally and socially. Policies such as this one have the potential to shape future funding and strategic action, and may affect the lives of many people for a considerable time to come as policy directions are played out. In my search for understanding of *Learning Together*, I very quickly comprehended that it would not be sufficient for me to view the policy as an object from which I was detached. I was entangled in this policy and my understandings of it were interwoven with my understandings of myself. Some apprehension also sprang from the very public nature of my connection with the construction of this policy. Was it justifiable for me to inquire into a policy in which I had such an integral role? How might others view this? If

I were to attempt to reveal my personal interest and involvement in an authentic and inquiring manner, might that not be as justifiable as any objectively framed policy analysis?

My search, therefore, also became a pursuit of self-understanding, followed by a comprehension that any such self-understanding would not emerge from only being inward-looking, that is, from interrogating my personal values and beliefs in an outward thrusting toward the world (Greene, 1978, p. 14). I had an ever-present feeling that my personal perspectives might result from me being mystified, or that my horizons might be narrow. I had a nagging doubt that what impressed me as good for education in the state of Tasmania might not necessarily be shared by others, nor might this be what I would think in the future when my work or other contexts changed. I wanted to be “conscious” of my understandings and their potential or otherwise but also conscious of other possibilities for interpreting *Learning Together*. I wanted to stand at a distance from my self and recognise that which might work upon me (Greene, 1978, p. 19). I needed to guard against mystification and understand how language, thought and experience combined to create me and my worlds.

I came to appreciate that I have situated understandings that shaped how I regarded the world and acted within it. They came from my life history, the social practices I engaged in and my conceptual understandings, sedimented in language. These were the grounds on which I interpreted and reinterpreted throughout my dialogue with *Learning Together*. I embodied a “being-in-the-world” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 147). In this way, *Learning Together* was a moment, worthy of my interpretive traverses, in which I developed my consciousness.

A pause to reflect

This interpreting of *Learning Together* has offered possibilities for thinking differently about policy, education and self. By giving significance to the meanings of a policy beyond qualitative and quantitative interpretations, it is possible to see diverse perspectives. In line with this, I propose that policy research in education can seek to account for ontological and axiological implications of a policy as well as epistemological ones. This would open opportunities for education policies to more richly envisage the nature, purposes and experiences of education.

Section 3

Insights into interpreting



Chapter 9

Reflecting on interpretive approaches

Of course this is not a predetermined path. The path of life, as Buddhist philosophers have told us is a path laid down by walking.

(Sumara, 1996, p. 127)

This study has unfolded an interpretive approach to understanding the policy *Learning Together*. It has drawn on selected works of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Foucault (1970, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1985, 1986a), Gadamer (1999) and Kögler (1999) to develop an approach that brings together competing hermeneutic and critical purposes. If a hermeneutic purpose of interpreting is to encounter possibilities (Gadamer, 1999), and a critical purpose, following Foucault's ideas, is to regard power as a permanent possibility (Kögler, 1999, p. 311), then a philosophically interpretive approach addresses both of these issues. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) provide one way into the interpreting of a specific policy text through using metaphor as a strategy for structuring a conceptual framework for its language.

An allegory as an extended metaphor

This chapter begins by outlining an allegory, or figurative narrative, which provides a language trope for the approach taken to interpreting in this study. The allegory uses, as its basis, the metaphor of A LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING modelled on the town in which I live. The description I created of this metaphoric town and its surroundings illustrates how I, and my interpreting, are situated in personal geographical, philosophical and educational landscapes. The allegory also portrays the temporal and spatial changes to the town in which I live and portrays how my LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING is dynamic and shifting.

Sumara's quote at the beginning of this chapter suggests that the interpreting path I chose to take was not already given but was created reflexively within the context of my

study. I kept in mind a metaphor of PASSAGE through a landscape incorporating a setting with which I was familiar, threaded with both history and possibility. In this case my hometown appealed. What I quickly came to recognise was that the allegory revealed more about me and my self-understandings and how these influenced my interpreting.

The allegory of the town is used here as an “extended metaphor” (Clifford, 1986, pp. 99-100). It is used to generate, in the minds of my readers, a representation “that ‘interprets’ itself” and throws light on the content of my study and its implications by referring to fresh meanings. My use of allegory allows me to elaborate the metaphor using metaphorical entailments. The allegory depicts “my town” as a “place” of multiple perspectives, personal and shared histories of which traces are still evident (Kögler, 1999, p. 269). There is much potential for exploration as meanings are always able to be disclosed (Sokolowski, 2000) from this landscape. The allegory I describe suggests I am situated within specific contexts bound by time and place, and therefore my interpreting within this study has been spatially and temporally conditioned. It also enables me to illustrate how there may be limits that constrain understanding of a policy in the present, as well as opportunities that open potential interpretive possibilities for the future. Yet, at the same time, I am aware that my allegory may become a misconception or “alluring fiction” (Clifford, 1986, p. 100).

Allegory of the town

Richmond nestles, like a sleepy tabby cat, in a warm hollow created by the Coal River in South Eastern Tasmania. Its feline similitude emerges from the warm local sandstone out of which much of the village is built – its churches, grand Georgian homes and small vine-covered cottages – and, mirroring the cat’s sleek back, the elegant and historic bridge that reaches over the trickle of a river. In autumn, falling leaves meld both the buildings and natural environment into one mottled golden theme, evoking images of a far-away English countryside. It is a scene that is golden and languid.

But not all of the scene resembles a tabby cat, straight from the pages of an English heritage magazine. There are also giant dry hills looming above the town, resembling sleeping prehistoric megafauna, sparsely dotted with scrappy wattles and the occasional dying gum tree, with sheep tracks criss-crossing their withered flanks. The ancient hills evoke *zygomaturus tasmanicus*, the island’s gigantic marsupial ancestor of the wombat. They are rarely green and grassy, perhaps only once a year with the mid-winter rains, and their exposed ridges are so high that airplanes flying over on a path to the nearby airport appear to skim the bony spine-like summits. These hills are remnants of massive mountains from times long before humans, slowly eroding through times when *zygomaturus* and other megafauna roamed freely through this country, and through times when Aboriginal people peacefully coexisted with this landscape up until the arrival of Europeans and subsequent social and environmental ruptures.

The past is very much part of this town's present. Almost two centuries ago, ritualised violent acts of discipline and punishment were inflicted upon hundreds of transported convicts. The most abhorrent floggings and beatings and indescribably inhumane conditions were the lot of those convicts, most of whom had been sent half a world away from their homes and lives in Britain for all manner of real or supposed crimes. The bridge outside my window, now glorious in the evening glow, is claimed as the oldest in Australia, having been built by these convicts for a far more awful purpose than that for which it is currently used. Built in 1823, it bridged the Coal River and made the convict settlement of Port Arthur more accessible to Hobart Town, allowing prisoners to be shipped from their landing place in Hobart to the Tasman Peninsula, without the inconvenience of a sea voyage or needing to ford the river. The bridge's construction was both a punishment and a means to punish, bridging, as it did, a key point on the convicts' journey to the Bentham-inspired horror of Port Arthur. It facilitated the ritual brutalisation of the convicts whose descendants eventually overwhelmingly populated this state, my ancestors amongst them. Red hair, fair hair, freckles and Celtic features still mark the convicts' influence in the colonising of Tasmania.

Richmond and its convict history present quite a different countenance now, an iconic one such as that found in other Australian places like Uluru, the Great Ocean Road and the Sydney Harbour Bridge. It is a tourist town where visitors from diverse countries and cultures converge in vast numbers to experience this awful past. They come to "stand in" convict and free settlers' shoes, if indeed those early townfolk were privileged enough to wear shoes. They come to connect with the lives of those from our Anglo-Celtic heritage – but also to eat ice-creams and chocolate, and buy trinkets and have amusing photos taken in the stocks outside the local pub. Every day the ducks opposite my house are again stuffed with offerings of bread by these unending streams of families from near and far – from Ottawa, Townsville and Taipei.

The town also has other more hidden faces. There are corners of rough scrub and crumbling sandstone cliffs at its edges, interspersed by typical suburban weatherboard and brick homes, complete with their symbols of everyday life – Hills hoist clotheslines, swing sets, sheds and veggie patches in the backyards. These corners are quintessentially Australian, just like the native marsupials, such as the echidnas, or spiny anteaters, that follow a primeval path through my yard every year. Symbols of the past or present, they evoke the living nature of my town. They represent its changing social and economic place within this rural community, its growing role as a commuter town to nearby Hobart.

Richmond is a country town that has experienced many of the challenges that have faced regional Australian communities in recent times. Only two decades ago, the surrounding region of the Coal River Valley, held the "distinction" of having the highest youth suicide rate in regional Australia. That such a statistic was based on very low incidences in a small population did little to lessen the horror of this for local people and it prompted intense scrutiny of the educational, social and economic opportunities of the region. These were dismal, with low employment prospects, many examples of alienation for young people in schooling and the community, and poor health outcomes. Yet, within twenty short years, a new boom time has come to this place. Vineyards, walnut and apricot orchards, wineries, restaurants and lettuce farms abound as the result of a major dam project upstream in the river's water catchment. Population growth has brought economic prosperity to the valley, with farms being bought by business entrepreneurs and homes by cashed-up interstate retirees. This has brought more employment opportunities for young and old. With those opportunities come potential increases in those "important" statistics.

This town is my home, a place I have chosen to make mine and in which I have found my personal space. I live in a ramshackle vertical weatherboard house of 1950s provenance, built

beside the cat-shaped bridge, in the midst of the teeming tourists, and looking out to the towering hills (tors). Here, I study and my partner imagines beautiful furniture. Here we have created a world which is ours, celebrating achievements and wrestling worries and working at life, always working it, working it out. My connection to this place is profound. It is my landscape of learning.

For me it is my landscape, a landscape in which my intellectual, emotional and physical lives come together. The town gives me a space in which to explicate my history, live my life and envisage my future. The landscape has become my commonplace location (Sumara, 1999) and I am able to apply its metaphors to enliven my interpreting. And like my interpreting, I explore new paths created by new spaces and times.

This allegory has given me a point of reference to which I have returned throughout the writing of this thesis. It was written early in my work as a means of expressing my understanding of how the physical and intellectual settings of this study link and I have re-visited it numerous times, in order to reveal new appreciations and insights. The allegory has allowed me to uncover my motivations for studying policy, and in this study, a policy in which I had such close involvement. I came to understand how interpretations are always related to our living within the world, our knowledge of it and the values we have. The allegory using this landscape illustrates for me how various interpretive directions I might choose to follow may lead to differing understandings. As Greene (1973, p. 49) urges, within this landscape I aspire to interpret from as many vantage points as possible. I needed a way through the landscape that allowed me to find vantage points that might provide worthwhile insights into my lived experience of the interpreting of a policy. This study is my attempt to think through and clarify the conditions in which my interpretations and understandings of a policy have come about (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000, p. 286). I have scrutinised my chosen paths in order to understand more carefully the perspectives I have gained from them, and how they have enriched my understanding. It is my way of demonstrating how interpreters are always in contexts that are inevitably part of their own understanding, as well as something which they refer to when they interpret. From my perspective, I live in this landscape and my understanding is shaped by it, but I also shape it in turn by being part of it and interpreting within it. This landscape context is not only bound by spatial and temporal parameters, but also involves others who bring their own various individual and shared experiences, stories, knowledge, and values arising out of their experiences and knowledge within time and place.

As illustrative of this, a town links time and place. A town may be relatively distinguishable from other parts of the landscape, but contrary to my Geography studies in school, which sought to divide the world into discrete definable components, a town is not separate from its world. For example, the people who live in a town are not restricted

to its town boundaries. They come and go on a daily basis or intermittently throughout a lifetime. Further, the town can ebb and flow in size as dwellings are built and fall down as part of its ever-changing physical landscape. Neither does a town exist only in the current moment. What happens in a town, is linked to its past, present and future. Within towns, people come and go, families are born and grow, friendships and other relationships are formed and abandoned, and inhabitants die. The human activity of a town brings to mind a sense of living, and, while the town itself may not be alive in biological terms, human activity distinguishes it from being solely characterised in terms of its physical environment. In particular, the landscape in which my town, Richmond, is situated is described by physical contours and features, as well as social and historical narratives and circumstances that are very evocative of the larger geographical category of Tasmania. Therefore it provides me with an allegorical link to the context from which *Learning Together* arose and within which it was implemented. Tasmania, when considered as one sovereign area, has immense natural beauty, a rich colonial history, a relatively homogeneous cultural composition and somewhat volatile economic circumstances.

The allegory enabled me to link the following elements together: the shifting understandings of the meaning of the language of the policy as I moved through the study; the changing and tentative nature of the context in which those meanings might be understood; the unique personal perspectives that shape our understanding of our world; and the shared nature of meaning that enables us to “be in our world” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 78). Just as I follow a path through my town of Richmond most fine evenings, I found paths emerging for me as I moved through my interpreting of *Learning Together*. Each took me through the landscape in what seems to be the same direction but each time my path was not quite the same. I took new turns on those paths or the paths themselves differed, creating subtle changes that I experienced along the way.

In Richmond, I meet others – residents, tourists, strangers, friends, insiders and outsiders. The weather and seasons bring constant changes: the river is high or low, the ducks are quiet or hungrily feeding, trees have leaves or are bare, and the grass beside my path is green or scorched by the intense heat of the summer. In the same way, the paths that led me through my study gave me different perspectives on policy, education, politics, myself and interpreting. I can tread the same paths numerous times, but each time I might see new vistas or notice small changes along my way. I may forge new trails as I go and explore the unexplored.

While I wandered somewhat freely in this study, I was also captured by my own previous understandings of those paths and within their particular intellectual traditions. Many paths I took had been, at least partly, trod by others, including a range of writers and thinkers. Lakoff and Johnson, Foucault and Gadamer were some whose footsteps I

briefly trod. They enabled me to encounter differing understandings of language, thought and experience. One pathway explored the meanings I gave to education within my community and concluded with me attempting to plot the possibilities and potential of this policy for education in Tasmania through new metaphors of *Learning Together*. A second path was an opportunity for me to think about *policy* and what the term might have come to mean in a late modern world. A third pathway explored knowledge and power and how these might manifest themselves in an interpretive landscape of policy, education and politics. A fourth path has chronicled my own personal understanding frameworks, through life-histories, particularly those of my educational experiences, to tease out knowledge and values I had which related to this study. One short passage on that pathway was a personal account of *Learning Together's* development and implementation. Another path opened up a whole panorama of understanding in relation to interpreting.

The set of pathways I mapped out in my interpreting of *Learning Together* seemed to portray this landscape as all my own, yet my understandings were also ones which others might share, either within my local education community or far beyond in other educational or policy communities. My interpreting reflected issues, concerns, challenges, opportunities and possibilities that others also may encounter in similar contexts. In this way, I can see that some of the meanings I disclosed are enduring meanings, as portrayed by Sokolowski (2000). I could recognise how the language used within *Learning Together*, and about it by me, kept other meanings vague by masking differing interpretations of the policy. Following each path enabled me to have some chance of becoming “wide-awake” (Greene, 1978, p. 43) and conscious of a shared world.

For Yanow (2000), contemporary interpretive policy research requires a hermeneutic stance that privileges human meaning and recognises that knowledge is subjectively framed by our prior knowledge and understanding of ourselves. That is, our beliefs, values and feelings, as well as our sense perceptions (p. 6) are central to any practice of interpretive policy. In Yanow's terms, a policy analyst is unable to stand objectively separate from the policy issues being studied. Policy analysis is in fact policy interpreting, and more about “the human possibilities of knowing the world around us and the character of that knowledge” (p. 7) than it is about any dispute as to the nature of reality in relation to specific or general circumstances. What we bring to our interpretations of understandings of our world determines the meanings we may give a policy, the possibilities we perceive for it and our actions in relation to it. If we can appreciate a range of possibilities, we think and act in a range of possible ways relating to that policy. Where a range of possibilities are not recognised, then only one way of understanding something holds sway (Young, 2003, p. 202). Yanow noted that little has

been published concerning interpretive policy analysis as a field, nor on possible methods of such analysis and any links between interpretive tools and their philosophical presuppositions (p. ix). She supported investigation of such approaches as they allow for consideration of not merely the quantifiable values of any policy, but the ambiguities that arise from the symbols (i.e. language, objects and acts) that frame that policy and have meaning for interpretive communities.

Being philosophically interpretive

My interpreting of *Learning Together* was shaped by frames I brought to the interpreting of it, and, in turn, my interpretations have shaped how I see its possibilities. The allegory I outlined above enabled me to describe how I have played, following Gadamer (1999, p. 101), with different interpretive frames. *Learning Together* could be interpreted through frames, as well as frame how I came to see policy, education, politics and myself both in the present and into the future. I was able to examine my own frames and consider how these related to everyday thinking and use of language to worldviews. My task was not only to see these frames and the meanings that resulted from them, but also to become aware of how frames might limit my understandings. I therefore drew upon selected insights of Foucault's (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) about the possibilities of power and Gadamer's (1999) ideas on the influences of pre-understanding on understanding, expressed as frames of metaphors, and addressed issues raised by Kögler (1999) about how each philosopher takes varied perspectives on interpreting. My approach to the interpreting of *Learning Together* was undertaken in this way for deliberate purposes, not least to take advantage of the significant individual insights of each theorist. Kögler (1999) suggested that "critical hermeneutics" might merge Gadamer's philosophic hermeneutics and Foucault's critique of reason and address the inadequacies of both. Kögler saw his theorising as a task of "methodological reflection on the critical potential inherent in existing cultural studies" (p. 2). For him, there was a dilemma in that critical theorising had ignored the situatedness in which interpreters and subjects mediate their understandings of symbolic structures (i.e. language), while hermeneutics failed to acknowledge that there were accepted culturally and historically specific horizons in which the interpreting of symbolic forms and social practices takes place. For these reasons, Kögler deliberately attempted to bring together the thinking of the two.

One key implication of Kögler's (1999) thinking for my interpreting of *Learning Together* was that it demonstrated that if I were to interpret the policy only by asking Foucault's (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) important questions related to relations

of power, I would have disregarded the situatedness by which my experiences, knowledge and values influenced my personal perspectives on power. Further, if I were to limit my interpreting to considering the personal background of understanding by which I reflected on *Learning Together*, I would have neglected consideration of any potential operation of power over which I had no agency. This is particularly important in this study, given its political nature, and my embeddedness in the Tasmanian political milieu. Kögler's (1999) intentions were that we should come to understand our situatedness as an interpreter while engaging with others through dialogue. Such dialogue would enable an interpreter to reveal any preunderstandings and transcend their own horizons, genuinely consider power as a permanent possibility (p. 311) and allow critique of the structural constraints of our interpretations. The act of interpreting is then able to reveal, through distanciation, any illusions created by power and its relations to knowledge, "to fill that vacuum of freedom that power technologies, in the sense of total control, also attempt to fill completely" (p. 239). Kögler's approach revealed the weaknesses of, and incongruities between, Gadamer's and Foucault's differing philosophical stances. He regarded Gadamer as privileging the ontological primacy of language and the self-understanding of situated subjects (Kögler, 1999, p. 267), while Foucault's theorising appeared to deny that symbolic structures were mediated through the lived experiences of individuals. For Kögler, any integration of critical and hermeneutic perspectives could only occur when the background of implicit pre-understanding against which interpretation occurred was made explicit. Kögler's intention in merging these two seemingly distinct philosophical perspectives was to "fuse the analytical tools offered by discourse analysis and a microanalytics of social-power practices with the insights that hermeneutics has gleaned with respect to the nature of preunderstanding and the dialogic character of interpretation" (p. 2).

Kögler (1999) also became the strategy by which I was able to sideshadow my interpretive approach, following Morson (1998, p. 601). My involvement in *Learning Together's* writing and implementation implicated me deeply within my understanding of it and had shaped my self-understanding in ways of which I was both aware and unaware. Through attempting to uncover my prejudgments and situatedness in relation to the interpretations I made, I assumed Gadamer's (1999) philosophic hermeneutic stance. However, if I were to interpret *Learning Together* in this study only through hermeneutic strategies, I might have struggled to reveal insights in which my own positioning might be more exposed or challenged, and where relations of power, which may have acted upon my subjectivity (Kögler, 1999, p. 68), were not brought to light. Similarly, if I only assumed Foucault's (1970, 1971, 1972, 1975) mid-career critical stance which focused on how power might act to subjectify, this might have denied or distorted any notions that I

had individual agency. By considering my self-understanding using Gadamer's (1999) ideas, I was better placed to see the potential for individual agency taken up by Foucault's (1985, 1986a) later work. As I was both interpreter and participant in relation to this policy, the integration of these two perspectives was needed to emphasise how I could become aware of my historically bound situatedness and my self-understanding. In exploring this integration of their ideas, my allegory took a new turn.

Both theorists, Gadamer and Foucault, followed a path from Heidegger (1962), one that commenced with Heidegger considering language as both subject and mediator of any interpretation, and interpreting as a continual and enduring process. Each gave primacy to language over any metaphysical explanation of being. Gadamer proposed the metaphor of HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE as a means by which interpreting of language was ongoing, and Foucault (1995) used the term "genealogy" like a metaphor to describe a process of analysing and uncovering historical relationships between power, truth and knowledge by examining language.

Pathways of possibilities

Every so often, I pause in my path of interpreting of *Learning Together* as I am unsure which way to go. At times, I have followed clear paths, but at others the way forward is either blocked or there is no clear path to follow. Metaphors have shown me signposts I felt I could recognise – 'community', 'individuality', 'democracy' and so on – but I became aware I could take other paths. Foucault led me to explore 'power' and this opened up new vistas, showing me some of the historicity of my landscape. He also helped me to recognise that *Learning Together* could be thought of as "the panopticon". Yet as I continue, I feel a sense of unease. I feel the need to re-think how I encounter the landscape. I come to see that the pathway possibilities are shaped by the maps, the mental frames I bring to the journey. How might I come to understand them more deeply?

A Foucauldian analysis of power was vital for me as I found that language could be a prison. The language of policy can constrain how we make meaning because of the limits of particular social-symbolic meanings and practices. Foucault allowed me to understand the criteria by which I judged the policy and its strategies as relevant or otherwise, and see their influence on my values and beliefs about education, policy and politics.

Otherwise, I may unknowingly have masked what I came to understand about *Learning Together* and the potential it offered. Gadamer's (1999) hermeneutic approach to self-understanding seemed at odds with Foucault's (2002) concern with discourse. If all understanding was self-understanding and self-understanding was achieved through open dialogue, then why would power be constituted outside of our own understanding, in discourse (Kögler, 1999, p. 1). Kögler would bring these two theorists together but also

enable me to sideshadow them so that I could view their interpretive stances from some distance.

With Gadamer's (1999) insights, I was influenced by his portrayal of how our pre-understanding or prejudices forms a background against which we reflect on our experiences to come to new understandings through an "event of understanding" (p. 472). Horizons of our understanding limited or enabled meaning-making; and our horizons of disclosure are both revealing and concealing (Young, 2003, p. 205). Kögler (1999) saw the contribution of contemporary hermeneutics to philosophic thought, after Gadamer (1999, p. 2), as being the appreciation of the character of pre-understanding and the dialogic spirit of interpreting. In doing so, he also noted that philosophic hermeneutics lacked an obvious position on language, as he saw merit in how language could be analysed in terms of discourse, to show how discursive formations could give rise to relations of power.

Why I chose education policy, and specifically *Learning Together*, for my study could be traced through a series of choices I had made over time arising from my life and work history. In my study of *Learning Together*, I have attempted to expose some of those prejudices that may have concealed my awareness of other possibilities that "can obstruct understanding because they are based on precisely those presuppositions and assumptions that are inculcated and passed on, without our awareness, through a pre-interpreted social context" (Scheibler, 2000, p. 17). My interpretive work allowed me both space and time to understand myself against a background of language and life experiences so far, which oriented personally held prejudices. Using Gadamer's (1999) ideas, I was able to reveal the framework that produced my understandings, "those that are responsible for our initial directedness toward one area of study over another" (Scheibler, 2000, p. 17). This would allow me to be conscious in a hermeneutically trained way, differing from an "unreflectively situated consciousness" (p. 18).

Through engagement with others, in this case engagement with writing that represents other ideas and perspectives, I have been able to experience an event of understanding (Gadamer, 1999, p. 472). In Gadamer's (1999, p. 39) terms, the language of my pre-understandings could be overcome and I could become aware of possibilities that unified with the meanings of others through a fusion of horizons. However, this raised a significant dilemma. According to Kögler (1999), Gadamer's view was linguistic idealism. Linguistic idealism suggested that only thought or language was real (Miller, 2001, p. 4), and this created difficulties for understanding how we share meaning with others. If our horizons are always linguistically constitutive of our world and being, how then can we go beyond the language of them, given that they are always expressive of our self-understandings? As Kögler (1999, p.14) points out, accepting Gadamer's

philosophical hermeneutics, with its privileging of language, leads to unexamined interpretation of our own situatedness. This gives me a rationale to step beyond Gadamer's holistic view of language (Kögler, 1999, p. 14) to find a space which allows me to understand how power might act on me as well as the limits of my language world.

We might end up merely with shared agreements or explanations of differences between ourselves and others that do little to radically re-interpret our understandings. This would harmonise, rather than transform them. In this sense, I might only ever understand *Learning Together* in terms of what I already knew or understood and I might never understand fully others' perspectives on it, particularly if they are at odds with mine. In relation to *Learning Together*, I might only ever have interpreted it as a positive and meaningful policy. Indeed that was my initial interpretation, based on my pre-understandings, borne out of positive and meaningful experiences I had had of policy-making through the *Learning Together* development process. I may never have grasped how others could be made subject to it. By contrast, teachers or students may have experienced unrealistic expectations as a result of it, or greater, unwarranted, scrutiny of their performance.

By engaging in a form of dialogue with the ideas of others (Foucault and Gadamer) about *Learning Together*, I could see where there were agreements and where there were aspects about which we differed. Following Gadamer's (1999) ideas, I would await the fusion of horizons that came from deeper and deeper dialogue into those matters that were not agreed. Yet I had to reject an exclusive use of Gadamer's linguistic-ontological explanation as it limited my capacity to transcend power-relations (Kögler, 1999). Power was not fore-grounded by Gadamer (Hoffman, 2003, p. 84) and it has been noted that he implicitly theorises power in a way that contrasts with feminist (or critical) writers who deliberately celebrate difference or strive to rupture agreement, unity and continuity. I could not accept Gadamer's stance in its totality as it denied any opportunity to reveal negative aspect of *Learning Together*, in particular, I could not accept his smooth conception of dialogue, which I came to regard as an object of power-relations. As Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) enabled me to see, my initial interpreting of *Learning Together*, using Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) work on metaphor, masked the idea of power.

Beliefs about self were central to differences between Gadamer (1999) and Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995). Foucault's insights enabled me to see the possibilities of power within *Learning Together*, particularly how individuals were produced through power/knowledge resulting from historical situatedness. Our subjectivity could become available to us through language. In Foucault's (1995) work *Discipline and Punish*, the self was a docile body, produced by discourses and

institutions, while later in his life, he retrieved a notion of self-reflexivity and agency. Yet this ethical self was still limited by power/knowledge (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000, pp. 150-51), and for Gutting (2010), “our finitude is, therefore, simultaneously founded and founding”, which Foucault regarded as positive and fundamental.

This was a dilemma for me in that any interpreting I undertook might not be able to overcome prejudices that came from a historically-constituted milieu, which at this time were those relations of power which held sway within the modern episteme. This left me with a sense of helplessness that limited what I saw as possibilities. Why would I try to change education through policy-making if I was unable to escape the limits of my subjectivity? Why would I engage in challenging the status quo if power/knowledge would always overwhelm other perspectives? What did my involvement in politics and policy-making mean, if personal agency was so limited by relations of power? Could I ever make a difference?

The manner in which Kögler (1999) assisted me to overcome this helplessness was to bring the two stances together in a coherent manner. This required that the critical insights of structuralist and poststructuralist traditions be integrated into hermeneutic perspectives (p. 2). It also gave a rationale to why I found my interpretive way into *Learning Together* through language, using metaphor after Lakoff and Johnson (1980). Kögler (1999) looked to the implicit pre-understanding background against which our interpreting occurs and sought to make it explicit, by differentiating it into three spheres, the *symbolic*, *practical* and *subjective*. The *symbolic* sphere was constituted by our basic beliefs and assumptions, as distinguished from the *practical* sphere, which was made up of our acquired habits and practices, and the *subjective* sphere, which was composed of biographical events and experiences. Understood in this way, I brought “symbolic” assumptions and beliefs to my interpreting of *Learning Together* drawn from a background of engaging the knowledge domains of education, politics and policy-making. My “practical” context was constituted by the educational, political and policy practices in which I continued to be engaged, such as teaching and politics. Further, the “subjective” sphere of my interpreting emerged from my biography and engagement in actual experiences involving *Learning Together*.

As Kögler (1999) noted, individuals are oriented toward objects in the world and not toward the consideration of the symbolic orders in which these objects are interpreted, therefore power could influence meaning making and understanding without an individual being aware of that influence. Delineating the *symbolic* and *practical* spheres enabled power structures in social practices and institutions to be analysed for their influence on symbolic forms that may be concealed from that individual. In relation to *Learning Together*, that meant considering the policy’s language as symbolic orders

separate from the practical understandings I had of being a member of educational and political institutions. For this reason, when I interpreted *Learning Together*, I examined the language of the policy to understand how power influenced my understanding in relation to the *symbolic* context as separate from the *practical* context. I recognised that I had idealised visions of democracy and education, which were not the same as my lived experience of educational and political institutions. In this way I was able to understand conceptual points of reference, such as democracy and education, and undertake a “distanciating disclosure of symbolic orders” (Kögler, 1999, p. 159). This would achieve a “transsubjective event of understanding” (p. 116).

My interpretations of *Learning Together* were not claims to truths that were correct but those that I was able to disclose (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 158). They were attempts to see both its apparent and sedimented meanings displayed to me. Through display of these meanings, ultimately my own horizons of understanding were revealed as well as the potential social and historical origins of the policy’s language. This was the promise of Kögler’s (1999) critical hermeneutics; by bringing together Gadamer’s (1999) and Foucault’s (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) ideas to address how power influenced meaning and how interpreting could escape the implications of power to achieve reflective distance and effective critique. For me, this meant having a strategy which not only acknowledged the possibilities of *Learning Together* and how it reflected understandings of myself but which also took into account and questioned the historically-situated context of this policy’s development in politics.

In this study, I built on the approach outlined by Kögler (1999) and applied particular critical perspectives of Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer’s (1999) hermeneutic understandings as a means of seeking “others” with whom to engage in dialogue about this policy. The interpreting of *Learning Together* became an opportunity to create dialogue about education, policy, politics and self. It opened up a space and offered time for the interpreting of this policy in a late modern world of tentative understandings, transitory experiences, and uncertain values. I followed Kögler’s (1999) suggestion of engaging in dialogue with the policy as a text, revealing my understandings of it attained through interpreting it. Kögler termed this a critical-dialogic circle (p. 171). The circle involved me in bringing into consciousness my preunderstandings, considering the text as the nexus of symbol and action and, through it, engaging with “others” and their preunderstandings. I thought again about his heuristic to create my own, Figure 5 below. By becoming aware of any concepts held in common, I sought to distance myself from it, reveal any relations of power that might limit my perspectives and form new concepts that related to it. I brought together aspects of the philosophical stances of Gadamer and Foucault as a process by using these as frames of

metaphors. I did not purposefully employ their interpretive approaches as summarised by commentators on their work, such as Gallagher (1992), Bernstein (1983) and Schmidt (1995), although aspects of these approaches linked conceptually to my study. For example, my approach was reflexive using a circle metaphor, as with Gadamer, and I looked for meanings that might be sedimented, as in Foucault's archaeology, where systems of thought and knowledge operated beneath the consciousness of individual subjects (Gutting, 2010).

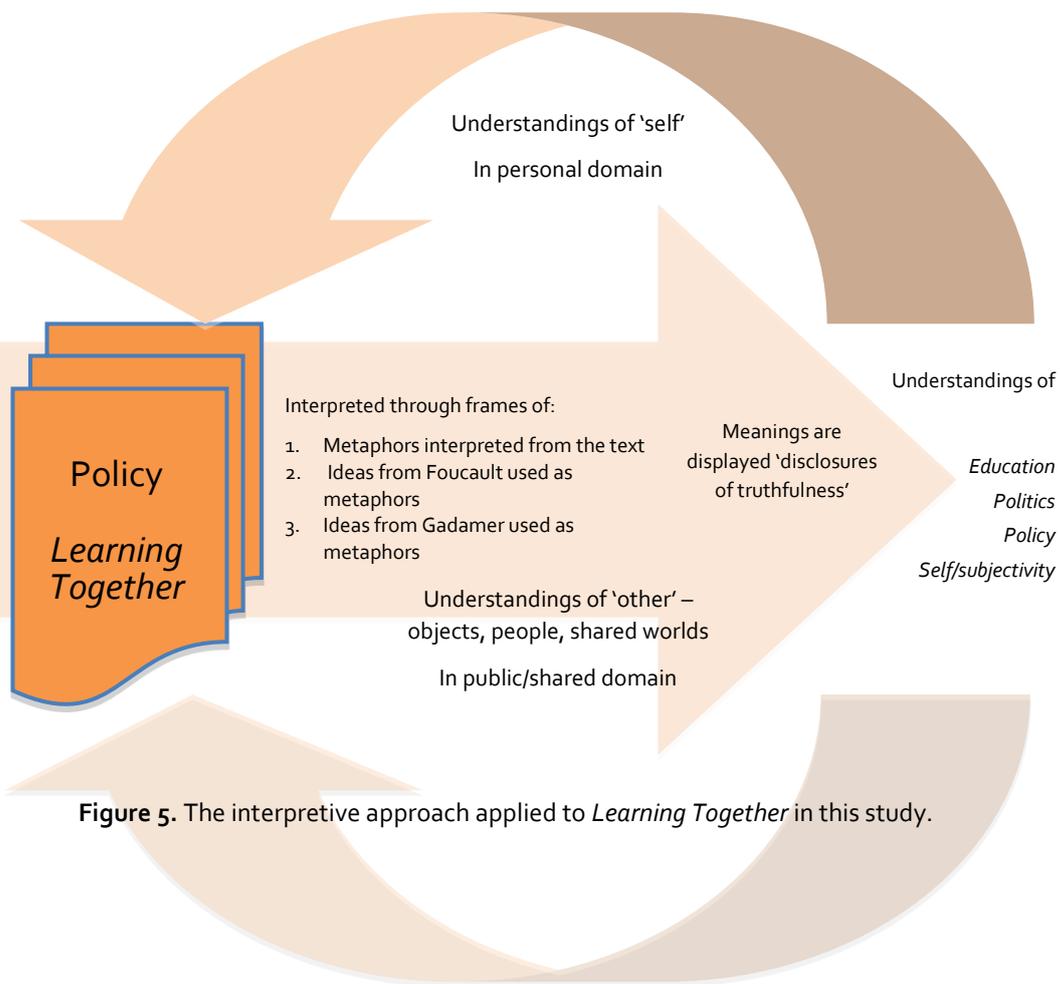


Figure 5. The interpretive approach applied to *Learning Together* in this study.

Gadamer's (1999) and Foucault's (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) ideas were with me on my path. I thought with them, employing Kögler's (1999, p. 183) critical-dialogic circle to engage their philosophic perspectives and constitute "an other". This approach to interpreting allowed for the sort of dialogue which could mediate between their seemingly divergent paths to dissolve some of the differences of critical theory and philosophical hermeneutics by pushing them together (Kögler, 1999, p. viii). Each theorist provided me with a set of *probes* by which to feel my way along the various interpretive paths. While the term "probe" has been used in qualitative research as a form of interview question, I use the term referring to a focus or an orientation to the study. Through the asking of questions focused in a particular way, I sought to engage, explore, penetrate or reveal new insights (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2006, p. 142).

First, by looking to the language of the policy to see what metaphors were highlighted, I could consider the relationships between metaphors, and whether there was consistency and coherence between them. Ultimately, I could suggest a metaphoric framework. Since Lakoff and Johnson wrote *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), understanding of how metaphors can shape our conceptual systems has expanded greatly. Lakoff and Johnson's understandings have influenced our understandings of metaphoric language system by interrogating existing conventional metaphors and bringing forward new metaphors. It has altered how we understand metaphors and use them. For example, it is not uncommon to hear criticism of the use of STRUCTURE and BUILDING metaphors, and during the writing of *Learning Together* these sorts of objectifying metaphors were questioned by the policy group.

Indeed language has been at the core of my interpreting. Language is central to politics as politics is always constituted by language, and in this study "[L]anguage is, so to speak, the point at which the object of study and the process of study must overlap" (Meyers, 2003, p. 36). In politics in recent times, there has been increasing understanding of the use of "spin" which frames debate (Lakoff, 2004, p. 100) and language, and, specifically, metaphor has played a central part in this to the detriment of framing which carries an articulated set of values.

According to Ricoeur (2003) the analysis of metaphor affords prospect for interpreting to be innovative. They allow for us to imagine what might be otherwise through imaginative signification. However, Ricoeur (1981, p. 253) also warns that where we use such linguistic devices for interpreting, we must guard against the same reification they seek to detect occurring. Therefore they should be regarded with the same suspicion.

When a social critic envisions alternative possibilities to the prevailing order, or when a movement fashions new metaphors and narratives by which it understands its conditions, this imaginative characterization may deteriorate into a new dogma, as needful of demystification as what it

replaced. A Vocabulary once illuminating may, in gaining currency, begin to conceal more than it reveals. In time its metaphoric constructions are transformed into idols adopted by a movement of believers.

(Ricoeur, in Fairfield, 2002, pp. 111-112)

Therefore, metaphor was a way to open up interpretive opportunities. These were always contingent upon the context of the interpreting, the interpreters and the prevailing language practices.

Through Foucault's (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) work, I was able to ask difficult questions of the policy about power and knowledge. What was enabled and *limited* by the discourses from which *Learning Together* emerged? What was privileged and ignored by the statements that frame those discourses? Metaphors shone a light on sets of statements that represent power/knowledge as it becomes apparent from the "processes and struggles that traverse" (Foucault, 1995, p. 28).

Gadamer's (1999) ideas enabled me to further uncover my situatedness and stretch toward my horizons of understanding (pp. 302-307). His work allowed me to ask questions such as "What might *Learning Together* mean to me?"; "What traditions and prejudgments shaped my interpreting of it?" and "In what sense is my being understood within the language of *Learning Together*?" This follows Rogers Horn (2005, p. 61) for whom our world is assumed out of theoretical understandings that we have, and when we come to understandings with others, we are sharing those assumptions.

My interpretive approach, using both Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer (1999) was to foreground my situatedness and regard power as a permanent possibility. I could see that *Learning Together* offered a powerful overarching metaphor for educational provision in the Tasmanian context, LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY. This metaphor gave structure to an extensive range of conceptual metaphors and their entailments. These included metaphors related to concepts of *collaboration*, *consultation*, *democracy* and learning. LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY was also a metaphor that masked how power worked within the institution of public education in the state. It concealed alternative ways of thinking about *education* and *learning*. I came to understand that learning could be a technology that can be used to control or suppress. Interestingly, through the interpreting, the policy lived up to its metaphors of being A LIVING AND EVOLVING DOCUMENT and A BRIDGE.

The seemingly enduring ancient hills of my allegory are constantly changing and shifting, sometimes in minute ways such as when wind erodes their flanks or as grass grows and dies, and at other times, as large boulders free themselves and hurtle down their steep slopes. I recognised that the probes I used may not be the only ones relevant to my inquiries, nor were they fixed and immovable. They were useful in bringing diverse

questions and perspectives to bear on my study and could arise unexpectedly. It was possible to contemplate asking other questions from diverse perspectives about *Learning Together*.

Through this interpretive approach, I was free to delve into my own perspectives and those of others to gain insights that I might not otherwise have. It allowed me to distance myself from how I previously understood policy-making. In doing so, I became more conscious of my self and my subjectivity, and gained more meaningful insights into policy, education, politics and interpreting. As a researcher, this study offered possibilities for me, but also for others in the Tasmanian education context to “articulate the themes of their existence and to reflect on those themes until they know themselves to be in the world and can name what has been up to then obscure” (Greene, 1978, pp. 18-19). It might be seen as “a process of discovery and recovery in response to worthwhile questions rising out of conscious life in concrete situations”, emancipatory as it allows us to know ourselves and our interests, revealing of technique and instrumental controls and allowing for a posing of “searching and significant questions” in order to understand ourselves and recognise mystification.

My interpretive path in this study has submitted *policy* and *Learning Together* to philosophical questioning. Implicit assumptions have been afforded the possibility of being made explicit, and my personal perspectives subjected to critique. I came to acknowledge alternative perspectives through this opportunity and appreciate a life world (Gadamer, 1999, p. 439) of educational policy-making. For Abolafia (2004, p. 351) “[p]olicymakers are challenged by an emerging present to reconstruct a coherent past and future”. An analogous challenge exists for future policy interpreters to recognise that our interpreting in the present is against a background of understanding created in the past and always projects towards the future, just as Heidegger (1962) proposed that “being-in-the-world” was always against our forehaving¹⁹, or our fore-structures of understanding. In this way, we can come to enduring and trustworthy meanings.

¹⁹ Heidegger's (1962) *Vorhabe*: the orientation of understanding to the totality of what has already been understood (p. 191)

Trustworthy interpreting

My thesis in this study is that the trustworthy interpreting of a policy requires truthful disclosures of its meanings, including those meanings that may be concealed by being absent or vague. This includes understanding of how various frames we bring to the interpreting of a policy influence our interpreting of it. Through sensitive interpretive approaches, it is possible to find meanings that can be justified, that will endure and will be found to be trustworthy. Maker (1994) suggested that both Foucault and Gadamer were critics of rational-foundational epistemologies (p. 23) that have underpinned much previous policy research and that have led me to seek meaning through interpreting that acknowledged a non-foundational epistemology stance.

Richardson (2005, p. 963) refers to crystallisation as both a strategy and metaphor that goes beyond a single truth as it moves away the established frame of triangulation with its references to land surveyors and geometry (Janesick, 2000, p. 392) to one of multiple facets, infinite variety and transformative capacity. In this study, the interpreting of the policy using metaphor and my engagement with three interpretive frames evoked facets of a metaphoric crystal and opened up interpretive possibilities.

Understanding and meaning have been inextricably linked in my study. Their paths have enabled me to traverse my LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING and make sense of my interpreting. In the philosophical positioning I have embraced, any circumstances hold potential for interpretation and therefore “meaning” is always possible, while “understanding” demonstrates how potential for meaning in any context, moment or (practical) event is realised and brought into consciousness. In this way, something may have meaning, but we may not understand it. This is consistent with how Sokolowski (2000) understood meaning as on display, absent or vague, yet always as having potential (p. 165). This distinction, while providing a way forward within this study, does not impose a philosophical stance that posits objective truth either in how we encounter meanings or the understandings we have. *Learning Together* was an experience through which I have attempted to gain insights into meanings which have the potential to be shared and enduring, disclosing a truthfulness (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 158) to which I have assigned understanding. Through foregrounding language as the framework on which my understandings relied (Kögler, 1999, p. 58), and engaging new meanings through ongoing interpreting, I aimed to reveal trustworthy understandings of *Learning Together*. The interplay of meaning and understanding through language has led me to unfold my self-understanding, revealing a subjective epistemology, axiology and ontology, yet my purpose also has been to understand how meaning is made between ourselves and others. I attempted to encounter meanings of *Learning Together* that were “from the inside”, by being self-conscious of my experience of this policy and enriching my self-knowledge

through the perspectives of others (Hartman, 1993), such as Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer (1999). I also sought insight into metanarratives that I encountered as I traversed my landscape.

A key facet of the interplay between meaning and understanding is that situated between ourselves and others. Heidegger (1962) and Gadamer (1999) both used the German term *Verstehen*, which might be translated as *understanding*, which is understood as in relation with others where we encounter the subjective meanings of an “other”, and come to agree and create new, shared understandings. My search for understandings has not been merely a search for knowledge about policies or education. Integral to this study has been an appreciation that policies are written, communicated and enacted by people within “communities” (Yanow, 2000, p. 10) which share thought, speech, practice and their meanings. The term “community” here denotes cognitive, linguistic and cultural sharing, and “communities of meaning” share points of view around an issue. Any self-understanding I have achieved through my interpreting of *Learning Together* has inevitably involved relationships with others. Thinking about how others understand has engaged my epistemological and ontological intentions together with my axiological ones and ensuring that my purposes are ultimately ethical. Further, my interpreting of *Learning Together* has been unable to ignore broader “grand narratives” (Young, 2003, p. 1) which underline stories of our time and shape attendant cultural norms. In thinking about *Learning Together* in these terms, I have also considered how interpreters gain insight and make meaning that could prevail or endure over significant periods of time and across cultural differences. Sokolowski (2000), Heidegger (1962), Gadamer (1999) and Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) each took particular interest in how meaning was comprehended through language and understanding endures over time.

With Kögler to sideshadow me in the landscape

In Chapter 4, I established the metaphor of A LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING. In elaborating my metaphor in such language, I attempted to both fictionalise and authentically represent my place in this study and its place for me. According to Gadamer (1999) in *Truth and Method*, interpreting involved participating in an event of tradition, beyond a method or process (p. 291). Understanding was an event, and any truth communicated could be multiply interpreted, dependent upon the pre-understanding and reflexive self-understanding of the interpreter and the contextual considerations of tradition and language. Foucault’s (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) work enabled me to see the landscape of my study quite differently, through the ideas of historically mediated power/knowledge and subjectivity, and he showed me perspectives which I otherwise

might not have noted, I needed a way to explore my changing landscape and I had been puzzled about how what I interpreted through *Learning Together* might be historically situated understanding, according to Foucault and how could it also reflect my self-understanding, according to Gadamer (1999). What I needed was a new way of thinking about the aporia between what I brought to language and what influence language and tradition had on my understanding and Kögler (1999) helped resolve this important dilemma. Kögler gave me insights through which I could be guided, by merging these seemingly diverse perspectives (Figure 3, p. 63). This offered me a new metaphorical entailment, INTERPRETING IS BECOMING CONSCIOUSNESS. With Kögler, I have been able to engage in a dialogue through my journey in the landscape with *Learning Together*, but also with Gadamer and Foucault. Being conscious, I came to deeper understandings attained by interpreting *Learning Together* through appreciation of its language, through a critique of power in relation to it, and by acknowledging my already-there ontology.

Therefore, this study could be understood using the metaphor METONYMIC MOMENT (after Aoki, 2003, p. 1), an interpretive wander through my LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING, portraying a place and time that allowed for varying interpretations and multiple possibilities. METONYMIC MOMENT acknowledged both the spatial and temporal aspects of my understanding and blended them in one metaphor. The metaphorical allegory of a town in a landscape could also be viewed through the context of a metonymic moment.

A pause to reflect

My approach to interpreting was initially intuitive and speculative. In uncovering sedimented meanings in each phase, and allowing absent ones to display themselves to me, I “played” (Gadamer, 1999) with modernist, rational “epistemological” privileging, late modern, critical “axiological” thought, and hermeneutic “ontological” ideas. All of these perspectives offered many possibilities, but I encountered my own limits and dilemmas in interpreting from each one. Through this new interpretive approach to policy, I overcame these and revealed what could be regarded as enduring meanings, about policy, education, politics and self.

Chapter 10

Conclusions

A moment to philosophise about unfolding possibilities

Emergence, ... transcendence ...are necessary if persons are to achieve a sense of effectuality again. If they can remain in touch with their perceptual landscapes, if they can be critical and aware, they may be able to overcome passivity and the temptation to withdraw. We must all choose ourselves as learners open to the profiles of a world we can never fully know, willing to live (as Virginia Woolf once wrote) "in the presence of reality". We may be, objectively, nothing more than a "quintessence of dust". But we can choose and we can sometimes transform.

(Greene, 1978, p. 20)

This study has presented a philosophically interpretive approach for considering meanings of a policy, consistent with my thesis that a way of interpreting policy that engages diverse philosophical ideas can offer a rich and trustworthy interpretation within this late modern era. Such an interpretive approach, applied to the Tasmanian education policy *Learning Together*, embodies "philosophising", which for Heidegger (1962) was how we might understand our "being-in-the-world". This philosophy for interpreting policy gave me a coherent way of integrating three elements: my ontology, as arising from my experiences; my epistemology, the manner in which I have come to know my world; and my axiological understandings, those values I bring to my interpretation.

Tentative understandings

By applying this approach I have become aware of some tentative understandings I have of *policy* and the interpreting of policy. First, I have understood policy as a multi-faceted and ever-shifting phenomenon. While the meanings of a policy might be disclosed in innumerable ways, the interpretive approach developed through this study has enabled meanings related to power and self-understanding to be displayed in a fashion that can be regarded as truthful. That is, the meanings are those that I can share, and they appear to be enduring, rather than disintegrating under scrutiny. For me, the meanings of this study provide fresh perspectives on politics, policy, self and language. Many also have shown

the capacity to be subjective, inter-subjective and trans-subjective understandings; that is they are understandings I hold personally, they are ones that I seem to share with others and they have the character of being or becoming metanarratives (Lyotard, 1992, p. 17), one of rational stories of modernity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 847).

The language of a policy is significant as language is a primary strategy for displaying meanings to us. Language provides both a means by which meanings are disclosed to us by a policy's text and a medium by which we can express those meanings. In this study, metaphor is used as a core language strategy to help evidence *Learning Together's* meanings. It is used as a heuristic, or means of interpreting meaning from the policy's text. By thinking about how language could be used to frame this policy, I have disclosed meanings that revealed the ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions on which those meanings could be based. Language, and particularly metaphor, was also useful as it gave me a way to express new understandings. For example, meanings may be thought of using the metaphor FLUID in that they may always be superseded, altered, changed, rethought. Interpreting could be considered using the metaphor of A MOMENT OF CONSCIOUSNESS in which meanings are made present to an interpreter in specific spatial and temporal contexts.

The study concludes that any trustworthy interpretation of a policy should should engage diverse philosophical perspectives and a policy's meanings should always be regarded as tentative, as meanings are always contingent on the spatial and temporal contexts in which the policy has been developed, implemented and interpreted, as well as through the personally held perspectives of the interpreter. At this time and in this context, it has been helpful and trustworthy to consider language, self and power in relation to *Learning Together* by considering how language has framed this policy. The interpreting of *Learning Together*, and indeed any policy, can be thought of as an interpretive moment in which we are able to philosophise (Heidegger, 2001b, p. 7) and become conscious of how we are, and might be, in the world (Greene, 1978, p. 15). As with Heidegger (2007), the motive and goal of philosophy for me was "never to augment the stock of objective truths, but the objective of philosophy, as I understand it and factually pursue it, something of my own, something that belongs to me" (p. 100).

Using the allegory of a town and the metaphor of walking allowed me a language device by which I could explain my understandings of interpreting in another way. I was able to employ metaphors that cohered and were consistent (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 44) with the metaphor of the topography of a township, such as paths, traverses, trails, courses, and other means of finding one's way around a landscape. These metaphors elaborated the idea of interpreting as always being undertaken in relation to a particular territory or ground, without that ground being static or fixed. In the application of that

approach I use, the territory has been that of policy-making in education. In particular, the allegory allowed the policy *Learning Together* to be explored through various philosophical perspectives. The metaphors and their entailments allowed for choices to be made about direction, purpose, agency and manner of my passage through the landscape and they were used to point to differing theoretical orientations and methodological considerations.

Walking around a town such as the one in which I live helped me to describe how interpreting can be like following established paths, seeing familiar things and understanding them in accepted ways. Living in a home environment is common to each of us, no matter where our locale might be. Using this as a metaphor gives a lived sense of how we all exist within specific spaces and times. By allegorically walking through this landscape, I took up Sumara's (1999) notion that "the path of inquiry is laid while walking" (p. 127). Walking has been used metaphorically in philosophy for centuries, as in the Latin saying *solvitur ambulando* which can be translated as "the problem is solved by walking". It brings to mind the pedagogical philosophising of Socrates' and Plato's walks in ancient Greece (Agutter & Wheatley, 2008, p. 27). This suggested that the interpretive paths I chose to take did not have to be established ones but could be created from my self-reflexivity and the passage of my interpretive task at that time and in that space. To do so, I sought out features of the landscape that recurred throughout my study, terms such as *meaning*, *understanding* and *interpreting*.

Using landscape and my living within it as an allegory displayed meanings that could be understood easily, but also disclosed meanings that were vague or layered with sediments that language builds up over time and in various settings. This was an acknowledgment that language holds potential for many meanings, but the metaphor of a town has meanings that are present to us in the here and now. All at once, this town is many individuals, yet at the same time it is something collective, a shared experience, akin to an event of understanding (Gadamer, 1999, p. 525) encompassing in its moment, tradition and self-understanding. Bringing together the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras, the town enables convergences of space and time. In this place, Aboriginal people, convicts, free settlers, farmers, servant-maids, teachers, business people, professionals, artists, landed gentry, have lived their lives, survived, worked hard, struggled, raised families, survived, prospered and passed away. Through personal histories, symbols and practices, this town has been made and re-made, and the individuals within it have become and become again, endlessly, in all manner of form, differently but always similar.

This town, Richmond, in one moment, can tell the story of the island of Tasmania. It can speak, in précised form, of the history of this state, one of enduring relationships

between Aboriginal people and the rugged environment, brought to an end by their dispossession. It can tell of the displacement of the rejects of Anglo-Celtic society, and of two centuries of their economic, social and personal struggles, interspersed with the comings and goings of various immigrants and emigrants. The policy and politics of global events also had their effect on this town and this state, such as the second world war, during which my mother remembers not going to school for a whole year as “the war was at a bad time”, and the old fellow who lived next door came to suffer the effects of shellshock for over fifty years. In more recent times, the Franklin dam debate, resolved in 1983 by an interventionist Commonwealth Government, opened up an environmental political/policy that has fractured Tasmanian society for generations. Yet local focuses, values and desires often pushed the rest of the world away. As a small society at the fringes of Australia, recent, if somewhat tenuous, prosperity has brought with it all the tensions of a place that has been undergoing significant change. Richmond faces ongoing struggles to retain its heritage, while trying to ensure its citizens have both the benefits of its growth and do not become mere servants to new masters of economic superiority.

In this town, each person who understands themselves as a part of the town brings their own values and beliefs about what the future of the town should be. For each one, they give the town, and its ongoing life, different meanings as they take different perspectives. Key questions bring different answers to each one. Should a bypass go around the town and take traffic volume away from the heritage-listed bridge? Is the town primarily a tourist town or a farming centre? Is it okay for aerial sprays to be used next to the Coal River? How might children of families that have lived for generations within the town be able to afford houses within the town boundary if the purchases of non-locals, with their deep pockets, keep the real estate prices booming? Are the willows on the riverbank environmental weeds or heritage plants? When is a sign outside a business suitable and when is it at odds with the streetscape? Who decides, how and what purposes should underpin these decisions? Yet the town and the landscape in which it is placed hold potential for many other significant meanings. These can be displayed, concealed and then re-emerge as the town goes through an ongoing and dynamic interchange of people, place and time. For all of these reasons, the allegory of the landscape, with its attendant metaphors, was a useful and potent one. Yet it also could mask other useful understandings I might have of the interpreting of policy. I have not imagined a future for this town. In a similar fashion, *Learning Together* presented as a vision for the future, but did not engage the past and its issues.

Consistent with the metaphor of a LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING, invariably I have described the intent, purposes and context of my study using spatial metaphors. I have sketched out a landscape within which my study took place, including a town that could

represent the structure and complexity of a policy. I have mapped out methodological pathways that I could follow and vantage points from which I might interpret *Learning Together*, accompanied by some well-known philosophers. The metaphors I have used, and their entailments, have been consistent with how the field of policy analysis and the concomitant world of politics are, in general, portrayed as being spatial. *Learning Together* was a policy that was written by a government within a sphere of politics defined by space. That is, it represented a certain truthfulness about education that was delimited spatially by the sovereign state of Tasmania, one of the six federated states of Australia.

The metaphor of a LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING has been a means of symbolising my situatedness in the interpreting of *Learning Together*. This relatively static landscape is crossed by pathways, and, as an interpreter, I moved around that landscape taking opportunities to follow pathways, or forge them, and took in differing aspects and vistas using varied philosophical perspectives. I took opportunities prompted by questions about my reflections on the purpose and the nature of my study, and by Foucault's (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer's (1999) insights along the way.

Interpretive moments

The metaphor of MOMENTS was also helpful in enlivening my interpreting as it gave me the possibilities of seeing my interpreting temporally rather than remaining spatially static. Towns, like policies, are located in times as well as spaces. The concept of a "town" is complex, as it is able to represent social, environmental and physical interrelationships of people and objects in events, occurrences or experiences that happen within specific places over particular periods of time. The landscape of a town can alter over time and the relationships within that town may change through generations, lifetimes and eras. It is possible to draw an analogy between the metaphor TOWN and the term *policy*. Policies also map complex interrelationships between individuals and objects, and involve temporal and spatial considerations that bound their scope of intention and action.

A town differs physically over time and such differences affect how we can describe the nature of the activity that takes place within and about it. What happened in my town 160 years ago was significantly different to what might be occurring in the personal and social lives of the inhabitants in the present. Indeed, how those events were understood in the 1860s may have little or no meaning today. Further, the temporal implications of the allegory are starkly illustrated by considering that Richmond, as a

formally constituted town, did not exist prior to 1823, just as policy analysis was only emerging as a field in the 1950s (Lasswell, 1951).

The convict era gives an example of how time and space influence the meanings that a policy might have and how this policy is understood. The period referred to in Australian history as the transportation era arose from a policy (Hughes, 1988) of the British Government during the early 1800s to send convicted felons from its overcrowded prisons to its far-flung colonies in Australia. As an era, the policy was implemented beginning in 1787 then ceased almost a hundred years later. This policy has been the subject of much historical and social interpretation at that time and since and it has been re-constructed in biographies and family histories by the descendants of convicts in recent years (Alexander, 2006). My own family history *Go ... be fruitful and multiply* is an example of such a text (Parkes & French, 1991). How this policy has been interpreted over time has changed. In the same way, the penal buildings, in which convict ancestors of mine were incarcerated, have been replaced by new versions of “model” prisons to hold wrongdoers. For example, when the new Risdon Prison Complex was opened near Hobart, Tasmania, in 2006, it was heralded as a new era in correctional management, providing Tasmania with the opportunity to further reduce the crime rate (Lennon, 2006). Original sites, such as the Female Factory Women’s prison in South Hobart hold interpretive displays for a different captured audience of tourists. The policy of transportation had various meanings during the period that it was actively applied, depending upon one’s association with it, which could range from convict, guard, squatter to political activist. These meanings were neither static nor uncontested as is clear from the shift in that policy over a fifty-year period in the early 1800s and the intense debate over the cessation of transportation during the 1850s. The policy continued to have meanings as the lives of the convicted and their fellow Tasmanians have played out over the following hundred and fifty years. In my family’s case, a convict who became a ticket of leave man eventually became free, yet he continued to sleep in the barn, being fed out the back door of my great grandparent’s home. Further, one part of my family conveniently ignored a convict ancestor, and his branch of the family tree, out of shame.

In this study, the temporality of the metaphor of TOWN and LANDSCAPE allow meanings of *Learning Together* to be evoked which are not easily portrayed spatially. It became my intention as this study progressed to further explore the temporal context of my interpreting of *Learning Together* and, in the allegory of my LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING, I found metaphoric references to the past, present and future of the TOWN. These references prompted me to consider how I and my accompanying theorists were influenced by various eras of thought and sensibility (Davis, Sumara & Luce-Kaplar, 2000, pp. 157-158). I could see how shifting mindsets might impact on knowledge,

beliefs, values and ultimately identity. Just as varied meanings of the policy of transportation can be interpreted through changing spatial and temporal contexts, so can the meanings ascribed to and understandings gained from a policy diverge.

“Policymaking, even under conditions of stability, includes three habitual, semiautomatic processes that reflect a continuous intertwining of past, present and future” (Abolafia, 2004, p. 351).

In changing times and with a burgeoning of perspectives, the metaphor of MOMENT is vital. It signifies an intermingling of the spatial and temporal dimensions of meaning, opening up space and time in order to provoke new insights and shift to new understandings. My use of the allegory A LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING enables the telling of new stories. It is used to show how we might understand over and over again, in different times and spaces where interpretive opportunities are available to us, without our understandings becoming homogenised in the liquidity of these times (Bauman, 2000), yet with the possibility of making meaning enduring. The transforming town and its transforming individuals are both within and beyond its physical space and time, yet they can be understood in relation to horizons that are the physical and temporal site of the town. These horizons hold the potential for interpretive moments, through which meanings may emerge, converge and diverge. These momentarily bring together my “self” with others, and allow the sharing of personal horizons of understanding with the horizons of others.

The person who chooses himself/herself in his/her freedom cannot place the onus on outside forces, on the cause and effect nexus. It is his/her interpreting or reading of the situation that discloses possibility; and yet there is no guarantee that the interpreting is correct. If there is proof to be found, it is only in the action undertaken; and the action itself closes off alternatives. There is always, as in the Robert Frost poem, a “road not taken”.

(Greene, 1988, p. 5)

Just as my imagined world, portrayed as a LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING, is at times inadequate to capture the ideas of this study in metaphor, my interpretive journey has taken place within time and space which has been undergoing complex and irretrievable change. Therefore I have needed to consider how temporal and spatial understandings influence my “coming to consciousness”. For example, the metaphors that I used heuristically from Gadamer’s (1999) writing offered a spatial interpretive frame comprising a HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE, FORESTRUCTURES OF UNDERSTANDINGS and HORIZONS. The metaphors used from Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995), particularly PANOPTICON, are similar in taking up a spatial orientation. In the same way, landscape and paths are not sufficient to make sense of the fluid, shifting nature of

understanding in my study. There is not only a need for a new place to stand and look from in a LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING but also a need to create space for new MOMENTS in time to interpret meanings again and understand differently.

If meanings are considered through a more temporal orientation, how I understand the making of meaning also changes. The making of meaning becomes an opportunity, not for epistemological certainty, one solid reality or rigid values, but where partial, locatable, critical knowledges can be recognised (Haraway, 1991, p. 117), plurality of perspectives can be valued, and different understandings can open new possibilities. That is why becoming wide-awake to the dilemmas of meaning, and conscious of more possibilities, involves more profoundly understanding the spatial and temporal contexts in which meaning arises.

Questions of time and space became central to my thinking and writing of this study because orientations to time and space that I assumed have influenced the epistemological and ontological foundations in which my interpreting has occurred. As I have noted, these assumptions are evident in the metaphors used within my allegory of a landscape of learning. A key finding of this study is that interpretive acts are always situated in time and space and to interpret is to make meaning within a context that has both temporal and spatial dimensions. Time and space were concerns integral to the interpretive stances of each theorist with whom I engaged in my study. Gadamer (1999, p. 309) regarded understanding as an event that involved becoming historically conscious of the hermeneutical situation within which we find ourselves, and of which we can never be outside (p. 301). Foucault raised awareness of the historical contexts of truth and knowledge. Space and time were means by which lives were regulated and how individuals were subject to knowledge/power (Danaher, Schirato & Webb, 2000, pp. 50-51). In this study, the alternative conceptions of time and space of each theorist allowed me to reconsider taken-for-granted epistemological and ontological assumptions. Both trace back to Heidegger (1962) who used the notion of *Dasein* as what it meant to be a person, a “being-in-the-world” (p. 147). A person cannot be/exist (*Dasein*) in any sense removed from their connectedness to the world (Young, 2003, pp. 110-112). I can understand myself as an interpreter who is a practically oriented “being-in-the-world”, able to thrust toward and engage with the world (Greene, 1978, p. 15). In interpreting for meaning in the present, I consider meanings that are vague or concealed from the past, while at all times being oriented toward future possibilities. This gives an ethic of purpose to how I understand the interrelationship of space and time within this study, summed up by Pirsig (1993) as “the most moral activity of all is the creation of space for life to move forward” (p. 430).

My study of interpreting has shown me that an interpreting of a policy can be understood as a series of interpretive moments in which an interpreter might become more conscious. The metaphor of a MOMENT offers up this different way of seeing the interpreting of policy. This use of the term *moment* can also be traced to the work of Heidegger (1962) and may be understood as the same as his term *Augenblick* or “the moment of vision” (p. 387). By this, Heidegger referred to “the resolute rapture with which *Dasein* is carried away to whatever possibilities and circumstances are encountered in the Situation as possible objects of concern, but a rapture which is *held* in resoluteness”. A *moment of vision* is one in which we are resolute, or projected toward understanding. It holds for us an “authentic” future, where “existence can even gain mastery over the everyday” (p. 436). Thus, a *moment of vision* is authentic not merely when it is in the present but also when there is intentionality, a “that with which it is concerned” (p. 337) beyond everydayness. It enables me to move from interpreting my world in terms of the past and the present and orient myself to thinking of the future. *Moments* with Foucault’s (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer’s (1999) insights have enabled me, as a “being-in-the world”, *Dasein*, to see anew and understand the complexity of *Learning Together*. The association with vision through Heidegger’s (1962) use of the term is not intended to emphasise an empiricist connotation, but is used metaphorically as Heidegger employed it.

The metaphor of MOMENT assisted me in understanding how my interpreting of *Learning Together* had spatial and temporal qualities. I chose moments with theorists in which I was guided, questioned and encouraged to new possibilities. In a MOMENT with Gadamer (1999), I could see my self-understandings and the prejudgments on which these were based. In a MOMENT with Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995), I was forced to consider power through appraisal of language and social practices. In each of these MOMENTS, I could see an ethereal Heidegger (1962), whose work and teaching mark the place and time at which the theorists’ individual thinking connects in the dim past of the previous century, before they branched off on their differing philosophic paths. Through Foucault’s (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995) and Gadamer’s (1999) ideas, I could regard *Learning Together* as an interpretive MOMENT, situated in space and time, in which I might “come to a critical consciousness” (Greene, 1978, p. 14). MOMENTS were metaphors for encounters between an interpreter and interpreted. Interpretive moments offered possibilities.

I was able to employ new metaphors made possible through Bauman’s “liquid modernity” (2000, p. 2) that can be applied to the allegory of the town. I am able to see the allegory differently. I used the metaphor LIQUID MODERNITY to show how interpretive MOMENTS in contemporary times can be dynamic and complex. That is each MOMENT can

reflect unique spatial and temporal circumstances, as well as be influenced by established and emerging theoretical positions. I could incorporate into my allegory, the metaphor of a river with all its fluidity, in which glimpses of meaning are open to us, then might disappear, only to re-appear later. A river endures over time but is ever-changing. This casts MOMENTS as tentative, fragmentary, tenuous, loud, categorical, swirling and passing, where what may have been may be no longer and what might be visible becomes no longer visible at the same time. For Aoki (2003, p. 1), that is “in the space between”, and following Greene, the space between allows us to an ambivalence that can “move to the edgy edges of representational discourse” (p. 3). MOMENTS may allow fuller insights into potential interpretive truthfulness. It may also be that new metaphors come to mind and that they offer differing meanings. Understanding *Learning Together* through the metaphor of MOMENTS may mean that both of these are possible.

This study has been a MOMENT of coming to consciousness (Greene, 1978, p. 15). Maxine Greene, through her invitation to see my world as a landscape, and at the same time, to come to consciousness, has enabled me to traverse across old and new LANDSCAPES, and through MOMENTS that mark how I understand interpreting. Greene expanded on Heidegger’s (1962, p. 147) call for each of us to strive to be an authentic “being-in-the-world” through “philosophising” (Heidegger, 2001b, p. 7). Greene (1978, pp. 14-15) appeals for us to come to “consciousness through a commitment to engage in the world” and to guard against “mystification” (p. 19). This warning against mystification has been particularly pertinent in this study because of entwined relationships between policy and politics and also because of my personal involvement in the development of *Learning Together*, the policy I interpreted. Therefore I considered how I became conscious of the manner in which I interpreted this policy. In seeking my consciousness of policy interpreting, I needed to find ways to become “awake” to other possibilities beyond those I perceived myself. Greene suggested that we could perceive consciousness as an engagement with the world, an enlivened and enlivening thrusting toward the world (p. 15). Through living one’s life, aspects of the world are opened to each of us. Consciousness (learning) involves three distinct processes: disclosure, reconstruction and generation. These were the bringing of the self to the object, the interpreting which brings something into being and the going beyond which created imaginative possibilities (Greene, 1971, p. 255). Consciousness would not be achieved through inwardness, but must be achieved through engagement in the world and in reflexive thought on that engagement. This gave a rationale to my study of interpreting of policy in the way I did. The interpreting of *Learning Together* was a MOMENT for me to imagine, intuit, remember, believe, judge, conceive and perceive what this policy might mean. It enabled me “to interpret, to constitute a world” (Greene, 1978, p. 14). Greene

appealed for a translucent view of consciousness, where such interpretations would reveal more clearly our presuppositions and prejudices and therefore require us to go beyond one-dimensional acceptance of intuition, impulsive or technique. “Each act of consciousness has an object: consciousness is always *of* something; it is characterized by intentionality” (p. 14).

My intentions were therefore shaped by orientations that were of concern to me. With *Learning Together*, I might perceive my interests as those in the “common good”. Yet, could I be ignoring other unspoken interests that I held, or, assuming my interests, would uphold the common good, perhaps without basis? Attempting to apprehend such interests, according to Greene (1978), can be understood as perspectival grasping. “Consciousness as perspectival grasping is our way of encountering the natural and human world” (p. 15). Perspectival grasping might also be comprehended as akin to Heidegger’s (1962) fore-having. Both have profound implications for interpretive study, where understanding is realised and re-realised through multiple revelations, illuminations or elucidations, or other, depending on one’s interpretive framework.

No-one’s self is ready-made; each of us has to create a self by choice of action, action in the world. Such action, if it is to be meaningful, must be informed by critical reflection, because the one who is submerged, who cannot see, is likely to be caught in stasis, unable to move. But the kinds of choices that are necessary can only be made when there are openings, when appropriate social conditions exist.

(Greene, 1978, p. 17)

Consciousness of the interpretive possibilities of a policy would be orientated by an individual’s varied perspectives in relation to it. The issue an interpreter faced is that differing political belief or other doctrines might orient interpretation of that policy in ways that accorded with that doctrine. In the case of *Learning Together*, my political and professional involvement meant that I saw it from perspectives that arose from my histories in relation to it. These histories arose from my involvement in its writing, my multiple memories from discussions about it, how I lived its implementation and from my ongoing interpreting and re-interpreting of it. It is for this reason that an interpreter should actively choose to take up differing philosophical perspectives as a way of becoming aware of different meanings that a policy might have and the varied understandings that individuals might gain from these meanings, rather than endorse only those which reflect their own perspective. A wider set of understandings is made available, yet such understandings require suspension of biases and ideological commitments, and examination of taken-for-granted interests. An interpretive path such as this may not be an easy one, as it may make the interpreter subject to that which Greene (1978, p. 13) referred to as “the pains of thought”. In my case, it revealed my political and personal

situatedness in way I did not fully appreciate. “When people construct imaginary worlds, they often allow them to ‘substitute for an actual achievement which involves the pains of thought’ ” (Dewey, 2010, p. 404). Greene (1978) entreated interpreters to follow Dewey and engage in “the pain of thought”, to avoid the imaginative creation of personal worlds, the “castles in the air” spoken of by Dewey (Greene, 1978, p. 13). Greene called for willing engagement in critical dialogue with others that may cause intellectual or other discomfort, or even pose threats to our well-being and safety. The sort of life that excluded “the pains of thought” left individuals open to new kinds of oppression. She entreated individuals to cope with any such manipulation or conditioning that could arise from our response to oppression by becoming cognisant of what was happening, rather than taking “refuge in one’s own inwardness” as this may “disarm oneself as a social being” (p. 14). “Under such circumstances, can the self remain inviolable? Or does a kind of inviolability have to be achieved – through critical reflection, in the pain of thought?” (p. 14).

It was crucial that I asked myself how my interpreting of a policy excluded the “pains of thought”? In my interpreting, did I construct my own “imaginary worlds” without some philosophical reflection and beyond question? Was I unaware of how a policy might be understood by others or how individuals might be subject to new kinds of oppression through it? If a policy enabled me to constitute a world, could I unravel the imagining of such worlds and challenge what I took for granted? By intending to be conscious, I had a clear rationale for my choice of an interpretive approach for policy. If I was to come to deeper understandings, I needed take up alternative perspectives and seek to understand how I was mystified or made subject to certain interests. At the time and place of my interpreting in this study, I chose perspectives that could display other meanings to me; meanings related to power, self and language. This approach resembles a “touchstone” approach to theory development (Yaxley, 1991, p. 2), because of the manner in which it allows for elaboration and extension of existing theoretical positions.

Possibilities for policy

The “interpretive approach to policy” that I have developed and the interpretive approach applied to *Learning Together* have potential for interpreting many policies of governments in a late modern era. It would be possible to reflect similarly on a policy on health provision by government, such as *Tasmania’s Health Plan* (Department of Health and Human Services Tasmania, 2007). Such a policy was created out of the institutional context of a state government health department, involved a powerful use of language in

texts that relate to it and could be understood differently by community members and stakeholders.

I developed an interpretive approach which considered power a permanent possibility (Kögler, 1999, p. 311), yet was not captured by the immobilising negativity of some critiques of power. I also sought to understand how meanings given to power, politics and policy interrelate. What I have come to acknowledge is that understandings of power may change over time. This requires that in thinking about power relations when interpreting a policy, we need to consider that the meanings we give to concepts such as *power* may be tentative. In the same way, self may also be considered a permanent possibility, with “possibility” not determining that self is certain or fixed. Again, as understandings of self change, so should be how we think about self in terms of our interpretations of a policy. Further, as understandings of language alter, so will the way an interpreter thinks about language – in terms of interpreting a policy – need to be dynamic. If I had undertaken this study in the 1980s, at the time that Lakoff and Johnson wrote *Metaphors we live by* (1980), my use of metaphors as a strategy for interpreting would have been potentially very different.

Greene (1978) suggested not one way of being, but for us to ask why we do things. Her interest was that an educator’s concerns were as profound as those of any philosopher. She wanted each to be inquiring, to contemplate the possible and imagine what might contribute to a more democratic and just world. She asked that we imagine our own possibilities and what we might do both now and for the future. At this time, when the pragmatic seems to dominate over the ethical in the policy domain, as in others, her words continue to question what might be and what should be, rather than what is. Greene’s (1978) “questing” forms the background to my study into educational policy-making: “Clearly, it takes critical reflection upon our own realities to capture such awareness. It requires a degree of wide-awakeness too many people avoid. Much depends on our ability to be cognizant of our standpoints and to be open to the world” (p. 17).

To be philosophically reflective required that I dig deeply into my understandings of interpreting and find ways to understand policy. I had to go beyond any surface meanings that were be evident to me and take up differing perspectives, represented by interpretive MOMENTS of coming to consciousness. My search for meaning followed the approach of Kögler (1999, p. 19) in unifying “pre-understanding, interpretive consciousness and language”, a search that was very much situated in my experience of life as interpreter.

However, the approach I use for *Learning Together* is not the only way in which to understand a policy, and my thesis is that interpreting about a policy from varied philosophical perspectives can offer multiple meanings and a rich and trustworthy

understanding. Heidegger (2001b, p. 7) called “philosophizing” our ongoing awakening to conscious thought of “the history that we are ourselves” (Heidegger, 2007, p. 119). We “dwell” by addressing ourselves to something, by seeking to interpret it, or cope with it (p. 160). This stands in opposition to sleeping, or a lack of awareness of *Dasein*, our being-in-the-world. Dwelling is what allows us to form worlds for ourselves and in the presence of others (McNeill, 2006, p. 33). Consciousness arises from the ongoing interpreting that is enabled by the tranquillised self-assurance of “being-not-at-home” challenged by “being-in-the-world”. In this way, “being-in-the world” is always uncertain, concerned and anxious (Heidegger, 1962, p. 233)

Heidegger’s role in this study was as a predecessor on the philosophical pathways of Gadamer (1999) and Foucault (1980, 1985, 1986a, 1990, 1991, 1995). His works served as signposts towards questions of language, experience and thought considered by each theorist in their own work and explored here in relation to policy. In thinking with Heidegger, I confirmed my intention to go beyond an analytical examination of a policy document and ground my study existentially. My questions were not merely “What might a policy mean?” (Yanow, 1993, p. 41), but also “What might the interpreting of a policy enable me to be as a person?” and “What worlds might the interpreting of a policy enable me to create for myself and others?” This reflected Heidegger’s (1962) “being-in-the-world” as an authentic epistemological, ontological and axiological stance. Through interpreting a policy, it has enabled me to see that we might understand more and differently about ourselves, our identities, histories, our present and future contexts, our shared understandings and our desires for others and ourselves. My study into the interpreting of policy was undertaken within a highly individual sphere of contemplation. It drew significantly on personal values and beliefs about policy, politics, learning, education, schooling, identity, democracy, community and culture. Yet it unavoidably prompted me to bring into consciousness my authentic experience of the “facticity of life” (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 66). As such, my interpreting of *Learning Together* is the interpreting of “everydayness” and “uncanniness” relating to my lived experiences of this policy. By bringing factual life into my consciousness, I was able to understand the history that was myself, dwell in my LANDSCAPE OF LEARNING and form worlds in the presence of others.

Rethinking my allegory

The picture of my town I have painted for you is highly visual. It describes the landscape in terms of rivers, bridges, hills, roads and paths. It provides an eagle’s eye view of a richly embroidered spatial representation of a place that is meant, within its metaphorical space, to represent my landscape of learning and provide insights into how we might understand education and learning as a community

(landscapes of learning in general). It details all that is present to that eye. In this thesis, the town becomes a metonym for Tasmanian community.

As we stand and view any landscape, it is never possible to determine that what we see is the same as others see. We may not know that each time we look at a scene, if what we see is the same thing we have viewed before. Each day when I look at the Richmond Bridge from my side fence I am nagged by vague doubts about the constancy of the panorama I see in front of me. While this view has changed in small ways since I have lived in my house (for example, a new coping stone where a car smashed into the bridge one night, removal of willow trees in the riverbank), in the past, those who stood in exactly the same place as me may have seen quite different things. For some, there would have been no bridge, for others, the bridge may represent a utilitarian river crossing, and yet others, the site of cruelty and hard labour or an artefact of European invasion. Each individual would bring a different situatedness to their viewing.

My allegory now evokes absences – absences that conjure up more metaphors, narratives and meanings. Rivers suggest fluidity, bridges evoke movement across them, hills are only described as hills if we see them as enabling us to be oriented in relation to them, roads are driven on, and paths imply walking. My town also is a place in which people live and relate to each other in countless ways – a place where people lay their paths by walking. Lacking from my interpreting of it is the language of the people, their whispering, oral histories, conversations in the street, letters and newsletters, arguments at dinner parties, sign and signals, their texts and textuality. These absences point to historical contexts that may have been but are no longer visible, to a historicity that is not displayed, to a set of discursive formations that are not foregrounded and to narratives that are not told. What I have sought along the way is a means to not only see differently to uncover meanings that are vague, but to find ways to recognise what is absent.

Taking in a sweeping vista

In this study, I have tried to understand my interpreting through an allegory of a landscape. I have done so because I have needed to go elsewhere in my mind. In re-imagining my town and its surrounds, I have come to understand interpreting as a MOMENT. It represents more than a spatial metaphor for interpreting, as MOMENT engages the temporality of my understandings. They may be instant, brief or enduring. My living experience of a policy can be understood as a MOMENT, in the ongoing project of interpreting in which any who undertake philosophy briefly pause.

This study proposes that that the trustworthy interpreting of a policy requires truthful disclosures of its meanings, including those meanings that may be concealed by being absent or vague. This includes understanding of how various philosophical frames we bring to the interpreting of a policy can be potent in revealing meaning. In “late modern” times, critical and hermeneutic frames enable understandings of a policy that are beyond simplistic interpretations of any political or bureaucratic text. They enabled me to form a particular interpretive approach, one that went beyond assumptions about any reality that a policy might seem to present (Yanow, 1996, p. 3). That approach focused on

revealing power and allowing silences to speak (p. 229), as well as making sense of our self and how we engage with others. It can be understood as a philosophically interpretive approach that acknowledges the complexities of how we live in a “liquid modern” (Bauman, 2000) world. In a search for meaningful existence, we ought always strive to think deeply and act ethically. It is through philosophising (Heidegger, 2001a) that we can “come to consciousness” and be “wide awake” (Greene, 1978) about the meaningfulness of a policy.

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Science and Mathematics Education Centre

Understanding Policy: An interpretive moment

Volume 2: Appendices

Lesley D. French

Contents

- A *Learning Together: A vision for education, training and information into the 21st century*
- B *Learning Together: Draft proposals for education, training and information into the 21st century*
- C Extracts of Table of metaphors scanned from *Learning Together*
- D Personal account of involvement in the writing and implementation of the *Learning Together* policy
- E List of Australian education policies and curriculum documents by state and territories

Appendix A

Learning Together: A vision for education, training and information into the 21st century

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a vision for education,
training and information
into the 21st century



Tasmania

Learning Together

A vision for education, training and information into the 21st century

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learning together



TOREWARD

Ever since my own school days in the Government system, I have been very passionate about the quality of Tasmania's public education. As Minister I am proud to celebrate the many achievements of our Government schools, libraries and TAFE Tasmania, and I openly acknowledge the excellence that I know occurs in our public system every single day. *Learning Together* reaffirms the principle of this Labor Government that our public education, training and information systems are our number one priority.

From the first day I became Minister for Education I stated that my vision for our public education, training and information systems in this State is to achieve a world-class system. I suspect that many people believe that this is an overly ambitious vision, but I am confident that we can achieve it.

Six months after my appointment as Minister, I was approached by a teacher who told me that she believed that, since its election, this Government had shown a real commitment to education and that, as a teacher, she felt valued by that. This comment re-confirmed my own determination to improve our education, training and information systems. I believe they are already first class and, with a little effort, we can strive that little bit further in excellence to world class.

Learning Together is about being clear in what we value, having a vision about what is possible and translating this vision into goals and achievable strategies. To put it another way, *Learning Together* is the bridge that we will build to take us from first class to world class.

Learning Together will also underpin *Tasmania Together*, a plan which is developed by the whole Tasmanian community and which is based on their ideas and dreams, rather than being imposed by Government.

The draft goals contained in *Tasmania Together* provide the broad framework for all Government agencies in the State and *Learning Together* provides the finer detail of strategies to be used by the Department of Education to realise our vision of a world-class system for this State.

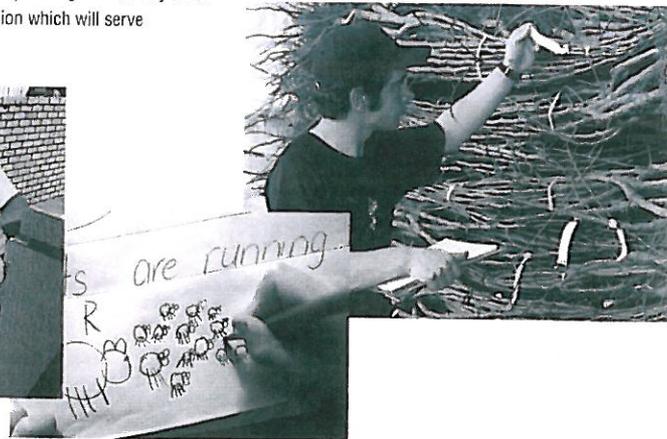
The past eighteen months have seen substantial consultation take place in order to develop the goals and strategies to assist us in achieving our world-class status. I am extremely grateful to the individuals and organisations that took the time to provide feedback and suggestions. Many of the responses confirmed the success of most of our present initiatives, but they also challenged us to build on our successes and be more creative and radical in our planning.

However, what came through even more clearly in the comments were passion, enthusiasm and optimism for the future of education in this State, coupled with unfailing commitment and dedication. It is these qualities that we are striving to support and nurture most of all.

The many responses to the draft document have significantly contributed to this final version. It is through those responses that we have been able to identify:

- An overall vision.
- What's important in our system – our values and principles that will guide us in whatever we do.
- A set of goals.
- Our strategies that will lead us to achieve our goals.
- A range of ways to measure our success and check our progress.

Realistically I know that the creation of a world-class education, training and information system isn't going to happen overnight. While I am confident that in the remaining term of this Government we can make a substantial start on many of the initiatives described here, others will require longer-term planning. That's why it's a long-term strategy for education which will serve successive Governments.



For the same reason *Learning Together* is very much a 'living' and evolving document. It means that we acknowledge the rapidly changing world we live in and recognise that what may be appropriate in the next two years may not be a viable proposition in five or ten years' time. The *Learning Together* Council which we are proposing will ensure that not only are we going to put many of the initiatives into effect but we will also consult with members of the education community to provide advice on new strategies to deal with changing times.

I am proud to have overseen the process of developing *Learning Together*. I would like to acknowledge the contributions of senior staff from my department to the initial development of *Learning Together*. I am particularly indebted to members of my personal staff who have collectively devoted hundreds of hours of hard work and energy to producing this final document. I take great pride in now presenting this vision statement and detailed planning document to the people of Tasmania and I look forward to working with you towards a world-class future

Paula Wriedt

Hon. Paula Wriedt, MHA
Minister for Education



Overview	5
Lifelong learning	6
Our vision	8
Our goals	10
How we will achieve our goals	11
Goal One – Responsive and continually improving services	11
1.1 <i>Learning Together</i> – build and sustain a world-class education system	11
1.2 Our teachers and staff are the foundation of a world-class education, training and information system.	12
1.3 Strengthen leadership opportunities for all educators	13
1.4 Empower schools to be flexible and to form genuine partnerships with their communities	14
1.5 Reinforce the Department of Education as a quality, high-performance organisation	15
Goal Two – Enriching and fulfilling learning opportunities	16
2.1 Establish a curriculum that develops our students' knowledge, skills and confidence	16
2.2 Create a comprehensive post-compulsory education strategy for Tasmania	17
2.3 Actively encourage lifelong learning	19
2.4 Link skills development and training to Tasmanian economic opportunities	20
2.5 Enhance the community value of TAFE	21
Goal Three – Safe and inclusive learning environments	22
3.1 Ensure that all childcare services, schools and training institutions are supportive and safe places	22
3.2 Ensure that students who are 'at risk' have the opportunity to participate	22
3.3 Ensure that our learning organisations successfully target the acquisition of literacy skills	23
3.4 Ensure that all learning organisations successfully include all students	24

GOVERNMENT

learning
together

Goal Four – An information-rich community with access to global and local resources	25
4.1 Develop world-class facilities and programs for online learning	25
4.2 Promote Tasmania's culture and heritage to the world and preserve our documentary heritage	26
4.3 Enable individuals and communities to access information	26
4.4 Enhance community education by linking the Department's community learning providers	27
Goal Five – A valued and supported education workforce	28
5.1 Recognise the professional status of teachers and the teaching profession	28
5.2 Improve communication with all employees and extend opportunities for consultation	29
World class	30
Report Framework	33
Glossary	35



OVERVIEW

learning
together

February 2000 saw the release of a draft document that proposed a vision for Tasmanian public education, training and information systems.

The Tasmanian education community and the wider community were asked for their responses. Many responses were received from groups and individuals.

It is from these responses that this document, *Learning Together*, has been developed.

It details:

A **vision** for our public education, training and information system

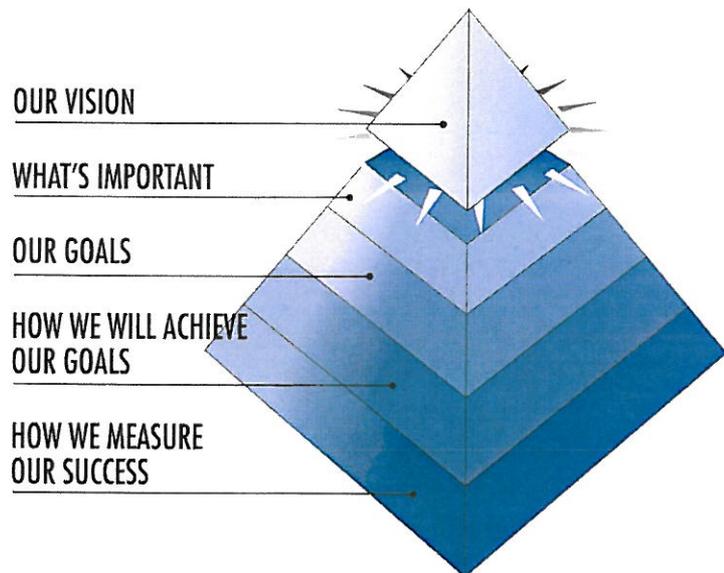
A set of **values** which underpin and drive our goals and new initiatives

A set of **goals** that align with the vision and values

A grouping of **new initiatives** that grows out of the goals

A variety of **ways to measure** our success.

The following diagram shows the relationship between each of the elements.



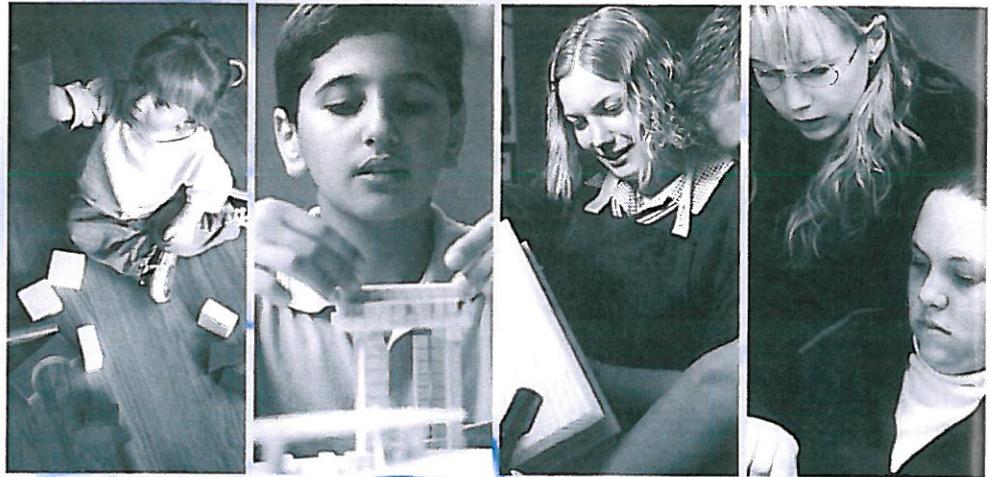
learning together

CHILDCARE

PRIMARY
SCHOOLING

SECONDARY
SCHOOLING

COLLEGE
EDUCATION



THE ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF

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VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION
& TRAINING

TAFE

ADULT
EDUCATION

LIBRARY &
INFORMATION
SERVICES



EDUCATION IN

ng learning

OUR VISION

learning
together



Tasmania will have a world-class education, training and information system which matches the best anywhere.



What's important

As we enter the 21st century we have started to move out of the industrial age and into the information age. The information age holds the promise of a world vastly different from our current one. It has been likened to a starburst.

We know that the information age is likely to be very complex and diverse and possibly unpredictable. For many of us the description of the information age is both alarming and exciting. We feel a tension: we don't want to lose those things that we value in our present age but we also want to improve the world in which we all live. What will help us to resolve this tension is education.

In developing a world-class public education, training and information system we can keep and refine those things that we value while we also improve the world around us.

The responses that were received concerning the draft of *Learning Together* have enabled the identification of those things that we value. In turn these values drive the changes and initiatives that the document describes now.

So what is it that we value? In this new world, what are the values that underpin what we do?

In a world-class education, training and information system we value:

People

We put people first.

We support people in developing their:

Feelings of self-worth

Creativity

Imagination

Critical thinking

Adaptability

Optimism

Resilience.

We prepare people to live in a new kind of world.

We give people life choices and allow them to make decisions that will help them to control their lives, or ultimately change their world.

We recognise that we are building our future national resources.

Achievement

We have high expectations of ourselves and others.

We make sure that everyone has the opportunity to develop to their full potential at all stages of their life.

We measure how we are progressing in achieving our goals and we report our progress.

We have mutually supportive relationships and partnerships at a community and whole-of-government level.

Flexibility and innovation

We recognise the significance of creative solutions.

We adapt innovative solutions according to local needs.

We encourage, value and celebrate diversity.

Organisation and planning

We are strategic in our planning.

We provide a service that is continually improving and developing.

We ensure that decision-making is informed by consultation.

We make best possible use of our facilities and resources.

The resources are allocated on a basis of equity, efficiency and effectiveness.

We have clear and logical quality-assurance processes.

A fair go

All people have a fair go and are able to access high-quality services, regardless of their personal backgrounds or location.

We meet the needs of all comers, including those with high resource needs.

We demonstrate our genuine commitment to equity.

We provide a safety net that supports and includes anyone who may be at risk of not being able to fully realise their aspirations.

We recognise that a truly democratic and civil society has its roots in the education we can provide.

Our Goals are:

1. Responsive and continually improving services –

that ensure all Tasmanians develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need.

2. Enriching and fulfilling learning opportunities –

that enable people to work effectively and participate in society.

3. Safe and inclusive learning environments –

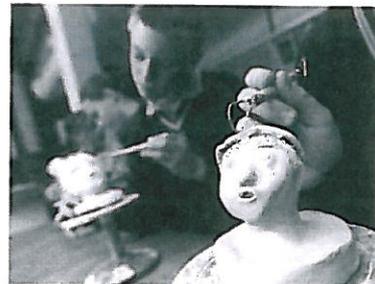
that encourage and support participation in learning throughout all of life.

4. An information-rich community with access to global and local information resources –

so that everyone has the opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, a healthy democracy and a prosperous society.

5. A valued and supported education workforce –

that reflects the importance of teaching as a profession.



How we will
achieve
our goals

1

Tasmanians will have a world-class education, training and information system which matches the best anywhere. We will achieve this through:

Responsive and continually improving services –
that ensure all Tasmanians develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need

1.1 *Learning Together* – build and sustain a world-class education system

Learning Together is the result of a large and wide-ranging consultation process which began earlier this year. It grew out of the *Tasmania Together* project and specifically underpins our education, training and information system. It contains a vision, a set of shared values, a set of goals that align with the vision and values, a range of new initiatives that enable us to continue to build towards the vision, and ways to measure our success.

Implement *Learning Together* initiatives

The input received during *Learning Together's* consultation period has played a valuable part in shaping this document. Confirmation was given to many areas in the draft document while other areas were nominated for 'fine tuning'. Some areas were identified for a major re-emphasis. It is important that the spirit of consultation of *Learning Together* is continued through changing times. We will:

- Establish the *Learning Together* Council. The Council will monitor the implementation of *Learning Together* to maintain our focus on world-class educational practice and ensure that *Learning Together* continues to be a framework that is dynamic, responsive and continually improving.
- Appoint a senior educator with specific responsibility for the initial implementation stages of the initiatives in *Learning Together*, clearing the way for their practical realisation.

Increase access to Government

To enable the education community and the broader community to engage in forums which address educational matters of significance and gain easier access to the Government we will:

- Use web technologies to enable interaction between the Education Minister, the education and training community and the broader community.

1.2 Our teachers and staff are the foundation of a world-class education, training and information system

We value our teachers, other staff and those who aid and support them. We recognise the vital contribution that they make to our schools and to students' learning. It is primarily through the quality of our teachers and those who work alongside them that students' learning will be enhanced. All staff require encouragement and support to meet the constant challenges that teaching presents. We believe that pre-service training needs to be strengthened and needs to include input from classroom practitioners. New teachers in particular need the support, nurturing and skill development that experienced teachers can give them.

Provide support to beginning teachers

Beginning teachers require support and assistance so that they develop the necessary skills and confidence as quickly as possible. From 2001 we will support and assist beginning teachers by:

- Providing a minimum of 2 hours a week release time for all first-year teachers to enable them to work with experienced teachers and undertake planning.
- Providing all beginning teachers with an information and induction package relevant to their District.
- Providing financial support to pre-service teachers so that they can undertake practice teaching in rural and isolated areas.
- Working with the University of Tasmania to ensure that the pre-service preparation of teachers includes opportunities to study and experience:
 - effective behaviour support strategies that are widely used in school communities;
 - inclusive practices that are used by outstanding teachers when working with students with disabilities; and
 - mentoring by practising teachers.

Support teachers in developing their professional knowledge and skill

The areas in which teachers need to be skilled are constantly evolving. Our ever-changing world also makes new demands on both students and teachers. Our understanding of how we can best handle these changes takes time to develop. To ensure that teachers strengthen their existing skills and develop the new skills and underpinning knowledge they need, we will:

- Develop a process that will provide regular feedback to teachers on their work and enhance their professional learning.
- Provide 'Refresher Courses' for teachers who have been out of the workforce for an extended period of time.
- Extend TAFE Tasmania's staff retraining program to teachers involved in VET in Schools and extend its scope for gaining relevant industry experience.

Support the professional learning of administrative and clerical staff

The work of administrative and clerical staff working in the education service is vital in assisting students and teachers. These staff require ongoing professional learning and support. We will:

- Develop a framework so that all non-teaching staff in schools can develop their skills and enhance their career opportunities.

1.3 Strengthen leadership opportunities for all educators

We recognise that quality leadership is the key to the realisation of *Learning Together's* vision of a world-class education, training and information system. Quality leadership is vitally important at both a system and a local level. It allows us to realise our underpinning values and achieve our goals.

Quality leadership is about developing a clear vision of what a desirable future looks like and how people can be supported in achieving that vision. It is also about caring for people, recognising who they are and valuing what they do. Quality leadership inspires people and generates energy, enthusiasm, commitment and courage.

Develop and sustain a culture of professionalism

To support and develop educational leadership, we will:

- Establish the Tasmanian Educational Leaders' Institute (TELI) by amalgamating the Professional Learning Services Branch and the Tasmanian Principals' Institute. The new organisation will form the centre of our professional learning services and provide a professional voice for teachers. It will:
 - engage current and potential educational leaders in professional programs that support innovation and the exchange of ideas;
 - work with teachers who are seeking promotion but do not want to take on the role of a Principal;
 - provide a range of professional learning opportunities tailored to support individual teacher and school needs;
 - conduct forums that enable teachers to explore and discuss professional issues;
 - provide an opportunity for teachers to network;
 - provide professional learning opportunities which support teachers in developing competence;
 - provide certificated courses.
- Establish an Advisory Council, including teacher and Principal representatives, to guide TELI's professional activities.

Encourage potential leaders to take on positions of responsibility

We need to improve the diversity of leadership in schools and campuses and encourage more potential leaders to assume positions of responsibility. We will:

- Improve the process for promotion so that it is fairer and more effective in selecting people who have demonstrated educational leadership in the areas of teaching and learning.
- Establish a formal mentor program in every District to encourage more women to apply for promotable positions.
- Establish a formal mentor program for other targeted groups.

1.4 Empower schools to be flexible and to form genuine partnerships with their communities

In many of our schools, the walls between the classroom and the community have been disappearing. This has often been through technology, through the introduction of VET in Schools work placements, or through individual school-community initiatives. Interaction between the classroom and the community ensures that students have a sense of real-life experience in their learning and that teachers have a wealth of resources on which to draw. The involvement of parents, in particular, supports students, and school facilities have the potential to be a central focus for many communities. In addition, schools will better cater for the changing needs of students when they have greater flexibility in the use of their resources.

Support flexible and innovative school management

We need to support schools with a flexible policy framework that enables them to be enterprising and innovative in building partnerships in their communities. The policy framework needs to be transparent and easily understood by the full range of potential community partners. We will:

- Sponsor pilot schools that propose viable and innovative concepts to redesign their organisational and management arrangements to better incorporate community involvement.
- Develop, in collaboration with principals, Partnership Charters that provide the framework in which schools can establish partnerships with community groups, organisations, businesses or enterprises.
- Develop models and processes to provide schools with flexibility in the deployment and use of a range of resources available to them.

Encourage shared use of school facilities

The range of school facilities within a community often offers the opportunity for resource sharing between education providers, Government agencies, and other service providers. This gives people in the community a connection to the school, whether or not they have children attending it, and gives educators a sense of commitment to the community they serve. We will:

- Support and facilitate schools prepared to work together to provide more innovative services to their communities through sharing resources and responsibilities.
- Assist schools with appropriate support to broker the co-location of services from Local Government, Government agencies and enterprises into school facilities.

Integrate community strengths into school programs

Just as a school can become a focal point for the community, the community can be a rich resource for the school. Technology, in particular, offers an opportunity to draw together much of the community. We will:

- Initiate a project to link every classroom in a pilot school to the Internet, with a secure web page that parents can access for information on homework, class projects and other matters of mutual interest.
- Sponsor and evaluate projects with a view to identifying best practice in school and community partnerships.
- Document and promote innovative projects to inform us about school-community ventures that are currently happening elsewhere and throughout Tasmania.

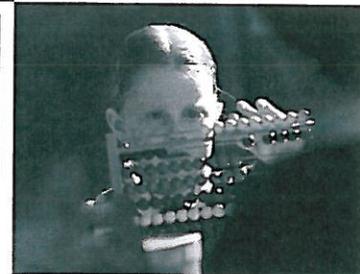
1.5 Reinforce the Department of Education as a quality, high-performance organisation

The Department of Education embraces a large and diverse range of learning organisations. In order to be a world-class education system, it must be committed to quality and high-level performance through world-class management. The Department will need to lead by means of firmer focus on internal performance, educational leadership, strategic planning, achievement of performance goals, provision of high-quality services and partnerships with stakeholders. It must blend high-performance challenges with excellence in leadership and management.

Commit to quality and high-level performance

To achieve this, we will:

- Enter into arrangements with a quality-management organisation and other similar organisations to benchmark performance.
- Provide quality management, including a review and accountability framework.
- Set and report upon benchmarks and targets across the Department of Education, including the use of e-solutions to improve quality and performance.
- Conduct meetings with key community, business and public stakeholder groups on a regular basis, including regional meetings, in order to identify State priorities for research and development in education.
- Publish Departmental strategies on the web to inform the community and Department of Education staff about:
 - what is to be accomplished;
 - how the work of the staff supports the achievement of the goals; and
 - how we are progressing towards the achievement of a world-class education system.



How we will
achieve
our goals

2

Tasmanians will have a world-class education, training and information system which matches the best anywhere. We will achieve this through:

Enriching and fulfilling learning opportunities –
that enable people to work effectively and participate in society

2.1 Establish a curriculum that develops our students' knowledge, skills and confidence

There is overwhelming support for a comprehensive review of the curriculum with wide input from stakeholders. While the value ascribed to particular aspects of the curriculum will vary, it is essential to be clear about our curriculum intentions and not to rush such a crucial process. There will be many views to reconcile in the process. We will need to consult and determine what people believe our purpose to be when establishing a curriculum for the beginning of the 21st century. We will need to consult about the emphasis that needs to be given, for example, to ethical and moral education, enterprise education, affective and social areas of development. Similarly we will need to consult about basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, as well as science, health and physical education, environmental education, and the visual and performing arts. We will need to focus on the importance of learning before school and in the post-compulsory years as well as on the links between the transition stages of learning. All of these are important issues to resolve so that we can develop lifelong learners through our education system.

Provide a curriculum for the 21st century

A comprehensive review of the curriculum, through extensive consultation, will determine what we want our children and young people to know, understand, value and be able to do, as a result of their education. The consultation will include all stakeholder groups and the broader Tasmanian community, and will consider the needs of all students.

The consultation will consider the contribution and value of all aspects of learning, including moral and ethical development, health and physical education, social and interpersonal skills, the visual and performing arts and environmental education, as well as foundation literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills (ICT).

The curriculum will explicitly define content, teaching methods and the assessment framework as three interdependent, essential elements.

We will develop:

- A clear statement of the values-base and the purposes of education;
- A description of what is considered to be essential learning;
- Support for teachers in their curriculum planning and teaching;
- A statement of what we want students to achieve; and
- An assessment guide for teachers to use.

Monitor and report student achievement

We need to monitor and report students' achievements. We will ensure that:

- Parents receive regular feedback on their child's achievement.
- Schools report on their students' achievement at the various levels of schooling.
- There is state-wide reporting of students' achievements at various levels of schooling, in the *Annual School Report*.
- Data is collected, over successive years, on student achievement, so that progress over time can be tracked.

Link childcare programs and schools

It is important that the curriculum incorporates children's learning from birth, both at home and in childcare settings. This means further developing partnerships between schools and childcare providers to link childcare programs and school curriculum. We will:

- Develop a learning guide for the early years through the curriculum consultation. We will ensure that this guide can be easily accessed by parents and early childhood educators.
- Establish and facilitate partnerships between early childhood educators and childcare professionals in local cluster groups.
- Provide professional development for cluster coordinators and mentors who work with early childhood educators and childcare professionals.
- Establish action research projects to determine best practice in facilitating the links between childcare and early childhood education.

2.2 Create a comprehensive post-compulsory education strategy for Tasmania

For our society to develop and to prosper in the global economy, it is important for Tasmanians to continue developing the full potential of their skills and abilities beyond school. For some, this will mean realising personal goals, fulfilling life ambitions and contributing further to our society. Others will gain and improve work skills for employment and will enable Tasmania to compete in a competitive world with fast-changing technologies. For this to occur, our system must provide lifelong learning opportunities that are responsive to Tasmanians' needs, cater for people's learning preferences, and recognise our varying aspirations and vastly different life experiences. While post-compulsory education will continue to be delivered by a number of providers, a comprehensive policy framework will provide accountability in realising goals, leadership in planning, and the achievement of an integrated and coordinated system driven by a shared sense of direction.

Establish an Office of Post-Compulsory Education and Training

Post-school education and training is characterised either by a diverse group of providers who provide specialised services or, in areas of greater activity, by learner choice. To ensure that the total range of opportunities provided will satisfy the full range of expectations of learners, a single policy body is essential. The new Office of Post-Compulsory Education and Training will be established, which will incorporate the functions of the Office of Vocational Education and Training (OVET) and take responsibility for the VET in Schools programs as part of its policy role. It will promote innovation and integration of the delivery system to ensure that it offers individual learning and industry skilling opportunities when they are required. The Office will:

- Provide strategic direction, based on common understandings by all stakeholders, on the purpose and goals of post-compulsory education and training.

- Bring together the planning, funding and regulatory functions of Government bodies in post-compulsory education and training.
- Develop and facilitate the learning 'pathways' that learners require from post-compulsory education and training providers.
- Monitor both learner and industry needs to ensure that timely services are provided and are appropriate to stages of development.

Streamline the qualifications process

A lifelong learner will increasingly gain qualifications from school, university, TAFE and VET-providers, and from learning in the workplace. These qualifications provide a record of personal achievement and a passport to both further careers and lifelong learning opportunities. Therefore, the relationship between the various qualifications must be clearly established to ensure that relevant standards are recognised and that ready progression through the systems is available. Most importantly, to encourage lifelong learning, the qualifications system must be flexible enough to recognise learning gained over a long time and through various modes. To achieve this we will:

- Establish a Tasmanian Qualifications Authority by working with the Tasmanian Secondary Assessment Board (TASSAB), the University Registration Council and the Tasmanian Accreditation and Recognition Committee (TAReC) to integrate their separate roles.

While the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority will have a key responsibility in ensuring that qualifications maintain rigorous standards, it will be asked in the longer term to:

- Survey employers every three years to assess how 'job ready' young Tasmanians are on entering the workforce with their first set of qualifications.
- Develop a coherent format for presenting lifelong qualifications – a format that makes the relationship between various types of qualifications clearer and meets the needs of individuals, employers and learning institutions.
- Build links between schools, VET-providers and the University of Tasmania to provide transparent recognition of VET achievement in both tertiary entrance and articulation arrangements.

Engage young Tasmanians in post-compulsory learning

As young Tasmanians make the transition from compulsory education to self-motivated learning, we need to strongly encourage them to embrace learning as an ongoing part of their lives. Many schools have imaginative strategies that inspire young people towards their life goals. We must manage the post-compulsory school transition by setting high participation goals and by offering flexible and innovative opportunities that renew and refocus Tasmanians' learning as their lives, and our society, change. We must strive to have each student make a well-informed choice in which all pathways from schooling to the various post-compulsory options are valued and considered. We will:

- Establish post-compulsory participation benchmarks for young people in Tasmania. These benchmarks must be the responsibility of the Office of Post-Compulsory Education and Training, with targets to be achieved by providers within an agreed accountability framework.
- Establish a 'VET Account' of training hours available to schools and secondary colleges from TAFE Tasmania. This will enable schools and secondary colleges to draw on the expertise and experience of TAFE teachers in the delivery of VET programs.
- Network school, college and TAFE Tasmania counsellors with each other and with industry bodies and Industry Training Advisory Boards (ITABs) in order to develop and implement career information strategies for transition students.

- Facilitate partnerships between schools, colleges and TAFE Tasmania, particularly in regional clusters, to ensure that the maximum use is made of the available resources and infrastructure.
- Track all Year 10 students of 2001 for a period of three years (2001–03) and ensure that every one of these students in the State is provided with information and advice about formal and informal learning options.
- Ensure that the Office of Youth Affairs has an increased role in developing individual strategies for young people who have left the education and training system after Year 10, thus helping them to renew their participation.

2.3 Actively encourage lifelong learning

Lifelong learning can generate the innovation and creativity that leads to a viable and productive future. Widespread social and economic changes, emerging career opportunities and varied employment patterns will mean that people need to engage in retraining and reskilling at all stages of their lives. Learning is also a necessary part of personal fulfilment and can lead to a better quality of life. In a learning society, people will increasingly seek more flexible ways of learning. To be successful, learning opportunities must fit into people's lifestyles and work patterns.

Provide alternative entry points for people to acquire foundation life, study and work skills

Each individual must have the foundations of a general education to be an effective lifelong learner; these include literacy and the ability to use numbers, IT skills, problem-solving skills and the capacity to work with others. All of these combine to provide the self-confidence essential for work and lifelong learning. Many adults, long out of school, and many teenagers in the transition years who do not respond to the college environment, need to acquire these skills. To support them we will:

- Provide an 'e-learn' voucher to post-school Tasmanians who do not have an information technology qualification. This voucher will provide a fees concession, to the value of \$100, with TAFE Tasmania for basic IT training.
- Provide more opportunities for adults to gain foundation skills, by building TAFE Tasmania's Access program into a General Education program. This program will meet the diverse needs of individuals and target groups requiring enhanced learning and life skills.
- Establish a study preparation course for adults who wish to prepare for higher education, using learning methods that are appropriate for adults.

Provide current and practical information on learning opportunities

The concept of lifelong learning needs to become embedded from an early age, so that young people view learning as a way to improve job opportunities and enrich their lives. Lifelong learning needs to be encouraged by providing good information about the opportunities that are available and by ensuring that people know how they can participate. To build a learning pattern and to ensure that information is freely available, we will:

- Establish a *Lifelong Learning Call Centre* where information about learning opportunities, tailored to individual needs, is provided.
- Publish an annual *Tasmanian Learning Opportunities Guide*, with current information about all post-compulsory learning opportunities.
- Promote lifelong learning to young people through an appropriate marketing campaign.
- Showcase the diversity of Adult Education learning opportunities through an annual exhibition of learner achievements.

Some skills are particularly important to enable access to further learning opportunities. In addition to supporting improvement of literacy skills (discussed under Goal 3), we will:

- Implement a new 'General Education' program in TAFE Tasmania for people entering training after a long break or people who are not yet confident in accessing training opportunities.
- Provide informal 're-entry' programs online with support provided through Online Access Centres.
- Provide all adult Tasmanians with the opportunity to gain a recognised information and communications technology qualification.
- Provide fee-based training in the use of library and information services.

2.4 Link skills development and training to Tasmanian economic opportunities

Training is a substantial investment for both Government and those industries that form the foundation of Tasmania's future economy. We need to ensure that our investment in training will target both statewide and more localised developments. We also need to ensure that training investment will target employment growth areas and that students actively consider those areas for potential employment.

Support training that will lead to increased employment

It is important that Government funding for training specifically targets industries where there are opportunities for growth and development. We will:

- Provide a 50% fees exemption in TAFE Tasmania for a quota of students enrolled in courses identified through the Industry Development Plan and by the Government Skills Response Unit for growth and development.

Assist students in identifying career options

Young Tasmanians need accurate and up-to-date advice on potential labour market trends in order to determine future career opportunities. Career planning advice should be available in all schools and colleges, based on freely accessible labour market information. We will:

- Provide accurate and timely labour market information to career counsellors.
- Ensure that all school students have access to career planning tools and up-to-date labour market advice via the Internet.

Maximise local partnership opportunities

It is important that opportunities are provided to build local community and enterprise investment in learning, particularly of young people, in the regions around the State, and that planning and investment in learning is undertaken in light of local economic and development needs.

- Community Learning Advancement Networks (CLANs) will be established to ensure that local delivery is consistent with regional development and needs.
- CLANs will bring together the collective experience of schools and colleges, TAFE Tasmania, libraries and Online Access Centres, as well as community organisations, other government agencies, enterprises and individuals who share an interest in lifelong learning. CLANs will advise on how local learning opportunities can be maximised and aligned with local economic and community developments.
- CLANs will encourage the further participation of employers in education and training by extending the range of work placements, providing structured workplace training and sponsoring new learning initiatives in provider institutions.



2.5 Enhance the community value of TAFE

We need every young Tasmanian to aspire to at least two years of post-secondary learning, whether in a VET certificate, a diploma course, or a degree program, in order to increase their job and earning opportunities. To achieve high participation levels, we must involve students from those families who have little or no tradition in post-compulsory education. To attract young Tasmanians into locally relevant, flexible and engaging tertiary courses, TAFE Tasmania can build on the work of:

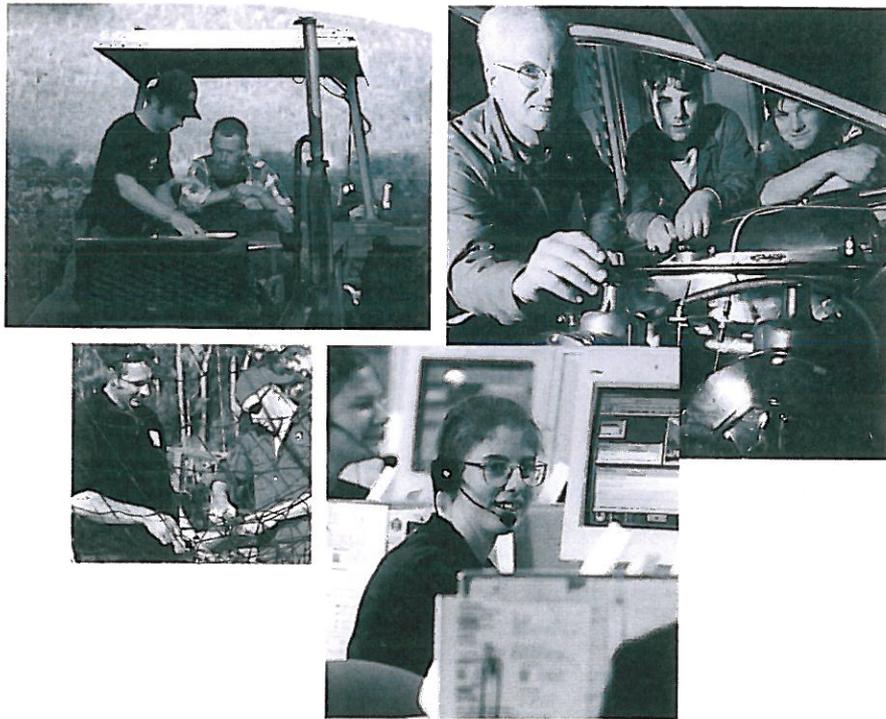
- Schools and colleges, including their VET in Schools programs,
- VET providers of new apprenticeships, and
- TAFE's own entry-level programs.

These formal pathways will have greater community value, and TAFE Tasmania will be a more attractive alternative, if TAFE is viewed as a positive alternative to university, providing qualifications that have a clear 'institute' status.

Create a single Institute of TAFE Tasmania

Young Tasmanians often view TAFE as a second-choice option, yet it builds on the excellent work of all VET providers, offering qualifications through to advanced diploma level. TAFE Tasmania's value to industry and the community will be enhanced through Tasmania having a single, statewide TAFE institute. Therefore, we will:

- Create a single statewide TAFE institute to be known as the 'Institute of TAFE Tasmania' from the year 2001.



How we will
achieve
our goals

3

Tasmanians will have a world-class education, training and information system which matches the best anywhere. We will achieve this through:

Safe and inclusive learning environments –
that encourage and support participation in learning throughout all of life

3.1 Ensure that all childcare services, schools and training institutions are supportive and safe places

Providing a safe and supportive environment in all of our learning organisations is a high priority. All people have a right to feel safe and secure and to be free from harassment, discrimination and bullying. This is one of the fundamental beliefs that underpin the whole of our society, and it has implications for what we do as a community as well as what we do within our learning organisations.

Establish a Behaviour Support Team

Currently many of our schools and colleges run effective programs that help students to feel safe and supported. To develop this further and to inform us about innovative and effective behaviour support programs at both local and international levels we will:

- Establish a Behaviour Support Team. The team will have one person in each District and a statewide team leader. The team's role will be to:
 - work with local communities, school communities, district support services and other agencies;
 - identify and document effective behaviour support programs that are currently operating in schools both locally and internationally;
 - provide professional learning in behaviour support;
 - establish or refine appropriate behaviour support programs and strategies in our schools;
 - play a key communication role in informing us about the best practices in behaviour support;
 - support the implementation of the best practices in behaviour support.

Support pilot projects

To promote best practice in the area of behaviour support we will:

- Establish projects in each District which trial approaches to behaviour support that are appropriate to the school and surrounding community.

3.2 Ensure that students who are 'at risk' have the opportunity to participate

For education and training to promote lifelong learning, it needs to be both accessible and inclusive. Many young people, for a range of reasons, require significant support in order to participate in schooling and training and utilise the opportunities our system offers.



Implement targeted programs to improve school attendance rates

Regular school attendance is crucial if students are to get the most out of their schooling. Targeted programs will be implemented to encourage students to attend school more regularly and reduce unexplained absences so that learning opportunities improve. We will:

- Provide incentives for schools to improve their attendance rates through initiatives such as parental education and 'no show' follow-up.
- Conduct public education programs on the importance of school attendance.
- Investigate the use of 'truancy free zones' in shopping centres and public places.
- Provide all schools with efficient electronic processes for:
 - recording student attendance
 - early identification of attendance trends
 - tracking attendance.

Implement strategies to include 'at risk' students in post-compulsory education and training

Tasmanian post-compulsory education and training retention and participation rates have improved in the past few years. However, those students who are most at risk of dropping out in the transition years still need support if they are to have the life chances they need. To encourage and support their further participation we will:

- Develop more flexible learning alternatives to attract transition students from Year 10 into Years 11 and 12.
- Extend District High School options through support for VET in Schools projects such as school-based apprenticeships.
- Implement strategies from the national plan, *Partners in a Learning Culture*, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people involved in training.
- Implement strategies from the national plan, *Building Bridges*, for people with disabilities involved in training.

3.3 Ensure that our learning organisations successfully target the acquisition of literacy skills

Literacy is fundamental to learning. It is critical in building our confidence and self-esteem. It enables us to participate in our society and enter the world of others. It impacts on all aspects of children's lives and supports learning in fundamental ways.

Ensure literacy intervention programs for students at risk

We recognise the importance of intervention with children known to be at risk of developing learning difficulties. We will:

- Implement an intensive literacy intervention program for children who are not achieving expected standards of literacy in the early childhood years.
- Establish a program where the ultimate aim is to have a trained teacher with 'reading recovery' skills in every primary school.

Promote literacy and numeracy development

For students 'at risk', or students who have specific learning difficulties that make literacy and numeracy unusually difficult, we will:

- Enhance the *Flying Start* program to ensure maximum effectiveness and flexibility.

- Develop a program to promote early literacy development of pre-school children through community education programs and libraries.
- Provide training for secondary teachers in teaching basic literacy skills.
- Establish 'online' literacy support and information services for all teachers.

3.4 Ensure that all learning organisations successfully include all students

Over the past year Tasmanians have given their affirmation to the principles of the *Inclusion Policy* for schools. They have also endorsed the principles underpinning the Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Act. We also believe that it is important that all learning organisations cater equitably and inclusively for all students.

Strengthen the skills and confidence of all staff who are working with children with disabilities

Rewards and Challenges: Inclusion in Practice – a review of the policy on inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools identified the profound changes that have come about in our learning organisations where children with disabilities are included. It also identified further opportunities to improve what we currently do. To build on these opportunities we will:

- Provide professional development for teachers, teacher-aides and principals in *Inclusive Practice*. This will support schools in meeting the needs of a full range of students.
- Develop a range of teaching and support materials for teachers so that they can more easily meet the needs of students with disabilities, helped by online mentoring support.
- Form a special education *Parent Reference Committee* and a *Teacher Reference Committee* as well as ensuring regular community consultation forums.
- Publish 'plain language' descriptions of special education funding models and moderation processes.
- Report publicly on the progress of students with disabilities in the school system, within annual reporting arrangements.

Make learning opportunities more accessible to the community

Lifelong learning opportunities should be available to all Tasmanians, irrespective of where they live, their personal circumstances, or their age. We will:

- Increase access to information services for specific groups in the community, including young people and people with disabilities. We will provide customised web sites, targeted support, advice and specialist equipment to increase their access.

Provide increased opportunities for gifted students

Students who have particular gifts and talents should also be well provided for in our education and training system. We will:

- Implement a program for gifted students that links them with appropriate mentors, including adults, in their areas of interest.
- Provide early entry processes for students who meet guidelines and ensure that there is provision for accelerated progression through schooling and into post-compulsory education options, including university.
- Provide online forums and learning materials designed to extend gifted students.

How we will
achieve
our goals

4

Tasmanians will have a world-class education, training and information system which matches the best anywhere. We will achieve this through:

An information-rich community with access to global and local resources –

so that everyone has the opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, a healthy democracy and a prosperous society

4.1 Develop world-class facilities and programs for online learning

Our learning organisations and information services have already embraced many of the new technologies that respond to the increasing demand for ready access to online information. Our next challenge is to ensure that we use technology to provide students with the education they need for the 21st century. The time is opportune for us to make major advances in the area of online learning. We can significantly build on the programs we have, and on the expertise of our teachers, to exploit technology for the benefit of all our learners.

Establish a Centre of Excellence in Online Learning

To contribute to Tasmania being the *Intelligent Island* we will:

- Establish a Centre of Excellence in Online Learning. This new facility will:
 - lead and support online learning throughout the State;
 - link to *Innovation Schools* throughout the State;
 - deliver a range of programs for all Government schools, teachers and students;
 - develop educational content; and
 - provide services related to the use of information and communication technology in education.

Create a business partnership between education and the IT industry

The Centre of Excellence will:

- Establish partnerships with local IT firms and the University of Tasmania.
- Create new opportunities for Tasmanian firms to develop online educational content for the Tasmanian, national and global markets.



4.2 Promote Tasmania's culture and heritage to the world and preserve our documentary heritage

Tasmania has a rich culture and history. Our ability to connect with our past and make sense of our present lives will be made stronger if we ensure the conservation of our documentary heritage and our oral history. When we feel connected to our history and the stories that make up that history, we build for our future and take a pride in promoting our island home.

Use our electronic and digital resources to establish links and promote Tasmania to the world

So that we can promote our island to the world and learn about other cultures and organisations we will:

- Establish web-based 'Sister School' relationships for every school and college in the State with other schools from our major international trading partners.
- Electronically link Tasmanian community organisations with other, similar, organisations both nationally and internationally.
- Develop processes for the preservation of documentary heritage resources and ways to access to them.

In order to preserve Tasmania's documentary heritage and make it accessible we will:

- Make sure that significant heritage and archival resources are available in a digital format.
- Ensure preservation of documents and long-term electronic access to them.
- Share the conservation facilities of Tasmania's cultural institutions.
- Help individuals and organisations to publish local history and community information.
- Work with community organisations to help them keep records in a form that makes them easily accessed.

4.3 Enable individuals and communities to access information

We need to coordinate and map our sources of information and professional support. This will allow us to access and interpret current and historical information as well as identify any gaps or duplication in service delivery.

Coordinate access to community information and cultural resources

For our communities to easily access and use the information they require we need to ensure that the systems we use are cohesive and integrated. So that we can do this we will:

- Develop a plan, *Informing Tasmanians*, that will collaboratively 'map' what public information resources are currently available and from whom. We will then, over time, put into place strategies that reduce any deficiencies and duplications, thereby enabling us to have access to information in a variety of formats and from a wide range of sources.
- Publish online heritage resources and develop other resources that help people to interpret heritage and archival material.
- Provide electronic access to archival resources and information about the State's archives.

Facilitate access to global information

As well as accessing local information we need to be able to easily access information that is available to us from all parts of our planet. So that we can do this we will:

- Develop strategies for the library network to become a key centre for learning communities and individuals, enabling them to use information resources and networks, and to link to learning providers in order to enhance their employment and life skills.
- Facilitate access to government information at federal, state and local levels.

4.4 Enhance community education by linking the Department's community learning providers

Community learning provides extensive opportunities for adults to build their individual confidence and for community groups to enrich our society. Government supports community learning in various ways, through the State Library, Online Access Centres and the Adult Education program. They all have an important role in engaging adult learners who might not otherwise participate in learning. They are an increasingly important resource, given our ageing population. Providing links between these important elements of community learning will engage more Tasmanians in lifelong learning.

Engage the State Library and Adult Education in a Strategic Partnership

Tasmanians use the State's library services at all stages of their lives: as individuals, communities or in small business. Adult Education also has a proud record of involving Tasmanians in informal learning programs. These two key elements of community learning will link into a Partnership that will enhance and extend their expertise and engage more Tasmanians in learning. They will:

- Collaborate on the initial development of a specific community education strategy focusing on community health issues and incorporating their joint areas of expertise.



How we will
achieve
our goals

5

Tasmanians will have a world-class education, training and information system which matches the best anywhere. We will achieve this through:

A valued and supported education workforce –
that reflects the importance of teaching as a profession and is held in high esteem by the community

5.1 Recognise the professional status of teachers and the teaching profession

All people have stories to tell about the positive impact that teachers have had on their lives. Our most admired teachers demonstrate their expert ability to lead their students in the serious pursuit of learning. Teachers are trusted professionals who can make a difference for many members of our community. We need to make sure that our teachers are recognised for the considerable contribution that they make to the whole of our society in building our future national resources.

Further develop world-class educational practice

Tasmanian education has a history of being 'leading edge' in many areas. Our educators are acknowledged nationally and internationally for the pioneering work that has been undertaken in our learning organisations. So that we can showcase Tasmanian education and further our national and international exchange of best practice we will:

- Host an international conference in 2002. Its theme will be *World-class Education* and it will focus on best practice.
- Further showcase Tasmania's education, training and information systems through the work done by the Tasmanian Educational Leaders' Institute.

Recognising excellence and innovation in teaching and teachers

We need to recognise and celebrate excellence and innovation in teachers and teaching. So that we can acknowledge the valuable role our teachers play we will:

- Conduct an annual 'Education Week' where the value of teaching and the contribution made by teachers is celebrated.
- As part of this week the Education Minister will host a function where:
 - outstanding teachers, who have been nominated by their peers, are recognised and celebrated;
 - innovative teaching practices are recognised and celebrated.

Extend opportunities for teachers to share their expertise

So that outstanding teachers can contribute to specific projects and share their expertise in a variety of classroom settings we will:

- Establish a register where teachers can express their interest in particular projects.
- Provide teacher relief for teachers to undertake short-term release from teaching duties so that they can share their expertise and work on various Departmental initiatives.

Enhance the status of teaching

To enable teachers to become part of a professional body that safeguards the integrity, skill level, qualifications and expert status of the profession, we will implement a process of teacher registration that:

- Ensures that all school and college teachers have at least a minimum level of professional qualifications.
- Ensures that all school and college teachers have the competency necessary to teach.
- Prevents people who are not 'of good character' being employed in schools.

Develop a recruitment strategy

We will continue to encourage young people to pursue teaching as a career and we will strive to attract the best graduates. We will:

- Strengthen the scholarship program for teachers in areas where it is difficult to recruit
- Develop a strategy that allows more teacher graduates to be recruited to permanent jobs.

5.2 Improve communication with all employees and extend opportunities for consultation

We all recognise that regular two-way communication and consultation processes are vitally important in all learning organisations. It is the 'glue' that bonds people together and adds to our ability to achieve our goals.

Enable all members of the education community to participate effectively in consultation processes

Significant changes require consultation. To enable all members of the education community to have input into issues of significance and to ensure that the consultation processes that we use match the scale of the change we will:

- Conduct a change-management program that highlights the consultation processes that are appropriate at all levels within the Department of Education.
- Increase the involvement of District Superintendents by recognising their importance as educational leaders and enablers of change.

Use technology to improve how we communicate

So that we can more effectively manage the distribution of electronic information and ensure that it meets the needs of the audience we will implement an *Electronic Service Delivery Strategy* that will:

- Ensure that all staff in the Department have access to e-mail.
- Distribute, electronically, information that is tailored to the interests and needs of the audience.
- Perform electronically many of the processes currently done on paper, such as applications for leave.
- Establish and automatically update a Department-wide organisational directory that is available online.

Improve communication through the use of the Internet and Intranet

Increasingly, the Department's web site will provide ways for the community to access information about Departmental activities and participate in forums about issues. It will increasingly provide a vehicle for communication with employees, and for information dissemination, sharing knowledge and good practice. We will:

- Use the web to strengthen a service culture within the Department.
- Ensure that information provided on web is current and accurate.
- Provide 'user friendly' processes for forums on key issues.

WORLD CLASS

learning
together

From First Class to World Class

Tasmania has first-class education, training and information services. Access to these services and achievement within them is on a par with anywhere in Australia. We will build on this first-class success in order to provide a world-class system for Tasmanians.

Ideally, education, training, and information services bring into harmony the dreams of parents, the desires of local communities, the aspirations of the Tasmanian community, the demands of employers, and the goals of individual learners with the skills and expertise of our teachers, educators and service providers. These expert services enable society's expectations to be realised and individual ambitions to be fulfilled.

World-class education services will engage students, will enable them to reach their full potential and, through their active participation in our community, will enrich the society in which we live. World-class training services will ensure that all individuals develop the competencies they need to fulfil their life ambitions, particularly in employment. Such services will also ensure that employers have the skills base they need to make Tasmania a leading competitive and productive state. World-class information services will ensure that our unique heritage is freely accessible to Tasmanians and to the world, and that the richness of global knowledge is available to individual Tasmanians, their communities, organisations and businesses.

The Learning Together Bridge

Learning Together builds the bridge from a first-class to a world-class education system. Most importantly, our strategies, like the parts of a bridge, are interlinked, coming together to take us into the future.

Learning Together recognises that a valued and supported workforce is the foundation of our strategy for world-class achievement. Diverse enriching and fulfilling learning experiences are the planks on which we will build our progress. Safe and inclusive learning experiences are, so to speak, the handrails on the bridge, providing security for our learners. We will ensure that the bridge is not insular but globally oriented; the direction we take will ensure an information-rich community. Finally, the finish on our bridge will keep it vibrant, to ensure that we have responsive and continually improving services.

*'What counts
can't always be counted
and what can be counted
doesn't always count.'* Albert Einstein

One of the unresolved challenges for us is: how do we measure the highest-level outcomes of learning? Personal fulfilment, creativity, self-confidence and innovation are important outcomes of learning, yet they cannot easily be counted or measured. Nevertheless, they are essential and will be evident in a community underpinned by a world-class education system.

Three key elements of an education system that are more easily measured, and which closely link to successful outcomes, are:

- **access** to programs, facilities and resources
- **participation** in learning throughout life and
- **achievement** through recognition or qualification processes.

Increasing access and participation rates will reflect success in providing relevant lifelong learning opportunities. Improving achievement levels among learners will validate the quality provision of the education system. However, neither one of these elements can be used in isolation from the other. For example, if we are true to our set of shared values, we cannot use higher pass rates as an achievement measure while excluding 'at risk' students from our measures.

The fourth element by which we can measure our progress is:

- an increased use of direct '**customer satisfaction**' measures, particularly for those services used by the broader community.

Such measures encourage a clear focus on quality issues and assist in the identification of the true 'customers' of our services. For example, in *Learning Together* we have established the need to survey employers regarding the work preparedness of first time employees.

Bringing together the performance data from those four elements will enable us to map our progress towards a world-class system. However, we will also need to seek out and introduce international indicators against which we can benchmark and incorporate the benchmarks endorsed by the work of *Tasmania Together*.

The *Learning Together* Council, supported by the Office of Educational Review and the Office of Post-Compulsory Education and Training, will play an important role in assisting us to measure our success by establishing baseline data and reporting against it on an annual basis. The Offices will assist in the development of a range of assessment tools and methods and act independently where independent assessment is required. They will use a variety of methods and a variety of forms to conduct independent assessments that are both qualitative and quantitative. The key elements will be:

Access

1. The availability of school facilities and other services to the wider community
2. The availability of printed and electronic resources.

Participation

1. Student retention at school
2. School attendance rates
3. Participation in formal programs, including schooling, training and higher education
4. Enrolments in adult education
5. Participation rates in selected programs for targeted equity groups
6. Numbers of Library and Information Services users.



Achievement

1. Student accreditation following participation in Vocational Education and Training courses
2. Post-school destinations for students
3. Student outcomes against nationally agreed performance indicators
4. Number of students successfully completing Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) subjects.

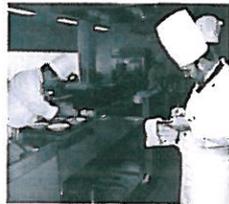
Satisfaction

1. Parent satisfaction with local school
2. Libraries' and schools' satisfaction with the internal support provision
3. Tasmanian education community satisfaction with the curriculum being provided in Tasmanian schools
4. Employer satisfaction with job readiness of young Tasmanians
5. Industry satisfaction with Vocational Education and Training outcomes
6. Learners' satisfaction with learning experience (Schools, VET, Information services).

While this data, along with *Tasmania Together* benchmarks and national and international indicators, will enable us to assess higher-level progress towards a world-class education system, the *Learning Together* Council will also provide an annual progress report on implementation of all of the strategies of *Learning Together*.

Department of Education Reporting

We will also maintain and report on a wide range of management-level indicators, including those developed within the national education and training reporting frameworks. In particular, it will report on areas of efficiency and effectiveness, and on matters relating to the development of a valued workforce and a quality system. The reporting framework against the goals of *Learning Together* is set out below.



Goal 1

Responsive and continually improving services

Indicators to be used in respect of this goal include:

- Percentage of schools who have established partnerships with their community;
- Percentage of schools where facilities are used by the wider community;
- Percentage of teachers participating in ongoing professional learning;
- Percentage of teachers and other professional staff in the school sector who are four-year trained;
- Teachers' and other staff's satisfaction level with professional development as relevant to the challenges of achieving a world-class education, training and information system;
- Level of satisfaction that parents have with their local school;
- Percentage of VET teachers who meet training package technical competence and assessor requirements;
- Percentage of women who attain promotable positions;
- Satisfaction of teacher graduates, employed by the Department of Education, with the support received during their first year of teaching;
- Performance against quality benchmarks.

Goal 2

Enriching and fulfilling learning opportunities

Indicators to be used in respect of this goal include:

- Satisfaction of the Tasmanian Community regarding the relevance of the school curriculum;
- Parent satisfaction with their child's school reporting processes;
- Number of partnerships between schools, secondary colleges and TAFE Tasmania;
- Number of partnerships between schools, childcare services and early childhood educators;
- Level of availability of information for Year 10 students about the ongoing formal and informal learning options that are open to them;
- The number of students who are undertaking courses identified by our Industry Development plan;
- The number of Tasmanians who undertake IT qualifications for the first time through such initiatives as 'e-learn' vouchers at TAFE Tasmania;
- Number of students who participate in post-compulsory education;
- Levels of student, staff and employer satisfaction with Institute of TAFE Tasmania.



Goal 3

Safe and inclusive learning environments

Indicators to be used in respect of this goal include:

- Percentage of schools with documented behaviour support strategies formally expressed through policies;
- School attendance rates;
- The percentage of students who feel safe while attending our learning organisations;
- The percentage of students who have reached expected national literacy and numeracy benchmarks;
- The number of secondary teachers who have completed training in basic literacy skills acquisition;
- Level of satisfaction that teachers have with the 'online' literacy support and information services they receive.

Goal 4

An information-rich community with access to global and local resources

Indicators to be used in respect of this goal include:

- The level of use of ICT materials in teaching and learning;
- The number of partnerships established by the Centre of Excellence;
- The number of web-based sister school relationships established;
- Enrolments in projects that have been jointly run by the State Library and Adult Education;
- The number of digital images added to the State electronic documentary collection;
- The number of items added to the Heritage Collections;
- The number of heritage documents available in digital format;
- The percentage of library users who are satisfied with levels of support to access local and global information.

Goal 5

A valued and supported education workforce

Indicators to be used in respect of this goal include:

- The number of positive reports in the local media regarding education, training and information services within the State;
- The level of satisfaction that the education community reports regarding the effectiveness and integrity of consultation processes that are used;
- The value that school communities ascribe to the work of teachers;
- The use made of Departmental web sites;
- The level of satisfaction that users have with Departmental web sites.



CLANs	Community Learning Advancement Networks
ICT	Information and communication technology
ITABs	Industry Training Advisory Boards
OVET	Office of Vocational Education and Training
TAReC	Tasmanian Accreditation and Recognition Committee
TASSAB	Tasmanian Secondary Assessment Board
TCE	Tasmanian Certificate of Education
TELI	Tasmanian Educational Leaders' Institute
TQA	Tasmanian Qualifications Authority
VET	Vocational Education and Training





Tasmania

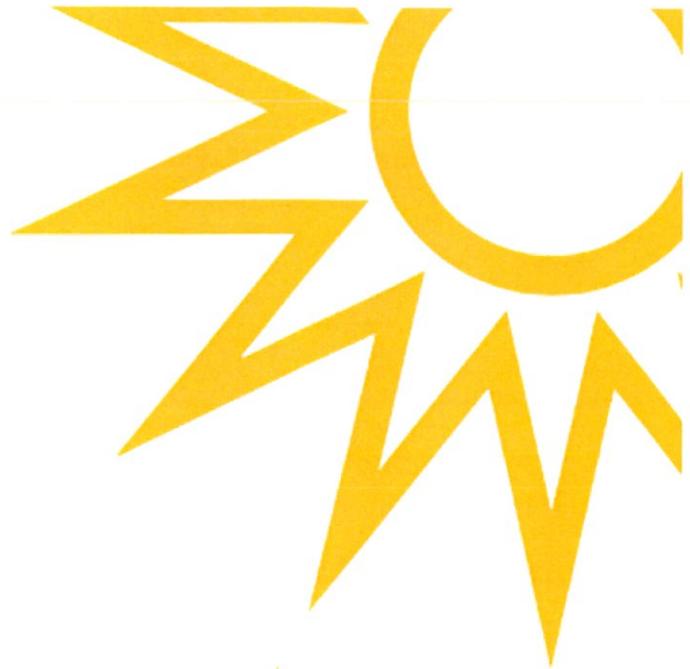
Appendix B

Learning Together: Draft proposals for education, training and information into the 21st century

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Tasmania



Learning Together

**Draft proposals for
education • training • information
into the 21st century**

Learning Together

Draft proposals for education, training and information – into the 21st century
February 2000

Learning Together

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Learning Together

A draft vision for education, training and information systems in Tasmania



Learning Together is a draft document that has been developed following a number of discussions that I have had with representatives from various educational interest groups. It offers suggestions for possible strategies we can adopt to move the education, training and information systems in Tasmania forward into a positive new future.

With the release of this document I am inviting you to join with me in determining what practical actions we need to take to achieve this goal.

I believe that the size and quality of Tasmania's education system means that we are ideally placed to make the changes that are necessary to ensure we have world class education, training and information systems.

Learning Together places lifelong learning at the centre of the future of education in Tasmania. We need to ensure that throughout our education system we are developing citizens with practical skills, wisdom and compassion. In our teaching and assessment practices we must ensure we are providing individuals with the desire, ability and expectation that they will continue to learn throughout their lives.

This paper also discusses the reasons why we need to remodel our education, training and information systems and which key elements we need to address. The possible strategies identified in *Learning Together* are about approaching our task with optimism in order to make the changes we need.

Many of you would have heard of *Tasmania Together*, through which the Government is helping Tasmanians to create a shared vision through to the year 2020. The Community Leaders' Group is leading a comprehensive process in consultation with the Tasmanian community.

When *Learning Together* has been finalised after the consultation process it will be fed into the Community Leaders' Group deliberations. Clearly education, training and information systems are central to the sort of society we want to be in the year 2020.

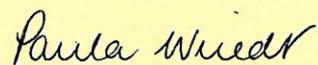
My personal vision is for an inclusive Tasmania in which all members of our community recognise the value, in both social and economic terms, of lifelong learning and can access education and training that are suitable to their needs and aspirations.

Learning Together discusses how this can be achieved. It suggests it will be achieved through education, training and information systems which benefit everyone through their inclusiveness, which value people rather than institutions, which have high expectations of all their participants, which provide value for money and which are meaningful to the everyday life of Tasmanians.

Achieving these goals will require concerted action and commitment from all of us. The real expertise to undertake these tasks lies in all staff in our schools, training organisations and information providers. Progress in this new direction for success will only be possible by using this expertise and by involving and mobilising users of these services and the community at large.

At the back of the document you will find details on how you can respond to *Learning Together*. I urge you to take this opportunity to involve yourself in this process, to ensure we have the best end result possible. Your input is important so that we can achieve real and sustainable change.

I look forward to your contribution.



Hon Paula Wriedt MHA
Minister for Education

Contents

Part 1	Goals and principles for the 21st century	1
	■ Goals for the 21 st century	1
	■ Key principles	2
Part 2	About learning	3
	■ Why learning matters so much	3
	■ The information age and lifelong learning	3
	■ Why learning matters so much to Tasmania	6
	■ Lifelong Learning and Tasmania	7
Part 3	The education system	9
	■ What kind of education system does Tasmania need to achieve our three goals for the 21 st century?	9
	■ Priorities in education to support our goals for the 21 st century:	12
	1 Quality curriculum	12
	2 Quality teaching	14
	3 Quality schools	16
	4 Quality leadership	19
	5 Equity	21
Part 4	The training system	23
	■ What kind of training system does Tasmania need to achieve our three goals for the 21 st century?	23
	■ Priorities in training to support our goals for the 21 st century	26
	1 Equitable opportunities	26
	2 Meeting training needs	28
	3 Being learner centred	30
	4 Facilitating enterprise and initiative	32
	5 Enhancing the role of TAFE Tasmania	34
	6 Quality outcomes	36

Part 5 The information system	39
■ What kind of information system does Tasmania need to support the goals for the 21 st century?	39
■ Priorities in information services to support our goals for the 21 st century	41
1 Access to information	41
2 Access to community services and networks	42
3 Preservation of Tasmania's documentary heritage	43
4 Partnerships between providers	44
Part 6 What kind of resourcing models support the goals for the 21st century?	45
Part 7 Monitoring and reporting progress	47
Part 8 Invitation to respond	51
References	58

Part 1 Goals and principles for the 21st century

Goals for the 21st century

Learning Together proposes three goals for education, training and information in this state for the 21st century.

The overarching goal is:

- 1** Tasmania will have world class education, training and information systems.

We will strive to put international best practice and standards into all aspects of Tasmanian education, training and information services.

To achieve this goal:

- 2** Tasmania will become a learning society, a community of lifelong learners.

We will develop the creativity, enterprise and learning capacity of all Tasmanians to ensure a well-educated and adaptable community.

- 3** Tasmania will have an information rich environment, with ready access to the knowledge and information resources of the world.

We will support our learning society and economic development by providing high quality access to knowledge and information for individuals and businesses.



Key Principles

These goals are underlined by some key principles and values that the Government is committed to.

- Children and young people are the starting point for the future of Tasmania. All our students need to perform well at school and keep learning throughout their lives.
- Our public education, training and information system is the number one priority.
- Closer links between the education, training and information service elements of the Department of Education are needed.
- Decision-making will be informed by maximum consultation.
- Research evidence should help to guide policy and practice.
- Flexibility and diversity in programs will be encouraged.
- Services will be focused on the needs of those people who use them.
- Services will be equitable and inclusive.
- People are the Education Department's most important resource and will be recognised and treated as such.
- Resources will be allocated in ways that are most equitable, efficient and effective.



Part 2 About learning

Why learning matters so much

The importance of learning cannot be over-estimated.

- Learning is the foundation of a civil society and a high quality of life. Values such as equality and regard for the rights of others, democracy and the rule of law are underpinned by learning. Learning also helps us make effective decisions and manage uncertainty – both are essential to our future society.
- A strong education and training system is also essential for creating a more equitable, cohesive and inclusive society – probably the best gift that a person can receive is a good education and a continuing desire to learn. Through an equitable education and training system we can help to reduce inequality and support all Tasmanians to build a better future for themselves.
- Learning is just as essential for economic prosperity, particularly through the development of a flexible, dynamic, and highly skilled workforce.
- We should not forget the role of learning in the development of individual self-worth and the encouragement of creativity and imagination. If individuals are to cope with an unpredictable future they must have skills that will allow them to be flexible and adaptable and to offer creative solutions to challenges as they arise.

For all of these reasons there is compelling evidence that learning is of critical importance to both individuals and communities.

The information age and lifelong learning

We live in an age where information is an important resource

We live in an age where knowledge has become our most important resource and the ability to use information with wisdom has become our most important skill. Creation of wealth and success is increasingly dependent on the production and dissemination of information. At the same time, computers and the Internet have changed the way that we live and the way that we do business. Rapid communication of information across countries and cultures has become part of everyday life. Because of dramatic growth in the value of information and the speed in which it is communicated, the present age is sometimes called the information and communication age.

‘Computers and the internet have changed the ways we live and the way that we do business.’

We live in a learning society

If wealth and success are dependent on our use of information, learning to use information becomes very important. This is why the society of people who will live successfully in the information age is sometimes called a learning society. In the industrial age success was built on physical assets, in plant and machinery and on manual skills and hard labour. In a learning society, success depends on how intelligently we create and use information. For many companies today, the value of their knowledge base is a more important part of net worth than the value of their physical assets.

People need to keep learning throughout their lives

Career opportunities and employment patterns are also changing. People are likely to change jobs, and even their whole career direction, several times in their working lives. Some skills, like the ability to be flexible and get on well with a range of people in new situations, will therefore become even more important. Widespread social and economic changes mean that more people will need to engage in learning at all stages of their lives. People will need to be able to organise a job, further training and a satisfying family and personal life in a time of constant change.

The benefits of a learning society

The need for lifelong learning goes beyond learning for work and business. We need to keep learning for our personal fulfilment and understanding of our fellow human beings. Through the support and development of human intellect, imagination and creativity, we build a better society. By learning together we also strengthen arts and culture, and build a sense of community and quality of life. This is why lifelong learning offers an enhanced quality of life and greater equity for individuals.

What does a learning society look like?

A learning society in which lifelong learning is promoted and supported, will have:

- **Foundations for all** – provision to ensure that everyone has the foundations for lifelong learning, such as ‘learning to learn’ skills, high-level literacy and numeracy, motivation and desire for learning and the skills to drive lifelong personal development.
- **Strengthened pathways and bridges between different forms of education, training and work** – strengthened and extended pathways through primary, secondary and tertiary education and training to work, with support and safety nets for disadvantaged people.
- **Strong learning organisations** – encouragement for organisations and enterprises to foster and recognise both formal and informal learning.
- **An extended role for information and learning technologies** – provision to ensure that everyone achieves basic information technology skills, with modern learning technologies available throughout the community so that everyone can access education and training.
- **Strong learning communities** – encouragement and support for all communities to become learning communities.
- **A strong education and training culture** – high value placed on education and training, shown by commitment from communities, individuals, industries and governments.

A passion for learning

Recent research conducted for the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) suggests that Australians are passionate about learning and understand the benefits of learning.

Australians love learning and think learning is important to:

- Build a sense of achievement, self-confidence and self-esteem;
- Become stronger, more secure and resilient in a competitive job market; and
- Develop a more robust democratic society.

Australians value learning for its own sake, not only because it leads to increased job opportunities. Both formal learning (university, TAFE and accredited courses) and informal learning (adult education, community classes and personal reading) are seen as intrinsically valuable.

For those in the workforce or currently unemployed, the power of learning to secure a job by increasing one's skills was seen as the most motivating and effective work-related proposition. Moving up and getting a better job was also considered important. However, while the link between learning and work is obvious and strong, it is not enough to motivate a commitment to learning throughout life. If learning is to become a lifelong goal, it must contribute to the achievement of *both* career and personal goals.

Australians believe in learning for pleasure and for life goals as well as learning to do with work. They are anxious to put the intrinsic value back into discussions about education and training while also strongly believing that learning keeps your mind active and enables you to keep up with technological change.

Not surprisingly, learning is on most people's short-term agenda. Almost two in three adult Australians say they will do some learning, training or studying in the next 12 months. At the top of the priority list for the community's learning agenda is learning about information technology and the use of computers.

While they have a real love of learning, Australians don't see learning as meaning the same as study, education and training. They tend to see school, study and formal job training much less positively than they see learning. They make it clear that their school and training experiences have sometimes not motivated them to want to continue to learn.

It is clear that if Tasmania is to become a learning society, schools and the training sector need to be transformed so that Tasmanians' passion for learning is cultivated and all Tasmanians are supported to undertake productive and personally satisfying learning.



Why learning matters so much to Tasmania

It cannot be emphasised too strongly that the future economic and social health of our state is dependent on the quality of the education, training and information services provided.

Traditional industries have diminished

As employment in manufacturing, construction, mining and agriculture has diminished, growth has occurred in occupations that demand higher levels of education and training. In Tasmania, our traditional sources of employment have relied on many people who did unskilled work. Now, work requiring unskilled labour is simply disappearing. The skill requirements for the workforce are changing. New skills, for example in information and communication technology, have become essential.

'The skill requirements for the workforce are changing. New skills, for example in information and communication technology, have become essential.'

We need more young people to go on to training and higher education

Completion of schooling and continuing in education and training after leaving school have become essential. Yet, our young people do not go on to post-compulsory education and training at a rate that matches other states. Our school retention rates, despite improvement, remain low. The overall participation rate in Vocational Education and Training is below the national average. Our participation rate for university education is also the lowest of the states. At the same time, while schools and Online Access Centres have brought computers and the Internet to many, Tasmania has the lowest levels of home access to computers and the Internet in Australia.

Job creation is easier with a well-educated and well-trained workforce

As Tasmania's traditional employment base has fallen away we need higher levels of education and training to promote innovation and create new employment opportunities. A well-educated and well-trained workforce will attract investment that creates jobs. Call centres are a good example of investment that has been attracted to Tasmania by the skills and training of those available for work. Without a well-trained workforce it is hard for new jobs to be created.

'A well-educated and well-trained workforce will attract investment that creates jobs.'

We need the best education and training system possible

To thrive in the 21st century Tasmania needs *world class* education and training. There is much evidence that we have already made a significant start in achieving this goal. For example, through the dedication of our teachers, supported by initiatives such as *Flying Start* and the *Program of Additional Support and Structure (PASS)* we have significantly lifted literacy performance. All states have now agreed to a literacy standard for Australian students. In 1998 84% of Tasmanian Year 3 students reached that standard. This result compares very favourably with those of other states.

We also have more people than ever before involved in vocational education programs. Over the ten year period to 1998, total traineeship commencements in Tasmania increased from 202 to 5,478.

While our performance needs to continue to improve, we have much to be proud of and a solid foundation on which to build a world class education and training system and a better Tasmania.



Lifelong learning and Tasmania

Success for Tasmanians will increasingly depend on their ability to learn and go on learning. If Tasmania is to become a learning society in which we use information to promote innovation and create new jobs, all Tasmanians must be able, motivated, and actively encouraged to learn and to keep learning throughout life. They must also be provided with the opportunities to do this.

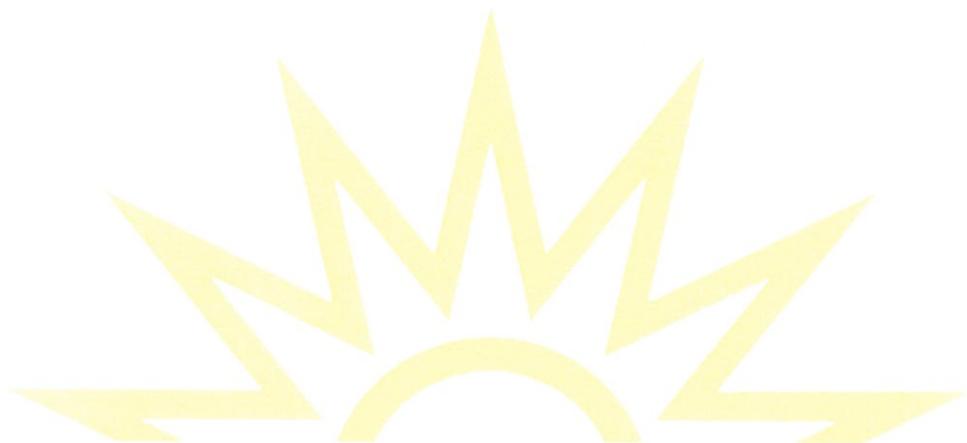
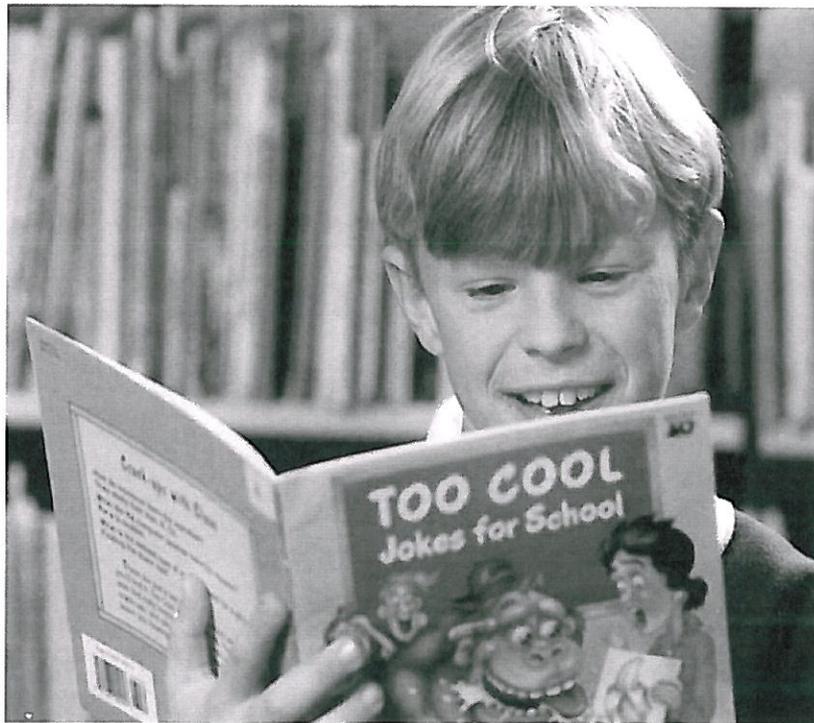
Through lifelong learning we adapt to changes in the nature of work and make sure that all our businesses are learning organisations that are able to respond flexibly and effectively to changing circumstances. In a world where almost all human work now has a much higher knowledge component and a higher level of intellectual and learning skill, it is crucial that Tasmania takes maximum advantage of the opportunities education, training and information can provide.

To give a few examples: the emerging technologies such as information technology, new methods of viticulture and aquaculture and new medical technologies are all learning dependent. These technologies are shaping the future; the resource underpinning them is the intellect, innovation, and creativity of the people.

This is a different way of thinking about resources, instead of thinking of material things. In the 21st century a workforce capable of rapid learning and innovation will be the vital resource. Tasmania's future depends on providing world class products and services through the enterprise and initiative of a well-educated, flexible, and learning workforce.

In a learning society, Tasmania is no longer disadvantaged by distance and isolation

It is not surprising that the nations and groups that are giving top priority to lifelong learning are those responding most positively and effectively to the impact of globalisation, new information and communication technologies and major changes in the employment base of economies. These things do not depend on where a country is or where a group of people live. In the age of the knowledge-based economy, disadvantages in Tasmania associated with distance, isolation and a small population become far less significant. People can live in Tasmania and enjoy the excellent lifestyle while still doing business on the world stage.



Part 3

The education system

What kind of education system does Tasmania need to achieve our three goals for the 21st century?

Opportunities for education

The onset of the information age and the knowledge-based economy provides fresh challenges for education. It is a critical time to reflect on the changing focus of education and the educational needs of Tasmanians so that they are prepared for a complex and demanding world. Tasmania needs young people who are world ready and able to adapt to changing social, economic and cultural forces.

'Tasmania needs young people who are world ready and able to adapt to changing social, economic and cultural forces.'

The focus of education has changed over time

Public education for all is a relatively recent development. For much of history, education was restricted to small and often wealthy groups. Industrialisation led to a commitment to 'universal' education that is the form of schooling that remains largely unchanged until today.

Social and family needs have changed

The role of schools in catering for all children and young people is increasingly challenging. With changing patterns of employment, greater family mobility, fewer nuclear families and less support from extended families, many children turn to school as the most stable and consistent element in their lives. Family and social disruption may be reflected in students' behaviour, depression, lack of self-discipline and aggression. This places new pressures on schools and teachers to provide social and emotional support to students.

Different expectations of schools

Schools are expected to accommodate many diverse social and economic priorities. Families, churches and the wider community previously provided many aspects of learning, such as drug education, civics education and education for successful parenting, that are now increasingly being expected of schools. Schools feel overwhelmed by the increasing and often inconsistent expectations that different members of the community have for them.

The structure of our education system needs to change to accommodate the new emphasis

While the focus of education is changing, the nature of the curriculum and the structure of our delivery remain broadly unchanged. What schools look like has proved resilient over time. In the light of the revolution in digital communication and changes to the nature of our society we need to re-examine the education we provide and how and where we provide it. It is time to acknowledge that schools that will be the very best for children in the 21st century will be very different from schools that their parents experienced. For example, our schools must incorporate information and communication technologies to allow students to take advantage of new ways of learning and gain skills that are essential in the 21st century.

'... schools that will be the very best for children in the 21st century will be very different from schools that their parents experienced.'

New ways of thinking about education and schools have been described by many recognised and experienced educators.

Some of the differences between the way we think about education and schools today, and the way that thinking is changing, are described below.

Thinking about schools today and for tomorrow

Thinking about schools today	Thinking about schools for tomorrow
Important learning can only occur in formal learning facilities.	People can learn things from many sources.
The learning process is controlled by the teacher. What is to be taught, when it should be taught, and how it should be taught should all be determined by a professional person.	The learning process is controlled by the learner. What is to be taught, when it should be taught, and how it should be taught will all be determined by the learner
Education and learning are individual activities. Success is based on how well learners learn as individuals.	Education and learning are highly interactive activities. Success is based on how well learners work together as a team.
Formal education prepares people for life.	Formal education is the basis for lifelong learning.
The terms 'education' and 'school' mean almost the same thing.	'School' is only one of a multitude of steps in the education journey.
Once you leave formal education, you enter the 'real world'.	Formal education provides a range of interactions between learners and the world of business, commerce and politics.
The more formal qualifications you have, the more successful you will be.	The more capability and adaptability you have, the more successful you will be.

Tasmanian schools are already changing, but need to change even further

Tasmanian teachers and schools are already changing in line with these new ways of thinking:

- We have schools that are learning communities characterised by strong learning partnerships between teachers, students, parents and business and industry.
- We have schools with learning access centres providing information and communication technology and open to their communities far beyond the normal school day.
- Our teachers are strongly focused on the learning needs of every individual and are increasingly making digital and communication technology an integral part of their work.
- Middle schooling has changed the structure of many schools in relation to students in years 5 to 8.
- Schools are increasingly incorporating childcare and after-hours care on their school sites.
- Increasing numbers of students are undertaking vocational education and on-the-job training.
- Some students are working from home and in after-hours classes for extension work and 'catch up' activities.

These changes are encouraging and show that our schools are capable of changing structural arrangements. But if we are to prepare for the future, we have to change even more.

The goals we have set for the 21st century emphasise closer working relationships between education, training and information systems, and they focus on Tasmania as a learning society:

- 1** Tasmania will have world class education, training and information systems.
- 2** Tasmania will become a learning society, a community of lifelong learners.
- 3** Tasmania will have an information rich environment with ready access to knowledge and information resources of the world.

The priorities to achieve these goals in education are:

- Quality curriculum
- Quality teaching
- Quality schools
- Quality leadership
- Equity

These priorities and the actions they involve are discussed on the next few pages.

Priorities in education to support our goals for the 21st century

1 Quality Curriculum

It is essential we get the curriculum right

The curriculum provided in our schools is the foundation for students' learning. If *Learning Together* is to achieve its goals it is essential that we get the curriculum right.

The present school curriculum is based on the *National Curriculum Statements and Profiles* that were introduced in 1994. No other state or territory is continuing to use these frameworks in their original form and it is generally acknowledged that they need a great deal of revising. Tasmania also has a number of other local curriculum policies and guidelines – some of these are now out of date while others (such as the literacy and numeracy policies produced more recently) only cover a limited area of content.

- Many curriculum experts are suggesting that there should be a narrower curriculum focusing on key competencies or essential learning such as literacy, numeracy, technological and vocational skills, rather than attempting to provide a broad curriculum to cover every eventuality.
- Many teachers are asking for more explicit and realistic curriculum direction.
- Many parents are asking for a clearer understanding of what their children are learning at school and how well they are going.

The curriculum needs to be more explicit

There is a long overdue need to clarify the curriculum in Tasmania. In particular we need:

- To identify what we want Tasmanian children to know, understand and value, and to be able to do when they leave school.
- To ensure that the most important knowledge and competencies are given priority.
- To have a clearer understanding of the standards that we want children to achieve at various stages throughout their schooling.

The present curriculum faces a number of challenges

To meet these needs it is time for a long, hard look at the curriculum we are presently providing. This curriculum faces a number of challenges:

- There are too many demands on what children should learn: the curriculum has become overcrowded and unrealistic for teachers to implement. It is also difficult to allow sufficient time for consolidation and practice.

'We need to identify what we want Tasmanian children to know, understand and value, and to be able to do when they leave school.'

- There are too many inconsistencies between schools and even within the same school, so some children are in danger of missing important curriculum aspects or covering the same thing more than once.
- With more and more children being involved in childcare, there is a need to make sure that childcare programs and school curriculum are properly linked together.
- The rise of the information age and the demands of a rapidly changing world mean that new competencies are needed. Schools will only be successful if all students have the skills to work within and adapt to a rapidly changing employment, social and economic climate. New technological literacies have become essential skills that must be incorporated into the curriculum.
- Vocational education and training is increasingly being incorporated into all levels of schooling and this needs to be better integrated with the general curriculum.
- A rapid increase in courses and curriculum modules available locally and through the World Wide Web is occurring. This is overwhelming for many teachers and students who need a clear framework in which they can make informed curriculum choices.
- There is evidence to suggest that among some young people, particularly adolescents, there is a feeling of alienation and a sense that the present curriculum is no longer relevant or engaging.

To ensure quality curriculum we propose:

- A comprehensive Curriculum Consultation to determine what we want our children to know, understand, value and be able to do as a result of the education we provide to meet world best practice standard.
- To define the standards that we want students to achieve, and make clear the level students should reach at various stages of their schooling.
- To acknowledge the importance of prior-to-school learning and the early years of schooling, and strengthen relationships between education and childcare.
- That pathways from childcare to school; from school to higher education; from school based curriculum to *Tasmanian Certificate of Education* syllabuses; and from education and training to jobs, will be well articulated and will provide a framework for lifelong learning.

2 Quality teaching

The teacher is the key to successful student learning

It is primarily through the quality of teaching that effective schools make a difference to students. Increasingly, there is evidence to suggest that the effect of individual teachers on how well students learn is considerable. Studies have found that up to 45% of the variance in student achievement results can be attributed to the individual teacher and class effects.

'The vital contribution that teachers make should be recognised and celebrated.'

The vital contribution that teachers make should be recognised and celebrated. It is also important that the teaching profession is held in high regard in the general community, so that learning communities can be promoted and young people are attracted to the profession of teaching.

We need to acknowledge the vital importance of non-teaching staff to the effectiveness of our teachers and schools.

Teacher competencies need to be made more explicit

The complexities and challenges of teaching should also be acknowledged. Many of the things that teachers are so skilled at are not fully understood or respected. The high-level skills involved in teaching are often under-valued. Teacher competencies need to be made more explicit and supported by high-quality pre-service and professional learning programs.

Pre-service education needs to adequately prepare teachers

Pre-service education needs to prepare future teachers adequately for their job in schools with a sound and up-to-date knowledge base, a deep understanding of pedagogical issues and curriculum, a range of practical teaching skills to meet the needs of the full range of students, and the capacity to reflect on teaching practice and continue with professional learning. Communication and collaboration between the Department of Education and the University of Tasmania, and regular feedback from newly qualified teachers, are vital to ensure that training matches teachers' needs.

Teachers need quality professional learning opportunities

The nature of teaching is such that teachers need to be continually updating their knowledge and understandings. Professional learning programs must be provided in key priority areas such as the use of information and communication technologies and teaching of literacy.

Teachers need time for quality professional learning and a broader range of vocational and life experiences if they are to transform teaching practices in the ways that *Learning Together* suggests. This means thinking about new models for professional learning that are flexible, practical and cause minimal disruption to classrooms.

We know that teachers learn best from other teachers – programs that help teachers to share ideas and practices and to support each other are most likely to succeed and must be promoted. For this reason, professional networks, mentoring programs, and opportunities for teachers to visit other schools, are key strategies.

Non-teaching staff are critical to effective teaching

The role of non-teaching staff is increasingly recognised as a key factor in effective teaching. These staff provide support and backup to allow teachers to teach effectively and efficiently. Strategies to ensure that non-teaching staff are well trained and fully included in whole-school planning and policy development are needed.

Teachers need to be better consulted and involved in policy development

Teachers also need to be fully involved and consulted in relation to major changes that are being proposed in the school system. All too often, teachers have not been regarded as key players in educational policy and program development. Yet teachers and other staff have a great deal to offer in reviews of effective practice and development of new policies. It is also the teachers who have to implement new policies and programs. However noble, sophisticated or enlightened proposals for change and improvement may be, they come to nothing if teachers don't adopt them in their own classrooms and if they don't translate them into effective classroom practice.

To ensure quality teaching we propose:

- More systematically using the contribution that teachers make to policy review and development by:
 - Listening to what teachers say through consultative networks; and
 - Involving teachers in research and dissemination of effective practices.
- Processes to celebrate and communicate the achievements of teachers which:
 - Enhance the status of the teaching profession;
 - Recognise and reward quality staff; and
 - Facilitate recruitment of beginning teachers.
- Working with universities to ensure beginning teachers are well prepared for their profession, especially in relation to identified needs such as:
 - Coping with emergencies and critical incidents;
 - Understanding student assessment;
 - Information and communication technology;
 - Managing student behaviour, and
 - Inclusive teaching practices that cater for the needs of all students, including those with disabilities and learning difficulties, and those who need extending.
- Provision of improved opportunities for relevant, targeted, quality professional learning including:
 - Development of mentoring and support programs for teachers, particularly in their first years of teaching;
 - More explicit definitions of teaching competencies and implementation of supportive performance appraisal and evaluation programs for teachers;
 - More flexible models for delivery of professional learning.
- Ensuring that the Department is supportive of and responsive to the needs of all staff, by:
 - Providing better lines of communication;
 - Making decision making more transparent; and
 - Effective human resource management.

3 Quality schools

Schools make a difference

There is increasing realisation that schools do make a difference in terms of the level of learning that is achieved with students. Considerable research shows that, regardless of the differences in students' home background and economic circumstances, the value that individual schools add to their students' learning is considerable.

'... the value that individual schools add to their students' learning is considerable.'

Quality schools are organised so that learning is the focus and teachers, students and parents understand and are committed to the learning goals that they expect students to achieve.

Schools need to provide a safe, supportive and inclusive environment

It is also well documented that learning is facilitated in schools that have a safe and supportive environment. All our schools must promote safety and security, a positive health-promoting lifestyle, and respect and tolerance for all community members. Schools that have a supportive school environment also promote their students' personal and social development, and their problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills, as well as providing appropriate corrective and discipline processes.

School organisation needs to adapt to the needs of the 21st century

At the same time, Tasmanian schools must change their form and function in line with the information age and the needs of a learning society, discussed earlier. As a starting point, schools must provide the technological infrastructure needed to facilitate the use of information and communication technologies in teaching and learning practices. Consideration should also be given to re-organising our schools to reflect the other changing demands of the new century.

'Schools must change their form and function.'

We need to support and assist schools to be enterprising and to 'dare to be different' within the departmental policy framework. The extent to which schools are able to respond to the demands of the 21st century will be determined largely by their capacity to meet and respond to the demands of their local communities and the background and circumstances of their students.

For example:

- Schools might maximise the time for learning, with people having access to learning 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Schools might have more flexible opening hours and provisions for learning.
- Schools could increasingly cater for the learning of both children and adults in the community and actively involve local businesses in learning activities.
- Schools could have more flexible organisational structures and ways of grouping students. Students might undertake education across more than one school or combine online schooling with 'regular' schooling.

- Web-based, online learning will provide opportunities to maximise learning regardless of where, when, or how people want to learn.
- Schools might be encouraged to develop partnerships with other learning organisations within their communities.
- Teaching could be more specifically targeted to the learning needs of particular students the school is catering for, rather than assuming that any particular model of best practice will work in all schools.



We need to examine more effective ways to use school resources for improved student learning

In addition, we need to look at the overall management of the school system and educational resources. The structural divisions between school sectors could be further broken down rather than necessarily maintaining separate primary, secondary and senior secondary schools in all suburbs. We can also explore further opportunities such as middle-schooling.

As well, we need cleverer ways of schools working together to maximise the benefit from their use of resources. Examples might include having cluster groups and sharing of facilities between schools.

We also need to acknowledge that we have too many schools with their number of students far below the school's infrastructure capacity. In some, student numbers are at such low levels that providing a broad, high-quality education program is very difficult.

'Central and district offices should support school innovation, responsiveness and flexibility.'

Central and district offices need to support schools to be more innovative

Central and district offices should support school innovation, responsiveness and flexibility. At the same time central and district offices need to monitor standards and ensure that all schools maintain a consistent and equitable quality of provision through continuous school improvement.

Local decision-making needs to be further developed

Tasmanian schools have had increased levels of control over their decision-making in the past few years. Local school management should be still further developed and should allow schools to determine more of their own ways of operating, within the parameters of a clear policy, equity and accountability framework. The factors that need to be in place for local school management to work effectively should be further documented and the roles and responsibilities at all levels (central, district and school) made more explicit.

The role of parents and the wider community should be further developed

In addition, the role of parents and the community in schools must be further developed. Schools don't operate in isolation. They must take account of the immediate and wider community in which they operate and the values, priorities and employment opportunities within the school community.

There is also good evidence that students learn best when there is mutual support and understanding with parents and the wider community. It is very difficult for students to learn well with parents who see little value in schooling and have little contact with their children's school. Parent involvement and participation will be encouraged and supported.

To ensure quality schools we propose:

- Processes to better communicate and celebrate the achievements of schools to the community.
- Within an appropriate industrial and accountability framework:
 - providing maximum organisational flexibility to schools;
 - identifying and implementing different options for management of schools and groups of schools;
 - encouraging schools to diversify, and to be enterprising; and
 - reviewing and revising school resourcing mechanisms.
- Staff in central and district offices will support school innovation and facilitate continuous school improvement by:
 - more explicit communication of the roles and responsibilities of schools, districts, central office; and
 - frequent interchange of staff in school and out-of-school positions so that there is better understanding of both contexts.
- Working with parents and schools to provide a more meaningful and genuine role for parents by:
 - ensuring parents have the support they need to be involved in their child's education;
 - reviewing the process of *Assisted School Self Review* to ensure better parent participation;
 - ensuring that parents receive regular, accurate and easy-to-understand reports on their children's and school's performance.
- Ensuring every school has a safe, supportive school environment and the capacity to be inclusive of the needs of all students.

4 Quality leadership

The importance of the role of quality leadership in schools

In recent years the pivotal role of school principals in ensuring maximum learning opportunities for students has been increasingly recognised, as has the vital contribution of other school staff who take on leadership in many areas. Research tells us what parents and teachers already know: quality leadership is the key to innovative, efficient and effective schools.

'... quality leadership is the key to innovative, efficient and effective schools.'

Principals have assumed more management tasks in recent years

The role of the principal is complex and multi-faceted. The key leadership role is in teaching and learning. With the advent of increasing levels of local school management, principals have assumed a greater managerial role and while this is important, the focus must be on educational leadership.

Principals need to be able to refocus on their leadership role in teaching and learning

Principals need to be supported and encouraged to develop their schools and promote innovation and creative practice. Principals need to provide the kind of educational leadership that is required to:

- Lead the school curriculum;
- Ensure a safe and supportive learning environment;
- Ensure that information and communication technologies are suitably incorporated into the curriculum and used effectively;
- Support program selection and delivery;
- Lead and support the teaching and learning decisions made by teachers;
- Ensure that schools have effective learning environments;
- Model good teaching and learning practices;
- Involve the school community in a positive and meaningful way;
- Supervise the professional learning of their staff;
- Monitor and report on student learning; and
- Monitor and support the work of teachers.

The professional status of principals needs to be enhanced

We need to enhance the professional status and competencies of principals by providing processes for initial and ongoing professional accreditation and ongoing professional learning.

All staff need to be encouraged to assume more leadership roles

We must encourage all staff within schools to assume leadership positions and to develop their leadership skills. We must also ensure that there is a pool of capable and enthusiastic people well prepared to take on leadership roles in the future.

It is important to recognise leadership in all areas of school life

The value of all staff in schools working together as a team cannot be over-estimated. We must make maximum use of the wealth of talented staff in our schools who can add a great deal to effective school leadership.

Principal and senior staff professional learning and promotional processes need to be based on merit

Given the importance of the principal and other senior staff, it is imperative that they are provided with opportunities to improve their competency and experience. It is important that we encourage more women to apply for promotable positions. It is also important that the selection process for promotion is fair, equitable and effective so that the best possible people are selected on the basis of their competence. Selection processes need to be as transparent and impartial as possible so that staff can be assured of selection based on merit and their performance.

To ensure quality leadership we propose:

■ Providing opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles and providing recognition and encouragement for them to take leadership responsibilities within schools and the Department, for example through greater use of mentoring programs.

■ More clearly defining principal competencies.

■ Implementing a focused principal leadership program that includes key areas of competence such as:

- Change management;
- Resource management;
- Communication and interpersonal skills;
- Curriculum implementation; and
- Effective teaching practices.

■ Developing and implementing a program of professional development that encourages more women to apply for promotable positions.

■ Assisting and encouraging teachers and senior staff to aspire to principal positions and work towards attaining these positions.

5 Equity

There are unacceptable differences in the outcomes of education for students from different social and cultural groups

Despite considerable amounts of money and the best intentions of many educators, the educational outcomes for many groups of educationally disadvantaged students in Australia have not dramatically improved. For example, in the area of Aboriginal education it is clear that the gap between performance of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students has not been significantly reduced. Another example is that retention of students until the end of Year 12 in country areas is not as high as in cities and major towns.

Economic and family changes are placing additional pressures on schools

At the same time, there is no doubt that changes in family structures and employment patterns are putting pressure on schools to provide increased levels of social support to students. Parents are likely to be older and with both parents often working, there are likely to be fewer siblings and less support from the extended family. There are also increasing numbers of single-parent families. This makes it harder to mobilise family and community support.

Students are also more likely to come from families needing support, with 38% of Tasmanian students receiving funding from the Student Assistance Scheme in 1998 compared to 29% in 1992.

In addition, many older students feel alienated from school and see little relevance of school to their lives and immediate circumstances.

In the 21st century there will be even more need for a strong public education system

In this context, a strong public education system is essential to ensure that all students have a 'fair go' by access to the highest-quality education system, irrespective of gender, cultural background, race, location, or socio-economic circumstances. The public education system must respond to social and economic changes by finding new ways to work with families and communities, so that there is an equitable spread of the benefits of education across all social groups.

'A strong public education system is essential to ensure that all students have a "fair go"'

This does not necessarily mean that schools should assume a broader student and community support role. Indeed, the most important contribution that schools can make to an equitable and just learning society is within their core responsibility for student learning.

Schools can decisively change students' lives by ensuring that at all stages of schooling, all students achieve sufficiently well to participate successfully at the next stage.

It is equally important that everyone involved in education has high expectations for achievement for all students and a commitment to continuous improvement in students' performance. The development of a learning society entails a strong belief that all children can learn and that all children have the right to a high-quality education.

'Indeed, the most important contribution that schools can make to an equitable and just learning society is within their core responsibility for student learning.'

Schools need to work in partnership with other community agencies to support students

It is also evident that several government departments and non-government agencies are often involved in providing support services to the same students and families. The need for increased inter-agency and intra-agency collaboration and cooperation to integrate educational services with other available forms of support is crucial.

This means that some of the current ways of providing special programs and additional support will need to be re-examined, if resources are to be used to achieve the best possible outcomes and if responsibility for those outcomes is to be shared throughout the educational community.

Building strong partnerships and clear linkages between education and other agencies is the key to the development of coordinated and combined approaches to meeting the diverse needs of all students.

To ensure equity we propose:

- Ensuring the Curriculum
Consultation identifies the needs of all students so that an inclusive curriculum can be developed.
- Checking the progress of students from educationally disadvantaged groups and working to achieve the targets for identified groups set by national agreements.
- Developing programs to improve school attendance.
- Addressing problems that prevent some young people from participating in education and training after compulsory school age.
- Strengthening the partnership between education and other government and non-government agencies and investigating the implementation of 'full-service districts'.



Part 4

The Training System

What kind of training system does Tasmania need to achieve our three goals for the 21st century?

Opportunities for training

Lifelong learning is the central dimension around which individuals and communities can achieve a sense of security and confidence in a rapidly changing and more competitive world. Tasmanians must have flexible and responsive opportunities for training so that they become stronger and more resilient and Tasmania can become a more robust democratic society.

The training system has undergone a period of substantial change

The main focus of vocational education and training in Australia during the latter half of the 20th century has been on occupation-specific skill development with emphasis on traditional apprenticeships and 'trade' based training.

However, in the last few years there has been a period of massive change to the training system. The major thrusts of reform have been towards competency-based training within an industry-led training system and meeting client and industry needs in more flexible and responsive ways.

Industry advice has played an increasingly important role in shaping training provision and this is a welcome link to ensure that training is relevant and specific in meeting industry needs. However, it is now perhaps more appropriate to refocus on individual needs in the training system to ensure that we are preparing Tasmanians for a life in the workforce and beyond.

'Industry advice has played an increasingly important role in shaping training provision.'

At the same time, national planning and funding has been used to promote other large-scale changes. These include an increase in the number of training providers, development of more competitive models of funding, and development of national training packages that seek to produce consistent training outcomes across Australia. This has largely led to significant improvements in the training system. However, we need to take steps to ensure that these changes are not having unforeseen detrimental effects, particularly in our rural and regional areas.

The training system is an essential part of a learning society

Our goals for the 21st century acknowledge the onset of the information and communication age and the knowledge-based economy and the essential requirement that we become a learning society.

A learning society is underpinned by the concept of lifelong learning for all and depends on a training system focused on skills that are essential in the creative and innovative use

of information. Tasmania requires people who can constantly update their skills to take advantage of this changing labour market, and are committed to both participating and investing in training.

Rapid and widespread social and economic change means that more people across the whole community must engage in more learning at more stages of their lives. To be nationally and internationally competitive, Tasmania must strive to have at least as high a proportion of Tasmanians actively participating in learning as is achieved across Australia in general. It must achieve this by equitable and effective training provision that is inclusive for all Tasmanians.

Some skill requirements are particularly essential

Some of the essential skill requirements that all people need to operate in a learning society, are:

- **Enhanced people skills**, especially in team leadership, communication and collaboration with others and the ability to consult.
- **Strategic skills** in developing businesses that take account of knowledge as the essential factor for success.
- **Conceptual skills** that help people to see issues from a variety of viewpoints and understand complexities involved in understanding different values and priorities.
- **The ability to empower others** and negotiate differences rather than use power and control strategies.
- **The ability to recognise that learning is an ongoing process** and that issues need to be continually re-examined.

The training system in Tasmania is already changing, but needs to change even further

In the past few years there have been many positive initiatives within the Tasmanian training system.

- Training opportunities have been developed in many new strategic industries such as aquaculture, marine manufacturing, viticulture, aluminium fabrication and call centres.
- Industries that are growing and developing have been supported and encouraged, including the development of food processing, wooden boat building, eco-tourism and information technology.
- The opportunity for school students to be involved in vocational education and training has also improved substantially and is continuing to develop. In 1999, over 2,200 senior secondary students participated in VET programs covering 20 different industries.
- A new Vocational Education and Training Act has been enacted to make the training system more flexible and adaptable to the needs of industry and individuals.
- Quality assurance issues have been comprehensively addressed, with two major reviews of the quality of training being achieved in Tasmania.

- More flexible learning opportunities are being developed through TAFE and through on-the-job training and online learning.
- TAFE Tasmania plays a central role in the Tasmanian training system and continues to expand the training opportunities available.

These developments are encouraging and show that the training system is developing and responding to the challenges Tasmania presents. But if we are to prepare for the future, we have to change even more.

The goals we have set for the 21st century emphasise closer working relationships between education, training and information systems and they focus on Tasmania as a learning society:

- 1** Tasmania will have world class education, training and information systems.
- 2** Tasmania will become a learning society, a community of lifelong learners.
- 3** Tasmania will have an information rich environment with ready access to knowledge and information resources of the world.

The priorities to achieve these goals in training are:



- Equal opportunities
- Meeting training needs
- Being learner centred
- Facilitating enterprise and initiative
- Enhancing the role of TAFE
- Quality outcomes

These priorities and the actions they involve are discussed on the next few pages.

Priorities in training to support our goals for the 21st century

1 Equitable opportunities

The benefits of learning are not evenly distributed

Every Tasmanian should have the opportunity for lifelong learning. But the benefits of training and lifelong learning are not presently equitably distributed throughout the community. Some groups within the community do not participate in training programs as much as others do and are particularly vulnerable to job changes, as it is more difficult for them to develop new skills.

'Some groups within the community do not participate in training programs as much as others do and are particularly vulnerable to job changes.'

For instance, members of the Aboriginal community, people who live in remote areas of the state, people whose language background is other than English and people with disabilities need to be given the opportunity to have greater access to training. We must encourage a gender balance in various training programs and particularly encourage women to participate in areas that have been traditionally male dominated. We must also ensure that we provide an appropriate balance of relevant programs. For example, in the past year there was approximately \$150,000-worth of training provided that specifically targeted women in access programs and women in work programs.

Barriers to further learning need to be addressed

Research suggests that there are several barriers to people becoming involved in training.

The first types of barrier are those associated with the training 'product' that is offered. These barriers include:

- the length of training being too long;
- the lack of a connection between the training and the work that the person wants to do;
- lack of prerequisite skills, especially literacy and numeracy skills.

The second major types of barrier are those associated with personal circumstances. These barriers include:

- having too much work to do and no time for training;
- poor health status or disabilities;
- inconvenient scheduling and geographical location of work and training;
- cost of training;
- family responsibilities, such as the need to care for young children.

Tasmania has some particular challenges because of its relatively decentralised population and a large number of small communities, as well as a relatively high proportion of the population who have low incomes or are unemployed. All members of the Tasmanian community, including those in regional areas, require access to appropriate and lifelong learning.

We must remove barriers that might prevent people from being part of a learning community and engaging in learning at various stages throughout their lives.

Lack of prerequisite skills needs to be particularly addressed

Ensuring that people have prerequisite skills they need to undertake training should be a particularly high priority. We must ensure that school programs are in place so that children leave school with sufficient literacy and numeracy to enable them to continue to learn.

A further factor that is becoming increasingly important is equitable access to information technology and to training in its use. All Tasmanians, including those in disadvantaged groups, need to be technologically literate.



To ensure every Tasmanian will have post-school opportunities to build a foundation for lifelong learning we propose:

- Providing support in workplaces for literacy and numeracy learning.
- Tailoring training services offered by TAFE Tasmania to the needs of regions and isolated areas.
- Achieving participation targets for equity groups, including women, people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people with language backgrounds other than English, and offenders.
- Valuing and supporting community education in achieving our goals for the 21st century and providing community education to encourage use of on-line and flexible learning opportunities.

2 Meeting training needs

The training system needs to meet the needs of individuals, industry and Tasmania generally

To enable the training system to contribute to our goals for the 21st century and meet the future skill requirements of individuals and of business and industry we need flexible and diverse training provision. This provision needs to be planned to meet individual and industry training needs, as well as anticipating the future needs of the state as a whole.

Training is an investment in Tasmania's future

Training represents a substantial expenditure by governments, companies and individuals. But training needs to be seen as an investment. A crucial balance exists between investment in individuals' skill development, investment in skills for today's industries and investment for those industries that will form the foundation of Tasmania's economy in the future.

As for any investment there is a need to be clear about the returns that can be expected. The Tasmanian community needs to understand that meeting the needs of individuals, businesses and future industries will not necessarily always lead to the same choices.

Training must meet present and future industry needs

This means that planning processes must be based on a clear understanding of future, as well as present industry needs and must ensure that training provision can immediately respond to changing needs.

The Government Industry Audits identified industry training needs and opportunities for growth given appropriate training. These audits provide a useful framework for planning. The training priorities from this process identified:

- The potential of the information technology industry;
- The provision of growth opportunities worth about \$600 million over the next five years in the agriculture, aquaculture, fishing, food and beverage industries;
- The potential for expansion of the state's manufacturing and engineering base;
- Continued expansion of marine manufacturing;
- The critical nature of the growth of tourism; and
- The fact that business and financial services represent a significant part of the potential growth of the economy.

Training packages provide an opportunity for meeting both industry and individual needs

The industry audits also reinforced the value of training packages that are being developed by industry for training that meets industry best practices. Training packages include competency standards, assessment guidelines and qualifications that cover a particular industry. Training packages will enable people to develop particular competencies that a specific industry has identified as important. They will also help workers to adapt to changing industry requirements, over the course of their employment histories.

The further development of partnerships between industry and training providers is also essential to increase access to and responsiveness of training.

To ensure that the provision of training aligns to the needs of individuals and industry we propose:

- Targeting vocational education and training activity to priority areas as identified in the state's industry plans.
- Focusing vocational education and training on skill development that leads to employment or further education pathways and adds to the skill base of the state.
- To increasingly individualise training.
- To implement National Training Packages to meet government, industry and individual needs.



3 Being learner centred

People need to be able to enter and exit training at various times in their lives

In a learning society, people must be able to enter and exit training at various points in their lives. We must ensure the best possible linkages between study in training and study in university and between school and post-school training options. There also needs to be clear articulation arrangements so that people can move freely within the training sector and between training, schooling and university, with recognition of competencies gained in each system.

Transition from school to work needs to be facilitated

A learning society also demands that people are able to make the transition from school to work as easily as possible and that young people are 'work-ready' when they enter the workforce. Expanding and enhancing the vocational education and training program in schools is essential to improving the job opportunities and future life chances of young Tasmanians. The Vocational Education and Training (VET) in schools program has demonstrated that it is a key to:

- Preparing students for working life;
- Providing opportunities for students not intending to proceed directly to tertiary education;
- Equipping students with marketable entry-level skills for specific industries;
- Supporting school-to-work transition; and
- Initiating and coordinating partnerships and programs with organisations outside the school system.

However, funding and qualifications arrangements have encouraged competition rather than cooperation between schools, colleges TAFE and other providers. We need to increase cooperation between these institutions and establish better links between them and the workplace.

The expansion of VET in schools programs has been rapid in Tasmania and must continue to be supported and expanded for growing numbers of our young people. We must ensure that these programs reflect industry, individual and Government needs in the same way as is expected of other VET programs.

'The expansion of VET in schools programs has been rapid in Tasmania and must continue to be supported and expanded.'

The skills of the existing workforce must continue to grow

At the same time, the needs of the existing workforce, particularly in response to changes in technology and work practices, must be a priority so that existing workers are not 'left behind'.

Being learner centred means identifying ways to make learning more accessible.

Being learner centred means identifying a number of approaches to training delivery that will meet the needs of individuals in different circumstances. These include:

- technology-based delivery and the development of learning resources that can be accessed through online delivery;
- the development of community education facilities such as access centres and skill centres;
- maximum use of existing sites, including schools in rural areas; and more flexible provision of training after hours; and
- implementation of arrangements for recognition of existing competencies.

To be learner centred it is also important that all training providers respond to individual and industry demands by being flexible, improving the quality of their training, and offering specialised services where appropriate.

To provide learner centred training we propose:

- Giving priority to learner needs and pathways for effective learning.
- Developing continuous and flexible pathways between schools, training and higher education.
- To implement and develop new training delivery modes, including on-line learning, to extend the access of industry and individuals to training.
- To increasingly enable learners to negotiate course content, and the timing, location and delivery of the courses.
- To ensure resources are located where learners' needs are best served.



4 Facilitating enterprise and initiative

Enterprise skills are essential to today's businesses

In the training system today there is more emphasis on information literacy and the development of enterprise skills (sometimes referred to as 'soft' skills). Enterprises in Australia and overseas are identifying a serious shortage of these non-technical skills – skills like communication, problem-solving, analysis, evaluation, judgement and decision-making, critical thinking, working in teams and a capacity for creativity and innovation.

The development of a learning society depends on the innovative use that we are able to make of the technological and knowledge based opportunities that are now available. Enterprises are becoming increasingly dependent on the skills of the workforce to add value to products, develop niche markets, customise products to specific needs and ensure high quality. In addition, employers increasingly expect their employees to use initiative, be more creative and flexible and look for opportunities on behalf of business.

'Add value to products, develop niche markets, customise products to specific needs and ensure high quality.'

Successful employees for the growing technology-rich and innovative industries of our future are more likely to be multi-skilled, with a depth of vocational education. They will be those employees who engage in lifelong learning at both their employer's and their own initiative. Industry will continue to seek employees who have appropriate enterprise and business skills as well as industry-specific skills.

The shift to entrepreneurial skills

Enterprise learning attempts to make teaching and learning more engaging, purposeful and relevant. It encourages students to become involved in real business opportunities. The hallmarks of enterprise learning are that it is experimental, student-owned, based on cooperative skills, and encourages reflection. A change of orientation from conventional training to a more entrepreneurial training system can be characterised as follows:

Conventional training	Entrepreneurial training
Focus on content	Focus on process
Trainer as expert	Participant as learner
Emphasis on 'what'	Emphasis on 'how' and 'who'
Pre-planned sessions	Flexible and responsive sessions
Mistakes seen as errors	Mistakes seen as learning opportunities
Emphasis on theory	Emphasis on practice
Focus on subject	Focus on examples and problems

Enterprise and initiative learning must be a key aspect of all training

Tasmania is not the only place that is conscious of the need to develop innovation skills. Our international competitors are equally committed. The challenge is to create the training culture that will ensure that Tasmania is at the forefront of development of enterprise and innovation skills.

To support enterprise and initiative learning we propose:

- Providing structured and informal learning pathways for adults and young people so that lifelong learning for all can become a reality.
- Providing enterprise training for small businesses using a combination of open learning strategies, mentoring programs and flexible delivery.
- Building industry and business skills through training that provides marketing, management and finance competencies.
- Using vocational education in schools to stimulate and encourage creativity and innovation in young people.
- Ensuring that VET planning gives appropriate attention to the need for generic skills.



5 Enhancing the role of TAFE Tasmania

The learning community envisaged for Tasmania requires a public TAFE institution that is both industry driven and inclusive of individual training needs

The Tasmanian community values TAFE

There are strong signals that local communities, both regional and city, value the contribution of their local TAFE Tasmania campus. For them, TAFE Tasmania is an educational focal point for learning technologies and expertise that contribute to their region's growth. Achievement of a diverse, innovative, and multi-skilled workforce can be supported through enhancing TAFE Tasmania's contribution to vocational education and training.

A strong TAFE system is essential to meeting Tasmania's training needs

TAFE Tasmania must not only meet the skill requirements of industry but also respond to the learning needs of Tasmanians of all ages and from diverse backgrounds. TAFE is already notable for its diversity in training, both in what it offers and in its client group. In fulfilling its vision as the strategic public provider, TAFE Tasmania must continue to respond to the changing training environment; recognising national frameworks along with unique Tasmanian demands.

TAFE provides a level of student support as part of its community service obligation

TAFE provides a learning pathway for those many students who see TAFE entry-level qualifications as appropriate to their initial expectations in employment. As a learning institution, TAFE Tasmania provides high levels of learning support within an environment where students can access qualified staff and student support services.

TAFE is able to improve access to training

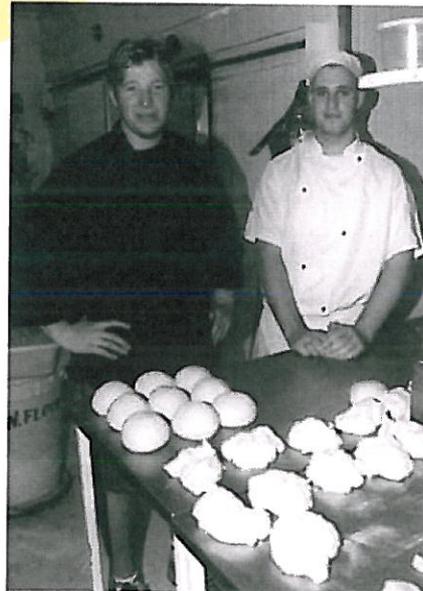
TAFE Tasmania also provides access for students in more geographically isolated areas who might otherwise be unable to get training. The increased use of open learning processes will facilitate improved access.

TAFE's management structure should reflect its unique role in Tasmania

TAFE Tasmania's public accountability has been extended through its establishment as a statutory authority and its Board is committed to building TAFE Tasmania's value to both industry and individuals. The Board recognises that this requires responsiveness in flexibility and in cost management. TAFE must be empowered to achieve the enhanced performance that will support the strategic development of the state.

To enhance TAFE Tasmania's value as a provider of vocational education and training we propose:

- To further clarify the key public expectations of TAFE Tasmania.
- Celebrating and communicating the contribution TAFE Tasmania and TAFE Tasmania's staff make to the social and economic well-being of the state.
- Further developing TAFE Tasmania's role in the equitable provision of training opportunities for individuals and target groups.



6 Quality outcomes

There is a need to assure the quality of training

Tasmania's training system needs to perform to expectations by all Tasmanians of efficiency, effectiveness and quality.

- Employers need assurance that training will lead to their employees having improved levels of skill demonstrated in the workplace and that qualifications can be confidently accepted as evidence of skill level.
- Students need to be assured they will receive quality training, and that they will be given the necessary teaching, practical support and sufficient time to learn properly.

The training system in Tasmania has several quality assurance processes based on best practice standards. For example, to achieve Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status, Tasmanian training providers need to satisfy trained auditors that they meet recognised national standards. These processes are among the most stringent in Australia.

The traineeship system should be a particular focus for quality assurance

The small size of Tasmania, generally cooperative relationships in the Tasmanian training industry and the overall professionalism of most stakeholders has enabled Tasmania to develop a sound traineeship system.

However, Tasmania's future growth and prosperity needs a traineeship system that performs above average and this will require the following strategic quality objectives to be developed:

- A more strategic approach to traineeship investment for the future;
- Overcoming specific significant functional weaknesses in the current system;
- Developing a stronger performance orientation within the system; and
- Strategic thinking about the long-term future of traineeships and apprenticeships.

The report of the independent review of the quality of Tasmania's traineeship system, '*A Risky Business*', completed in 1999, proposes a framework to monitor and assure the quality of the system. A range of risk management measures and strategic audits will be introduced to ensure quality outcomes for individual trainees and employers.

There needs to be confidence in training providers

The community expects that training is not merely relevant, but of a national standard. It is important that the quality of the Tasmanian VET system is maintained through the regulation of training providers and training programs. Systems are being developed to ensure this.

Legislation should allow for penalties if standards are not met

The *Vocational Education and Training Act 1994* has been amended to ensure a quality system in Tasmania by:

- Providing a legislative basis for the full implementation of the National Training Framework and New Apprenticeships;
- Streamlining administrative processes in relation to training.

The amended Act also continues to ensure the quality of training delivered on an ongoing basis through strengthening of the powers of the Tasmanian State Training Authority's two associated committees:

- The Tasmania Accreditation and Recognition Committee (TAREC); and
- The Tasmanian Training Agreements Committee (TTAC).

The Government needs to ensure consistent quality for training that it purchases

Service standards have been developed for the purchase of training from Registered Training Organisations in accordance with the VET Plan. These arrangements will be maintained and contracts reviewed regularly.

To guarantee the quality of training outcomes we propose:

- Monitoring training outcomes to ensure the integrity of qualifications.
- Taking action to strengthen and improve the traineeship system.
- To implement the national quality system for training organisations and replace existing training programs with programs reflecting national industry best practice.
- To monitor and audit the major components of the vocational education and training system to ensure that quality training is implemented.





Part 5 The Information System

What kind of information system does Tasmania need to support the goals for the 21st century?

The role of information services is changing

Within our learning society the role of the information system in Tasmania is extending. The traditional management of books and paper records in libraries and archives is changing to the facilitation of access to information in all formats, including electronic forms. This changing role must continue to develop so that Tasmania can take full advantage of the information and communication age.

Information services must develop collections of and ways of accessing information resources that allow delivery of information from anywhere in the world, into people's local communities.

Knowledge is the foundation of a learning society

The foundation of our learning society is knowledge and information. Access to information allows everyone the opportunity to participate in a healthy democracy, economic prosperity and personal and community well-being.

Tasmania's future depends on how well we access and communicate information

In the information age access to information and communication networks has become fundamental. Tasmania's future depends on how well we use information and communication technology in all aspects of our cultural, recreational, political, educational and economic life.

We must ensure that Tasmanians and their businesses and industries have ready access to local and global information. The speed with which those in business can find and utilise information will increasingly determine their competitiveness. Access to information resources will also enhance economic development through the development of individual and collective innovations and enterprises and the access to the world marketplace.

'The speed with which those in business can find and utilise information will increasingly determine their competitiveness.'

Access to information also influences the quality of personal and community life

Access to quality information, including recreational and creative literature, also enriches our personal lives and enables each of us to play a fuller part in the community. Information can open doors to new areas of learning and interest. A record of the community's memory is also fundamental to ensuring a culturally rich Tasmania.

The advent of electronic forms of information creates new access issues

The advent of new technologies is also changing our community's expectations about the nature of information services. There is a global trend for information and cultural resources to be in an electronic format, as well as in traditional forms such as paper and films. Members of the community increasingly expect easy access to electronic information.

Access to information must be equitable

Tasmania now has the technical infrastructure to allow delivery of information services to any place at any time. If the Tasmanian community is to embrace new technologies then all members of the community must have access to services, not just those who live in our cities or who can afford modern personal computers. In a learning society access to information must be free of charge and equally available to everyone.

The goals we have set for the 21st century emphasise closer working relationships between education, training and information systems and focus on Tasmania as a learning society:

- 1** Tasmania will have world class education, training and information systems.
- 2** Tasmania will become a learning society, a community of lifelong learners.
- 3** Tasmania will have an information rich environment with ready access to knowledge and information resources of the world.

The priorities to achieve these goals in information services are:

-  Access to information
-  Access to community services and networks
-  Preservation of Tasmania's documentary heritage
-  Partnerships between providers

Priorities in information services to support our goals for the 21st century

1 Access to information

Public access to information is vital to allow people to become more fully involved in the democratic process. By using information and communication technology, Tasmanians should have ready access to information about all aspects of life and be provided with opportunities to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives.

Open access to information can eliminate barriers to information and educational opportunities that may previously have faced people such as those who live in isolated or socio-economically depressed areas or those who have disabilities.

The extent of access to information, including electronic information and computer associated technology, has become an indicator of social division. There is a danger that if access to information is not equitably provided through information services, Tasmanian society will become divided into the 'information-rich' and 'information-poor.'

Information must be openly accessible

Information must be open and available to all, without precondition, whether the resources are accessible in printed or electronic format. Information services have a role to play in fostering social cohesion by making sure that everyone is better informed and has an opportunity to be consulted.

The accessibility of information, enhanced by networked technologies, will ensure that people in remote and regional parts of the state are able to access and explore new opportunities and communicate with anyone in the world.

To provide statewide public access to local and global information we propose:

- To develop collections of and ways to access information resources to meet the needs of the whole community.
- To develop systems and services which facilitate community access.
- To deliver information to members of the community in the form they want, and where and when they want it.
- To endeavour to provide equitable access to information regardless of a person's location, socio-economic status or special needs.
- To provide leadership in the development of a State Information Plan.

2 Access to community services and networks

Community information access resources should be used efficiently

Changing social and economic demands and the scarcity of public resources, particularly in regional areas, means that information resources and access facilities need to be used as efficiently as possible. The community needs to be involved in deciding how these resources can be used as optimally as possible.

Access to information provides a sense of community cohesion

The Online Access Centres and computers in schools and libraries have the capacity to bring the community together, reinforce community values and promote social cohesion. Community participation and acceptance of new technologies reduces isolation, especially among the elderly and others who find it difficult to travel or the young who may feel alienated or isolated.

Ability to communicate and do business with government should be facilitated

Information services are also able to deliver information on local, state and Commonwealth government services as well as community services. This network can promote a sense of belonging to all members of the community. Faster and more effective transactions with government and public services are possible through community networks. There are also opportunities for using these networks for better communication within the community and with government.

Communication between all interest groups should be facilitated

In an information society there should be free and easy communication and interaction between all sorts of interest groups no matter how small or isolated.

To provide facilities and opportunities for community networking and access to digital technology we propose:

- To identify opportunities for working with community members to improve access and services.
- To develop integrated access to public, government and community information resources regardless of their format, ownership or location.

3 Preservation of Tasmania's documentary heritage

Information services help to preserve our cultural heritage

Through a tradition of collecting and storing resources, our libraries, archives and other cultural institutions have long been custodians of the community's identity and self-image. Information services ensure that culturally significant materials in all formats are conserved and preserved for future generations. There is an increasing need to also preserve digital resources to allow them to be accessed by future generations of Tasmanians.

Electronic technologies allow Tasmanians to have open access to significant items

Information services are developing ways of making culturally significant items held in public collections available to all Tasmanians, when they are unable to access the items physically. For example, it is possible to view collections held at the State Library or the Archives Office of Tasmania by accessing their web sites. It is now possible to do more than passively view such items, through networked computers that allow people to interact with the items in a more interesting way.

To enable the preservation, interpretation and creation of content from Tasmania's documentary heritage we propose:

- To preserve and conserve heritage materials for the community.
- To increase and enhance community access to heritage materials.
- To provide leadership to the community in preserving and providing access to Tasmania's documentary heritage.



4 Partnerships between providers

Information services are a lifelong learning resource for the Tasmanian community and should be connected to education and training services in formal and informal ways. They can support the education and training of students by offering a wide variety of resources that complement those available in formal education and training environments. They also provide the print, visual, auditory and electronic resources that help to engender a love of learning and appreciation of literature and other cultural materials.

- Information services can provide support for children and young people in acquiring basic skills, building their personal knowledge base and developing information-searching and analysis skills. Librarians help children to access information resources and use them appropriately.
- Information services also have a role to play in assisting adults to acquire information literacy they did not have the opportunity to develop when they were at school. For example, libraries and Online Access Centres are ideal places for adults to learn to use computers and access the Internet.

Information services provide a safe and supportive environment for children and adults to learn to use information resources and become independent learners.

These services also provide flexible study opportunities in terms of time and location. For example students of all ages can use their local library to complete homework and assignments, study in a quiet and comfortable place, and get support and help.

In developing partnerships with the lifelong learning and cultural sectors at state, local government and community level we propose:

- To improve services to young people and students in collaboration with the schools.
- To support literacy skills, including information literacy, of all Tasmanians.
- To develop and pursue cooperative partnerships with relevant institutions, communities and organisations.

Part 6

What kind of resourcing models support the goals for the 21st century

By making sure we cooperate in the use of our resources we can provide greater benefits to our community. Excellent examples of cooperative resource use include the co-location of public libraries, access centres and childcare in schools.

By careful management and avoiding duplication we can increase the benefits flowing from our available assets and resources.

The Department of Education has one of the state's largest workforces, with around 10,000 employees, and the largest property base (over \$1.1 billion in replacement value with 500 separate locations and buildings). It also has the most extensive information technology infrastructure and is the major information resource in the state.

The buildings, sites and equipment through which we deliver education, training and information to Tasmanians are community-owned assets. We are collectively accountable for the proper use of the resources provided to us and the assets we have to work with.

To ensure that we get the best value from our resources we propose:

- To have management structures that support wise resource use and make clear who is responsible and accountable.
- To monitor and report more effectively on the costs of providing services.
- To ensure cooperation and coordination between all sections of the Department of Education.
- To ensure greater cooperation and coordination between the Department of Education, other State Government departments and agencies, and education and training providers.
- Making sure that our resources are allocated equitably, efficiently and effectively.
- To be strategic in making decisions relating to capital works and maintenance, and information technology provision and support.
- To identify and eliminate wasteful duplication of resources or services.



Part 7

M Monitoring and reporting progress

We need ways to monitor how well we are implementing *Learning Together*

All plans need to be monitored to see if what was planned has been implemented and whether it has made a difference.

Benchmarks are a part of planning and reporting processes

In recent years, monitoring and reporting is often described in terms of 'benchmarks'. Benchmarks are simply standards that are used as points of comparison. Once a benchmark has been agreed on, it is possible to report 'signposts along the road' that mark stages of progress towards achieving the agreed benchmark.

Benchmarks for progress are being developed as part of *Tasmania Together*

A key feature of the Government's vision statement *Tasmania Together* is the development of a set of performance indicators and benchmarks to match the long-term social, economic and environmental goals for Tasmania. Once benchmarks are in place, reporting whether they have been achieved is relatively straightforward.

Benchmarks are needed for *Learning Together*

We need benchmarks for our 'goals for the 21st century', so that we have some point of comparison for understanding when they have been achieved:

■ **Goal 1: Tasmania will have world class education, training and information systems.**

Benchmarks for this goal are the best practice standards for 'world class' that can be identified from across the world. This might involve things like students' level of achievement, teaching practices, and the professional standards of the workforce.

■ **Goal 2: Tasmania will become a learning society, a community of lifelong learners.**

Benchmarks for this goal are the kind of evidence needed in order for Tasmania to be recognised as a learning society. This might involve things such as the number of people involved in formal and informal learning, and the number of new enterprises that have been developed.

■ **Goal 3: Tasmania will have an information rich environment, with ready access to the knowledge and information resources of the world.**

Benchmarks for this goal are the evidence needed to show that Tasmanians have ready access to, and are making use of, information resources. This might involve things such as the use of networked computer resources, the amount of government information that is readily available to the public and the quality of web sites designed for students, parents and the community.

There are many benchmarks that could be used

Education, training and information services already use many benchmarks. Some things like literacy and numeracy are relatively easy to benchmark and assess. For example, there are national benchmarks being developed for literacy and numeracy. These benchmarks are the standards that children need to achieve at each level of schooling. Ministers for Education have agreed that all Australian states will assess their students in Years 3, 5 and 7 against these benchmarks and report the percentage of children who achieve them.

It is also relatively easy to assess and report things that can be counted – like the number of children who attend school or go on to university, the number of students who complete vocational education courses, the number of books that are borrowed from libraries or the number of times a web site is visited.

Many things that we value are harder to assess against benchmarks

Other aspects of education, training and information services that we value are less tangible and harder to assess against a benchmark. For example, it is harder to assess and report how safe children feel at school, how enterprising workers are, or how much joy and cultural value Tasmanians get from access to the Internet. Assessment and reporting practices that measure a range of things we value are becoming more freely available. For example, it is possible to measure teaching practices in a particular school against agreed principles of what effective teaching practice should look like. It is possible to assess a training provider against quality standards for providing training. It is possible to assess whether people think a service is improving by doing a survey that compares results with a previous one.

'... it is harder to assess and report how safe children feel at school, how enterprising workers are, or how much joy and cultural value Tasmanians get from access to the Internet.'

The decision on *what* we should monitor and report and *how much* assessment and reporting we do is very important. We need enough information to ensure that our plans are working or not working, without making assessment dominate.

Monitoring and reporting will not in themselves improve performance

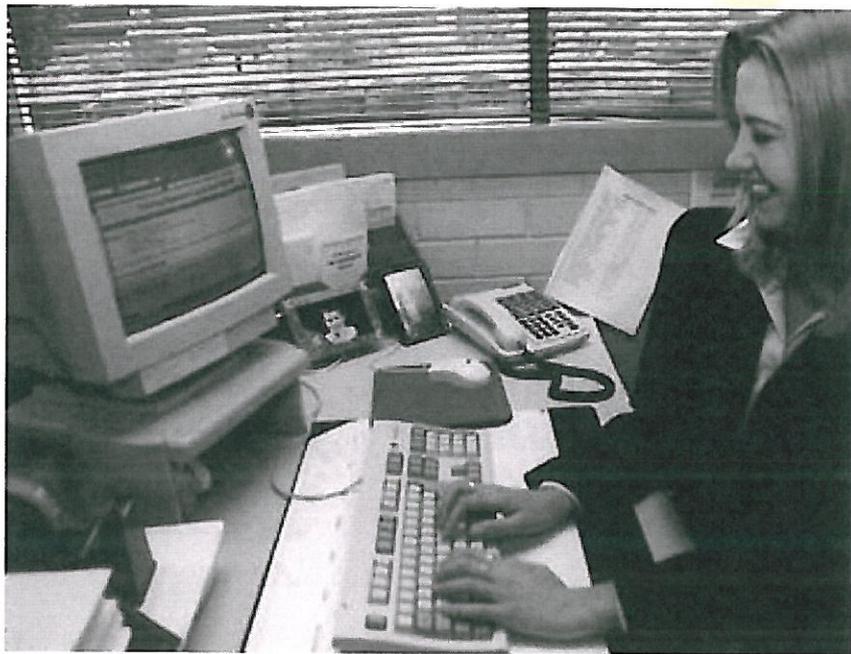
Assessment and reporting will not, in themselves, improve our performance and must not distract us from strategies and actions that are our priorities. However, it is important that we have a clear idea of what we are trying to achieve and whether our programs are working.

We must further develop these assessment and reporting processes against agreed benchmarks so that all Tasmanians have the opportunity to understand what is being achieved in education, training and information services and whether our plans are being carried out.

'... it is important that we have a clear idea of what we are trying to achieve and whether our programs are working.'

To ensure monitoring and reporting of progress we propose:

- To develop benchmarks for our three goals for the 21st century and report annually on progress towards achieving them.
- To monitor progress and report annually on each of the priorities identified in *Learning Together*.
- Each section of the Department will monitor and report their performance against agreed indicators.
- Student learning outcomes will continue to be assessed, monitored and reported at school and state level.
- The essential outcomes and standards for the curriculum will be identified through the Curriculum Consultation and will be monitored and reported.



Part 8 Invitation to respond

Learning Together will provide the basis for the Government's planning in education, training and information services. It is therefore important that it aims to meet the needs that the community identifies as major priorities, and incorporates the vision that Tasmanians have for education, training and information services.

The present document draws on a first round of consultation with some major interest groups. This draft now requires comment and input from as many other people as possible. Your views on the Goals and the principles are welcome and your priorities and strategies for the future are of particular interest.

How to respond

Complete some or all of the response form provided here, detach and post to *Learning Together*, c/- Ms Paula Wriedt, MHA, Minister for Education, Level 8, 10 Murray Street, Hobart, 7000 or fax to (03) 6233 4980

Or

Write a response and post as above

Or

Complete some or all of the response form through the Internet at the *Learning Together* website www.doe.tased.edu.au/learningtogether

Or

Write a response and email to minister.wriedt.office.staff@central.tased.edu.au. This can also be done through the web site above.

Please respond by 20 April 2000

For questions or clarification or to arrange a discussion session around the document for your school or group.

Write to Danielle Kidd, Office of the Minister for Education, Level 8, 10 Murray Street, Hobart, 7000

Or fax (03) 6233 4980

Or Telephone (03) 6233 2371

Or Use the *Learning Together* website at www.doe.tased.edu.au/learningtogether

Or Email to danielle.kidd@central.tased.edu.au

Response Form for Learning Together

1 Do you agree with the goals for the 21st century or would you make changes?

Tasmania will have world class education, training and information systems.

Tasmania will become a learning society, a community of lifelong learners.

Tasmania will have an information rich environment, with ready access to the knowledge and information resources of the world.

2 What is your response to the Key Principles?

Children and young people are the starting point for the future of Tasmania. All our students need to perform well at school and keep learning throughout their lives.

Our public education, training and information system is the number one priority.

Closer links between the education, training and information service elements of the Department of Education are needed.

■ Decision-making will be informed by maximum consultation.

■ Research evidence should help to guide policy and practice.

■ Flexibility and diversity in programs will be encouraged.

■ Services will be focused on the needs of those people who use them.

■ Services will be equitable and inclusive.

■ People are the Education Department's most important resource and will be recognised and treated as such.

■ Resources will be allocated in ways that are most equitable, efficient and effective.

4 What are your comments on the kind of education system Tasmania needs to achieve our goals for the 21st century?

Quality curriculum.

Quality teaching.

Quality schools.

Quality Leadership.

Equity.

5 What are your comments about the kind of training system that Tasmania needs to achieve our goals for the 21st century?

Equitable opportunities.

Meeting training needs.

Being learner centred.

Facilitating enterprise and initiative.

Enhancing the role of TAFE Tasmania.

Quality outcomes.

6 What are your comments about the kind of information system that Tasmania needs to achieve our goals for the 21st century?

Access to information.

Access to community services and networks.

Preservation of Tasmania's documentary heritage.

■ Partnerships between providers.

7 What are your comments about the kind of resourcing models needed to support the goals for the 21st century?

8 What are your comments about monitoring and reporting progress?

9 Are there any other comments or suggestions that you would like to add?

10 Are there any other strategies you would like to suggest to assist in achieving our goals for the 21st century?

This response is (please tick as appropriate)

From an individual

On behalf of a group (please indicate nature of group and number of respondents represented)

Optional

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

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Appendix C

Example of mapping of metaphors in *Learning Together*

Appendix C – Example of mapping of metaphors in *Learning Together*

*An extract of the scan of metaphors of the *Learning Together* policy undertaken for this study.

CONCEPTUAL GROUPING	LEARNING IS COLLABORATIVE	LEARNING IS AN ACTIVITY	LEARNING IS...(OTHER)
<p>LEARNING</p>	<p>WORTHWHILE LEARNING IS UNIVERSAL LEARNING IS LEARNING TOGETHER THE CULTURE OF PROFESSIONALISM (QUALITY LEADERSHIP) IS CREATED BY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY IS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING. ADVICE TO THE SYSTEM ABOUT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SHOULD BE CONSULTATIVE. THE COMMUNITY IS A RESOURCE FOR SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS. THE COMMUNITY IS A RESOURCE FOR LEARNING. SCHOOLS ARE THE PEOPLE WHO PARTICIPATE IN EDUCATION WITHIN THEM. EMPOWERING SCHOOLS WILL ENABLE THEM TO CATER BETTER FOR STUDENTS. EDUCATORS SHOULD BE COMMITTED TO THE COMMUNITY. QUALITY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE INVOLVES CONSULTATION. QUALITY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE INVOLVES MORE OPEN COMMUNICATION. LEARNING IS PREPARATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY. METAPHOR THE LEARNING OF INDIVIDUALS BENEFITS SOCIETY. POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION IS SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING. METAPHOR</p>	<p>LEARNING IS AN ACTIVITY. LEARNING IS ACTIVE. LEARNING IS WORK LEARNING IS AN EVENT. LEARNING IS AN OBJECT. TEACHER LEARNING IS PROFESSIONALISM. SCHOOLS SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE. THE COMMUNITY IS A RESOURCE FOR SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS. THE COMMUNITY IS A RESOURCE FOR LEARNING. SCHOOLS ARE THE PEOPLE WHO PARTICIPATE IN EDUCATION WITHIN THEM. EMPOWERING SCHOOLS WILL ENABLE THEM TO CATER BETTER FOR STUDENTS. QUALITY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE INVOLVES CONSULTATION. QUALITY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE INVOLVES MORE OPEN COMMUNICATION. LEARNING IS PREPARATION FOR WORK. METAPHOR LEARNING IS PREPARATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY. METAPHOR CURRICULUM RESULTS IN EDUCATION. LEARNING SHOULD BE MONITORED AND</p>	<p>TEACHER QUALITY IS CENTRAL TO STUDENT LEARNING. A SUCCESSFUL SYSTEM IS ONE WHERE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ARE ENHANCED. TEACHERS REQUIRE ONGOING FEEDBACK AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING. LEARNING IS ABOUT KNOWING, UNDERSTANDING, VALUING AND DOING. METAPHOR LEARNING HAS PERSONAL AND SOCIETAL VALUES. LEARNING QUALIFICATIONS SHOULD BE RECOGNIZABLE. STATE INVESTMENT IN</p>

	<p>LEARNING IS A COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY. METAPHOR THE CAPACITY TO WORK WITH OTHERS IS A FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE LEARNING. METAPHOR LEARNING SERVES THE INTERESTS OF A RANGE OF STAKEHOLDERS.</p> <p>LEARNING IS CREATING COMMUNITY VALUE. METAPHOR LEARNING IS RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY VALUES. METAPHOR</p> <p>SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT PARTICIPATION IN LEARNING THROUGHOUT ALL OF LIFE.</p> <p>IF THESE ENVIRONMENTS ARE SAFE AND INCLUSIVE, PEOPLE WILL LEARN THROUGHOUT LIFE.</p> <p>INCLUSIVITY SUPPORTS LEARNING.</p> <p>RESPONSE TO THESE (RIGHTS OF SAFETY AND SECURITY) REFLECT HOW WE ACT IN THE COMMUNITY AS WELL AS OUR LEARNING INSTITUTIONS.</p> <p>PRACTICES CAN BE COMMUNICATED. (CONDUIT)</p> <p>EFFECTIVE BEHAVIOUR IS EFFECTIVE FOR THE SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY.</p> <p>AT RISK MEANS NOT ACCESSING EDUCATION OR TRAINING OR NOT BEING INCLUDED.</p> <p>'AT RISK' IS NOT PARTICIPATING. METAPHOR ATTENDANCE IS A RESPONSIBILITY. METAPHOR LEARNING CAN ONLY OCCUR IN SCHOOLS.</p> <p>PARTICIPATION IS LEARNING. METAPHOR LEARNING IS A PATHWAY. METAPHOR (THIS LINKS WITH LEARNING IS A COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY IN THAT WE CAN BE ON THE PATHWAY WITH OTHERS)</p> <p>LITERACY ENABLES US TO PARTICIPATE.</p> <p>LITERACY ENABLES US TO 'ENTER THE WORLD OF OTHERS'.</p> <p>TASMANIANS SUPPORT INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS. LEARNING ORGANISATIONS SHOULD INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS.</p>	<p>REPORTED.</p> <p>LEARNING FOR TEACHERS IS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. METAPHOR THE LEARNING OF INDIVIDUALS BENEFITS SOCIETY.</p> <p>INDIVIDUAL LEARNING IS FOR WORK. SCHOOLING IS DIRECTED LEARNING. METAPHOR</p> <p>POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION IS SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING. METAPHOR LEARNING IS PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING OR EDUCATION. METAPHOR LEARNING IS A COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY. METAPHOR</p> <p>LEARNING IS PRODUCTIVE. (A PRODUCT) METAPHOR</p> <p>PEOPLE SEEK LEARNING.</p> <p>SELF-CONFIDENCE IS A FOUNDATION FOR (FUTURE) LEARNING. (CAN WE LEARN WITHOUT BEING SELF-CONFIDENT) METAPHOR</p> <p>NON-PARTICIPATION MEANS THESE FOUNDATIONS MAY NOT BE ESTABLISHED. PARTICIPATION IS ESTABLISHING FOUNDATIONS. METAPHOR</p> <p>LEARNING IS A PATHWAY THAT REQUIRES MULTIPLE ENTRY AND RE-ENTRY POINTS. METAPHOR</p> <p>LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ARE LINKED. INVESTMENT IN LEARNING SHOULD RESPOND TO LOCAL NEED.</p> <p>LEARNING CAN BE DELIVERED.</p> <p>LEARNING IS RELATED TO THE CONDUIT METAPHOR. METAPHOR</p> <p>LOCAL LEARNING DELIVERY SHOULD MATCH LOCAL NEED.</p>	<p>LEARNING (TRAINING) SHOULD BE TARGETED. LEARNING IS A FOUNDATION OF THE TASMANIAN ECONOMY. METAPHOR</p> <p>WORLD CLASS IS SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS. CAN WE LEARN WHEN WE DON'T FEEL SAFE OR SUPPORTED</p> <p>LEARNING IS A RIGHT. METAPHOR</p> <p>LEARNING SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO ALL.</p>
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	<p>LEARNING ORGANISATIONS SHOULD TREAT ALL STUDENTS EQUITABLY.</p> <p>THIS PROVISION (FOR GIFTED STUDENTS) MAY BE MENTORING. MENTORING IS SUPPORT FOR GIFTED STUDENTS. METAPHOR</p> <p>TECHNOLOGY WILL BENEFIT LEARNERS IN OUR SOCIETY. TASMANIA CAN BE AN INTELLIGENT ISLAND.</p> <p>PARTNERSHIPS CREATE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES.</p> <p>EDUCATIONAL CONTENT CAN BE DELIVERED TO LOCAL, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL MARKETS.</p> <p>LINKS BETWEEN CULTURES PROMOTE LEARNING.</p> <p>LEARNING HAPPENS IN A COMMUNITY.</p> <p>LEARNING IS SUCCESS. METAPHOR (LEARNING IS SUCCESS IN A COMMUNITY)</p> <p>LEARNING CAN OCCUR IN COMMUNITIES.</p> <p>LEARNERS REQUIRE ENGAGEMENT.</p> <p>LEARNING ENRICHES SOCIETY.</p> <p>COMMUNITY LEARNING FOSTERS LIFELONG LEARNING.</p> <p>THE STATE LIBRARY, ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES AND ADULT EDUCATION ALL SUPPORT COMMUNITY LEARNING.</p> <p>COMMUNITY LEARNING IS AN OBJECT. METAPHOR</p> <p>COMMUNITY LEARNING IS A SET OF OPPORTUNITIES. METAPHOR</p> <p>THE STATE LIBRARY, ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES AND ADULT EDUCATION ARE ALL OBJECTS (ELEMENTS) OF COMMUNITY LEARNING. METAPHOR</p> <p>LINKS CAN BE MADE BETWEEN THESE TWO OBJECTS (THE STATE LIBRARY & ADULT EDUCATION) .</p> <p>ELEMENTS OF COMMUNITY LEARNING (EG. STATE LIBRARY AND ADULT EDUCATION) HAVE EXPERTISE.</p> <p>TASMANIANS NEED TO ENGAGE IN LEARNING.</p> <p>PARTNERSHIPS ARE LINKS. METAPHOR</p> <p>PARTNERSHIPS ARE LINKS ON PATHWAYS OF LEARNING. METAPHOR</p>	<p>LEARNING IS DELIVERY OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS.</p> <p>LEARNING CAN BE ORIENTATED UP. (MAXIMIZED)</p> <p>TRAINING REQUIRES STRUCTURE.</p> <p>DESIRE FOR LEARNING RESULTS FROM TRADITIONS.</p> <p>LEARNING IS CREATING COMMUNITY VALUE. METAPHOR</p> <p>LEARNING IS RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY VALUES. METAPHOR</p> <p>TAFE LEARNING IS UNDERVALUED. (BY THE COMMUNITY)</p> <p>LEARNING INSTITUTIONS ARE PERCEIVED AS HAVE DIFFERING VALUES.</p> <p>LEARNING OCCURS IN PARTICULAR ENVIRONMENTS</p> <p>IF THESE ENVIRONMENTS ARE SAFE AND INCLUSIVE, PEOPLE WILL LEARN THROUGHOUT LIFE.</p> <p>SAFENESS SUPPORTS LEARNING.</p> <p>BETTER LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS ARE ORIENTATED AS HIGHER.</p> <p>LEARNING CAN BE ORGANIZED.</p> <p>LEARNING IS ORGANIZED ACTIVITY.</p> <p>METAPHOR (CAN LEARNING BE DISORGANIZED)</p> <p>PROGRAMS CAN BE DOCUMENTED.</p> <p>PROGRAMS CAN BE EFFECTIVE OR NOT EFFECTIVE.</p> <p>EFFECTIVE BEHAVIOUR PROGRAMS ARE SUPPORTIVE PROGRAMS.</p> <p>PROGRAMS CAN SHOW BEST PRACTICE.</p> <p>BEST PRACTICE IS EFFECTIVE PRACTICE.</p> <p>PRACTICES CAN BE IMPLEMENTED.</p>
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	<p>GOOD TEACHERS LEAD. TEACHING IS LEADING. METAPHOR TEACHERS LEAD STUDENTS INTO THIS SERIOUS PURSUIT. TEACHING BUILDS FUTURE NATIONAL RESOURCES. TEACHING IS BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE. LEARNING IS A RESOURCE. METAPHOR TEACHING IS A CONTRIBUTION. METAPHOR OUTSTANDING TEACHERS CAN CONTRIBUTE. TEACHING IS A CONTRIBUTION. METAPHOR SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES ARE THE HANDRAILS. METAPHOR HANDRAILS PROVIDE SECURITY. SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES PROVIDE SECURITY FOR LEARNING. SUCCESSFUL LEARNING IS PARTICIPATION. METAPHOR</p>	<p>IS BEST PRACTICE SAFE AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICES CAN BE COMMUNICATED. (CONDUIT) PROJECTS CAN BE PILOTS. PILOT PROJECTS CAN BE DUPLICATED. AT RISK MEANS NOT ACCESSING EDUCATION OR TRAINING OR NOT BEING INCLUDED. ‘AT RISK’ IS NOT PARTICIPATING. METAPHOR AT RISK STUDENTS MAY MISS OPPORTUNITIES. ATTENDANCE SUPPORTS EDUCATION. SCHOOLING IS A CONTAINER WHICH IS FILLED BY ATTENDANCE. METAPHOR ATTENDANCE IS A RESPONSIBILITY. METAPHOR LEARNING CAN ONLY OCCUR IN SCHOOLS. PARTICIPATION IS LEARNING. METAPHOR WHEN STUDENTS ATTEND, THEY LEARN. SCHOOLING AFFECTS LIFE CHANCES. PARTICIPATION AFFECTS LEARNING. LEARNING CHOICES SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE. FLEXIBLE LEARNING IS GOOD. FLEXIBLE IS CHOICE. METAPHOR LEARNING IS A PATHWAY. METAPHOR LITERACY LEARNING CAN FOLLOW EXPECTED DEVELOPMENTAL STANDARDS. INTERVENTION CAN ADDRESS LITERACY LEARNING DIFFICULTIES. LITERACY IS LEARNED. LITERACY CAN ONLY BE LEARNED SUCCESSFULLY IN THE EARLY YEARS. THE EARLIER LITERACY IS LEARNED THE BETTER. ONLINE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING IS GOOD LEARNING.</p>	
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	<p>LEARNING IS LIFE. METAPHOR LEARNING ORGANISATIONS SHOULD TREAT ALL STUDENTS EQUITABLY. PROGRESS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WITHIN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM SHOULD BE REPORTED ON PUBLICLY. LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES NEED TO BE ADVERTISED. ACCESS IS QUANTIFIABLE. METAPHOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES MAY NOT BE ABLE TO ACCESS LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AS EASILY AS OTHER TASMANIANS. THESE PEOPLE CAN BE IDENTIFIED. GIFTED STUDENTS ALSO REQUIRE PROVISION. THIS PROVISION (FOR GIFTED STUDENTS) MAY BE MENTORING. GIFTED STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM EARLY INTERVENTION. SUPPORT FOR GIFTED STUDENTS CAN BE DELIVERED ONLINE. SOCIETY'S MEMBERS REQUIRE ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN ORDER TO LEARN. ACCESS TO INFORMATION ALLOWS FOR INDIVIDUALS TO PARTICIPATE IN SOCIETY. LOCAL AND GLOBAL INFORMATION SHOULD BE ACCESSED. SOCIETY MEMBERS DEMAND ACCESS TO ONLINE INFORMATION. EDUCATION WILL BE DELIVERED ONLINE. ONLINE TECHNOLOGIES ARE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES. METAPHOR ONLINE TECHNOLOGY BENEFITS LEARNERS. TECHNOLOGY WILL BENEFIT LEARNERS IN OUR SOCIETY.</p>	
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	<p>EXCELLENCE CAN BE CONTAINED IN A CENTRE. LEARNING PROGRAMS CAN BE DELIVERED. LEARNING IS DELIVERED THROUGH EDUCATIONAL CONTENT. LEARNING PROVISION IS A SERVICE. METAPHOR EDUCATIONAL PROVISION THROUGH TECHNOLOGIES CAN BE A BUSINESS. PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BUSINESSES AND EDUCATION ARE DESIRABLE. PARTNERSHIPS CREATE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES. EDUCATIONAL CONTENT CAN BE DELIVERED TO LOCAL, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL MARKETS. LINKS BETWEEN 'CULTURES' ARE GOOD. LINKS BETWEEN CULTURES PROMOTE LEARNING. LEARNING HAPPENS IN A COMMUNITY. LEARNING ENHANCES LIFE SKILLS. LEARNING IS SUCCESS. METAPHOR (LEARNING IS SUCCESS IN A COMMUNITY) LEARNERS CAN OCCUR IN COMMUNITIES. LEARNERS REQUIRE ENGAGEMENT. LEARNING ENRICHES SOCIETY. LEARNING IS A CONTAINER, WHICH WE MIGHT PARTICIPATE IN. METAPHOR COMMUNITY LEARNING FOSTERS LIFELONG LEARNING. THE STATE LIBRARY, ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES AND ADULT EDUCATION ALL SUPPORT COMMUNITY LEARNING. COMMUNITY LEARNING IS AN OBJECT.</p>	
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	<p>METAPHOR COMMUNITY LEARNING IS A SET OF OPPORTUNITIES. METAPHOR THE STATE LIBRARY, ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES AND ADULT EDUCATION ARE ALL OBJECTS (ELEMENTS) OF COMMUNITY LEARNING. METAPHOR ADULT EDUCATION IS INFORMAL LEARNING. METAPHOR ELEMENTS OF COMMUNITY LEARNING (EG. STATE LIBRARY AND ADULT EDUCATION) HAVE EXPERTISE. TASMANIANS NEED TO ENGAGE IN LEARNING. PARTNERSHIPS ARE LINKS. METAPHOR PARTNERSHIPS ARE LINKS ON PATHWAYS OF LEARNING. METAPHOR GOOD TEACHERS LEAD. TEACHING IS LEADING. METAPHOR TEACHERS LEAD STUDENTS INTO THIS SERIOUS PURSUIT. TEACHING BUILDS FUTURE NATIONAL RESOURCES. TEACHING IS BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE. LEARNING IS A RESOURCE. METAPHOR TEACHING IS A CONTRIBUTION. METAPHOR OUTSTANDING TEACHERS CAN CONTRIBUTE. TEACHING IS A CONTRIBUTION. METAPHOR LEARNING IS PREY. METAPHOR TEACHING IS HUNTING. METAPHOR SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES ARE THE HANDRAILS. METAPHOR HANDRAILS PROVIDE SECURITY. SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING</p>	
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	<p>EXPERIENCES PROVIDE SECURITY FOR LEARNING.</p> <p>PARTICIPATION IS PARTICIPATION IN LEARNING THROUGHOUT LIFE. METAPHOR (NOT TOGETHER)</p> <p>ACHIEVEMENT IS RECOGNITION OR QUALIFICATIONS RELATED TO LEARNING. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL LEARNING IS ACCESS. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL LEARNING IS ACHIEVEMENT. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL SATISFACTION IS LEARNERS' SATISFACTION WITH LEARNING EXPERIENCE (SCHOOLS, VET, INFORMATION SERVICES). METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL LEARNING IS SATISFACTION. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) LEVEL OF AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION FOR YEAR 10 STUDENTS ABOUT THE ONGOING FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING OPTIONS THAT ARE OPEN TO THEM; METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO FEEL SAFE WHILE ATTENDING OUR LEARNING ORGANISATIONS; METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) NUMBER OF SECONDARY TEACHERS WHO HAVE COMPLETED TRAINING IN BASIC LITERACY SKILLS ACQUISITION; METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) LEVEL OF USE OF ICT MATERIALS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING; METAPHOR</p>	
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<p>EDUCATION</p>	<p>TASMANIAN EDUCATION HAS A HISTORY. TASMANIAN EDUCATION IS ALREADY WORLD-CLASS. TASMANIAN EDUCATION IS PIONEERING. METAPHOR PIONEERING IS GOOD. TASMANIAN EDUCATION IS LEADING EDGE IN MANY AREAS. EDUCATION IS A SURFACE. METAPHOR TEACHING IN TASMANIA IS PIONEERING. METAPHOR GOOD TEACHING IS PIONEERING. METAPHOR BEST PRACTICE EDUCATION CAN BE SHOWCASED. BEST PRACTICE EDUCATION CAN BE IDENTIFIED. TASMANIAN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION SERVICES ARE FIRST CLASS. THESE SERVICES IDEALLY HARMONISE INDIVIDUAL GOALS, PARENTS' DREAMS, LOCAL AND STATE COMMUNITY DESIRES AND ASPIRATIONS, EMPLOYERS DEMANDS, AND TEACHERS, EDUCATORS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS SKILLS AND EXPERTISE. EDUCATION SHOULD ENGAGE. A COMMUNITY CAN BE UNDERPINNED BY EDUCATION. EDUCATION IS A FOUNDATION OF A COMMUNITY. METAPHOR A COMMUNITY IS A BUILDING/STRUCTURE. METAPHOR EMPLOYERS ARE CUSTOMERS OF AN EDUCATION SYSTEM AS MUCH AS STUDENTS ARE CUSTOMERS OF AN EDUCATION SYSTEM.</p>	<p>TASMANIAN EDUCATION HAS A HISTORY. TASMANIAN EDUCATION IS ALREADY WORLD-CLASS. TASMANIAN EDUCATION IS PIONEERING. METAPHOR PIONEERING IS GOOD. TASMANIAN EDUCATION IS LEADING EDGE IN MANY AREAS. EDUCATION IS A SURFACE. METAPHOR TEACHING IN TASMANIA IS PIONEERING. METAPHOR GOOD TEACHING IS PIONEERING. METAPHOR BEST PRACTICE EDUCATION CAN BE SHOWCASED. BEST PRACTICE EDUCATION CAN BE IDENTIFIED. EDUCATION CAN BE LEAD. THESE SERVICES IDEALLY HARMONISE INDIVIDUAL GOALS, PARENTS' DREAMS, LOCAL AND STATE COMMUNITY DESIRES AND ASPIRATIONS, EMPLOYERS DEMANDS, AND TEACHERS, EDUCATORS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS SKILLS AND EXPERTISE. EDUCATION SHOULD ENGAGE. A VALUED AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION WORKFORCE IS THE FOUNDATION OF WORLD- CLASS ACHIEVEMENT. METAPHOR A VALUED AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION WORKFORCE IS THE FOUNDATION OF THE BRIDGE. METAPHOR A COMMUNITY CAN BE UNDERPINNED BY EDUCATION. EDUCATION IS A FOUNDATION OF A COMMUNITY. METAPHOR A COMMUNITY IS A BUILDING/STRUCTURE.</p>	<p>FIRST CLASS EDUCATION IS A PLACE. METAPHOR WORLD CLASS EDUCATION IS A PLACE. METAPHOR</p>
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	<p>METAPHOR AN EDUCATION SYSTEM CAN HAVE ELEMENTS. ACCESS, PARTICIPATION AND ACHIEVEMENT ARE ELEMENTS OF AN EDUCATION SYSTEM. SUCCESS IS INCREASING ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION. METAPHOR IMPROVING ACHIEVEMENT IS QUALITY PROVISION OF EDUCATION. NEITHER ELEMENT IS ISOLATED. EMPLOYERS ARE CUSTOMERS OF AN EDUCATION SYSTEM AS MUCH AS STUDENTS ARE CUSTOMERS OF AN EDUCATION SYSTEM. SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS PARTICIPATION IN FORMAL PROGRAMS, INCLUDING SCHOOLING, TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS ENROLMENTS IN ADULT EDUCATION METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL LEARNING IS PARTICIPATION. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL ACHIEVEMENT IS STUDENT ACCREDITATION FOLLOWING PARTICIPATION IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COURSES. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL ACHIEVEMENT IS THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING TASMANIAN CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION (TCE) SUBJECTS. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL SATISFACTION IS INDUSTRY SATISFACTION WITH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING OUTCOMES. METAPHOR SUCCESS IS TEACHERS' AND OTHER STAFF'S HIGH (OR HIGHER) SATISFACTION LEVEL</p>	
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	<p>WITH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS RELEVANT TO THE CHALLENGES OF ACHIEVING A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION SYSTEM; METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS HIGH OR HIGHER SATISFACTION OF TEACHER GRADUATES, EMPLOYED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, WITH THE SUPPORT RECEIVED DURING THEIR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING; METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) NUMBER OF PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOLS, CHILDCARE SERVICES AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS; METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) NUMBER OF POSITIVE REPORTS IN THE LOCAL MEDIA REGARDING EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION SERVICES WITHIN THE STATE; METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) LEVEL OF SATISFACTION THAT THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY REPORTS REGARDING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND INTEGRITY OF CONSULTATION PROCESSES THAT ARE USED; METAPHOR</p>	
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<p>TRAINING</p>	<p>TASMANIAN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION SERVICES ARE FIRST CLASS.</p>	<p>TRAINING IS DELIVERED THROUGH A SERVICE.</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS PARTICIPATION IN FORMAL PROGRAMS, INCLUDING SCHOOLING, TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS ENROLMENTS IN ADULT EDUCATION METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL LEARNING IS PARTICIPATION. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL ACHIEVEMENT IS STUDENT ACCREDITATION FOLLOWING PARTICIPATION IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING COURSES. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL SATISFACTION IS INDUSTRY SATISFACTION WITH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING OUTCOMES. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL SATISFACTION IS LEARNERS' SATISFACTION WITH LEARNING EXPERIENCE (SCHOOLS, VET, INFORMATION SERVICES). METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS TEACHERS' AND OTHER STAFF'S HIGH (OR HIGHER) SATISFACTION LEVEL WITH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS RELEVANT TO THE CHALLENGES OF ACHIEVING A WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION SYSTEM; METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS A HIGH (OR HIGHER) PERCENTAGE OF VET TEACHERS WHO MEET TRAINING PACKAGE TECHNICAL COMPETENCE AND ASSESSOR REQUIREMENTS; METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) NUMBER OF</p>
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		<p>PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOLS, SECONDARY COLLEGES AND TAFE TASMANIA; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) LEVELS OF STUDENT, STAFF AND EMPLOYER SATISFACTION WITH INSTITUTE OF TAFE TASMANIA. METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) NUMBER OF POSITIVE REPORTS IN THE LOCAL MEDIA REGARDING EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION SERVICES WITHIN THE STATE; METAPHOR</p>	
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<p>SCHOOLING</p>	<p>TEACHERS ARE EMPLOYED IN SCHOOLS. SCHOOLS ARE CONTAINERS. METAPHOR THOSE WITHOUT GOOD CHARACTER SHOULDN'T BE EMPLOYED IN SCHOOLS.</p>	<p>SUCCESSFUL ACCESS IS THE AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AND OTHER SERVICES TO THE WIDER COMMUNITY. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS STUDENT RETENTION AT SCHOOL METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RATES METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL ACHIEVEMENT IS POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS FOR STUDENTS. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL SATISFACTION IS PARENT SATISFACTION WITH LOCAL SCHOOL. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL SATISFACTION IS LIBRARIES' AND SCHOOLS' SATISFACTION WITH THE INTERNAL SUPPORT PROVISION. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL SATISFACTION IS LEARNERS' SATISFACTION WITH LEARNING EXPERIENCE (SCHOOLS, VET, INFORMATION SERVICES). METAPHOR SUCCESS IS A HIGH (OR HIGHER) PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS WHO HAVE ESTABLISHED PARTNERSHIPS WITH THEIR COMMUNITY; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS A HIGH (OR HIGHER) PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS WHERE FACILITIES ARE USED BY THE WIDER COMMUNITY; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) SATISFACTION OF THE TASMANIAN COMMUNITY SUCCESS IS REGARDING THE RELEVANCE OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) PARENT SATISFACTION WITH THEIR CHILD'S SCHOOL REPORTING PROCESSES; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) NUMBER OF</p>
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		<p>PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOLS, SECONDARY COLLEGES AND TAFE TASMANIA; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) NUMBER OF PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOLS, CHILDCARE SERVICES AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RATES; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) NUMBER OF WEB-BASED SISTER SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS ESTABLISHED; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) VALUE THAT SCHOOL COMMUNITIES ASCRIBE TO THE WORK OF TEACHERS; METAPHOR</p>	
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POST-
COMPULSORY

SUCCESSFUL ACHIEVEMENT IS POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS FOR STUDENTS. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL SATISFACTION IS TASMANIAN EDUCATION COMMUNITY'S SATISFACTION WITH THE CURRICULUM BEING PROVIDED IN TASMANIAN SCHOOLS. METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) LEVEL OF SATISFACTION THAT PARENTS HAVE WITH THEIR LOCAL SCHOOL; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) NUMBER OF PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOLS, SECONDARY COLLEGES AND TAFE TASMANIA; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) LEVEL OF AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION FOR YEAR 10 STUDENTS ABOUT THE ONGOING FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING OPTIONS THAT ARE OPEN TO THEM; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) NUMBER OF TASMANIANS WHO UNDERTAKE IT QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE FIRST TIME THROUGH SUCH INITIATIVES AS 'E-LEARN' VOUCHERS AT TAFE TASMANIA; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION; METAPHOR SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) LEVELS OF STUDENT, STAFF AND EMPLOYER SATISFACTION WITH INSTITUTE OF TAFE TASMANIA. METAPHOR

<p>TOGETHERNESS</p>	<p>LEARNING REQUIRES COLLABORATION. LEARNING CANNOT BE ACHIEVED INDIVIDUALLY. LEARNING YIELDS SHARED ACHIEVEMENTS FROM JOINT EFFORTS. QUALITY LEADERSHIP IS RECOGNISING, VALUING AND CARING FOR PEOPLE. QUALITY LEADERSHIP INSPIRES. QUALITY LEADERSHIP GENERATES ENERGY. QUALITY LEADERSHIP GENERATES ENTHUSIASM. QUALITY LEADERSHIP GENERATES COMMITMENT. QUALITY LEADERSHIP GENERATES COURAGE. IT IS POSSIBLE TO HAVE A CULTURE OF PROFESSIONALISM. THIS CULTURE OF PROFESSIONALISM IS CHARACTERIZED PRIMARILY BY QUALITY LEADERSHIP. THIS CULTURE OF PROFESSIONALISM IS QUALITY LEADERSHIP. THE CULTURE OF PROFESSIONALISM (QUALITY LEADERSHIP) IS CREATED BY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING. THE CULTURE OF PROFESSIONALISM (QUALITY LEADERSHIP) PROMOTES INNOVATION. THE CULTURE OF PROFESSIONALISM (QUALITY LEADERSHIP) PROMOTES THE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS (COMMUNICATION). PROFESSIONALISM IS DIALOGUE. IT IS GOOD FOR TEACHERS TO HAVE A CULTURE OF PROFESSIONALISM. PROFESSIONALISM IS PROMOTED BY DIALOGUE. DIALOGUE FOR TEACHERS IS CREATED/PROMOTED BY NETWORKING. ADVICE TO THE SYSTEM ABOUT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SHOULD BE CONSULTATIVE. WOMEN MAY NEED MENTORING IN ORDER TO BE LEADERS. MEMBERS OF SOME OTHER GROUPS MAY NEED MENTORING IN ORDER TO BE LEADERS.</p>	<p>LEARNING TOGETHER IS A STRATEGY. PROFESSIONALISM IS DIALOGUE. SCHOOLS SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE. CLASSROOM WALLS DIVIDE SCHOOLS FROM THEIR COMMUNITY. SCHOOLS ARE THE PEOPLE WHO PARTICIPATE IN EDUCATION WITHIN THEM. THE COMMUNITY SHOULD BE CONNECTED TO SCHOOLS. SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SHOULD BE CO-LOCATED. TECHNOLOGY IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES. TECHNOLOGY IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT SCHOOLS GLOBALLY. METAPHOR A WAY TO CONNECT COMMUNITIES IS BY LOOKING AT BEST PRACTICE. MANAGEMENT INVOLVES REVIEW AND ACCOUNTABILITY. QUALITY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE INVOLVES CONSULTATION. QUALITY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE INVOLVES MORE OPEN COMMUNICATION. COMMUNICATION IS REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES. METAPHOR LEARNING IS PREPARATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIETY. METAPHOR LEARNING IS A COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY. METAPHOR IS BEST PRACTICE SAFE AND INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION IS LEARNING. METAPHOR INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS IS GOOD. LEARNING SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO ALL. THIS PROVISION (FOR GIFTED STUDENTS) MAY BE</p>	<p>LEARNING SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO ALL. CULTURE IS AN OBJECT. METAPHOR WHERE WE LIVE IS OUR HOME. METAPHOR THIS INCLUDES THE LARGE GEOGRAPHICAL SPACE OF TASMANIA. ISSUES REQUIRE INPUT. PARTICIPATION IN CONSULTATION CAN BE EFFECTIVE. CHANGE CAN BE MANAGED. CONSULTATION ASSISTS CHANGE.</p>
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	<p>SCHOOLS SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE. THIS FLEXIBILITY MEANS THERE IS LESS DIVISION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY. FLEXIBILITY IS THE COMMUNITY USING SCHOOL FACILITIES AND SCHOOLS USING COMMUNITY RESOURCES. CLASSROOM WALLS DIVIDE SCHOOLS FROM THEIR COMMUNITY. A SCHOOL HAS A COMMUNITY. A SCHOOL IS A COMMUNITY. SCHOOLS ARE THE PEOPLE WHO PARTICIPATE IN EDUCATION WITHIN THEM. SCHOOLS ARE THE TEACHERS IN THEM. SCHOOLS SHOULD BE EMPOWERED. EDUCATORS SHOULD BE COMMITTED TO THE COMMUNITY. THE COMMUNITY SHOULD BE CONNECTED TO SCHOOLS. SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SHOULD BE CO-LOCATED. TECHNOLOGY IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES. TECHNOLOGY IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT SCHOOLS GLOBALLY. METAPHOR A WAY TO CONNECT COMMUNITIES IS BY LOOKING AT BEST PRACTICE. MANAGEMENT INVOLVES REVIEW AND ACCOUNTABILITY. QUALITY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE INVOLVES CONSULTATION. QUALITY AND HIGH PERFORMANCE INVOLVES MORE OPEN COMMUNICATION. COMMUNICATION IS REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES. METAPHOR LEARNING IS PREPARATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN</p>	<p>MENTORING. ACCESS TO INFORMATION ALLOWS FOR INDIVIDUALS TO CONTRIBUTE TO DEMOCRACY. SOCIETY MEMBERS DEMAND ACCESS TO ONLINE INFORMATION. PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BUSINESSES AND EDUCATION ARE DESIRABLE. PARTNERSHIPS CREATE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES. EDUCATIONAL CONTENT CAN BE DELIVERED TO LOCAL, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL MARKETS. LEARNING IS SUCCESS. METAPHOR (LEARNING IS SUCCESS IN A COMMUNITY) LEARNING CAN OCCUR IN COMMUNITIES. LEARNERS REQUIRE ENGAGEMENT. LEARNING ENRICHES SOCIETY. LEARNING IS A CONTAINER, WHICH WE MIGHT PARTICIPATE IN. METAPHOR THE STATE LIBRARY, ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES AND ADULT EDUCATION ALL SUPPORT COMMUNITY LEARNING. COMMUNITY LEARNING IS AN OBJECT. METAPHOR COMMUNITY LEARNING IS A SET OF OPPORTUNITIES. METAPHOR THE STATE LIBRARY, ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES AND ADULT EDUCATION ARE ALL OBJECTS (ELEMENTS) OF COMMUNITY LEARNING. METAPHOR ELEMENTS OF COMMUNITY LEARNING (EG. STATE LIBRARY AND ADULT EDUCATION) HAVE EXPERTISE.</p>	
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	<p>SOCIETY. METAPHOR CURRICULUM IS DETERMINED BY CONSULTATION. REPORTING IS ACCOUNTABILITY TO PARENTS. METAPHOR PARTNERSHIPS ARE WORTHWHILE. LEARNING IS A COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY. METAPHOR THE CAPACITY TO WORK WITH OTHERS IS A FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE LEARNING. METAPHOR PARTICIPATION IS ABOUT MORE. LEARNING IS CREATING COMMUNITY VALUE. METAPHOR WORLD CLASS IS SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS.</p> <p>SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT PARTICIPATION IN LEARNING THROUGHOUT ALL OF LIFE. INCLUSIVITY SUPPORTS LEARNING. PARTICIPATION IS LEARNING. METAPHOR LITERACY ENABLES US TO PARTICIPATE. LITERACY ENABLES US TO 'ENTER THE WORLD OF OTHERS'.</p> <p>TASMANIANS SUPPORT INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS. LEARNING ORGANISATIONS SHOULD INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS. EQUITY IS INCLUSIVITY. METAPHOR INCLUSIVITY IS BASED ON CONSULTATION WITH TEACHERS AND PARENTS. THIS PROVISION (FOR GIFTED STUDENTS) MAY BE MENTORING. MENTORING IS SUPPORT FOR GIFTED STUDENTS. METAPHOR WORLD CLASS IS AN INFORMATION-RICH COMMUNITY WITH ACCESS TO GLOBAL AND LOCAL INFORMATION RESOURCES. GLOBAL AND LOCAL INFORMATION RESOURCES ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN, AND CONTRIBUTE</p>	<p>TASMANIANS NEED TO ENGAGE IN LEARNING. PARTNERSHIPS ARE LINKS. METAPHOR PARTNERSHIPS ARE LINKS ON PATHWAYS OF LEARNING. METAPHOR WORLD CLASS IS A VALUED AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION WORKFORCE. METAPHOR A VALUED AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION WORKFORCE REFLECTS THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING AS A PROFESSION. THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING AS A PROFESSION IS THE ESTEEM WITH WHICH TEACHING AS A PROFESSION IS HELD IN BY THE COMMUNITY. GOOD TEACHERS LEAD. TEACHING IS LEADING. METAPHOR TEACHERS LEAD STUDENTS INTO THIS SERIOUS PURSUIT. TEACHERS DEMONSTRATE. TEACHERS ARE TRUSTED PROFESSIONALS. METAPHOR TEACHERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE. TEACHING IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE. TEACHERS SHOULD BE RECOGNISED FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION. TEACHING BUILDS FUTURE NATIONAL RESOURCES. TEACHING IS BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE. LEARNING IS A RESOURCE. METAPHOR TEACHING IS A CONTRIBUTION. METAPHOR TASMANIAN EDUCATION HAS A HISTORY. TASMANIAN EDUCATION IS ALREADY WORLD-CLASS. TASMANIAN EDUCATION IS PIONEERING. METAPHOR</p>	
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	<p>TO, A HEALTHY DEMOCRACY AND A PROSPEROUS SOCIETY.</p> <p>ACCESS TO INFORMATION ALLOWS FOR INDIVIDUALS TO PARTICIPATE IN SOCIETY.</p> <p>SOCIETY MEMBERS DEMAND ACCESS TO ONLINE INFORMATION.</p> <p>EXCELLENCE CAN BE CONTAINED IN A CENTRE.</p> <p>TASMANIA CAN BE AN INTELLIGENT ISLAND.</p> <p>PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BUSINESSES AND EDUCATION ARE DESIRABLE.</p> <p>PARTNERSHIPS CREATE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES.</p> <p>EDUCATIONAL CONTENT CAN BE DELIVERED TO LOCAL, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL MARKETS.</p> <p>WE DESIRE TO CONNECT TO THE PAST.</p> <p>THE PURPOSE OF CULTURE IS TO PROMOTE TASMANIA (OUR HOME). METAPHOR</p> <p>LINKS BETWEEN 'CULTURES' ARE GOOD.</p> <p>LINKS BETWEEN CULTURES PROMOTE LEARNING.</p> <p>LEARNING HAPPENS IN A COMMUNITY.</p> <p>LEARNING IS SUCCESS. METAPHOR (LEARNING IS SUCCESS IN A COMMUNITY)</p> <p>LEARNING CAN OCCUR IN COMMUNITIES.</p> <p>LEARNERS REQUIRE ENGAGEMENT.</p> <p>LEARNING ENRICHES SOCIETY.</p> <p>LEARNING IS A CONTAINER, WHICH WE MIGHT PARTICIPATE IN. METAPHOR</p> <p>COMMUNITY LEARNING FOSTERS LIFELONG LEARNING.</p> <p>THE STATE LIBRARY, ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES AND ADULT EDUCATION ALL SUPPORT COMMUNITY LEARNING.</p> <p>COMMUNITY LEARNING IS AN OBJECT. METAPHOR</p> <p>COMMUNITY LEARNING IS A SET OF OPPORTUNITIES.</p> <p>METAPHOR</p> <p>THE STATE LIBRARY, ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES AND ADULT EDUCATION ARE ALL OBJECTS (ELEMENTS) OF</p>	<p>PIONEERING IS GOOD.</p> <p>TASMANIAN EDUCATION IS LEADING EDGE IN MANY AREAS.</p> <p>EDUCATION IS A SURFACE. METAPHOR</p> <p>TEACHING IN TASMANIA IS PIONEERING. METAPHOR</p> <p>GOOD TEACHING IS PIONEERING. METAPHOR</p> <p>BEST PRACTICE EDUCATION CAN BE SHOWCASED.</p> <p>BEST PRACTICE EDUCATION CAN BE IDENTIFIED.</p> <p>TEACHING EXPERTISE CAN BE SHARED.</p> <p>OUTSTANDING TEACHERS CAN SHARE THEIR EXPERTISE.</p> <p>TEACHERS SHOULD BE GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE THEIR EXPERTISE.</p> <p>TO DO THIS, THEY NEED OPPORTUNITIES TO BE IDENTIFIED AND LISTED.</p> <p>COMMUNICATION WITH EMPLOYEES IS GOOD.</p> <p>OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSULTATION ARE COMMUNICATION. METAPHOR</p> <p>COMMUNICATION CAN BE TWO-WAY.</p> <p>COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION ARE VITAL FOR LEARNING.</p> <p>COMMUNICATION IS GLUE. METAPHOR</p> <p>CONSULTATION IS GLUE. METAPHOR</p> <p>SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS REQUIRE GLUE.</p> <p>SOCIAL BONDS ARE GLUE. METAPHOR</p> <p>COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION HELP ACHIEVE GOALS.</p> <p>INVOLVEMENT CAN BE INCREASED.</p> <p>INVOLVEMENT IS AN OBJECT. METAPHOR</p> <p>INFORMATION SHOULD BE TAILORED TO THE NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF THE AUDIENCE.</p>	
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	<p>COMMUNITY LEARNING. METAPHOR LINKS CAN BE MADE BETWEEN THESE TWO OBJECTS (THE STATE LIBRARY & ADULT EDUCATION). ELEMENTS OF COMMUNITY LEARNING (EG. STATE LIBRARY AND ADULT EDUCATION) HAVE EXPERTISE. TASMANIANS NEED TO ENGAGE IN LEARNING. PARTNERSHIPS ARE LINKS. METAPHOR PARTNERSHIPS ARE LINKS ON PATHWAYS OF LEARNING. METAPHOR WORLD CLASS IS A VALUED AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION WORKFORCE. METAPHOR A VALUED AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION WORKFORCE REFLECTS THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING AS A PROFESSION. THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING AS A PROFESSION IS THE ESTEEM WITH WHICH TEACHING AS A PROFESSION IS HELD IN BY THE COMMUNITY. GOOD TEACHERS LEAD. TEACHING IS LEADING. METAPHOR TEACHERS LEAD STUDENTS INTO THIS SERIOUS PURSUIT. TEACHERS DEMONSTRATE. TEACHERS ARE TRUSTED PROFESSIONALS. METAPHOR TEACHING BUILDS FUTURE NATIONAL RESOURCES. TEACHING IS BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE. LEARNING IS A RESOURCE. METAPHOR TEACHING IS A CONTRIBUTION. METAPHOR TASMANIAN EDUCATION HAS A HISTORY. TASMANIAN EDUCATION IS ALREADY WORLD-CLASS. TASMANIAN EDUCATION IS PIONEERING. METAPHOR PIONEERING IS GOOD. TASMANIAN EDUCATION IS LEADING EDGE IN MANY AREAS. EDUCATION IS A SURFACE. METAPHOR TEACHING IN TASMANIA IS PIONEERING. METAPHOR GOOD TEACHING IS PIONEERING. METAPHOR</p>	<p>INFORMATION LEADS TO COMMUNICATION. ACCESS LEADS TO PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING. KNOWLEDGE CAN BE SHARED. GOOD PRACTICE CAN BE SHARED. A CULTURE IS INFORMATION SHARING. METAPHOR A CULTURE IS COMMUNICATION. METAPHOR THESE SERVICES IDEALLY HARMONISE INDIVIDUAL GOALS, PARENTS' DREAMS, LOCAL AND STATE COMMUNITY DESIRES AND ASPIRATIONS, EMPLOYERS DEMANDS, AND TEACHERS, EDUCATORS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS SKILLS AND EXPERTISE. THESE AMBITIONS CAN BE FULFILLED THROUGH PARTICIPATION. SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES ARE THE HANDRAILS. METAPHOR HANDRAILS PROVIDE SECURITY. SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES PROVIDE SECURITY FOR LEARNING. A COMMUNITY CAN BE UNDERPINNED BY EDUCATION. EDUCATION IS A FOUNDATION OF A COMMUNITY. METAPHOR A COMMUNITY IS A BUILDING/STRUCTURE. METAPHOR PARTICIPATION IS PARTICIPATION IN LEARNING THROUGHOUT LIFE. METAPHOR (NOT TOGETHER) SUCCESSFUL ACCESS IS THE AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AND OTHER SERVICES TO THE WIDER COMMUNITY. METAPHOR</p>	
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	<p>BEST PRACTICE EDUCATION CAN BE SHOWCASED. BEST PRACTICE EDUCATION CAN BE IDENTIFIED. TEACHING EXPERTISE CAN BE SHARED. OUTSTANDING TEACHERS CAN SHARE THEIR EXPERTISE. TEACHERS SHOULD BE GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE THEIR EXPERTISE. TO DO THIS, THEY NEED OPPORTUNITIES TO BE IDENTIFIED AND LISTED.</p> <p>TEACHING REQUIRES GOOD CHARACTER. GOOD CHARACTER IS INTEGRAL TO GOOD TEACHING. TEACHERS ARE EMPLOYED IN SCHOOLS. SCHOOLS ARE CONTAINERS. METAPHOR THOSE WITHOUT GOOD CHARACTER SHOULDN'T BE EMPLOYED IN SCHOOLS.</p> <p>COMMUNICATION WITH EMPLOYEES IS GOOD. OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSULTATION ARE COMMUNICATION. METAPHOR COMMUNICATION CAN BE TWO-WAY. COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION ARE VITAL FOR LEARNING.</p> <p>COMMUNICATION IS GLUE. METAPHOR CONSULTATION IS GLUE. METAPHOR SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS REQUIRE GLUE. SOCIAL BONDS ARE GLUE. METAPHOR COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION HELP ACHIEVE GOALS.</p> <p>INFORMATION LEADS TO COMMUNICATION. ACCESS LEADS TO PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING. KNOWLEDGE CAN BE SHARED. GOOD PRACTICE CAN BE SHARED. A CULTURE IS INFORMATION SHARING. METAPHOR A CULTURE IS COMMUNICATION. METAPHOR THESE SERVICES IDEALLY HARMONISE INDIVIDUAL</p>	<p>SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS STUDENT RETENTION AT SCHOOL. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RATES. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS PARTICIPATION IN FORMAL PROGRAMS, INCLUDING SCHOOLING, TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS ENROLMENTS IN ADULT EDUCATION. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL LEARNING IS PARTICIPATION. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS PARTICIPATION RATES IN SELECTED PROGRAMS FOR TARGETED EQUITY GROUPS. METAPHOR SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS NUMBERS OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES USERS. METAPHOR</p>	
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	<p>GOALS, PARENTS' DREAMS, LOCAL AND STATE COMMUNITY DESIRES AND ASPIRATIONS, EMPLOYERS DEMANDS, AND TEACHERS, EDUCATORS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS SKILLS AND EXPERTISE.</p> <p>PARTICIPATION BRINGS ABOUT ENRICHMENT OF SOCIETY. SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES ARE THE HANDRAILS. METAPHOR</p> <p>HANDRAILS PROVIDE SECURITY.</p> <p>SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES PROVIDE SECURITY FOR LEARNING.</p> <p>A COMMUNITY CAN BE UNDERPINNED BY EDUCATION. EDUCATION IS A FOUNDATION OF A COMMUNITY. METAPHOR</p> <p>A COMMUNITY IS A BUILDING/STRUCTURE. METAPHOR PARTICIPATION IS PARTICIPATION IN LEARNING THROUGHOUT LIFE. METAPHOR (NOT TOGETHER)</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS STUDENT RETENTION AT SCHOOL. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RATES. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS PARTICIPATION IN FORMAL PROGRAMS, INCLUDING SCHOOLING, TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS ENROLLMENTS IN ADULT EDUCATION. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL LEARNING IS PARTICIPATION. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS PARTICIPATION RATES IN SELECTED PROGRAMS FOR TARGETED EQUITY GROUPS. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IS NUMBERS OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES USERS. METAPHOR</p>	
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<p>COMMUNITY</p>	<p>TASMANIA IS A COHESIVE COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS ARE IMPORTANT. RESPONSIVE AND CONTINUALLY IMPROVING SERVICES ENSURE ALL TASMANIANS DEVELOP THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE THEY NEED SCHOOLS SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE. THIS FLEXIBILITY MEANS THERE IS LESS DIVISION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY. FLEXIBILITY IS THE COMMUNITY USING SCHOOL FACILITIES AND SCHOOLS USING COMMUNITY RESOURCES. CLASSROOM WALLS DIVIDE SCHOOLS FROM THEIR COMMUNITY. A SCHOOL HAS A COMMUNITY. A SCHOOL IS A COMMUNITY. THE COMMUNITY IS A RESOURCE FOR SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS. THE COMMUNITY IS A RESOURCE FOR LEARNING. SCHOOLS SHOULD BE EMPOWERED. EDUCATORS SHOULD BE COMMITTED TO THE COMMUNITY. THE COMMUNITY SHOULD BE CONNECTED TO SCHOOLS. SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SHOULD BE CO-LOCATED. TECHNOLOGY IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES. A WAY TO CONNECT COMMUNITIES IS BY LOOKING AT BEST PRACTICE. COMMUNICATION IS REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES. METAPHOR STATE INVESTMENT IN LEARNING (TRAINING) SHOULD BE TARGETED. LEARNING IS A FOUNDATION OF THE TASMANIAN ECONOMY. METAPHOR LEARNING IS CREATING COMMUNITY VALUE. METAPHOR</p>	<p>SCHOOLS SHOULD BE FLEXIBLE. FLEXIBILITY IS THE COMMUNITY USING SCHOOL FACILITIES AND SCHOOLS USING COMMUNITY RESOURCES. CLASSROOM WALLS DIVIDE SCHOOLS FROM THEIR COMMUNITY. THE COMMUNITY IS A RESOURCE FOR SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS. THE COMMUNITY IS A RESOURCE FOR LEARNING. THE COMMUNITY SHOULD BE CONNECTED TO SCHOOLS. SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SHOULD BE CO-LOCATED. TECHNOLOGY IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES. A WAY TO CONNECT COMMUNITIES IS BY LOOKING AT BEST PRACTICE. COMMUNICATION IS REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES. METAPHOR MONITORING IS STATEWIDE ACCOUNTABILITY. METAPHOR LEARNING IS CREATING COMMUNITY VALUE. METAPHOR LEARNING IS RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY VALUES. METAPHOR WORLD CLASS IS AN INFORMATION-RICH COMMUNITY WITH ACCESS TO GLOBAL AND LOCAL INFORMATION RESOURCES. HERITAGE IS AN OBJECT. METAPHOR STORIES BUILD ON LIVES. STORIES BUILD ON THE PAST. STORIES ARE BUILDING BLOCKS OF LIVES. METAPHOR</p>	<p>INFORMATION-RICH MEANS BOTH LOCAL AND GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE. THE REAL WORLD IS BEYOND SCHOOLS. SCHOOLS ARE NOT PART OF THE REAL WORLD. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION PROVISION IN TASMANIA FORM A SYSTEM. WHERE WE LIVE IS OUR HOME. METAPHOR THIS INCLUDES THE LARGE GEOGRAPHICAL SPACE OF TASMANIA. LOCAL IS COMMUNITY. METAPHOR A COMMUNITY IS AN OBJECT. METAPHOR</p>
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	<p>LEARNING IS CREATING COMMUNITY VALUE. METAPHOR LEARNING IS RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY VALUES. METAPHOR</p> <p>TAFE LEARNING IS UNDERVALUED. (BY THE COMMUNITY) LEARNING INSTITUTIONS ARE PERCEIVED AS HAVE DIFFERING VALUES.</p> <p>WORLD CLASS IS SAFE AND INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS.</p> <p>RESPONSE TO THESE (RIGHTS OF SAFETY AND SECURITY) REFLECT HOW WE ACT IN THE COMMUNITY AS WELL AS OUR LEARNING INSTITUTIONS.</p> <p>EFFECTIVE BEHAVIOUR IS EFFECTIVE FOR THE SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY.</p> <p>TASMANIANS SUPPORT INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS. WORLD CLASS IS AN INFORMATION-RICH COMMUNITY WITH ACCESS TO GLOBAL AND LOCAL INFORMATION RESOURCES.</p> <p>WORLD CLASS IS AN INFORMATION-RICH COMMUNITY. METAPHOR</p> <p>TASMANIA CAN BE AN INTELLIGENT ISLAND.</p> <p>TASMANIA HAS IDENTIFIABLE CULTURE AND HERITAGE. THIS CULTURE AND HERITAGE IS RICH.</p> <p>INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS HOLD LOCAL AND COMMUNITY INFORMATION.</p> <p>COMMUNITIES NEED INFORMATION.</p> <p>LEARNING HAPPENS IN A COMMUNITY.</p> <p>LEARNING IS SUCCESS. METAPHOR (LEARNING IS SUCCESS IN A COMMUNITY)</p> <p>LEARNING CAN OCCUR IN COMMUNITIES.</p> <p>COMMUNITY LEARNING FOSTERS LIFELONG LEARNING.</p> <p>THE STATE LIBRARY, ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES AND ADULT EDUCATION ALL SUPPORT COMMUNITY LEARNING.</p> <p>COMMUNITY LEARNING IS AN OBJECT. METAPHOR</p> <p>COMMUNITY LEARNING IS A SET OF OPPORTUNITIES.</p>	<p>CULTURE AND HERITAGE ARE CONTAINERS. METAPHOR</p> <p>INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS HOLD LOCAL AND COMMUNITY INFORMATION.</p> <p>LEARNING IS SUCCESS. METAPHOR (LEARNING IS SUCCESS IN A COMMUNITY)</p> <p>LEARNING CAN OCCUR IN COMMUNITIES.</p> <p>COMMUNITY LEARNING FOSTERS LIFELONG LEARNING.</p> <p>THE STATE LIBRARY, ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES AND ADULT EDUCATION ALL SUPPORT COMMUNITY LEARNING.</p> <p>COMMUNITY LEARNING IS AN OBJECT. METAPHOR</p> <p>COMMUNITY LEARNING IS A SET OF OPPORTUNITIES. METAPHOR</p> <p>THE STATE LIBRARY, ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES AND ADULT EDUCATION ARE ALL OBJECTS (ELEMENTS) OF COMMUNITY LEARNING. METAPHOR</p> <p>ELEMENTS OF COMMUNITY LEARNING (EG. STATE LIBRARY AND ADULT EDUCATION) HAVE EXPERTISE.</p> <p>WORLD CLASS IS A VALUED AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION WORKFORCE. METAPHOR</p> <p>A VALUED AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION WORKFORCE REFLECTS THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING AS A PROFESSION.</p> <p>THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING AS A PROFESSION IS THE ESTEEM WITH WHICH TEACHING AS A PROFESSION IS HELD IN BY THE COMMUNITY.</p> <p>THESE SERVICES IDEALLY HARMONISE INDIVIDUAL GOALS, PARENTS' DREAMS, LOCAL AND STATE COMMUNITY DESIRES</p>	
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	<p>METAPHOR</p> <p>THE STATE LIBRARY, ONLINE ACCESS CENTRES AND ADULT EDUCATION ARE ALL OBJECTS (ELEMENTS) OF COMMUNITY LEARNING. METAPHOR</p> <p>ELEMENTS OF COMMUNITY LEARNING (EG. STATE LIBRARY AND ADULT EDUCATION) HAVE EXPERTISE.</p> <p>WORLD CLASS IS A VALUED AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION WORKFORCE. METAPHOR</p> <p>A VALUED AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION WORKFORCE REFLECTS THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING AS A PROFESSION.</p> <p>THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING AS A PROFESSION IS THE ESTEEM WITH WHICH TEACHING AS A PROFESSION IS HELD IN BY THE COMMUNITY.</p> <p>THESE SERVICES IDEALLY HARMONISE INDIVIDUAL GOALS, PARENTS' DREAMS, LOCAL AND STATE COMMUNITY DESIRES AND ASPIRATIONS, EMPLOYERS DEMANDS, AND TEACHERS, EDUCATORS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS SKILLS AND EXPERTISE.</p> <p>GLOBAL IS AN INFORMATION-RICH COMMUNITY. METAPHOR</p> <p>A COMMUNITY CAN BE UNDERPINNED BY EDUCATION. EDUCATION IS A FOUNDATION OF A COMMUNITY. METAPHOR</p> <p>A COMMUNITY IS A BUILDING/STRUCTURE. METAPHOR</p>	<p>AND ASPIRATIONS, EMPLOYERS DEMANDS, AND TEACHERS, EDUCATORS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS SKILLS AND EXPERTISE.</p> <p>A COMMUNITY CAN BE UNDERPINNED BY EDUCATION.</p> <p>EDUCATION IS A FOUNDATION OF A COMMUNITY. METAPHOR</p> <p>A COMMUNITY IS A BUILDING/STRUCTURE. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL ACCESS IS THE AVAILABILITY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AND OTHER SERVICES TO THE WIDER COMMUNITY. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESSFUL SATISFACTION IS TASMANIAN EDUCATION COMMUNITY'S SATISFACTION WITH THE CURRICULUM BEING PROVIDED IN TASMANIAN SCHOOLS. METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS A HIGH (OR HIGHER) PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS WHO HAVE ESTABLISHED PARTNERSHIPS WITH THEIR COMMUNITY; METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS A HIGH (OR HIGHER) PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS WHERE FACILITIES ARE USED BY THE WIDER COMMUNITY; METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) SATISFACTION OF THE TASMANIAN COMMUNITY SUCCESS IS REGARDING THE RELEVANCE OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM; METAPHOR</p> <p>SUCCESS IS HIGH (OR HIGHER) LEVEL OF SATISFACTION THAT THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY REPORTS REGARDING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND INTEGRITY OF CONSULTATION PROCESSES THAT ARE USED; METAPHOR</p>
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Appendix D

Personal account of involvement in the writing and implementation of the *Learning Together* policy

This is an account of my involvement with the education policy *Learning Together: a vision for education, training and information into the 21st century*. It is an amalgam of personal stories and memories of that policy's development and implementation. My account includes vignettes about the *Learning Together* policy, as well as observations about education, politics and policy as my professional and personal journey through the world of policy intersected with the development and implementation of this policy. My account is inevitably partial, being only half-remembered across the distance of time and, ultimately, only from a particularly personal point of view. It comprises only my hazy recollection of those times, with the selective editing and rose-coloured hues allowed by perceptions of time, events and people understood through the haze of memory. There were tales of this policy that will go unreported and I have chosen not to tell some stories, holding back describing certain conversations and events because of their confidential nature. There may also be silences about this policy and other stories of it of which I am unaware.

I draw my understandings of the *Learning Together* policy, not only from the final document, but also from a corpus of texts that accompanied it. These included the draft *Learning Together* policy, and associated print and multi-media texts published under the *Learning Together* brand. Following the publication of the final text, the policy also generated other material, including references made to the policy in the Hansard record of the Tasmanian Parliament, ministerial speeches, *Learning Together Awards* publicity material, personal notes taken by me during my role as a member of the *Learning Together Council* and entries in personal journals. During this study, I also accessed media reports about *Learning Together* and related Tasmanian Department of Education policy documentation, including annual departmental reports to the Tasmanian Parliament and previous and consequent policies.

Origins of *Learning Together*

My account of *Learning Together* begins, not with this policy, but with a preceding one that was written to serve the interests of a government of an altogether different political persuasion. It was a personal view that *Learning Together – draft proposals for education, training and information into the 21st Century* arose from a desire to sweep away the remnants of *Directions for Education*, which was the key educational policy statement of the previous Liberal Government. This government had been swept from office in 1998 and replaced by the Labor government that went on to develop *Learning Together*. Considered in this political context, *Learning Together* might be seen as a deliberate attempt to steer public education onto a different path from that set out under the *Directions for Education* statement. When it was published in draft form and disseminated for consultation, the *Learning Together* policy followed a similar pragmatic administrative style to the *Directions* statement yet, even at the very earliest stage of its development, it seemed to be based on quite a differing set of assumptions.

An antecedent for *Learning Together* was the policy *Directions for Education* (1997). In 1997, the former Premier of Tasmania, the Hon. Tony Rundle M.H.A, who was leader of the Liberal Tasmanian Government at that time, launched *Directions*, a strategic policy encompassing a range of areas of government authority. The areas the policy covered were: education; information technology and advanced telecommunications; energy; primary industry; aquaculture; forestry; tourism; and local government. *Directions* was intended to set “a clear direction for Tasmania. It says where the Government is taking the State and spells out how we will get there” (Department of Premier and Cabinet Tasmania, 1997). *Directions for Education* was one component of that overarching government strategy, addressing matters that related to the government school education system in the state. This policy document outlined a set of policy statements and proposed actions that were intended to shape school management, educational decision making and the resourcing of government schools. It involved six initiatives covering accountability for learning outcomes, partnership agreements with communities, more funding directly to schools, (or as the policy stated “funds through the school gate”), leadership performance and accreditation, professional learning for staff and extensive investment in information technology resources. The policy statement met with a mixed response, perhaps because one of its key initiatives, to upgrade

the technological capacity of schools, relied on the privatization of the government's large energy enterprise, the Hydro-Electric Commission.

The *Directions for Education* policy was announced following an approach to policy making that had not previously been seen in the Tasmanian educational context as it was launched under the name of the Premier of the day rather than the incumbent Minister for Education. This immediately gave it an authoritative political status that had been unknown in Tasmania prior to this time. Whilst there had been a range of previous education policies (see Appendix E for a list of Australian state education policies), no previous policy had been linked quite so closely to the economic prosperity of the Tasmanian state. *Directions for Education* was similar to other policies around that time, such as *Schools for the future* announced by the Kennett Liberal Government in the nearby Australian state of Victoria, as part of the *Victoria on the Move* strategy (Victoria. Dept. of the Premier and Cabinet, 1993) and the Queensland QSE-2010 (Education Queensland, n.d.) blueprint as well as those undertaken in other places in the developed world around that time.

One aspect of *Directions for Education's* which was most contentious amongst its stakeholders was the proposal to loosen restrictions on teacher staffing in the system in order to allow schools to pay their own staff and, accordingly, recruit them as required need. This was a major shift away from existing practice where a school was required to accept all staff allocated to it, which meant a school had a staffing profile over which it had no control, neither in terms of the expertise of individual staff or the level at which they were paid. Under the *Directions for Education* proposal, each school would have flexibility in up to 10% of their own staffing allocation. They could employ staff according to individual school's needs, rather than have to take any teacher who happened to be available, usually those who had tenured employment with the Department of Education. This proposal opened up the possibility for a school to have a greater range of choices about how was employed. Consequently, course offerings could be targeted, and, for example, a school might employ two specialist teachers' aides rather than a more expensive teacher. Another choice might be to re-allocate teacher aide in order to employ people from the local community with specific expertise who could participate in school programs, such as a builder, a chaplain or a hospitality expert. This flexibility in recruiting staff was portrayed by the policy statement as a way of handing more responsibility for decision-making to schools, as it increased management control at local level. The premise behind this shift was that local management was a good thing that would lead to more successful schooling.

Another initiative of the policy was a move to greater monitoring of student outcomes. In this way, more educational accountability by schools was coupled with less centralized control of its resources, underpinned by the assumption that localized decision-making would lead to accountability and therefore to improvements in student achievement. As “more money through the school gate” was the policy’s catch cry (Department of Premier and Cabinet Tasmania, 1997), schools became the focus of this policy rather than the education system. The community of a school was best placed to make decisions about the appropriateness, or otherwise, of the educational provision of that school, provided certain prescribed accountability expectations were met. It could be said that *Directions for Education* was a policy with economic rationalist intent, employing strategies such as devolution to marketise education, or at least to act on it in new ways (Hunter & Meredyth, 2000, pp. 2-3).

The responses of principals and senior departmental officials to this policy were generally positive, as it promoted school-based decision-making and supposedly increased community (read parent) involvement. Importantly it appeared to loosen what was perceived to be a firm grip by the centralized bureaucracy on the work of schools. It also took up a view that the quality of teaching in a school would improve in line with its increased capacity to determine its own staff according to its immediate needs and strategic plans. For some, this strategy could be interpreted as being aimed at keeping teachers ‘on their toes’ or motivated.

Not unexpectedly, responses from the Australian Education Union (AEU) and other professional groups were less positive. For these stakeholders, the statement signaled that the Department would take less employee-friendly approach to workforce planning. If there was scrutiny of a teacher’s skills and abilities to see if they matched a school’s desired staffing profile, they may not match and the Department would most likely move to transfers teachers between schools to suit needs, either willingly or unwillingly. The AEU and other professional organisations questioned the logic of principals appointing staff independently from other schools. They pointed out what had happened in other parts of the world, where a tight school budget could lead to an overall reduction in teacher numbers or the appointment of newly trained cheaper staff over more experienced peers. For these stakeholders, the policy would potentially lead to less experienced, and therefore, less effective teachers and this would flow on to poorer student achievement. The *Directions* policy also upheld the untested assumption that self-governing communities would make better decisions than the state government that had formerly made them. School communities were portrayed as being good, as the term *community* evoked a sense of democracy.

As a new statement of educational purpose for schools in Tasmania, *Directions for Education* fostered much discussion and debate. It made me wonder what the role of government was in determining educational practice in a modern state and the nature of government schooling in delivering that practice. There were anecdotes circulating in the community at that time that the document had been written behind closed doors by a small group of senior bureaucrats who were required to keep any discussion of its development absolutely confidential. This contrasted with the policy's core statements about community-based decision making, which did not it seemed, extend to the making of decisions about overall system accountability and monitoring.

Directions referred mostly to school and vocational education, with an occasional reference to libraries, but did not encompass the entire breadth of work of the Department of Education, Community and Cultural Development, as it was called at that time. Perhaps this was linked to the then distribution of portfolio responsibilities between several ministers¹ or perhaps it was because school education was the Department's primary focus, from budgetary and resource perspectives. Even the mention of libraries related to how they might contribute to school reform and there was no mention of such other departmental areas as archives. In the then Premier's Tony Rundle M.H.A. launch speech, it was clear that a new approach to Tasmania's economy would require fresh industries as yet not found in Tasmania and education was a key strategy to drive such an approach.

“These are the knowledge-based industries information technology, advanced telecommunications and the clever businesses whose advantage in the marketplace is their intellectual capital ... Tasmania needs to be part of this but we need a new kind of public infrastructure to support it, one where the Government's investment is in education, training, information and the most modern telecommunications.”
(Department of Premier and Cabinet Tasmania, 1997)

Directions for Education strongly indicated that there needed to be a more cohesive approach across the education, training and information aspects of the Department of Education, and, looking back, it signposted a move to integrate these functions within a more coherent policy framework. Many educators regarded *Directions* as a bureaucratic economic rationalist response to education and training policy. Some commentators, most

¹ The Department of Education, Community and Cultural Development (DECCD), at the time of the release of *Directions for Education* in 1997, was responsible to two ministers, the Hon. Sue Napier M.H.A with portfolios in Education, the Arts and Sport and Recreation, and the Hon. Denise Swan M.H.A. with responsibility for Youth Affairs and Family, Community Development, Aboriginal Affairs, Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs and the Status of Women.

recently Saul Eslake, former ANZ chief economist and expatriate Tasmanian, saw it as resetting the “path of development” in Tasmania, as it identified the strengths and weaknesses in the state’s economy which “became part of the Crean² strategy for development revival” (Crawford, 2006). *Directions for Education* only had a short life as a policy statement as the minority Rundle Government was defeated resoundingly at the August 1998 State Election and the Liberal State Government was replaced by a Labor Government lead by former trade union official Jim Bacon.

Learning Together – the draft policy

At that election, Paula Wriedt was appointed Minister for Education and within 18 months, the Department of Education, as it was renamed, had begun work on *Learning Together – draft proposals for education, training and information into the 21st Century*. Central to my story was the Minister, who was the key architect of the *Learning Together* process. Elected as a member of Parliament at the age of 26, Ms Wriedt had held the Shadow Ministry for Education for a time whilst in Opposition and had impressed many in educational circles with her capacity to target vital issues and capture media interest at the expense of the Liberal Government of the day. Appointed as Minister at 28, she was welcomed by many educators as she was seen to offer a fresh approach, despite her seemingly brief political experience, and she established working relationships quickly with all the key stakeholder organisations.

Within a year of taking office, she had announced that a process of consultation around education would take place and that it would be called *Learning Together*. The draft would be distributed widely for comment and most notably, responses would be returned to her office, rather than through the Department of Education. This signaled that these responses would not, in the first instance, be filtered by a bureaucratic sieve and that she wanted to genuinely hear of the concerns and issues of all of those interested in some way in education in the state. It also allowed for these responses to be forwarded without fear or favour.

Also pivotal to the *Learning Together* story were a range of key departmental officers and ministerial advisors. In the Minister’s office during this period were advisors and staffers Terry Field, Maggie Aird, Nick Evans, Danielle Kidd, Debbie Goddard, Frae Page and Aaron Devine, assisted by educational consultant Lynne Ferencz, with other advisors

² The then Tasmanian Treasurer, Hon. David Crean MLC.

participating in the implementation stages: Robin Fox, Sophie Muller, Emma Pennington and Sonia Bolonja. There were also departmental officers, principally Secretary of the Department of Education, Dr Martyn Forrest, and Deputy Secretary Alison Jacob, who wrote the draft policy and early versions of the final policy. His colleagues Tim Doe, Simon Barnsley, and Michael Stevens, as well as numerous other departmental personnel, had significant input in relation to the policy's structure, the written text or the design and launch. Input also came from John Smyth, former Chief Executive of the Institute of TAFE Tasmania, and later, Secretary of the Department of Education, who played a key role in the development of the text, in particular the evaluation framework. He developed the bridge metaphor and provided the rubric of access, participation, achievement and satisfaction. A range of departmental and school-based personnel and non-government stakeholders provided written and verbal feedback on the draft policy and executed the strategies outlined in the final document.

Learning Together - Draft proposals for education, training and information – into the 21st century (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a) (see Appendix B), draft policy put forward a set of proposals for education which took a vastly different stance than its policy predecessor *Directions*. Once the draft policy was completed, it was distributed through departmental educational and other workplaces for comment. It included an open-ended invitation to comment, to give both feedback on what the document proposed as well as advice on other potential policy proposals. Rather than being a finished policy statement, the draft publication demonstrated that, under this Minister's administration, high-level educational policymaking could be negotiated between politicians, bureaucrats, educators and other stakeholders. "It offers suggestions for possible strategies we can adopt to move the education, training and information systems in Tasmania forward into a positive new future." (p. iii). The foreword uses terms such as "lifelong learning", "optimism", "inclusive" and "shared vision" and these evoked the sense that the policy would be developed through collaborative means. The draft also introduced the notion of "world class education training and information systems." There were references to the Tasmania *Together* process and the Community Leaders group, and it links between the *Learning Together* consultative process and the Tasmania *Together* one were clear, as the consultations of *Learning Together* would be "fed into the Community Leaders Group" (p. iii) deliberations.

The draft *Learning Together* policy had a stated intention to prompt discussion about how Tasmania's education, training and information systems valued "people rather than institutions". It declared that the staff of these systems, be they from schools, training

organizations or information providers would be crucial to any success or “progress in this new direction... (to) achieve real and sustainable change” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. iv). That meant having “high expectations of all their participants, provide value for money and which were meaningful to the everyday life of Tasmanians.” (p. iv). It is possible to compare the focus of *Directions* on school and local community-based administration of education and the broader state-wide focus for educational conversation that the draft *Learning Together* suggested. Both posited a move away from control by a centralized bureaucracy. Certainly the broad messages of the *Directions* and draft *Learning Together* policies were quite distinct. *Directions* spoke of outcomes, requirements and resources whilst *Learning Together- the draft* emphasized a different set of words emphasizing ideas such as “values”, “vision” and “commitment”. However, whilst the text of the draft *Learning Together* proposed a conversation about education, rather than a directive approach to determining policy, it did propose some policy ideas that would lead to greater expectations in relation to accountability.

The draft policy first offered the possibility of one strategic policy vision for all aspects of the Department of Education, as it was now named, through its pivotal LEARNING TOGETHER metaphor. In particular, the term *learning* was a conceptual thread that linked three distinct functions of the work of the Department - education, training and information. Learning was central to education, learning was central to training and, in the current era of information technology, learning was fundamental to engaging in society. The policy recognised that the participants in this society would learn throughout their lives and for a variety of personal, vocational and recreational reasons. *Learning Together* could be regarded as raising the profile of learning beyond an eighteenth century purpose of preparing children to go to work. The focus of the Department of Education, through education, training and information, would be to enable Tasmanians to learn, whether they were school students, library patrons, online access centre users, trainees or staff members. Learning would be both a means and an end, enabling the citizens of Tasmania to learn, presumably, a range of valued things, and, through learning, attain many potential social, economic, cultural and personal benefits. A vision of learning as the central purpose of Department of Education activity not only linked the work of schools and colleges but also connected child care, TAFE, training organizations, libraries, online access centres and archival services. The importance of learning as an outcome of education had been articulated in many Departmental statements previously and many of those statements dealt with elements of the Departmental portfolio, such as primary or secondary schooling or training (Department of Education Tasmania, 1987). However, there had not been any overarching statement setting forward such a comprehensive vision, goals and strategies, nor which placed learning as

pivotal to a vision. *Directions*, as indicated by Premier Rundle's launch speech, anticipated that education had a significant role to play in the state's economic and social future, but neither *Directions* nor any other previous policy had brought all the portfolio responsibilities together with such a shared purpose.

The fifty-eight page policy document began with a Ministerial foreword that explained its genesis, content and composition. The foreword set out the agenda of the statement as being to consider anew the context for education, training and information services in Tasmania at the beginning of a new century. In this foreword, Minister Wriedt notes that the document sets out a rationale to "remodel our ...systems and the key elements we need to address." Yet, in doing so, it presented a set of issues and concerns that needed to be discussed by the Tasmanian community. This did ignore that the community with access to the document was a relatively limited one, primarily made up of educators and departmental officers. The text that followed was divided into eight parts. Firstly, goals and purposes of the policy were outlined, followed by discussion of the implications of these goals for each element of the Department, then questions relating to resourcing, monitoring and reporting were posed and finally there was an invitation to respond to a consultation process.

Part one of the document, titled *Draft goals for the 21st Century*, gave an overview of three draft goals for the policy and the principles and values upon which these goals were based.

The three goals were:

1. Tasmania will have world-class education, training and information systems.
2. Tasmania will become a learning society, a community of lifelong learners.
3. Tasmania will have an information rich environment, with ready access to the knowledge and information resources of the world (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. 1).

The first goal was very much about the Department of Education becoming a world-class system, whilst the other two goals referred to Tasmania as a whole. Of these goals, the first was an overarching goal, and it was elaborated in the text as follows: "We will strive to put international best practice and standards into all aspects of Tasmanian education, training and information services." Of all the discussions about *Learning Together*, the one about what was meant by the term *world class* was the most spirited, yet much like questions about what was meant by *best practice* and *quality*, there is unlikely to be any real resolution. It was one of the messages of the draft *Learning Together* policy to which educators in particular responded positively, as if the possibility that Tasmanian education could be world class had been affirmed. This message resonated with a long held belief by educators in this

state that a Tasmanian education was highly regarded nationally and internationally in past years for being innovative. For there to be such affirmation from no less than ministerial level was powerful. It indicated that being equal to the most successful education systems in the world was a tangible possibility for this small island, seemingly on the edge of the world. At the time of the policy's release, many noted that the state had a great education system and that there was a chance to celebrate its strengths again. It seemed that a language of possibility spoke deeply to a collective psyche of Tasmanian educators. The responses to the aspirational vision of world-class were very positive, particularly as it was perceived that the policy sought built on the existing capacity and potential of the system, rather than taking a negative or blaming stance on Tasmania's educational achievement. Just as economic rationalist education policies, such as the ones adopted by Thatcher's Conservatives in the United Kingdom and Victorian Liberal Premier Jeff Kennett, had made schools more accountable for student outcomes, these policies also focused blame for a lack of educational success. The positive words of the draft *Learning Together* policy reinforced a message that what was currently happening in schools and other education and training settings was valuable. The document also promised that whilst a lot of collaborative effort to achieve the goals would "require concerted action and commitment from all of us" (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. iv), there would be benefit for everyone in a "bright new future" (p. iii). Rather than everyone in the education sector being to blame, all were responsible and able to contribute, as everyone had "expertise" that could be drawn upon. Again, responses to the document were affective, or emotional, rather than rationalising resourcing implications, or the cost benefits and effectiveness of policy options.

This message of valuing was one that educators had lamented as being lost over previous decades. As individual and groups of parents voiced concerns over educational outcomes for children, there was a sharper focus on accountability and Western democratic governments tried to define what successful schooling outcomes were and then fund these accordingly (Teddlie, Reynolds, Creemers, Scheerens & Townsend, 2000, p. 3). For some educators, there was belief that a culture of 'teacher bashing', that negative portrayal of teachers, had grown over previous decades, (Currie & Leete, 1998) promoted by the media and fueled by community beliefs about teachers' conditions of work and holidays. This had led to erosion of public confidence in educational institutions and educators, particularly public education systems. In Tasmania, why the draft *Learning Together* policy might herald a swing towards valuing educators more highly could be understood in several ways. It could be that the state government saw the draft policy as a way of building relationships with the major teacher union, rather than the two being at odds. It could also be a way of differentiating the government's policy on education from that of the Liberal Opposition, or part of a shift

towards positive policy messages, following a generally negative focus on the state's social and economic indicators by the Rundle Government at the previous election.

The second goal was to create “a learning society, a community of lifelong learners”, (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. 1) and it reflected terminology drawn from contemporary writing, research and policy making on education, notably *The Treasure Within*, Delors' (1998) work for UNESCO, *The learning game* by Michael Barber (1998), education advisor to former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and *What did you learn today?: creating an education revolution* by Federal Labor politician and future Australian Labor Leader of the Opposition Mark Latham (1998). This goal proposed that a learning society/community was one in which a government would endeavour to “develop the creativity, enterprise and learning capacity of all Tasmanians to ensure a well-educated and adaptable community.” It was a goal also founded on a premise that the government, through the Department of Education, would have the prime role for setting the educational agenda for the state and setting out how to achieve the goals.

The third goal again referred to the state government's aim to create an “information rich environment” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. 1) and then set out the Department's responsibility for achieving this goal by stating that “we will support our learning society and economic development by providing high quality access to knowledge and information for individuals and businesses.” Interestingly, whilst the goal proposes that the government had a central role in the creation of an information rich environment, the management of the many ways in which Tasmanians might access knowledge and information were not solely the domain of the Department of Education. They also resided with other government agencies, such as Service Tasmania, private firms such as the media or internet service providers, or community organizations. As such, the policy referred to the knowledge and information for which the State Library of Tasmania, the Archive Office and the Department of Education held responsibility.

The document continued with a statement that underpinning the goals of *Learning Together- the draft* were principles and values. The terms “principles and values” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. 2) were used interchangeably and these were described as a set of commitments upon which the policy was based. The first principle refers to children and young people as “the starting point for the future of Tasmania”. There were opportunities such as how the government can make significant contribution to young peoples' successes at school and to the development of their capacities to learn throughout their lives. The second statement asserted that “our public education, training and

information system is the number one priority” yet there was no elaboration on the connection between these two principles. Such statements assumed that there would be benefits from having more integrated and improved education, training and information systems for both the state and individuals. Following this, the statement that “closer links between the education, training and information service elements ... are needed” gave a rationale for the re-structure of the Department that had occurred recently. Other values and principles focused on strategies to guide departmental processes, with decision making in policy and practice to “be informed by maximum consultation” and “research evidence” and “flexibility and diversity in programs... (to) be encouraged.” Another set of statements were grounded in notions of equity and inclusivity, acknowledging that “people are the Education Department’s most important resource and will be recognized as such” and suggesting that resources to be allocated equitably, efficiently and effectively. Each of these values and principles were significant as they gave some justification and priority to the concerns and issues raised in the document. They provided a clear policy direction and scoped the discussions that the policy would prompt.

The draft policy also explored the term *learning* and how it might influence future education policy making in education. It began by stating how the policy was conceptually grounded in learning and contextualized the work of the Department of Education as crucial for establishing a learning society and educated individuals who engage in lifelong learning.

The draft policy resolved that the purposes and nature of learning were to:

- found a civil society and contribute to a high quality of life. This was described as being underpinned by democratic values such as equality, regard for others and the rule of law. The assumption was that learning was a democratic process and that by engaging in learning, democracy was enhanced. Essential in this democratic context were the making of effective decisions and the management of uncertainty.
- create “a more equitable, cohesive and inclusive society”(Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. 3). A benefit of a strong education and would “support Tasmanians to build a better future for themselves”. The assumption was that learning would enable Tasmanians to relate more effectively together and build a shared sense of society.
- foster a workforce that was “flexible, dynamic and highly skilled”. Thus learning was an imperative for Tasmania if the state was to become a prosperous society. There was some criticism about the draft policy that it focused on individuals as workers and this ignored the potential of individuals to be entrepreneurial in fostering economic growth.

- enable individuals to develop personal characteristics and qualities of self-worth, creativity and imagination. These were valued as being essential for coping with “an unpredictable future” (p. 3) as they were “skills that will allow them to be flexible and adaptable and offer creative solutions to challenges as they arise.” This focused on the individual refers to dealing with personal and societal change.

The policy also considered what it termed *the information age* and its influence on education. In relation to the draft policy, knowledge was viewed as a resource or commodity and in the “information and communication age” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. 3), knowledge would be delivered throughout society via communication tools such as the Internet. Knowledge was important for technical and practical reasons. As work moved from focusing on “manual skills and hard labour” (p. 4) individuals needed to know how to “create and use information”. In order to create wealth and success for ourselves, individuals needed to acquire knowledge from information. In this sense, “knowledge” is “learning”. As knowledge became understood as learning, there was a shift to thinking about learning throughout one’s life, as we moved flexibly between jobs and careers. Beyond work or economic considerations, lifelong learning also contributed to personal and social lives. The strengthening of “arts and culture” (p. 4) would enable us to become fulfilled and build a sense of community. “Lifelong learning offers an enhanced quality of life and greater equity for individuals.” Any consideration of equity in relation to this was less about the redress of discriminatory power relations than it was about opportunity and access in work and society. A learning society, in which lifelong learning was legitimated, would have “foundations for all” (p. 4) with every member of society having an entitlement of lifelong learning skills and dispositions. There would be “strengthened pathways and bridges between different forms of education, training and work” especially for the least advantaged in society, and “strong learning organizations” that supported and acknowledged both formal and informal learning. There would be “an extended role for information and learning technologies” both in terms of availability in the community and their contribution to lifelong learning, “strong learning communities” and “a strong education and training culture”. Each of these elements would contribute to a learning society. The draft policy quotes research by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) in 1999, which found that “Australians love learning” (p. 5) and recognised its benefits in building self-concept, enhancing employability and job-readiness and contributing to “a more robust democratic society.” Learning was important to adult Australians and they see their significance in terms of career and personal goals for the short and the long term. Yet, despite being positive about learning in a general sense, formal education, study and training

can often devalued in Australia, in some ways akin to the tall poppy syndrome in which Australians diminish high achievers. This ANTA research gave a rationale for transforming schools and the training sector “so that Tasmanian’s passion for learning was cultivated and all Tasmanians are supported to undertake productive and personally satisfying learning”.

The policy went on to discuss the economic and social benefits of quality education, training and information services. A shift was occurring in the skills requirements of the Tasmanian workforce, brought about by a shrinking of traditional industries and a rise of information and communication technology-based enterprises. Tasmania had low educational retention rates, compared to national averages and this was related to the completion of schooling and continuation from school education into tertiary education, training and work. Low levels of access to computers in homes were also highlighted. These comparatively low post-compulsory retention statistics, tertiary education participation and information technology engagement were regarded as threats to the State’s prosperity and therefore the collective well-being of its citizens. Higher levels of education and training were needed in order to take advantage of opportunities created by new and emerging industries and to create new jobs. Therefore “Tasmania needs world class education and training” to “thrive into the 21st century” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. 6). There was evidence that Tasmania was by no means destined to remain on the low end of educational performance evaluations as literacy rates for Year 3s in 1998 had lifted to nationally comparable levels. As the policy notes, a lower population base need not determine poor achievement and Tasmanians, and even Tasmanian educators, needed to be proud of what had been accomplished so far. This section of the document was much criticized as positioning Tasmanians as a workforce, not as possible leaders of any economic or societal change, or as entrepreneurs and innovators. This might be regarded as a traditional socialistic notions of class and capital economy, rather than reflecting emerging economic and social conditions such as globalisation or marketisation.

The policy also discussed the capacity of Tasmanians to participate in lifelong learning, stating they must be “able, motivated and actively encouraged” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. 7) to do so, and “they must be provided with the opportunities to do this” (p. 7). If this occurred Tasmanians would be better able to “adapt to changes in the nature of work”, and ensure that businesses were learning organizations, more able to respond flexibly and effectively to changing circumstances. In a societal context where there were greater work-life demands on knowledge, intellect and learning, individuals would be able to take “advantage of the opportunities education, training and information can provide”. Tasmania’s emerging wine, aquaculture and medical technologies industries were

quoted as examples of the state's increasingly sophisticated economic milieu, as they were industries that were based on "intellect, innovation and creativity of the people".

Interestingly, the Directions statement emphasized similar concerns.

In the past Tasmanians have invested heavily in our physical infrastructure - our roads, ports and hydro dams. Now we need a different kind of investment - in things like educating and training our young people, in modern telecommunications and in research and development for some of our growth industries. (Department of Premier and Cabinet, 1997)

Lifelong learning was a key consideration "for nations and groups" (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. 7) that were facing profound dilemmas created by globalization, changing economic circumstances and technological growth. Lifelong learning provided positive and proactive ways forward in the face of these challenges. Also, in an "age of the knowledge-based economy", Tasmania's prosperity need no longer be bounded by geographic distance and isolation, as there were opportunities to have "an excellent lifestyle" whilst engaging economically "on the world stage".

The question "What kind of education system does Tasmania need to achieve our three goals for the 21st Century?" (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000a, p. 9) was also raised. In responding, the policy proposed that our society required greater and more appropriate education opportunities, reflecting the challenging and "changing social, economic and cultural forces" of the time. There was also reflection on how the nature of education had changed over time as the result of shifts in social and family needs, and this had led to diverse and inconsistent expectations being placed on schools and teachers. This had driven changes to curriculum and pedagogy that would potentially shape schools and educational institutions in very different ways. The policy lists some significant changes that were occurring in education at that time or likely to occur in the future. They included: moving from learning only occurring in formal settings to learning in many settings and sources; learning being a process controlled by teachers to one controlled by learners; education seen increasingly as interactive rather than individualistic; formal education being part of lifelong learning; 'school' constituting only one aspect of education, rather than being used as an interchangeable term; bridging the divide between school and the 'real' world; and a shift from the amount of educational qualifications have decided an individual's success to "the more capability and adaptability you have, the more successful you will be" (p. 10). The document goes on to state that some of these shifts were already in the Tasmanian public education system. Evidence of this included a move to learning partnerships and increased

community links, the growing use of information and communication technology and more learner-centred teaching. Also noted were middle schooling models, embedding post- and pre-compulsory learning opportunities (such as childcare and vocational learning) into schools, and the use of school facilities beyond traditional school hours. Interestingly the draft *Learning Together* policy was silent or took a low-key approach to some pressing issues of the time, including student behaviour and the need for capital works on ageing school buildings. For example, whilst issues of student behaviour were not discussed in any depth, alternative approaches to schooling were elaborated at length.

Following its development, the draft *Learning Together* policy was distributed for consultation across the Tasmanian education sector. Whilst the intention for the consultation was quite pragmatic, it had a very powerful effect in that sector as it seemed to model a dialogical process that was unprecedented, that of actively listening to stakeholder voices, regardless of their relevance or power. Unlike *Directions*, where only a very small group participated in its writing of the strategy and there was no consultation, *Learning Together* offered an open process, one where any individual or group could present their ideas. It gave a sense of everyone having the potential to contribute to educational discourse, not merely those deemed experts or insiders, and suggested a more unrestricted engagement between the minister, bureaucrats, educators and community members.

***Learning Together* – the final policy**

Following a consultation period of two months, feedback on the draft *Learning Together* policy was incorporated into a final *Learning Together* policy. I was privileged to have the experience of being one of the writing team for the final document. Like many policies, the text was finalized after many discussions, arguments, drafts and re-drafts, and readings and re-readings by the Minister, her staff and senior departmental officers. My personal involvement began when this process was already underway, with a text in-progress arising from consultations on the draft document. Feedback came in directly to the Minister's office, rather than through a departmental portal. It was a conscious decision by the Minister to invite direct feedback, to send a message that this was her response not that of the senior bureaucracy. From this feedback, departmental officers had written a policy response, which I recollect, took more bureaucratic stance than was desired by the Minister. The Minister wanted a document that spoke to its intended audience and, after much workshopping of the text, a consultant was engaged to re-write the document with the assistance of Ministerial

staff and under the direction of the Minister. She wanted the language to be accessible and have meaning for as many members of the educational community as possible.

The final policy document of *Learning Together* was published in early December 2000 and launched in a series of public launches and media events across the state of Tasmania during that month. A package of related print and multi-media publications was distributed to each school, library, training and other educational sites. This included multiple copies of the full colour policy booklet, a video outlining the policy's key elements, wall posters and a set of brochures for distribution to all Department of Education employees, families and other community members. The document opened with a foreword from the Minister, praising the capacity of those who worked within the Tasmanian Department of Education and recognizing the current strengths of the overall education, training and information system. It invited all in the community to work collaboratively to achieve the vision of a "world-class future" (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 1). The statement talked about *Learning Together* as a "very much a 'living' and evolving document" (p. 2) with the goals and strategies to be supplemented with "new strategies to deal with changing times". These statements underlined the unfinished nature of *Learning Together*, and deliberately emphasized the potential for a dialogue about education. As Bridgman and Davis (2004) note, policy' was an ambiguous term. Generally a policy document was a clear expression of public policy and many policies were end-statements of an issue debate or documents that summarize authoritative positions by a government on a given issue. In those forms, a policy statement was designed to solve, rather than question. In contrast, *Learning Together* appeared quite distinctive as it opened rather than closed or defined discussion about education in Tasmania. There was a sense the policy sought out possibilities rather to police the actions of departmental employees. The policy's invitation for educators and community members to participate in a continuing interchange about Tasmanian education challenged previous assumptions about these relationships within the Tasmanian education, training and information system. For example, any notion that the bureaucracy merely would take the feedback on the policy and subject it to its view was shattered when the Minister proffered an invitation for all feedback to be forwarded to her office. This took away potential for any initial filtering of responses and gave a very clear message that a range of perspectives and ideas were being sought.

As a visual text, *Learning Together* appealed to individual experiences of learning. It had subtle two-tone blues on a white background and an eye-catching logo, incorporating images of people of all ages participating in educational opportunities, and this grounded the document in the context of the audience to which it was attempting to speak. There were

photographs of real people who worked for the Department of Education and these reinforced its focus on the experience of actual people and their learning, not merely on the structures and functions of an impersonal institution. As a visual statement, the lifelong learning timeline (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, pp. 6-7) evoked inclusiveness, as it encompassed education across all ages, from babies and toddlers, to school-aged children, adolescents and young adults, through to more mature members of the Tasmanian community. *Learning Together* painted a broad picture of educational participation, with learning experiences portrayed in many forms, from reading to arts-based practice to interaction with computer technology, and in a range of contexts, from solo to collaboratively. The graphics of the policy were visual expressions of *lifelong learning* and *a learning society* and brought together, they represented the LEARNING TOGETHER metaphor of the title, which was woven through the text.

Developed at the same time as consultation for *Tasmania Together*, which was aimed at describing values for the state of Tasmania, *Learning Together* clearly articulated its own set of values: people and their self-worth; achievement; flexibility and innovation; organisation and planning; and a fair go (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 9). These values were highly inclusive and admirable, but also were virtually unassailable. It would be hard for any educator not to find values that were consistent with their own from this list.

The pictorial representations continued through the Overview (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, pp. 1-2, 4,8) clarifying how the consultation process had led to the development of the final document. A diagram (p. 5) described how the strategies linked to the goals and the vision, and how accountability was part of the structure of the policy. This diagram symbolised an attempt to make the document from the vision to the values to the actions. The purpose of this heuristic was more than just illustrative of the elements of the policy process, as it also demonstrated a shift towards more explicit values at the core of this process of policy making. This shift was already been evident in the draft *Learning Together* policy.

The five goals of *Learning Together*, as outlined in the final publication, were as follows: continually improving and responsive services; enriching and fulfilling learning opportunities; safe and inclusive learning environments; an information-rich community with access to global and local information resources; and “a valued and supported education workforce (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 10). These goals defined major priorities that could be linked directly back to the vision and values. They also grouped the strategies together. The goals were positively framed, focusing on possibilities

and opportunities, contextualised within the local educational, economic and social environments. They centred around people, their needs and concerns rather than bureaucratic functions. There was a keen desire within the writing party to avoid motherhood statements. Therefore, the policy used active language, with verbs leading each strategy, and each strategy described a potentially achievable action. For example, strategies aimed at mobilising Department of Education staff were grouped under goal number one “continually improving and responsive services” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 11). Each sub-goal was validated in the preamble, in the sort of language that spoke of a collective educational community, a “we” and created a favourable tone for the subsequent strategies. Sub-goals and strategies targeted particular areas of policy that were recognised or emerging areas of concern or which had an identifiable appeal to an interest or lobby group. They also proposed specific achievable actions. These actions ranged from facilitating consultation, e.g. “Working with the University of Tasmania” (p. 12), to allocation of resources “Providing a minimum of 2 hours a week release time for all first-year teachers” or development of support materials “Providing all beginning teachers with an information and induction package”.

Goal One “responsive and continually improving services that ensure all Tasmanians develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 11) underlined the overarching goal of the policy to have “a world-class education, training and information system which matches the best anywhere”. This goal would be achieved through the services that the department provided and made explicit reference to the Tasmania *Together* consultation and planning process. It assumed that a world class education system would happen by putting in place strategies to ensure the consultations between the Minister and the education community continued and that the initiatives of the document were achieved. The *Learning Together* Council was one such strategy. This goal also focused on valuing the work of teachers and developing their expertise through initiatives to increase their professionalism, foster leadership throughout the organisation and to support beginning teachers. What followed were strategies that focused on improving the skills of administrative staff to support students and teachers. Schools were encouraged to explore relationships with their communities, be flexible in their organisation and share their facilities and resources, where possible, to the benefit of the whole community. Finally, under Goal One, there was a focus on the quality and performance of the whole department, with emphasis on openness in planning, more effective communication across the structure and excellence in management and leadership. This goal advocated a service orientation for the Department of Education’s operations, rather than compliance, and continued the Directions’ policy call for closer engagement of

schools with their communities. Whilst there were similar initiatives in each policy, their purposes were different as the Directions statement sought to create more accountability by a school to its community, whilst the *Learning Together* proposals were intended to foster community interchange of ideas, expectations and resources. These models of public policy suggested quite different metaphors. Whilst there were some strategies about accountability under this goal, these were more directed at the Department of Education as a bureaucratic structure.

Goal number two “enriching and fulfilling learning opportunities –that enable people to work effectively and participate in society” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 16) affirmed that learning needed to be meaningful. It began with the affirmation of a comprehensive curriculum review that was already underway at the time of the launch - to “establish a curriculum that develops our students’ knowledge, skills and confidence” (p. 16). The review was to encompass the pre-school and post-compulsory years and would require consultation with stakeholders within and beyond education and schools. The introduction to this strategy noted that there was a range of views about the nature and purposes of a curriculum for the 21st century. It also noted that there would need to be a process of consultation and reconciliation in order to design a curriculum that met such diversity of perspectives. These perspectives included preparing students for learning throughout their lives, and ensuring they were well equipped in relation to literacy, numeracy, and other such “basic skills”, as well as learning across numerous disciplines and fields of knowledge. Contiguous to the curriculum was an initiative that promised more comprehensive monitoring and reporting to parents on children’s achievement, within a broadly based, longitudinal state-wide reporting structure. This initiative suggested, when the four sub-strategies were analysed together, a system that would track every child in every school in the state across their schooling years. It would make regular feedback available to parents and provide data to the Department that would enable evaluation of students’ progress, school success and, potentially, teachers’ performance.

Childcare, which had only recently been incorporated into the portfolio of the Minister for Education, and the Department of Education, was given some consideration, particularly how childcare programs and schools could be more closely linked through curriculum, professional partnerships, professional development and research on practice. If links were able to be made explicitly to the curriculum, children would benefit in their educational setting or at home. At the other end of the years of schooling, post-compulsory education and training were to be more coordinated and integrated, with the establishment of a single Office of Post-Compulsory Education and Training (OPCET). This office would take over existing functions of the Department of Education, such as strategic policy, as well as

funding, liaising and regulating public and private providers of Vocational Education and Training (VET). A further body, the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority would make for a more streamlined approach to qualifications, incorporating the Tasmanian Secondary Assessment Board, (TASSAB) the Universities Registration Council and the Tasmanian Accreditation and Recognition Committee (TAREC). By bringing together these separate roles, there was recognition that students' transitions into tertiary education needed to be administered more flexibly, and there needed to be equal value given to qualifications from a range of educational settings. There was a perception that university entrance demands were regarded more highly than VET qualifications, yet in a rapidly changing world, this may not necessarily relate to employers' needs or general life requirements. *Learning Together* called for the community to value TAFE as a provider of very worthwhile training, rather than seeing it as a "second-choice option" (p. 21). This comprehensive set of initiatives would "streamline the qualifications process" (p. 18) and make the lifelong learning notion more "coherent" and relevant to "the needs of individuals, employers and learning institutions". Its intention was engage more students in schooling, training or work, in direct response to post-compulsory participation rates for Tasmanians under 25 that were lower than national averages (pp. 17-21).

"Lifelong learning" was at the core of many of these initiatives as they were intended to generate involvement in learning that would contribute to personal fulfilment, better quality of life, and personal and societal economic outcomes. These initiatives proposed more flexible learning opportunities, specifically in information technology, as well as 'foundation' or life skills, and pre-tertiary education preparation. The policy noted that all such opportunities needed to be advertised and made available in ways that were appropriate to any prospective students. This included considering how fee structures, such as exemptions of 50%, might encourage adults to re-enter education and training. There were also definitive statements about the clear links between education and training provision, the economy of the state and the career needs of individuals. One strategy was to foster these links through local networks such as Community Learning Advancement Networks (CLANS). These regional associations of departmental units, employers and education providers would be able to provide on-the-ground advice as to local structures, offerings and initiatives.

Goal three "safe and inclusive learning environments – that encourage and support participation in learning throughout all of life" (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 22) established a values base for a range of strategies centred around the value of inclusiveness. However, it was combined with the somewhat ambiguously used term 'safe',

making an assumption that ‘inclusive’ and ‘safe’ could also be read as ‘supportive’. The initiatives of this goal concentrated on particular areas of educational need, such as ‘at risk’ behaviour, school attendance and participation. It also listed potential groups that might most be excluded, such as those who had a disability, were gifted, and were achieving at a lower level of literacy and numeracy. It is possible to identify these target groups as the students who, for whatever reason, didn’t act appropriately in school settings, didn’t attend or participate often if they did attend, who opted out of schooling, who were not literate or numerate to expected standards, who were gifted or those who had a disability. On only one occasion, there was a mention of inclusiveness as encompassing all members of the community and their differences, be they age, locality or personal circumstances (p. 24). Key responses to being “safe and inclusive” were to highlight the implementation of specific national and state government legislation, policies and programs. Implementation emphasised consultation with parents and stakeholders, resources publication, professional development for staff, as well as the establishment of specifically-focussed programs. These safe and inclusive learning communities were where students were assisted to fit into the systems of training, education and information, and consequently the community, through a series of interventions and operational modifications that would enable them to assimilate appropriately. They were less about acknowledgment of difference.

Goal four, aimed at “an information-rich community with access to global and local resources – so that everyone has the opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, a healthy democracy and a prosperous society” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 25) highlighted the emerging roles of information and communication technology (ICT) in Tasmanians’ lives. In particular, ICT was having a significant influence on how Tasmanians were able to participate in education, training, work and community life. This goal sought both to broaden the scope of ICT from an information-sharing tool to taking a more interactive role that enabled diverse educational, social and economic activities to happen across the state. It followed the inclusion of the State Library of Tasmania and Archives Office within the Department of Education and incorporated strategies to involve these Departmental units in cultural promotion of the state and its heritage preservation. There were also strategies to deliver informal learning programs with Adult Education and make significant investment in school ICT learning programs through the establishment of *e-MAGINE*, the Centre of Excellence in Online Learning. It was a level of coordination that would require the formation of a plan *Informing Tasmanians*. The plan would give an overall rationale to these aims and provide accurate representation of what was currently happening in relation to information dissemination, sharing and coordination. This goal appeared to have a somewhat indistinct purpose. It did relate the provision of information

resources to equity, democracy and prosperity, which might have indicated the shifting nature of how rapidly ICT was changing at the time of writing. It probably demonstrated how uncertain the policy's writers were about how this complex and seemingly confused growth and whether it might contribute to people's lives. In particular, there were many questions about whether ICT may, or not, privilege some community members over others. Of note was how ICT was primarily framed as an opportunity for economic stimulus that might advantage this remote and marginal economy in a world where the technology and its uses were changing on a daily basis.

Goal five was focused on developing “a valued and supported education workforce – that reflects the importance of teaching as a profession and was held in high esteem by the community” (Department of Education Tasmania, 2000b, p. 28). It referred to the workforce of the Department of Education. Under this goal, the final set of strategies of *Learning Together* were about how that workforce might be better valued, managed, communicated with and consulted. In particular, this goal highlighted how teachers could be given greater professional respect within the community. Strategies included an International Education Conference, that would showcase the state's “world-class” education practice, recognition of outstanding educators and their programs, and recruitment strategies to encourage young teachers into a career with the Department of Education. Strategies addressed issues around recruitment in particular curriculum areas and for schools in disadvantage and isolated parts of the state. Other initiatives included ones focused on communication and change, presumably to enable such changes as the curriculum review to be implemented successfully, and to utilise contemporary technological change, such as the use of email and internet use for the operational management of staff. The importance of good leadership, which had already been mentioned under goal one, was again referenced as being central to the achievement of the *Learning Together* proposals.

Learning Together was launched in a series of policy launches around Tasmania, beginning with a major media and public launch at the University of Tasmania, Sandy Bay Campus on December 1, 2000. What followed were other events in the North and North-West, mirroring the Southern launch, involving receptions for educators, parents, students, other stakeholders and community representatives. These events were designed to attract major media coverage in all three Tasmanian newspapers, the Mercury, the Examiner and the Advocate, as well as extensive radio and television coverage. This goal was certainly achieved. The launches carried strong positive messages about the importance of education for the future lives of the Tasmanian people and the economic and social standing of the state.

We must inspire all Tasmanians with a passion for learning and with a desire to explore every learning possibility open to them. (Wriedt, 2000)

Newspaper articles spoke of a wide-ranging document that set out “a mammoth task” of becoming a world leader in education. The status of this policy statement was further emphasized by a \$6.3 million funding allocation. Firstly, the vision of world class education and training was given significant coverage by all forms of media, with the tasks of achieving this regarded by some journalists as “mammoth” (Grube, 2000).

It was interesting to hear what members of the Tasmanian education community drew from an initial reading of *Learning Together*. I suspected that many would only give the document a cursory scan, searching for words and phrases that had meaning for them, or which named aspects of their work. What was clear was that Tasmanian education quickly became reframed through the metaphor of ‘togetherness’ as the *Learning Together* title was evoked at every opportunity. Teachers, bureaucrats and others quickly adopted this new way of describing their work, with several meanings becoming evident straight away. One perceived meaning of *Learning Together* was that all members of the community could participate in educational decisions making. Another was that Tasmanian could become more cohesive as an educational and social community. A further interpretation was that the Department of Education Tasmania might become more consultative and less centralist, moving away from bureaucratic impositions of policy without consultation.

In the years that followed, I was involved in the implementation of initiatives from across *Learning Together*. A major initiative was *Leading Learning*, an international conference conducted throughout the state and attended by educators from all Government schools in Tasmania. As part of my work, I had a central role in the conception and planning of this conference, liaising closely with Departmental officers for what was a very successful, professional learning event. Particularly, I was charged with ensuring that the conference achieved its aims of being inclusive of Tasmanian Government schoolteachers and that it considered their needs and interests. It was warmly welcome and repeated in 2005.

Following my move to the Faculty of Education at the University of Tasmania in 2003, I was appointed to the Ministerial *Learning Together* Council, listed under goal one as having the role of monitoring the implementation of the policy and keeping the focus on achieving a world-class system through continually improving services. This allowed me to continue my close involvement in *Learning Together* and gave me insight into the policy’s ongoing influence. I describe two such occasions in the following narratives.

Learning Together – new possibilities

Clarence High School Celebration evening – December 2003

I went to the Clarence High School Celebration evening at the Federation Concert hall tonight. The school gave a *Learning Together* Award to a student in Year 8 who was an all rounder - a student whose contributions to the school were varied and it was clear that his teachers very much enjoyed teaching him. This award to a student in every Tasmanian public school was an initiative that grew out of *Learning Together* after the policy was announced. Money was given to each school community to allow them to set the criteria and choose a student who was worthy of recognition. It was interesting to see an award to a year 8 student, who was noted for being a well rounded student and I wondered what other criteria were used in other schools. Perhaps I should find out as it interests me that such an award might be quite different nature to many awards that would be given in such assemblies - awards which privileged academic achievement or general merit were the norm. The year group of the student who was selected at this ceremony hinted that different understandings of learning, perhaps broader ones than just framed by academic success, were the order of the day.

2004

I have been part of discussions with the *Learning Together* Council and with the minister's office about how the *Learning Together* evolves next. These discussions began in late 2003, and ground to a halt when it became clear that a new purpose for *Learning Together 2* (also known as *Son of Learning Together*) was not yet clear. A group comprising the Minister and her staff, senior bureaucrats, and several others who had been central to the original *Learning Together* policy had met to discuss this, even to the point of discussing possible strategies that might be included in a consultation draft. There was a wish to celebrate what had happened in the past, but there was also a desire to take the *Learning Together* vision further. Eventually, the conversations slowly all found their way to the same conclusion; that any new version of *Learning Together* needed to be highly credible but just building on past successes would not be enough to address the issues of education in the state and or concerns of its stakeholders. A document had begun to be drafted but was somehow lost, and this has brought to a stumbling close any forward momentum that *Learning Together* had.

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Appendix E

List of education policies and curriculum documents of
Australian states

Melbourne Graduate School of Education Curriculum Policies Project

Curriculum Policy and Major Education Reports

Key Curriculum Documents

	1975	1985	1995	2005
Vic	1960: Ramsay Report	1984: Ministerial Paper No. 6 1985: Blackburn Report 1985: P-17 Frameworks	1986: Implementing Ministerial Paper 6 1988: P-17 Curriculum & Organisation Framework 1995: The CSF 1995: Using the CSF	1997: Dow VCE Review 2000: CSF II 2003: Blueprint 2005: VELS
NSW	1957: Wyndham Report	1981: McGowan Report 1982: Curriculum Review 1984: Future Directions	1989: Carrick Report 1989: Scott Report 1989: Excellence + Equity 1995: Ellis Report	1997: McGaw Report 1998: Review of HSC 2002: K-10 Framework
Qld	1970: Radford Report	1978: Scott Report 1980: Ahern Report 1985: Education 2000	1986-88: RQSB Discussion Papers 1987: P-10 Framework 1990: Viviani Report 1995: Whillshire Report	2001: 1-10 Curriculum Framework 2002: Pitman Report 2002: The Smart State 2005: QCAR
SA	1971: Karmel Report	1978: Jones Report 1981: Into the 80s 1982: Keeves Report	1988: Gilding Report 1989: Educating for the 21st Century 1995: Curriculum Statements & Profiles	1997: Foundations for the Future 2001: SACS Framework 2005: SACS
WA	1969: Dettman Report	1981: Priest Report 1984: Beazley Report 1985: McGaw Report	1987: Better Schools 1989: Andrich Report 1993: Vickery Report	1998: Curriculum Frameworks K-12 1998: Student Outcome 1999: Focusing on Outcomes
Tas	1968: Hughes Report	1977: Secondary Ed 1978: The Next Decade 1980: Requirements for Curriculum 1981: White Paper	1987: The Future: Policy Statement 1990: Cresap Report	2000: Learning Together 2002: HL Framework 2003: State of Learning

Yates, L., O'Connor, K., Collins, C., Wright, K & Holt, B. (2008). *School Knowledge, Working Knowledge and the Knowing Subject: A review of state curriculum policies 1975-2005*. Melbourne, Victoria: Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne.
Retrieved 10 May 2011 from
<http://www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/curriculumpoliciesproject/Reports/Matrix.html>

Melbourne Graduate School of Education Curriculum Policies Project

Curriculum Policy and Major Education Reports

Victoria - Key Documents

Vic | [NSW](#) | [Qld](#) | [SA](#) | [WA](#) | [Tas](#)

1975
Victoria. Committee on State Education in Victoria (1960). <i>Report of the Committee on State Education in Victoria (Ramsay Report)</i> . Melbourne: Government Printer.
More information available here
1985
Victoria. Education Department (1983-4). <i>Curriculum Development and Planning in Victoria, Ministerial Paper No. 6</i> . Melbourne: Education Department of Victoria.
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Victoria. Education Department (1985). <i>Curriculum Frameworks P-12: An introduction</i> . Melbourne: Curriculum Branch, Education Department of Victoria.
More information available here
1995
Victoria. Ministry of Education (1986). <i>Implementing Ministerial Paper No. 6</i> . Melbourne: Ministry of Education.
Victoria. Ministry of Education (1988). <i>The School Curriculum and Organisation Framework, P-12</i> . Melbourne: Schools Division, Ministry of Education.
Victoria. Board of Studies (1995). <i>Curriculum and Standards Framework (CSF)</i> . Melbourne: Board of Studies.
Victoria. Board of Studies (1995). <i>Using the CSF: An introduction</i> . Melbourne: Board of Studies.
More information available here
2005
Victoria. Department of Education and Training (1997). <i>Enhancing their Futures: Report of the Committee of Review on the Victorian Certificate of Education (Dow VCE Review)</i> . Melbourne: Department of Education and Training.
Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (2000). <i>Curriculum and Standards Framework II (CSF II): an overview P-10</i> . Melbourne: Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
Victoria. Department of Education and Training. (2003). <i>Blueprint for Government Schools: Future Directions in the Victorian Government School System</i> . Melbourne: Department of Education and Training.
Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (2005). <i>Victorian Essential Learning Standards: Overview</i> . Melbourne: Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.
More information available here

Melbourne Graduate School of Education Curriculum Policies Project

Curriculum Policy and Major Education Reports

New South Wales - Key Documents

[Vic](#) | [NSW](#) | [Qld](#) | [SA](#) | [WA](#) | [Tas](#)

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