

# **(Re)Reading the Historical Record: Curriculum History and the Linguistic Turn**

Phil Cormack<sup>1</sup> & Bill Green<sup>2</sup>

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This paper is an exploration of the methodological challenges and implications for curriculum history presented by “the so-called ‘linguistic turn’” (Franklin, 1999: 473) in the Humanities and Social Sciences, using research directed towards subject English as a case-study. Please note that it is presently still in draft form, and we ask that it not be formally cited without due permission from the authors.

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<sup>1</sup> Centre for Studies in Literacy, Policy and Learning Cultures, University of South Australia, Underdale, South Australia, Australia, 5032 (<phillip.cormack@unisa.edu.au>).

<sup>2</sup> At time of writing: School of Curriculum Studies, University of New England, Armidale, New South Wales, Australia, 2350. Current contact: Faculty of Education, Charles Sturt University, Panorama Avenue, Bathurst NSW 2795 (current contact<bigreen@csu.edu.au>).

... the question confronting contemporary historians is not whether they will utilize a linguistic model to aid them in their work of translation but what kind of linguistic model they will use (White 1987, pp.188-9).

Franklin's (1999) recent synoptic essay on curriculum history, with reference specifically to the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, usefully overviews work in the current-traditional and critical-revisionist traditions. Among other things, it refers to new directions in curriculum-historical research such as that of Popkewitz (1997) and others but doesn't elaborate on them, other than to note the increasing importance of language and related concepts and categories. We argue that the impact of the so-called 'linguistic turn' on curriculum history is still quite limited in spite of the important and distinctive challenge it offers to the field. We consider here some of the possibilities that the linguistic turn, and poststructuralist theorising more generally, might offer for historical studies of curriculum and schooling, with a focus on methodological challenges. We begin however by focusing more specifically and directly on implications for curriculum inquiry itself.

### **Reconceptualising curriculum history**

From an international perspective, curriculum history has become an established field of study in curriculum inquiry only in the last three decades - indeed, more or less coincident with the larger curriculum inquiry field itself, at least in what might be called its critical-reconceptualist tradition of development and debate. This is usefully grasped as the eruption of history, theory and politics in curriculum inquiry, as something of a paradigmatic shift in that larger field's self-understanding and conduct. Reconceptualist initiatives in curriculum inquiry have since become increasingly influential in shaping professional and intellectual work, although not without controversy or critical debate, sometimes along quite problematical 'theory/practice' lines. Pinar et al (1995) explicitly locate curriculum history within this emergent tradition. As they write: "If one distinguishing characteristic of the traditional field was that it tended to be atheoretical and ahistorical ..., then one distinguishing characteristic of the reconceptualized, contemporary field is that it is profoundly historical." Moreover, as well as introducing historical perspective into curriculum work more generally, a new "self-consciousness regarding the historicity of curriculum work", a new field (or sub-field) of study has appeared on the scene: "The study of curriculum history ... has emerged in the 1980s as one of the most important sectors of contemporary curriculum scholarship" (Pinar et al, 1995, p42).

Running alongside this critical-reconceptualist work, and sometimes in complex dialogue with it, have been those forms of curriculum scholarship addressed more programmatically to questions of institution and practice and organised around the intricate projects of schooling and modernity (eg Reid, 1999). Classically liberal in its politics and its outlook, this work has equally provided for historical inquiry in curriculum research. History has been understood here, and actively promoted, as an invaluable indeed necessary resource for effective, meaningful, socially-responsible curriculum work

This is the context, then, within which curriculum history as a distinctive sub-discipline is to be conceptualised. That is acknowledged in Franklin's recent ('state of

the art') essay, in highlighting both the social construction of the school curriculum and its role and significance, historically, in social regulation. A new socio-historical awareness pervades curriculum inquiry, and curriculum-historical work has become a distinctive and important area of research and scholarship in its own right. Moreover, there has been a growing body of Australian work in this regard (Musgrave, 1988; Seddon, 1989; Kirk, 1992), and an increasingly more sophisticated curriculum-theoretical discourse - for example, work organised more explicitly and self-consciously around what has been called the 'modernism-postmodernism' debate (Green, 1993). We see this present work as both informed by and furthering such inquiry.

Franklin (1999, p472) observes that "the most interesting and conceptually rich work in [recent] curriculum history" has been that which has increasingly addressed itself to questions of rhetoric, textuality, language and discourse. He points, in particular, to Kliebard's work on symbolic action and to work that embraces more squarely "the idea of the so-called 'linguistic turn' in the social sciences", specifically citing here what might be appropriately if somewhat provocatively called the Popkewitz school (Baker, 1996; Popkewitz, 1997; Popkewitz and Brennan [ed], 1998). However, Franklin's view of the linguistic turn is one that is, for us, both limited and limiting. This is because clearly he has little feel and perhaps sympathy for poststructuralist theory and philosophy, which arguably is at the heart of the postmodern challenge to curriculum and social inquiry alike. Moreover, there is little sense here of what might be actually at stake or at issue in speaking of a '*linguistic* turn' in this fashion and in this context.

Indeed, there has been little explicit recognition or acknowledgment in the field as a whole of the importance of *language* in and for curriculum and schooling, as well as knowledge and identity. Language is not to be understood here in the instrumental sense but rather as a primary condition of possibility. This was a key thesis in our earlier work, in fact - "that language, 'Writing' and the symbolic order are crucial considerations for understanding curriculum and schooling" (Green, 1993, p5). Moreover, it was argued that there was a blindness in the curriculum field as to the importance of language and literacy, understood expressly in terms of textuality, representation, signification and symbolic practice, and more generally in terms of the social dynamics of discourse and subjectivity. That work sought to indicate "the relevance of what is broadly known as 'poststructuralism' for literacy studies and curriculum theorizing" (Green, 1993, p3), pointing in particular to figures such as Foucault, Lacan and Derrida, as well as Kristeva, as rich resources for educational inquiry and praxis. Although clearly there has been heightened interest in such work over the past decade, it is still debatable whether its radical challenge in terms of the foundational fields of realism and humanism has been properly or appropriately engaged.

Over a decade ago, Musgrave (1988, p4) observed of curriculum history that it was "now more conceptually based", with "its frameworks of methods chosen from several of the social sciences". He also noted "the widening range of disciplinary methods used in this area", and the importance of "new disciplinary approaches" (Musgrave, 1988, p9). Of particular interest and relevance here is his insight into the importance of language. As well as referring directly to Lacan's work on language and psychoanalysis (Note 57), he makes the following assertion: "The growth of

mass public education has been set in an age of the written word. *Curriculum history has centred on texts and their content*" (Musgrave, 1988, p9; our emphasis). This is still, as it were, pre- (or perhaps proto-) poststructuralist, but it is suggestive all the same. We shall take up the notion of going *beyond* 'texts and their content' later in this paper, in our account of discourse analysis and curriculum-historical inquiry. Here we want merely to emphasise the point that clearly, in such a view, language matters, over and beyond its instrumental functions and its phenomenal manifestations.

The issue become one then of properly understanding what such a view means for rethinking, firstly, the specificity of the curriculum concept, and secondly, the project of curriculum history itself, as a distinctive form of *curriculum* inquiry. Here, the challenge that poststructuralist theory and philosophy presents for the field becomes manifest. It is more than simply just another resource for curriculum inquiry, as Pinar and his colleagues imply (Pinar et al, 1995, p48), turning as they do to notions of 'text' and 'discourse' to "focus on the language of the field"<sup>3</sup>. Rather, and more radically, account needs to be taken here of the fuller significance of what has been named here as 'the linguistic turn' - as, in Derrida's (1978, p280) terms, "... the moment when language invaded the universal problematic, the moment when, in the absence of a centre or origin, everything became discourse". In this light, what has been described previously as an 'eruption' of history, theory and politics into the field can be re-assessed. Curriculum itself, as a distinctive concept, is more properly reformulated as both a problem and a practice of *symbolic value* (Donald, 1992, pp45-46; see also Pinar et al, 1995, p16). Hence the importance of reckoning into account the 'linguistic turn' in and for curriculum inquiry and curriculum history, with that 'turn' to be understood historically as well as conceptually as

not just a new linguistic sensibility in educational and cultural research - that is, a new heightened awareness of language, information and the symbolic order, something that has emerged and burgeoned in the postwar period, right across the cultural and intellectual field - but also the growing recognition that *we must review history itself* in these terms and through such a lens (Green, 1993, p16; our added emphasis).

At this point, then, it is appropriate to turn to a more specific consideration of history and historiography along such lines.

### **What is the linguistic turn, and what does it have to do with history?**

Writing in 1997, Andrew Thacker linked the linguistic turn with postmodern(ist) theorising and indicated that both have had a disruptive impact on thinking about historical methodology, such that:

[w]riting history has become rather a fraught affair. The discipline of history in the Anglo-American world, has in the last decade or so had to contend with a 'linguistic turn' or the rise of a 'postmodern' history', a

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<sup>3</sup> Intriguingly, the passage continues on from this thus: "that is, the scholarly production of the field, to insist the field *is* its scholarly production" (Pinar et al, 1995, p48) - arguably, a subtle and most suggestive shift in focus.

series of debates that have provoked, enraged and disrupted much that was taken as a methodological consensus (Thacker 1997, p.29).

Strictly speaking, the linguistic turn refers to the impact of the work of structuralist thinkers in the social sciences which severed the assumed link between language and the 'real' - the signifier and the signified - showing that this relationship was arbitrary and culturally determined. No longer could historical texts be assumed to provide direct evidence of past reality; the historian was studying instead a linguistic production and representation. For Barthes (1997, p.121), the claim for history to be about collecting and using 'facts' (the referents here being beyond discourse, yet only ever able to be used within discourse) served to disguise the way historical discourse proclaimed its own authority:

We could say that historical discourse is a fudged up performative, in which what appears as statement (and description) is in fact no more than the signifier of the speech act as an act of authority (Barthes 1997, p.122).

More recent (or post-structuralist) theorising by, especially, Michel Foucault has critiqued and built upon structuralist theories to show that discourses "reflect relations of power and the purposes of social control. Developed within specific historical circumstances, they serve to organize and order what it is possible to think" (Burgess, 1984, p.15). Poststructuralism "reintroduces history into structuralism" (Benington and Young 1987, p.2), by grounding discussion of discourses and their effects in particular localities and times, and by showing that no one, including historians, can stand outside of discourse.

A number of historians have considered the methodological implications of the linguistic turn and poststructuralist theory more broadly for the study of history. Georg Iggers (1997), for example, argues that the linguistic turn leads historians to place cultural factors alongside others that they have traditionally considered (eg economic) in their work:

The "linguistic turn" in historical studies over the past decade and a half has been part of an effort to break the determinism inherent in older socioeconomic approaches and to emphasize the role of cultural factors, among which language occupies a key place (Iggers 1997, p.133).

Iggers' version of the linguistic turn does not involve a turning away from traditional historical methods; rather, linguistic analysis becomes an important 'supplementary tool' (p.133) in the historian's methodological toolbox.

Others, however, argue for a more fundamental rethinking of historical methodology. For example, Munslow (1997) highlights the constitutive nature of discourse, arguing that historians do not tell the story of the past - rather, their stories constitute history:

History is no longer defined then by the established categories of analysis - economic structures, competing nationalisms, political and cultural revolutions, the march and opposition of ideas, great men and women, periods of excess and ages of equipoise, republics and monarchies, empires and dynasties, famines and plagues - but instead by how societies

interpret, imagine, create, control, regulate, and dispose of knowledge, especially through the claims of disciplines to truth, authority, certainty. Events do not dictate history: history dictates events (Munslow 1997, pp.124-5).

Jenkins (1995), in a similar vein, makes a distinction between ‘historiography’ and ‘the past’ in order to emphasise that the two are not synonymous. History, he says, is the field of relations between historiography and the past and is an epistemologically ‘fragile’ enterprise because:

- no historian can (re)cover the past because its ‘content’ is nearly limitless
- no historical account can (re)cover the past because the past wasn’t an account, it was events and situations,
- history (as opposed to the past) is a personal construct built out of the historian’s perspective as a narrator
- history could also be more than the past, because, with hindsight, we can know more about the past than the people who lived in it. (Jenkins 1995, pp.11-13)

Here we have an understanding of history as a ‘discourse’ and as ‘text’ and the practice of history as always conceptualising and mediating the past through the discourses and texts of others. According to Jenkins, this makes:

the study of history (the past) necessarily a study of historiography (historians), historiography therefore being considered not as an extra to the study of history but as actually constituting it (Jenkins 1995, p.12).

This view of history as discourse means that no longer can the study of history assume simply or simplistically that there is a ‘reality’ or ‘past’ which lies outside of historical or textual representation, one which can provide a touchstone for verifying or checking a history:

Textuality has important implications for traditional historical methodology and representation. It adds complexity to the reading of documentary remains from the past by conflating what they signify with how they signify. It supplements, when it does not dissolve, the notion of authorship and intention into the social, cultural, or other textualizing practices that produced the document or remain, thereby repudiating the traditional notions of intention and authorship that had supplied the premises necessary to interpret documents as evidence for the reconstruction of the past as actual context (Berkhoffer 1995, p.22).

This disrupts fundamental (for traditional history, that is) distinctions between ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ sources because both are to be conceived as discursive productions and representations of the past which are “*always* apprehended through the sedimented layers of previous interpretations and through the reading habits and categories developed by previous/current interpretive discourses” (Jenkins 1995, p.11). No text can, therefore, be said to be ‘original’, in the sense that it was not constituted by the discourses it operated within or did not, itself, comment on and respond to other discourses. The work of Bakhtin (1981, p.337) is particularly relevant here. He notes that “our speech is filled to overflowing with other people’s

words,” and that most texts are *dialogic* in that they are written out of, and in response to, other texts.

Thus, the linguistic turn reconfigures history as discourse and the study of history, accordingly, as a self-conscious study of the discourses of history. History is always being written within discourses that constitute and are constituted by present-day power structures and ruling relations - which implies a need for reflexivity about the place of historical writing within those structures and relations, acknowledging the particular role of history in bolstering or disrupting these discourses (Munslow 1997). Hayden White’s (1987) work on the textual form of historical discourse is relevant here. He shows that the narrative form of historical discourse is central to its power and its appeal:

The authority of the historical narrative is the authority of reality itself; the historical account endows this reality with form and thereby makes it desirable by the imposition upon its processes of the formal coherency that only stories possess (White 1987, p.20).

By imposing a narrative on past events – giving the past a ‘plot’ – history is implicated in giving form (value, meaning) to peoples’ lives and social structures, providing explanations and connections which have powerful effects in the present.

This last point brings us to the particular relations between the past and the present that have been reconfigured by the linguistic turn, and to the particular impact of (one of) Foucault’s approaches to history that he characterised as a ‘history of the present’ (Foucault 1977, p.31; Tyler and Meredith, 1991, p2). This ‘genealogical’ (Foucault 1977) approach to the study of history refuses the unity of subjects (eg child, citizen), institutions (eg school, hospital), and ideas (eg democracy, sanity), noting that, being constituted within discourses, they are the *effects* of particular (historical) practices. These subjects, institutions, ideas are not transhistorical in the way that traditional historical narratives constitute them, through the ways they describe their formation, their development and their emergence. There is no (human) subject, for example, that exists outside of discourse that can be tracked in its various changing modes:

One has to dispense with the constituent subject, to get rid of the subject itself, that’s to say, to arrive at an analysis which can account for the constitution of the subject within a historical framework. And this is what I would call genealogy, that is, a form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history (Foucault 1980, p.117).

This represents a challenge to the heart of historical methodology - an accusation that (traditional) history has, in fact, denied history by making the present appear an almost inevitable outcome of the past:

Genealogy opposes itself to traditional historical method: its aim is to “record the singularity of events outside of any monotonous finality (NGH 139). For the genealogist there are no fixed essences, no

underlying laws, no metaphysical finalities. Genealogy seeks out discontinuities where others found continuous development. It finds recurrences and play where others found progress and seriousness (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1986, p.106).

To show that present-day subjects, institutions and ideas are different from (or innovations on) the past, Foucault must turn to history (ie he must show that history is the 'other' of the present (Flynn 1997, p.250)). He does this through 'problematization', which involves a process of starting with a problem (a question or practice which is the focus of attention) as it is currently constituted and tracing its genealogy. Thus a history of the present problematizes a practice or issue in the present by attending to the history of its transformations and its emergence (note the reverse of the usual 'historical' order here) as a problem worthy of attention (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1986, pp.118-25). Dean (1994, p.21) describes this as the development of 'critical and effective' histories which "reflect upon the contingency, singularity, interconnections, and potentialities of the diverse trajectories of those elements which compose present social arrangements and experience." The implication here is that the particular role of traditional history has been to fabricate seamless representations of the production of present arrangements, something which a genealogist attempts to unpick and to show how things could have been otherwise:

[I]f the genealogist refuses to extend his faith in metaphysics, if he listens to history, he finds that there is "something altogether different" behind things: not a timeless and essential secret, but the secret that they have no essence or that their essence was fabricated in a piecemeal fashion from alien forms (Foucault 1977, p.142).

In its opposition to traditional historical method, genealogies attend to discontinuity, to accidents and the mundane (Cormack, 1998). Dean (Dean 1994, p.20) labels genealogies as 'critical' because of the way they seek to disrupt what is taken for granted or seen as 'normal' in the present day. These histories focus on the practices and techniques by which human subjects have been shaped (Rose 1996) and not just the ideas and knowledges that have been brought into play in this process. Such a focus steers the historian towards a study of the 'improper', the 'delinquent', the 'diseased', because it is out of concern for these that notions of normality, their accompanying grids of specification and the 'technologies' that shape human subjectivity, typically have been developed (Rose 1996, p.131).

Foucault's focus on the mundane and programmatic aspects of history through his genealogical approach is worth exploring here. He did more than study the history of ideas. He was interested in the transformation of the 'moral technologies' (Foucault 1991) – the 'practices' – by which populations are shaped and disciplined. If there is work to be done in curriculum history in response to the linguistic turn, beyond that described by Franklin (1999, p473), it is in this field of *practices* - regimes of local, mundane, contingent ways of doing and saying things that connect differentially with theories, plans and policies:

[T]hese types of practice are not just governed by institutions, prescribed by ideologies, guided by pragmatic circumstances – whatever role these elements may actually play – but possess up to a point their own specific

regularities, logic, strategy, self-evidence and 'reason'. It is a question of analyzing a 'regime of practices' – practices being understood here as places where what is said and what is done, rules imposed and reasons given, the planned and the taken for granted meet and interconnect (Foucault 1991, p.75).

It seems to us that schools and the curriculum represent just such a place – where policy, reforms, ideologies, theories meet the local and already taken for granted to produce what might be called a 'surplus of effects'. Foucault was interested in the programmatic aspects of ideas as they were played out in particular places and ways to produce effects (usually not the expected ones) which nevertheless act as powerful human technologies:

These programmes don't take effect in the institutions in an integral manner; they are simplified, or some are chosen and not others; and things never work out as planned. But what I wanted to show is that this difference is not one between the purity of an ideal and the disorderly impurity of the real, but that in fact there are different strategies which are mutually opposed, composed and superposed so as to produce permanent and solid effects which can perfectly well be understood in terms of their rationality, even though they don't conform to the initial programming: this is what gives the resulting apparatus (*dispositif*) its solidity and suppleness. (Foucault 1991, p.81)

The possibility for historical study of the curriculum beyond the linguistic turn, then, is to extend its focus beyond the history of ideas, 'intellectual history', and the study of discourses that constitute curriculum to the domain of programs and effects in particular places and spaces. The possibility also exists to consider how these practices in turn serve to reinforce and modify those discourses.

In summary, the linguistic turn has presented challenges to traditional historical methods but it has also provided for the possibility of new kinds of 'critical and effective' histories. The following points summarise the issues raised above, and consider the implications and questions that these raise for the study of curriculum history.

- historians constitute history (which is something different from the 'past') and themselves work within discursive frameworks
  - what discourses have constituted curriculum history and shaped the representations made?
- historians mostly deal with textual forms of data which are themselves constituted in discourse - there are no 'original' or 'primary' texts which precede or stand outside of this process
  - what kinds of methods are suitable for the analysis of historical discourse, including the writing of historians? how might historical analysis take account of the multi-voiced and dialogic nature of such texts?
- as readers and producers of historical texts, historians need to be aware of the ways that their work relates to (bolsters *or* disrupts) present-day power structures and practices

- how have the truth claims of curriculum history been implicated in relations of power?
- the narrative form produced in (that produces) history has powerful effects in the present because of the way it gives form and meaning to peoples' lives, something that makes the reflexivity implied above particularly important
  - in what ways does curriculum history address present-day participants in curricula? what meanings does it ascribe to these peoples' lives and what forms of life and living does it valorise?
- the subjects of human history (people, institutions, ideas), being constituted in discourse, are not transhistorical categories. The ways we think about ourselves and our world are not an inevitable outcome of our history
  - what analytic categories (eg 'subject', 'child', 'school') does the field of curriculum history treat as *outside* of discourse and therefore constitute as essential and unquestioned?
- current sets of practices and ways of thinking can be problematised by tracing the genealogy of the various forms that they have taken in the past and the contingent and even haphazard way in which they came to be
  - what current sets of curriculum practices and problematisations (eg the concept of 'at-risk'; outcomes based learning, etc) are most important to historicise?
- histories (of the present), by showing the different forms of problematisation used in the past, can provide a means of critiquing present arrangements by showing their contingent nature and questioning those things that are seen as normal or taken-for-granted
  - what practices in the present do curriculum histories address themselves to?
- critical and effective histories focus on the (often mundane) *practices* as well as on the ideas and theories which shape human subjectivity, paying attention to the improper/delinquent subject that is so often brought into play in determining what will count as 'normal'
  - what does the history of the mundane, everyday and enacted curriculum have to teach us about the ways in which, for instance, school-subjects (and their associated practices) operate as technologies to shape human subjectivity? How has the delinquent (child/teacher/parent) served to shape the curriculum ideal?
- genealogical approaches to history study the programmatic aspects of ideas and institutions to consider the practices that are employed in particular places and times to discipline, regulate and produce human subjects. They take into account the multiple and often unexpected outcomes of particular programs and policies which nevertheless result in forms of human technology
  - how have different programs of curriculum reform been played out in specific localities and school spaces? What local logic, ways of thinking and doing things have been employed to what effects?

### **Discourse analysis and curriculum-historical inquiry**

From a methodological perspective, the key challenge for curriculum history in response to the linguistic turn in historical studies and the human sciences more generally is how to engage with text and discourse as both 'data', on the one hand, and as constituting the very practice of curriculum history itself, on the other. This seems to us to require a form of discourse analysis which is both sensitive to historical (con)texts and self-consciously reflexive in its application.

Discourse analysis is itself a heterogeneous field of study which has emerged in the latter part of the twentieth century, drawing from both the fields of linguistics and, more recently, poststructuralism (Lee and Poynton, 2000). Hence it needs to be understood also in specific relation to contemporary developments and debates in cultural studies and (social-)semiotics, literary and cultural theory, and what has come to be known as the New Literacy Studies (Gee, 2000). Of particular relevance here is the field's characteristic emphasis on questions of power, identity and history, and its explicit engagement with issues and problems of 'context'. Two distinguishing features can be noted, in positing discourse analysis as above all else a form of *relational analysis* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992): firstly, its programmatic emphasis on the relationship between 'macro' and 'micro' perspectives and problematics, and secondly, its focus on the equally important and contentious relationship between what for the moment we shall label simply as the 'discursive' and the 'non-discursive' (or 'extra-discursive'). This is, in part, precisely the challenge in Derrida's (1978: 280) assertion of "the moment when ... everything became discourse": how to bring these various relations and vectors together?

As Franklin (1999: 472) indicates, a major initiative in recent curriculum history has been the neo-Foucaultian 'postmodern' work associated with what we have labelled here the Popkewitz School. The interest in this work has been in "pursuing a 'linguistic turn' which focuses on the discursive patterns through which schooling is constituted" (Popkewitz, 1997: 138) - that is, "the rules of 'reasoning'" (Popkewitz, 1997: 139; Baker, 1996: 111) whereby curriculum history *constitutes* its objects, categories and formulations of concern. This is to draw attention to the large-scale discursive regularities, iterations and patterns in curriculum and schooling; moreover, to the implication of curriculum history itself, as a distinctive field of inquiry, within those rules of formation (Baker, 1996: 107).

This is important work, and serious and significant scholarship, and we see our own project as an intervention in this regard. At the same time, its characteristic focus on "how systems of ideas change over time and how that change is related to issues of power" (Popkewitz, 1997: 138) needs, in our view, to be both complemented and supplemented by more close-grained work on actual textual traces and practices. This necessitates specific, systematic theoretical *and* practical attention to notions of 'text' and 'genre' (and also 'narrative') as well as 'discourse', and also to the articulation of insights and arguments from both linguistics and poststructuralism (Threadgold, 1997). With reference to curriculum history, that work has scarcely begun.

Accordingly we propose to concentrate here on that an emerging group of practices within that field that have been labelled 'critical discourse analysis' (for an introduction to the term and its location in the field, see Fairclough 1989; Fairclough 1992; Luke 1995; Luke 1997; Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). Broadly speaking, critical discourse analysis (CDA) responds to and builds on discourse-analytic work by attending to issues of power and the material effects of discourses on peoples' lives. It brings to discourse analysis insights developed from poststructuralist (and also feminist and postcolonial) theories, some of which have been canvassed in the previous section. Here we mainly refer to emergent work by Australian scholars who are theorising and utilising CDA in educational research. A number of emphases of critical discourse analysis are highlighted (although it should be emphasised that

critical discourse analysis has not been codified, and remains an emerging and experimental approach to research method), with a view to the implications for curriculum-historical methods<sup>4</sup>.

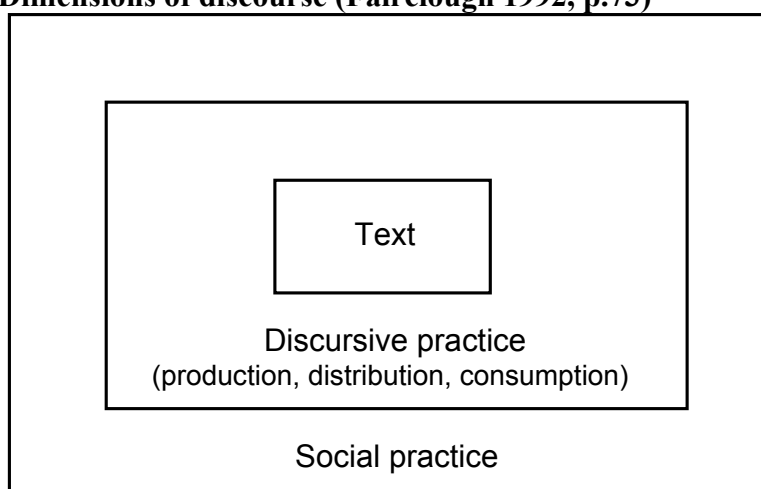
*Analysis of texts in their social and historical context*

According to Fairclough (1992, pp.63-64), discourse is a social practice as well as a mode of representation. This means that discourse constructs subject positions for people (identities) and the relations between people (relations). It also constructs systems of belief (ideas):

The identity function relates to the ways in which social identities are set up in discourse, the relational function to how social relationships between discourse participants are enacted and negotiated, the ideational function to ways in which texts signify the world and its processes, entities and relations (Kamler 1997, p.64).

These three functions of discourse work not only in texts (oral and spoken) but also impact on the ways in which these texts are made and used in the world, and these in turn are implicated in wider social relations. Fairclough represents these dimensions of discourse with three nested boxes, as shown in Figure 1. This representation shows that analysis of discourse involves not only close attention to texts, but also to the processes of production, distribution and consumption of these texts, as well as their relation to broader social practices.

**Figure 1: Dimensions of discourse (Fairclough 1992, p.73)**



Thus analysis of texts in CDA is always related in some way to the other, overlapping dimensions shown by Fairclough. In curriculum-historical study, this would mean that texts such as curriculum documents, teacher references, student text-books, classroom artefacts, minutes of meetings, transcripts of staff meetings, etc, are always considered in terms of the discursive practice in which they are used and constituted; and this, in turn, is related to the broader social structures which frame the practices and texts under examination. To consider this in even more concrete terms of our own

<sup>4</sup> Something not addressed here but clearly relevant is the account of 'discourse-historical methodology' in Fairclough and Wodak (1997: 266) - something we intend to engage more fully on another occasion.

research into English teaching, literacy education and public schooling in Australia in the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Green, Cormack and Reid, 2000 [in press]), a chain of considerations is involved.

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Considerations</b>
Text	The focus of textual analysis is the <i>Education Gazette</i> – the official organ of the Education Department responsible for state education in South Australia. This document contains official instructions to teachers, curriculum specifications, inspectors’ reports, extracts from articles and other forms of ‘guidance’ for teachers
Discursive practice	This document operates as an official set of instructions - ie it is to be <i>consumed</i> in certain ways and is <i>produced</i> by the Education Department. It is <i>distributed</i> to every school and each teacher is expected to read it. It assumes and constitutes particular relations between teachers and headmasters; teachers and inspectors; teachers and students. It contains <i>intertextual</i> references to other documents - inspectors’ reports, acts of parliament, journal articles, politician’s speeches, newspaper reports, texts for students – ie it operates within sets of other sites and practices. It not only instructs teachers, it seeks to guide them, provide models of practice. It also speaks to (it is in dialogue with) other ways of seeing teaching and curriculum - eg the ‘practical’, the ‘time-server’, the ‘old-fashioned’ teacher. It is also a hybrid text with contradictory and complementary discourses operating.
Social practice	The producers and consumers of this document operate in a state-wide education bureaucracy struggling to assert its legitimacy and raise the status of teachers (an impetus for collusion between teachers and the bureaucracy). This decade is a period of relative prosperity which impacts on the resources available to the department and teachers. It is also a time of tension between rural and urban interests and concern about the movement of people to the cities and the consequent problems this causes. It is a time when the separate former colonies have established the Commonwealth of Australia and debates of the shaping of a new ‘British’ nation. The role of the school in shaping citizens and the skills and knowledge they should have is being debated with new secondary industries pressuring governments to provide better preparation for the new kinds of work available. Thus the nature and content of the curriculum and teaching is a political issue.

Each of these dimensions aids the analysis of the others. Significantly, this approach allows linguistic analysis at the micro-level, to be connected to analysis of issues of power and distribution of resources at the macro level, via consideration of the actual discursive practices through which subjects – teachers, students, inspectors – are constituted.

#### *Close and critical ‘reading’ of texts*

Researchers who use CDA employ various linguistic tools (such as systemic linguistics or functional grammar) in their analysis of the identity, relational and

ideational functions of discourse as a social and representational practice. For example, Janks (1997) lists nine aspects of texts that she may decide to examine systematically:

- 1 lexicalisation [word meanings]
- 2 patterns of transitivity [use of verbs]
- 3 the use of active and passive voice
- 4 the use of nominalisation [replacement of verbs by nouns]
- 5 choices of mood
- 6 choices of modality [degrees of certainty] or polarity [what is opposed]
- 7 the thematic structure of the text
- 8 the information focus
- 9 cohesion devices [references that link meanings across sentences and larger sections of texts]

(Janks 1997, p.335 - comments in brackets are our supplements)

Such close linguistic analysis provides a way of ‘denaturalising’ a text and reading it as a discursive practice. This provides a reading which may be different from the preferred reading structured by the author(s) of the text. Patterson (1997) labels CDA as ‘a condition of doubt’, where the taken for granted is interrupted and questioned:

Part of the ‘trick’ of critical analysis then is *not* to allow the object to appear without hesitation. Rather, the target of analysis is expected to draw attention to itself as socially constructed, historically positioned and culturally anchored, as is the person of the researcher/analyst. The goal is to make the object or idea appear problematic, tentative, plural, multiple and complex through its social, cultural and historical positioning ... (Patterson 1997, p.425).

One example of such an approach was employed by one of the authors in a study of newspapers and policy documents on adolescents in the early 1990s (Cormack 1996). In this study, all news articles in three newspapers over a one-week period referring to adolescents were collected and analysed. One analysis was to consider the kinds of descriptive words and phrases used to label young people. These were collected together as shown in figure 2.

**Figure 2 Labels applied adolescents in newspapers (Cormack 1996)**

• absolutely lost	• impressionable youth	• not naughty but full of fun and inquisitive
• too scared to go back to school	• kids going down the drain	• a good mimic
• centimetres from death	• defenceless boy	• an average student
• a very lucky boy	• children of prisoners	• ultimate chatter box
• slow learners	• asset rich/parent poor	• ‘an incredible kid’
• children with learning difficulties	• callers to Kids Help Line	• no heroine
• at risk	• kids with money	• vulnerable
	• a very tactile person	• thoughtful

This basic analysis served to compress the readings of adolescents provided by the newspapers collectively over the week. It served to highlight that young people were,

in large part, being cast as 'victims' in a way that served to justify various forms of governmental 'rescue'. The close word study was disruptive and allowed a reading against the grain of the articles concerned.

### *Subjectivity*

CDA is especially alert to the ways in which human subjects are constituted in and through discourse. Another way of saying this is that the analyst does not take for granted the labels and attributions provided for humans. Terms such as 'teacher', 'student', 'child', 'adolescent', 'parent' are treated as being constituted by discourses which 'speak' them into existence – the concept of subjectivities providing a way of talking about the multiple, varying and contingent ways of being a human that are available. Thus to do a history of the 'adolescent' in relation to the curriculum, is not to assume that the term means the same thing at all times - nor does it assume that changes in the meaning of 'adolescence' are varying approximations of what young people of a particular age are really like. Rose (1996), in his own genealogical work on identity, illustrates such a stance:

To write such a genealogy is to seek to unpick the ways in which 'the self' that functions as a regulatory ideal in so many aspects of our contemporary forms of life – not merely in our passionate relations with one another, but in our projects of life planning, our ways of managing industrial and other organizations, our systems of consumption, many of our genres of literature and aesthetic production – is a kind of 'irreal' plan of projection, put together somewhat contingently and haphazardly at the intersection of a range of distinct histories – of forms of thought, techniques of regulation, problems of organization and so forth. (Rose 1996, p.129)

As Rose illustrates here, analysis of subjectivity and identity involves more than considering the ways of thinking (forms of thought) about human subjects that were available historically. It also involves attention to what were called previously the 'programmatically' aspects of discourse, which Rose labels as 'techniques of regulation' and 'problems of organisation', and curriculum history potentially has much to say about these issues.

Curriculum materials contain much in the way of the codification and regulation of teachers, students and parents lives. Recent work on subject English in South Australian primary schools (Cormack and Comber 1996) showed that differing views of the child and the subject English actually changed the kind of teacher that was being required in four successive curricula over more than thirty years:

In 1995 we see the writing of an anxious teacher, pessimistic about her work, and responding in a highly disciplined way to widespread panic about literacy in public schooling. This teacher is very different to the teacher of 1984, 1978 and 1962. Gone is the sense of satisfaction and enjoyment, and the faith in her efforts that are emphasised in those earlier documents (Cormack and Comber 1996, p.142).

The analysis of discourse, however, does not restrict itself to the study of official codes and regulations which seek to shape or regulate peoples' practices. This is

because discourse not only operates at the visible level of codes of conduct, but also on peoples' desires:

Power operates visibly and invisibly through expectations and desires. It operates visibly through formal, public criteria that must be satisfied. It operates invisibly through the way individuals (teachers, administrators, and university-based educators, for example) think of themselves and act. Educators adapt as a matter of everyday professional life to contractual organizational demands, to demands of professional discourse, to expectations of professional peers, and to informal as well as formal job expectations. Power helps shape subjective feelings and beliefs, our subjectivities. Often power is most effective and efficient when it operates as desire, because desire often makes the effects of power invisible (Cherryholmes 1988, p.35).

Taking this broader context of the operation of discourse into account, Cherryholmes (1988) lists a set of questions that can be asked of discourses. These questions not only focus on what is said/written and who says/writes it, but also on what is *not* said, and the contextual rewards and deprivations that are in place that act on desire. His questions are:

- Who is authorized to speak?
  - Who listens?
  - What can be said?
  - What remains unspoken
  - How does one become authorized to speak?
  - What utterances are rewarded?
  - What utterances are penalized?
  - Which categories, metaphors, modes of description, explanation, and argument are valued and praised; which are excluded and silenced?
  - What social and political arrangements reward and deprive statements?
  - Which metaphors, modes of argumentation, explanation, and description are valued?
  - Which ideas are advanced as foundational to the discourse?
- (Cherryholmes 1988, p.107)

Cherryholmes provides some useful ways of thinking about how historical inquiry after the linguistic turn might go beyond texts, to consider how discourses have impacted on peoples' material lives. He reminds us that it is as important to consider what is *not* in texts as what is, and to consider the practices of production and consumption of those texts as a way of understanding how they shape and constrain subjectivity.

### **Attending to the embodied aspects of discourse**

A focus for Australian feminist researchers using critical discourse-analytic approaches has been the relationship between discourse and embodiment. For Threadgold (interviewed in Kamler 1997, p.447), it is simply not possible to have "text and context without a body." Texts, in the ways they refer to other parts of the same text (cohesion), to other texts (intertextuality), to places, events and institutions, need a body to make those connections – the grammar of the text makes these

connections possible, but the body realises or performs them. The body is required for producing texts – the musculature involved with vocal chords for producing speech for example – and also for consuming and using them. Bourdieu’s (1990) concept of the habitus has been important in understanding how practices, including textual practices, come to be ‘written’ on the body. The habitus is a ‘durable training’ (p.31) or embodiment which predisposes a way of seeing, behaving, understanding and responding to the world. Researchers such as Kamler (1997) have shown how, in educational institutions, textual practices are central to the shaping of student (and teacher) bodies to produce a habituated way of being and seeing the world. It is a reminder that curriculum work is more than intellectual work, since it centrally includes work on the body – how it is to be, where it is to be, how it is to be held and disposed.

As a researcher of contemporary classrooms, Kamler uses video to support her focus on the embodied aspects of educational practices, something clearly not available to most researchers of curriculum history. This does not mean, however, that the latter can’t or shouldn’t attend to embodiment. Photographs, pictures, clothing, architecture, artefacts such as school desks - all provide information about the embodied aspects of the curriculum. Importantly, so do conventional texts – the mainstay of curriculum-historical research. According to Threadgold (1997), analysis of linguistic elements such as intertextuality, cohesion and the theme-rheme structure of a text provides much evidence of the body. To take one aspect of cohesion as an example, ellipsis (the omission of information that it is assumed the reader will be able to fill-in from context and experience) tells much about what it is assumed the body of the reader will know, the resources they have access to, the places they’ve been, the things they can do:

Cohesion ... has the potential to describe in detail some of the complex ways in which speakers and writers make text and are positioned by and in text in social interaction (discourse). It is already implicitly intertextual: lexical collocation, patterns of vocabulary in texts, particularly, is a kind of ‘code’ which speakers will only be able to access from their embodied experience of text in other contextual configurations. (Threadgold 1997, p.102)

An example from the *Education Gazette* of May 1900 - an extract from the annual report of the Board of Inspectors – will exemplify Threadgold’s point about texts as a ‘code’ which relates to text-participants’ embodied experience. In this extract, the Board ‘sounds a warning’ to teachers that arithmetic, writing and drawing (three subjects of the primary curriculum of the time) are being over-emphasised in comparison to reading and poetry"

**Figure 3: Extract from “Report of the Board of Inspectors”, *Education Gazette*, May 1900**

An education department must, we willingly admit, be at all times progressive and open to new light, but a curriculum which is as broad and elastic as ours is, a curriculum which we have recently been assured by a high educational authority outside of this colony “admits of less cram than any other in Australia” should not be lightly interfered with. It is, of course, at all times open to re-adjustments, and, judging from the tone of some of the inspectors’ reports, the criticisms of outsiders, and fortified by our own observations, we are of the opinion that we should now

sound a warning not to those teachers who almost idolize “arithmetic,” “writing,” and “drawing,” at the expense of reading, poetry, and composition. In looking over school time-tables—and we have especially noted many—it is no uncommon experience to find eleven or twelve lessons per week in arithmetic, whilst reading claims only five and poetry one, or two, at the most. And yet it is through the channels of these latter subjects that the children’s minds are brought into contact with all that is best in human nature and all that is most beautiful in the universe around him. (pp.81-2)

Intertextual references abound here (as they do in most discourse). There is the reference to words of a ‘high educational authority’ outside the colony, to inspectors’ reports, ‘criticisms of outsiders’ and timetables. Each of these references conjures up embodied aspects of being a teacher in South Australia at the turn of the century – the great distances to other colonies, and the deference to the ‘mother country’; the twice-yearly visits of the inspectors and all they involved; public criticism of teachers and the generally low status of teaching; and the timetable split into half-hour lessons which tightly regulated the lives of teachers and students across the school day.

Other texts are not mentioned but remain an absent presence – especially other editions of the *Education Gazette* itself. Previous inspectors’ reports had mentioned the practice of ‘cramming’ – the rote and ‘last minute’ learning of facts for the annual exams conducted by inspectors – in negative terms. This relates to the singling out of arithmetic, writing and drawing as subjects which were dominated by tightly disciplined and ‘mechanical’ learning, with all the embodied aspects of being a student and teacher they implied – rows of children working simultaneously, answering in chorus, producing the one correct response, holding their bodies in the correct position, and so on. In contrast, there is reading and poetry – with a focus on children’s mind and the best in human nature and “all that is most beautiful in the universe around him.” Still further embodiment is implied here – the sexed student-subject and - something else left out but which could have been supplied by a contemporary teacher-reader - a natural child, outdoors, connected with nature (an emphasis in subjects such as nature study, and a new drawing course about to be introduced). Other references could be read into this text - the ongoing reference in the *Education Gazette* at that time to the importance of establishing classroom libraries, for example.

The extract from the *Education Gazette* is crowded with bodies and relies on the body of the teacher reader to bring these to the text. This is one of a number of texts at the time which mark a discursive change in the ways that curriculum and the classroom are represented and organised. The text literally rewrites the embodiment of the curriculum in the classroom.

### **Discourse and texts as dialogic**

Two key concepts from Bakhtin (1981) have been particularly influential in Critical Discourse Analytic work - those of *heteroglossia* and *dialogism* (Threadgold 1997). Holquist (1981) notes the way that heteroglossia emphasises the impact of *context*:

Heteroglossia is Bakhtin’s way of referring, in any utterance of any kind, to the peculiar interaction between the two fundamentals of all communication. On the one hand, a mode of transcription must, in order to do its work of separating out texts, be a more or less fixed system. But

these repeatable features, on the other hand, are in the power of the particular context in which the utterance is made; this context can refract, add to, or in some cases, even subtract from the amount and kind of meaning the utterance may have when it is conceived only as a systematic manifestation independent of context (Holquist 1981, pp.xix-xx).

Another way of saying this is that any speech act, word or text always contains aspects of its use in previous contexts - it carries its history with it, and this history charges words and discourses with its own meaning. This meaning, in turn, is renegotiated each time that a word or text enters a new social or ideological space, time or location or comes into contact with another word or text. It is this process of dialogism - the negotiation of the meanings that a word or text carries with it with the particulars of the context in which it is being used - which stratifies language:

[T]he centripetal forces of the life of language operate in the midst of heteroglossia. At any given moment of its evolution, language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects in the strict sense of the word (according to formal linguistic markers, especially phonetic), but also—and for us this is the essential point—into languages that are socio-ideological: languages of social groups, “professional” and “generic” languages, languages of generations and so forth (Bakhtin 1981, pp.271-2).

The implications for curriculum-historical work from these insights are far-reaching. It implies that there is always a ‘language of the day’ or ‘place’ which must be understood as emerging at the nexus of the language’s history and the context in which it is being used. Words, labels, constructs, etc, must not be assumed to be the same across time or space. Words and texts always carry with them the marks of struggles over their meaning which can be tracked over time. Dialogism implies that texts are not single-voiced - they are engaging in dialogue with other texts over meaning - speaking back and forth to one another in an attempt to negotiate an agreed meaning (version of the truth)<sup>5</sup>. Thus curriculum texts carry with them fragments of the voices of the different viewpoints that are engaged in that negotiation (or struggle), even if it is only in the form of an interdiction which seeks to silence other voices.

CDA is alert to these relationships between and within texts in order to track the different viewpoints and meanings being employed. For Fairclough (1992), this involves tracking relations between texts in 'horizontal' and 'vertical' planes:

Bakhtin distinguishes what Kristeva calls ‘horizontal’ and ‘vertical’ dimensions of intertextuality ... On the one hand there are ‘horizontal’ intertextual relations of a ‘dialogical’ sort ... between a text and those which precede and follow it in a chain of texts ... On the other hand, there are ‘vertical’ intertextual relations between a text and other texts which constitute its more or less immediate or distant contexts: texts it is historically linked with in various time-scales and along various

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<sup>5</sup> This process of dialogism needs to be related to the broader discursive context in which it occurs - after all, the words and texts of some people ‘count’ more than others because of their relative power and institutional status, and there are always some spaces in which dialogue is not permitted.

parameters, including texts which are more or less contemporary with it.  
(Fairclough 1992, p.103)

One relatively simple illustration of this process of dialogism at work in the *Education Gazette* involves work on moral education in primary schools in the 1900s in South Australia. Emerging from a series of quite strident debates over the reading of the Bible in school in the late 1800s, a debate won by proponents of secular education, education officials struggled over the most appropriate ways to instil a proper moral training in students. In the same report of the Board of Inspectors in 1900 referred to above - indeed, on the same page - the Board highlights this issue in a way that suggests that it is central to the task of legitimising a public education system which was just on 25 years old:

**Figure 4: Extract from “Report of the Board of Inspectors”, *Education Gazette*, May 1900**

The higher functions of a primary schools teacher are not such as will turn boys into bricklayers, carpenters, farmers, lawyers, or doctors’ but, such as will educate them physically, mentally, and morally; and we put morally last not because it is least, but because, in a system like ours, which rests on a secular basis, the moral and emotional education of the child is the highest work we have to do.” p.81

This text is clearly referring to earlier texts – parliamentary debates, newspaper articles, instructions to teachers – in which the Bible in schools debate was played out. It continues a dialogue over moral education and the role of the State but in a new context and time. Later in that same extract the Board comes to its curriculum point, as it were, and redefines what can count as an authoritative text in moral education. The Board quotes from Matthew Arnold on the need to educate ‘by means of letters’ to raise the ‘standard of life’, and then places poetry as a form of letters that can take the place of the bible:

**Figure 5: Extract from “Report of the Board of Inspectors”, *Education Gazette*, May 1900**

“...the fruitful use of natural science itself depends in a very great degree on having effected in the whole man, by means of letters, a rise in what the political economists call ‘the standard of life’” Now it is evident that what Arnold means by “letters” is the refining culture which comes of reading and digesting the best thoughts of the best writers, past and present, and as in a secular system we cannot call in the aide of religious dogma, we must, in a great measure, rely on poetry to aid us in getting at the precious kernel which is enclosed within the outer shell of almost every child with whom we have to deal.

The *Education Gazette* of the 1900s contains a number of such examples of a struggle over what will count as moral education and an appropriation of what might be called a religious-moral discourse by the State in the name of public education. This gives rise to some interesting hybrid texts, where language moves across discourses and its meaning is renegotiated. For example, in 1903 the Assistant Inspector-General of the state comments: “To-day the child is not regarded as an empty vessel to be filled, but as a soul unit of the State, who will in due course act on all other soul units, of the State either for good or evil, for physical and moral health or weakness and costly criminality, for material prosperity or national poverty.” ... self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control.” (*Education Gazette* August 1903, p.119)

Through the use of CDA, such hybridisation and intertextual references can be highlighted and used to track struggles over the curriculum. It thus provides insights into the issues that were at stake and the discursive resources that were utilised in establishing new curriculum forms.

### **The researcher and researched – the politics of CDA**

Recently Lee (2000) has sought to problematise some of the unexamined assumptions of discourse analysis, so as to highlight the need for the field to attend to the ‘politics of text and commentary’ (Hodge and McHoul, cited in Lee, p.189) that are central to its methods:

Discourse analysis is most often conceived of in terms of what someone does *to* a particular site or text. There is an assumed relationship of exteriority with regard to that site, an ‘etic’ relationship, (Kline, 1995) where the analyst’s tools, whatever kind they might be, are applied in the production of an authoritative account *about* the site. There is, in general, within the field of discussion and debate about discourse analysis, a paucity of commentary concerning the political relations, that is, the relations of power-knowledge, that obtain between the analyst and the object of analysis (Lee, 2000, p188 - emphasis in the original).

Lee highlights a crucial feature of CDA: its self-conscious attention to the role of the researcher and his or her relation to the field being studied (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). It acknowledges that relations of power are central to research - for example, who gets to produce authoritative accounts of texts and the world. In addition, CDA needs to account for questions of desire and pleasure: “of which texts persuade and convince, of whom they persuade and convince and to what desired ends” (Lee, 2000, p189).

Luke (1997) notes that, after the poststructuralist denial of ‘totalising schemas’ and teleological versions of history and research, CDA can not appeal to foundational theories but rather must both use and build theory and “accept the provisional and contingent nature of that theory” (Luke, 1997, p.349). For Luke, CDA is a “situated political practice: a machine for generating interpretations and for constructing readings, none of which is neutral or unsituated” (Luke, 1997, p.349).

This relates closely to the points made earlier about the need for historical research to attend to the politics of the here and now – to understand how history bolsters or critiques ways of seeing the world that work for particular interests. Luke goes a step further than asking for such an awareness, however, and declares CDA as an openly political project which acknowledges the situatedness of the researcher and allows for the provisional nature of the theory it employs. For him, CDA has to:

... retain an allegiance to the representation of diasporic and subaltern voices and positions. The challenge for critical discourse analysis is to stand as an openly counter-scientific sociocultural practice (Luke 1997, p.349).

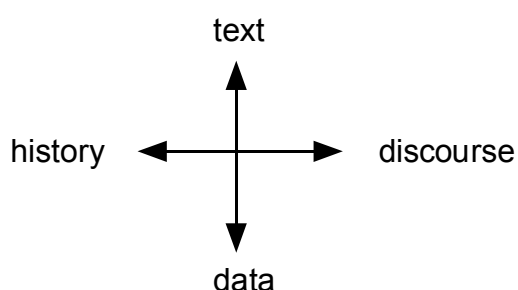
It seems to us, especially in these times when curriculum and schooling are being reshaped in response to new conditions in postindustrial societies, that there is a need

for such an allegiance in curriculum-historical work. The ‘diasporic and subaltern voices and positions’ in curriculum debates in these times include traditionally marginalised social groups – communities in poverty, indigenous peoples, immigrant communities, women – who are cited ritualistically in justifications of proposed reforms (Baker, 1996). They also include teachers themselves who are faced with a new technicisation of curriculum and assessment and, especially, young people who are always the target of curriculum reforms - the 'problem' to be 'solved'. Curriculum history can attend to some of the spaces and silences that have been established by monologic versions of history and attempt to “tease out of scanty evidence some inkling of the educational lives of the inarticulate” (Kaestle 1999, p.123)

Curriculum history also can be used to problematise the taken-for-granted lines of reasoning (eg 'early intervention') and categories (eg 'basic skills') that underpin curriculum reform today, to consider their effects on those who are the targets rather than the authors of curriculum reform. The challenge is to do this in a way that does not simply establish new 'truths of curriculum history but which, rather, fully acknowledges the partiality and contingency of the work involved.

### Conclusion

The reviews of historical and critical discourse-analytic methods in the previous two sections show that the two share many similar methodological challenges and questions. This is not surprising since they have much in common (at least as conceptualised here), including work across disciplines, and a focus on text and discourse. In bringing the two fields together, we are attempting to address some key challenges offered to curriculum history by the linguistic turn, which are represented in part in this Figure:



On the horizontal plane, there is the link and the tension between *history* and *discourse*, as concepts and as practices - or, to return to Derrida, the recognition that everything has now become discourse. History is a discursive field which deals in the business of representation and also the representation of representation, with all the epistemological and political questions that raises. At a basic level, this requires that histories “deliberately call overt attention to their own processes of production and explicitly indicate the constructed rather than found nature of their referents” (Jenkins 1991, p.68).

It is these processes of production in historical research that are the focus of the vertical plane of the diagram. The vertical plane highlights that 'texts' are the major sources of data for historical research and raises the question of what counts as data

and evidence for historical research. Our examination of critical discourse analysis has sought to consider how textual data might be used to consider the *practices* that have constituted human subjectivity (Thacker 1997, p.32). Importantly, the study of discourse is not just the study of ideas or 'systems of thought', or of language apart from what is done. The act of describing or proposing ideas is itself a practice, and the ways we describe or think about things has effects on how they are perceived and used. Similarly, all practices are at least in part responses to ideas and language themselves. Discourses and practices are interdependent and discourse-analytic method can be used in the study of both - especially if the concept of 'text' is kept broad and sufficiently flexible. As Terry Threadgold (interviewed in Kamler 1997, p.446) reminds us, discourse analysis can and must go beyond simply linguistic analysis to consider "... the visual bits, the spatial and architectural bits, the corporeal bits".

CDA offers therefore a 'technology' for using (often the most mundane of) texts as data that provide historically compelling evidence of the ways in which discourses constitute subjectivities and act on bodies, in both the context and the practice of curriculum and schooling. The challenge remains now to explore more systematically and rigorously the potential of these forms of textual evidence in and for the field of curriculum history.

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