Do we have a theory of change? Calling change models to account

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Abstract

Like many other governments, and in line with the shift towards outcomes-based education, the South African government has recently begun to introduce new measures of accountability which have direct implications for teacher regulation. Proponents of accountability are hoping to introduce performance-based regulative measures that will enhance the added value of the school, particularly of its instructional environment, for the performance of weak learners. Recent research on school improvement in South Africa has begun to provide more specific sets of explanations for the notion of performance-based teacher regulation. This research includes Taylor's work on systemic reform (2001, 2002) and Fleisch's work on a prescriptive model of school improvement (2001). Taylor's and Fleisch's works on accountability advocate a convergence model of change or a model that combines external regulation of teachers' work through the use of sanctions and rewards together with systemic means of teacher support. The paper makes two claims. Firstly, that research which is advocating a convergence approach to change needs to examine very carefully the tenuous balance between pressure and support and warn against the "balkanization" (Elmore, 2000, 23) of pressure. Secondly, that until we are sure that we have given our teachers meaningful learning opportunities, the belief in performance-based accountability remains highly problematic.

Like many other governments, and in line with the shift towards outcomes-based education, the South African government has recently begun to introduce new measures of accountability which have direct implications for teacher regulation. Through various policies[1] the government has begun to provide systemic means with which to assess the degree to which the instructional environment of the average South African classroom is conducive to the task of achieving the nationally mandated learning outcomes. Disciplinary committee in the case of *The South African Code of Conduct of Educators*, SACE (DoE 2000a),[2] appraisal panels in the case of Developmental Appraisal Systems, DAS (DoE, 1998),[3] supervisory unit personnel and external

[1]They include the recently published *National Curriculum Statement* (DoE, 2002) which consists of booklets for each learning field covering learning outcomes and assessment standards for each grade; *The Norms and Standards for Educato*r (DoE, 2000d) and the *Criteria for the Recognition and Evaluation of Qualifications for Employment in Education* (DoE, 2000c) that provide a 'generic' picture of educators, their required competencies and guidelines for the development of learning programmes aligned with the new outcomes-based National Qualifications Framework.

[2] The Code aims to provide for the registration of educators, to promote the professional development of educators and to set, maintain and protect ethical and professional standards for educators.

[3] This is an ELRC agreement to identify the strengths and weaknesses of office and classroom-based educators through Developmental Appraisal Systems.

evaluators in the case Whole School Evaluation, WSE (DoE, 2001a), national testing of key Grades in the case of Systemic Evaluation, SE (DoE, 2001b)[4] and public evaluation in the form of teachers' national awards, (DoE, 2000b) are some of the regulative mechanisms that the government has introduced in order to enhance accountability. For the first time teachers' "responsibility" in South Africa will also be managed through competition between schools and public demonstrations of differentiated quality. For example, the policy of Systemic Evaluation is intending to use learner performance (in Grades 3, 6, and 9) as a key indicator of successful performance (DoE 2001b, 2), informing the public with a comparative analysis of schools' performance.

This is a very important policy development which advocates the idea that educational performance, particularly of low performing learners, needs to be accounted for – and not by unreflective theories like "the expected results of poverty", "weak authority structures in the family", "lack of academic ability" or "too much television" (as cited by Elmore, 2000, 9). Proponents of accountability are hoping to introduce performance-based regulative measures that will enhance the added value of the school, particularly of its instructional environment, for the performance of weak learners. Recent research on school improvement in South Africa has begun to provide more specific sets of explanations for the notion of performance-based teacher regulation. This research includes Taylor's work on systemic reform (2001, 2002) and Fleisch's work on a prescriptive model of school improvement, (Education Action Zones, 2001). This paper examines Taylor's and Fleisch's arguments on the factors that influence teachers to change their practice.

The general problem that triggered this paper is: Given the great tradition of moral and ethical arguments in support of teacher professional autonomy (Carr, 2000; Sockett, 1993) and given the recent defiance of classroom inspection by many South African schools as well as of teacher resistance to internal structural adjustment policies (Chisholm, 1999), explanations about ways of forging a new social contract with teachers, particularly with low performing teachers, are of relevant interest and thus merit, I believe, a critical scrutiny. The notion of performance management systems of accountability, which Taylor and Fleisch argue to be the necessary foundation for 'getting classroom instruction right', shapes an emerging project on teacher professionalisation in South Africa. The project of teacher professionalism is captured in the idea that bureaucratic measures and high stakes accountability are crucial levers in the development of teachers.

Taylor's and Fleisch's works on accountability advocate a convergence model of change or a model that combines external regulation of teachers' work through the use of sanctions and rewards together with systemic means of teacher support. I believe their work on accountability is very important in theorising the factors which influence teachers' responsiveness to the demands by Government to improve their practice. Notwithstanding, two concerns inform my examination. The first one is that Taylor's and Fleisch's arguments about change present primarily a bureaucratic/managerial process of control. Their view underestimates the complexity and unevenness in which the process of changing is experienced by the individual teacher, particularly by the low-performing teacher. Although Taylor and Fleisch advocate a convergence model of change, their respective analyses foreground the role of performance management systems at the expense of quite a thin description of the kind of pedagogical support teachers should receive in order to meet the demands placed on them by systemic accountability. The second concern which guides my examination of their work is that Taylor's

[4] Systemic assessment will be conducted on a nationally representative sample of learners and learning sites and will include periodic evaluation of all aspects of the school system and learning programmes at Grade 3, 6 and 9.

and Fleisch's research reflects a certain kind of selective stance *vis-à-vis* the international work on the factors that shape teachers' attempts to change their practice. Their selective stance underplays the role of "alignment" (Fuhrman, 2001) in teacher professionalisation, in building *reciprocal* relationship between exerting pressure on teachers and providing them with appropriate kinds of pedagogical support.

In view of these concerns, my examination follows a **specific methodological focus** – it asks specifically, what assumptions about change are embedded in the work on school improvement? In looking at how Taylor and Fleisch explain change, particularly in relation to the role of accountability-type pressures, I followed the international research that Taylor and/or Fleisch selected for their work. These include, mainly, reports on change in teachers' practice, which are based on analyses of large-scale systemic reforms, and which are backed up by empirical evidence of learner performance. Following this, the realisation I came to was that our local research has 'thinned out' the international wisdom on change with the consequence of supplying the "pedagogic recontextualising field" (Bernstein, 1990, 198) in SA with a view of performance-based accountability that has a strong bias towards a bureaucratic/managerial interpretation of change.

This paper makes two claims. Firstly, that research which is advocating a convergence approach to change needs to examine very carefully the tenuous balance between pressure and support and warn against the "balkanization" (Elmore, 2000, 23) of pressure. As succinctly put by Fullan: governments that introduced measures of new accountability can easily err by providing too much or too little control (2001, 232). This, I argue has to be taken into account when advocating, as Fleisch does (2001), prescriptive models of school reform for low functioning schools. Secondly, that until we are sure that we have given our teachers meaningful learning opportunities, the belief in performance-based accountability remains highly problematic. International research on large-scale school reforms shows that only a very specific pedagogical mode of teachers learning can advance change in their practice. This is a mode which develops labour intensive forms of interventions, like ongoing collaborative relationship between teachers and teacher educator experts (Elmore & Burney, 1997; Ball & Cohen, 1999), forms which take time and are not cost-effective. This, I argue has to be taken into account when advocating, as Taylor does (2002), cost-effective models of delivery of teacher training.

The central aim of this article is to use the critical engagement with Taylor's and Fleisch's works on systemic reform to bring to the fore a somewhat neglected angle: for the last decade we have been looking extensively at notions like policy, management and leadership; it is time we ask what learning opportunities are more effective for teacher development and why. I hope that working through these issues will help bring about more respect for and appreciation of the complexity involved in the process of change we demand from our teachers.[5]

Convergence model of change – research in SA

One of the most recent attempts to theorise the process of change is Taylor's work on systemic reform. Taylor advocates his view of systemic reform in response to the despairing results that recent studies on learner performance and school management performance have shown:

[5] Gultig (1998) reported that in 1997 90% of education media was about teachers; 95% portrayed teachers negatively (quoted in Hoadley 2002). Based on her discussions with primary school teachers, Hoadley adds more description on the perceived demoralisation of teachers: "they have been cast as expendable human resources through the redeployment process, they are conservative, resistant to change, and victims of material constraint. At the level of the school, strong differentiations are made on the basis of college-trained and university-trained teachers, groupings who collectively express different, and at times antagonistic, definitions of their being and doing"(41).

> This gross systemic inefficiency is the largest single obstacle to overcoming the legacy of apartheid and providing equality of opportunity to all our citizens. While vigorous redress measures have been instituted since the election of the first democratic government, the increased flow of resources to the historically disadvantaged sectors appears to have had little if any effect on improving learning outcomes (2001, 15).

> The only way of hauling in the vast slack of inefficiency and corruption which bloats every corner of the enterprise of public schooling, is through a management system which ensures a better regulation and coordination of workflows, from the office of the Minister through to the classroom of the most junior teacher in the smallest school. (2002, 11)

In view of this despairing picture Taylor deduces that the support which teachers have been given is ineffective and that more support should be conditioned upon the establishment of demand measures from teachers. With this in mind, he promotes a view of teacher development which sequences the process of change in an order that begins with accountability and follows with support:

> In the absence of accountability sub-systems, support measures are very much a hit and miss affair. Accountability measures provide motivation for and direction to support measures, by identifying capacity shortcomings, establishing outcome targets, and setting in place incentives and sanctions which motivate and constrain teachers and managers throughout the system to apply the lessons learned on training courses in their daily work practices. Without these, support measures are like trying to push a piece of string: with the best will in the world, it has nowhere to go (2002, 17).

Taylor offers a convergence model of change. According to Taylor accountability measures of demand must come first. These will monitor the day-to-day performance of teachers (at school and at the instructional level of the classroom) and through a combination of incentives and sanctions will motivate teachers to apply what they will learn in teacher development courses. The accountability measures will also give direction to support measures like teacher appraisal, provision of learning material and systemic training (14). Let's look at his position more closely.

Taylor's view of the "demand side" of accountability calls on the Ministry of Education to institute systemic measures of performance for monitoring all levels of the system. These mechanisms include specific, measurable learning outcomes (specified by the National Curriculum Statement for each Grade), systemic assessment of schools and of learner performance, and performance management systems of day-to-day monitoring of teachers' work. Typical performance management systems of the day-to-day work of teachers would include "planning and monitoring coverage of the intended curriculum"; "ensuring that books and stationery are available and used daily"; and "moderating regular assessment exercises and using the results to improve instruction" (2002, 10). Taylor claims that the results of systemic assessment will provide information on "knowledge needs" (10) and that performance management systems or "micro-technologies" (11) will be used to monitor the coverage of the intended curriculum and "the quality of the knowledge transactions which occur between teacher and pupil" (15) in the classroom. In his notion of "micro-technologies" Taylor refers to "line management responsibilities of district managers and school principals"; "systematic curriculum management subsystem, through which the delivery of the curriculum is planned and monitored throughout the school"; and "school inspections" (2002, 16). Taylor's notion of micro-technologies also seems to include "schemes of work" for each grade in each of the

subject area, "lesson plans" for each lesson, and on-going assessments that are used together with classroom inspection to monitor teachers' progress on the curriculum (JET, 2001, 70).

With regard to support Taylor is critical of the NGOs' input into teacher training, for being too localised and fragmented, and for offering short courses or workshops that do not put sufficient emphasis on content knowledge (2002, 5). In addition to administrative measures of institutional provision (like developmental appraisals, books and learning material), Taylor also calls for systematisation of professional development. He argues that in view of recent research on poor learners' achievement (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999, JET 2001), primary school teachers need to receive "structured reading and numeracy INSET programs" and senior phase teachers need to receive "programs which systematically take them through the content of their specialised subject areas" (2002, 15). Instead of "short workshop-based courses" that he sees as limited to only providing "information and orientation to new policies" and inspiring "individual and institutional change", Taylor asks the universities to build "the deep knowledge structures and professional ethos required for a long term improvement" (15) by offering "accredited two or three year courses for school managers and teachers, directed by a focus on improving the delivery of the curriculum" and "classroom instruction". And instead of what he sees as "the almost exclusive focus in the past on pedagogy through INSET courses for teachers", Taylor asks universities to supplement teacher development by an approach "which places centre stage the quality of the knowledge transactions which occur between teacher and pupil", including "the subject knowledge of teachers and their pedagogical content knowledge" (*ibid*.).

A far more bureaucratic version of teacher development with sole emphasis on pressure emerges from Fleisch's Interim Report on the EAZ intervention (2001). Fleisch's investigation of the intervention is done with a view to evaluate it for a "strategic import for replication" (1). His report states that the EAZ intervention combined "special measures" of pressure and demand with very little support, if any (5). The "special measures" targeted, mainly, discipline and control of educators and learners in 67 schools in which less than 20% of learners passed the matriculation examinations before the start of the intervention. There is no clear explanation in Fleisch's paper of what the special measures in fact involved. From the Deputy Director General's presentation in the 2000 National Conference on Whole School Evaluation, it appears that in their attempts to instil discipline in these schools, special units (popularly referred to as the 'scorpions') employed by the Gauteng Department of Education used measures like "Intensive monitoring of school compliance to basic bureaucratic rules" which included monitoring of learners' and teachers' attendance and school timetables (Swartz, 2000). One of the reported achievements of the EAZ intervention is the cutting down of the time spent on disciplinary procedures from two years to a month and the acceleration of appointments, terminations, substitutions, and procurement procedures (Swartz, 2000). At the time of the intervention the schools did not receive substantial additional funding or any add-on programs and projects of support (Fleisch, 2001, 5).

In his report, Fleisch (2001) examines the effects of these measures on the improvement of the matriculation results of these schools, in the year 2000.[6] A very important finding of Fleisch' analysis is the correspondence between tougher kinds of demand measures and gate-keeping strategies that the EAZ schools adopted:

[6] Of the 67 schools in the intervention, 55 improved their pass rate to lift them out of the category of secondary schools that achieved pass rates of under 20%. 60 out of the 67 schools achieved the original target of 5% improvement, which represents a 90% success rate for the intervention. Five schools' matriculation pass rate declined between 1999 and 2000 and two improved by less than 5% (Fleisch, 2002, 10).

> Very preliminary findings from the qualitative component of the study suggest that the smaller Grade 12 classes and the tighter, more controlled environment may have complemented each other in a number of ways. Schools would likely have had sufficient learning materials for smaller classes. With the exclusion of repeaters and learners that were deemed unlikely to succeed, the 'tone' or 'climate' of the Grade 12 classes changed. This would be most noticeable in teachers' perception of learners as individuals more likely to pass. This new attitude, re-enforced by more study time made possible by the monitoring of late-coming and attendance, may explain how smaller classes and the intervention would produce substantial gains in the short-term.[7]

Fleisch postulates that the results of the intervention should be seen alongside the context of an increased pressure on low performing schools by the state bureaucracy and the market to improve their performance (24).[8] His analysis draws attention to smaller class size, sufficient learning material, and a class climate of high teachers' expectations, as crucially important factors in achievement of better results. What is specific to his analysis is that it aggregates all the factors that support teachers in changing their practice, factors which, from an educational point of view, seem very sensible, around a model of change that attributes to government the right (*de facto*) to impose special prescriptive measures including bureaucratic-like treatments, that, as Fleisch himself reports were experienced by teachers as authoritarian forms of "bullying"[9].

This analysis suggests that Taylor and Fleisch would like a renewed role for a strong interventionist bureaucracy that will insert a combination of bureaucratic and market-driven procedures of regulation in order to strengthen the institutional fabric of our schools. In the equation between demand and support for the low performing schools, Taylor and Fleisch would like to see much more effort on the part of the government in strengthening its bureaucratic controls over the day-to-day work of teachers.

Two things must be noted about Taylor's convergence model. The first one is that it argues that change has to be sequenced and that the sequence has to begin with accountability sub-systems. The second one is that the accountability measures are, in the main, of bureaucratic-type.

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[7] The number of candidates went down nationally as well. In 2000, the number of candidates went down from 511 159 in 1999 to 489 294 in 2000. The pass rate went up from 249 831 in 1999 to 283 294 in 2000 (from 49% to 58%). University exemption went up from 63 725 in 1999 to 68 626 in 2000 (from 12% to 14%) and the total failure went down from 261 328 in 1999 to 206 000 in 2000 (from 51% to 42%). (source: Bot, M. Compiled from EduSource Data News and Department of Education, Report on the 1999 Senior Certificate Examination, Information as at 30 December 1999; *The Sunday Independent* 31/12/00 in Taylor, 2001).

[8] It is interesting to note that the year 2000 marks a notable improvement overall. As reported by the DoE, "In 2000 the tide of poor pass rates in the Senior Certificate examinations of the past few years was stemmed and a 9% improvement, from 49% to 58% was achieved. This improvement was reflected throughout the system, in all nine provinces. This brings the objective of a 60% pass percentage at national level within reach. A decrease in the number of schools that obtained a pass rate between 0% and 20% from 940 in 1999 to 499 in 2000 was also achieved and there was a 1,5% improvement in the number of candidates who passed with endorsement to study at university" (DoE Annual Report (2000/2001).

[9] The view by South African Democratic Teachers Union, quoted in *Mail & Guardian,* November 20, 2000, and reported by Fleisch on page 5). A sense of authoritarianism can also be felt in the following claim, made by the Deputy Director General, Ronald Swartz (2000) in his reporting on the EAZ intervention.

"There have been major differences in learner and teacher attendance and meaningful curriculum work in classrooms. The (minority of) teachers who do not work have begun to realise we are serious and that if they do not perform they *will be out of the system***.** There have been some failures and there are individual teachers who are not prepared to *knuckle down*"…. "There has been some resistance from unions, especially around the assessment and evaluation and follow-up action against teachers. Action Zone teams check on whether teachers plan their lessons, whether teachers are in classrooms and perform in the classroom. This does go against some of the agreements with teacher unions so there has been some friction and conflict, but people must realise that, in the worst-performing schools**,** *extraordinary measures are needed.* We cannot always work with accepted procedures in these cases". (My emphasis)

Taylor's convergence model of systemic reform postulates "positional" (Bernstein, 1975) social relations between teachers and managers: teachers form membership within the "subordinate" category and school principals, district officials and civil servants form membership within the "management" category (Taylor, 2002, 11). Taylor's position on systemic reform portrays a process of change that has to begin with the work of a strong agent located *outside* the teacher - the hands of managerial/bureaucratic authorities that monitor classroom "transactions" using procedures like "curriculum management subsystems" and "school inspections" (16). His view polarises aspects of teacher knowledge and learning, defining "institutional vision and culture" as "soft issues" (5) in comparison to "deep knowledge structures embodied in instructional knowledge". It also polarises modes of learning, defining "in-school support and mentoring" as an appendage activity (15).

By propagating bureaucratic disciplinarian strategies that could even include experienced forms of bullying and strategies of gate-keeping "repeaters and learners that were deemed unlikely to succeed" (Fleisch, 2001, 21), Fleisch's view could be interpreted as allowing authoritarian methods of improvement.

No one would deny that different forms and levels of control are essential to the life of a school or that school attendance by both learners and teachers is a necessary condition for learning and that better monitoring systems can ensure better attendance. Accountability forms of control are important too in view of the international experience that without high levels of deliverables, high levels of support "invariably lead to a wastage of critical resources in such organisations" (Jansen, 2002, 2). The question, though, is how "control" becomes a matter-of-fact so that it informs a sound pedagogical approach, teachers motivation and their continuous investment in change. Can control be mandated bureaucratically? Can it and should it be bullied? Will Taylor's plan for enhanced bureaucratisation of control in schools create conducive culture for the kind of learning teachers need? Will it motivate them? Also there is the question of how far one can take Fleisch's thesis of prescriptive controls as a model for school reform that is expected to demonstrate convergence between demand and support measures? In short will Taylor's and Fleisch's models of change create the foundation for a climate that is conducive to long-term sustained learning and teaching environment?

As far as support is concerned and although Taylor's model of convergence is much more nuanced than Fleisch's, particularly in terms of the relation it postulates between pressure and support, the analysis in the following sections will show that his model of teacher development under-theorises the complex knowledge-base of teaching, the type of pedagogical support a teacher should be given on route of new learning, and the importance of collaborative forms of school culture for enhancing teachers' opportunities to enact what they have learnt. Missing in particular is an analysis – equivalent in level of detail to his analysis of what should be included in performance management systems – of how teachers' learning should be pedagogised and integrated into their professional lives. In the absence of this kind of examination it is unclear how low-performing teachers can be protected from what the international literature has shown to be the undesirable consequences of high stakes accountability.

Selections from the international theory of change

In this section of the article I examine the selections that Taylor and Fleisch conducted in support of their view of a convergence model of change, which as has been shown in the previous section, is heavily weighted towards bureaucratic/managerial notion of teacher development. But first an important note: "being selective" by no means suggests that Taylor's and Fleisch's important work is lacking scholarly competence or anything like that. I use this

notion to emphasise their commitment to an approach. Let's look at an example of how selection might work. Simkins (2002) who analysed evidence from the Quality Learning Project makes the following claim:

> The results of this study suggest that one factor matters above all the others in school management. Proper record keeping of learner performance in assessment tasks, tests and examinations can make for improved performance in the Senior Certificate examination. *The great advantage of adequate learner assessment coupled with feedback is that it informs learners of the required standard of performance and of their own competences in relation to the required standard* (My emphasis, 4).

"Being selective" here would mean that if one is committed to a bureaucratic/managerial notion of change, it is possible that she/he could translate this evidence-based claim into an argument which explains why we need tighter microtechnologies of management. If, on the other hand, one is committed to a pedagogical approach to learning to change, it is possible that she/he could translate this evidence-based claim into an argument that asks what pedagogical work teacher educators need to do and in what institutional format in order to impart teachers with the significance of evaluation criteria for pupils' learning. Now let's look at examples of selection that Taylor makes. With the view to clarify the directive role government should take in large-scale systemic reforms, Taylor refers to the British National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NLNS) initiative of 1997. In his book, *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (2001), Fullan analyses the complex set of strategies employed by the British government in this top-down successful initiative of reform.[10] He analyses this initiative in terms of its impact on teachers and draws implications for what he calls lessons on mandated change for the first phase of systemic reform (228). What is interesting about Fullan's analysis is the set of strategies that he reports (226-227 based on Barber 2000) to have been employed by the British government for the initiative. Taylor also reports on these strategies. In reporting on these, Taylor (2002) mentions that the British project of reform was framed through "a national plan", which set "targets, actions, responsibilities and deadlines" and that the plan was supported financially with "a substantial investment, sustained over at least 6 years and skewed towards those schools most in need", and with "a major investment in books (over 23 million new books since 1997)". Taylor also reports that schools and the specific groups of teachers that participated in the national project were monitored and extensively evaluated by OFSTED and that the project set clear expectations such as that "every class will have a daily maths lesson and a daily literacy hour".

What is not detailed in Taylor's report, and hence his selective stance, is the kind of pedagogical support that the teachers received during the implementation stage of the first phase of systemic reform in Britain. Taylor does mention that "both initial teacher training and the ongoing professional development of administrators, principals and teachers [were] designed to enable every primary school teacher to understand and be able to use best practice in teaching literacy and numeracy"(6). Nevertheless, his reporting of the support the British teachers received excludes the following measures, which according to Fullan's report were (and should be) included in the first phase (2001, 235). For example, in addition to a professional development programme on best practice, "300 consultants" (for literacy and numeracy) and "2000 leading math teachers and hundreds of expert literacy teachers" gave their time and skill to model best practice for their peers (227). Fullan also reports that at the level of the school, teachers were given the freedom to reduce time on "other prescribed curriculum content outside the core

[10] The NLNS targeted an improvement of the national average for literacy scores for 11-year-olds from 57% to 80% by 2002, and an increase in numeracy scores from 54% to 75%.

subjects", and were expected to provide extra time after school and over weekends for extra help (227). The teachers were working from teaching programmes that covered every school year from ages 5 to 11. In addition the infrastructural conditions in which this initiative took place were also very supportive. Included in this are reduced class size, for the 5, 6, 7, year-old classes (maximum of 30), systemic provision of school-based counsellors whose role was to work in the system with learners with special needs, media support for the programme, and generally a massive built up of a "national crusade" (230).

The point of this is not to suggest that the British case is the perfect case of teacher development but rather to use it to show the kind of pedagogical support which mandated change is obligated to support teachers with. In defending his view for mandated change, Fleisch recruits Fullan's claim which says "the emphasis that I have placed on the flow of large-scale reform from tighter to looser forms of control (from external to internal commitment) seems more likely to move us forward. In effect the system shifts from control to direction and guidance" (2001, 269, quoted by Fleisch, 2001, 6). The analysis above of the missing 'level of detail' in Taylor's reporting is crucial for our understanding of what Fullan has in his repertoire of change when he periodises the above intervention as phase one of mandated change (235). Only if we take into account this massive influx of support work with teachers and the infrastructural changes that were induced into the system, can we understand Fullan's observation (quoted by Taylor, 2002, 7) that "almost all of the gains can be attributed to an increase in [teacher] motivation" (228). The addition of this 'level of detail' shows that much more conceptual work on the pedagogy of alignment between pressure and support is needed (see below) before one can accept Taylor's claim that "accountability measures provide motivation for and direction to support measures" (2002, 17) or Fleisch's claim that the EAZ intervention, with its "special measures" of pressure, can be seen as an appropriate example for what Fullan, in the above claim, suggests as a mode of control which gradually shifts from external to internal commitment.

The central point here is that external accountability plays a role within the process of change but cannot and should not come instead of an educational project, as was the case in the EAZ intervention. As clearly stated by the international literature on large scale of school reform:

> Schools with low capacity are vulnerable. Because they do not have the confidence, because they literally don't know what to do, they at best comply superficially to external demands. The dilemma for well-intentioned governments is considerable. If they trust local entities to take policies seriously, to take advantage of resources, only a few will systematically do so. If they force the issue by increasing accountability, they foster cultures of superficial dependence (Fullan, 2001, 225).

If Fleisch and Taylor agreed with this claim, they need not have panicked about the amount of investment made for support of teacher development in the first eight years of political independence. Instead of comments like: "the country is awash with supply-push interventions" (Taylor, 2001, 16) what we really need is far better analyses of the special kinds of learning opportunities that teachers need in order to sustain the change envisaged through large-scale school reform. Hence my claim that until we are sure that we have given our teachers meaningful learning opportunities, the belief in performance-based accountability remains highly problematic. The analysis of the Curriculum Review Committee (2001) clearly shows not only, as suggested by Taylor, that the NGOs input into teacher training was limited but also that the systemic training that was provided for teachers by Government during the first years of independence, following a cascade model was too, clearly, of low quality.

Meaningful learning opportunities to change

A personal reflection from the Minister of Education might be a good starting point for thinking about teachers learning. Reflecting on his experience of learning through a distance mode he said:

> I had no opportunity for interaction, both with peers and with those who might have more knowledge than I. I believe it is essential to *provide* proper opportunities for *proper* interaction … I am certainly aware that the sort of interaction I speak of cannot be taken for granted at the traditionally face-to-face higher education institutions where large impersonal lectures are prevalent … The teachers are obviously mature people with family commitments. Many of them live and work far from urban centers where higher education institutions are located. In addition, to ensure that their learners are not neglected, they need to remain in their classrooms while they study. It is clear, therefore, that conventional face-to-face programmes will not suffice. More flexible approaches to programme delivery are necessary … This involves the learner-teacher in *knowing, reflecting* and *doing*. Providers are required to arrange the necessary learning opportunities for these three categories of competence to be developed, taking into account the living and working context of the teacher-learners.[11]

Although there is no extensive research on learning opportunities for teachers in contexts of large-scale intervention, some positions are already beginning to emerge: Cohen's and Ball's (1999) extensive analysis of design, specification and development of instructional capacity through large-scale interventions emphasises how important it is to think about teacher professional development in ways that are similar to thinking about improvement of learners' classroom instruction. Cohen and Ball argue that like classroom instruction, in addition to curriculum and learning material, improvement of teachers' learning requires appropriate pedagogy of instruction. In this they refer to what interveners need to understand about the ways in which and the context in which their enactors (the teachers) learn the content of their programme. "Ways in which" refers to what enactors find too hard or foreign to the ways they have been teaching or to what they know about the topic. "Context in which" refers to the extent to which enactors receive opportunities within a programme to learn to hear better how their learners learn a specific topic or what raison d'être is hidden behind the failure of particular learners to grasp an aspect of the topic. On Cohen's and Balls' view, "opportunities to learn" improve when they are focused and specific, when they are linked to the learners' curriculum, and when the "professional argot"[12] of the programme is properly reflected upon. Cohen and Ball argue that the more specific (in the above terms) the intervention is, the more it includes examples of adaptation processes (direct modeling, video materials), and the more it gives the enactors opportunities to work under supervision with their learners, the more effective it is.

Back home, Ensor conducted intensive sociological investigation into how a teacher education pedagogic discourse is structured, transmitted and acquired in a teacher education programme (2002). Her research systematically describes the complex relay that is involved in recontextualising knowledge from a pre-service course in Mathematic education into its context of application (2001). Borrowing from Ensor's analysis of modalities of pre-service teacher education (2002), it can be argued that the pedagogy of instruction needs to give in-service teachers opportunities to develop instances of the "privileged repertoire" of the content of their courses, within their classrooms together with their teacher educators (14). Ensor argues that

[11] Address by the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning, Durban, 29 July 2002, Emphasis in the original.
[12] A term I borrowed from Ensor, 2002.

this will enhance teachers' access to the set of symbolic and material resources that the teacher educators selected for the in-service course and to the ways in which they configured these into a differentiated classroom practice. This claim is supported by Welch and Gultig's (2002) examination of current initiatives to improve teacher education. They argue that there is a need for a new framework of teacher development – a framework that "actively develop[s] the capacity of existing higher education institutions to meet the demands of developing a school-focused, competence-based teacher education system that is delivered more flexibly" (38).[13] Reflecting on the impact of the Wits Further Diploma in Education programme on the practice of teachers, Reed, Davis and Nyabanyaba (2002) suggest too that teachers' take-up is positively associated with opportunities at school to reflect and discuss ideas as well as by a course in pedagogy that gives teachers opportunities to "plan for modest and attainable changes that could gradually produce improvements not only in performance and confidence, but also in an understanding of how different aspects of classroom activities relate and interact" (131-132).

The upshot of all of these claims is this: Meaningful learning opportunities for teachers are essential all the way through the process of change but they are labour intensive and thus very expensive (Elmore & Burney, 1977), and require time (Hargreaves, 2002; Jansen, 2002). Moderating the cost of an intervention by using models of large classes, off site-based courses which are focused on content with a bit of exemplification increases the uncertainty about enactment. Enactment is not a matter that can be "contracted out" (Taylor, 2002, 15); it is the core business of any intervention that treats its practices educationally, that is, alongside the conceptual frame of classroom learning and teaching. As succinctly put by Jansen:

> The short-term nature of training, often removed from the classroom context, is another lesson not yet learned in recent reforms [in SA]. Direct, sustained, classroom-anchored training is the only means for beginning to disrupt the grammar of schooling (My addition, 2002, 4).

The emphasis on pedagogy of instruction is derived from an approach that acknowledges the complex conceptual bases that inform teacher's knowledge about teaching. This is a relatively new domain of research[14] which shows that claims such as "improving the conceptual knowledge of teachers *alone* gives [teachers] the confidence and resources to engage children at more challenging levels" (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999, 161, my emphasis) are simply too simplistic. One such study is Turner-Bisset's (1999) which shows that the domain of teacher knowledge is broad and multilayered. It includes substantive subject knowledge, syntactic subject knowledge, beliefs about the subject, curriculum knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, knowledge/models of teaching, knowledge of learners (cognitive), knowledge of learners (empirical), knowledge of self, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends (Turner-Bisset: 1999).[15]

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[13] For a very interesting provision of a distant education partnership project, Fort Hare, BPrimEd, see SAIDE, 2000. 33.3% of this study programme is structured around classroom and school-based activities. According to the report: "classroom-based key activities require evidence in the form of examples of learners' work (as opposed to just teacher-learners' work, for example) or evidence in the form of completed school policy documents and the documented process of development thereof. Thus the assessment strategy is very much evidence-based and requires self, peer and *umkhwezeli* [tutor] review. At the end of each semester, teacher-learners are required to justify their portfolio to their peers and *umkhwezeli*. This oral justification, together with the portfolio itself, and satisfactory performance on the key activities included throughout the year, a running journal which teacher-learners are required to keep detailing their experiences and insights, active participation in the Saturday morning contact sessions and the evidence that the teacher-learners' engagement in the programme is impacting positively on the learners in their care, is the basis for a negotiated decision on whether the teacher-learner progresses to the next level of the programme. The portfolio presentation at the end of the year also includes relevant experts from outside of the programme" (4).

[14] Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin, 1999; Ball and Cohen, 1999; Guess-Newsome,1999.

[15] From Parlo Singh by e-mail communication: Turner-Bisset, 1999, 45-46.

In thinking about what this layered notion of teachers' conceptual knowledge of teaching may possibly entail for the task of providing teachers with meaningful learning opportunities, Gess-Newsome's (1999) analysis of the relationship between content and pedagogic content knowledge offers two organisational axes – "development" and "specificity". According to Gess-Newsome's analysis "development", refers to teachers' understanding of why the content of a learning programme is selected, how it is organised into different grades and inside a grade, within learning material, into a conceptual sequence of topics and of graded tasks (curriculum knowledge), how the preferred selection and sequence of topics and graded tasks help pupils to learn the topic (pedagogical knowledge), and what are the general educational goals and values which frame the orientation of the curriculum in a specific knowledge area (orientation to teaching).[16] The second principle, "specificity" refers to the understanding that teachers require to develop about the difficulties that learners of a particular age and social circumstances have with a specific content (knowledge of learners and learning). This level of specificity helps interveners to examine the pedagogical orientations dominant in the school in which the teacher works and in the selected learning materials (to which the teacher is expected to be accountable). It also entails bringing the learning of the subject in closer proximity to the standardised forms of assessment used in the school ('knowledge of context').

Successful programmes of teacher development combine the two principles through labour intensive forms of modelling. These include "instructional consulting services" in which consultants spend a significant amount of time, repeatedly on a limited number of instructional problems/exemplary practices in a focused content area, with a small number of teachers, "professional development laboratory", "Intervisitation", and "peer networks" (Elmore and Burney, 1977).[17] All these forms are content focused and continuous over time, their pedagogy is labour intensive, and their institutional structures of a partnership type. In terms of teacher learning they all require that teachers observe, produce their own teaching tasks and lessons, be observed and subject their productions to critical evaluation.

The paradox in learning to change

The support of international research for the idea of new accountability is generally not in question.[18] Research tends to foreground, however, the varied effects of external regulation on the professional integrity of teachers [19] and on their capacity to change their practice.[20] Much of

[16] See also Morine-Dershimer and Kent, 1999.

[17] For a comprehensive review on "continuing professional development" see Sayed, 2001.

[18] Some strong critique exists too. It is associated with works like McNeil's (2000) & Davis's (1996). Both make similar arguments, the former on an empirical base and the latter for conceptual reasons, that there is a serious danger that the high stakes which are connected with new accountability will narrow the curriculum. The study by Carnoy, Loeb and Smith (2001) on school reform in Texas shows that although tests scores are improving this does not translate into long terms gains like return to college. Fuhrman review of reforms in several states in the US shows that teachers with weak subject knowledge respond to incentives and sanctions by extensive test preparations, which often result in an impoverished curriculum (Fuhrman, 2001, 7).

[19] Elmore confirms that although accountability systems do direct teachers' attention to improving their instruction, they are, nevertheless, in dire conflict with professional integrity. This is explained by the fierce competition faced by schools:

> In general, the theory of action around performance-based accountability is that providing communities, parents, teachers and administrators with evidence of student performance, coupled with rewards and sanction for high and low performance, will stimulate school systems to do whatever they have to do to improve student learning. We know now, of course, that there are serious problems with this theory: People in schools often do things – teaching test items, rather than real content, for example – that are manifestly bad educational practice but that allow them to raise their performance in some way. Schools often compete for students who are more likely to succeed under the new performance-based system, rather than learning how to educate students who are less likely to succeed (2001, 31).

[20] Fuhrman, 2001; Elmore,2002; Fairman and Firestone, 2001.

the research on variation in response to new accountability emphasises that different kind of school conditions or of *internal accountability* explain the variation more than the presence or absence of external measures of accountability.[21] One must not forget, Fuhrman emphasises (2001) that since the process of change is associated with standards and since standards will always be subject to various interpretations and different understandings, the change into new accountability will always be uneven with regard to degrees of alignment between internal school processes of regulation and external ones, and in the degree of success of interpreting policy goals to achievable outcomes and manageable programmes of improvement.

> Variation at the school and teacher level is clearly not erased by the presence of strong incentives, even though some policymakers have argued that accountability is enough. Just because there are stakes, school do not automatically develop capacity, certainly not the abilities necessary to sustain *deep* improvement in practice (273, my emphasis).

These kinds of findings gave rise to an emerging focus in the international research on the complexity involved in "change through accountability". The following statement, by Elmore, on internal accountability raises the central problem of change:

> Internal accountability precedes external accountability. That is, school personnel must share a coherent, explicit set of norms and expectations about what a good school looks like before they can use signals from the outside to improve student learning. Giving test results to an incoherent, atomized, badly run school doesn't automatically make it a better school. The ability of a school to make improvements has to do with the beliefs, norms, expectations, and practices that people in the organization share, not with the kind of information they receive about their performance. Low-performing schools aren't coherent enough to respond to external demands for accountability … Low-performing schools, and the people who work in them, don't know what to do. If they did, they would be doing it already. You can't improve a school's performance, or the performance of any teacher or student in it, without increasing the investment in teachers' knowledge, pedagogical skills, and understanding of students. This work can be influenced by an external accountability system, but it cannot be done by that system (Elmore, 2002, 5-6).

Elmore made these comments in response to recent moves by the federal government in the US to centralise control over high stake accountability assessment. Elmore's claim suggests that change has two dimensions – external/systemic and internal to the individual (school, teacher) and that these two dimensions are interrelated in a way which actually subverts managerial notion of time. In a managerial time frame, performance-based accountability starts at the systemic level by setting standards, sanctions and rewards; it then creates public expectations that teachers will gear their practice towards meeting those standards. Nevertheless, this frame depends on another type of frame – an educational time frame, which as we have all known for sometime is paradoxical: teachers need to find the meanings of that which is presented *as if* already there – in the form of a managerial promissory (the national standards to be attained by all learners) – but which, nevertheless, they do not yet understand. In other words, these two notions of time frame are very different and in a way at loggerheads with one another.

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[21] Studies on the effects of accountability in places like New York, Kentucky, Maryland and Vermont, show that the variation in desired teaching strategies and levels of teacher knowledge transcend variation in accountability measures. For example, whether the high stakes measures of incentives for accountability targeted schools (Kentucky), or students (New York), or both schools and students (Maryland) or none (Vermont), classrooms continued to show some very good examples of change and some very depressing examples of bad practice (Fuhrman, 2001, 277).

Performance-based regulation of accountability sets time conditions for teachers to change on the basis of something that is not yet there – their belief and understanding of what they need to do and for which they need educational time. In response to this gap, governments set in motion a process of transmission of laws, rules, procedures and public forms of criticism and evaluation – a toolbox. This tool mixture is aimed to manage the gap or to tighten the educational time frame so that it follows in line with the interests of the public for an accountability time frame, but of course it can't. The non-linear process of education, a process which has no short cuts and which at heart deals with the core problematic of a change of belief, keeps resisting managerial time frames.

The paradox of learning to change is most interesting and most difficult in the case of low performing teachers. The difficulty with low performing teachers is that it is for them, in particular, that governments set standards and accountability stakes but it is them, in particular, that have the least understanding of how to shift towards the standards: "if they did, they would be doing it already" (Elmore, 2002, 6). The managerial argument about time responds by saying something like: "well, this is not a problem; ours is just a solution for the short term". Elmore calls this response the working theory of accountability and he characterises it as "fatally too simplistic" (2002, 5). The working theory of accountability, which this article argues is implied by the Taylor's and Fleisch's versions of systemic reform, is the notion that once learners' achievements on national tests become public and once the schools and indirectly the teachers face rewards and sanctions, all (district administrators, schools, teachers and learners) will work harder and will be motivated to learn to change their practices (their management, administration, teaching and learning) and finally the results will improve. This notion uses a stimulus-response (S-R) psychology; it assumes that stimuli outside a person cause him or her to behave (respond) in a certain way and a desired behaviour can be manipulated by, *inter alia*, positive and negative reinforcements, bureaucratic and/or high stakes performance related lessons.

A study on the influence of rewards and sanctions on teacher performance in Kentucky, North Carolina and Maryland (Kelly, Heneman III, & Milanowski, 2000), proves further the limitations of this simplistic theory of change. The study examined the extent to which "teacher expectancy" is affected by school-based performance rewards (pay bonuses, money for school improvement) and various forms of public criticism. "Teacher expectancy" refers to the link between teachers' efforts and their belief that their efforts will, in fact, yield the expected results – "the more a teacher perceives that working hard will pay off in meeting the goals, the greater the teacher's motivation to expend the effort to do so" (7). This view treats teachers' beliefs about their competence and the correspondence between their efforts and learners achievement as an outcome that can be manipulated by certain enabling conditions (measures of pressure and support). To emphasise: the assumption here is that *if* teachers believe that they are competent and if they can see that their management is serious about the school-based performance rewards (that there are consequences to their behaviour), then the link to performance is strengthened. This assumption seems to sit neatly within the working theory of accountability. Nevertheless, the findings of this research show that the matter is far more complicated. Let's look at what the research says about the results of its core concept: "teacher expectancy":

> Our results show that schools with higher average teacher expectance improve student achievement more, but also that many teachers perceived that the probability that their efforts would lead to their school's meeting its improvement goals was not very high. Award program designers should therefore be concerned with ways to build expectancy … . Reformers such as Cohen (1996) and the National Commission on teaching and America's Future (1996) have argued that many teachers lack the skills to teach to high standards. Professional development focused on understanding the

> performance measures and the behaviors needed to influence them, as well as on providing the knowledge and skills needed to carry out the behaviors, may therefore help teachers believe that their efforts can lead to improved school performance. Pay incentives *for* acquiring the needed knowledge and skills may be a promising way to encourage teachers to develop the skills they need to believe they can succeed, and therefore might complement school-based performance award programs. The other influence on expectancy in the model is the presence of enabling conditions such as principal leadership, professional community and assessment feedback (41, my emphasis).

In other words, the important and very complicated condition for achieving the link between teacher motivation (effort) and performance is teachers' belief about their competence. This belief is linked directly to their learning, and not primarily to their school-based award programme. The order of the sequence within the convergence model (if there is such an order in a process of learning to change) is reversed here. The argument is that with sufficient *meaningful* professional development, teachers can be helped to see that their efforts can bear fruits. Teachers need to be able to see the reasons for change, understand its core principles and be convinced that it is feasible and will benefit their learners. What this means for us, I believe, is that instead of perfecting our micro-technologies of pressure, what we need is much more debate on the question of what constitutes a meaningful learning opportunity for teachers. "New accountability" is a *reciprocal process*: the public demands teachers to perform and this demand is equivalent to teachers' demand to receive meaningful opportunities to learn (Elmore, September 2001, Wits University Lecture). "Alignment" is the notion which the international literature uses to describe the reciprocity that is needed for teacher learning.

From "line management" to "alignment and reciprocity"

In a systemic model of alignment between pressure and support, teachers (and other categories of educational agents) are addressed as "shareholders" (Fullan, 2000, 23), and not "subordinates" under the power of "officials" (Taylor, 2002).

"Alignment" describes the effort to correlate different processes at different levels. Its logic cuts across familiar binaries such as macro/micro; top-down/down-up; outside in/inside out; systemic learning/school-based learning; deep structures of knowledge/school culture etc. The main principle of alignment is "system leverage" (Fullan, 2000, 25) or "reciprocity" (Elmore, 2000, 2002). For example Clune (2001), who in his research during 1992-96 was looking at the degree of success in reform in nine states in the US, found that a typical profile of a successful Statewide Systemic Initiative is a state that built a delivery structure of professional networking in order to link between levels of policy levers like systemic assessment and instructional guidance. Emphasised here is that alignment at the macro/institutional level – between national standards, curriculum and assessment, incentives and sanctions to schools, and school-level processes of accountability- is only a framework, an empty shell or a box that gets filled up with meanings through local, school-based learning engagements. Through these opportunities teachers give meanings to the standards, and thus are themselves empowered to be accountable for them:

> Once teachers are in the 'net,' they become part of all the 'boxes' or variables of reform, namely reformers, policymakers, curriculum implementers, and facilitators of student achievement. They are reformers and policymakers because they help construct each modification of standards and assessments, and they implement the curriculum and shape student achievement in their own classrooms. Sub-groups of teachers take the

> lead in developing examinations and working with teachers from higher education, while others focus more exclusively on their own classrooms. To some extent the entire system becomes a 'learning organisation', in which the causal processes of reform are distributed across roles (Clune, 2001, 26-27).

In this notion of alignment, school culture is not a 'soft issue' (Taylor, 2002, 5); it is understood as a necessary condition for learning to change.[22] So even models of reform that operate with a detailed, comprehensive blueprint are 'sold' and not bullied into the school. One such example is the 'Success for All' programme (Slavin & Madden, 2001) which demands consent of 80% of the teachers in a school as a condition for implementing its approach in the school. In this programme, teachers' consent is administered by a secret ballot vote after 'awareness presentations' at a district level and after examination of the programme material by the teachers and after their visit to schools that have already implemented the programme (2001, 204).[23] How space and time are typically organised in a school, for example, is often a hindrance to innovation. Collegiality is difficult because teachers are isolated and have little time outside their classrooms and yet, collegiality is found as one of the most important conditions for teachers learning. In addition, because many teachers teach in self-contained classes, those who do not agree with a reform effort or do not know what it means 'are able to shut their doors and go on doing what they have always done' (Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

Tough and consistent bureaucratic regulation cannot compensate for the atomised culture of teachers' work. In their study of four high schools' response to new accountability policies in two states in the US (New York & Vermont), DeBray, Parson and Woodworth (2001) found that an array of formats of staff development including mandated meetings twice a month, staff development days, subject area department conferences, forums, instructionally focused conversations, and teacher study groups might begin to address the adversary of atomisation (175). DeBray *et al.* argue that without these development and support efforts, data on learners' scores in high stake testing does not turn around teachers' pessimism about their learners' capacity to pass the accountability tests or the low expectations teachers have of themselves. Successful reforms align assessment to standards and curriculum by building a *chain of translating devices*. These devices include public documents on core contents for assessment; learning material and model teaching units; assessment literacy; continuous opportunities for teachers to observe experts modelling good practice in their classrooms when teaching the content they are expected to assess; learning opportunities on how to read and decode the national tests; and professional networks as well as day-to-day collegial interactions in the school. [24]

Only a narrow conception of alignment focuses on tying learner performance to sanctions and rewards. This technicist version of alignment is reported to increase teacher's instructional time on test preparation, mainly in the content areas that are to be tested, but not necessarily on teaching learners how to learn for high standard.[25]

The notion of alignment is even more useful in the ways it is used to expand the meaning of management of educational change. The idea of alignment articulates the notion of control with

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[22] See also Elmore and Burney, 1997; Fullan, 2000; Waugh, 2000; Gipps 1999; Cherednichenko *et al*., 1999.
[23] See also Bodilly *et al*., 1998, Mansell , 1999.
[24] See also Kannapel *et al*., 2001; Clune, 2001; Cohen and Hill, 1998; Fuhrman, 2001; Hargreaves *et al,,* 1998; Fullan, 2001; and Elmore and Burney, 1997.
[25] See also Kannapel *et al.*, 2001; Elmore and Burney, 1997; NcNeil, 2000; Silvernail, 1996, Fairman and Firestone, 2001; Davis, 2001.

"education" and not with "bureaucracy", and focuses its operation on creating enabling conditions for instruction. In his numerous analyses of the implications for large-scale reform from the famous success in District # 2 (New York), Elmore contends that school managers must be trained to think about their role in educative rather than in a traditional managerial/bureaucratic sense:

> In District 2, staff development is management, and vice versa. That is, management is about marshalling resources in support of instructional improvement and staff development is the vehicle by which it occurs. Accountability within the system is expressed in terms of teachers' and principals' objectives for instructional improvement, and the idiom of management is instruction. Principals' conferences are organized around discussion and inquiry about instruction, rather than routine administrative matters. Principals write their annual activities in terms of specific attempts to improve instruction in specific content domains, not in terms of generalised ideas about such things as improving school climate, keeping the hallways clean and keeping parents happy. District and school-level budget priorities are expressed in terms of expenditures on instructional consultants, substitute teachers, and access to workshops that lead to changes in instruction, rather than in terms of general line items or functional categories. In other words, management is operationally defined as helping teachers to do their work better and work is defined in terms of teaching and learning (Elmore & Barney, 1997, 25-26).

In this expanded notion of management, authority is fundamentally reciprocal and distributive (Elmore, 2000), a very different notion to Taylor's (2002) and Fleisch's (2001) respective offerings of "line-management" and "bureaucratic control". This is not a matter of a 'words war' but a reflection of a different approach to change. As pointed out by Elmore's distinguished piece on "*Building a new structure for school leadership*", "the language fails us here":

> I have used the language of 'comparative advantage' here because I want to emphasise the degree to which large scale improvement requires deference to and respect for expertise, coupled with reciprocity and accountability. I have selfconsciously avoided using terms like 'division of labour' or 'division of responsibility' because I think it connotes a kind of balkanisation that is more typical of loose-coupling than of distributed leadership. Spillane, in his important piece on distributed leadership, borrows from the language of distributed cognition and speaks of expertise and responsibilities as being 'stretched over' people in different roles rather than neatly divided among them … . The language fails us here, because the terminology that comes most readily to the surface in discussions of policy and management is the language of control rather than the language of reciprocity and mutual dependency (2000, 23).

At stake here is the claim that accountability systems in the form of line-management functions and a focused administration in the school, high stakes testing data, sanctions and rewards, all provide a frame for change *only* when teachers have access to relevant learning material and meaningful opportunities to learn. This means that teachers have more time during school hours to engage in new learning, receive help through relief teaching, and operate in a school culture that encourages collaboration and trust between teachers, between teachers and the principal and between teachers and experts.[26]

[26] See also Elmore and Barney 1997; DeBray *et al*., 2001; Bodilly *et al*., 1998; Slavin & Madden, 1999; Mansell, 1999.

In conclusion

Accountability might be initiated at the "top" and "outside" but its fabric is a cultural process of learning that is local, relational and consensual. It is one thing to achieve alignment between curriculum standards and state assessment; it is a very different matter and a much longer process to achieve teachers' understanding of what to focus on in their instruction and what assessment approach to take. Teachers' understanding, their consent and their readiness to go with the change are interrelated processes. The core enabling factor in this kind of educational process is TRUST – trust that routine and direct observation of teachers in their classrooms will only enlarge the already existing social space of interaction (between teachers and their colleagues and between teachers and their school officials) around good practice and around the anxiety that always gets invoked while being-in-the-process-of-change. An enlarged interactive space is one in which a teacher can feel vulnerable but yet is willing to try out innovative pedagogies in the presence of a supportive other (Elmore, 2000, 32; Hargreaves, 2001).

What this article contests is the idea that 'unlearning' is a follow up to a bureaucratic/managerial process of control. It suggests, instead, that change, which is often triggered through a rupture in the ordinary and familiar life of the person, is a process of experiencing a set of meaningful practices, which once their relational significance is *shown* to form a different social and conceptual order, different ways of engaging with that order develop.

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