Discovering Democracy:

An analysis of curriculum policy for citizenship education

DISSERTATION

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Elizabeth Helen Criddle

December 2001

DECLARATION

I certify that this dissertation is entirely my own work, and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made to the source.

Signed

Date

July 2002

This dissertation has been formatted in accord with modified APA referencing and citation guidelines.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation reports a study designed to analyse the policy processes, including the professional development training, associated with the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum resource package. The particular focus of this research was the way the *Discovering Democracy* policy process was interpreted and practised in Western Australia. The study analysed the policy cycle on three levels. At the macro level, it examined the perspectives of Commonwealth Government policy initiators, including the Commonwealth Minister. At the intermediate level it examined the perspectives of professional development trainers in Western Australia. Micro level analysis considered the perspectives of teachers in both government and non-government Western Australian schools.

The central research question was stated as follows: How have the origins and intentions of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy at the macro level been perceived and practised at the intermediate and micro levels of the policy process? This question was investigated by analysing data from policy documents, interviews and questionnaires. The research was developed around the theoretical perspectives of interpretivism and critical theory. Findings are illustrated with characteristics of the data from transcripts and questionnaires.

Overall outcomes of this research reveal that the *Discovering Democracy* policy was a contested and complex process, highly controlled by the Commonwealth government; subverted to an extent by State participants; and inadequately informed by grassroots practitioners.

This dissertation has ramifications for future teacher professional development, for the continuation of the *Discovering Democracy* programme and for understandings of the nature of governmental power. The dissertation concludes with recommendations for further research and future practice.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
AFSSSE	Australian Federation of Societies for the Study of Society and Environment
CEG	Civics Expert Group (changed to Civics Education Group in 1996)
DETYA	Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (Changed to DEST in 2001)
EDWA	Education Department of Western Australia (Changed to DOE in 2001)
EYA	Education and Youth Affairs
WA	Western Australia

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CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim

This research analysed the policy processes, including the professional development training, associated with the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum resource package. This package was produced at the Commonwealth level in 1998 and then used in schools throughout Australia. The particular focus of this research is the way the *Discovering Democracy* policy process was interpreted and practiced in Western Australia.

The study analysed the policy cycle on three levels. At the macro level, it examined the origins of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy within the Commonwealth Government, including the perspectives of the Commonwealth Minister. At the intermediate level it examined the preparation of professional development trainers in Western Australia and sought their perspectives on the curriculum policy process. Micro level analysis considered the perspectives of teachers in both government and non-government Western Australian schools on the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy process.

1.2 Significance

This research addressed a contemporary educational issue highly pertinent to current citizenship debates in Australia. The centenary of federation, and the republic referendum have set the issue of citizenship strongly in the public arena. This research considered government policy in the area of citizenship education and compared policy intention with policy practice.

The Commonwealth government has only recently become involved in curriculum 'content' policies for education as for most of the latter part of the last century its role in education was focused on providing funds. The Commonwealth-State constitutional relationship provides that the States and Territories have residual responsibility for

education, and it has thus been difficult for the Commonwealth to intrude into curriculum content policies for education. In recent cases, such as literacy and numeracy benchmarking, the Commonwealth has influenced education policy by tying funding levels to benchmark results. The *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy reflects recent trends by the Commonwealth to become involved in the 'content' of education policy.

The Commonwealth's interest and involvement in the specific area of citizenship education (through *Discovering Democracy*) is another new dimension. Citizenship has not been given this level of attention in Australian schools since the 1960s and the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy is thus a significant change in focus.

This research considered the effect of Commonwealth involvement in curriculum and professional development policy. Implications for practice flowing from this research could include reviewing the manner in which future education policies are presented to trainers and teachers, altering the consultative process undertaken or revising professional development training for the implementation of new curriculum policy, especially that originating at the Commonwealth level. This research has examined whether this is a 'top down', government-controlled process, or a process that is informed by grassroots practitioners, or a combination of these.

1.3 Research Questions

The general research question is: How have the origins and intentions of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy at the macro level been perceived and practised at the intermediate and micro levels of the policy process?

Specific research questions were grouped into the three levels of macro, intermediate and micro. The following questions were addressed:

Macro Level (Commonwealth Government)

- Which were the key interest groups involved in initiating the policy at the Commonwealth level, and how did they influence the nature of the curriculum policy?
- What was the intention of the curriculum policy constructed by the Commonwealth Government?

Intermediate Level (Western Australian Professional Development Trainers)

- What are professional development trainers' perspectives on the origins and intentions of the curriculum policy?
- What are professional development trainers' perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses of their training programme in terms of achieving the curriculum policy intentions?
- What are professional development trainers' perspectives on the effect of the curriculum policy on teachers and students?
- What are professional development trainers' perspectives on the degree to which curriculum policy intentions have been achieved?

Micro Level (Western Australian Teachers)

- What are classroom teachers' perspectives on the origins and intentions of the curriculum policy?
- What are classroom teachers' perspectives on the effect of the curriculum policy and of the professional development training objectives on teachers and students?

- What are classroom teachers' perspectives on the degree to which curriculum policy intentions and professional development training objectives have been achieved?

1.4 Background Context

Citizenship Movement

Increasing world wide concern with civics education has been mirrored in Australia in recent years. Political transitions occurring in several countries have resulted in uncertainty about the form that government should take. Regionalism and globalisation are divergent issues emerging from this uncertainty. An emphasis on citizenship education is globally viewed as important, in order to merge the “boundaries between the local community and the nation-state” (Civics Expert Group 1994: 32). Kennedy identifies international issues that affect the need for civics education as “APEC [Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation], the globalisation of the economy, the impact of communications technology and the changing role of the United Nations” (1995: 3).

In the Australian context, education for citizenship has enjoyed a recent resurgence in interest. Macintyre (1996) finds that in Australia, this is due to urgent national issues of multiculturalism, reconciliation and the republic debate. A Commonwealth Government initiated study resulted in the report *Whereas the People: Civics and Citizenship Education* of 1994, which reignited the debate over the aims and priorities of citizenship education. Government surveys, conducted in the same time frame, were received with concern. The results showed school students with low levels of knowledge about the Australian system of government and its processes. Interest in citizenship education was further fuelled by the referendum held to decide if Australia would change its system of government to a republic.

A national focus on the aims for education was produced by the 1999 *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century*, following from the 1989 *Hobart Declaration*. The Adelaide conference considered a range of goals for schooling, including the purpose of civics and citizenship education. The National Youth Roundtable was established, with student representatives including citizenship education in their educational reform aims.

In *A New Agenda for a Multicultural Australia*, produced in December 1999, the Commonwealth Government supported an emphasis on links between multiculturalism and the Centenary of Federation 2001 celebrations. These celebrations occurred throughout 2001.

Global and national events have thus influenced a strong resurgence of interest in Australian citizenship education. This has resulted in citizenship education being re-elevated to a level of importance in government policy.

Commonwealth Government Initiatives

Concern over the low level of political awareness in Australia began in 1988, amid celebrations of the bicentenary of European settlement. The 1989 report by the Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training *Education for Active Citizenship* labelled this “retreat into apathy and ignorance” (1989: 7) as enabling self-centredness to triumph over “a sense of community responsibility” (1989: 7). A second Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training report *Active Citizenship Revisited*, released in 1991, restated concerns about a lack of active citizenship and teacher education about citizenship education. The 1995 Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee *Discussion Paper on a System of National Citizenship Indicators* examined citizenship and suggested the need for citizenship benchmarks in Australia. This discussion paper stated one way to strengthen citizenship is “through strategies for improved citizenship education” (1995: 69).

As a result of concerns about citizenship education the Civics Expert Group was established in June 1994 by the national Keating Labor Government to develop a framework for civics education in Australian schools. The perceived need for citizenship education was given detailed coverage in their report *Whereas the People: Civics and Citizenship Education* (1994). A broad conclusion was that there is “uniform support for a greater emphasis on civics and citizenship education in schools” (1994: 50). The report suggested this be supported by “high quality resource material accessible to all schools” (1994: 63), and that considerable expenditure on professional development of teachers was a key priority.

The recommendations outlined in *Whereas the People: Civics and Citizenship Education* were accepted and funds were committed to support it with education programmes. The election of the Coalition Government in 1996 affected this programme. The name of the Civics Expert Group was changed to the Civics Education Group (CEG), and two more members were appointed. The CEG developed the policy which generated the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum package and professional development training. This policy will be referred to in this research as the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy.

The funding of citizenship education at a federal level enabled the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA¹) to produce the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum resource package through the Curriculum Corporation (1998). Preliminary trials of the package occurred in 1997 and 1998, in schools throughout Australia. After a consultation process involving the results of these trials, many of the trial teachers became professional development providers. The *Discovering Democracy* materials were launched in 1998, by the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs (EYA), Dr David Kemp, who stated;

The *Discovering Democracy* teaching and learning units will be trialed in 160 schools around Australia... I am also very pleased to be able to announce this morning that the Federal Government is providing \$4.6 million over three years for teacher professional development to support the *Discovering Democracy* programme (1998: 1).

The programme was established as a national four-year programme in 1997 and curriculum packages were provided free to all government and non-government schools in Australia. The professional development was carried out at a State and Territory level, with other parts of the programme such as the *Discovering Democracy* Awards conducted at the Commonwealth level. Evaluations of the dissemination and take up rate of *Discovering Democracy* materials were planned by the Commonwealth for 1998 and 2000. In 1999 the interim report *Evaluation of the Discovering Democracy Program* was produced by external consultants Erebus Consulting Group. This report was commissioned by DETYA, published and made available to the public. One of its main recommendations was the continuation of funding for the *Discovering Democracy* program. Funding for the project was renewed in 2000.

¹ Changed to the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) from 2001

State Government Initiatives

Citizenship education has risen to prominence at a State level in Western Australia. The Curriculum Council's (1998) *Curriculum Framework* specifically includes civic responsibility as one of the five underpinning core shared values. This explicit acknowledgement of values is to be reflected in the teaching and learning that is to take place in schools. 'Active citizenship' is included as one of the Society and Environment learning outcomes. Outcome Seven for this learning area states students should "demonstrate active citizenship thorough their behaviours and practices in the school environment, in accordance with the principles and values associated with the democratic process, social justice and ecological sustainability" (1998: 252).

There are limited links between the State and Commonwealth groups involved with developing citizenship outcomes, with no overlap of key personnel. In relation to curriculum, the WA State Government has given no formal approval to the use of *Discovering Democracy* in WA schools and it is not being officially incorporated in the curriculum. This is in spite of the assertion by Minister Kemp that "These materials... are designed to be related to current State and Territory curriculum frameworks" (1998: 1).

The *Discovering Democracy* implementation is taking place within the context of the implementation of the Western Australian *Curriculum Framework*, and some tension exists between the organisation of the *Discovering Democracy* package, and application to an outcomes-focused education (Carter, Ditchburn & Bennett 1999). If teachers can accommodate the package within a flexible structure, and not see it as prescribed, few practical problems are expected. "To the extent that the *Discovering Democracy* materials prove to be flexibly accommodated within the WA *Curriculum Framework*, and effectively contribute to the achievement of desired student outcomes... the Project's materials are likely to be viewed as widely successful" (Carter *et al.* 1999: 56).

All States and Territories undertook professional development programmes as part of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy process. The WA professional development *Trainers' Resource File* asserts the main purpose of the professional development was to "assist with the implementation... of the teaching materials"

(1998b: 11). In Western Australia, the professional development project was managed by a team consisting of a Programme Director, Coordinator and Coordinating Committee. The Director was a representative of the Education Department of WA (EDWA²) and signatory to the contract with DETYA. The Coordinator carried out administration and organised the professional development for trainers, and the committee had an advisory and decision making role. This Coordinating Committee was made up of representatives from government and non-government schools, the WA post-compulsory education authority, academics, principals and parent groups. Teachers who were employed as professional development providers were referred to as 'trainers', and this title will therefore be used throughout this study.

Professional development training was developed entirely at the State and Territory level, with Commonwealth funding. In Western Australia, the professional development *Schools' Resource File* and *Trainers' Resource File* were developed, and training sessions established around a locally focused 'Train the Trainer' model. Trainers were appointed and inserviced in 1998, and schools were invited to express interest in sending teachers to professional development training sessions (referred to as 'network meetings'). Trainers held network meetings for teachers in 1999, then evaluated and modified courses at the end of 1999.

Schools were invited to participate in the 2000 professional development, either as an extension of the professional development already undergone, or as new participants. These network meetings were held throughout 2000 and into the first half of 2001. The three year Commonwealth Government funding programme ended at this time, and was renewed, with a new round of funding announced for a further three year period.

1.5 Outline of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of seven chapters. The first chapter, this introduction, details the background and purpose of the research. The second chapter critically reviews the literature relevant to the research questions and provides a framework for later analysis. The third chapter gives an overview of the qualitative research methods chosen as most

² Changed to Department of Education (DOE) in 2001

appropriate to the context of this research. It describes the theoretical framework, data collection and analysis. Chapters Four to Six report and discuss the findings at the macro, intermediate and micro levels of the policy process respectively. They include verbatim quotes from respondents articulating their perspectives, as well as wider reflections on the data. The final chapter offers a meta level of analysis which brings together the whole curriculum policy process from macro (Commonwealth Government) to intermediate (professional development trainers in WA) to micro (teachers in schools). This is also referred to as the policy trajectory, which shows the relationships between each level. It then concludes with a discussion of implications for practice, theory and future research.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to determine how macro level policy is reinterpreted and practiced at the intermediate and micro levels for the specific curriculum policy example of the *Discovering Democracy* citizenship resource package. This chapter is designed to report critically on the bodies of literature relevant to this research. Approaches to the analysis of policy are highly contested, and different analytic positions are held and argued in the literature, therefore a critical review of the literature will be conducted.

The key terms in this study: ‘policy’, ‘citizenship’ and ‘democracy’, have multiple interpretations. The readings people make are based on the discourses in which they are located or which they have available to them (Gee & Green 1998). Different discourses occur at different levels of the policy process and within any one level. They reveal both the different ideologies of participants and power relationships between participants. People located in ‘top-down’ discourses about policy will make different readings of the same texts from people located in more negotiatory discourses. Even though certain people may be located together on the same level of the policy trajectory, their divergent discourses will result in competing and contradictory positions within that level. Different interpretations of the three key terms will be discussed in the first section of this literature review.

In relation to the notion of ‘discourses,’ Gee and Green (1998) consider the construction of situated meanings by separate groups who are located in different ‘worlds.’ Media releases and ministers’ speeches often have different authors, and this can lead to a concern with the anonymity of texts: “The very anonymity of the materials lends them an aura of handed down truth... silence constructs the materials” (Gill & Reid 2000: 65). All texts have the potential to hold multiple meanings (O’Neill 1995). ‘Situated meanings’ are relevant to the analysis of both non-print and printed texts and will be considered in this study.

Analytic approaches to policy processes are heavily contested in the literature. Views about policy processes can be arranged on a continuum where at one end those at the ‘grass-roots’ are seen as merely consumers and reproducers of policy, and at the other they are seen as critical agents of policy change (Bowe, Ball & Gold 1992). In terms of citizenship education, policies can potentially range from indoctrination of passive recipients to active enculturation of citizens (Hunter & Jimenez 1999; Meredyth & Thomas 1999). Approaches to policy processes will be discussed in the second section of this review.

The literature that informs this study has been grouped as follows. First, the key terms integral to this research will be discussed in order to highlight the complex and contested nature of the discourses informing this research. Second, a critical review of literature pertaining to the *Discovering Democracy* policy process is presented. This discussion is structured around the two dimensions of *Discovering Democracy* which received separate funding from the Commonwealth: the curriculum resource package for use in schools, and the professional development of teachers choosing to use the curriculum package.

2.2 Key Terms

This study revolves around the meanings given to the terms ‘policy’, ‘citizenship’ and ‘democracy.’ These key terms hold multiple and contested definitions which are discussed below.

Policy

There have been many attempts in a number of disciplines to define the term ‘policy.’ More traditional definitions tend to see policy existing as documents or texts that state how an organisation wishes to achieve a set of goals. More recently, however, there has been a move toward an understanding of policy as process, where the text is formulated then changed and responded to. In this conceptualisation, “policy involves the production of the text, the text itself, ongoing modifications to the text and processes of implementation into practice” (Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard & Henry 1997: 25). The emphasis in definitions of policy is on the difficulties, such as power struggles, constant

change and the ‘chaos’ of production and implementation (Brieschke 1989; Ball 1990; Taylor *et al.* 1997).

There is also a move to extend the conceptualisation of policy as documents or text. Alternative definitions of policy focus to a different extent on purposes or goals, on the initial policy writers and actual practices or consequences which result from the policy. According to Cibulka, policy “includes both official enactments of government and something as informal as ‘practices’. Also... the inactions of government, not simply what the government does” (1994: 107). The analysis of government policy therefore involves considering both written policy text and unwritten practices. Similarly, Ball (1994) includes intentions, text and actions in the definition of policy. Ball states that policy is both text and action. This reflects the move away from previous methods of policy analysis, which focused on only the written policy statement. Policy analysis should extend beyond written texts to track the processes ‘lower down’ at the intermediate and at the micro level of the policy trajectory. Taylor *et al.* (1997) advocate that focusing on processes negates a rational approach to policy and highlights the political and value laden nature of both processes and text. They emphasise that policy involves processes prior to the formulation of the text, and processes continuing after the text has been produced. Contestation arises from the moment an issue is raised onto a policy agenda and is then played out as the voices of some groups are heard, and others are ignored.

Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) describe two views of critical education policy analysis. Policy can be analysed using a ‘top-down’ state control model where a policy agenda (such as new curriculum in this study) is constructed as being imposed by the government on teachers, with little consultation. In this model, the intention of macro level policy makers is imposed on those on the intermediate and micro levels. This model views educational policy as being set by government and then implemented with no feedback or review from participants at the intermediate or micro levels. Alternatively, the ‘policy cycle’ view allows for the “policy recontextualisation that goes on in the schools” (1992: 19). This view of policy acknowledges the transformation and negotiation of policy that occurs at each level of the policy process, resulting in a difference between policy intention and policy practice. Policy can be viewed as a whole process, with these multiple interpretations being reflected back up the policy

trajectory to be reinterpreted by other levels. The policy trajectory focuses on relationships between each level. In this model the macro, intermediate and micro level participants all influence the policy process. The complexities of the policy process cannot always be analysed using just one of these two approaches, and so a middle ground for analysis may need to be found between the two approaches (Vidovich 1998).

Citizenship

Citizenship is a complex concept which has multiple, contested definitions. A contemporary understanding of this term is considered by Ichilov (1998) to involve more than the classical understanding which is to find balance between rights and obligations. Citizenship today includes the binding together of individuals for a common national identity, and the formation of social bonds. Social rights are taking precedence in contemporary definitions of citizenship. Marshall (in Ichilov 1998) states that there are three dimensions - the civil, political and social - with the right to a certain standard of living or social life taking precedence. Ichilov concludes that there is no one single model of citizenship, and it is defined within the context of the local, national or even international social concerns.

Several current definitions of citizenship focus on moving from a global to a local perspective. In the education arena, Lynch suggests “the tripartite concept of citizenship” (1992: 3) which involves three levels of citizenship - local, national and international. Lynch finds that students need greater awareness of the impact humans have on the environment and on each other at a global level. He states that in teaching for citizenship, educators need to translate policies of human rights and social responsibility into workable curriculum at the classroom level.

Cogan (1998) supports the view that context will affect understandings of citizenship by finding that citizenship attributes vary depending upon the political system of which they are part. Cogan lists five general areas that define citizenship. These are identity, certain rights, fulfilment of obligation, involvement in public affairs and accepting basic societal values. Cogan does not however, include more contemporary issues found in recent Australian definitions of citizenship, such as multiculturalism, reconciliation and republicanism.

A definition of the term ‘civics’ from Australian policy documents can be found in the 1994 report of the Civics Expert Group *Whereas the People: Civics and Citizenship Education*. ‘Civics’ is formally defined as “an identifiable body of knowledge, skills and understandings relating to the organisation and working of society, including Australia’s political and social heritage, democratic processes, government, public administration and judicial system” (1994: 6). The report then states that ‘citizenship’ should be interpreted just as broadly and should not be taken to mean solely “the formal processes for acquiring legal status as an Australian citizen” (1994: 6). The WA *Curriculum Framework* takes a similar approach. It states students who are active citizens will be able to analyse critically their heritage and traditions, and demonstrate “behaviours consistent with values associated with the democratic process” (1998: 261). The main contestations between these two views are over citizenship as knowledge of government, as learning democratic behaviours or as active and analytical involvement in a democracy.

Meredyth and Thomas (1999) outline two main tensions between definitions of citizenship. The first conceptualises citizenship as developing the individual into a passive servant of their society. The second, a more recently developed child-centred individualistic approach, focuses on students being self deterministic, actively involved and able to deal with civics issues. Tensions between these arise because of issues such as commonality, plurality and the debate over values. The definition of citizenship had been moving from one of individual development to a more global, community based one. Conversely Meredyth and Thomas find the new *Discovering Democracy* materials emphasise a shift in focus back “from collective values to individual character” (1999: 10).

Democracy

The struggle to conceptualise the term ‘democracy’ has resulted in a myriad of contexts within which to define this term. The term ‘democracy’ is rarely defined in isolation from ‘citizenship’ in the literature and the relationship between these concepts forms a highly contested debate.

Knight advocates that “democracy is an ever developing concept and that it needs to be continuously invented” (2000: 49). He discusses the struggle to define democratic attributes, and juxtaposes the contradictions that arise when democracy “cannot be mass delivered to classrooms but must emerge in the classroom” (2000: 50). He presents six generally recognised attributes of democracy. “1. The nature of educational authority; 2. the ordering and inclusiveness of membership; 3. the determination of important knowledge; 4. the definition and availability of rights; 5. the nature of, and participation in, decisions that affect one’s life; 6. equality” (2000: 52).

In drawing out this definition further, Ichilov focuses in part on the relationship between democracy and citizenship. The compatibility of citizenship and nationalism with democracy is dependent on the strength of ‘civil society’ where “civil society is conceived as the realm of organised social life that is voluntary, self generating, largely self-supporting, autonomous from the state and bound by a legal order or a set of shared rules. It involves citizens acting collectively” (1998: 16).

Globalisation and the increased use of technology are conceived as having disparate impacts on democracy (Ichilov 1998). These could potentially either invigorate the citizenry of representative democracies with more political power as they have stronger communications networks. Alternatively it may reduce the shared sense of mutual responsibility, encouraging individualism and resulting in the isolation of citizens.

A juxtaposition arising within strengthening capitalist democracies is the growing gap between information elites and permanently unemployed workers. As democracies become capitalist in their outlook “the decline of the welfare state seems to grant greater freedom of choice mainly to the affluent social echelons... in a democracy the right to choose should also be allocated equally” (Ichilov 1998: 20).

‘Democracy’ is thus a developing term, with various conceptualisations having emerged over time. Attempts to define it tend to be naturally broad and wide reaching as a result. It is a term that is still being invented (Knight 2000).

2.3 Critique of the *Discovering Democracy* Policy Process

Discovering Democracy provides a particular example of national government curriculum policy for education. It is a special case, as it reflects the Commonwealth Government's response to the dilemma of developing policy on the role of citizens. The process of policy formulation and process for *Discovering Democracy* plays out tensions between government and interest groups.

The policy process will be critically reviewed by firstly discussing competing discourses over *Discovering Democracy* curriculum content and pedagogy. The professional development policy will then be examined by critically discussing competing discourses over the role of the teacher as a professional or as a technician.

Curriculum Content: Competing Discourses

In recent years, the Australian government has intervened substantially in citizenship education through significant investment in curriculum production. Successive governments, while being committed to frequent policy reform, have in reality produced policies seen as having very similar intents. Citizenship education policies form a widely contested terrain. This section will examine the literature of policies on citizenship education by contrasting different views of the passive or active involvement of 'grass roots' participants in policy formulation. The competing perspectives ascribed to government policy intent will be examined using a continuum where those at the 'grass-roots' level could range from being consumers of policy through to being agents of critical change (Meredyth and Thomas 1999; Gilbert 1996; Pascoe 1996; Kennedy 1995). Within this, the level of knowledge based content can be compared with active citizenship content (Robison & Parkin 1997; Gill & Reid 1999; Hunter & Jimenez 1999). As illustrated in Figure 2.1, this continuum is not a dichotomy of two perspectives, rather it is used to enable examination of the range of literature which discusses competing perspectives.

Figure 2.1: Continuum representing citizenship curriculum content

At one extreme, citizens are viewed as passive ‘consumers’ of government citizenship education policy. The recent focus on citizenship education in Australia is perceived as the Federal government’s “response to its legitimization crisis” (Reid 1996: 9). Reid states that the government faces a contradiction in its two main roles of developing skilled workers and responsible citizens. He argues that the government would not want change agents because an educated citizenry might participate “with the skills and commitment to challenge capital and achieve a more equal distribution of power and wealth” (1996: 9). Reid highlights the notion that the government wishes to only produce able-bodied citizens to work for the benefit of the country. This views citizens as ‘consumers’ of policy, with no decision-making or policy challenging role. Reid concludes this means *Discovering Democracy* has been developed with a minimalist view of citizenship; in other words, policy makers are insulated from implementers, and students are taught traditional, knowledge-based content. This perspective is supported by Gilbert (1996) who suggests that if the report of the CEG were to result in education about civic history to support the state, then citizens will not be interested in it. If, however, the resulting education moves toward the other end of the continuum and engages people in active learning and participation, Gilbert states that people will respond. Students in particular are mentioned as needing to be persuaded of the relevance of citizenship issues to their lives. This supports a view of the learner as an engaged participant who is an agent of change, not a compliant policy consumer.

In contrast, Shanker (1998) takes the view that education for democracy cannot be a form of indoctrination, but rather it is an essential form of enculturation. He finds learning the content in civic education programmes is equally as important as developing thinking skills. This is because without knowledge-based content, “citizens remain helpless to make wise judgements” (1998: 6). He argues that educators place too much emphasis on critical thinking skills for democracy and not enough focus on history. An alternative view is suggested by Pascoe who states “citizenship education... should provide opportunities for values clarification and for the development of a sense

of self in relation to community. It should empower young people with the confidence and competence to engage in public life” (Pascoe 1996: 18). This provides an ‘insider’ view of citizenship policy, as the author was a member of the CEG, and it is a viewpoint placed more toward the active participation end of the continuum.

The final version of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum package is criticised for containing a high level of content and knowledge based activities (Hunter & Jimenez 1999). They state the main purposes of the *Discovering Democracy* package give slight attention to teaching about active and informed citizens, and are mainly “concerned with knowledge about the political and legal institutions of Australian society” (1999: 21). Their viewpoint of citizenship policy as traditional and knowledge based is reinforced by Gill and Reid (1999) who provide an analysis concluding the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum package takes a minimalist approach to civics education, is lacking in depth and irrelevant to young Australians today. The package is seen by Hunter and Jimenez as reinforcing the “government’s concern with social cohesion in a time of tremendous social, political and economic change” (1999: 22). This view of society can be contested however and the idea it promotes, of not being able to have social cohesion among critical citizens, can be questioned.

A critique of the curriculum package is provided by Hogan and Fearnley-Sander, who find most of the materials fail to meet the “standard to provide an education for ‘liberal democratic citizenship’ ” (1999: 57). While they find some of the package allows students to analyse issues, they conclude that the package does not provide meaningful approaches to educational issues. Robison and Parkin (1997) criticise the draft materials similarly. They critique the heavy reliance on a historical approach and on content, and suggest that more emphasis on encouraging students to participate in their communities would be appropriate. In juxtaposition, the overall response of McRae to the trial materials was somewhat different. He finds the materials “represent some of the absolute best of what could be produced” (1998: 18). However, he also agrees with Robison and Parkin to some degree by questioning whether the package is relevant to all students.

In contrast to these perspectives, Kemp’s view is that “the historical dimension of the *Discovering Democracy* programme is extremely important. The study of history assists

students to develop critical abilities; however, Gill and Reid (2000) find that the materials, which Kemp had a lot of influence over, do not challenge traditional assumptions about minority groups. When Kemp launched the *Discovering Democracy* package in 1998, he stated;

Discovering Democracy aims to connect students in schools with the concepts, principles, behaviours and practices of democratic citizenship. Every young person... will need to understand our system of democracy, to develop the skills of critical and reflective thinking, of social inquiry and to be able to ask the hard questions:

- * How does our government work?

- * Why has it worked so well for so long?

- * How can it best be improved?

The materials from this project will assist students to answer those questions. (1998: 1).

This extract could be seen as a traditional position and representative of earlier civics frameworks. Such an interpretation is supported by Meredyth and Thomas (1999) who note a 1997 report of teacher focus group feedback included concerns about the marginalisation of students, the use of a traditional approach and a lack of ‘active’ participation and ‘critical’ thinking activities. The *Discovering Democracy* package is perceived by some groups to be strongly weighted toward the knowledge based content end of the continuum constructed earlier.

The competing policy tension held by the Howard government is revealed upon analysis of the speech made by Minister Kemp at the launch of the *Discovering Democracy* materials (Kemp 1997). The speech notes the decline in the teaching of history in schools and announces a plan to test student knowledge of the “workings of Australia’s governments and democratic foundations” (Kemp 1997: 1). This heavy emphasis on the passive consumption of knowledge becomes muted in a later statement by Kemp. When announcing the continuation of funding for the *Discovering Democracy* policy, he broadened the policy statement. As well as discussing the importance of Australia’s “democratic tradition”, Kemp asserted that students now needed to be equipped with the skills required to participate as a citizen and have an “active and informed part in community life” (2000b: 1). However, the more conservative policy is still clearly apparent in another statement made that same year. In a media release about the impact of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum package, Kemp stated students were becoming more aware about how governments work, being informed and “taking their

place in the rich traditions” (Kemp 2000a: 1). The programme supports the 1999 *Adelaide Declaration for National Goals for Schooling in the 21st Century*. In particular, it achieves the goals of “each citizen having the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life” (Erebus Consulting Group 1999: xvii). The Commonwealth Government’s policy on citizenship education is thus more heavily weighted to a view of ‘grass roots’ learners as passive and uninvolved in change. This is toward the ‘citizens as consumers’ end of the continuum constructed earlier.

Based on these arguments, the content of *Discovering Democracy* is seen as being weighted toward the citizens as ‘consumers’ end of the continuum constructed earlier. The package emphasises knowledge about the history of democracy and the workings of government as important content.

Pedagogy: Competing Discourses

Along with the different approaches to curriculum content outlined in the previous section, there are implications for pedagogy. There is a direct relationship between the two. Competing perspectives on teacher pedagogy see the learner as located on a continuum between passively receiving knowledge about government, to becoming actively involved as a citizen (McRae 1998; Pascoe & Ferguson 1999). To emphasise that these competing perspectives are not a dichotomy, but rather they form points on a continuum, the range of perspectives on pedagogy is represented in Figure 2.2, by illustrating the two ‘extremes’ on the continuum.

Figure 2.2: Continuum representing perspectives on pedagogy for citizenship education

Debates in the literature over the pedagogical style of teachers using *Discovering Democracy* have focused around points on this continuum. These points include pedagogy involving the transmission of knowledge, discussion of issues, active involvement as a citizen or the critique of government.

Kemp's (1998) view of civics education is that it involves the transmission of facts such as how government works and why it works well. This perspective is contested by Hunter and Jimenez (1999), who argue that civics education must go beyond the type of pedagogy that merely transmits knowledge. They outline three theoretical models of pedagogy for civics education. The first of these is constructivism, which would involve the students actively engaging in the construction of knowledge. This involves the use of inquiry, and of the student's prior knowledge. It also means that the students cannot be passive in the classroom. The second model is of conflict. This involves students and teachers engaging in discussion about citizenship values that oppose their own beliefs. The third model is critical pedagogy involving the development of the students' voice, with the teacher encouraging the student to go beyond their own experience of the world to question their own values and beliefs.

There is debate over the pedagogical style encouraged by the materials. McRae (1998) responds positively to *Discovering Democracy*, finding there is a strong emphasis on active learning, with a large amount of material available to facilitate this. McRae states however that teachers would need to use their ingenuity to turn the materials into something useable in terms of their own values and perspectives. The concept of teacher ingenuity is a common theme in the literature surrounding the use of the materials by teachers. Clayton typifies this response by asserting that the *Discovering Democracy* materials must "be modified by teachers to meet the needs of their students" (1999: 11). Clayton is in agreement with McRae, stating the materials provide extensive resources for the transmission of historical knowledge, however they do not specifically encourage the teaching of an active or a critical viewpoint. An alternative viewpoint from Pascoe and Ferguson claims the *Discovering Democracy* materials adopt an approach that is inclusive of both historical content and learning processes. Pascoe is a member of the CEG and Ferguson a developer of the materials. They state the materials adopt an approach including both "an inquiry-based pedagogy with a focus on students learning about the origins, principles, operations and values underpinning Australian democracy" (1999: 20).

The expectation of policy makers for the *Discovering Democracy* policy was that the curriculum materials would provide the resourcing required for teachers to implement the policy fully, with little change (Kemp 1998). Policy implementation was to involve

the development of responsible, informed citizens that many of the materials encourage. From a critical perspective, these citizens are to become individuals who “will accept current social and political arrangements and... limit their political involvement to voting at periodic intervals” (Gill and Reid 2000: 64).

Based on the arguments above, the *Discovering Democracy* materials by themselves are generally viewed as being skewed more toward learners as passive recipients of knowledge, with minimal allowance for teachers to challenge learners and involve them in the process in a more active way.

The Role of the Teacher: Competing Discourses

The contrasting approaches to curriculum content and pedagogy outlined in the two preceding sections will affect discourses about the role of the teacher. Competing discourses about two of these roles is considered here. Firstly, the value of teacher feedback and consultation on the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum materials is discussed. This occurred when the Commonwealth Government undertook a process of consultation with interest groups, receiving feedback on the *Discovering Democracy* materials. Secondly, the government also funded professional development to States and Territories as part of the *Discovering Democracy* ‘implementation’ and so the role of professional development will be considered.

Consultation

A government’s willingness to consult on policy development by reviewing processes and receiving feedback can vary from ‘top-down’ imposition to ‘grass roots’ consultative negotiation (Bowe, Ball & Gold 1992). To emphasise that these competing perspectives are not a dichotomy, but rather they form points on a continuum, the range of perspectives on policy consultation is represented in Figure 2.3, by illustrating the two ‘extremes’ on the continuum.

Figure 2.3: Continuum representing perspectives on policy consultation

The draft *Discovering Democracy* materials were developed and sent out for review by schools Australia wide. A consultative environment was thus established in the drafting of the curriculum package. Feedback from the initial consultation period and on the draft materials reflected a range of responses to the content and pedagogical approach, however there are divergent views about the use that was made of this feedback.

Criticism of the actual consultation period reveals questions about the Curriculum Corporation’s willingness to receive feedback and make alterations to the draft materials. The materials were reworked in a “surprisingly short time” (Gill & Reid 2000: 64) before the release of the final version in Australian schools in September 1998. In response to the feedback received from the trials of the materials, Carter *et al.* state that the traditional perspective in the content was modified extensively and a “greater process orientation in some of the units... emerged” (1999: 54). This perspective contrasts with the view of Gill and Reid (1999: 34), who find the trial period was too short, and that criticisms to do with language difficulties, assumed knowledge and a lack of relevance to local contexts were not taken into account in the reworking of the final package.

Hunter and Jimenez state that policies on civics education need to be responsive and remain “contestable and debatable, open to input from all individual and community groups interested in contributing” (1999: 29). They find that policy should thus be responsive to interest groups, and so indicate how open the policy process actually is. They find that this is only of use, however, where the government is interested in the development of policy as distinct from implementing. Feedback on the *Discovering Democracy* policy was possible for a brief time when the trial materials were released, with no provision for ongoing response by interest groups. The 2001 announcement of more funding did not include funding for more feedback and trials, but for further professional development using the existing materials. The government would therefore appear to be uninterested in further policy development.

The implementation phase of 1999-2000 did not allow for official revision of the package. Feedback was not requested, or received, from ‘grass roots’ practitioners. Reid (1996) finds that the initial civics education project was developed with a minimalist viewpoint. The model of policy making employed was not one which modelled democratic participation. In the absence of any plans for further consultation and revision, this appears to be a robustly top-down model of policy ‘implementation.’

Professional Development - Technicians or Professionals

Competing discourses about professional development for classroom teachers vary from viewing teachers as technicians who must be directed in every aspect of education, to teachers as professionals who require minimal guidance (McWilliam, Hatcher & Meadmore 1999). To emphasise that these competing perspectives are not a dichotomy, but rather they form points on a continuum, the range of perspectives on professional development is represented in Figure 2.4, by illustrating the two ‘extremes’ on the continuum.

Figure 2.4: Continuum representing perspectives on professional development

Autonomy and self-direction are often expected of teachers. McWilliam, Hatcher and Meadmore (1999) discuss the professional identity of teachers, who are under increasing pressure to become active and enterprising with their professional development. Teachers are now expected to develop as enterprising managers and classroom leaders. McWilliam *et al.* state this should result in exciting possibilities for teachers as professionals with the proviso that those “who provide professional development at all stages of a teacher’s career insist on critical engagement with the various truths on offer in the marketplace” (1999: 17). Debate over the enhancement of teacher credentials implies teachers are expected to function as knowledgeable, self-determining professionals, who network with others and create learning. In the current Australian culture of education deregulation, teachers are expected to be enterprising participants in the education market place, needing little guidance or central control. The environment

in which teachers are located is thus purportedly one of professionalism and self-direction.

One interpretation of the *Discovering Democracy* package is that implicit in the package is a desire to control what teachers will do (Robison & Parkin 1997). Robison and Parkin demonstrate it is faulty for the government to assume that the interpretation and use of the materials by teachers can be controlled. The pivotal role of the teacher is emphasised in their review. They find all teachers can be encouraged to educate students to be active citizens, suggesting the package can be used in a manner that differs from merely transmitting knowledge. Robison and Parkin, as with McWilliam *et al*, are rejecting a view of teachers as technicians and claiming for them a more proactive role as professionals in constructing and operationalising the curriculum. The interpretation of the materials cannot therefore be controlled to the extent that government policy might intend. McRae (1998) also does not see the materials as isolated from teacher pedagogy. The approach of the teacher will alter the impact of the package, thus implying that the professionalism of teachers is of importance. Kennedy argues that for teachers, civics must mean more than passing on knowledge, and as a result, professional development for civics education should be focused on teachers modelling democratic values in their lives. This requires “teachers themselves to be active and informed citizens” (1998: 1).

Two relevant empirical studies have developed recommendations for teacher professional development for citizenship education. These studies were produced by educational interest groups, with funding from the national government. They are the Social Education Materials Project 1975 (SEMP) and the National Professional Development Program 1996: Informed Citizenship Project.

The National Committee on Social Science Teaching initiated the Social Education Materials Project in 1974. The conclusions of this programme are relevant to the analysis of micro level policy process in this study. The SEMP programme was set up on a similar basis to *Discovering Democracy*, except it was a joint venture between the Commonwealth and the States. It involved the formulation of curriculum materials, and their dissemination to teachers. The involvement of teachers was seen as being the major determining factor in the usefulness of the materials, however Marsh (1983)

found the only teachers who continually used the materials were those who trialed them and who therefore had continual access to materials. The take up rate by teachers in schools appeared to be much less than anticipated. Conclusions reached by Marsh about why very few WA teachers were using the materials revolve around teacher unfamiliarity, competition from existing syllabuses, the high cost of packages and a lack of fit between existing SOSE syllabuses and the materials. Teacher unfamiliarity arose from a lack of guidance about how to use the package, from professional development activities not structured for teachers with varying levels of experience and materials requiring high levels of adaptation (Marsh 1983; Elliot 1980), all reflecting a need for well structured and directed professional development.

Madin (1980) commented on the provision of professional development for teachers, finding in order to encourage teachers to use new materials a “realistic level” of professionalism should be expected, where teachers are not particularly innovative but are “individuals with the ability to prepare common-sense plans and with a keenness to respond” (1980: 48). This is an interesting contention when intermediate level in-service providers often feel pressured to be innovative and ‘different.’ In addition, he finds that as teachers are time-poor they need to be provided with wide-ranging support and ideas about the range of pedagogical possibilities. The tension here for professional development providers is between having to overcome the view of professional development as being ‘more of the same’ while concurrently providing enough of ‘the same’ so teachers feel they can readily incorporate ‘the new’ into current practice.

In relation to the use of the materials in schools, teachers often chose relevant parts of SEMP units, and fitted these into their existing lesson structures. No two teachers used the materials in similar ways, perhaps a reflection of a high level of professionalism. The SEMP Committee stated that the materials were provided with the intention that they be flexible, showing that the aim was not to influence teaching practice. Teachers were assumed to be professionals, capable of adapting the materials as required for their context.

The Informed Citizenship Project was conducted jointly by the University of Tasmania and Deakin University from 1996 to 1997. It was an action research project to encourage dialogue between citizenship educators, and therefore has relevance to the

intermediate level of this study. Brown's (1997) evaluation of the project finds it is important to not overload teachers with technical content, to allow for discussion of current teaching practices, to take teacher prior knowledge into account and to establish effective on-going dialogue after each professional development session. Hogan notes it is important to maintain awareness of "teacher scepticism of academics" (1997: 9). He appears to feel this is important because of teacher cynicism about academically trained presenters, who may not have practical experiences to draw upon. Blackmore and Prior (1997) find that the use of visiting 'experts' was viewed with scepticism by teachers. Networking among participants was extremely effective, and thus highly recommended for future professional development. All these recommendations support a view of the teacher as an engaged, self-developing professional.

Professional development for teachers using *Discovering Democracy* is barely mentioned in the literature. Kennedy suggests a process for the preparation of teacher education students that involves discussing the resource book, viewing resource CDs, working with outcomes and exploring the issues that arise as the package provides "better insights into civics content than has been possible in the past" (1999: 24). These suggestions place professional development for *Discovering Democracy* toward the teachers as 'technicians' end of the continuum outlined above.

Implications for professional development policy that arise from the literature show that professional development will be affected by the view providers take of teachers, and their placement of teachers along the continuum from professionals to technicians.

2.4 Conclusion

This Literature Review has examined varied and contested propositions about curriculum policy and professional development policy. The propositions that arise are that these contested views of policy can be negotiated, however it may still not be possible to form a workable compromise. Whether a compromise has been achieved in the development of the *Discovering Democracy* policies will be examined further in this dissertation. This research will fill a gap in the literature about the realities of the policy

process in this instance, and these contestations will be further explored throughout the remainder of this dissertation.

CHAPTER THREE:

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the theoretical framework and the associated methods used throughout this research. The reasoning behind a predominantly qualitative approach is outlined, along with the conceptual framework for policy analysis that was employed. This is followed by an explanation of the way in which data were collected and organised. Data analysis techniques involved with the use of policy documents, interviews and questionnaires are then examined.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

This study was developed around the theoretical perspectives of interpretivism and critical theory. The methodology is predominately reflective of many of the features of the interpretive research method (Strauss & Corbin 1990; Punch 1998). This methodology was considered most appropriate to the central research question as it places importance on the meanings behind observations. Interpretivism allowed the researcher to focus in-depth on the perspectives of respondents and the meaning they made of the policy under study (Crotty 1998). Critical theory is appropriate to examine the inequalities that can exist in power relationships. It is appropriate here as this study focused on power relationships within and between different levels of the policy trajectory, such as Commonwealth with State; Minister with consultative groups; and policy initiators with teachers. Data collection and preliminary analysis were consistent with interpretivist perspectives, and then critical theory perspectives were brought to bear on a meta level of data analysis.

The conceptual framework used involved the 'policy cycle' model of education policy analysis represented by the work of Ball (1994). This involves a focus not only on the powerful policy makers of government, but also on the intermediate practitioners and micro level practitioners of the policy. The research aimed to not merely describe the

Discovering Democracy policy processes, but rather provide a critical analysis. Analysis of research data in this study of curriculum policy processes has enabled the researcher to “generate critical perspectives upon the impact and effects of policy” (Ball 1994a: 2).

3.3 Location of the Researcher

The researcher was involved as a participant observer at the intermediate level of the policy process. The research focused primarily on this intermediate level ‘implementation’ of the policy, due to the researcher’s involvement in this level and ‘insider’ status. This status also gave easier access to important data.

The researcher was one of the Western Australian professional development trainers involved in the professional development of other teachers to use *Discovering Democracy*. After acceptance as a trainer in late 1998, the relevant sessions were attended or organised until 2000. The researcher’s observations were not included as a respondent, and constant awareness of the need to be impartial due to this ‘insider’ status was maintained. The potential disadvantage of being an ‘insider’ was the possibility of allowing bias into the data by not stepping back and analysing it from the perspectives of the participants who agreed to be respondents to this research.

3.4 Design of Study

This research was primarily conducted using qualitative methods. Punch (1998) notes that such methods allow the structure of the design to develop as research proceeds. It has allowed the collection of rich, detailed data on the perspectives of respondents. Themes could be isolated and reviewed with respondents as the study progressed. The research design was based on a policy trajectory from macro to micro levels. While the policy cycle (Bowe, Ball & Gold 1992) is seen as continuous, and policy development and process as continually impacting upon each other, separation into the three levels of macro, intermediate and micro was needed to facilitate analysis.

In keeping with the interpretivist approach, perspectives have been collected from participants at each level of the whole policy process. The first is the macro level of policy initiators within the Commonwealth Government. The second was the intermediate level of professional development trainers within Western Australia. The respondents at the micro level were involved in the curriculum policy process in Western Australia as classroom teachers. A meta level of analysis revealed differential power relationships along the trajectory, which is consistent with the critical theory approach to knowledge. The details of data collection and analysis are discussed in the subsequent sections.

3.5 Data Collection

Sampling

The parameters that informed the sampling procedure included settings, actors, events and processes (Miles & Huberman 1994). Complexities exist in the sampling process for this research as all the respondents were not located within the one organization. At the macro level, respondents were involved at the national or Commonwealth level. The Commonwealth Minister for Education and one of the five members of the Civics Education Group (CEG) were interviewed.

Sampling at the intermediate level involved using maximum variation sampling (Miles & Huberman 1994; Punch 1998) to select a representative range of professional development trainers from Western Australia for interview. This included professional development trainers from both government and non-government schools, urban and rural areas, males and females, primary/secondary/support sectors, and those holding a range of different positions within the schools. A representative range was aimed for to enhance the potential transferability of the research (Miles & Huberman 1994; Punch 1998). It was feasible to interview such a wide range, in a restricted time, because of the researcher's immediate access to this group through direct involvement in the training process. A total of 12 out of 36 professional development trainers in Western Australia, as well as one of the eight members of the WA *Discovering Democracy* Professional Development Coordinating Committee were interviewed at the intermediate level of the policy process.

Snowball sampling was used to identify teachers at the micro level in Western Australia (May 1993). Professional development trainers identified potential sites at the school level, giving contact details of teachers in schools who had attended the *Discovering Democracy* professional development. This form of snowball sampling was viewed as “very useful in gaining access to certain groups” (May 1993: 119), to enable the researcher to find willing respondents to contact in each school. Choosing a wide range of respondents based on school type, location and area ensured maximum variation in the sample. These practising classroom teachers were sent a questionnaire, with the object of generating at least thirty responses. Potentially, all teachers in WA who attended the professional development could have been sampled. Ten questionnaires in each district were initially sent, with a follow-up fax a few weeks later to those who did not reply. 58 completed questionnaires were returned.

Policy Documents

The documents collected were produced at two levels. At the macro level, the Senate Discussion paper and report of the Civics Expert Group were an initial source of data, as they were used when preparing the *Discovering Democracy* Primary and Secondary Kits resource package. These documents revealed information about the aims of the macro level interest groups for the citizenship education programme. In addition, several media releases and speeches made by the Minister and by his Parliamentary Secretary were analysed. All the macro level documentation was easily accessible and available in the public domain. Discussion papers and reports were obtainable in libraries, the resource material was provided to all schools in Australia free of charge, and the Minister’s speeches were accessed on the internet.

Documents produced at the intermediate level included the Western Australian produced *Discovering Democracy Professional Development for Teachers Schools’ Resource File* (First and Second edition) and the text of the *Professional Development for Teachers Trainers’ Resource File*. These contained data about the aims of the professional development and training programme.

At the micro level within individual schools, documents other than the curriculum package did not exist; therefore the researcher relied on information supplied by

teachers in response to the questionnaire. Thus, the overall reliance on documents decreased as the research progressed down the policy trajectory to the micro level.

Interviews

Respondents at the macro level included the Commonwealth Minister for Employment, Education and Youth Affairs as well as a member of the national CEG. Data obtained through a face to face interview with the CEG member enabled some informed critique of policies stated in the macro level documents. This macro level interview indicated that the Commonwealth Minister for Education had taken a strong interest in the project, and had heavily influenced this policy. As a result, a telephone interview with the Minister for Education was arranged. The two interviews were transcribed verbatim. Respondents were asked if they wished to correct the transcript. The Minister was the only respondent of all those in the study who wished to see the transcript. Although he was invited to make alterations he did not choose to do so.

Respondents at the intermediate level were one member of the State *Discovering Democracy* Professional Development Coordinating Committee and 12 professional development trainers in teaching districts in Western Australia. These were individual, face-to-face or telephone interviews. Professional development trainers were classroom teachers, Heads of Department, members of District Offices and education officers based in Western Australia. Of the total population of 36 professional development trainers in WA, one was selected from each of the 13 Western Australian districts. Of the 13 people approached, 12 agreed to be interviewed. Of these, two were from the same district at the time of the interview due to a transfer. A representative range of respondents was achieved, with respondents having diverse backgrounds. All professional development trainers were asked if they wished to view a transcript of their interview, and none did. Six interviews were face-to-face and six were telephone interviews, due to the geographical dispersion around the state of Western Australia. While the use of telephone interviews was crucial, as it allowed access to a geographically wide-spread sample, it also held limitations. Non-verbal information such as facial expressions were missed, and it was not possible to offer non-verbal cues (Drever 1995). The researcher minimised these limitations by restricting the amount

said and using “paralinguistic utterances... to give encouragement” throughout the telephone interview (Drever 1995: 16).

At the macro and intermediate levels, the type of interview used was semi-structured, in which questions were specified, but the researcher was able to “seek both clarification and elaboration on the answers given” (May 1993: 111). Similarly, this type of interview gave the freedom to alter the sequence of questions when some were answered earlier in the interview than expected (Fielding, N. 1993), and it allowed probing for further information when required. The use of probes for each interview gave flexibility, and enabled the exploration of ideas in further depth. The use of similar questions assisted with later analysis, by enabling consistency of coverage, facilitating the later development of categories, and assisting with triangulation of perspectives.

The interviews provided “access to the meanings people attribute to their experiences and social worlds” (Miller & Glasner 1998: 100). This was important as the aim was to investigate beyond textual policy statements to find the meaning the respondents attributed to the policy. A series of open ended questions was asked at each level. From the responses received at the macro level, a set of clarifying questions were formulated and added to the trainer interviews. This explored macro level assumptions and ideas. The responses received here were used to formulate the questionnaires used to collect data at the micro level. As data were collected at each level of the policy trajectory, it informed another level of the trajectory (Bowe, Ball & Gold 1992). The intent of the macro level questions was for the respondents to reflect on their experiences at the macro level, and to reflect ‘down’ the policy trajectory to the intermediate and micro levels about the policy process and effects. These respondents were most able to respond to the research questions about curriculum policy, and less able to comment on professional development policy. The intent of the intermediate level questions was for professional development trainers to reflect back ‘up’ the policy trajectory to the policy intentions at the macro level, to reflect on their experiences at the intermediate level, and to reflect ‘down’ to the policy effects at the micro-level or grassroots level of teachers and students in schools. The additional questions of clarification that were added after the macro level interviews aided this process.

Establishing rapport was important. Each interview began with a clear statement about the aims of the interview and reassurance so that respondents were not apprehensive about the intended use of their responses. Confidentiality was assured for all interviewees other than the Commonwealth Minister as the Minister's position was unique. Rapport was established in an effective manner in the intermediate level interviews. The researcher had met most of the respondents before. The researcher was aware it would be ideal to use the same type of interview for all respondents, however several were located in country Western Australia. The only difference between the face to face and phone interviews was that phone respondents were less hesitant in their responses. It appeared to be easier for them to be honest about their opinions when they were not facing a researcher. In addition, it was necessary for the researcher to be constantly sensitive that the shared frame of reference generated by familiarity with the respondents did not intrude on the interview process. This was necessary to ensure that responses were not assumed, but rather were explicitly articulated. The familiarity appears to have been beneficial however, and to have enabled the professional development trainers to relax and be very responsive. Questions asked were open ended, allowing a natural, conversational approach. An honest discussion resulted in a trusting atmosphere. Techniques that were used as the researcher determined appropriate included active listening, affirming responses, summarising and clarifying and responding positively to all feedback as recommended by Foddy (1994) and Drever (1995).

Interviewing the Powerful

Respondents at the macro level were skilled interviewees and had reasons to be cautious about what they said due to their involvement in the arena of public politics (Ball 1994b). This affected preparation for the interviews, and extensive background knowledge was required. Those in a position of power can often have their own agenda to communicate (Cookson 1994). Consequently the researcher remained aware that the Commonwealth Minister's purpose for the interview at times strayed to topics he considered of importance, but which were not directly relevant to the questions being pursued. When these situations occurred, the researcher guided the Minister back to the main item of discussion. The situation was unusual because the researcher was

‘interviewing up’ by interviewing someone in a position of authority greater than her own (Walford 1994).

A further factor to be aware of was the impact that being a young, female researcher had on these interviews. All macro level interviews were with males in positions of power. The effect of this is dependent on the respondent’s perceived power in relation to the researcher (Gewirtz & Ozga 1994), and the researcher was aware of the need to not threaten the respondent, achieving this by approaching the interview in a relaxed manner and accepting all responses to questions without openly querying the respondent’s viewpoint. Clarification and justification of opinion was sought using indirect questioning (Cookson 1994).

Questionnaires

Micro level respondents were classroom teachers who had attended the professional development training for *Discovering Democracy*, and who were using the package in schools in Western Australia. They were identified to the researcher by professional development trainers, and sent a questionnaire. The interviews conducted at the macro and intermediate levels, and responses to these, informed the construction of the questionnaire. Questions were decided upon after the interviews were conducted so both the specific research questions, as well as new insights revealed by the interviews could be surveyed. The questionnaire was trialled with a small number of teachers in order to ensure there were no difficulties interpreting the intent of the forced-choice questions.

The questionnaire was sent with a letter asking micro level teachers to participate in the survey including a stamped, self addressed envelope to return the questionnaire. Envelopes were marked so that people who did not return the questionnaire were followed up, however their anonymity was guaranteed as the questionnaire was not marked in any way. The questions were formulated in a manner that enabled the teachers to reflect back up the policy trajectory to the macro and intermediate levels, as well as on their own practices in the classroom.

Ethics and Confidentiality

As required by university ethics procedures all respondents except the Minister signed informed protocols which assured anonymity and confidentiality of data during the research process and any subsequent publication. In the case of the Minister, anonymity could not be offered; instead he was provided with the opportunity to review and modify the transcript. It was understood that perspectives from this position could not remain anonymous and he consented to this.

3.6 Data Analysis

Documents

While most of the data were based on interviews and questionnaires, the documents chosen for analysis formed an important part of the research setting (Silverman 1997).

Approaches to document analysis range along a broad continuum of perspectives from content analysis to critical analysis (Jupp & Norris 1993; May 1997; Silverman 1997). Jupp and Norris (1993) identify three main traditions in documentary analysis. These are positivist content analysis, interpretative analysis and critical or discourse analysis. The latter form of analysis is becoming most common in educational policy research. The critical analysis of the available documentary evidence therefore involved looking beyond the written statements as the “story behind the production of each document needs to be probed and analysed, and the contents need to be triangulated against data from other documents and other forms of evidence” (Walford 1994: 229). This was done in the analysis stage by triangulating with interview data.

The analysis of a policy text can differ from other document analysis in that there are often many authors, or no recognised author. Prior (1997) states that Foucault did not think of the author of a text as being the origin of textual knowledge, rather there are discursive rules through which knowledge is produced. This is particularly relevant in the study of texts which can be described as being without an author, such as the *Discovering Democracy* government policy. Prior states that such “texts can constitute

a starting point for analysis in their own right” (1997: 65). The question of authorship is also addressed by Ball who argues that as policy texts are rarely the product of single authors or a single process, they are “not necessarily clear or closed or complete” and they “shift and change their meaning” (1993: 11). This particularly applied to media statements and speeches made by the Minister and the CEG produced Primary and Secondary Kits. All the documents were analysed critically, with implied power relationships and expectations being considered at all stages of analysis.

Interviews and Questionnaires

As delineated by Miles and Huberman (1994), analysis aims to trace relationships between social phenomena based on the regularities and sequences that link these. The analysis model used involves the three stages of data reduction, data display and drawing conclusions.

The interviews were summarised and transcribed. Interview transcripts were scrutinised inductively using analytical techniques by being checked against tapes, before data reduction commenced. This was a continuous process with concepts extracted inductively from the data and the interrelationships between transcripts drawn out. A check list matrix was used for both interviews and questionnaires to assemble common themes and patterns.

Analytic induction was used in order to raise concepts from the data to a higher level of abstraction, and then draw out the interrelationships (Punch, 1998). Early labels or tags were placed against the data in a descriptive manner, to commence the analysis (Miles & Huberman 1994). Then a more interpretive type of coding took place, which required inference beyond the data. The research questions were kept in mind during this process and categories emerged after coding, resulting in three main themes being drawn from the data. These were:

- Curriculum policy production;
- Professional development policy;
- Curriculum policy practices.

These form the themes for reporting findings and are the subsections of Chapters Four to Seven. The focus was on holistic impressions to avoid fragmenting and decontextualising the data.

Triangulation

Triangulation was used for analysis within each level of the trajectory, and between interviews, questionnaires and documents at each level. Triangulation between interview and documentary data sources, and between levels of the trajectory was used to ensure the internal validity or ‘trustworthiness’ of findings (Miles & Huberman 1994). Methodological triangulation was used as findings from interviews at each level were verified against available documentary evidence (Macdonald & Tipton 1993).

The overarching research question was constantly kept in mind as analysis progressed. Some themes emerged consistently across all levels of the trajectory, whereas other themes were unique to a particular locus in the trajectory. Critical analysis focusing on power relationships were used to develop meta level patterns which emerged from the data. The aim was to develop concepts that would be sufficiently abstract so that they may be transferable (Punch 1998). Critical policy analysis also influenced triangulation.

3.7 Presentation of Findings in Chapters 4-6

The findings of this study are presented as three separate chapters. Chapter Four focuses on perspectives from policy initiators at the macro level, Chapter Five on perspectives from professional development trainers at the intermediate level and Chapter Six on teachers’ perspectives at the micro level of the policy trajectory for *Discovering Democracy*. Although these findings have been separated for the purpose of analysis, there are constant interlinkages between the different levels of the policy trajectory. These interlinkages will be explored in Chapter Seven.

In total, the findings discussed in the following chapters are the result of analysing documents, two macro level interviews, 13 interviews at the intermediate level, and 58 individual questionnaires from the micro level of the trajectory. All respondents were

guaranteed anonymity, apart from the Commonwealth Minister for Education. The other macro level respondent was a member of the national Civics Education Group. Intermediate level interview respondents and micro level questionnaire respondents were given an identification code and these codes are used in reporting direct quotes to reflect the level of the policy trajectory at which each was operating (eg. intermediate – INT and micro - MIC), in order to provide an audit trail of the data and its analysis. There has been a stronger reliance on documents at the macro level, then interviews at the intermediate level, and the questionnaire at the micro level as sources of data.

In analysing the data, three main themes emerged as subcategories of *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy. Each is explored at each level of the policy trajectory. However, the analysis differs for each theme, due to the variation in the richness of data available.

CHAPTER FOUR:

MACRO LEVEL - POLICY INITIATOR PERSPECTIVES

4.1 Introduction

The macro level of the policy trajectory focused on the Commonwealth (national) Government. Interviews and documents were the main sources of data at this level. Interviews were conducted with two actors involved in macro level policy text production - the Commonwealth Minister for Education and a member of the national Civics Education Group (CEG). Documents analysed as part of the data set include speeches and media releases made by the Minister for Education about the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy, the interim report *Evaluation of the Discovering Democracy Program* (1999) (hereafter referred to as the Evaluation Report), as well as the text of the *Discovering Democracy* Primary and Secondary Kits.

Macro level findings are discussed under the themes of curriculum policy production, professional development policy and the practising of the curriculum policy. Sub-themes were identified for each of these three main themes.

4.2 Curriculum Policy Production

At the macro level, the richest data revolved around the theme of the production of curriculum policy and the findings are arranged into four sub-themes below:

- Changing participants in the policy production
- Policy intentions
- Curriculum content
- Trialing and consultation

Some of these parallel those at the intermediate and micro level. These four sub-themes are discussed in detail in the subsequent sections.

Changing Participants in the Policy Production

The *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy was developed by the national CEG at the macro level, and participants in this group changed over time. Its precursor, the Civics Expert Group was established in June 1994 by the Labor Government. The 1998 Coalition Government made alterations to the membership of the CEG when they came into power. The name of the group was changed, and although the acronym remained the same (CEG), the ‘E’ became ‘Education’ to replace ‘Expert.’ This name change signalled a desire by the Coalition Government to refocus the purpose of the group. In addition, two more members were appointed to the CEG. The Coalition Government increased the CEG board numbers from three to five with the addition of two individuals who are described in the literature as conservative academics (Gill and Reid 2000). These changes affected the policy position taken by the CEG in initial materials development.

The Commonwealth Minister for Education exerted considerable influence over the final composition of the CEG, which represented a particular group of stakeholders. It reflected the interests of three history and law professors, the chair of policy for Catholic Education, and the Director-General of Education in NSW. The Minister was also heavily involved in the committee’s work in developing the content of the curriculum package.

One perspective on the effect of adding two extra members is that it shifted the focus of the CEG away from the notion of active participation toward passive receipt of knowledge. The development of materials became more biased toward the teaching of history for citizenship. This shift is confirmed by a statement made by the CEG member during their interview; that the two newer members of the CEG “came in more sceptical of the participation agenda...”, where the term ‘participation agenda’ in the interview was referring to ‘active citizenship.’ The CEG member later stated that their scepticism of active citizenship lessened when they saw good examples of teaching practice employing practical and skills-based experiences for students. This respondent said that over time the CEG as a whole became more open to ‘participation’ (or the teaching of active citizenship) and acknowledged this could become a minor part of their content-based (or historically based) policy agenda.

The change to participants in the CEG over the period 1994 to 2000 thus influenced the position taken, as members were biased toward a policy of citizens as recipients of knowledge and history.

Policy Intentions

The development of the national CEG and *Discovering Democracy* reflected changes in citizenship education policy such that the Commonwealth was now forging a particular position on curriculum content. Before the creation of *Discovering Democracy*, the Dawkins' ascendancy of the mid 1980s became the starting point of the Commonwealth's struggle to give input into the curriculum. Prior to this, the Commonwealth had negligible involvement in determining curriculum policy as States and Territories have jurisdiction over education. While the Commonwealth provided tied funds, these were generally for programmes rather than specific curriculum policy.

The most recent statement of Commonwealth Government policy on education programmes is outlined in the 1999 *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century*. The extent to which *Discovering Democracy* accords with these trends in government policy is examined in the interim report entitled *Discovering Democracy Program Evaluation* (1999). An external consulting group (Erebus Consulting Group) prepared this interim report for the Commonwealth Minister's Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA). The report finds that the programme is clearly in accord with government policy goals, recognising the importance of citizenship education and the need for students to "be active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life" (1999: 66). This policy goal is also clearly outlined in the Commonwealth-produced Primary and Secondary Kits.

When asked why there was a need to change government citizenship policy and thus develop *Discovering Democracy*, the macro level respondents identified inadequacies in existing policies. They did not specify whether these inadequacies existed at a State or Commonwealth level. The Commonwealth Minister stated in the interview that the policy change was needed because Australians do not understand the background to their democracy. This reflects a focus on citizenship education policy where students

are seen as passive recipients of knowledge. The Minister also said this change in policy could improve the “quality of our democracy.”

The Minister spoke at length during the interview about people wanting to feel empowered. The particular emphasis in his response was on citizens *feeling* empowered, not necessarily *being* empowered. He believed that empowerment is achieved through people understanding how the system of government works. This implies that the way to enable this empowerment is through the provision of factual content for students to passively consume. A similar inference can be drawn from the comments of the CEG member during interview. This respondent believed the inadequacies in citizenship policy were all related to the need for a stronger factual and historical basis for citizenship education. The close involvement of the Minister also reflected changing intentions about the level of government influence on policy development. The change in CEG members was driven by the Commonwealth Minister. This was revealed in the Minister’s interview where he stated that when the alteration of membership was made “the initial judgement was originally made by me.” He further explained that by appointing two new members to the CEG with a background in legal history he could “introduce elements that were perhaps not as strongly represented as we believed they should have been.”

It can therefore be argued that participants in the national CEG adjusted the policy intentions for *Discovering Democracy* to emphasise a basis for citizenship policy where students are passive consumers of factual knowledge. The policy development proceeded under the close direction of the national CEG group and the Commonwealth Minister. *Discovering Democracy* represented a new arena for Commonwealth Government interventions in the ongoing contestation over curriculum. The Commonwealth Minister was driven by a strong belief in the inadequacies of existing State citizenship education policies and a need for change.

Curriculum Content

The macro level respondents juxtaposed two potentially different approaches for the substance of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum: historical knowledge content or active citizenship content. Over time, the emphasis at the Commonwealth level changed

along a continuum between the two approaches, from active citizenship to history and then back. The Commonwealth Minister stated during the interview that he was dissatisfied with the citizenship education agenda inherited from the previous government because of an excessive emphasis on current issues (active citizenship) and the need for a “stronger emphasis on the development of Australian democracy”, meaning knowledge about the history of democracy. While he stated the purpose was both to give students civic knowledge, and to empower them to be effective citizens, his examples of what this entails all included knowledge-based outcomes. He cited as examples that students need to be given a “strong sense of the heritage and development of Australian democracy” and that the main purpose of the package was to provide “what you might call civic knowledge.”

Contrasting media releases by the Minister appear to show that he changed his focus from the importance of historical content towards greater acceptance of the notion of active citizenship between 1997 and 2000. The 1997 speech to launch *Discovering Democracy* notes the decline in the teaching of history in schools. At the 1998 launch of the materials, his speech clearly stated “the historical dimension of the *Discovering Democracy* programme is extremely important.” The more conservative, historically-based policy is still apparent in a March 2000 media release about the impact of the *Discovering Democracy* programme. Here the Minister stated that students were becoming more aware of how governments work, and being informed about the traditions of Australian democracy. However by May 2000 the Minister’s language in a media release relied more heavily on the discourse of empowerment. The emphasis on the teaching of knowledge is muted in this 2000 announcement of the continuation of funding for *Discovering Democracy* where the Minister discussed both the importance of Australia’s ‘democratic tradition’, and that students now needed to be equipped with the skills required to participate as a citizen and have an “active and informed part in community life.”

The Minister frequently referred to ‘empowering citizens’ throughout the research interview in 2001. However he viewed empowerment more in terms of historical knowledge rather than active citizenship, seeming to take a particular view of empowerment that is contestable, as the language surrounding this was not language of inclusivity or shared decision-making. At one point in the interview, he stated that

Australians don't feel empowered because they don't feel they influence what governments do, however individuals should be able to achieve remarkable results through understanding how the system of government works. At another point, he explained that education provides empowerment needed by students because it "provides essential knowledge." This reflects a discourse different from 'active citizenship.'

The CEG member said during the interview that all members of the CEG were "strongly in favour of a history injection for civics." This reflects a stronger emphasis toward the historical content end of the continuum, moving away from active citizenship content. The perspective of the CEG member did alter slightly as the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum project developed. This is revealed in the statement that as the project developed, it was noticed that 'sophisticated' participatory education worked and that this could be integrated with an historical perspective if done 'properly.' The language and tone used by the CEG member reveals a particular discourse about power and the content of curriculum materials. When asked about the importance of exposing students to different texts the reply was;

Say you're trying to teach heroic feminism. You could carry on about that until you're blue in the face and make no impression, but if you give the story *The Drover's Wife*, then a person who can't grasp what that is about has got more problems than literacy problems or any other problem. They've got an emotional dysfunction.

The CEG member was thus confident that the historical emphasis of the materials could provide for learners at all education levels, as a variety of historical sources were accessed.

A critical interpretation of the above would therefore infer that *Discovering Democracy* curriculum was initially developed with a strong emphasis on historical content; however this gradually changed over time to reflect some acceptance of an active citizenship perspective.

Trialing and Consultation

Several stakeholder groups gave input into the curriculum materials through formal trials and consultation. The *Discovering Democracy* Primary and Secondary Kits mention that State and Territory education agencies, project schools and the Australian Federation of Societies for the Study of Society and Environment (AFSSSE) were involved in trialing and consultation. In the 1998 project commencement speech, the Commonwealth Minister announced over 160 schools were involved (Kemp, 1998).

The *Discovering Democracy* Primary and Secondary Kits clearly distinguish differing roles for the CEG and all other participants in the policy production. The CEG had a controlling influence. It was to give a “conceptual overview of the project and approve materials” (1998: 2). This can be contrasted with the role given to other interest groups. Education agencies, project schools, the Advisory Committee and AFSSSE all were only to give feedback on the trialing of the materials. Interactions that occurred between the Commonwealth Minister, CEG and other stakeholders reveal differential levels of influence. The aims for the programme that the Minister gave during the interview are consistent with the purpose outlined in the Primary and Secondary Kits (1998: 8). This is a reflection of the close involvement that both the Minister and the CEG had with the development of the *Discovering Democracy* materials.

There were different views of the consultation process by the Commonwealth Minister and member of the national CEG. When asked in the interview about the response to trial material, the Minister stated there was a very wide consultative process. The Minister was able to list more involved interest groups than any other respondents at the macro or intermediate levels of the trajectory. He stated that the curriculum package seemed to have very broad support and that he hadn’t a sense that there was “any real disagreement over the aims of the package.” In contrast, the CEG member adopted a tone less suggestive of consultation in the interview, stating that “there were always interest groups running around”, thus implying their input was almost a distraction to the CEG. The CEG member also added that “if you were on the Civics Education Group you wouldn’t spend time being told what the principals were up to or what the union wants.”

The CEG member mentioned that no other interest groups were involved at the level of the CEG, which makes the limited representation on this decision-making group even more significant. Feedback from other stakeholders such as the State education departments and principals' associations was given to the Curriculum Council or "to the people writing the materials... They were operating at the level underneath me." In effect, there was a buffer between the CEG and interest groups, created because feedback and consultation was sent to the writers of the materials. This feedback could have then been filtered before being relayed to the CEG. In addition, the authority of the CEG was absolute. The CEG member explained that any substandard material was rejected and "we just said no to a couple of units."

No changes were made to the *Discovering Democracy* materials produced by the Curriculum Corporation at any stage without the agreement of the CEG members and the Minister. All the materials were reviewed and checked in minute detail by the CEG members. The CEG member stated during the interview that the group discussed all aspects of the materials and went through them quite carefully. This respondent believed this was an unusual amount of involvement for this type of board. It was particularly noted "you... don't expect the Head of the Civics Expert Group... to go through absolutely everything, which he does, and then you don't expect the Minister to go through everything." This respondent pointed out that the Minister "reads just about anything" but has been "extremely uninterfering."

It is worth reiterating here that the CEG did not consist of grassroots practitioners. Further, this group does not appear to have been composed of individuals with widely divergent views. In fact the CEG member stated "the Civics Education Group is the most amicable, consensus body that I have ever worked on. There was never a dissenting vote. Everything was being decided by consensus." The content of the package was developed by a group of five that was not broadly representative of all stakeholder groups. The CEG did not consist of individuals holding contested views on policy or citizenship.

It can therefore be demonstrated that feedback from the formal trials of *Discovering Democracy* materials was not presented directly to the developers of the policy. It can

be concluded that national CEG members closely controlled the trialing and consultative process, with minimal input from other stakeholders.

4.3 Professional Development Policy

In macro level documents, the professional development of teachers for *Discovering Democracy* is mentioned briefly in media releases made by the Commonwealth Minister for Education, provided for in the Primary and Secondary Kits, and examined in the interim Program Evaluation. Professional development is not mentioned in the 1997 speech made by the Minister to launch *Discovering Democracy*. At the two 1998 events to launch the materials and multi media Primary and Secondary Kits, the only reference to professional development detailed the amount of funding being provided by the Commonwealth (Kemp, 1998). This reflects the lack of emphasis by the Commonwealth on this area of the *Discovering Democracy* policy, as States and Territories were given specific control of related professional development.

The *Discovering Democracy* Primary and Secondary Kits contain a booklet *Using the Primary/Secondary Kit*. This details professional development sessions to be provided within a school. The outline provides for two sessions which could be used to inform teachers about the background and aims of the *Discovering Democracy* project, gives an overview of the materials and suggests ways to utilise these. This booklet is independent of the professional development training provided at the intermediate level by States and Territories. The Primary and Secondary Kits do not mention the provision of this intermediate (State level) training at all.

The expectations Commonwealth (macro level) participants had of the State and Territory led professional development training reflect a low awareness of how the training programme was carried out. The Commonwealth Minister said during the interview he was “not directly involved” in the professional development training and was not aware how the training had been implemented beyond stating his need for it to occur “within the framework which is set by the package... Trainers then helped teachers to implement the programme in a way that they believe is appropriate for their local circumstances.”

The CEG member stated during the interview an impression that teachers needed to “influence others in the use of the materials. They encourage the adaptation of curriculum and its innovative use.” The CEG member had gained a very positive impression of the professionalism and dedication of the teachers who had volunteered to become professional development trainers. These individuals were seen by this respondent to be motivated and innovative, and an atypical, or elite, group of professionals. The professional development trainers and their influence were described as;

A spiral circle. You have at the very heart a group of really, really motivated, high quality civics teachers and they will go to the next group who are not quite as good as that, but pretty good, and turn them into ones who are as good as themselves and then the next group – the ripple effect.

When asked during interview about aims for the professional development training of classroom teachers, neither macro level respondent had specific aims in mind. They reiterated the importance of allowing the States and Territories to determine the basis for the training. Commonwealth involvement in the related professional development was limited to providing funding.

Therefore it can be argued that both Commonwealth (macro level) respondents lacked any real knowledge about how the professional development training was to work in practice. Their focus was the policy aims and content of *Discovering Democracy*, and the professional development training of teachers was allocated to others.

4.4 Curriculum Policy Practices

Commonwealth (macro level) perspectives on the theme of teachers and their classroom practices are arranged into the following three sub-themes. These sub-themes parallel those at the intermediate and micro level and are:

- Teaching approach
- The materials
- Student outcomes

These are discussed in the subsequent sections.

Teaching Approach

Teachers and their classroom practices are infrequently mentioned in Commonwealth (macro level) documentation. The first reference to *Discovering Democracy* teachers occurs in a 2000 media release by the Minister, where it is simply noted that the “involvement of teachers and their support of the *Discovering Democracy* programme has increased substantially” (2000a). Macro level documentation briefly mentions the classroom practices expected to result from teachers using *Discovering Democracy*. The Primary and Secondary Kits encourage teachers to use a range of approaches and resources to present the activities. Teachers are encouraged to plan carefully and not see the materials as “a whole new course, but rather, as a way of supporting and strengthening content and learning activities that are already in the curriculum” (1998: 22). This perspective contrasts with the interim Evaluation Report, which was critical of teachers who did not use units in the package as a whole. While it was found that “the most common implementation approach has seen teachers pick and choose from among the many topic areas and activities” (1999: xix), this was not seen as being beneficial. It is stated that;

While this is not necessarily inappropriate, it does allow some teachers to use the kit material in less educationally productive ways than the potential allows (1999: xix).

The expectation that teachers should use the materials without alteration is reflected in comments made by the Commonwealth (macro level) respondents in their interviews. Both respondents, when interviewed, indicated their belief that the *Discovering Democracy* materials were well structured for immediate use in the classroom. Members of the CEG were surprised by the use of alternative teaching methods, and to see that teachers had adapted the materials. The CEG member stated that in noticing this “it has been a learning process for us as well.” This respondent appeared surprised by the level of professionalism of the classroom teachers who participated in feedback sessions. In particular, it was a surprise that good teachers would be able to utilise quite ‘sophisticated’ participatory civics education.

The perspective of these respondents reveals an expectation that teachers would use the *Discovering Democracy* materials as they were presented, with no modifications. This

also implies a desire, at the macro level, to control citizenship teaching at the micro level of the classroom and raises wider issues of the conceptualisation of teachers as technicians who simply implement a prescribed curriculum, as opposed to professionals who make value judgements.

The Materials

CD Roms and Readers were developed as additional materials for the *Discovering Democracy* package. These were produced and sent to schools during 1999 as a supplement to the Primary and Secondary Kits. Interview remarks from macro level respondents reveal that the main purpose for these items was to market the policy to teachers and students. The Commonwealth Minister stated during the interview that the Readers looked attractive and students would therefore find them interesting. The provision of information technology in the CD Rom was “designed to provide a lot of information in a very accessible form and in a way that students like to access.”

The CEG member stated in the interview that the Readers were designed to be uplifting and were “consciously planned to expose a wide range of Australian children to a quality of writing that they would not otherwise read.” It was also thought the Readers had been very well accepted by teachers because they were of such high quality. This member of the CEG did not see the CD Roms as being as important. The CD Roms were developed “to try and sell a product to a sophisticated and sceptical market, which is what teachers are, you have to pursue a policy of multiple accessibility.”

The extra materials were therefore developed with the ultimate users – teachers and students – in mind. They were created as eye-catching, alternative resources in order to ‘sell’ the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum.

Student Outcomes

The policy intention at the macro level was for students to achieve specific outcomes as a result of the *Discovering Democracy* programme. The use of benchmarking was foreshadowed in the 1997 launch of the programme, with a statement that student outcomes would be measurable. As part of the policy the Commonwealth Minister

stated “students will be surveyed each year to test their level of knowledge of the history and workings of Australia’s governments and democratic foundations” (Kemp 1997). The Minister was aiming to have performance measures developed to accurately gauge student progress as a result of the *Discovering Democracy* policy.

The interim Evaluation Report was inconclusive about the extent of student achievement in civics and citizenship education. It found that there was little evidence to show students had achieved specific learning outcomes, with anecdotal judgements being the only available method of measuring achievement. As a result, the development of indicators for assessment purposes was recommended. The level of engagement that students had with the content of the programme depended “largely on the vitality of the approach taken to its implementation” (1999: 46).

The Primary and Secondary Kits were produced at the Commonwealth level, and these contain detailed aims for students. The *Discovering Democracy* materials are to provide students with opportunities to achieve five outcomes. These are to gain knowledge of Australia’s democracy and government, understand decision-making in contemporary Australia, develop personal character traits, understand how Australian government works and finally to “understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and the opportunities for exercising them” (1998: 3). In addition, students are to learn “democratic values ... to reflect the cohesive and pluralistic nature of Australian society” (1998: 3).

When interviewed, the Minister specified that student outcomes should be a greater understanding of democratic government, the ability to use institutions effectively and skills and values needed to shape the future of Australia. The CEG member specified two similar outcomes for students during the interview. These were basic historical knowledge as well as “empathy with the system and the ability to use it.” Both respondents strongly believed that students were not connected with Australian history, and that the *Discovering Democracy* programme should engage them more fully with this aspect of citizenship education.

There was overall consistency between the policy intentions of the Minister and CEG member with those contained in the materials. All emphasise student outcomes in terms

of knowledge and democratic values. The actual method of measuring these outcomes was problematic however, with a clear method of measurement of students outcomes yet to be ascertained.

4.5 Summary

This chapter presented the findings at the macro level of the policy trajectory. Respondents were Commonwealth policy initiators involved in policy production. Three main themes were presented, and relevant sub-themes were explored. Revelations from these findings are that policy initiators exerted greater power over the content of the *Discovering Democracy* package, than over the professional development. Curriculum policy production was strongly influenced by the Commonwealth, while minimal influence was wielded over the curriculum practices of teachers. The Commonwealth Government sought to give strength to its citizenship education policy through the content and form of the curriculum package.

CHAPTER FIVE:

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINER PERSPECTIVES

5.1 Introduction

The focus of the intermediate level of the policy trajectory for *Discovering Democracy* is within individual States and Territories. Within individual States, professional development programmes were run using teachers as professional development trainers. The approach taken to professional development was unique in each State or Territory. Within the state of Western Australia, these professional development trainers were respondents in this study. In addition, a member of the WA professional development Coordinating Committee was a respondent at this level of the policy trajectory.

Respondents discussed their perspectives of the strengths and weaknesses of the training programme in terms of achieving the curriculum and professional development policy intentions. They were asked to reflect ‘up’ the trajectory on the intentions of macro level participants for the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy. They were also asked to reflect ‘down’ the trajectory on the effect of the *Discovering Democracy* policy on micro level participants in schools.

Given the larger number of respondents at the intermediate level, these have been referred to using identification codes: INT 1 to INT 13 when direct quotes are given to illustrate major themes. Documents analysed as part of the data set include the text of the Western Australian produced *Discovering Democracy Professional Development for Teachers Schools’ Resource File* (hereafter referred to as the *Schools’ Resource File*) and the text of the *Professional Development for Teachers Trainers’ Resource File* (hereafter referred to as the *Trainers’ Resource File*).

Intermediate level findings are discussed under the same themes identified in Chapter Four at the macro level. These are curriculum policy production, the professional development policy and curriculum policy practices. The analysis differs for each theme, due to the variation in the richness of data available. Sub-themes were identified

for each of these three main themes, and they are included below. As far as possible, the structure of this chapter parallels the structure of the Chapter Four macro level analysis to facilitate triangulation of data from different levels in the policy trajectory. The only addition is the use of tables to summarise the key issues that were identified by respondents because there were so many more respondents at this level. Although these tables refer to numbers of respondents in different categories, there is no intention to imply an emphasis on quantitative data, as these tables are used only as a tool to create a ‘picture’ of the issues which emerge. In addition, each respondent could provide more than one response to each issue, hence the total number of responses to each theme will vary.

5.2 Curriculum Policy Production

Intermediate level data around the theme of the production of curriculum policy are arranged into the following three sub-themes. These parallel those from the macro level, with the exception of ‘changing participants’, which is not relevant at this intermediate level.

- Policy intentions
- Curriculum content
- Trialing and consultation

These are discussed in detail in the subsequent sections.

Policy Intentions

The policy intentions from the Commonwealth level policy initiators are reiterated in intermediate level documentation. The *Schools’ Resource File* and *Trainers’ Resource File* contain details of the national policy, duplicating the policy outlined in macro level documentation. These *Resource Files* also contain details of State level policy. At the State level, curriculum policy on citizenship education was developed as part of the curriculum frameworks of individual States at the same time that *Discovering Democracy* was being developed at the Commonwealth level. While the development of Commonwealth and State curriculum policies were parallel events they were not designed to dovetail with each other. In Western Australia, citizenship learning

outcomes were developed as part of the *Curriculum Framework for Kindergarten to Year 12 Education in Western Australia* (1998). Each State and Territory in Australia has developed its own separate curriculum framework independently.

When interviewed, the WA State professional development Coordinating Committee member saw that tensions existed between the Commonwealth and State citizenship curriculum policies. This respondent expressed the view that macro level policy changes occurred with the change to a new Commonwealth Government in 1998 resulting in;

A shift from what we desired here in Western Australia, which was an active citizenship focus, to one that tended to be very historically based, and... about helping... better understand about the schools of citizenship in a fairly formal sense (INT 1).

This respondent believed there was no ‘formal’ Commonwealth Government policy about citizenship education, although a specific curriculum policy had been developed at the State level. To this respondent, the WA *Curriculum Framework* ‘active citizenship’ outcome clearly established a State level citizenship curriculum policy. However, the respondent pointed to the fact that the State policy was developed through *Curriculum Framework* focus groups, not through any government education department, and thus, this was policy development with a strong grass-roots focus, involving direct stakeholder consultation.

State curriculum policy was perceived by the Coordinating Committee member as allowing a much broader definition of citizenship education than that derived from the Commonwealth. This respondent believed that the “*Discovering Democracy* package is a narrower version of citizenship than what is in the active citizenship component of the [WA] *Curriculum Framework*” (INT 1).

The opinions of professional development trainers on the origins of the curriculum policy (Table 5.1) showed that respondents were aware of the Commonwealth Government’s leading role. The originators of the policy, as perceived by respondents, are summarised in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Origins of the curriculum policy

Policy originators identified	Number of responses
Commonwealth Government	10
CEG/Academic groups	8
Could not identify other groups	5
Writers	4
Other interest groups	2

When asked about the groups involved in the development of *Discovering Democracy*, a majority of respondents could identify the Commonwealth Government and the Civics Education Group as having predominant input. This awareness is typified in the response “The Minister... decided that the children throughout Australia didn’t understand enough of the political process... he got a group together... he decided to develop the *Discovering Democracy* materials” (INT 6). The CEG was perceived to be a distanced group of “researchers” (INT 7, 12) with little practical knowledge of teaching. It was described as a “group of academics” (INT 7, 12) and “professors on a panel” (INT 2), with only one trainer being able to give the actual name of the CEG.

Only two respondents could name other stakeholder groups that may have had input into the materials, reflecting a lack of awareness about the involvement of groups other than the Commonwealth and CEG, and the perceived power of these groups in setting policy directions. Stakeholder groups mentioned by name included the “Chamber of Commerce... Curriculum Council... WASCO... Parents and Friends Associations” (INT 7) as well as the “Social Studies Association” (INT 9).

Several respondents struggled to answer the question about other interest groups, and some expressed surprise with their inability to identify any other stakeholders. Comments such as “there was another group but I can’t think of them” (INT 6) typified the reaction of these respondents. Most respondents knew about the use of trial schools, mainly because they happened to have been involved personally.

Professional development trainers thus tended to be aware of the involvement of policy initiators in changing the curriculum policy, however they had little awareness of other interest groups. They were conscious of the strong involvement of the Commonwealth Minister and his likely influence on *Discovering Democracy* policy intentions.

Curriculum Content

Intermediate level respondents were asked for their perspectives on key issues reflected in the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum content. Their responses are summarised in Table 5.2 and explained below.

Table 5.2: Key issues in the curriculum content

Key issues reflected in curriculum content	Number of responses
Historical knowledge	11
Involved citizens in community	5
Government self interest/Promotion	4
Active citizenship	3
Identity/Culture	3

An overwhelming majority of 11 out of 13 respondents stated that the main issue dealt with by the materials was the development of student knowledge about Australian government history and procedures. Respondents cited examples such as the heavy emphasis the materials gave to facts and data. This perspective is typified by the comment by one respondent who believed the developers of *Discovering Democracy* believed “that students were coming out of schools with little or no knowledge of the history of our legal system or government” (INT 8).

Half the respondents stated the curriculum content included the aim of involving students more in their community. This involvement would include volunteer and local government work in the community to ensure that students knew “their place within that, and their place as citizens” (INT 2). One respondent suggested the purpose of this “is to get Australian students more actively involved in learning in a practical sense about what citizenship is” (INT 11).

Only three of 13 respondents specifically mentioned ‘active citizenship’, or students taking an active role in government, as being the primary aim in the curriculum content. For one of these respondents, active citizenship resulted from individuals and groups who are politically motivated and “getting involved in decision making... community action, direct active citizenship from the individual, to family, to community groups” (INT 9). The other two respondents saw active citizenship as existing when the students

were given knowledge about, for example, “the way to become actively involved” (INT 11) in their government.

Intermediate level respondents identified two other policy aims of the curriculum content. Four respondents suggested *Discovering Democracy* arose out of government self interest, and a wish to ensure that students were aware of what governments do. This perspective views the curriculum content as a governmental public relations exercise. As one respondent noted it was “probably also a PR exercise for the government to show that they actually do something, to promote themselves” (INT 10). Three respondents mentioned that there might have been a desire to encourage students to develop their identity and awareness of Australia’s multicultural background.

Professional development trainers thus strongly identified knowledge as the main emphasis of the curriculum, with community involvement, identity and active citizenship perceived as being of far less importance to the curriculum policy developers.

Trialing and Consultation

Ten of the 13 intermediate level respondents were directly involved in the trialing of *Discovering Democracy* materials, either in focus schools or in providing individual feedback. For many participants, feedback involved teaching many of the draft units, writing lengthy feedback notes and providing suggested alterations. This feedback was sent to the Curriculum Corporation, which produced the materials. Of the nine respondents who provided feedback to the Curriculum Corporation, a minority could identify places where their suggested changes appeared in the materials. A majority of respondents found their feedback was either not incorporated, or they could not identify if it had been included. Their responses are included in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Involvement in trialing and consultation

Involvement of trainer	Number of responses
Trialed but don't know if feedback used	4
Trialed and suggestions appeared	3
Not trialed	3
Trialed but suggestions didn't appear	2
No feedback received	1

Respondents were asked if any changes were needed to the consultation process. Importantly, respondents were critical of the process that was used for feedback on the draft materials, as indicated in Table 5.4 below.

Table 5.4: Changes to curriculum materials consultation

Changes suggested	Number of responses
Need more teacher input	5
Timeline	2
None	1

Half the respondents suggested changes were desirable for any similar process in the future. They suggested changes related to teacher input and the timeline for consultation. It was clearly emphasised by respondents that classroom teachers were not given enough opportunity to feed back concerns such as; the level of difficulty of the materials, the balance between historical and active citizenship content, and their appropriateness to different student groups.

Two respondents thought that the trialing and consultation process was rushed, and as expressed by one respondent “the timeline didn’t allow for full and considered feedback” (INT 9). Another respondent reflected doubts that their feedback was going to be listened to at all;

With the materials, I got them a bit late, I think it had been decided anyway. It would have been better had we been given consultation early in the piece, and the opportunity to trial more of the materials rather than just read through them and make comments (INT 12).

Overall, respondents wanted to feel more involved in the development of the *Discovering Democracy* materials, and they wanted to know their trial feedback was utilized. To these respondents, the key flaws of the trialing and consultation process were low teacher input and a difficult timeline.

5.3 Professional Development Policy

At the intermediate level, the richest data revolved around the theme of how the professional development policy associated with *Discovering Democracy* was put into practice. Findings are arranged into the three sub-themes which arose:

- Professional development intentions
- Professional development process
- Feedback and consultation

Perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses of the training process are unique to this intermediate level of the policy process so these sub-themes do not appear elsewhere.

Professional Development Intentions

Aims and intentions for the professional development policy were difficult to clarify using documents as sources. Intermediate level documents do not clearly state any aims for the professional development sessions. The *Trainers' Resource File* outlines the primary role of the professional development trainers in each district, which was to organise two network meetings for their 'cluster' of schools. The meetings were held for the professional development of teachers in the use of the *Discovering Democracy* package. These 'network meetings' were to be followed up with phone calls and school visits to "assist schools to implement the *Discovering Democracy* program" (1998b: 12).

The *Trainers' Resource File* discusses the basis for the model of professional development that was chosen in WA. This model was "based on research that identifies a number of key elements necessary for educational change" (1998b: 11). It can therefore be implied that the professional development was aimed at enabling change in education; however it is not clear from this document what is intended by the term 'educational change.' The document does explain how educational change should be achieved however, by outlining strategies such as in-service programmes providing "theory, demonstration, practice, feedback and application with coaching" (1998b: 11). It states that educational change would be supported through multiple in-service

activities, allowing teachers to relate their new learning to classroom experiences, and regular, on-going follow up or support services.

Respondents varied in their ability to identify aims for the professional development policy. The Coordinating Committee member was adamant when interviewed that the *Discovering Democracy* materials were ineffective by themselves without the support of substantial teacher professional development. The member believed that the professional development programme was essential to ensure teachers used the materials to their full potential, as it enabled sharing of innovative teaching strategies: “The materials themselves are just the starting point and they are what makes the learning. It is not about the package, it’s about how teachers make use of the package” (INT 1). This respondent’s views of the main aims for the professional development were that it was to allow participants to “see connections between *Discovering Democracy* materials and the... citizenship avenues that are in the *Curriculum Framework*” (INT 1), to allow networking between professional development trainers, and to give trainers some broad general skills in locally focused training.

The 12 intermediate level professional development trainers were asked their perspectives on the *Discovering Democracy* professional development policy origins and aims. Their views are summarised in Table 5.5 and elaborated below.

Table 5.5: Professional development policy aims

Policy aims identified	Number of responses
Encourage teacher use	5
Look at materials	2
Involve all schools	1
Don’t know	1

Professional development trainers found it difficult to identify specific aims of the professional development training. Five respondents thought that the aim of the professional development was very simply to encourage teachers to use *Discovering Democracy*, and ensure “the package didn’t just arrive in the school and get ignored because no one knew what to do” (INT 4).

Respondents did not feel that teachers were in any way incompetent, or needing training in citizenship education, and two strongly thought that the emphasis was on ensuring

teachers took time to become familiar with the materials. Some also were of the opinion that the involvement of teachers as professional development trainers was important for the professional development to have credibility at the ‘grassroots.’ This would attract teachers to the professional development programme because “providing PD by people actually at the chalk face is a good motivator for teachers to listen” (INT 2).

One respondent suggested that the main aim of the professional development was to ensure that all schools in the State were in some way encouraged to use *Discovering Democracy*. In particular, the aim of including schools in remote areas was mentioned as a priority.

Overall, respondents believed the aim of the professional development policy was to encourage teachers to look at the package. It was difficult for respondents to identify the professional development policy intentions of the *Discovering Democracy* policy initiators. This is interesting as those at the intermediate level were ultimately in charge of providing the professional development to other teachers.

Professional Development Process

The main focus of the professional development training was to prepare professional development trainers for ‘network meetings.’ These were held by trainers in each cluster, and classroom teachers from participating schools attended. A cluster was based on school districts, containing two professional development trainers for every 30 to 40 schools.

The *Trainers’ Resource File* contained a detailed outline of how network meetings could be presented to classroom teachers. It was provided to professional development trainers at their first professional development session. The file outlines adult learning principles, useful skills for presenting and facilitating a network meeting and a sample agenda for a network meeting. The agenda suggests professional development trainers first present the background, purpose and aims of *Discovering Democracy*. Overheads are provided for this purpose. The plan suggests professional development trainers go through the resource material and a unit of work from the resources. Then teachers discuss where the resources fit into their teaching programme and into the Society and

Environment learning area within the Western Australian *Curriculum Framework*. The final agenda item involves allocating teachers a task to achieve before they return for the second network meeting, where a less formal structure is recommended.

Teachers were required to attend a second network meeting. For this second session, the *Trainers' Resource File* suggests that participants discuss achievements resulting from using the materials, and that the materials be tied to the WA *Curriculum Framework* and outcome statements. The aim of the session is to “provide the opportunity to share between session activities and capitalise on the collective wisdom of the group... The trainer’s role will become far more facilitative in order to engage the participants” (1998b: 21).

When interviewed, the Coordinating Committee member stated the professional development training aimed to give the professional development trainers a good grounding in organising and presenting a network session, while also allowing individual flexibility. This flexibility was seen as paramount for two reasons. These were the large distances some professional development trainers had to travel in remote areas, and the perceived need to enable trainers to be responsive to their local environment. Trainers in remote areas would have had difficulties because of the travelling time required if they were not given flexibility to set their own agenda.

The professional development training was not intended to be entirely prescriptive, even though a detailed agenda and outline was provided in the *Trainers' Resource File*. The Coordinating Committee member’s aims were to enable professional development trainers to come “to a better understanding of the material, principles of adult learning and strategies to train other people, to facilitate other people’s understandings” (INT 1).

The *Trainers' Resource File* was quite prescriptive about the role of the trainer and it could be argued that little professional judgement was required on the part of professional development trainers. Thus, it is interesting and relevant to elicit from professional development trainers how they conducted their role in practice. The actual methods used by trainers to present to a network meeting varied somewhat from the suggestions in the *Trainers' Resource File*. Only three of the trainers stated that they provided the background and aims for the *Discovering Democracy* materials to the

teachers as part of the meeting. Respondents did not use an ‘up front’ lecture style of presentation. An overwhelming majority used both informal discussion and practical work to present both their network meetings. Informal discussion was used to share experiences and ideas for the use of the materials. Practical work ranged from modelling teaching styles, using group work, having the CD Roms available on computers for teachers to see to sharing examples from classroom teaching situations.

When the 12 professional development trainers were asked about the usefulness of the professional development training to their provision of network meetings, their responses were wide ranging. These responses are summarised in Table 5.6 and elaborated below.

Table 5.6: Usefulness of professional development training

Usefulness of professional development	Number of responses
Reinforces skills/No effect	6
Direct influence	5
Gave ideas and focus	4

One respondent stated that the training had no effect, and five said it just reinforced skills that they already had. This chance to consolidate skills was still valuable however, as these respondents generally gained other benefits such as networking and professional exchanges from the training sessions. For four respondents the training was useful as it gave them ideas and inspiration. They found the training valuable as it enabled them to focus on their aims for the network meetings. The training clarified the expectations and purpose for network sessions.

In contrast, five respondents found that the professional development training had a direct and authoritative influence on their delivery of the training sessions. These people gained benefits such as improved confidence in their abilities as a presenter and a structured agenda and resources for the network meetings. One respondent stated that the handouts, overheads and ideas were “very, very good”, as it gave a clear structure to what was required of professional development trainers (INT 2).

Overall, the perspectives of professional development trainers on their professional development training process were dependent on trainers’ pre-existing professional

skills and abilities. Respondents found meetings useful to varying degrees and had strong views on related strengths and weaknesses, as discussed next.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Professional development trainers were asked to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the professional development programme in relation to the perceived policy objectives. Strengths that were identified included networking, quality ideas, good examples and leadership and these are discussed below.

Every trainer interviewed stated that a strength of the programme was the establishment of a supportive network of fellow professional development trainers and the resultant sharing of skills that occurred during each professional development session. This was overwhelmingly the most positive result for all professional development trainers, and all were strongly appreciative.

Trainers were asked specifically if the networking between professional development trainers was on-going. Seven of the 12 replied that after the professional development training sessions, their networking was still very effective. This is best summed up in the comment that “the networking was excellent with my fellow facilitator. We worked really well together and for me that was one of the highlights” (INT 9). While trainer networking was a resounding success, three respondents specifically highlighted that networking between schools in their cluster did not increase. “Teachers from the same school networked very well, but between schools I think the networking was virtually nil” (INT 9). The perspective of these respondents was that teachers in schools did not have the time to make this a priority.

Five professional development trainers found the high quality of the professional development presenters and the content of the training programme to be a strength. Four professional development trainers found another strength to be the many ‘good practice’ examples and the step by step approach that was modelled to trainers. The other strength, mentioned by three respondents, was the professionalism and responsiveness of the professional development Co-ordinator and the Program Director.

Ten of 12 trainers identified weaknesses in the training programme and two stated there were none. The problems tended to be very specific to the individual respondent. Weaknesses that were identified included time, relevance, unfamiliarity and primary/secondary clashes and these are discussed below.

Four respondents found the professional development sessions were not practical enough. They listed difficulties such as needing more practical training advice and more time exploring the *Discovering Democracy* materials. This contrasts with the comments of other respondents, who found the practical ideas in both the sessions and the *Trainers' Resource File* to be very useful and of a high standard.

Two respondents found the initial professional development training sessions overwhelming for inexperienced professional development trainers, containing too much information. Contrasting with this, two other trainers mentioned not every part of the sessions was relevant. These two found some parts irrelevant for their needs, as they already had experience in giving professional development training. The views of all four respondents reflect the wide range of prior abilities catered for by the training.

Other weaknesses mentioned by respondents included clashes between the needs of primary and secondary professional development trainers, sessions being too lengthy and the long distance that some professional development trainers had to travel to Perth for the sessions.

Feedback and Consultation

The issue of consultation was different for the State level professional development trainers at the intermediate level than for the policy initiators operating at the Commonwealth (macro) level. No trialing of the professional development occurred at the intermediate level.

Respondents were asked about their opportunities to provide feedback about the professional development policy. They revealed that the WA Coordinating Committee gave professional development trainers the opportunity to feedback their opinions on the training sessions in two ways. The first involved the formal introduction of a

representative appointed from a local university to collate written and verbal feedback from professional development trainers. The second method of feedback was at an informal level where members of the Coordinating Committee and the person employed as the Program Director were available to receive verbal feedback. The feedback given and responses received are summarised in Table 5.7 and discussed below.

Table 5.7: Professional development feedback

Feedback given and response received	Number of responses
Provided written	10
Provided verbal	3
No formal personal feedback	10
Yes, individual feedback received	5
Yes, group feedback received	1

Ten of 12 professional development trainers provided formal written feedback. This was collated by the university consultant, who was to report back to the group of professional development trainers at a later training session. The consultant did not appear to have reported back. None of the trainers received a personal response from the consultant, and none could recall their feedback being acted upon in any way. Trainers were ambivalent about the usefulness of the consultant, who did not have a compelling impact on the group. One respondent noted that the university consultant just “floated” around the room, and had very little interaction with others (INT 8).

Some professional development trainers were critical of the way in which the written feedback was obtained, feeling they were rushed to fill out an evaluation form at the end of a session. Written feedback was perceived by these professional development trainers as less valuable than verbal feedback. One trainer in particular commented that it “was one of the major problems in the whole programme... the evaluation process... probably the best form I find, is just during the sessions we have in Perth, just speaking up and speaking your mind” (INT 10).

Professional development trainers generally reflected positively on the response to verbal feedback given by people other than the consultant. All trainers received immediate follow up when they gave informal verbal feedback to someone directly connected to the training programme. Half the trainers verbally gave feedback about the

professional development training to the Program Director or to members of the Coordinating Committee. All commented that their suggestions for change were responded to, or that they had noticed their feedback was listened to. One trainer noted that they did not just receive feedback from their suggestions, they also were given positive acknowledgement of their achievements in running networking sessions.

In spite of the problems that professional development trainers had with the formal consultation process, none were of the opinion that the consultation process for the professional development policy needed to change. When asked how the feedback and consultation process might need to be altered, respondents either stated no changes were needed, or they cited positive aspects of the professional development process that worked well. These responses are summarised in Table 5.8 and elaborated below.

Table 5.8: Professional development consultation

Changes needed and positive aspects	Number of responses
None	5
Support for trainers good	2
Coordinator good	2
Emphasise active citizenship	1
Written negative/Verbal positive	1

Five professional development trainers said no changes were required to the consultation process for the professional development. Two others said the support given to the professional development trainers by the Program Director and Coordinating Committee was very effective and one stated this negated the need for any formal feedback process. One other respondent also noted that the Program Director was the best person to give feedback to. The effectiveness of the Program Director seems to have resulted from his direct involvement in the professional development training, as well as his attendance at several of the network meetings, to offer on the spot advice and consultation.

Interestingly, nearly all the professional development trainers believed they had not had any influence on the training programme at all. When asked how they had influenced the *Discovering Democracy* professional development programme, an overwhelming majority of 11 of the 12 responded that they had no impact at all on the programme.

Overall, informal verbal feedback was valued and listened to, while formal consultation processes were less useful. Respondents did not feel they had influenced any stage of the professional development training policy. This is an unusual result, contrasting with the strong perspective from most respondents that they had given clear feedback on the programme.

5.4 Curriculum Policy Practices

Intermediate level findings around the theme of teachers and their classroom curriculum practices are arranged into the following three sub-themes. These sub-themes parallel those at the macro and micro level and are as follows:

- Teaching approach
- The materials
- Student outcomes

These are discussed in the subsequent sections.

Teaching Approach

Intermediate level documentation provided suggested approaches and classroom practices for teachers using the materials. The *Schools' Resource File*, which was developed at the State level, clearly indicated that while the construction of the units of work makes them appear prescriptive, teachers in an outcomes focused classroom should emphasise “negotiated learning tasks” and should “pick and choose material from the units that could enhance their... particular learning contexts” (1998a: 12). The *Schools' Resource File* then outlines a wide range of possible activities that could be undertaken in the teaching of each unit of work, for both primary and secondary units. Teachers are exhorted however, to be aware of the processes of learning over the prescriptive suggestions contained in the *Schools' Resource File*. They are advised;

Teachers may select the most interesting and useful sections in each unit which are appropriate for the school, their students, and their curriculum needs... Teachers will make their own judgements about the particular emphasis they will give... examples they choose and where the knowledge is placed (1998a: 28).

Respondents were asked how classroom teaching might have changed as a result of the professional development training and the *Discovering Democracy* package. They were initially asked to comment on how classroom teachers were implementing the *Discovering Democracy* materials in their teaching, and respondents discussed their observations of the teachers working in their cluster of schools. The key responses are summarised in Table 5.9 below.

Table 5.9: Teacher implementation

Teacher use of the curriculum materials	Number of responses
Parts of units	12
Entire units	4
Not using package	2

All 12 professional development trainers responded that teachers were selecting parts of units as required, and using the materials as an added resource to their teaching programme. Some professional development trainers were encouraging teachers to see the materials in this way at the training sessions. The Coordinating Committee member saw that this encouragement was paramount;

We needed to say to people that the materials themselves should only be the starting point, that they should provide the basis for helping teachers... but... strategies that teachers employed would be extra to strategies provided in the materials (INT 1).

One respondent explained that class teachers used the parts of the materials that supported their teaching of citizenship and implemented the *Discovering Democracy* programme “in bits and pieces” (INT 6). Another respondent viewed teachers as professionals who did not need entire teaching plans outlined for them;

Most of the teachers didn’t take a whole chunk and start at page one and go through it. Most of them are experienced teachers so they just can see something in, say, the reader and think ‘well they can do that’... They pick and choose is probably the best way of saying it (INT 10).

Four respondents added that in addition to choosing parts of units as required, some teachers in their cluster were teaching entire units as presented in the materials, and making no modifications or changes. Two respondents said the materials did not appear to have been implemented at all in several schools in their cluster.

While discussing the implementation of the programme, several respondents mentioned they had observed difficulties arising from the implementation of the materials. These problems appeared to develop either from difficulties within schools, or from problems with the distribution of the materials. These issues are summarised in Table 5.10 and discussed below.

Table 5.10: Difficulties implementing *Discovering Democracy* in schools

Difficulty identified	Number of responses
Inflexible programming	2
Time needed	2
Distribution of materials	2
Not aware package exists	1

Two respondents identified the difficulty within schools in their cluster as teachers being quite inflexible with their programming, and unwilling to consider altering their teaching. A respondent thought this was a particular problem for secondary teachers and that “secondary teachers are more resistant to change” (INT 2). Two other respondents found the time required to work through the materials and create a programme was a major deterrent for class teachers in their cluster schools. This resulted in an unenthusiastic response to the materials.

Two respondents believed the circulation of the materials to schools was done on a very *ad hoc* basis, for example the curriculum material, readers and CD Roms all arrived at different times. As a result some teachers were not even aware that the materials existed in their school, and one respondent identified this as a problem.

In spite of the difficulties identified, respondents generally considered that teachers implemented the materials by relying strongly on their own professional judgement. This is summed up by the statement;

The package... should have been more understanding of the professionalism of teachers. We’re not teachers, we’re educators. We’re facilitators and don’t own all the knowledge (INT 13).

Thus respondents at this level perceived the overall approach by teachers to be very individual, dependent on the specific circumstances of their school environment, and on the ideas generated at the professional development session.

The Materials

The Readers developed as part of the *Discovering Democracy* package were sent to schools during 1999 as a supplement to the Primary and Secondary Kits. The second edition of the *Schools’ Resource File*, produced at the State level, summarises the content of Readers as “a collection of factual and fictional, historical and contemporary texts dealing with civic and citizenship themes” (2000: 17). The Readers were designed to be rich in content and suitable for particular age groups. They aimed to be wide ranging, with short articles and varied reading levels that would “pose few difficulties for primary and secondary students” (2000: 17). Graphics were chosen to be high quality, colourful and varied. A wide range of sources was used.

Respondents were asked to comment on the usefulness of the Readers that were provided to schools. The key issues which arose are summarised in Table 5.11 and discussed below.

Table 5.11: Readers

Response to the Readers	Number of responses
Great resource	7
Colourful/ Eye-catching visuals	5
Too high reading level	4
Dry and unappealing	3
Not seen yet	1

Remarks from these respondents reveal a perspective that teachers and students accepted the Readers positively. Some respondents revealed they were surprised by this, and explained their expectations had altered when the first drafts of the Readers were revised to make them more eye-catching;

The initial thinking was that it was a dreadfully old fashioned kind of production... As they’ve been developed there has been a bit of a change. There’s a nice mix of forms of literature and visuals and a whole range of stimuli... We’re not unhappy with some of the material in them... They needed to be changed if they were to be interesting for kids to look at (INT 1).

Seven respondents stated that the Readers were an excellent resource, with an additional three respondents distinguishing them as being visually eye catching. One respondent exemplifies this response, finding the Readers “colourful... well set out” and with an “impressive range” of content (INT 7).

Two criticisms of the readers were offered. Four respondents thought the reading level of the secondary Readers was too high, and that these could not be used for a range of student abilities. It was believed that they were pitched incorrectly and were “too difficult for students with reading problems” (INT 2). The second criticism directly contrasted with the majority view that the Readers were a good resource. Two respondents found the Readers to be of no use. For example, one stated they were “quite dry” and “not appealing” (INT 5).

Overall, however, intermediate level respondents found the Readers to be useful, receiving positive feedback from teachers about the range of student outcomes that could be achieved using this resource.

Student Outcomes

The *Resource Files* were intermediate level documentation, produced at the State level and containing intended student outcomes. The *Schools' Resource File* contains both national (Commonwealth) and State specified aims for students to achieve. In a section about the national *Discovering Democracy* programme, this State-produced resource duplicates two of the five Commonwealth outcomes. These outcomes involve gaining knowledge of Australia's democracy and government, and gaining the skills and values needed to participate in civic life. It also mentions that “democratic values are supported in the project materials” by the national programme (1998a: 3). The national programme is not mentioned in the second edition of the *Schools' Resource File*.

In sections about the primary and secondary units, the *Schools' Resource File* explains the WA *Curriculum Framework* outcomes and the WA Society and Environment learning area statement. These student outcomes are more detailed and appear to be the main emphasis of the State-based professional development project group. A brief summary asserts that students are to develop five key outcomes. These involve students understanding civic ideas, respecting the democratic heritage, upholding common societal values, actively contributing as citizens and;

To empower students with knowledge, skills and values to become better thinkers and decision makers who are able to take action for the public good (1998a: 10).

Two different perspectives on student outcomes are thus presented within the one document. On close inspection the Commonwealth and State views on student outcomes are revealed as being dissimilar, however this may not be apparent to a teacher who might give this section of the document only a cursory glance.

At the intermediate level, professional development trainers had several perspectives on the outcomes that students should achieve as a result of the *Discovering Democracy* programme, and these are summarised in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12: Student outcomes

Outcomes identified	Number of responses
Knowledge	10
Community involvement	5
Different perspectives on issues	4
Appreciate other viewpoints	3
Rights and responsibilities	3
Active citizenship	2

In total, respondents outlined six possible outcomes that students could achieve as a result of the *Discovering Democracy* materials and professional development. These will each be discussed in turn.

A large majority of 10 of 12 respondents stated that students would gain knowledge about the working of Australia’s government from the programme. Most of these respondents believed that the materials did not encourage a more active type of citizenship. They thought that the information focused on knowledge to the exclusion of active citizenship and one respondent stated;

Because... there wasn’t a huge amount about getting involved... A few teachers have modified it a bit but that is more getting involved in Anzac Memorial Services and things like that, there wasn’t a huge amount of... student government and things like that in there to actually get them involved in the process in a practical way now (INT 5).

Five respondents mentioned community involvement as a student outcome. Understandings of this entailed connection with the local community ranging from the students generally “being involved” (INT 3) to participating “within the community in civics events” (INT 6).

Four respondents stated students should gain different perspectives on important issues. For one respondent this meant students were gaining an “appreciation of others’ struggles” (INT 2), and thus understanding the challenges faced by different groups in Australian society. For another respondent this would result in students forming their “own opinions” and thinking “laterally” (INT 8) while learning that these different perspectives are not to be feared.

A fourth outcome, mentioned by three respondents, was that students would vigorously question and appreciate other viewpoints. This view is stronger than students just gaining different perspectives on issues. It is exemplified in the statement by one respondent who hoped students “will be far more questioning” and that students would realise they have “a democratic right to their opinion” (INT 9).

Three respondents stated an outcome would be an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Australia. Achieving this would involve completing civics activities to enable understanding, which should result in “patriotism” (INT 12) toward Australia.

The final outcome for students that was mentioned is active citizenship. Two respondents thought this was a potential outcome of the materials and professional development programme. Examples of the active citizenship possibilities were detailed by one respondent as “run elections, write laws, speeches, contact politicians” (INT 7).

Most respondents were also asked if the type of outcomes achieved by students were dependent on the teacher as well as the material. Five respondents replied in the affirmative. “Like anything that is done in the classroom... it depends on the teacher a lot and basically how far the teacher will take it and run with it, and be flexible instead of putting the blinkers on” (INT 8). In addition the impact on students;

Depends on teacher enthusiasm ... it depends on their background knowledge, it depends on their preparedness to make changes and be different and their preparedness to work at something I guess, in order to make the changes, because they would have to do some reading and preparation that that is different to what they have done before (INT 12).

Two respondents mentioned one concern about student outcomes. In their opinion, citizenship education had a long term impact and the outcomes of the programme would not be seen for many years. It was therefore difficult for teachers to measure their progress.

The overall perspective of respondents was that the majority of students would gain knowledge related outcomes as a result of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy. Other outcomes were viewed as being less likely to occur, however there was a strong belief in the impact that the individual teacher could have on the types of outcomes achieved.

5.5 Summary

This chapter presented the findings at the intermediate level of the policy trajectory. Respondents were professional development trainers involved in policy process. Three themes were presented, and relevant sub-themes drawn out from these. In general, the professional development trainers had minimal comprehension of the influence of policy initiators. Professional development trainers were not involved to a significant extent in consultation for the curriculum content or the professional development policies. Trainers found the professional development process useful to varying degrees with its effectiveness dependent upon individual levels of experience. Their perspective of teachers in schools is of competing demands on their time, and a related impact on the use of *Discovering Democracy* materials.

CHAPTER SIX:

MICRO LEVEL - CLASSROOM TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings at the micro level of the policy trajectory. The perspectives of classroom teachers about the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy process are outlined and analysed. These teachers attended the professional development sessions (called 'network meetings') provided by intermediate level trainers. Teachers were asked to reflect 'up' the trajectory on the policy intentions of macro level policy initiators and the intermediate level professional development and curriculum policy. They were also asked to reflect on the impact *Discovering Democracy* professional development and curriculum policies may have had on the use of the package in schools. Data were collected through questionnaires due to the large number of respondents at this level of the policy trajectory. Alternatives in the multiple choice were generated from data collected at the macro and intermediate level of the policy trajectory. In addition to the multiple choice questions, opportunities were given for respondents to make open responses, resulting in a richer level of data from these written responses. The number of responses reported for multiple choice questions could range from 58-116 as, apart from one case, respondents could choose one or two replies to most questions. At this level, data collection used a different method and the sample size was much larger. The intent here was to obtain a sense of what was occurring at the micro level, so consistent with the different approach, data is reported in a different format. Findings are reported using numbers and percentages of total responses.

Respondents were from a range of schools, including government, non government, rural, metropolitan, primary, secondary and district high schools. A total of 58 completed questionnaires were analysed and were coded MIC 1 – MIC 58. There were no documents available at this level of the trajectory.

Micro level findings are discussed under the same themes identified in Chapters Four and Five. These are curriculum policy production, professional development policy and

curriculum policy practices. Sub-themes were identified for each of these three main themes, and they are included below. Tables are used to allow ease of identification of trends from the data. There is no intention to imply an emphasis on quantitative data, as these tables are only used as a tool to create a ‘picture’ of the emergent trends.

6.2 Curriculum Policy Production

The perspectives of micro level teachers around the theme of the production of curriculum policy were analysed using the sub-theme of policy intentions. The other sub-themes to emerge at the macro and intermediate levels were not relevant here at the micro level of the policy trajectory.

Policy Intentions

Respondents were asked for their perspectives on the main policy intentions of the *Discovering Democracy* package developers. The questionnaire offered six alternatives with the option of adding an open response. The number of responses and percentage of total responses is included in Table 6.1 and elaborated below.

Table 6.1: The main intention of *Discovering Democracy* package developers

Policy intentions	Number of responses	Percentage
Skills to participate in civic and community life	32	29
Knowledge of Australian government processes	27	25
An inquiring attitude to citizenship	17	16
Involvement of young people in political process	16	15
Understanding of civic history	12	11
Cultural awareness of different groups	5	4
Other	0	0

Two responses were most popular. A total of 29 per cent of respondents said skills required to participate in Australian civic and community life were the main intention of the package developers. A similar number, 25 per cent, identified knowledge of Australian government processes as the main intention of the developers.

A total of 16 per cent of respondents chose ‘an inquiring attitude to citizenship’ and 15 per cent believed that ‘involvement of young people in the political process’ was the intention of the policy developers.

Finally, 11 per cent of respondents identified an understanding of civic history as the intention. Only four per cent of respondents believed that cultural awareness of the citizenship expressed by different groups in Australia was one of the main intentions of policy developers. None of the micro level respondents identified any other options in the open responses.

It can be concluded that respondents at the micro level held a range of perspectives on the policy intentions of *Discovering Democracy* policy initiators. The main policy agendas identified were participation skills and knowledge of government.

6.3 Professional Development Policy

Micro level perspectives around the theme of the professional development policy are discussed under the sub-themes of professional development intentions and professional development process. These parallel those discussed at the macro and intermediate levels.

All the teachers surveyed should have attended at least two network meetings. They were asked to respond to two multiple choice style questions about these sessions, and were invited to give open feedback about any further issues to do with the network meetings.

Professional Development Intentions

Respondents were asked their perspectives on the aims of the network meetings. Four alternative responses were possible, with the option of adding an open response. The number of responses and percentage of total responses is included in Table 6.2 and discussed below.

Table 6.2: Aim of *Discovering Democracy* network meetings

Major aims identified	Number of responses	Percentage
Encourage teachers to use the materials	50	47
Provide on-going support in use of the materials	37	35
Focus on citizenship education	14	13
Inform about the citizenship outcome	4	4
Other	1	1

Almost half the respondents (47 per cent) believed the network meetings aimed to encourage teachers to use the materials. The second most popular response of 35 per cent identified the provision of on-going support in the development and use of the materials as the major aim of the professional development.

The three other possible viewpoints were not as strongly held. A total of 13 per cent of respondents thought a focus on citizenship education was the aim, four per cent believed it was to inform about the citizenship outcome and one respondent identified an ‘other’ option in the open response. This respondent believed the sessions were aimed at “letting teachers know the resources existed” (MIC 30).

Teacher respondents were asked to consider the main outcomes they believed were achieved from the network meetings. The questionnaire offered six alternatives, with a seventh option of adding an open viewpoint. These responses are summarised in Table 6.3 and elaborated below.

Table 6.3: Outcomes achieved from *Discovering Democracy* network meetings

Main outcomes achieved	Number of responses	Percentage
Knowledge about the materials	42	41
Feedback/ideas about implementing the materials	22	21
An opportunity to evaluate the materials	18	17
Skills to train teachers in the use of the package	9	9
Networking across schools in my region	6	6
Professional support from the trainer	4	4
Other	2	2

Respondents identified knowledge about the materials as one of the main outcomes they achieved from the professional development, with 41 per cent acknowledging this outcome.

Two outcomes were each identified by 17 per cent of respondents. Feedback and implementation ideas were an outcome for 21 per cent of respondents, while 19 per cent achieved an opportunity to evaluate the materials.

Only nine per cent of respondents believed they gained skills to train other teachers in their schools to use the materials, and six per cent found that networking across schools was a result of the professional development sessions. In addition, the small number of four per cent of respondents believed they received professional support from the trainer.

Two respondents acknowledged ‘other’ outcomes, and their feedback was atypical. One stated the main outcome they achieved was “developing links for students... to identify the effects of political power” (MIC 6). The other believed they had achieved “nothing: I thought it was more aimed at primary teachers” (MIC 36).

Respondents were asked why they became involved in the professional development, and invited to give open feedback. Respondents generally took the opportunity to raise issues about the professionalism of teachers and their involvement in the entire policy process. Alternative answers to this question were not given to respondents on the questionnaire, and eight themes have been identified from the responses. These themes, and the number of responses, have been summarised in Table 6.4, to enable identification of trends arising from the data.

Table 6.4: Why teachers became involved in the professional development

Reasons for becoming involved	Number of responses
Resource gathering	20
Interest in citizenship or Society and Environment/Part of role	19
Develop own skills/knowledge	11
Develop student skills/values	9
Financial incentive	3
WA Curriculum Framework support	1
Networking between teachers	1
Did not attend	2

A total of 20 respondents became involved in the professional development to learn how to use effectively the materials and add to their resource base. For two respondents the sessions provided “an opportunity to obtain more resources and teaching strategies”

(MIC 22), or a chance to simply “find out more about the package” (MIC 41). This alternative shows a majority of respondents wanting to gain an understanding of the usefulness of the materials and gather resources.

An almost equal number of respondents were motivated by their personal interest or career involvement in either citizenship or Society and Environment education. A total of 19 respondents identified this aim. Respondents were, for example, “interested in government” education (MIC 6) or had to participate as part of their role. There was a range of role participation as shown by two respondents, one who was a “Society and Environment school leader” (MIC 54) and another who was almost coerced into going because “no-one else volunteered” (MIC 16).

11 respondents were concerned about developing their own skills and knowledge in the area of citizenship education. These perspectives are typified by one respondent who “wanted ideas on how to do it” (MIC 13). Nine respondents noted the development of student skills and values as a priority. One respondent stated that this type of programme was “lacking in our schools” (MIC 40) and another that “students were leaving primary school with no knowledge of government process” (MIC 33).

Three respondents became involved because of the “financial incentive” that was offered (MIC 14). This incentive was paid to schools enrolled in the professional development programme and that sent teachers to at least one of the sessions. Other replies included one respondent who wanted curriculum framework support and another who wanted to network with other teachers. Two respondents stated they had not attended the professional development at all.

Overall, respondents were generally self motivated and interested in attending the *Discovering Democracy* professional development with intentions to further their resourcing or their skill levels to teach citizenship. In contrast, they perceived the aim of the network meetings to be to encourage them to consider the package. In addition, the main outcome achieved was knowledge, rather than skills, support or ideas.

Professional Development Process

Respondents were asked to give their perspectives of further issues about the professional development process and invited to give an open response. A total of 30 respondents took the opportunity to provide further feedback on general issues. Responses directly related to the professional development process are discussed below. Alternatives were not given to respondents on the questionnaire, and seven themes have been identified from the responses pertaining to professional development. These themes and the number of responses have been summarised in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Further issues and feedback about the professional development

Issues identified	Number of responses
Well run and useful	11
Lack of time	6
Out of hours/Travel/Couldn't access	4
Not relevant	4
Networking useful	2
Not enough schools involved/Networking ineffective	2
No on-going support from trainer	1

Feedback from 11 respondents was that the professional development was effective, well run and useful. One respondent found it to be “informative, interesting and well presented” (MIC 47).

Criticism of the professional development was wide ranging however, with six respondents identifying a lack of time or a need for more time as a failing of the sessions. One stated that “the sessions were too rushed and I didn’t benefit” (MIC 50). Another problem was access to, and the timing of, the network meetings. Four respondents found that having professional development in the late afternoon was ineffective or that the hours of travelling to the venue made the meeting worthless. One respondent was from a remote school and for this individual it was “hardly worthwhile travelling up to 150 kilometres for a two (hour) session which starts at 4pm” (MIC 21). Further negative feedback came from four respondents who found the professional development irrelevant. One stated the sessions contained “what I would have known from reading the teacher’s guide” (MIC 46).

One point of positive feedback was received from two respondents who stated the networking that occurred between teachers at the network meetings was useful. In

contrast to this, two other respondents believed that there was not enough schools involved in the sessions or that the networking between teachers was ineffective. For one of these respondents, the networking problem was related to their location as they found the “distance in rural areas makes networking across schools difficult, so PD was primarily information sharing” (MIC 11).

The final item of feedback came from one respondent who did not receive a satisfactory level of on-going support from the trainer who led their network meetings. This individual stated that after attending one of the meetings they found the “professional development has been negligible” (MIC 55).

Respondents at the micro level thus gave positive feedback on the professional development policy process by reflecting ‘up’ the policy trajectory to the intermediate level. Several difficulties with the professional development process became evident however, showing the reflective and analytical perspectives held by teachers.

6.4 Curriculum Policy Practices

At the micro level, the richest data revolved around the theme of teachers and their classroom practices. The findings are arranged into the three sub-themes which arose. These sub-themes parallel those in reporting data at the intermediate and macro level and are:

- Teaching approach
- The materials
- Student outcomes

These are discussed in the subsequent sections.

Teaching Approach

Micro level teacher respondents commented on the effect of the professional development programme on their use of the materials, and the effect it had on classroom practices of other teachers. They were also provided with the opportunity to give open feedback.

Respondents were initially asked how the professional development programme affected their use of the materials. Five alternative responses were possible, with the option of adding an open response. The number of responses and percentage of total responses is included in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6: Effect of the professional development on use of the materials

How professional development influenced practice	Number of responses	Percentage
Parts of multiple units and year levels used	23	35
Adapted/changed materials from different units	22	33
Used relevant parts from only one unit	12	18
Professional development made no difference	5	8
Whole units used	2	3
Other	2	3

The most popular approach to using the materials was to utilize parts of several units and this was identified by 35 per cent of respondents. The parts used were taken from materials provided for different year levels, resulting in a wide range of ‘picking and choosing’ of relevant parts by respondents. These respondents did not make alterations to the units and did not use units in their entirety. A further 33 per cent of respondents adapted and made changes across several units. A smaller number, 18 per cent, chose the relevant parts from only one unit, probably to supplement their teaching.

For eight per cent of respondents, the professional development sessions made no difference to their teaching and made no impact on their use of the materials. Only three per cent of respondents used whole units without alteration. Two respondents identified another option in the open response. Both acknowledged they gained an awareness of what was available in the package. One of these respondents found the professional development programme “gave insight (into) what was available” (MIC 14).

Respondents were asked how the professional development programme affected the use of the materials by *other* teachers. Six alternative responses were possible, with the option of adding an open response. The number of responses and percentage of total responses is included in Table 6.7.

Table 6.7: Effect of the professional development on use of the materials by other teachers

How professional development influenced practice	Number of responses	Percentage
Parts of multiple units and year levels used	20	30
Adapted/changed materials from different units	16	24
Used relevant parts from only one unit	9	14
I don't know	7	11
Professional development made no difference	6	9
Whole units used	1	1
Other	7	11

The three most popular responses mirror those given by respondents for the previous section. The approach identified by 30 per cent of respondents was that teachers were using parts of multiple units, across different year levels. A further 24 per cent believed that teachers were adapting and changing the materials from several units. A total of 14 per cent thought that teachers were picking out the relevant parts from only one unit of the materials.

It is interesting to note 11 per cent of respondents did not know how teachers were affected by the professional development. In addition, nine per cent believed the professional development sessions made no difference to the use of the package by other teachers. Only one per cent of respondents believed teachers were using the package as whole units.

Seven respondents identified 'other' effects of the professional development. Four stated no other teachers in their school were using the package. For some, this was because they were the only teacher in a remote school. These respondents were unable to affect the use of the package by other teachers. Two respondents stated the sessions had increased awareness about citizenship education in their school. One respondent had not been given time to share the results of the professional development with staff.

Overall, teachers approached the use of the curriculum package in varying ways. In general, parts of units were used as needed and the *Discovering Democracy* package was adapted to teacher needs as required.

Respondents were asked to give perspectives on any further issues about the ‘implementation’ of the curriculum policy at the school level. They were invited to give an open response and 30 respondents took the opportunity to provide further feedback. Responses directly related to the school level processes are discussed below. Alternatives were not given to respondents on the questionnaire, and nine themes have been identified from responses pertaining to school practices. These themes and the number of responses have been summarised in Table 6.8.

Table 6.8: Further issues about the curriculum policy at the school level

Issue identified	Number of responses
Lack of school awareness or support	10
Competition from other priorities	7
Supports current teaching or WA Curriculum Framework	5
Lack of time to implement	3
Difficult to use package	3
Implementation went well	2
Citizenship now a school priority	2
Teachers empowered	1
Poor distribution of materials to schools	1

The issue identified by most respondents was a lack of awareness about the package or a lack of support from their school, and ten respondents mentioned this. Lack of support included disinterest from other teachers, difficulties with school administration, and not being given a chance to introduce the package to staff. One respondent had “very little opportunity to in-service the rest of staff on a formal basis at school” (MIC 21). Another respondent could not find the package and after searching discovered;

No one at the school particularly cared - it was just more stuff to find a place for... the resources were stored somewhere out of the way (MIC 30).

Seven respondents identified another negative issue relating to the implementation of the materials in the school context. These respondents found that in daily school life, there were many competing priorities and so it was difficult to promote the package. One respondent stated that for their staff, the *Discovering Democracy* materials were “yet another box of things to try and incorporate into the classroom” (MIC 34). For another, there were many other changes occurring in their school and it was “unfortunate that it came at such a huge time of change – people’s heads are very full of many issues” (MIC 45).

Three respondents identified a lack of time as a problem. Difficulties existed for example, because “teachers do not have time to familiarise themselves with more text materials” (MIC 24). In addition, the implementation of the curriculum policy was seen by one respondent as “very time consuming... many teachers are not interested in implementing it due to this factor” (MIC 41). A further three respondents found the package difficult for teachers to use. These problems included needing to change the level of materials presentation “to a more acceptable age level” (MIC 39), and finding “some task outcomes hard to follow” (MIC 43).

The final point of negative feedback came from one respondent who noted the difficulties that arose from the separate delivery of the Readers to schools. This respondent indicated;

The Readers were received in the last week of Term Four... and put away with little thought at a time when everyone is in cleaning mode – bad time to be sending out materials (MIC 30).

Positive feedback about the implementation of the curriculum policy resulted from five respondents who stated that the package supported current teaching in their school. One “used the *Discovering Democracy* materials to support existing curriculum, in line with the *Curriculum Framework*” (MIC 23). Two respondents commented positively that the implementation of the curriculum policy at the school level progressed well, and a further two noted that citizenship had become a priority for the following school year. The final positive comment from one respondent was the main benefit from the curriculum policy implementation was “that the classroom teacher was empowered in its implementation and the supporting materials made this all so much more manageable” (MIC 33).

Overall, the concerns held by micro-level teachers reveal that competing demands made the policy practice of *Discovering Democracy* difficult at the school level. The curriculum package was not likely to easily gain precedence over other priorities.

The Materials

Respondents were invited to give their opinion of the Readers, which were new curriculum materials when the questionnaire was conducted. Open feedback was requested. Of the replies, 28 respondents either did not reply, stated they had not used the Readers, or stated they were not aware that the Readers existed. One particularly noted that it was “too late to use them... when they arrived” (MIC 40).

Another 28 respondents replied very positively about the Readers. In particular, the attractive presentation and usefulness of this resource was commented on. This is exemplified in one comment that the Readers were “a valuable, well set out and thought out resource” (MIC 45). The Readers were beneficial in other teaching areas, respondents finding them “great for cross curricula work” (MIC 29) and useful “as part of an integrated curriculum” (MIC 49). Seven respondents believed that students enjoyed the Readers. It was noted that they “provide flexibility and greater interest from the students” (MIC 44). Another respondent replied that the “students generally find them thought provoking” (MIC 12).

The only negative feedback received about the Readers came from two respondents who mentioned they found the reading level to be quite high. These respondents appear to have utilised and understood the Readers in detail, and one commented the reading level “may be a little too challenging for middle years” (MIC 11).

Overall, micro level teachers found the Readers to be a relevant and useful resource. They freely adapted them for use in other subject areas, and found the student response to be positive.

Student Outcomes

Respondents were asked to comment on the main outcomes they observed students achieving. Six alternative responses were possible, with the option of adding an open response. The number of responses and percentage of total responses is included in Table 6.9.

Table 6.9: The main outcome/s achieved by students using the materials

Outcome achieved	Number of responses	Percentage
Knowledge of Australian government processes	28	30
Understanding of civic history	20	22
Skills to participate in civic and community life	17	18
An inquiring attitude to citizenship	12	13
Involvement of young people in political process	11	12
Cultural awareness of different groups	2	2
Other	3	3

With 30 per cent of responses, the main student outcome observed at the micro level was knowledge of Australian government processes. Another 20 per cent of respondents identified another knowledge based outcome, understanding civic history, as a major outcome. The skills required to participate in Australian civic and community life were recognised as an outcome by 18 per cent of respondents.

Outcomes involving a more active approach to citizenship were less frequent responses. An inquiring attitude to citizenship was noticed by 13 per cent of respondents, and the involvement of young people in the political process by 12 per cent. Only two per cent of respondents observed students achieving a cultural awareness of the citizenship expressed by different groups in Australia.

Three respondents identified an ‘other’ outcome for students. One acknowledged that their students were now thinking of themselves as Australian citizens and being aware of their rights and responsibilities. Another found students had gained a crucial awareness of “the effects of democratic struggles on changing living standards” (MIC 6). The other simply noted they did not know of any student outcomes.

Opinions on student outcomes were more evenly spread at this level, however knowledge of government and understanding of history again took priority. The possible outcomes of an inquiring attitude and involvement in the political process which reflect a more ‘active’ citizenship were perceived as less likely to have been achieved.

6.5 Summary

This chapter presented the findings at the micro level of the policy trajectory. Respondents were teachers involved in policy practice. Three themes were presented, and the relevant sub-themes drawn out from these. Teachers did not have a strong understanding of the intentions of policy initiators. Teachers became involved in professional development sessions to improve their resources and professional skills. They were self motivated to participate and gave perceptive insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the professional development policy. To these teachers citizenship education involved a variety of approaches while negotiating competing demands at the school level. In negotiating these demands, it was believed that student achievement was less than expected with historical knowledge the main outcome.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

This chapter conducts a triangulation of perspectives along the whole policy trajectory for *Discovering Democracy* from macro to intermediate to micro levels. The similarities and differences in perspectives that arose across the trajectory will be analysed before the discussion returns to the specific and general research questions. A final discussion of the ‘big picture’ issues that have emerged has been developed to provide a meta-level of analysis. Finally, the implications of the study for practice, theory and future research are outlined.

7.1 Triangulating Perspectives Along the Policy Trajectory

Triangulation across macro, intermediate and micro levels of the policy trajectory for *Discovering Democracy* included comparing and contrasting the perspectives of policy initiators at the Commonwealth level, then professional development trainers and the teachers at the State level in Western Australia (as reported separately in Chapters Four, Five and Six respectively). Some themes have emerged consistently across all levels of the trajectory, whereas other themes are unique to a particular locus in the trajectory. The overarching research question was continually kept in mind as analysis progressed. The specific research questions are responded to, and the triangulation of perspectives is discussed, under the themes that emerged as subcategories of *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy in Chapters Four, Five and Six. These are:

- Curriculum policy production;
- Professional development policy;
- Curriculum policy practices.

Similarities and differences in perspectives that arose across each level, and within levels, from respondents on the policy trajectory will be analysed.

Curriculum Policy Production

Policy initiators ostensibly produced the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum resource package with clear aims in mind; however, interactions along the trajectory reveal how professional development trainers and teachers continued to reconstruct the curriculum.

Commonwealth level policy initiators and State level professional development trainers noted that under the influence of Minister Kemp (Coalition) a more conservative group than originally appointed under the previous (Labor) minister produced the key framework of the curriculum policy. This resulted in the curriculum package coming from an historical knowledge-based perspective rather than a more active participation perspective. However, after *Discovering Democracy* was developed and distributed, members of the Civics Education Group (CEG) started to see the wider possibilities for the package. These policy initiators began to see the value of ‘active citizenship’ policy, through examples set by class teachers and trial groups. Teachers were in fact able to project their influence back up the policy trajectory to the initiators, and to affect their attitudes toward citizenship policy. This difference between the policy intention of how the package would be used, and the reality of how it was used reflected the inability of policy initiators to completely control policy practices at the classroom level. Teachers were analytical and thoughtful in their interpretation of the package. Wider questions about the status of teachers as ‘professionals’ capable of making their own discretionary judgements, and the amount of guidance they require in the application of citizenship education policy, arise here.

There was a consistent view across each level of the trajectory of the intentions of policy initiators in developing the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy. The macro level policy initiators held a controlling influence; notwithstanding the influence of teachers at the micro level. In particular, the Commonwealth Minister was omnipresent in the development of the curriculum policy and package. The Minister drove the composition of the CEG and the changes in policy intention. Members of the CEG were well aware that he would read every page of the work, and that he was keeping a close interest and close watch on the curriculum policy process. This reflects the ‘ministerialisation’ (Dudley and Vidovich 1995), of the policy process, or change in balance of power from education ‘experts’ to politicians (ministers in particular) in proactively determining the

content of education policies. However, the increased power of the Commonwealth Minister was not complete as tensions, and even power struggles, were evident in the policy process.

Tensions exist between the production of Commonwealth and State citizenship curriculum policies. In contrast to the narrow version of citizenship provided in the Commonwealth's *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy, the Western Australian State *Curriculum Framework* reflects a wider view of citizenship. Commonwealth policy initiators, during interview, pointed to the Commonwealth's unusual level of involvement in this particular curriculum policy development which was traditionally the State arena. The power play was reflected by the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy being 'imposed' on the States, through tied funding. Conflict between the two levels of government thus developed because the State professional development coordinators wanted to utilise their broader definition of citizenship, where teachers and students are change agents and not passive consumers.

State professional development trainers did not have 'ownership' over the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy as it was presented to them as a *fait accompli*. However, despite macro intentions, these trainers were determined to impress their own agenda onto teachers. The professional development trainers wanted teachers to use their discretion in choosing relevant materials and to not merely transmit knowledge but rather, encourage critique of government.

Policy initiators skewed the content of *Discovering Democracy* toward historical knowledge-based activities. To professional development trainers the content over-emphasised knowledge about Australia's government and its history, and provided 'publicity' for the Australian government. Micro-level teachers had a broader perception of the intentions of the policy developers. For them the *Discovering Democracy* content gave knowledge of government and participation skills equal importance. Classroom practitioners saw historical understandings as one of the least important policy intentions. These differences between perceptions at macro, intermediate and micro levels of the policy trajectory are possibly explained by the 'distance' between them – both in terms of power and in terms of geographic distance between Canberra (macro) and Western Australia (intermediate and micro). Even

within WA, tight control over policy implementation is rendered more problematic with dispersion of schools across geographic distance in both government and non-government sectors.

On the surface, trials and consultation for the development of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum package appeared to be wide-ranging and consultative of various groups. The reality is that developers of the package did not give feedback a serious amount of attention. While the Commonwealth Minister could list many interest groups that were involved, interviews and questionnaires further down the policy trajectory revealed that respondents were less able to name particular groups involved. Even those involved in trials had difficulty naming interest groups. Further, policy initiators freely rejected units they felt were substandard and selectively listened to interest groups. This was noticed by trial participants who commented that their feedback did not appear in the final package, that they were not given a response to their feedback and that the time frame was too short for considered feedback. The consequence is that even though there were trials and feedback, in reality the development of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum package took a 'top down' approach. However, despite this, it is doubtful that policy initiators at the macro level achieved what they expected when the policy process was initiated. Some of the reasons for this became apparent as the 'worlds' of the lower level of the trajectory impinged on enactment of the policy.

Trainers and teachers overall modified the curriculum policy aims held by policy initiators. While it was difficult to have their feedback heard, they were still able to lessen the controlling influence of the Minister by actively interpreting the policy at the intermediate and micro levels of the policy trajectory.

Professional Development Policy

The creation of new curriculum on citizenship education was clearly a priority for Commonwealth policy initiators; however they had no interest in, or sphere of action for, directly influencing the professional development of teachers who would teach this new curriculum. Professional development was left to the States and Territories. Aims for the *Discovering Democracy* professional development policy were unclear at the Commonwealth level. These aims were much more difficult to discern than aims for the

curriculum policy, reflecting a major difference between the Commonwealth and State. It was assumed by policy initiators that the curriculum intent would be faithfully translated to the classroom. This attitude was noted across both other levels. Professional development was thus just a vehicle to encourage teachers to adopt the curriculum packages because 'implementation' was not compulsory. Arguably, this reflects a lack of understanding about teaching and lack of respect for teachers as professionals who make their own discretionary judgements.

The intentions of policy initiators for the curriculum to have an historical, knowledge-based focus were subverted to a certain extent by the professional development trainers who focused on professional development for 'active citizenship.' Trainers and the Coordinating Committee in WA saw the professional development as being of much more importance than the policy initiators did, although they took on board the need to 'sell' the package to teachers and achieved this by emphasising the WA *Curriculum Framework* relationships as part of the professional development sessions. They also perceived it as an opportunity to make up for what they perceived as the inadequacies or shortcomings of the curriculum package. Tensions arise here in bringing together the differing curriculum intentions with the realities of curriculum practice.

The usefulness of professional development to trainers varied, reflecting the wide range of prior skills and abilities they brought to the training sessions. Policy initiators saw it as important to recognise these prior abilities. Trainers concurred, identifying useful professional development as networking, skills sharing and supportive peer relationships. The treatment of trainers as experienced professionals did not extend to using their input however, as the professional development trainers did not feel they had any influence on the professional development policy or as having power to change how their training programme was run. While they gave feedback on their professional development training, they did not expect it would make a difference, and there is little evidence it impacted on the macro level.

Professional development trainers used alternative methods to present network meetings. In general, they were informal, providing for the sharing of experiences and ideas. Trainers and teachers held contrasting perceptions of the usefulness of these network meetings. For professional development trainers, they were a valuable

opportunity to make the curriculum package available, to network and to develop strategies. Teachers tended to find the meetings less useful. While most were happy with the results, several criticisms related to relevance and usefulness did arise. Teachers found the meetings mainly encouraged them to look at the curriculum package and consider using it. Thus despite the trainers' intentions of emphasising a pedagogy of 'active participation' and teacher choice, the reality was that teachers were mainly exposed to the package and given the opportunity to discuss the content.

Different perspectives were held about the reasons for teachers choosing to be involved in the network meetings. Policy initiators saw professional development trainers as dedicated professionals, which they considered important because they would have to influence teachers and motivate them to be involved. However, policy initiators did not consider classroom teachers to be as motivated. Similar opinions were also held by trainers. However, the teachers' main reasons for involvement in meetings were to gain resources and personal development in an area of interest. This raises questions about the majority assumption that professional development was 'just to get people to use the package' and also raises wider questions about the purpose and intention of professional development. Teachers' reflections on the professional development process were strongly critical, with several suggestions for change. Their comments revealed a depth of understanding about the purpose and usefulness of professional development, and pointed to a lack of understanding on the part of professional development providers.

Overall, policy initiators and trainers fed their aims for the professional development 'down' the policy trajectory. Little regard was given to feedback about professional development returning 'up' the trajectory from teachers (micro level) to trainers (intermediate level) and policy initiators (macro level). This arguably ignores one of the key resources in curriculum policy 'implementation,' which is teachers. Arguably, tailoring the professional development of teachers to teacher needs is a preferable 'implementation' strategy.

Curriculum Policy Practices

Contrasting perceptions existed of the way in which the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy was practised at the school level. Classroom teachers did not tend to use the teaching approach prescribed at other levels of the trajectory.

The teaching approach to be used was prescribed at the macro level. Policy initiators had clear expectations that teachers should use the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum package as it was presented. This implies a wish by the policy initiators to control teaching at the micro level of the classroom. This reveals tension between the diametrically opposed constructs of teachers as technicians implementing a prescribed curriculum rather than teachers as critical professionals. This study has provided growing evidence of the need to attend to the take up rate of curriculum materials by teachers in schools and to consider issues of teacher unfamiliarity, competition and cost (Marsh 1983).

There was clear conflict over conceptualisation of teachers between the macro and intermediate levels. Policy initiators were very prescriptive; however the WA Coordinating Committee and professional development trainers wanted teachers to make their own judgements about classroom practices and the use of appropriate parts of the curriculum package. Teachers confirmed that they generally made their own professional judgements about the use of the curriculum package. A majority used relevant parts and discarded units that did not meet their requirements. The approach by teachers was very individual and dependent on the specific circumstances of their school environment, demonstrating to policy initiators the difficulties of attempting to impose specific policy intentions on teachers in schools.

One expectation at the macro level that was not met at the micro level was the importance that the *Discovering Democracy* package should have had for citizenship teaching and learning. Trainers were strongly aware of this tension. The package did not have the priority that policy initiators expected it should have. Teachers had many competing demands and *Discovering Democracy* was just one. They had to be personally interested to take notice.

Both policy initiators and trainers wanted to 'sell' the curriculum package and the network meetings. The Readers and CD Rom met the policy initiators' purpose of 'selling' the package to teachers and students. Readers and the CD Rom were marketed as an interesting alternative, and were received positively. The network meetings were 'sold' by professional development trainers by relating them explicitly to a mandatory competing demand on teachers' time in the form of the new WA *Curriculum Framework*. Although this marketing device was not as effective, a minority of teachers did believe this was one factor that attracted them to the professional development.

The outcomes for students from *Discovering Democracy* were difficult to measure and thus the effectiveness in terms of student outcomes is contestable. Overall perceptions at all levels support the knowledge, civic history and democratic values outcomes. These are the outcomes intended by the Commonwealth. In spite of attempts at the State level to widen outcomes to include active participation and critical analysis of government, this outcome was perceived by teachers as less likely to have been achieved. Interestingly, a majority of trainers and teachers identified participation and active involvement as policy aims, however the main student outcomes they identified centred around historical knowledge.

Overall, teachers modified the curriculum resource package as required. There were clear misunderstandings by policy initiators and trainers about the role and professionalism of teachers, leading to an expectation that teachers be treated more like technicians.

This section has discussed all levels of the policy trajectory for *Discovering Democracy* and triangulated the perspectives of policy initiators at the Commonwealth level with professional development trainers and teachers at the State level in Western Australia. Within this discussion the specific research questions, outlined at the commencement of this research, have been responded to. The meta-level themes which have emerged consistently across all levels of the trajectory will now be discussed in relation to the general research question.

7.2 A Return to the General Research Question

The general research question was: How have the origins and intentions of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy at the macro level been perceived and practised at the intermediate and micro levels of the policy process?

The findings of this research have reinforced the contested and changing nature of key concepts associated with the general research question. It has been demonstrated that ‘policy’ is a process, with complex interactions that inform resultant policy practice. The value-laden nature of written policy text, actions and inactions at all levels of the trajectory influenced the final practicing of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy. The term ‘citizenship’ held multiple meanings; these range from formal knowledge about processes of government to active, analytical involvement in Australian democracy. The term ‘democracy’ itself held multiple interpretations and tended to be defined in relation to citizenship.

The curriculum policy process associated with *Discovering Democracy* was essentially directed by macro level policy initiators. This control was experienced at all levels. The group of policy initiators was not representative of all stakeholders, and their agenda had priority in the development of the curriculum package. Trainers and teachers perceived the main directives of this group to be firstly a focus on historical knowledge over active citizenship, and secondly to utilise the *Discovering Democracy* package to transmit knowledge as presented, with no modifications such as a critique of government. The professional development training process for *Discovering Democracy* was left to the States and Territories to manage. The WA trainers and Coordinating Committee attempted to subvert what they perceived as directives from the macro level policy initiators. These intermediate level trainers encouraged teachers to take a participatory, ‘active citizenship’ stance to the content of their teaching where students were to be change agents. Trainers also encouraged teachers to be self-determining, use professional judgement in choosing relevant parts of the curriculum package and to use a pedagogical style that included critical analysis. The reality however, is that student outcomes are perceived to have been predominantly the gaining of historical knowledge and civics values.

This research has revealed that the *Discovering Democracy* policy process was a ‘top down’, highly government controlled process, which was inadequately informed by grassroots, micro-level practitioners. Teachers who took ownership of their classroom practices and emphasised active participation in their use of the package attempted to subvert this ‘top-down’ process and were successful to a limited extent.

7.3 The Big Picture: Power Relationships

An analysis of power relationships across the trajectory reveals complex interactions between key participants at each level. This is manifested in the major tensions which have emerged. These are: teachers as professionals versus technicians; education expertise versus political control (‘ministerialisation’), and State versus Commonwealth government conflicts. In discussing these meta level themes, a critical approach will be used.

Teacher professionalism was an issue as both Commonwealth and State government authorities attempted to set their own policy agenda. While the *Discovering Democracy* policy was adopted on terms set by the Commonwealth, these terms were accepted and practised to varying degrees at the school level in Western Australia. Both Commonwealth and State attempted to impose their agenda on teachers with little regard for teacher professionalism (McWilliam *et al.* 1999) instead regarding them as technicians. A further tension is between wanting to provide professional development to encourage radical difference and the pressure to provide ‘more of the same’ – the type of professional development which might modify, but not seriously challenge, teachers’ existing practices.

The ‘ministerialisation’ of the policy process (Dudley & Vidovich 1995) is illustrated by the hold the Minister had over the content of this policy. It could be argued that the lack of consultation and limited interest group representation on the CEG was a deliberate strategy to minimise the subversion of its policy agenda. It is unclear whether it is the Commonwealth government or the Minister’s personal agenda being pushed.

The struggle to renegotiate power between Commonwealth and State over the residual power of education is apparent. This is clearly a formulation of the efforts of the Commonwealth to impose control on State policy and education spending and demonstrates Commonwealth frustration as it attempts to direct State spending to Commonwealth policy priorities. The State is insisting on its right to ‘interpret’ Commonwealth policy through its own agencies such as EDWA³.

In the policy trajectory, an ideological gap exists between Commonwealth policy initiators and all State trainers and teachers. This tension is over historical knowledge versus ‘active citizenship’ for students in schools. These differences arise because of the different ‘worlds’ (Gee & Green 1998) these groups are located in. Policy initiators saw the professional stance taken by some teachers to set their own agenda as subversion of their policy agenda. Teachers saw the curriculum policy as a manifestation of their duty to produce active, participatory citizens. This represents a failure at the macro level to understand the ‘worlds’ inhabited at the lower levels of the policy trajectory.

It can be concluded that power relationships heavily influenced interactions in the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy process. This research has shown how the interplaying tensions resulting from ‘top down’ imposition by the Commonwealth Government modified the policy. It is evidence of the ‘messiness’ of the policy process (Ball 1994). The resultant struggles for control reshaped the policy through curricular and pedagogical practices deployed in the schools.

7.4 Implications

The findings of this research will further inform the areas of educational policy and practice. Current methods of government educational policy processes have been examined in this study, focusing on Commonwealth level processes and the way in which they intersect with State level processes. The results show how the purported consultative process has played out between interest groups and the power plays between different levels of government and grassroots practitioners.

³ Changed to Department of Education (DOE) in 2001

Recommendations for educational practice include clarification of consultation processes and giving greater value to teacher professionalism. Clarification of the consultation process for the development of new curriculum is required, in order that more comprehensive information can be provided back ‘up’ the policy trajectory to policy makers. In addition, teacher professional freedom and responsibility needs to be valued.

This research should inform and enlighten key participants in the policy process and enable better management of the new round of funding for *Discovering Democracy* professional development in WA from 2001. Greater Commonwealth-State coordination could be possible if these participants become more aware of differing viewpoints and possibly develop a co-ordinated approach to curriculum policy (‘co-operative federalism’).

Application of a policy trajectory as a theoretical framework in this research should inform further study that utilises this approach. Its value lay in enabling critical reflection ‘up’ the trajectory, ‘down’ the trajectory and within levels on the trajectory. The *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy was overtly political with influence at Commonwealth, State and school levels. Due to these complexities, and as a complex definition of ‘policy’ was used in this research, the trajectory made the truly ‘messy’ (Ball 1994) realities of the policy process visible. Analysis of the processes that occurred in the final practising of the curriculum policy was therefore possible.

This dissertation has brought together policy trajectory theory (Bowe, Ball and Gold 1992) and social discourse theory (Gee and Green 1998), which has allowed the ideological and value positions of the different groups at each level of the trajectory to be made visible. This approach to policy development, ‘implementation’ and practice is represented in Figure 7.1 where the two theories are summarised in diagrammatic form. Arrows have been used to illustrate the recognised and suggested interactions between each level. The solid arrows represent acknowledged interactions between levels, while the ‘hidden’ tensions arising from the discourses at each level are represented using dotted arrows.

Figure 7.1: Policy Trajectory Theory and Social Discourse Theory

Where wide disparities exist between ‘worlds’ at different levels of the policy trajectory, it is likely that the ‘messiness’ of the policy process from development to practice will continue to occur. If groups at different levels of the trajectory identified and recognised probable conflicts and attempted to resolve them through a parallel but different iterative process, then ‘hidden’ power struggles over the content of the policy might be more easily resolved. Alternatively, exposing such struggles might have the opposite effect of making stand-offs stark and not negotiable. In the future, this approach might be explored in more depth and in different areas of policy.

Future research in this area could consider ministerial power, teacher professionalism, State and Commonwealth government tensions or a longitudinal study on the impact of the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy on teaching and learning. This research could study larger, more diverse samples of teachers and trainers; or other States and Territories. One basis for further research could be a follow up study assessing the impact of the second round of funding that was recently announced for *Discovering Democracy*, which is to be focused on professional development. Teachers who are new to the *Discovering Democracy* curriculum policy could be interviewed. One shortcoming of this research was that students were not directly involved as respondents, so future research could incorporate their views. This occurred because this research emphasised the analysis of policy processes over the measurement of outcomes.

In conclusion, this research revealed valuable insights into the nature of ministerial power, government policy processes and assumptions made about the provision of professional development to teachers. It allowed professional development trainers and teachers to reflect and evaluate their involvement in the process as grass roots practitioners, and it is hoped, gave a voice to the unheard as well as an improved understanding through critical policy analysis.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter to Teachers in WA

Dear participant

I am conducting research as a Master of Education student (part time) at the University of Western Australia, and I would like to invite you to participate in a study of the *Discovering Democracy* policy. I am aiming to analyse the way in which curriculum policy is generated by policy makers and the way in which it is interpreted at different levels. This study will inform and contribute to our understanding of policy issues relating to citizenship education.

As part of my research, I am surveying teachers who participated in the *Discovering Democracy* teacher professional development sessions held in Western Australia. I am requesting your participation by completing the short survey attached to this letter. Please complete the survey and return it by fax or mail (a reply paid envelope is enclosed) before **Thursday 30 November**. You can be confident that your contribution will be entirely confidential and that you will not be identified in any reports or publications stemming from the research.

Thank you for being willing to complete this survey, and to assist with my research. I appreciate you taking this time in your busy teaching day. If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study, please don't hesitate to contact me at work on 08 9447 1111 or via email on criddle@ststephens.wa.edu.au.

Yours sincerely

Liz Criddle

Appendix B: Core Interview Questions

Macro Level Questions

- ⇒ Clarify: interested in your perspective on policy for citizenship education as you experienced it in your involvement with.....
- ⇒ The purpose of the *Discovering Democracy* project (from the materials) is to enable young people to gain knowledge and skills to participate as citizens. What kind of citizens do you believe this policy will encourage?
- ⇒ Why do you think a change in policy for education for citizenship is necessary? (ie: where do you see inadequacies in education for citizenship?)

TRAINING:

- ⇒ Therefore – what changes do you think would be necessary in the professional development/training for teachers in order to teach citizenship?
- ⇒ Why?
- ⇒ How have trainers, who organise the professional development, implemented the *Discovering Democracy* programme?
- ⇒ How do you think these changes in professional development/training would show up in how teachers conceptualise citizenship education and what they do in the classroom?
- ⇒ How would the outcomes for students be different?

PROCESS:

- ⇒ What is your understanding of the effect that the policy has had on trainers?
- ⇒ In your opinion, what motivated teachers who became involved as professional development trainers (in the *Discovering Democracy* programme)?
- ⇒ Why might citizenship education be important to those teachers?
- ⇒ Why is citizenship education important to you?
- ⇒ How were you involved in the development of the aims of the *Discovering Democracy* policy? What did you feel was the main purpose of the package?
- ⇒ Did the other people who were involved have other aims? What were they?
- ⇒ What do you feel are the citizenship policy aims of the Minister (David Kemp)? Why?
- ⇒ What (other) interest groups have been involved in developing the curriculum package at Commonwealth and State level?

Intermediate Level Questions

Birthplace, Teacher/Edn Officer/Dis. Officer, Where, Male/Female, Govt/Non

- ⇒ What can you tell me about how *Discovering Democracy* was developed and about the groups or individuals involved?
- ⇒ What are your perceptions of the policy intentions of those who developed the package?
(PROMPT IF REQUIRED: Citizenship policy and professional development training policy)
- ⇒ Why is citizenship education important to you?
- ⇒ Did you trial the package, and was your feedback incorporated into the final materials?
- ⇒ Did you give feedback (on the PD training) at network training sessions? What response, if any, have you received from this?
- ⇒ Are there any changes that you would suggest to the consultation process?
- ⇒ How has the professional development training programme affected your delivery of the professional development sessions to classroom teachers?
- ⇒ Describe any strengths of the *Discovering Democracy* training programme.
- ⇒ Describe any weaknesses of the *Discovering Democracy* training programme.
- ⇒ In what ways do you feel you have influenced the development of the *Discovering Democracy* training programme?
- ⇒ Describe how you delivered professional development to classroom teachers
- ⇒ (Then - using the aims that macro level had, ask about specific aims):
 - ⇒ Readers?
 - ⇒ Networking?
 - ⇒ How are teachers implementing?
 - ⇒ What type of outcomes for students?

Appendix C: Micro Level Questionnaire

RETURN TO:

LIZ CRIDDLE

FAX: 447 1116

MAIL: ST STEPHENS SCHOOL, PO BOX 68, GREENWOOD 6924

Please choose the most relevant answer to each question. When responding, consider your experience of the *Discovering Democracy* training sessions and your implementation of the *Discovering Democracy* package.

1. Please circle your demographic details:

Government/Non-government school

Metropolitan/Rural

Primary school/Secondary school/Other: _____

2. For how many years have you been using *Discovering Democracy*? _____

3. Year level/s taught using the *Discovering Democracy* programme: _____

Please choose A MAXIMUM of two responses for each question that follows.

4. The main intention of those who developed the *Discovering Democracy* package was to enhance (choose one or two only):

☐ Cultural awareness of the citizenship expressed by different groups in Australia

☐ Knowledge of Australian government processes

☐ Understanding of civic history

☐ Involvement of young people in the political process

☐ Skills required to participate in Australian civic and community life

☐ An inquiring attitude to citizenship

☐ Other (please specify): _____

5. Why did you become involved in the *Discovering Democracy* professional development training?

6. The major aim/s of the *Discovering Democracy* professional development sessions were to (choose one or two only):

☐ Focus on citizenship education

☐ Encourage teachers to use the materials

☐ Inform about the citizenship outcome

☐ Provide on-going support in the development and use of the materials

☐ Other (please specify): _____

7. The main outcome/s that I achieved from the *Discovering Democracy* professional development sessions (choose one or two only):

☐ Professional support from the trainer

☐ Networking across schools in my region

☐ Skills to train teachers at my school in the use of the package

☐ Knowledge about the materials

☐ An opportunity to evaluate the materials

☐ Feedback and new ideas about how to implement the materials

☐ Other (please specify): _____

8. **One** effect of the professional development programme on my use of the materials:
- ☐ Whole units used
 - ☐ Parts of multiple units and year levels used
 - ☐ Adapted and changed the materials from different units
 - ☐ Used relevant parts from only one unit
 - ☐ The professional development made no difference
 - ☐ Other (please specify): _____
9. The main way in which the professional development changed the use of the materials by other teachers at my school (**choose one or two only**):
- ☐ Whole units used
 - ☐ Parts of multiple units and year levels used
 - ☐ Adapted and changed the materials from different units
 - ☐ Used relevant parts from only one unit
 - ☐ The professional development made no difference
 - ☐ I don't know
 - ☐ Other (please specify): _____
10. The main outcome/s achieved by students using the package, that I have observed (**choose one or two only**):
- ☐ Cultural awareness of the citizenship expressed by different groups in Australia
 - ☐ Knowledge of Australian government processes
 - ☐ Understanding of civic history
 - ☐ Involvement of young people in the political process
 - ☐ Skills required to participate in Australian civic and community life
 - ☐ An inquiring attitude to citizenship
 - ☐ Other (please specify): _____
11. The Readers were a new addition to the package this year. If you have used them, what is your response to these curriculum materials?
- _____
- _____
12. Please give details of any further issues that have struck you about either:
- the process by which this curriculum policy was implemented at the school level and/or
 - the professional development training.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. If you have any further feedback, please feel welcome to include additional comments.

Appendix D: Consent Letter

Dear participant

I am conducting research as a Master of Education student at the University of Western Australia, and I would like to invite you to participate in a study of the “Discovering Democracy” policy. Using the data generated by you and other participants, I am aiming to analyse the way in which curriculum policy is generated by policy makers and the way in which it is interpreted at different levels. These levels include the intermediate (or trainer) level and the micro (or classroom teacher) level. This study will inform and contribute to our understanding of policy issues relating to citizenship education.

I am requesting your permission to conduct an interview with you which will be taped and transcribed prior to analysis. I would be pleased to provide you with a copy of the transcript to verify prior to my analysis, if you wish. You can be confident that your contribution will be entirely confidential and that you will not be identified personally in any reports or publications stemming from the research. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time.

I will be contacting you in the near future to invite you to participate in an interview of approximately 40 minutes, which will be arranged at your convenience. If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study, please contact me at work on 08 9447 1111 or via email on derbysl@ststephens.wa.edu.au.

Yours sincerely

Liz Derbyshire

Please complete and return the slip below to indicate your willingness to participate.

STUDY: “Discovering Democracy”: An analysis of curriculum policy for citizenship education

I have read the description of the research project and agree to be involved. I understand that I can withdraw at any time if I wish.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____