

**The Sense-making Process of Teachers in Institutional Change in Curriculum: A Case Study on the Implementation of the Subject Liberal Studies in Hong Kong**

KOO, Wai Sze

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Thesis Committee

Professor LO Nai-kwai Leslie (Chair)

Professor TSANG Wing-kwong (Thesis Supervisor)

Professor TSE Kwan-choi, Thomas (Thesis Supervisor)

Professor LAI Man-hong (Committee Member)

Professor Alvin Y. SO (External Examiner)

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## 撮 要

這個研究是探究一個新課程的制度化過程，以及行動者對課程變遷理解的影響因素。研究中選取了三間學校，以實行通識教育科的先後為準則，分別是早實行者（1992 已經採用）、遲實行者（2005 年實行）及未有實行者（至今仍未實行）。在這三個個案中，分別選取決策者、領導人及跟隨者作深入訪談。首先，訪談集中訪問學校組織實行新課程的因素；其次，受訪者被問到個人的基模對理解課程改革及自己的行為的影響。是次研究是以新制度主義為視角，但集中於微觀過程，即行動者理解過程的影響因素。根據新制度主義的主張，一個制度中的組織需要回應相應的制度環境（或者組織與組織組成的場域的共同要求）才能得到合法性，以得到物質或符號資源。研究指出，當學校組織面對需要做課程改革時，會有統制及規範的考慮；或者說，學校組織需要回應一個現代組織的制度環境，以及新課程的制度環境來得到合法性。至於從個人行動者的認知面向中可以看到，他們以自己的基模及網絡來認知自己在組織的行為，以及回應課程改革。個人行動者在過程中選取、建構及拼湊出自己的理解結構。

## **The Sense-making Process of Teachers in Institutional Change in Curriculum: A Case Study on the Implementation of Liberal Studies in Hong Kong**

### **Abstract**

This study is to investigate how a new school curriculum is institutionalized at school organization level in Hong Kong and how the organizational actors make sense of their actions towards the change. The school curriculum under investigation is Liberal Studies. Three schools are chosen in terms of the time of adopting Liberal Studies in their senior-form curriculum, namely, the early adopter which has adopted LS since 1992, late adopter which started to adopt LS after 2005, and the non-adopter which has not adopted the subject yet. In these three school cases, three types of interviewees are identified, that is, decision maker, leader and follower. By in-depth interviews with these school actors, the study aims to investigate how the actors perceive the contributing factors to this curriculum change, and how their personal schema influence the sense-making process of their actions towards the change. New institutional perspective is adopted as the guiding framework of the study and the microscopic sense-making processes of actors are the focus of investigation. According to new institutionalism actors have to construct a sense of legitimacy in responding to the respective institutional environment, in order to obtain symbolic as well as material resources for their actions. It is found that the three schools have taken regulative and normative considerations when they decided on when to comply with the curriculum change. In other words, they responded to the institutional environment in accordance with the expedient-regulative consideration as an organization as well as with the legitimate-normative consideration as a cultural entity. As for the individual actors, each accommodates the curriculum change by reconstructing his/her subjective reality. By adjusting their cognitive schema and constructing new networks of practice, these actors build different cognitive bricolages for themselves in face of the curriculum change brought about by the introduction of Liberal Studies.

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## **Chapter 1 Background of the Study**

### **1.1 Liberal Studies as a Problem of Curriculum Change**

#### **1.1.1 What is Liberal Studies?**

In 2005, Liberal Studies (LS) is stipulated to be one of the four core subjects in the New Secondary School Curriculum (NSS) in addition to Chinese Language, English Language and Mathematics in the school year 2009/10 and the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) in 2012/13 proposed in the consultation Paper *Reforming the Academic Structure for Senior Secondary Education and Higher Education- Actions for Investing in the Future* (EBD 2004). The curriculum reform, in particular the introduction of the subject LS as one of the core subjects, has captured the attention of society, as LS is regarded as a very different subject compared to the traditional discipline-based ones.

As an integrated curriculum, LS is characterized by its breadth and flexibility, the connections between both core and specialist studies and general (academic) as well as applied (vocational) studies; opportunities for progression and credit transfer and a clear sense of the purpose of the curriculum as a whole (CDC 2007:79).

LS is regarded as a subject that cultivates students' generic skills rather than

implanting a specific stock of knowledge to students, which is a necessary change in any knowledge-based society. It is stated clearly in the CDC policy document that:

In a knowledge-based society, knowledge exists in various forms and contexts... knowledge is always changing. Knowledge is contextualized, multi-disciplinary, and personally and socially constructed (CDC 2007:83).

Besides, LS is a new form of curriculum that cultivates a workforce that a knowledge-based economy needs, with these characteristics as follows:

Liberal Studies...helps learners to make connections among various disciplines and forms of knowledge, and to learn with and from other people, as well as developing their capacity for "learning to learn"... The knowledge construction process in Liberal Studies involves elements presented in the three essential components of the curriculum: knowledge, generic skills, and values and attitudes. (CDC 2007:83-84)

### **1.1.2 The Introduction of Liberal Studies in the Formal Curriculum**

However, LS, as a subject, is not new. It was first introduced in 1992 as an Advanced Supplementary (AS) Level optional subject for students at Matriculation stage. The aim of introducing a new form of curriculum is, according to Curriculum Development Council (CDC) (1991):

This subject aims to broaden the horizons and skills of Secondary 6 and 7

students ... to increase students' awareness of themselves, and to engender a critical awareness of the society in which they live and the way that society relates to an ever-changing world... the main emphasis of the subject is on the acquisition of certain thinking and study skills...on learning outcomes rather than on acquisition of factual knowledge (p.7).

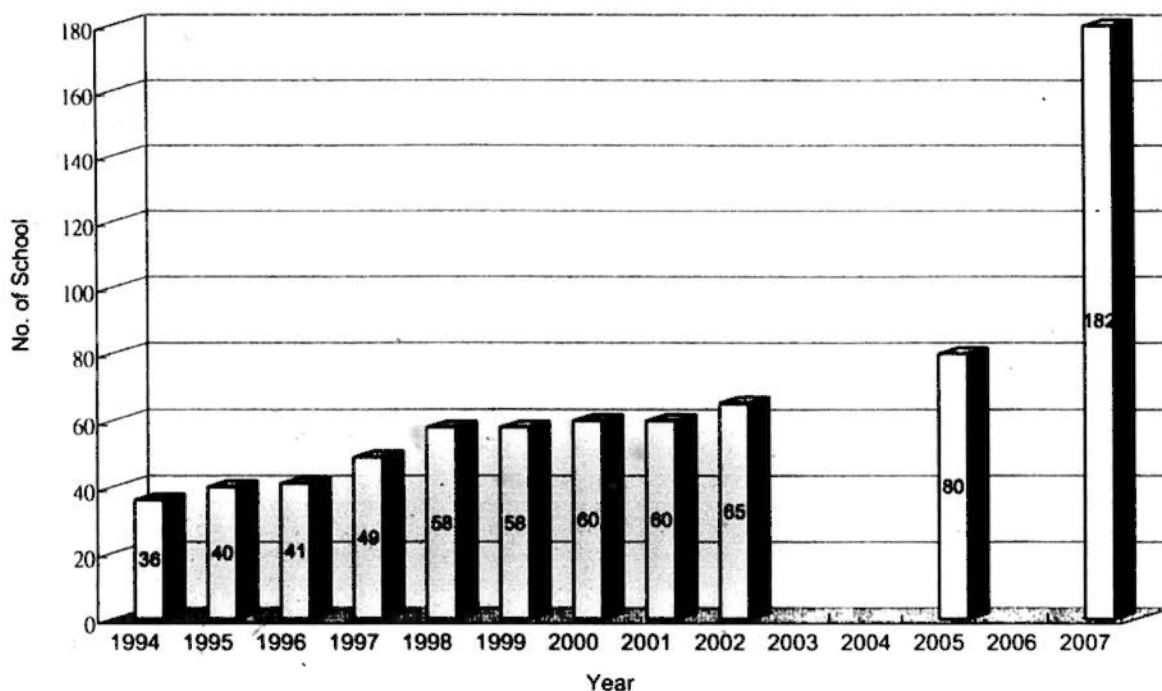
**Figure 1.1: No. of Candidates sat for the Liberal Studies examination**

Year	No. of Candidates Sat for the Exam.	Total No. of Upper Sixth Form Students	Percentage (%)
1994	886	26 088	3.4
1996	931	30 094	3.1
1997	977	30 863	3.2
1998	1 130	32 167	3.5
1999	1 164	34 085	3.4
2000	1 140	35 549	3.2
2001	1 244	36 099	3.4
2002	1 260	36 999	3.4
2003	1 179	36 660	3.2
2004	1 253	36 004	3.5
2005	1 361	33 829	4.0
2006	1 855	34 977	5.3
2007	2 510	36 608	6.9

Source: Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority Website

[http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/doc/fd/2007ale/alexamstat07\\_7.pdf](http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/doc/fd/2007ale/alexamstat07_7.pdf). Available: 28<sup>th</sup> July, 2008.

**Fig.1.2 Number of schools offering LS (AS) (1994-2007)**



Source: CDC (2002). *Research Report of LS at AS level* [online]. Available: <http://ihome.cuhk.edu.hk/~b103405/lis2002/f-workshop/f-2002-03-talk4.ppt>.

The percentage of students taking the LS examination at AS level has been very low (Fig. 1.1 & 1.2). In 1994, the first year of the LS (AS) examination, there were only 36 schools offering the subject and the number increased to about eighty a decade later (Yung 2005: 45). In 2008/09, 182<sup>1</sup> out of 527 secondary day schools offered the subject in AS level<sup>2</sup>. In other words, only 36 per cent of secondary schools offered the course in the current academic year. We believe that the rise might be due to the mandate of LS as one of the four core subjects in NSS curriculum and

<sup>1</sup> Figure obtained from EDB through email enquiry, 15<sup>th</sup> Sept, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Overview, Secondary School Education, EDB Official Website [online]. Available: <http://www.edb.gov.hk>. 15<sup>th</sup> Mar, 2009.

HKDSE. However, given that there is only one year ahead of the mandatory implementation of the NSS curriculum and four years to go for the HKDSE, the percentage of schools that offer LS is relatively low.

Apart from its low level of adoption, the implementation of LS in AS level has also been criticized as far from satisfactory. First, the format and content of the subject LS are very different from the traditional subjects in that the main emphasis of LS is on the acquisition of certain thinking and study skills rather than that of factual knowledge (CDC 1991:7). In general, it is reported that there is a “lack of understanding about the contents of the subject chosen” among school principals and teachers (ED 1995:5). The subject itself has been criticized for its high complexity low clarity (Deng 1995; ED 1995), and its feasibility has been questioned in terms of the students’ solid knowledge foundation of other subjects (Guozhou 1998). Moreover, the implementation of the subject has also been described as “not successful” at school level (Deng 1995; ED 1995). Most of the teachers and administrators interviewed hold that the subject does not have sufficient support in curriculum interpretation, curriculum resources and teacher training (Deng 1995; ED 1995). The low support from the government can be regarded as the reason for low adoption of the subject in secondary schools.



Besides, there are a number of concerns which school administrators have to take into account in the decision of whether to adopt LS at AS level. The concern could be on functional account, or in a consideration of legitimacy. In a functional consideration, school administrators have to decide whether it is a necessity to adopt a new curriculum in order to “provide a new, broadly-based and balanced sixth form curriculum for students who would either continue their studies in tertiary institutions or who would join the work force at the end of Secondary 7” (CDC 1993:1). Besides, the concern could be a resource reallocation one, on which the school administrators decide whether, or to what extent they should reallocate resources such as pupils /candidates for public examinations, teaching timeslots and teaching and learning materials. Since school resources are limited, school administrators’ decision on whether they offer a new subject is based on rational calculation on reward and punishment. The reward refers to the material as well as the symbolic resources, such as government subsidy, number of student enrolment, and recognition of professional groups.

In terms of legitimate consideration, schools have to gain the recognition of the government as well as professional groups, and hence, to get resources. On the one

hand, schools have to follow the government policy in general and the official curriculum in particular; on the other hand, they have to work in congruence with the professional ideologies on curriculum practices. School administrators have to take the above concerns into account when they decide to adopt a new subject such as LS.

However, even for schools which have currently adopted LS at AS level, the implementation of the curriculum might vary in terms of form and content. Some schools adopt the subject full-scale, following the officially defined instructional practices, learning strategies and assessment instruments in both form and content; while some adopt the subject to a lesser extent. In the latter case, for example, some schools follow the syllabus content with traditional teaching strategies such as “chalk-and-talk”, whereas some schools combine project assessment with traditional tests and examinations as an assessment method. In sum, the curriculum structure of LS at AS level and the daily instructional practices vary among schools.

In addition, the most important problem is that LS at AS level is offered as an optional subject, which means the subject coexists with other conventional subjects in the Advanced Level (AL) and AS Level curriculum. As a new form of curriculum, LS is characterized by modular, interdisciplinary and the interdependent features. The

subject covers a wide variety of topics, including six modules, specifically “Hong Kong Studies”, “Environmental Studies”; “Human Relationships”, “The Modern World”, “Science, Technology & Society” and “China Today” (CDC 1991:9-13). In other words, it covers the area of science, arts and humanities in general, and the curriculum is organized in a multidisciplinary and thematic form (*ibid*, p.6-7). In summary, it is very different from the existing mainstream curriculum which has the features of disciplined-based, independent character, and distinct knowledge content. Hence, teachers and students face the challenge when they adopt these two totally different types of subjects among which the instructional and pedagogic practices and assessment instruments are totally different.

It can be seen that LS is a very different form of curriculum. The syllabus is modular, interdisciplinary and subject contents are interdependent. Besides, the curriculum content of LS is organized by theme or issue. LS does not have specific disciplinary knowledge or particular stock of knowledge as subject matter, or “weak classification” in Bernstein’s words (Bernstein 1977). In the teaching and learning of LS, there is no specific sequence and pace of knowledge transmission, which is called “weak frame” in Bernstein’s words. LS adopts the issue-enquiry approach to deal with its special feature mentioned above.

In brief, LS represents a “deviant”, which coexists with other traditional subjects such as Chinese Language or Geography, in the existing curriculum. Therefore, the introduction of the integrated subject such as LS is not only seen as a curriculum change from a traditional one to a new one, but also regarded as an institutional change of curriculum organization. In other words, this curriculum change could be conceptualized as the process of the institutionalization of the new curriculum within an existing institution.

## **1.2 New Institutional Perspective and Liberal Studies**

The new institutional perspective builds upon a constructivist view of the society and emphasizes the cognitive aspect of an institution. According to Meyer and his colleagues (1977, 1991, 1992), all the actors in an institution, ranging from individual to organization, survive by responding to the institutional environment to attain legitimacy. The institutional environment defines the standards, rules and regulations, classifications for the actors to follow in that specific institution. Following these rules and classifications in order to attain legitimacy, the actors become more homogenous in terms of cognitive, normative and regulative aspects,

which the new institutionalists call “isomorphism” (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:66). It is called the “cognitive turn” of the institutionalist perspective (Powell & DiMaggio 1991:8; Selznick 1996:274; Bidwell 2006:42).

The institution is composed of three components, which Scott (2001) called the “three pillars”, namely cognitive, normative and regulative (*ibid*, p.33). The three components serve as sources of legitimacy of the institution in social context, and in turn, they enable and constrain social actions in a society. The regulative pillar refers to the constraining and regularizing characteristic of institutions on the behavior of institutional actors by rule setting and sanction. The normative pillar refers to the evaluative and obligatory dimensions by the values and norms in a particular institution. Nevertheless, in the second half of the twentieth century, the state and the professionals are the two major institutional agents (Scott 2001:93), while the state always affects the institution in the way of coercive measures such as charters, resource allocation, and regulatory controls (*ibid*, p.94); the professionals usually affects the institution by making recommendations, proposing reforms and setting the standard of the specific institution (*ibid*, p.96). It constitutes not only the normative aspect, but also the third pillar, cultural-cognitive ones of the institution. The cognitive pillar is the shared meaning system of the institution by beliefs and

knowledge accepted by the society. From the perspective of new institutionalism, the institution is founded on these three pillars by which the institutional effects are accounted for.

School organizations have been habitualized with the rules and classifications of a discipline-based curriculum over the years. The discipline-based curriculum is recognized by the organizational actors, such as teaching training personnel, professional groups, textbook publishers, educational researchers in universities and so forth in the organizational fields (the normative aspect in the institution), in which teachers and school administrators perceive it as the only curriculum in this existing institutional framework (the cultural cognitive aspect). School organizations receive both material and symbolic resources from the state authorities (the regulative aspect). The existing curriculum institution operates in a smooth way until the introduction of the new curriculum in early 1995. Hong Kong secondary school organizations were confronted with a totally foreign curriculum structure and organization when LS was introduced in 1992. Discipline-based curriculum has been the official curriculum until the introduction of LS (AS), the first integrated curriculum in 1992.

The curriculum change was not rapid and comprehensive at the beginning. The new

subject LS at AS level is introduced as an optional subject in 1992. Only 36 out of 496 secondary schools<sup>3</sup> adopted the subject in 1994 (fig. 1.2). As it was not listed as a core subject, the decision of whether adopting it did not affect the survival and resources of the school organization. A few schools that adopted the subject were in fact responding to a new normative requirement of the curriculum institution, that is, to cultivate “certain thinking and study skills” (CDC 1991:7) in order to “liberate the minds of our students... to help students to develop skills that are characteristics of a well-educated person” (*ibid*, p.6). It was mainly a normative consideration. Besides, these organizational actors had to believe in both the new and the old curriculum, fulfill both sets of requirements. In practice, it is difficult for the frontline teachers as well as the students to practice two sets of rules and classifications of two distinct curriculum institutions in cultural cognitive aspect at the same time. The institutional change in curriculum, therefore, was at a slow pace from the start, and the form and content of the adoption of the subject varied among schools.

The case is expected to be more complex when LS (HKDSE) is one of the four core subjects starting from 2009/10 onwards. In the process of isomorphic change,

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<sup>3</sup> Sources: Hong Kong Education Department (1994). *Annual Summary*. Hong Kong: Government Printer.

school organizations face the conflicts in adopting two curriculums with different structures and organizations. The formal structure and daily practices of the curriculum in each school might vary due to respective organizational as well as agencies factors. School organizations and actors both in groups and as individual actor in each school are in a wide range of varieties. The complexity of the institutionalization of the new curriculum in the existing institution can be understood by the cognitive aspect of the new institutionalist perspective.

According to the new institutionalist perspective, both the organization actors and the individual actors have to follow the standards, rules and regulations of the legitimate curriculum. In other words, they have to respond to the proper institutional environment. As individual actors, frontline school administrators and teachers can decide and act according to their schema, sense-making process with reference to professional judgment, organizational culture, organizational arrangement and so forth. Situated between the two distinct curriculum institutions these individual actors assist or resist the “institutionalization” of the new curriculum into the existing one on a daily-basis.



### **1.3 Focuses of Investigation**

This thesis will investigate the institutional changes in curriculum organizations in three Hong Kong secondary schools since LS at AS level (and subsequently LS in HKDSE) has been introduced in 1992. New institutional perspective will be adopted as the guiding framework of the study because it is believed that LS as a school subject is different from most of the other currently existing discipline-based subjects in some institutional ways. There are two major focuses of investigation, namely, how a new school curriculum is institutionalized at school organization level in Hong Kong, and how the organizational actors make sense of their actions towards the change. The institutional change is illustrated by the adoption of the subject Liberal Studies (LS).

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The current research is a study on the sense-making process of the actors in the context of a real case of institutionalization of a new curriculum institution into an existing one. Researches elicited by new institutionalist perspective are characterized by their macroscopic view, global scale, and comparative-quantitative methodological orientation (Coburn 2004). This research is an attempt to look into

the microscopic aspect, namely, the cognitive aspect of the individual actors, which is a congruent move with most of the new institutional studies in recent years (Coburn 2004; Spillane 2006).

In addition, to apply the new institutionalist perspective, we can grasp the cognitive aspect of individual actors, that is, how they define and redefine the institutional environment. In a real school organization, actors respond to various institutional environments rather than regarding themselves as merely educators. The process of sense-making could be complicated when the actors are situated in the crux of various institutions such as curriculum, a modern organization (Scott 2001), and individuals as rationalized agency (Meyer & Jepperson 2000). This research serves as an empirical study to illustrate the sense-making process of actors in organization in the institutionalization process in various dimensions.

This empirical study also sheds light on better strategies on policy implementation in the future. We know that the success of policy implementation depends largely on the frontline practitioners. By understanding the micro-process of teacher sense-making, particular facilitating factors as well as difficulties teacher encountered can be identified. Practitioners can then strengthen the positive factors and reduce

the negative ones in different dimensions such as teachers training, school organization and environment. In this regard, the study can be seen as a reference for initiating other curriculum preparations in the future.

## **Chapter 2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Liberal Studies as a Curriculum of the Future**

With the inclusion of Liberal Studies (LS) as one of electives in the Advanced Supplementary (AS) Level subjects in 1992, and the introduction of it as a compulsory subject in the New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum in 2009/10, institutional changes occur in both the curriculum structure and the organization in Hong Kong secondary schools. Starting from the new academic year in 2009, LS will be one of the four core subjects apart from Chinese language, English Language and Mathematics. In both cases, LS as a new form of curriculum coexist with the traditional one which is traditional discipline-based and has been practiced by schools and teachers for decades. The new injection of LS indicates a transformation of curriculum into a more integrated form.

As suggested by Bernstein, the old and the new curriculum can be conceptualized by two sets of analytical tool, that is, the collection code and integrated code in curriculum and the visible and invisible pedagogies in pedagogic practices (Bernstein 1997, 2000). These two types of curriculum can be regarded as two distinct forms of curriculum.

To Bernstein, knowledge can be operationalized as curriculum (the legitimate knowledge), and pedagogy (the way of teaching such knowledge). Both of them can be categorized by

two criteria, namely classification and framing. Classification refers to “the degree of boundary maintenance between contents” (Bernstein 1973, cited in Sadovnik 1991:2) and is concerned with the insulation or boundaries between curricular categories (areas of knowledge and subjects). Strong classification refers to a curriculum that is highly differentiated and separated into traditional subjects; weak classification refers to a curriculum that is integrated and in which the boundaries between subjects are fragile. Using the concept of classification, Bernstein outlined two types of curriculum codes: collection and integrated codes. A subject with strong classification and strong framing is regarded as a collection code of curriculum, which refers to a hierarchical organization of knowledge, discipline-based form of curriculum with clear boundaries between subjects and a solid stock of knowledge (Bernstein 1971:96); while a integrated code of curriculum refers to subjects with weak classification and framing, which have a more weakly defined boundary and content (*ibid*, 96), on which students have more control. In keeping with his Durkheimian project, Bernstein analyzed the way in which the shift from collection to integrated curriculum codes represents the evolution from mechanical to organic solidarity, (or from traditional to modern society), with curricular change marking the movement from the sacred to the profane (*ibid*, 96). Whereas classification is concerned with the organization of knowledge into curriculum, framing is related to the transmission of knowledge through pedagogic practices. Framing refers to the location of control over the

rules of communication. “Frame refers to the degree of control teacher and pupil possess over the selection, organization, pacing and timing of the knowledge transmitted and received in the pedagogical relationship” (1973b, p. 88). In other words, strong framing refers to a limited degree of options open to teachers and students; weak framing implies more flexibility on selection of the ways and pace of knowledge transmission.

In pedagogic analysis, Bernstein differentiates two types of pedagogies; “visible pedagogy” refers to pedagogy with strong degrees of specificity on rules of hierarchy (hierarchical authority structure), rules of sequencing and pacing (syllabi and curricula) and rules of criteria (explicit or implicit expectations or behavioral standards) (Sadovnik 1991:53); while “invisible pedagogy” is realized in the “play”, with no clear hierarchical authority presented, no explicit criteria for evaluation, nor any definite sequencing and pacing. The Bernsteinian typology of curriculum and pedagogy is illustrated in table 2.1:

Table 2.1 Typology of curriculum and pedagogy

		Classification	
		Strong	Weak
Framing	Strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Collection Code Curriculum/ Visible Pedagogy</li> <li>❖ E.g. the subject Physics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Mixed Code</li> <li>❖ E.g. cross-modular guided writing lesson</li> </ul>
	Weak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Mixed Code</li> <li>❖ E.g. the subject Visual Arts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Integrated Code Curriculum/ Invisible Pedagogy</li> <li>❖ E.g. the subject Liberal Studies</li> </ul>

Young (1998) names the new form of curriculum with weak classification and weak frame the “curriculum of the future”, which is distinct from the “curriculum of the past” (Young 1999:468-9). According to Young, the curriculum of the future caters for the new era of the knowledge-based economy (*ibid.*, 470) which necessitates the rapid expansion of post-secondary education; the integration of academic and vocational education and the need to prepare students to be life-long learners (*ibid.*, 467). The curriculum of future is characterized by its breadth and flexibility; the connections between both core and specialist studies and general (academic) and applied (vocational) studies; opportunities for progression and credit transfer; and a clear sense of the purpose of the curriculum as a whole (Young 1998:79).

This change is inevitable in a knowledge-based economy. In Wong’s study (1991), she exemplifies the subject Social Science under a universal evolution from discipline-based subjects like Geography and History to an integrated subject. To Wong, the new form of curriculum highlights “the relationship of the individual citizen to larger social and political environment, embodies the new rationalistic approach to social organization” (Wong 1991:42). The form of the subject takes a change from an academic, de-contextual one to a contextual one as a result of the rise of rational individualism in national economic and

political progress (*ibid*, 41).

LS (at both AS level and HKDSE) is a subject of integrated code of curriculum and invisible pedagogy, in the form of “curriculum in the future” (Young 1998:131). It has a wide coverage on the areas of science, arts and humanities in general<sup>1</sup>, and the curriculum is organized in multidisciplinary and thematic form (*ibid*, 11 & 83). The subject is modular and interdisciplinary form in which the modules are interdependent.

Liberal Studies...helps learners to make connections among various disciplines and forms of knowledge, and to learn with and from other people, as well as developing their capacity for “learning to learn”... The knowledge construction process in Liberal Studies involves elements presented in the three essential components of the curriculum: knowledge, generic skills, and values and attitudes. (CDC 2007:83-84)

According to Bernstein’s framework, LS is a weak classified subject, which does not have specific disciplinary knowledge nor a particular stock of knowledge as subject matter; and it is weak framed, that is, there is no specific sequence and that the pace of knowledge

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<sup>1</sup> It includes three areas with six modules, specifically “Hong Kong Studies”, “Environmental Studies”, “Human Relationships”, “The Modern World”, “Science, Technology & Society” and “China Today” (CDC 1991:9-13)



transmission in the teaching and learning is more discretionary. The issue-enquiry approach is adopted for teaching and learning of the subject in order to deal with its special features (CDC 1991:6) (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 Relative definitive features of Liberal Studies

	<b>Liberal Studies</b>	<b>Traditional Subjects</b>
<b>Curriculum Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Interdisciplinary</li> <li>❖ Weak classification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Disciplinary</li> <li>❖ Strong classification</li> </ul>
<b>Curriculum form</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Module or issue-based</li> <li>❖ Inquiry-oriented</li> <li>❖ Weak frame</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Structured &amp; systematic</li> <li>❖ Acquisition-oriented</li> <li>❖ Strong frame</li> </ul>
<b>Curriculum objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Liberated and critical mind</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Disciplined mind</li> </ul>

Source: Tsang Wing Kwong "EDD 5229U handout L1- Relating Liberal Studies to Knowledge Society" [online]. Available: <http://www.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/~wktsang>. Retrieved on 12 Dec, 2008.

The two distinct forms of curriculum, according to Bernstein are catered for different forms of social control, in order to make social class reproduction (Bernstein 2000:60). However, while Bernstein regards social control as a static structural fit of two different types of curriculums/ pedagogies corresponding to two distinct social classes, Meyer and the new institutionalists (Meyer 1977; Meyer & Rowan 1992) think that a functional explanation is far too simple to explain the emergence of the new curriculum organization. The isomorphic formal structure of an organization is a result of the actors following the institutional rules and regulations, and classifications in order to attain legitimacy. The mechanism of isomorphic change, the cognitive aspects of the actors, and the institutional

effect on various levels of actors are the focus for institutional studies (Scott 1995: 55-60).

In order to explain the institutional change of the curriculum institution in Hong Kong, the new institutionalist perspective will be adopted as the key framework in this research. First, I will introduce the new institutionalist perspective and conceptualize curriculum as an institution. Then, I will try to distinguish different levels of abstractions in explanation of institutional effects. Finally, I will analyze how the later development of new institutionalism on institutional change can be employed as theoretical tools to analyze institutional change of curriculum which brings the new LS into the context of conventional Hong Kong.

## **2.2 Institution, Institutionalization and New Institutionalism**

Institution is the major subject matter in sociology. In social phenomenology, institutionalization is regarded as a necessary condition of human interaction, which is defined as a process of “reciprocal typification of habitualized actions by types of actors” (Berger & Luckmann 1989:54). Institutionalization involves three moments, namely externalization, objectivation and internalization (*ibid*, p.129). By externalization, actors’ actions are externalized and developed into habitual patterns of interaction. The patterns objectivated as typifications, such as language of signs. Individuals learn the objectivated

patterns and make them a part of their own internal consciousness through socialization (*ibid*, p.130). By these three moments, institutionalization brings individuals and society together in a continuing dialectical process, that is, actors act according to the objective rules as well as the internalized ones, and involves a little change when they actually act in daily life. It is a factor of social change (*ibid*, p.87). Social institutions are an outcome of the process, which is externalized as well as internalized in actors, and they keep evolving in a dialectic way.

The institution is enabling and constraining for actors. The norms are external and coercive; and at the same time they are significant guidelines for daily life. Once the institution is internalized by individuals, it is no longer externally constraining. Instead, it becomes a set of internalized rules for individuals to comply voluntarily. The socialized individuals perceive the reality passed on to them as natural and real, and they take it for granted. Therefore, it is enabling as it provides the cognitive and normative function for the actors. Yet, it is constraining as it socializes actors or confines actors with rewards and punishments. In Scott's (2001) words, it is the three pillars of an institution, namely, cultured-cognitive, normative (enabling function), and regulative (constraining function) pillar that communicate the actors and the institution (*ibid*, p.51). On the one hand, the norms of the institution facilitate the action of the actors by internalization (the normative and cognitive elements);

while the objectivated structure restraint actors from breaking the norms by award and punishment (the regulative element).

Institutionalism refers to a wide range of theories. New institutionalism is regarded as a “cognitive turn” of the old ones (Powell & DiMaggio 1991:8; Selznick 1996:274; Bidwell 2006:42). In the following, the differences of the two institutionalisms will be introduced, and the related conceptual tools in new institutionalism will be discussed.

### **2.2.1 Institutionalism, Old and New**

Institutional theorists emphasize the significance of social and cultural aspects of organizational environments rather than the technical elements. They attempt to explain the behavior of actors in the embedded structure, that is, norms, rules, and institutional cultures and how they respond to the external environment. In general, all the institutional theories, both old and new, oppose the notion of a rational actor, functional account and methodological individualism (Powell & DiMaggio 1991:2-3; 12). In other words, they believe that social action cannot be reduced to the aggregation of individual behaviors and understood through the calculation of an individual’s rational decision. Rather, they share the view that individual action is embedded in the institution, in which the rational

calculation is either bounded or with limited taken-for-granted-choices. In sum, the institution provides a consistent meaning system in which the actor can make sense of and react accordingly.

New institutionalism is different from the old one in a number of ways. The old institutionalism covers a wide range of theories on institutional structure and effects by tracing “the emergence of distinctive forms, processes, strategies, outlooks, and competences as they emerge from patterns of organizational interaction and adaptation” and it regards the patterns as “responses to both internal and external environments” (Selznick 1996:271), such as the search for resources or response to power. In short, it is a wide range of open-system theories that study institutional structure and effects with functional, or realist explanation.

New institutionalism differs from the old one in the conception of the shaping forces. It holds that the formal organizational structure is shaped by institutional forces which are embedded in a wider environment (Powell 2007:1). The forces are cognitive and constructivist, rather than a functional and realist one, such as the response to institutional classifications and rules to attain legitimacy. The new institutionalist perspectives are therefore regarded as a “cognitive turn” in the direction of the institutional school.

By cognition the theorists turn their focus on the reasoning and the preconscious grounds of reason: classifications, representations, scripts, schemas and production systems (Powell & DiMaggio 1991:35), that is, the taken-for-granted beliefs embedded in the institution in which actors construct, interpret, and act in their everyday life. It is the constructionist view that all the above classifications, beliefs, schemas are constructs in formal organizational structure that are created and shared by the actors in the same institution, and diffused in the institutional environment. In this respect, the new institutionalist perspective is very different from the old one, in which the shaping forces are believed to be real, such as resources or power. Both the old and the new share the view that organizational rationality is constrained by institutions, but the old one lays the source of the constraints in the exchange, alliance, or conflict of various parties with different power, authority or vested interests in informal interaction which subverted the initial goal of organization and its respective structure (Powell & DiMaggio 1991:13); while the new one regards the adoption of a universal formal structure and alien with the practices of individual organization as a way to attain legitimacy which is not necessarily rational.

In the new institutionalist perspective, agencies become a significant focus of study. For instance, how the actors perceive and interpret reality is a major contributing factor that influences organizational forms and actions. It also includes how the reality is being

constructed in the process, as well as the effects of the creative and adaptive aspects of actors on their social lives. The cognitive aspect of agencies has been considered as a significant dimension with which organizations and institutions are examined. The significance of agencies in institutional analysis has been stressed in the new institutional perspective.

One of the criticisms on new institutionalist perspective is that they ignore the concept of conflicts and status competition (Morrow & Torre 1995). To the new institutionalists, once the actors identify the appropriate institutional environment, they will comply the requirements in order to achieve legitimacy. When new institutionalist theorists emphasize the actors who respond to the specific institutional environment, it seems that a consensus approach is adopted that no conflicts are to be dealt with. Conflicts and power struggles, such as class conflict and status competition are the focal point of sociological analysis, which is absent in the new institutionalist study. However, to the new institutionalists, the problematic belongs to the old institutionalists who regard power, interests, resources and conflicts are real in consequence to shape the institution (Powell & DiMaggio 1991; Selznick 1996). In *TVA and the Grassroots* (1984), Selznick studies the formal organization by investigation of the informal structure such as the interaction and alliances of members which he believes that is the major shaping force of the formal organization. For instance, he finds that the leaders use the informal system for formal control and delegate structure; however,

they will pay the price of reallocation of power distribution. There are also dilemmas and power constraints in the organization which influence the informal structure as well as the formal one. In new institutional perspective, the focus is changed. The formal structure is adopted from other organizations in the same field, with elaborated rational myths or classifications to achieve legitimacy, and hence, it will not change. However, whatever happens in everyday life decouples from the formal structure, which has its own logic. In addition, the daily practices involve conflicts, resources, power and interests is studied by how the actors perceive and articulate them to the legitimate discourse. In the mentioned case of Selznick, the informal structure does have impact in shaping the formal structure, the focus of study will be on how the power, interests and conflicts are articulated as a legitimate discourse such as a requirement of democratic practice in a governmental organization such as TVA.

Another major criticism involves the theorists undermining the agency. It is said that the significance of agencies in institutional analysis has been stressed in the new institutional perspective. As mentioned, actors are not regarded as rational in institutionalist perspectives, yet, with bounded rationality the actors are shaped and influenced by their own mentality or schema which can be conceptualized as the force of agency (Coburn 2004; Spillane, Reiser & Gomez 2006; Spillane & Burch 2006). In sum, when organizational actors respond to the



institutional environment, as rational agentic actors (Meyer & Jepperson 2000) they also need to respond to their own institutional environment. It involves a mechanism which Archer names "internal dialogue" (Archer 2003:303). The discussion on agency will be further discussed in section 2.2.4.

### **2.2.2 New Institutionalism**

The new institutionalist theorists follow the constructivist perspective which emphasizes the cognitive aspect of an institution. To start with, an organization actor has to seek adequate resources as well as legitimacy for its survival (Meyer 1991). In most of the cases, the former has to rely on the latter, that is, an organization is able to access material as well as institutional resources only when it is defined as legitimate. To the new institutionalists, to attain legitimacy, not only does the organization needs to meet technical requirements, also they must adopt and achieve a set of well-accepted standards which are defined by the institutional environment, and seek institutional support. In general, an organization gains legitimacy by showing that it is able to accomplish the organizational objectives.

For a profit-making organization, the standard is clear and simple, that is, its profitability. However, for the non-profit-making ones, the standards are far more unclear and difficult to

assess. To attain legitimacy, non-profit-making organizations turn to institutional support. In other words, organizations copy the formal organizational structure and regard the elaborated classifications defined in the institution as significant and as a result, they automatically attain the legitimacy of this institution. The well-accepted set of formal structure and classifications are formulated in the organizational field, or the institutional environment. By responding to the requirements set in the institutional environment, the organization can get its legitimacy. In the new institutionalist assumption, organizations in the same institution eventually become isomorphic in organizational structure with ritual classifications (Meyer & Rowan 1977). In such a way they are becoming more similar to other organizations that cope with ostensibly the same institutional environment, and the participants who undergo these classifications get recognition in the society, as part of a myth which is believed by the society.

In an educational organization, for instance, both the process (education process is usually seen as a black box) and the products (the graduates) do not lend themselves to easy assessment. An educational organization therefore has to adopt the formal structure as well as the classifications or categories of the existing ones in the same institution in a global scale. The formal structure such as the standard form of a school building, structure of official school years and the administrative structure; the classifications such as age range of students,

units, number of classes, titles of class, topics of curriculum, days of attendance, credentials and types of schools are regarded as rational and successful. It serves as a myth, entrusted by the participants in the society, and hence, it brings legitimacy. In sum, organization actors adopt the set of rules, the beliefs, and the rational myths as a package in a taken-for-granted manner. They are not concerned with the real efficiency and effectiveness as it is a way to gain legitimacy. Focused on the organizational field level in which organizations exchange and negotiate legitimate formal structure and rational myths, the new institutionalist theorists finds that the organization in the same field, responding to similar institutional environment will grow more and more similar (Powell 2007:6). This is called "institutional isomorphism". This is the cognitive turn which focuses on the belief of the actors and its influence.

### **2.2.3 Isomorphism and Decoupling**

The isomorphic change refers to the organizations responding to similar institutional environment growing more and more alike. To the new institutionalist theorists, the change is due to institutional forces rather than technical demands or rational choice of the actors. Resource-dependency theorists suggest, for example, organization actors adopt strategies to relate to the environment by actively acquiring control over resources in order to reduce

dependence on other organizations and maximize dependence of other organizations on them (Scott 1998:116), which is a rational choice of the actor. While the old institutionalists such as Selznick (1984) suggest that the change might be generated by the distinct interest of each person in the organization, with actions and alliances separated from the formal organization, that "the organization is an adaptive social structure" (1984). The change can also be the result of the interactions between the external factors such as environment, and internal factors such as leadership, that the optimal organization style depends upon various internal and external constraints, suggested by Contingency theorists (Scott 1988:65, 96-7). The above theorists try to explain the complexity of the interactions between organizations and the environments. However, they are criticized that when the uncertainties and the reaction of organization towards the uncertainties have not be theorized into the patterns of behavior, which cannot be regarded as a theoretical advancement (Selznick 1996). Besides, although there are minor variations among the organizations in the same institution, the homogeneity of the organizational structure and the rational myths is far more noticeable. If it is mostly case-dependent as the contingency theorists or old institutionalists suggest, the homogeneity of organizational structure would be failed to be accounted for.

Take the case of the institutional change of curriculum in Hong Kong as an example. The institutional change could be regarded as functional. The introduction of LS at AS Level

aims at catering for the needs of a knowledge-based economy (CDC 2007:83), in which a new set of criteria of employable graduates and citizens is needed. In short, the technical requirement of the employers in the new economy includes the generic skills<sup>2</sup> and the ability of life-long learning. The curriculum change is therefore a result of rational choice in order to achieve technical effectiveness and efficiency in the context of the new economy. However, it is difficult to explain why there are early adopters, later adopters and even non-adopters of the subject among the school organizations if it is driven by functional necessity.

All in all, among various factors that contribute to the institutional change, the cognitive aspect of agencies or actors has been considered as a significant dimension to examine organizations and institutions. Organizational actors perceive and interpret the symbolic system, and it reflects on the organization structures and practices. An institutional change can be due to the change of perceptions of the institutional environment the actors responding to.

Isomorphic change is part of the modernization or the rationalization project. According to DiMaggio and Powell (1991), to attain legitimacy, an organization must adopt the

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<sup>2</sup> Generic skills refer to communication, creativity, critical thinking, information technology, numeracy, problem-solving, self-management and study skills (CDC 2007:85-6).

rationalized or scientized form and structure to attain its legitimacy. Different from the case of bureaucracy discussed by Weber (1964), organizational change does not stem from market competition or the need for efficiency, but a legitimacy which, individual organizations seek to cope with uncertainties and constraints by copying the structure, culture and output in the most structured organizational field (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:64). Organizations that attain legitimacy have to respond to two sources of legitimacy, in their most rationalized and scientized form, namely, the nation-state and the professionals, which are the two great rationalizers in the second half of the twentieth century (*ibid*, p.64). Organizational actors are driven by these two rationalizers to pursue legitimacy. In the context of the rationalized institution defined by the state and professionals in the structured organizational fields, actors adopt the forms defined by this particular institution and grow similar. This is the isomorphic change.

DiMaggio and Powell identify three modes of realization of institutional isomorphism. First, coercive isomorphism is forced upon by a central authority, usually the state or government which mandates the isomorphism top-down; the second, mimetic isomorphism arises as a voluntary yet standard response to an uncertain environment; the third, normative isomorphism which stems from the development of the knowledge industry and the expansion of professionalism and professional associations (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:67-74).

Though these are variant sources of isomorphic changes, they lead to the same result -- the increasingly homogenized organizational structure.

However, as the form of organizations tends to be isomorphic, the formal organizational structure will not be suitable for all organizations. The structure transplanted does not match the specific daily activities of specific organizations. The mismatch between this formal organizational structure and the organization's goals or daily activities causes "de-coupling" (Weick 1976). On one hand, the formal organizational structure stays intact, while on the other, the daily activities of the organization have their own logic to follow and operate. A de-coupled organization tends to avoid inspection of its process, monitoring of its output, or evaluation of its efficiency, so as to maintain its reputation (Weick 1976). It continues to enjoy its legitimate presence and importance within the formal structure, while it operates without obstacles in a daily basis.

Then how can such an organization carry out its daily activities without any doubt on its legitimacy when neither effectiveness nor efficiency can be proven? The answer comes from the actors. According to Meyer, in such decoupled situation there will be some subtle reactions among the actors, i.e. what they call "logic of confidence" and "good faith" (Meyer 1977). In the case of a decoupled educational organization, the responses adopted, such as

classification, professionalism, goal ambiguity, the maintenance of face and the like, are reactions to uncertainties in the environment and signs of their inability to assess the process of the organization and its outcome (Meyer & Rowan 1992:40). In educational organizations, thus, the classification is elaborate and rigid. Ritual classification is a means to maintain the socially agreed-upon rites defined in societal myths of education (Meyer and Rowan 1992:76). Legitimacy, or the logic of confidence is founded on elaborate classifications, in which both the members in the educational organizations as well as constituencies in the larger society will accept without reflection. This is what Berger and Luckmann (1989) called the “taken-for-granted attitude” towards institutions. Therefore, the more elaborate the classifications, the more likely people will trust the institution. In the case of schools, there are refined classifications on teachers (based on their specifications, credentials and specializations), students (based on the level and grade, programs and units gained, subject areas specializations, or even physical abilities), topics (based on curricula and streams) and the schools themselves (based on their nature, funding, size, curriculum etc.). Once such classification schemes become standardized and common ideas are shared by the society, the schools secure legitimacy (Meyer and Rowan 1992:77-78). In short, the logic of confidence refers to the participants as well as social constituents sharing the confidence that the system can work smoothly. Participants act according to good faith and believe that the actors involved will act for the good results of the organization. For



example, the adoption of professionalism ensures that members in the organizations and constituencies in society believe the organization to be functional, and professional codes make the professionals work in good faith where again, actors are not conscious of the daily routines of the organizational work. It has a two-fold meaning. First, as they have confidence in the system, they would take what is going on for granted; second, their rationality is bounded by the embedded institution.

However, external inspection and evaluation is still one of the sources of legitimacy. Facing the decoupling between the formal structure and daily practices in real life, the external evaluation will take a different form. It tends to be ceremonial in nature, that is, rather than an actual evaluation of the organization's efficiency and effectiveness, it is only a routine performed to obtain the society's endorsement. For example, the credentials in the educational system do not represent a real assessment but rather a ceremonial evaluation of the graduates.

### **2.2.3.1 Institutional Change, Path Dependence and Bricolage**

Institutional change is one of the major driving forces of organizational change in institutional setting other than pressure from market competition, and the pursuit of efficiency

(DiMaggio & Powell 1991). When organizational actors realize a need to conform to a new set of categories and practices in a new institutional environment, isomorphic change happens. In accordance with DiMaggio and Powell, the adoption of the defined set of classifications and categories is the result of the power of the state to enforce conformity (coercive form of isomorphism), the power of dominant professional elites to disseminate a single normative standard (normative form) and the practice of administrators who tend to copy the successful form (mimetic form). The realization of the need to conform to a new set of categories, on the other hand, is particularly true in the order-affirming type of organizations rather than task-performing ones, such as educational organizations (Brint & Karabel 1991:342).

The institutional change is an ongoing process. Organizations conform to the existing set of institutional categories and become isomorphic. However, the institutional categories are enforced in the organizational field which is composed of formal and informal networks and organizational actors, in which, as DiMaggio suggested, is filled with different forces which compete for a legitimate set of categories continuously. In other words, the institutional change is a process of structuration (DiMaggio 1991:267).

There are various forms of isomorphic change, and many contributing factors that influence the changes. One of the forces involved is the inertial tendency of the organization. It is a

structural constraint that influences the institutional transformation (Brint & Karabel 1991:348). In Pierson's word, it is the "path dependence" (2000). It can be conceptualized as the mindset constraint of the organizational leaders, the ideological constraint in the institution, or a particular track on which an organization follows which would be highly costly to change the track. In a broad sense, it is the causal relevance of preceding stages in a temporal sequence; while in a narrow sense, it means a particular track taken by an actor, whose cost is extremely high when it reverses. In other words, the preceding steps of the organization in a particular direction induce further movement in the same direction, that is, the "increasing return" process (Pierson 2000:2520). When the development of an institute is in line with the existing "path", the reward keeps on increasing; however when it changes to the new path, it would be very costly in terms of the institution arrangement, learning and internal resistance (Draelants & Maroy 2007:45).

An explanation of path-dependent processes thus requires looking at history, rather than simply at current conditions of technology, preferences, and other factors that determine outcomes. History matters in institutional analysis (North 1994:361; Pierson 2000;).

As the path dependent model suggests that the institutional change is constrained and enabled by the previous repertoire of the institution. The institutional change is therefore

“evolutionary” rather than “revolutionary” (Campbell 2004:70). Evolutionary institutional change is the gradual accumulation of small, incremental changes over long periods of time; while revolutionary change refers to the “major shocks or crises that disrupt the status quo and trigger fundamental institutional changes” (*ibid*, p.68).

Further to the path dependent tendency of institutional change, Campbell (2004) tried to theorize the outcome of path dependence and the factor of agency by the concept “bricolage”.

Bricolage is a hybridization of selected elements of the elements of the new institution and the existing institutional classifications. Following the path dependence assumption, Campbell believes that the evolutionary type of institutional change (Campbell 2004:70) is constrained or resourced by the institution’s historicity and the network and mindset of the actors. The direct transplant of the external formal structure is not viable with the given institutional structure. The input institution must be translated and innovatively combined with existing principles and practices. The change is therefore always in the form of “bricolage” (Campbell 2004:69), which means that, the institutional change generally adopts and combines the existing institutional principles and practices with the new categories through a creative process of recombination. The function of bricolage is to bridge the gap between the normative dimension of the new formal structure with the existing cognitive dimension and make the new institution feasible. Likewise, the adoption of a new formal

structure is in fact a process of recontextualization in a new context which is a field with existing power relations. Bricolage can be regarded as a compromise among the power groups in the field.

Campbell distinguishes two types of bricolage, namely, the “substantive bricolage” and the “symbolic bricolage” (Campbell 2004:69). Substantive bricolage follows the logic of instrumentality. It involves the combination of the existing institutional principles and practices to address the technical adjustments; symbolic bricolage follows the logic of appropriateness (March & Olsen 1989). It refers to the institutional change that involves the recombination of symbolic principles and practices in order to reconcile normative or cognitive conflicts invoked by changes.

Another major factor that affects the mechanism of change is the actors— “institutional entrepreneurs” or “bricoleurs” as dubbed by Campbell. They are the major agents and resource persons of the change, who are also responsible for mobilizing “ideas” in the institutional change (Campbell 2007:101). The “repertoires” (*ibid*, p.75) or the networks and resources, (both symbolic as well as physical), of the bricoleurs in the organizational field affect the scope and form of change directly. They are the key persons to determine the change in either an evolutionary or revolutionary form; in a creative or a conservative

way. In addition to the network and resources, the mindset of the bricoleurs has a significant influence on the change.

The major contribution of organizational institutionalists is that they take “cognitive aspect” back to the organizational studies and study the taken-for-granted worldviews and cognitive schema. However, new institutionalists are criticized that there has been little attention paid on actors and agency (Coburn 2004; Spillane, Reiser & Gomez 2006; Spillane & Burch 2006). Actors bring along their schema, repertoire including network and resources, are not passive receivers or responders to the environment. They are shaping the institutional change on a real-life and daily basis. The mechanism of how actors make sense of various environments with their own individual schema, how they actually recombine selected institutional elements in their own way in the change, and how the mechanism and their action interact with the taken-for-granted cultural cognitive scheme of the actors is a crucial realm to study. In sum, the agency of institutional change as a new direction is consequential to the study of new institutionalist perspective.

#### **2.2.4 Actors and Agency: Sense-making Process**

While bricolage is the change in formal structure to cater for the gap between the existing

institution and the new, that is, the normative dimension and the cognitive one, “decoupling” or “loosely coupling” is the daily practice that caters for the gap (Weick 1976; Meyer & Rowan 1992). Decoupling or loosely-coupling refers to the situation that the “structure is disconnected from technical (work) activity, and activity is disconnected from its effects” (Meyer & Rowan 1992:79). Following the new institutional assumption, organizations responding to the same institutional environment eventually become isomorphic in the formal structure to attain legitimacy. As the formal structure adopted is standardized, it could be alienated to the original institution and the local factors. Loosely-coupling refers to the practice where the actual activities deliberately disconnect with the formal structure, and the organizational structure is not necessarily bounded by a central authority or technical core.

As the input formal structure is the source of legitimacy and it is tightly coupled with the requirements of institutional environment, the organization responds to the very institutional environment that adopts such formal structure. Hence, Weick believes that this loosely-coupled system is a functional necessity. First, it protects the formal structure from practical inconsistencies arising in daily activities; it also makes the daily practices possible even if it is inconsistent with the input formal structure. As a result, in a loosely-coupled system inspection of daily activities is avoided. It may also help the organization to be more stable among uncertainties and contingencies in its environments. It also allows the

organization to make adjustments in response to more localized changes and thus easier, and let the individual actor in the organization to be more autonomous. The fact that the organization operates in such a loosely-coupled way, with the relative independence of different parts in an organization, is beneficial to the operation of an organization (Weick 1976:6-9).

Some theorists, including Weick, further develop the concept of loosely-coupled system or de-coupling in a more complicated way. For example, de-coupling is a process with various dimensions rather than a static phenomenon. There are two major directions on the further development of the concept, namely, different types of decoupling in various contexts, and the significance of the agency in the process of decoupling (Coburn 2004; Orten & Weick 1990; Spillane, Reiser & Gomez 2006; Spillane & Burch 2006).

Coburn (2004), for instance, points out that beyond “decoupling”, there are various outcomes which are dependent on teachers’ pre-existing beliefs, practices and the nature of the policy message. The teacher is of a mediating role to determine the way and dimension of de-coupling in education reform. According to Coburn, teachers make interpretations after making sense of the institutional requirements and act in daily activities in classrooms. In his research on teachers’ responses to the introduction of a new approach on reading



instruction (2004), Coburn found that when a policy is launched in a top-down way, teachers might have different reactions due to their perceptions. The perceptions are shaped by four factors of the policy message in the context of the institutional environment, namely, the degree of congruence, (degree of the new policy message congruent to the pre-existing beliefs of the teachers), degree of intensity, (degree of intensity of pressure teachers received), degree of pervasiveness, (degree of the how the messages are interlocking and overlapping) and degree of voluntariness, (whether the teachers follow the message by coercive means or normative ones) (*ibid*, p.226-234). The perceptions of teachers will lead to the responses in the following ways. First, when the new approach is not congruent with the teachers' beliefs or the existing approach, the teacher might have the reaction of "rejection", that is, they tend to reject approaches that do not fit in with their preexisting approach; second, they may give "decoupling/ symbolic response". The teachers only respond to the pressures from the environment with symbolic responses that are decoupled from the technical core; third, "parallel structures" may be developed. That is to say, teachers might balance two or more parallel approaches in the classroom when the approaches are conflicting; fourth, the strategy of "assimilation" may be employed. Teachers tend to assimilate, or interpret the new approach through their existing tacit knowledge or the "schema"; and last, by "accommodation". The teachers engaged with pressures from the environment that caused them to restructure their fundamental assumptions (*ibid*, p.223-226). In sum, the

pre-existing beliefs and practices and the nature of the policy message do have effects on the individual perception on policy implementation. By different perceptions, the implementation in the frontline level will have various outcomes in addition to “decoupling” (*ibid*, p214).

Spillane and his colleagues (Spillane, Reiser & Gomez 2006; Spillane & Burch 2006) try to investigate the complexity of the concept “decoupling” in the context of classroom instruction (Spillane, Reiser & Gomez 2006:87). Instruction differs among subjects, which includes the content, academic tasks students work on, teaching strategies, ways of presenting ideas to students, student grouping strategies, and student work assignments (*ibid*, p.87). To Spillane and his colleagues, subject is a key variable of decoupling, in which the institutional environment to be responded to is different. For instance, the degree of decoupling from the policy environment to the instruction of some subjects is higher in languages arts subject than mathematics (*ibid*, p.92). It might be due to the institutional curriculum requirements of different subjects, such as the government authority, university departments and professional groups, textbook and test publishers and external programmes (*ibid*, p.90, 93) such as those provided by private tutorial centres. Mathematics, for example, tends to be more tightly coupled because there is a greater degree of sequencing of the content, and that the assessment format is more standardized. Besides, subjects with different types of

assessment methods vary the degree of decoupling. The public, standardized form of examination is believed to have greater control over instructional practices rather than the school-based, formative form assessment, and hence it contributes to a more coupled structure. Teacher training programmes of different subjects define different discipline culture of teachers which encompasses the teachers' conceptions of the subject matter and the approach to instructional practice like the student-centred or teacher-centred approach for instance. It is another variable that affects the degree of decoupling. To sum up, subject is a key variable to understand the degree of decoupling of the policy and instruction.

Another significant variable that affects the degree of decoupling is human agents (*ibid*, p.95-6). It includes forms of leadership of principal or panel chairperson (*ibid*, p.92-93) and the sense making process of human agents in the school process. Some administrators or panel chairpersons tend to be more involved at the implementation level, while others would be more lay-back in terms of their leadership style. For instance, it could be examined by the frequency of the administrators participating in panel meetings. Nonetheless, these dimensions interact with the characters of different subjects introduced in the previous paragraphs. For instance, some principals may take part in the meeting on core subjects such as Use of English, which is defined as a very critical subject to determine the entry rate to tertiary institutes.

Likewise, the sense-making process of frontline practitioners such as teachers and panel members is another variable that influences the degree of decoupling. The factor of human agencies refers to the sense making process in the immediate scenario of implementation of the policies such as panel meeting and classroom. The local interests of teachers and teacher groups (Spillane, Reiser & Gomez 2006:47), for example, and the “prior knowledge” of the teachers (Spillane & Burch 2006:95; Spillane, Reiser & Gomez 2006:47), as Coburn puts it, also affects the sense-making process of the teachers. Practitioners have their own values and prior knowledge in the field due to professional socialization as well as the discipline culture. Prior knowledge includes experience and tacitly held expectations and beliefs (*ibid*, p.49). It influences the daily operation in the classroom when teachers are involved in the sense-making process. According to Spillane and his colleagues, it involved a “schema”, or a specific knowledge structure that link the related concepts used to make sense of the world together. Teachers then process, encode, organize and interpret the messages received (*ibid*, p.49). In the implementation of a policy, teachers will categorize what they see in terms of existing knowledge structures by encoding conceptions of types of people and behaviors (*ibid*, p. 50). This is particularly true when the policies are less elaborated (Spillane & Burch 2006:95) and when the subjects are assessed in a less standardized way. In other words, policies are always “supplementing” rather than

“supplanting” (Spillane, Reiser & Gomez 2006:49).

As suggested, human agencies are a key variable to study the implementation of a policy or the degree of decoupling of a policy (Coburn 2004). It is suggested that there are three scenarios where the true implementation is influenced by the cognitive sense-making process of the agents. First, the same top-down policy message might result in different interpretations. Second, the new ideas are misunderstood as the familiar interferes with change (*ibid*); third, the understanding is focused on superficial features and misses the true deeper principles of the policies (*ibid*, p. 52-56). The sense making process of the policy is related to the schema of actors. Coburn (2004) further specifies the process of sense making with individual schema in the following ways. First, the individual has an existing schema, which leads to individual interpretations of the policy; second, the individual develops a new schema, which refers to the situation that people encounter with difficulties of “accommodation” in Piaget’s term, that is, when the old schema is not able to assimilate the new ideas, there is a need to construct a new schema; third, the individual maintains an old schema, and tries to assimilate new knowledge on a superficial level. In the last case, individual sticks to the original schema and focus on superficial similarities, which limits the recognition of the new policy (*ibid*, p.51).

Nonetheless, the sense-making process of the agencies is neither a static nor a solo affair (*ibid*, p.56). In Spillane and his colleagues' research, they found that the teachers' understandings of reform ideas will evolve as they try out new instructional ideas and approaches in their teaching (*ibid*, p.62). It is an ongoing process. In addition, the sense-making practice is stretched over the agencies such as teachers, school administrators and academic professionals (*ibid*, p.61). The process is always shaped in a social context by the common practices and beliefs of a community. In a school, the process might be shaped by professional group of teachers, individual school organization, sponsoring bodies; and it might be shaped by the formal group such as teacher union or subject panel; or an informal one (Coburn 2004) etc. Besides, the effect of the sense-making process varies in different organizational arrangements. For example, whether the staffroom is a cubicle-ridden format or an open office makes the form of interactions vary among teachers, and hence affects the opportunities for teachers to be exposed to alternative understandings of policy proposals (*ibid*, p. 56-7). Moreover, agencies nested in several overlapping contexts will enhance the opportunities of the exchange of various views. Principals and teachers taking part in government curriculum committees, for example, are likely to bring different perspectives to their school organization that influence the whole sense-making process (*ibid*, p. 58). The professional or occupational identities with shared norms, knowledge, perspectives, commitments, and language influence the process too (*ibid*, p. 58). The knowledge and norms

shape the interpretation of the agencies.

Coburn, Spillane and his colleagues bring agency back into the study on organization and focus on the institutionalization process in the micro-level. The theorists try to study the voluntaristic aspect of the actors by situating teachers in the context of institutional environment and real classroom. It is believed that the preconception of teachers on classroom practices in changes of the working environment has significant impact upon how they respond. The preconception, or the schema, and the immediate interpretation of the real classroom practices presumes voluntary agency of the actors. It could constitute an important integral part of the institutionalization process at both micro and macro level which fills in the mechanism of isomorphic change as well as institutional change in various levels. The incorporation of cognitive aspect of the actors into the new institutionalist perspective could also serve as a micro foundation of the macro structure. The study on sense-making process of actors towards institutional change can be served as a new entry point of new institutionalist studies.

However, while the theorists try to introduce these various variables at the micro level, they fail to put it into the organizational context for analysis. Individual actors are organizational actors that they make reference of the organizational context in which they react and respond

to the requirement of institutional environment. To investigate the black-box of institutional change by bringing back the agency, the theorists have to put the actors in organizational context. As voluntary actors, teachers are affected by their own schema in the sense-making process in institutional change. The schema is affected by the repertoire and the network of individual actors, as well as the institutional environment they perceived. As suggested in new institutional perspective, actors have to respond to the respective institutional environment in order to achieve legitimacy, in which the sense-making process towards the institutional environment is situated in organizational setting. The reference to organization and as an organizational actor is therefore very crucial and necessary to be brought into focus in the studies.

In sum, when organizational actors respond to the institutional environment, they also need to respond to their own institutional environment as a rational agentic actor in modern society (Meyer & Jepperson 2000). A modern agentic actor is referred to as rational and sovereign. Its rationality and independence makes the actor adaptive and capable of learning. The actors responds to an institutional environment of agentic actors themselves, by selecting their own schema, that is, the repertoire and network. It is the mechanism which Archer calls "internal dialogue" (Archer 2003:303), by which the agency can be at work in the process of sense-making.



### **2.2.5 Theoretical Apparatuses of New Institutionalism**

The focuses of new institutionalist studies are on the legitimacy and the cognitive aspect of an institution. It includes 1) the studies of *institutional effects*: the sustaining patterns, orders and practices found in institutions, the durability of institutional effects (Pierson 2004); 2) the studies of *institutional changes*: types of institutional changes (Campbell 2004), dimensions of changes (Scott 2001), levels of abstraction, mechanism of institutional change, the role of actors in the change, and normative and cognitive ideas about institutional changes (Campbell 2004). The theoretical apparatuses of the three pillars (namely the regulative, normative and cognitive pillar) will be applied in the study of these dimensions. These three pillars are the bases of legitimacy of an institution, and through which the process of institutionalization works. In addition, institutions operate at multi-levels and in various ways. By conceptualizing the multi-level of abstractions, we can understand how the institution effects work on different levels.

#### **2.2.5.1 The Three Pillars of Institution**

According to Scott (2001), there are three pillars in the institution, namely, the cognitive pillar, the normative pillar and the regulative pillar. The three components serve as a source of legitimacy of the institution in a social context, and in turn, they enable and constrain social actions in a society. The cognitive pillar refers to the meaning system in which the construction of classifications or typifications is consistently framed, guided and negotiated (*ibid*, p.40-4). Actors, as Berger and Luckmann (1989) put it, are enabled and constrained in the meaning system in which they can make sense and “work the system”. The meaning system includes both values and norms, and the normative pillar provides “prescriptive, evaluative, and obligatory dimensions” of social life (Scott 2001:37). The regulative pillar is the sanction, the reward and punishment which consists of “rule-setting, monitoring, and sanctioning activities” undertaken in institutions (*ibid*, p. 35). In new institutionalism, the institution is founded on these three pillars by which the institutional effects are accounted for, and it works through different levels of analysis.

The curriculum institution is sustained by the three pillars in Hong Kong. The official curriculum conferred by the Education Department (ED), as well as the official examination syllabus conferred by the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) serve as the regulative pillar which works in the form of reward and punishment for the actors. Credentials such as the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE)

or the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKAL), for example, serve as a threshold to university admission as well as in job application. It rewards both the organizational and individual actors who follow the rules with legitimacy and resources, while punishing those who do not. The normative emphasis has a prescriptive basis, (values and norms), of legitimacy. In the curriculum institution in Hong Kong, for example, the tertiary teacher training institutes and universities provide this basis. Mainstream discourses of curriculum knowledge and pedagogy are generated and spread by academic research and teaching in the field. Professionals provide a normative guide to the curricular and pedagogic practices in everyday life. It operates in the organizational fields, that not only actors of school organizations and frontline teachers alike have to follow, but also the governmental education department, textbook publishers and the like in the organizational field have to follow. In the cognitive aspect, actors share the culture in the curriculum field and follow it in a taken-for-granted way. They are socialized and cultivated within this official curriculum, and they have the mindset which acts in line with the curriculum discourse. In this way, organizations in curriculum institution gain legitimacy and survive based on these three pillars.

The following is the summary of Appendix I to illustrate different focuses of concern about LS over the time period. It is found in the Appendix I “The Chronological table: News

Clips about Liberal Studies in Hong Kong (1988-2008)” that the discussion of the subject from 1988 until 2008 is around the three pillars.

Table 2.3 Number of Mentioning of Different Focuses of the Three Pillars in the News about LS from 1988 to 2008 (Appendix I)

	Normative Pillar		Regulative Pillar			Cognitive Pillar		Others	
	Curriculum issue	Academic structure of NSS	University admission	School allowance	Assessment	Teaching training	Subject Implementation	MOI	Others
1988	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1989	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
1990	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
1992	-	-	2	1	2	-	4	-	-
1993	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
1994	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
1996	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1998	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
1999	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2000	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2001	5	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
2002	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2003	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2004	34	2	2	-	8	42	1	-	2
2005	29	7	6	1	8	8	8	1	1
2006	11	1	1	-	9	17	14	6	-
2007	3	-	-	-	10	6	5	-	1
2008	10	-	-	-	9	12	14	4	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>

Source:

#### Appendix I.

Remarks: Only the title of the news is used as the object of analysis. Each idea is counted as one in each title. In other words, there might be more than one count in every entry.

In the table it is seen that over the years the focuses of public discussion is different, yet they are around the three pillars. The normative aspect of LS, that is, the curriculum idea and other issues have been the centre of discussion from the very beginning in late eighties until today. It refers to the philosophy of the curriculum, coverage of the subject content, curriculum and child development and so on. In late eighties there was a discussion on the

sixth-form curriculum reform (Hong Kong Working Group on Sixth Form Education 1989) that led to the introduction of the subject LS in 1992. It is the focal point in the discussion of LS at that time. The normative concern has been popular again in 2004 and the following year when the consultation paper was released to invite comments from the public. It serves as a keynote and foundation of other discussions.

The regulative pillar refers to the criteria of rewards and punishments to individual and organizational actors, such as requirement of university admission, school allowance and assessment (the public examination) of the subject. Compared to the normative pillar, the regulative one is less mentioned in the public discussion, yet it is seen that after 2004 there is more concern on the assessment, in particular public examination of LS, on its form and content, and its relations to university admission. Assessment and requirement of university admission is the focal point of concern of the stakeholders or the public to estimate the feasibility of the subject. This is the regulative pillar.

The cultural cognitive aspect of the actors in the institution refers to teachers' perception of the legitimate subject. In the discussion, it is the concerns on teaching training and the subject implementation. Among the news clips, it is found that the public realized the change brought by the new subject in both pedagogic practices in everyday life as well as the

requirement of an LS teachers on conception of the subject, content, teaching skills and so on. From 2004, the discussion on teaching training and subject implementation has been very popular. It can be regarded as a practical consideration on the implementation in real classroom, or a cultural change in teaching profession and pedagogic practices.

In sum, in the context of institutional change of curriculum, different parties in our society such as secondary school teachers, principals, university vice-chancellors, scholars, parents, representatives of sponsoring bodies engage in the public discussion of LS around the three pillars. Among the three, normative components are the major focus in the discussion over twenty years. LS must be regarded as an appropriate and sound curriculum in order to achieve legitimacy. Around the curriculum philosophy, objectives and content, almost all parties show positive attitude towards the subject. Yet there are various opinions on how to implement the subject, such as content coverage or the pedagogic practices. The cognitive aspect is another major focus in public discussion. The new subject involves cultural change in teaching as well as classroom practices. The concerns are showed by different parties, in particular scholars from universities and teachers and teachers' associations as observed in mass media. The parties are conscious of the cultural change in the institutional change. Only more resources and supports are necessary according to the members of different parties to facilitate the change. On regulative aspect, LS has already been listed as

one of the subjects in official curriculum announced in both 1992 (as an elective subject) and 2005 (as a core one), LS has attained its legitimacy. The discussion is mainly on whether it is listed as basic requirement of university admission and the form of assessment.

### **2.2.5.2 Multiple Levels of Abstractions**

The institutional effects penetrate into various layers of the social institution, from individual to organization and from the societal and to a world level. Each level of analysis is equally an abstraction. The differences of the levels of reification are both spatial and temporal. Individual actions are “nested” in a social context, while social context can only be explained in terms of individual consciousness and behaviour (Friedland & Alford 1991:242). In this sense, it is hermeneutic in essence. There are different spatial extents of activities happened in different levels. The extent is the greatest for institutions and the least for individuals (*ibid*, p. 242). The symbolic world can only be constructed theoretically at the institutional level. Nonetheless, it is necessary to take in consideration the temporal differences on various levels. The system level, sector level and the organization level are more enduring than individual action, which is also be very important in the study of institutional effects.

The institutional effect operates at various levels, namely, system level (world polity level),

sector level, organization level, and human interaction level.

World polity is defined by Meyer as a "system of creating value through the collective conferral of authority" (Meyer 1980: 111-2). Flourished from World War II under the rationalization project, nation-states are the major actors to construct and spread the rationalized world culture (Meyer et al. 1997: 169). The world polity is the field in which world culture is constructed in the rationalization project, and the nation states as the actors who are mediated by the international governmental as well as non-governmental organizations, the United Nation in particular, disseminate a set of universally applicable models that define their legitimate goals and means (*ibid*, p.112). The world culture is in fact a source of legitimacy of the system, which we also call the institutional environment.

Institutional environment, or the system level, is defined as that "characterized by the elaboration of rules and requirements to which individual organizations must conform if they are to receive support and legitimacy" (Scott & Meyer 1991:123). DiMaggio and Powell (1991:64) suggest that the state and the professions are the two great rationalizers in the mentioned modernization project after World War II which source and disseminate world culture as an institutional environment. Meyer and Rowan, in addition, believe that the market is a significant institutional environment (Meyer & Rowan 2006:3), which is a



technical environment. By the technical environment the theorists refer to the set of rules and regulations which the organization responds to which is technically more certain and more market-driven (Rowan 2006:210), that is, clearly assessed by the rules of effectiveness and efficiency (Scott & Meyer 1991:123). However, the market as a technical environment is not as real as we think. The technical components of the market could be constructed and selected according to the rules of the institutional environment. For example, the outsourcing of educational services, such as extra-curricular activities does not only follow the market logic of efficiency, but it is also congruent to the institutional environment. The exchange networks in education are structured as much by institutional considerations as by the considerations of economic efficiency (Meyer & Rowan 2006b:8). In sum, the nation-state, market and professions constitute a rationalized, universal symbolic world to which organizations must respond in order to attain legitimacy. This is the system level of the institutional effects.

The sector level, or the organizational field, is a critical unit to bridge the organizational and societal level of institutional studies. It refers to the "aggregate which constitute a recognized area of institutional life, including key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies and other organizations that produce similar services of products", in other words, "the totality of relevant actors" (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:64-5). In the sector,

different levels of actors are related and organized in a network of governance and exchange.

In the large institutional environment of education, a variety of organizations serve as the key actors, such as the school organizations, school sponsoring bodies, government departments and officials, teachers' unions, parental groups, political parties, private tutorial centres, textbook manufacturers, professionals from universities or research institutes; and there are individual actors in the organizational field such as teachers, parents and students. These actors are involved in the ongoing negotiation and exchange in the organizational fields in response to the institutional environment.

Individual organizations will become isomorphic in formal structure (on organization level) in order to gain legitimacy, when they respond to the same institutional environment in the organizational field. This is a constraining process in which one unit in a population is "(forced) to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions" (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:66). On the organization level, or the formal structure which includes the leadership, organizational goals, structural features and processes, the organizations grow isomorphic by realizing the source of legitimacy of cognitive, normative and regulative aspects in the specific institution in due course.

The link between the individual level (micro) and the system and sector level (macro) is an

important question to institutionalists. An institution is defined as a widely shared, homogeneous, enduring set of rules and regulations, with which is very difficult to raise the problem of the existing differences and institutional change. In fact, we cannot grasp the whole picture unless we study the institutional process at a micro level, for instance, the meaning negotiation process. The individual and the human interaction level is therefore a significant entry point to the mentioned problem.

Human interaction level refers to reciprocal typifications and interpretations of habitualized actions (Berger & Luckmann 1989:53-4) which is the key link between the micro and macro level. According to Berger and Luckmann, individual actions are externalized and objectivated as reciprocal typifications, which in turn internalizes the individual with a set of norms, values and rules in particular institutional settings. Through internalization, individuals attain their identity in the typified form, the "identity types". It is a phenomenon that "emerges from the dialectic between individual and society", and the "identity types" "are social product *tout court*, relatively stable elements of social reality" (1989:195). In other words, the individual action, cognitive scheme of individuals as well as their values, although originated by the individual, is finally social in nature. When individuals internalize these typifications they obtain their identities out of the categories of the society. It connects the micro-macro level in a dialectic way. The human interaction level is possible

only with common institutionalized languages, interacting and communicating patterns, and routines in practices.

The study of the institutional change of curriculum in Hong Kong should be understood with the three pillars in multiple levels. The institution has changed from the old curriculum to a combination of the old one with the new curriculum. Both the old and new curriculums are mandated by the government that gains legitimacy and resources from the institutional environment, namely the government and professions in the organizational field of curriculum institution. LS at AS level as an optional subject was introduced in 1992, and stipulated as one of the core subjects in NSS curriculum in 2005. The early adopter, (which adopted the subject when it is first introduced), late adopter, (which adopted after 2005) and non-adopter, (which has not adopted the subject) make their respective decisions as a response to the institutional requirements. In regulative aspect school organizations have to take legitimacy into consideration. LS at AS level as well as other discipline-based subjects are officially accepted curriculum. It is totally legitimate to adopt. In the normative aspect, there are various and shifting discourses on the structure and practices of the two curriculums, which are defined by the professional community, including the tertiary institutes, teaching training institutes and teacher professional associations and so forth. Both curriculums are supported with legitimate professional discourses. Under the curriculum change in this case,

school organizations could choose either old or new curriculum at their own calculation. In a later stage when schools know that they are required to take the new curriculum in a coercive way after 2009, they might try to select components of the discourses from the two distinct institutional environments to respond to. Take a non-adopter school for an example, it refuses to adopt the subject LS as an “extreme subject”, in their Principal’s words; but he insists the traditional subjects can achieve the goals of “project learning” and “acquisition of generic skills” in a “knowledge-based society”. These are the classifications selected from both curriculum institutions. In a cognitive aspect, we must understand the meaning system shared by the actors, according to which actors understand and interpret the curriculum change on a daily basis. The change of curriculum institution implies the change of the meaning system. How the actors perceive the change and make sense of it is crucial to the understanding of the curriculum change. As the construction of classifications or typifications is consistently framed, guided and negotiated (Berger & Luckmann 1989:40-41), actors makes sense, interpret and adjust the curriculum structure of the taken-for-granted meaning system. The individual and human interaction levels should be studied in order to understand the sense-making process.

In the organization field, or at the sector level, it is significant to figure out the way the organizations in the organizational field sustain the old curriculum and start the new one

together and how they construct the discourses on two distinct, if not opposite type of curriculum at the time when institutional change is introduced in a top-down manner. The discourses of key actors to be studied include school organizations, school sponsoring bodies, government departments and officials, professionals from universities or research institutes.

On an organization level, the study of the formal structure of the curriculum focuses on the governance of school organizations. It includes the organizational goals, the subjects offered, the allocation of time for each subject in the timetable, the allocation of students who participate in the public examinations, the subject panel structure, the supporting personnel arrangement, the participation of school administrators in each subject and the like in school organizations. It will be studied in order to see how it works on the decision-making of school organizations and the curriculum structure.

On the individual as well as human interaction level, the teachers' practices and conceptions are the focus for investigation. In this case, the new formal structure of curriculum, that is, LS at AS level has been taken into the existing conventional curriculum structure. When we look into the way the discourses in the organizational fields, we can see how the actors justify the co-existing curriculum structures. Nonetheless, as the new institutionalists suggest, the formal structure, that is the new curriculum institution is not congruent with the daily

practices of the teachers. It is assumed that the individual actor undertakes invention and negotiation as strategies in such institutional changes, and is usually “decoupled” or “loosely-coupled”. To study human interaction as well as individual level, the following will be investigated: the interactions between the administration and subject panel chairperson, the panel chairperson and subject teachers, and the interactions between teachers teaching different subjects, in particular LS with non-LS teachers. Besides, the individual strategies adopted and the perception and understanding of the scenario of curriculum change are also examined. The strategies and the perception, as mentioned, are nested in the institutional rules and categories. It is an interesting case to study how the teachers and panel personnel perceive, act and react in the situation in which two distinct curriculum forms coexisted.

### **2.3 Related Local Research**

Not much research has been done on the subject of Liberal Studies in Hong Kong. More and more studies are done on the LS at HKDSE level, and there is only very limited number of research on LS at AS level.

On the LS at AS level, Deng (1995) investigates how the principal and teachers implement an

integrated subject in the Sixth form, with the case study of LS. Deng sets the study in the context of curriculum innovation, and evaluates the factors that influence the implementation of the subject. He finds that the implementation of the subject is hardly satisfactory (*ibid*, p.3-4); there are four major factors that are significant, namely the degree of clarity and complexity of the policy, the strategy on implementation from the top-down, the school context factor and the external factors such as the relation of the subject and the entry requirement of the universities.

The first two factors are about the policy itself and the official strategies on implementation.

The degree of clarity and complexity of the policy is found to be very significant on the communication of policy message from the top-down. The form and content of the new curriculum of LS (AS) are respectively described as highly complex and unclear by the teachers and principals in the study, and is said to be rather difficult to understand and follow (*ibid*, p.93-5). In addition, the support from the Education Department and Curriculum Development Council is criticized by the interviewees to be far from satisfactory. In-service and pre-service teacher training catered for the new form of curriculum is piecemeal rather than well-organized. The teaching resources and teaching materials are insufficient. In sum, the actors are not familiar with the new form of curriculum and there is not enough support from the government.



The third factor is about the implementation of policy in a school context. Deng finds the perception of the principals and teachers are relatively significant in the school context, that is, the more they think the subject has relative advantages and is necessary, the more successfully the subject will be implemented. According to the two case studies in the research, all of the teachers being interviewed acknowledged the aims and objectives of the subject. They think that the subject is desirable and necessary to students in the way that could enhance their thinking ability and independent learning ability, which they think is much better than drilling (*ibid*, p.80-81). In addition, the subject identity of teachers brings major influence on the implementation. If they identify themselves with their discipline training, they will probably have trouble accepting the form, contents and resource allocation of the new subject. In effect, this will affect the survival of the original subject (*ibid*, p.95-6).

Another major obstacle to the implementation of the subject, according the teachers and principals, is that it is not significant in terms of the requirement of university admission (*ibid*, p.100). As an AS level subject it is counted as having the lack of support from public examination. AS Liberal Studies subject is given a weighting equivalent to 0.5 of an A-level subject, the resource allocated, such as hours in time table, number of teachers, and other resources is proportionally fewer (*ibid*, p.106).

Some other researches concern the perception of teachers of LS teachers in preparation and implementation of the subject. For example, Yu (2007) conducted a research on the perception of school practitioners in a Direct Subsidy Scheme School towards NSSLS. It is found that there are a number of factors that affect the preparation of the new curriculum. Yu identifies the pressures for curriculum changes is the major external factors contributing to the initiation of the curriculum preparation; while the internal factors, particularly the perception of school practitioners towards the curriculum is the major shaping force of the curriculum preparation.

Yung (2007) conducts a research on how the epistemological beliefs of LS teachers affect the teaching practices of teachers and the learning outcomes of students. It is found that teachers with “transmissionist epistemologies” a quantitative view about teaching and learning, entail a large portion in dispensing factual information; while teachers with “constructivist epistemologies”, a qualitative view about teaching and learning, emphasize active student participation. Furthermore, Yung finds students who are taught by the teachers with constructivist epistemologies showed more patience in completing the task and they are more elaborative in their answers than their transmissionist counterparts.

These researches can be conceptualized as the study to explain the factors that shape teachers' perception, either by teachers' own schema, or by the nature of policy messages in curriculum change. However, it can be further developed in terms of the content of the schema and policy message. Other factors such as the subject nature of LS could also be taken into account when dealing with the influence of subject preparation and implementation. An extension of the scope of the study is another further research development of these two studies.

In sum, the study finds that LS in AS level has not been implemented very successfully in the first few years due to a number of reasons. The research serves as an evaluation on the subject implementation of LS at AS level in 1992 to 1995. Putting the curriculum innovation in context, Deng identified the factors that affect the implementation of the subject, which include special features of the policy, insufficient support from the government, and contextual factors of school organizations. However, the study attempts to adopt an administrative approach which focuses on the feasibility of the curriculum implementation, which can be further developed by putting it into a theory-informed framework.

### **Chapter 3 The Study**

This study is to investigate how a new curriculum is institutionalized at school organization and how the organizational actors make sense of their actions towards the change. The introduction of subject Liberal Studies (LS) both at Advanced Supplementary (AS) Level in 1992 and in Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) curriculum in 2009 can be regarded as an institutional change from the collective code curriculum and a visible pedagogy to the integrated code curriculum and invisible pedagogy. The study focuses on the micro-level process in school organization. Individual as organizational actors in school organization are investigated on their perception and interpretation of the institutional change, and the sense-making process between their schema and the institutional environment in the change. These two sets of research questions respond to the three pillars of institution, namely, regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive pillars (Scott 2001) respectively. The perception and interpretation of individuals as organizational actors will be put in the regulative and normative context for analysis; while the sense-making process of individual actors will be put in the cultural-cognitive context. In order to find out the contributing factors of the institutional changes, two levels of the institutional change will be studied, namely, at school organizational level, the formal structure of the curriculum institution, and the sense-making process of the agencies at the individual level as well as the interaction between the agencies at human interaction level.

First, I shall identify the differences in school organizations between the early adopters of the subject and the late ones. What are the contributing factors that influence the adoption of the subject, including whether they adopt or not and in what scale? What are the institutional environments the actors perceive they have to respond to? What form of curriculum finally do the school organizations adopt, and in what degree? Second, I shall examine the sense-making process of the individual actors (frontline workers). What are the institutional environments they have to respond to? How do they deal with the discrepancies between the old curriculum institution and the new one? What are the significant factors that influence the sense-making process of the actors in terms of their own perception, interpretation and action in real classroom?

According to Campbell (2004), the formal structure of curriculum change is usually in the form of bricolage on the organization level. It is due to the mechanism of "path dependent" (ibid, p.65-6) that the existing institution provides a repertoire of rules and practices. The new institution differs from, but resembles the old ones in two ways: first, the substantive bricolage which resembles the technical principles and practices and follows the logic of instrumentality; and second, the symbolic bricolage which resembles the symbolic principles and practices and follow the logic of appropriateness (ibid, p. 69-70). Both forms of

bricolages co-exist in reality. The introduction of LS at AS level in many schools took the form of bricolage in Hong Kong since 1992. For example, some of the school teachers said that they usually adopt traditional teaching strategies such as "chalk and talk" in the new subject, which they think is the most efficient method (Deng1995:74-5). For the assessment method, they have to follow the suggestions of the policy paper to combine the conventional form of examination with project-learning, but some of them said they have no idea about the project (Deng1995:73-4). As a result, the format rather than the real content of project assessment is adopted. An administrators of the schools said the mixture of the old elements with the new ones is a characteristic of school-based curriculum, which is good for the transition of the old practice with the new one<sup>1</sup>. In this case, it is a combination of symbolic bricolage as well as substantive bricolage.

On an individual level, actors' choices for innovation are more or less fixed by the set of institutional principles and practices. However, it is an active process of the actors to make decision on the institutional change, which involves a sense-making process of individuals. The actor decides the range, dimensions, pace of the change (*ibid*, p.74), which implies a greater sense of agency. There are a number of actors to be studied in order to understand how the agencies matter in institutional change and they include the bricoleurs and the

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<sup>1</sup> Interview note E.I. (\*will be in proper format after transcription)

frontline teachers.

First of all, “bricoleurs”, the major agents and resource persons of the change, are the key person to determine the change in either an evolutionary or revolutionary form; in a creative or conservative way. The “repertoires” (Campbell 2007:75) or the networks and resources, (both symbolic as well as physical), of the bricoleurs in the organizational field affects the scope and form of change directly. For instance, a principal who takes part in government official curriculum working committee, or takes a significant role in the curriculum development session of the sponsoring body tends to adopt the new curriculum, and adopt it in a fuller scale in a more coupled way. The institutional repertoires of the bricoleur in the organizational field will be focused, such as ones’ current and past affiliated organizations, and see how it affects the scope form, and the pace of change.

In addition, frontline practitioners such as panel chairperson (the leader) and teachers ( the follower) are the key informants in the study. The pre-existing belief and practices and the nature of the policy message do have effects on the individual perception on policy implementation (Coburn 2004). Teachers might have different reactions towards the policy message due to their perceptions by the degree of congruence, degree of intensity, degree of pervasiveness and degree of voluntariness (*ibid*, p.226-234). It is therefore necessary to

study teachers' perception of the policy message, as well as the teachers' responses towards the policy with the above perception, such as "rejection", "decoupling/ symbolic response", "parallel structures", "assimilation" and "accommodation" (*ibid*, p.223-226). It is important to study the perception of the teachers towards their existing beliefs and the policy message they perceived. For example, whether there is any discrepancy on the implementation of LS among teachers when they interpret the subject with their own reference; and how they manipulate the classifications of LS into their own schema etc. In the case of the introduction of LS at AS level, apart from rejection, other responses such as decoupling, parallel structures, assimilation and accommodation can also be seen. Most of the teachers can only prepare the new subject with their own discipline knowledge and training. Parallel structures, which refers to the practice where teachers balance various approaches in classroom practices can usually seen in the daily practice of LS. As in the mentioned case, LS or other subjects in integrated code and invisible pedagogy are conducted in both old and new teaching method, such as chalk-and-talk, while on the other hand teachers have to stick to the project learning as the policy paper defines. An LS (AS) teacher said as the time-table is the same, there is not enough time to follow the issue enquiry approach. In addition, being an experienced Chinese history teacher, he does not really believe the enquiry approach, which he thinks the students cannot achieve solid foundation by discussion and



self-enquiry<sup>2</sup>. Assimilation is another method that teacher try to make sense of the new curriculum by their existing framework. The decoupling or loosely-coupling strategies show that the cognitive aspect or the sense-making process of agencies is very significant.

The sense making process is also influenced by the special features of the subject, which makes a greater autonomy of teachers in implementation. LS is a subject with integrated code and invisible pedagogy. It is supposed the school has more autonomy over the subject (it is regarded as a school-based subject), and in daily practice, teacher has more control over the instruction of the subject in classroom. Besides, the assessment of LS is combination of public examination and project work<sup>3</sup>. The form of assessment is not only a public and standardized form that might bring a more decoupled structure. Moreover, there is no specific pre-service teacher training courses for LS teachers or other integrated subjects until 2000 in tertiary institutes, and EDB (former EMB) has not provided teacher training activities until 2005<sup>4</sup>.

In addition, there is no LS course provided by the private tutorial centres until 2007. Large

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<sup>2</sup> Interview note E1.

<sup>3</sup> An Introduction to the Sixth-form Curriculum 2003 [on-line].

[http://www.edb.gov.hk/FileManager/EN/Content\\_3109/e-leaflet\\_s6\\_2008\\_e.pdf](http://www.edb.gov.hk/FileManager/EN/Content_3109/e-leaflet_s6_2008_e.pdf). Retrieved on 10 Feb, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> The Supply and Demand for General Education Teacher Training (通識教師培訓供求) (2004-10-23), *Wen Wei Po*. [online].

<http://paper.wenweipo.com/2004/10/23/HK0410230077.htm>. Retrieved on 10 Feb, 2009.

scale private tutorial centre is a very important, yet informal institution in the field of education. According to the Consumer Price Index 2004/05, there are 48.1% and 33.6% of sixth form students and upper secondary students attend supplementary tutorial classes (HKC&SD 2005), which is a very significant proportion of the population. The major purpose of tutoring is to help students to get good results in major public examinations (Bray & Kwok 2003:614). The teaching in tutorial centre, therefore, focuses on the examination skills rather than the academic content. It emphasizes and reinforces the standards of examination, on which students can be drilled. LS as a new form of subject has not been taken into tutoring or only in a "trial period", which highlights the different characteristics from other subjects. It affects the perception of the teachers in a mainstream school that it is not a subject with clear and standard form of assessment. In summary, the subject LS has its own special features that influence the sense-making process of the practitioners. It is a very significant factor that influences the pace and form of the institutionalization of the new curriculum.

In addition, the identity of the teachers and administrators affects the sense-making process as well, which includes the discipline training, any official committee or teachers interests group they take part in, any professional group or community they join and so on. These are the nested factors that are to be studied.

Besides, the sense-making process towards the perception and action of the teachers on LS is affected by the interactions among the frontline practitioners. For example, the organizational arrangement such as the staff room arrangement has a direct influence on the interaction pattern of the teachers. The staff room which is designed as an open office can facilitate professional as well as daily interactions, while the staffroom with cubicles cannot. Teachers are not a homogenous group of people. They might influence one another during daily interaction. The interaction every day in staff room, for example, or at lunch time brings the opportunities of informal discussion and exchange of thoughts which might be the source of influence among teachers group. The interaction can help teachers to get more information of the policy and help shaping their opinions towards the policy as well as the implementation. The on-going negotiation and change of sense-making process will be studied in this research.

Last but not least, the teachers' sense-making process in the institutional change is an on-going process. Actors adjust their framework of perception towards the new curriculum day by day. Teacher training activities is a one of the sources of perception change. All teachers are required to engage in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities of

not less than 150 hours in a three-year cycle<sup>5</sup>. However, which courses the teachers choose, teachers' attitude towards training, whether the teachers have the supports of the school administrators might affect the perception of the teachers towards the new curriculum. Besides, teachers will also adjust their perception in daily pedagogic practices in the classroom. The subject structure and assessment of LS is very different from that in traditional subject. One of the interviewed LS teacher said he believed that on-job training is very important for an LS teacher. The built-in components of LS such as project work, issue-enquiry approach is very demanding, which he found it is difficult to stick to the old school teaching. The teaching itself changes his concept of teaching and learning.

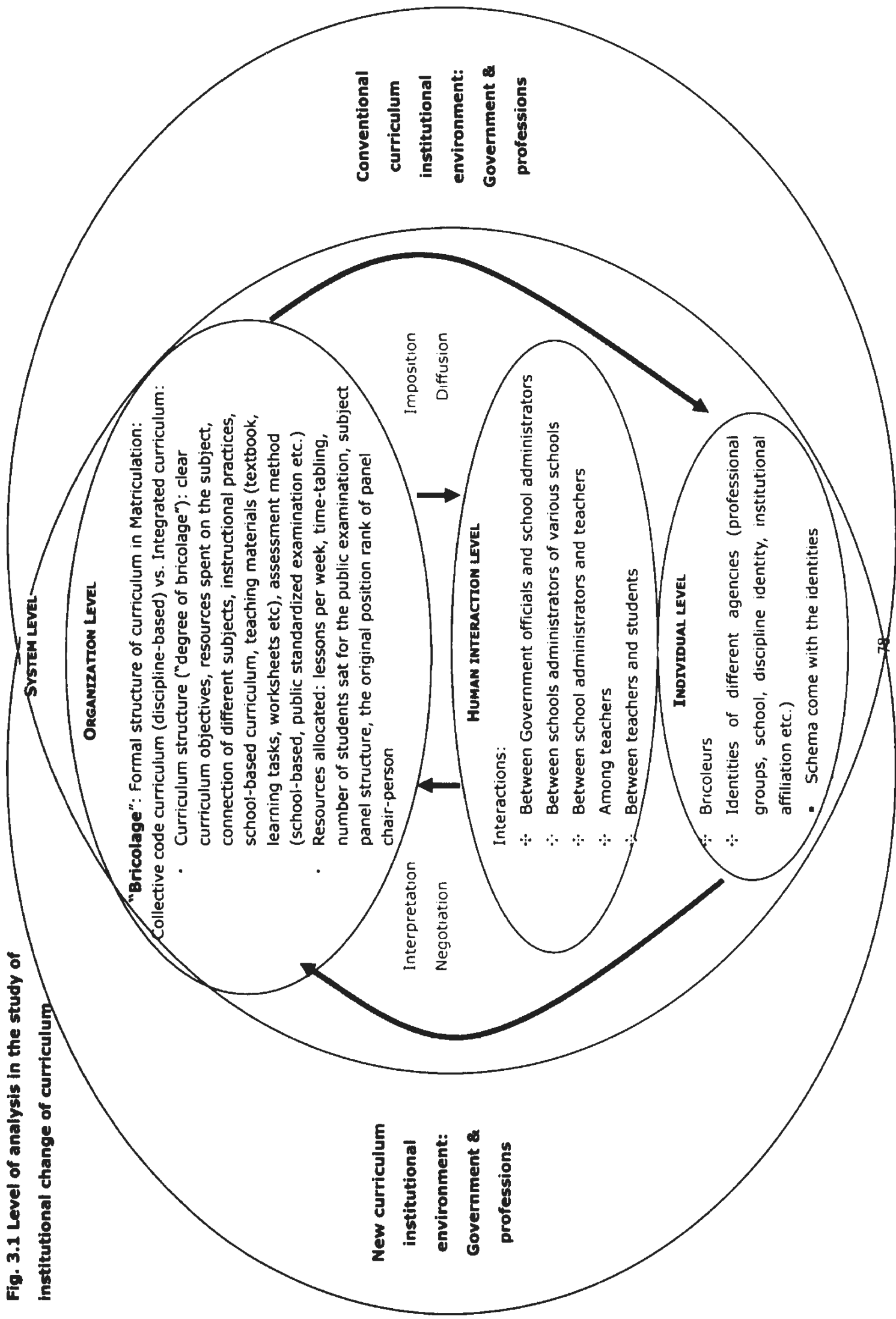
The research focus is on the institutionalization of a new curriculum institution into an existing one, with the central focus on the formal structure of the new curriculum and the sense-making process of the agencies that influences the institutional change, it will be conducted on the organizational, individual as well as human interaction levels (fig. 3.1).

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<sup>5</sup> Website of Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications. Available:

<http://www.acteq.hk/category.asp?lang=tw&cid=143&pid=70> . Retrieved on 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009.

**Fig. 3.1 Level of analysis in the study of institutional change of curriculum**



Human cognition is the key dimension in new institutionalism. Actually how actors perceive LS at AS level as a subject implemented coercively from top-down in the context of knowledge society, which is totally different from the conventional discipline-based subject, helps us grasp the complexity of the situation. The new curriculum is regarded as a functional necessity to meet the demand of the new economy. On the other hand, the discipline-based curriculum responds to the conventional curriculum institutional environment where solid knowledge, skills and attitude are the foundation of education. To respond to the two institutional environments which are both legitimate, actors selectively choose the components from the two environments, and combine different components from respective discourses. This is an on-going process. From the research we can see the constructivist nature of the curriculum change.

This thesis is an attempt to find out the contributing factors of adoption of the new subject LS at AS level in three types of school organization, namely the early adopter, later adopter and non-adopter. "Early adopter" is the school which adopted the subject before 1994 and participated the AS level examination in 1994; "Late adopter" refers to those adopted the subject after 2005 to now; and "Non-adopter" are those which have not adopted the subject until the academic year 2008/09. The adoption of the new subject is regarded as an acceptance of a new curriculum, an institutional change in other words. The study is an

investigation of the sense-making process of the perception and action of the actors in the institutional change of curriculum, how the actors respond to the respective institutional environment of the new and old curriculums and other institutions. The schema and other factors that influence the sense-making process is further explored in the study. The research is to contribute to the development of institutional theory by identifying a set of contributing factors in meaning negotiation process to delineate and describe the processes at play when individuals try to make sense of and respond to the curriculum change. It is significant in understanding the role of the agency and the institutionalization process in the micro-level.

The levels of analysis in the study include the individual one as well as the organizational one. Adopting the method of in-depth interview, I look into the sense-making process of individual, as an agentic actor of an individual, but as well as an organizational actor (Meyer & Jepperson 2000). Individual actors are playing organizational roles and enacting according to the cultural prescriptions of the respective institutions (Campbell 2004:78). The investigation conducted on the individual level in which individual is regarded an individual actor and an organizational one. Individual acts and enacts upon organizational context, with reference to, and bounded by the rules and regulations in the organization. It can therefore reveal the institutional rules.

As the primary focus is the sense-making process on which the discourses and the meaning system of the actors is emphasized, the method of in-depth interview is adopted in the study. It allows relatively free expression by the informants to talk about their experience. Besides, in order to strike a balance between allowing free expression by informants and the subsequent convenience of data analysis, semi-structured in-depth interview is selected as the principal method of data collection, which will be discussed in the following section.

The research questions and the research design are listed as follows.

### **3.1 Research Questions**

There are two sets of research questions in the study. First, why do schools respond to the LS at AS level in different ways? In other words, how do organizational actors perceive the requirements of the institutional environments and respond in such a way. The objective of the first set of questions is to find out the triggering factors of the institutional change in these three schools, the source of legitimacy of change or resistance. In addition, I would like to find out what the institutional components of the two curriculum institutions the actors perceived as legitimate are, and how they reacted. The first set of questions includes:



- A What are the factors that the informants believe that trigger/ have not triggered the institutional change in the school? In other words, what institutional environments do the actors think they should respond to?
- a What are the major concerns of the actors when they decide to take the change/ not to take the change?
- i Is there an intrinsic or extrinsic values to adopt the institutional change?
- ii Is there any consideration concerning the development of the school organization that influence the decision on whether to adopt the new subject?
- iii Any other factors are of concern by the actors in making decision?
- b Are there any pressures from government authority, professional groups, peer schools or peer administrators, teachers or the like?
- i How do the actors take the NSS curriculum reform in 2009 into consideration when they decide whether adopting the subject LS?
- ii How do they take the new curriculum discourses transmitted in teacher training, support programmes in tertiary institutes, or professional teachers' group in consideration?
- iii Do they feel any pressure when they know other schools or peer administrators/

teachers decide to adopt the subject?

B What are the standards, classifications, and rules and regulations do the actors believe they should adopt from the old and the new curriculum institutions respectively?

a The standards and classifications refer to subject practices (objectives, teaching and learning strategies, subject structure, assessment methods etc.), time-tabling, form and duration of subject teacher training, textbook etc.

The second set of research questions is about the sense-making process of the individual actors that influences the adoption of the subject LS at AS level. The objectives of the second set of question is to find out how the following factors influence the perceptions of the teachers, which includes schema and network of the actors, subject characteristics, and the communication of policy message. Specific questions are:

A What is the schema of different individual actors in these three types of school organizations?

a What kind of the repertoire, which includes the network and resources the actors possessed, including the training of academic discipline the actors received, affiliation to professional groups or government institutions and so forth.

- b How does the repertoire influence the schema of the individual actors?
  - c What and how are the interactions (from professional exchange as well as daily causal interactions) among the individuals affect the schema of the individual actors?
    - i The interactions between government officials and school administrators; schools administrators of various schools; school administrators and teachers; teachers and students; and among teachers.
- B How are the specific subject characteristics (which consists of the objectives, teaching and learning strategies, assessment methods and so forth) individual actors perceived that influences their schema?
- C How are the specific characteristics of the policy message the individual actors perceived that influences the degree of acceptance of the curriculum?

## **3.2 Research Design**

### **3.2.1 Research Design and Sampling**

The thesis is a qualitative study which uses in-depth interview to understand actors' views and sense-making process in the context of school organization. In-depth interview as the

principal data collection method allows interviewer to tailor follow-up questions and probe the interviewees in order to better tap into the mind of informants and interpret the subjective meaning of the interviewees. We can identify the distinct content of the discourses, actions and reactions of the actors in the context of policy implementation, yet the invisible reasons for the policies implemented, positions taken, and the actions and discourses carried out can be comprehended more fully by drawing upon the actors' own interpretations.

In the research, semi-structured in-depth interviews with open-ended questions are adopted as the data collection method. Semi-structured interview is a more flexible form of interview which provides a loose structure to guide the informants to answer while it allows flexibility so that the informants could freely express his or her thoughts. With a set of major questions, the interviewer can alter the sequences of the questions, ask follow-up questions when it is necessary in order to probe more deeply (Hitchcock & Hughes 1995:153-7).

The data collection was conducted in May to July 2009 through in-depth interview. Each interview is conducted for at least an hour, with follow-up interview over the phone if there is necessary. Triangulation technique has been applied to cross-check the validity of interviews by asking same questions among different interviewees in the same case.

### **3.2.1.1 The Three Cases**

The three cases of study and the informants within are selected by the method of theoretical sampling. The selection of participants is theory driven. Essentially theoretical sampling means that the selection of a study population is based on theoretical rather than statistical grounds (Finch & Mason 1990:28, cited in Holloway 1997:82).

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the present study aims to find what triggers the curriculum change in a school, and the sense-making process of the actors in school organizations. To achieve this goal, individual actors are identified in these cases as bricoleur, leader and follower. According to Campbell, bricoleur is the major agents and resource persons of the change, who are also responsible for mobilizing “ideas” in the institutional change (2007:101), who might be the principal or panel chairperson; while leaders are the ones who enact upon the change, who might be the panel chairperson or the key active teachers; the followers are the ones who follow the classifications respectively in the institutional change of curriculum, who are regular teachers. In early adopter and late adopter, bricoleur, leaders, and key followers are the key informants while in the non-adopter, decision makers and potential leaders are interviewed.

To answer the first question of what triggers the change, school cases are sampled. The selection of the three cases is made according to the framework of different critical moments and various considerations. First, there are three critical moments since LS at AS level has been introduced, that is, first, the initial introduction of the subject in 1992; second, the announcement of LS as one of the core subjects in NSS in 2005; third, the implementation of LS in NSS in 2009. As the study is to investigate the contributing factors on the adoption of the new curriculum of actors' sense-making process, three cases are identified according to these three critical moments, that is, the school adopted right at the beginning of the subject introduced and participated in the first AS level examination in 1994 (early adopter); the school adopted the subject after 2005 (late adopter); and the school which has not adopted the subject by the academic year 2008/09 (non-adopter). In addition, it is assumed that schools adopt the subject at different time is due to different institutional considerations. Those adopt LS in early stage is believed to have a normative concern while others do so after the announcement of NSS curriculum reform or delaying to adopt the subject is believed to be a more regulative consideration.

The Information of the three cases is listed in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1 The Three Cases and the information of interviewees**

School		School N (Non-adopter)	School L (Late-adopter)	School E (Early-adopter)
Interviewees	Bricoleur	Dr. Wong, the Principal, Mr. Tse, A freelance curriculum consultant	Mr. Man, the Vice-Principal	Mr. Yeung, currently the Vice-Principal (Penal Chairperson in 1992)
	Leader	Mr. Hui, the Panel chairperson	Miss Pong, the Panel chairperson	
	Follower		Mr. Fong, teacher	Mr. Kung, currently the Panel chairperson (teacher in 1992)

These three schools are selected as the object of case study as they are the typical case in the specific categories. School N, the non-adopter is typical among those which have not taken LS at AS level. Most of these schools either prepare the new subject by adopting lower forms LS, or follow the suggestions of Education Bureau (EDB) by adopting Integrated Humanities (IH) in junior forms (S1 to S3) or senior forms (S4 to S5) before the actual implementation of LS at Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) level in 2009. School N has adopted the school-based IH in junior form since 2004 instead of LS at AS level. School L, the late adopter is a school with intake of mostly band 1 students. School with better performance tends to have more expedient considerations on whether adopting a new subject, in other words, it is a calculation on opportunity cost. Late adopters are mostly average schools or those with better academic performance. School E is one of

the typical schools of the two types of school which adopted the subject in an early stage. One of them is based on normative consideration, which adopts the subject because they approve of the subject; while other is usually schools with intake of lower banding, which adopts the subject for students who do not have academic inclination. School E is selected as a typical case in this category, as most of the schools in the latter type no longer survive and are not accessible. The detailed information of three cases is presented as follows.

#### **3.2.1.1.1 School N**

School N is an Anglo-Chinese secondary school founded by a sponsoring body of a Christian church in early seventies. It has been a subsidized school since 1982. Details of the school information, including subjects offered, class structure, teachers' qualification and other information are in Appendix II.

In School N, three bricoleurs: (1)the decision maker, the principal Dr. Wong<sup>6</sup>, (2) the leader, the panel chairperson Mr. Hui and (3) another resource person, the curriculum developer, Mr. Tse have been interviewed. Dr. Wong, the principal has been working in the current position for twenty-two years after being a secondary school teacher for thirteen years and a curriculum officer in EMB. He majored in Geography in undergraduate studies and

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<sup>6</sup> The names of the interviewees have been replaced with pseudonyms.



Postgraduate Diploma, and got a PhD degree in Management. Mr. Hui is a Physics teacher teaching in this school for eleven years and was the panel chairperson of the subject Physics. He has been the panel chairperson of IH since 2004 and that of LS starting from this year. Mr. Tse was a Physics and Ethics teacher and later a CDI curriculum officer. He was the major curriculum officer in the section of Liberal Studies before he retired, and has been a freelance curriculum developer in School N since 2008. These three are the key informants who have agreed with / resisted against the curriculum change in School N.

School N has not adopted LS at AS level, however, it started a school-based of Integrated Humanities in the school year 2002/03. The subject was composed of four humanities subjects, namely, Chinese History, History, Geography and Economics and Public Affairs. The new subject LS, together with the New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum, will be adopted in the coming academic year in 2009/10, which has been prepared for four years with an independent subject panel led by Mr. Hui.

As said, school N is a typical school among those which have not taken LS at AS level and it has adopted the school-based IH in junior form since 2004 instead of LS at AS level.

The curriculum change of School N will be accomplished in 2009. Table 4.1 shows the

change from before 2004 to after 2009.

**Table 3.2 The subject change from before 2004 to after 2009**

Before 2004	2004-2009	After 2009
<b>S1-S3</b>		
Chinese Language	Chinese Language	Chinese Language
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
Visual Arts	Visual Arts	Visual Arts
Christian & Life Education	Christian And Life Education	Christian & Life Education
Computer Literacy	Computer Literacy	Computer Literacy
Chinese History	Integrated Humanities	Chinese History
History		History
Geography		Geography
Economics & Public Affairs		Liberal Studies
Music	Music	Music
PE	PE	PE
Integrated Science	Integrated Science	Integrated Science
Putonghua	Putonghua	Putonghua
English Language	English Language	English Language

<b>S4-S5</b>		<b>NSS S4-S6</b>
Chinese Language	Chinese Language	Core subjects
Chinese History	Chinese History	Chinese Language & Culture
Chinese Literature	Chinese Literature	Use Of English
Commerce	Commerce	Mathematics
Ethics	Ethics	Liberal Studies
PE	PE	
English Language	English Language	Elective subjects
Mathematics	Mathematics	Applied Mathematics
Additional Mathematics	Additional Mathematics	Biology
Biology	Biology	Chemistry
Chemistry	Chemistry	Economics
Computer & Information Technology	Computer & Information Technology	Geography
Economics	Economics	History
Geography	Geography	Physics
History	History	Pure Mathematics
Physics	Physics	Chinese History
Principles Of Accounts	Principles Of Accounts	Chinese Literature

Before 2004	2004-2009	After 2009
<b>S6-7</b>		
Chinese Language	Chinese Language	N.A.
Chinese History	Chinese History	
Chinese Literature	Chinese Literature	
Ethics	Ethics	
PE	PE	
Use Of English	Use Of English	
Applied Mathematics	Applied Mathematics	
Biology	Biology	
Chemistry	Chemistry	
Economics	Economics	
Geography	Geography	
History	History	

Physics	Physics
Pure Mathematics	Pure Mathematics

Remarks: Subjects highlighted are integrated subjects.

The curriculum change did take place in School N in a particular way. In the school year 2009/10 all the actors know there will be a top-down curriculum reform in NSS. Expecting this huge change in 2009, the principal requested the teachers to start the preparation of the unfamiliar form of curriculum before the actual implementation. As a result, IH for junior form was implemented in 2004.

In S1 to S3, the curriculum structure is characterized by integrated and practical subjects in general in 2004 to 2009; while in senior form, both in S4 to S5 and in sixth form, it is mainly disciplined-based. After 2009, in junior form, it becomes a disciplined-based structure, with LS as a single subject among others. To the Principal, it protects the interests of the disciplined humanities subjects, that is, resources distribution (time slots, number of candidates etc.), and it works as a preparation of the students in junior form for NSS.

LS as an integrated subject shares the same weight with other disciplined-based subjects in junior form after 2009. In this regard, LS will be treated as a single, independent subject that is at odds among other subjects.

### **3.2.1.1.2 School L**

School L was founded in 1949 by a Christian Church. The school has been moved to Northern district in 1991, surrounded by several public housing estates and Estates of Home Ownership Scheme. Over 70% of the students are identified as band 2. The intake is comparatively better than others in the same region. It is an aided school. Details of the school information, including subjects offered, class structure, teachers' qualification and other information are in Appendix II.

School L adopted LS at AS level in 2005 as a substitute of the subject Computer & Information Technology (CIT) and a preparation for NSS curriculum reform. At first it was initiated by Mr. Man, a panel chairperson of Chinese History then, and Vice Principal now. He formed the LS team with Miss Pong, a new Geography teacher at that time and the panel chairperson now. They decided to adopt two modules of LS then, namely Human Relationships and Environmental Studies which was taught by Mr. Man and Miss Pong respectively. The subject is an elected subject which accommodates twelve students. Students from both Arts and Science class are able to take the course. Basically it is freely elected from the Arts students if they are interested. However, some of the Science Class students are forced to select LS because there are not enough seats in Chemistry Class. They usually have thirty-two students in Science Class, but the Chemistry laboratory can only

accommodate twenty-six students. As a result, it is compulsory for six of them to take LS.

In School L, three interviewees are identified: (1) the decision maker or the bricoleur, Vice Principal Mr. Man, (2) the leader, the panel chairperson Miss Pong and (3) the follower, Mr. Fong have been interviewed. Mr. Man is a senior member of School L, who worked as a Chinese History teacher for over 15 years and has been promoted to Vice Principal for five years. He majored in Chinese History in both undergraduate and Post-graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) studies. He was the initiator of the curriculum change in 2005, who led the LS team with the only member Miss Pong. Mr. Man had been invited and seconded to relevant training and supporting programmes as a disseminator since then. Miss Pong has been a Geography teacher since 2003 who was required to take up the subject LS in 2005. She majored in Geography in both undergraduate and PGDE studies. She was promoted to be panel chairperson in 2007. Mr. Fong has been Chinese History teacher since 2007. Last year he was invited to teach LS at AS level. He majored in Chinese History and got a Master Degree in Arts in LS.

### **3.2.1.1.3 School E**

School E founded in 1983 found by a Christian Church which is located in a public housing

estate. Students are identified as band 1. It is an aided school. Details of the school information, including subjects offered, class structure, teachers' qualification and other information are in Appendix II.

School E adopted LS at AS level in 1992 as a response to the curriculum reform of the Sixth Form. At first it was initiated by the coordinator of the Academic Committee which is responsible for curriculum issue in school. Later, the coordinator left the school and has subsequently supported by Mr. Yeung, a Biology teacher then and Vice-Principal now. Mr. Kung, a Chinese and History teacher has voluntarily joined the team and has worked as subject leader until now. They decided to adopt two modules of LS at the beginning, namely China Today and Environmental Studies which was taught by Mr. Kung and Mr. Yeung respectively. It is provided as a core subject for all students in Sixth form. School E joins the Seed Programme of EDB and other support programmes in various tertiary institutions to help on disseminating subject philosophy and pedagogical practices of LS since early years.

In School E, two interviewees are identified: (1) the decision maker or the bricoleur, Vice Principal Mr. Yeung and (2) the leader, the panel chairperson Mr. Kung. Both Mr. Yeung and Mr. Kung are senior members of School E. Mr. Yeung has been a Biology teacher and

then promoted to Vice Principal. He majored in Biology in both undergraduate and PGDE studies, and minored in Integrated Science in PGDE. He has been invited and seconded to relevant committees in EDB, CDC, and other training and supporting programmes in tertiary institutions as a disseminator until today. Mr. Kung was a Chinese teacher. He majored in History in both undergraduate and PGDE studies, and minored Chinese Language in PGDE. He has been panel chairperson since Mr. Yeung was seconded to EDB. Mr. Kung does not pursue higher degree in particular disciplines but likes to take different courses from various areas. He keeps on taking various training courses until today.

### **3.2.2 Interview Questions**

In in-depth interviews, three major sets of questions will be asked to the bricoleurs, panel chairperson and the frontline teachers. First of all, the background information of the informants, such as seniority in general and in current school, position, qualifications in undergraduate and post-graduate studies, membership in related professional groups or governmental committee and other related experience were asked.

The second set of question refers to the factors that the informants believe that trigger the institutional change. Questions such as the major concerns of the actors when they decided

to take the change are asked, such as whether the actors perceived there is a necessity to change, and the reasons they articulated. Is it a functional need in knowledge society? Is it a subject that facilitates students to learn and prepare them to work in the future? Is it because it is an official curriculum that will be coercively implemented in 2009? What components in the curriculum does the actor think significant? Any organizational factors such as source of teacher, time tabling, and resource allocation are the concerns of the actor? Furthermore, questions about the pressure the actors perceived will be asked. Do they think it is a pressure that the subject will be implemented in 2009? Is there any pressure from EDB or CDI? The discourse of the new curriculum is popular, is there any pressure from professional groups or teacher training programmes in tertiary institutes? Are there any pressures from peer schools who adopt the subjects? Or they feel pressure from peer administrators/ teachers decide to adopt the subject?

The third set of questions refers to the schema of the actors that influences the sense-making process of the individual actors. What is the related training affect the view of the teachers towards curriculum in general and the new curriculum in particular? What kind of the repertoire, which includes the network and resources the actors possessed, affiliation to professional groups (both pre-service and in-service) or government institution, including their history of or current involvement in various related organizations and other related



experiences that affects the perception? Is there any professional exchange or daily causal interactions among frontline workers affect their perception? In addition, teachers' interpretation on policy messages and the subject itself are asked. Questions concerning how the actors perceive the policy in 1992 and 2005 are asked, on four dimensions, namely, the degree of congruence of the new policy on LS (AS) and LS (HKDSE) to the old principles and practices; the degree of intensity that the pressure teachers received; degree of pervasiveness that how the messages are interlocking and overlapping; and degree of voluntariness that whether the teachers follow the message by coercive means or normative ones. In addition, questions about how the actors perceive the specific instructional practices of the subject LS are asked, including the subject objectives, teaching and learning strategies, form of assessments, the actual operation of the subject in classroom, resource allocation and related arrangements. By these sets of questions the perception of the actors on the policy and subject can be comprehended (fig. 3.2)

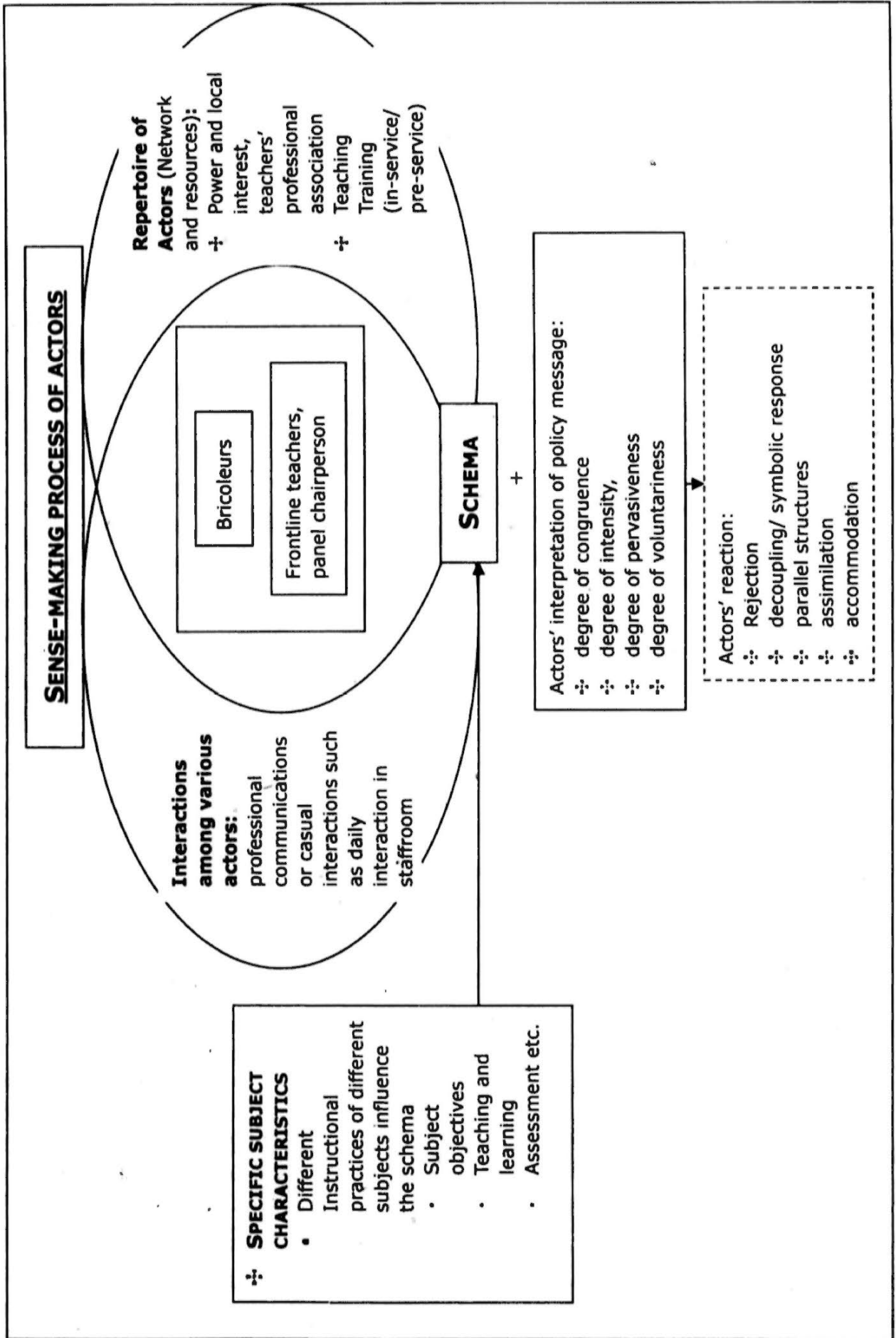
**Fig. 3.2 Institutional Change of Curriculum**

**PROCESS**

Early Adopter

Late Adopter

Non-Adopter



By these three sets of questions we can grasp the sense-making process of and among the actors in the process of institutionalization. Actors do not passively perceive the requirements diffused and imposed upon by the institutional environments, but actively interpret and negotiate according to their schema. The outcome manifests as formal structure of each school organization, which is in the form of bricolage. The formal structure is the result of selection of components from the old as well as the new institutions, and the components selected can either be symbolic principles and practices or the substantive ones. There will be four types of bricolages as a result. "Performer school" which adopts more on symbolic principles of new institution; "Observer school" which adopts more on symbolic principles of old institution; "True reformer school" which adopts more on technical principles of new institution; and "Old schooler school" which adopts more on technical principles of old institution (fig 3.2). Early adopter, later adopter and the non-adopter, according to the degree of bricolage, fall into these categories.

### **3.3 Limitations**

There are a number of limitations pertaining to the research method. One of the major limitations is that the sample of informants might not be representative of all the school organizations in Hong Kong. In my research design, three types of school are sampled as

three cases for study by the method of theoretical sampling (Ragin 1994). Theoretical sampling is not a method to achieve representativeness, but rather to gain a deeper understanding of the selected cases. The cases are selected according to the period of adoption of the new subject, which is theoretically-informed. However, the cases might not be comprehensive. The gap will be filled by other documentation such as other existing related studies and further studies.

Moreover, there will be a number of biases in the method of in-depth interviews. It includes selection bias or memory error (Hitchcock & Hughes 1995). This is particularly true in my study in the case of “Early Adopter”, in which the interviewees are required to memorize the incidents that happened years ago. As this study is an attempt to research the sense-making process of the actors, the focus should be put on how the actors interpreted and framed their experiences. Approached by New Institutionalism, the focus of the study is the discourses and rhetoric of the actors, in other words, how do they make sense of the situation in the legitimate account they perceived. The error itself can be a source of data for interpretation. However, some measures will be adopted to cross check the error, such as “triangulation”. Triangulation refers to the use of more than one method of data collection, is a technique used to cross-validate the data obtained from the interview (Hitchcock & Hughes 1995).

## **Chapter 4 What Triggers the Institutional Change**

In this chapter, factors that contribute to the adoption or non adoption of Liberal Studies are examined by investigating how individual teachers perceive and interpret the new subject and what factors they would consider whether to adopt or not adopt the new subject in the context of their school as an organization as a whole.

In this study, the adoption of LS into existing curriculum structure of secondary school organization will be regarded as an institutional change. According to the new institutionalist argument, actors will seek legitimacy for the survival of an organization undergoing institutional change (Meyer 1977). It is proposed that the actors will choose to respond to the institutional environment which is undergoing significant changes as LS was introduced in Sixth Form curriculum in 1992. In other words, the process of institutionalization will be investigated to see how different school actors respond, the actual selection of components of symbolic or substantive principles and practices of the actors is “in the making”.

By taking up the new institutionalist argument outlined above, it opens up two important venues for understanding the factors that contribute to the institutional

change of curriculum structure. Firstly, by investigating individual teachers in a school organization, we can seek and construct the sources of legitimacy for the curriculum change, how they articulate the problems, how they perceive and interpret the changes in the institutional context, and what institutional categories or classifications are selected. In this way, we can reveal the sense-making process of individual actors towards their perception and action of the change, through which the legitimation process for curriculum changes of the school is constructed.

Secondly, it is proposed that in order to understand the sense-making process of the individual actor, we must put them in the context of organization. Individual actors are intermediated by the school organization who responds to the institutional environment in order to gain legitimacy. They are bounded by the organization, while at the same time bestowed as legitimate actors in the organization. Organization is the venue in which various articulations and interpretations by different individual actors are coordinated. As a result, we can identify how the organization actors come to the decision and become early adopter, later adopter and non-adopter of the new subject in our study.

In this chapter the informants in the three schools are investigated on how they make

sense of the curriculum changes. The changes took place in three schools started in different time, are in different pace and different ways. It is to illustrate how the individual actors located in different organizational context perceive and interpret the changes and to legitimize it respectively.

#### **4.1 What Triggers the Institutional Change**

Scott (2001) suggests that the three pillars in the institution, namely, the cognitive, normative and regulative pillars serve as a source of legitimacy of the institution, and in turn, they enable and constrain social actions in a society (*ibid*, p.58-61). The cognitive pillar refers to the meaning system in which the construction of classifications or typifications is consistently framed, guided and negotiated (*ibid*, p.40-41). Actors, as Berger and Luckmann (1989) put it, are enabled and constrained in the meaning system in which they can make sense and “work the system”. The meaning system includes both values and norms, and the normative pillar provides “prescriptive, evaluative, and obligatory dimensions” of social life (Scott 2001:37). The regulative pillar is the sanction, the reward and punishment which consists of “rule-setting, monitoring, and sanctioning activities” undertaken in institutions (*ibid*, p. 35). In new institutionalism, the institution is founded on these

three pillars by which the institutional effects are accounted for, and it works through different levels of analysis.

The selected three cases, namely the early adopter, late adopter and non-adopter, and the individual actors in these three schools are believed to respond to the three pillars of institution respectively to attain legitimacy. On school organization level, actors tend to take on regulative (expedient) considerations such as survival of the organization, resource allocation/ reallocation; and normative consideration such as curriculum. On individual level, actors try to interpret their perception and interpretation towards the change by their schema, which can be regarded as a response to the cultural cognitive aspect of the institution. In this chapter, the regulative and normative elements on organizational level in the institutional change that articulated by the actors will be presented; while the cognitive element of individual actors will be presented in the chapter 5.

School E the “early adopter”, represents schools that have adopted LS at AS level when LS is first introduced and offered in the first AS Level Examination in 1994. The school has been one of the major leading schools in the field of LS teaching. It is assumed that the contributing factors of the change are framed around normative



considerations. In short, it is believed that the school adopts the new curriculum in an early stage when it is not coerced to do so, tend to be due to normative reasons.

School L the “late adopter”, represents schools that have adopted LS at AS level on or after 2005, when EDB announced LS will be one of the four core subjects in the New Senior Secondary curriculum. It seems that the adoption of the subject is due to the pressure of the expectation of a full-scale implementation of the new subject in 2009.

The contributing factors of the change are believed to be framed mainly by expedient or regulative considerations. In this case, although schools are not coerced to adopt the subject, the expedient calculation of the preparation for LS is the major factor of adopting the subject in or after 2005.

School N the “non-adopter”, represents schools that have not adopted the new form of curriculum in senior forms, LS at AS level up until the time of writing. As a typical case of non-adopter, there is in fact a curriculum change during the past few years in School N. The school has in fact adopted the subject Integrated Humanities (IH) in junior form since 2004. The contributing factors of the change are believed to be framed mainly by expedient reasoning. In this case, schools have not adopted the subject in senior forms. Instead, it offers a similar subject in lower forms which

there is no negative impacts on public examination results, while they can prepare teachers for new form of curriculum. It is a total expedient consideration. It is assumed that the later the adoption, the actors inclined to be more expedient.

#### **4.1.1 An expedient explanation – School as a Modern Organization**

School is an organization. While the government publicizes the whole curriculum reform, most of the actors in school organization frame the change and the concern of whether adopting the change in an expedient framework. It seems from the presentation of the informants that the expedient consideration is more sound and well-accepted than the educational objectives that an educational organization should claim. It is consistent to various individual actors in different positions, including decision makers, leader and the followers in the three schools whom I have interviewed. The consideration includes the survival of the organization, and the effectiveness and efficiency, the management of daily educational activities and the management of human resources.

First and foremost, the survival of the school is the key concern of the decision makers. It involves two major issues. Firstly, to follow the government's policy

direction is one of the concerns. Secondly, the assessment of the performance of a school organization, such as the public examination results as well as the entrance rate of the students into universities, is another one. The assessment of performance is closely connected to the competitiveness of a school. More competitive schools are able to get better intake of students, which is undoubtedly related to the survival of the schools.

The expectation of change in the near future and the feeling of the need of change is the common points that shared by the decision makers. In School L, for instance, it is articulated as a need to prepare for the NSS curriculum reform by the decision maker, the Vice Principal Mr. Man.

*Mr. Man (L): The NSS is coming, we felt that we need to develop the subject[...]  
At first we started to plan for the subject (LS) at AS level[...] I don't think we  
will (adopt the subject) if there will be not a core subject in NSS[...] LS is at AS  
level, in general students will take 3 AL subjects. There is no point to adopt the  
subject[...]*

In School N, the non-adopter, the decision maker Principal Dr. Wong said the decision to have IH in junior forms is a preparation for the NSS LS.

*Dr. Wong (N): We did the curriculum integration, the IH. The purpose is to*

*equip our students in junior forms to accept or transit, or to match the requirements of NSS LS.*

In School E, the early adopter, the decision maker Vice Principal Mr. Yeung remembered that the decision is a response to the curriculum reform of the Sixth Form:

*Mr. Yeung (E): At that time (1992), all the schools considered a curriculum reform in the Sixth Form. Liberal Studies is part of the package of the curriculum redesign[...] We heard that Liberal Studies is a subject which can broaden students' vision; it provides students not only with knowledge, but to train students with generic skills and habits. So we decided to adopt the subject.*

From the articulations of the three informants, it is generally revealed that to respond to the official policy direction is a key concern of the individual actors in the school organization. All of them brought up this factor when they are asked about what triggers the curriculum change in their school?. In fact, although the factors that contribute to the change and the forms of change in each school are different, this answer is shared by the bricoleurs of the three schools. It could be interpreted as the most legitimate answer of the question that, to gain legitimacy of school as an educational organization, the bricoleur, or decision makers must respond to the official top-down reform policy. In addition, the subject itself, whether LS at AS

level or IH, could also be regarded as a official curriculum mandated by Education Department, which is legitimacy by definition.

The second issue of survival of a school relates to the entrance rate to universities. It is a significant factor to consider. In School N, both Dr. Wong, the Principal and Mr. Tse, a former teacher and retired CDI officer, eluded the “concern of school administrators”. As Dr. Wong put it, they have not adopted the subject LS at AS level because of a cautious calculation of opportunity cost. The decision is made because it is not beneficial to the students for to apply for specific discipline in universities, nor can it promote the entrance rate of the school. On the contrary, the adoption of IH and subsequently LS in junior form is the result of a careful consideration that it does not affect the results of public examination yet it helps to train the teachers before the officially required implementation of LS in 2009.

*Dr. Wong (N): If the students will promote to tertiary education, do you think they will select discipline-based subjects at Advanced Level or subject such as LS in AS level?[...] They would prefer to select the subjects at Advanced Level for the application for the specific discipline.*

*Mr. Tse (N): In order to train the teachers, (the school adopted IH in junior form) it causes no harm at all. As it does not influence the public examination results.*

In School L and School E, part of the concerns is the examination strategies of the students:

*Mr. Man (L): LS is at AS level, in general students will take 3 AL subjects. There is no point to adopt the subject (before the announcement of NSS curriculum reform).*

*Mr. Yeung (E): Students can take 3 AL subjects, or 2 AL and 2AS. More capable students will take 3 AL subjects. It is a more direct way to enter universities[...]  
But to the less competent students, they feel more secure to take AS subjects which are lesser in scope of content. It (LS) is easier to them, they don't need to have a lot basic knowledge. They feel comfortable with that.*

To the bricoleur or the decision makers, devising appropriate strategy towards public examination in light of the quality of students is a practical issue. If most of the students belong to a better banding, they would adopt all AL subjects, which are academic subjects in sixth form, which relates directly to the specific discipline in of the universities. If, however, most students are in a lower banding, they adopt AS subjects which are mostly practical subjects with lesser syllabus coverage. It is easier for the students who are less capable.

The informants in School L, the late adopter, and School E, the early adopter, also mentioned the strategic calculation of public examination results in the interviews. It

is not only in School L and N which incline to have a more expedient consideration. Even in School E which adopts the subject primarily because they agree with the idea of the sixth form curriculum reform and the subject itself, Mr. Yeung has the concern of university entrance requirement too.

*Mr. Yeung (E): We think the subject has its future. It was said that it will be one of the basic requirements to enter universities.*

In general, public examination results and entrance rate to universities usually serves as dimensions of assessment of the performance of a school organization. The results define the banding of schools, and subsequently affect the resources obtained, and enrolment of the school. In other words, it could affect the survival of the school in quite a direct way.

Apart from the examination results and universities entrance rate, the general competition of the school with others is another concern of the Principal.

*Dr. Wong (N): The competition among schools is keen. Imagine if the schools in the same school district adopt the subject, we are in a comparatively unfavourable situation. From the marketing point of view, we have to take care of this.*

To Dr. Wong, the decision might be about the competitiveness of a school. If schools make right decisions to follow what is perceived as “good” (or legitimate requirements) by the parents, it survives or promotes the well-being of schools. It could affect the enrolment as well as the quality of the student intake.

#### **4.1.1.1 To conduct educational activities in a cost-effective and efficient way**

As an educational organization, school organization has to manage the daily activities, resources and people in an effective and efficient way. For instance, one of the reasons of adopting IH in School N is to coordinate a number of humanities subjects in order to rearrange the subject matters in a more focus way and the time table in a more efficient way. In other words, it could be regarded as a need to conduct the educational activities in the organization in an effective and efficient, or a cost-efficient way.

*Dr. Wong (N): The most critical problem is, when there exists various humanities subjects, there will be overlapping area, for example, the topic population is covered by Geography and EPA. If the subjects are integrated, the learning would be more focus, and time would be saved[...]time slots are significant (resources)[...] Students can have more time for extra-curricula activities and enjoy their family life if we arrange the timetable in a better way.*



*Mr. Tse (N): There are too many humanities subjects in junior form. We might need IH to coordinate the subjects...*

In School N, it is described that IH is adopted for the effectiveness of the teaching and learning activities, which takes away the overlapping areas, and reorganizes the curriculum in a more focused way. In addition, it is also for the efficiency of the use of the resources such as time slots and teacher resources.

As mentioned, time slots in time table are important resources of a school organization. To decide whether adopting a subject could be an expedient calculation of resource allocation and reallocation. Mr. Man of School L mentioned that they did not adopt the subject right at the beginning when it is introduced in 1992 due to the concern of resources.

*Mr. Man (L): Actually we did not have extra resources (to adopt a new subject), we have enough subjects for students to select. As a result we have not considered adopting the subject (before the announcement of NSS curriculum reform).*

The decision on whether adopt a subject, in particular public examination is involved, is a decision of resource allocation. It includes the time resource, candidates to participate in public examinations, teacher resource and so on. With same amount of

resources, it is at the cost of another subject if they decide to implement LS. It has a direct impact on the student intake and school banding; in other words, the survival of school.

#### **4.1.1.2 Management of human resources: Issues of Power and Interests**

Management of human resources or the personnel is another concern of the actors which is critical for the daily operation of the school organization. To the school administrators, the major consideration of whether adopting the subject might be due to the supply of eligible teachers.

*Mr. Tse (N): There are not many teachers that could teach LS in the pool[...] When an administrator decides to adopt a new subject, he must consider the development of the subject as well. He cannot rely on only one person. He should check if there are qualified teachers in the pool.*

*Mr. Yeung (E): First we think this is a good subject. The second question is teacher. Mr. Kung and I were invited then.*

According to Mr. Tse in School N, the decision was made with respect to the sustainability of the subject, which was mainly an issue of personnel supply. Even in the early adopter school, staffing is an important issue to consider.

In School L, the late adopter, when Mr. Man, who works as a trainer at present, reflects upon the experience from when they first adopt the subject until now, he finds that human resources, qualified or capable teachers, could be a key problem.

*Mr. Man (L): If the teachers have not received enough training but they have to teach the subject, it is very difficult. The competence of the teachers is very significant.*

Apart from the supply of competent teachers, how to manage and coordinate the teaching personnel is another major concern shared by the interviewees. For instance, Mr. Tse brought up another issue of “fairness” in workload when there are too many subjects:

*Mr. Tse (N): Teachers always have conflict over the number of time slots of specific subjects[...] The workload of the teachers might not be fairly distributed in this respect[...], for example, if I teach three periods of History per week, I might need to teach three classes; while I have three periods of Geography, I need to teach four classes[...] To the teacher the feeling of irritation is very real[...] This is no more about the big idea.*

Another problem is the management of staff placements. The staff placement should be seen as “appropriate” in an organization, no matter it is an educational or other kinds of organization. In School N, for instance, the appointment of a Physics

teacher as the panel chairperson of IH was regarded as a strange one. Mr. Tse, the former CDI officer said he could not make sense of this appointment. The related panel chairpersons of the four Humanities subjects felt irritated by this arrangement too, which eventually led to the abolition of IH in 2009 in School N.

*Mr. Tse (N): I found it very strange (that Mr. Hui was appointed as the Panel chairperson of IH). I cannot make sense of it, frankly speaking[...] There have been some conflicts[...] The four panel chairpersons of the humanities subjects thought there is no reason they handed in their territories (over) in the hand of a (Science) teacher who knows nothing about their subjects.*

*Most of the teachers in this school are senior teachers. Mr. Hui is comparatively young in this school... I can imagine it is not easy for him.*

The staff placement is rule-binding. “Appropriateness” of staff placement means it works with reference with rules. The rules are usually apparent, for instance, it is congruent with the hierarchical rank or sectoral category in the organization, the seniority of the staff, and his/ her network within or outside the school organization. It is particularly true in teaching profession in which both formal and tacit knowledge is important asset of a teacher. Seniority is believed to be a significant indicator of these experience and knowledge. In this case, Mr. Hui in School N has been challenged for his Science background and he is regarded a less qualified panel chairperson of the subject IH, with comparative low seniority. The placement has

been therefore considered an inappropriate one. According to the interviewees of School N, it eventually leads to the failure of the implementation of the subject IH later.

Compartmentalism among different subjects could be another problem in School N. Teachers, in particular panel chairpersons tend to place their subject interest over that of the organization. According to Dr. Wong in School N, it is a factor which leads to the failure of IH.

*Dr. Wong (N): It is difficult to overcome the problem of compartmentalism[...] (If we adopt IH,) the teachers would think that there is not any platform for the students to know about the subject[...] (but if there is a subject called Geography in junior form), students know what the subject is about. Teachers think that they tend to choose the subjects in A-Level Examination.*

Both Dr. Wong and Mr. Hui in School N mentioned that there is a comfort zone problem among the teachers.

*Dr. Wong (N): Teachers are in their comfort zone[...] (For instance,) a History teacher no long needs to teach History, but have to change to IH and teach something he or she has dropped since Form three[...] Do you think they will be comfortable with that?[...] Individual colleague might need a lot more effort to do this. I do not want to see this... But I would not break IH into four Humanities subjects if I can really make the call.*

*Mr. Hui (N): (Some of the teachers) don't feel comfortable on the paradigm shift[...] They have taught the subject for ten years maybe twenty years, they felt that they can survive like this, why bother to change?[...] Until now, some of them are still avoiding... (for example,) don't want to attend the training courses...*

The inertia of the teachers is one of the barriers of the curriculum reform in School N.

The teachers exhibited resistance, either in active or passive form, towards the change when their vested interests might be affected. For instance, some teachers try to directly push for the abolition of the new subject or indirectly try to avoid taking the related training courses. It seriously hinders the implementation of the subject IH, or even leads to the abolition of it. It further brings bad effect on the coming NSS curriculum reform. Dr. Wong said that he would not be willing to abolish the subject IH if he could make the decision irrespective of other teachers' opinion. However, Dr. Wong also mentioned that he did not think it is worthy if his colleagues spend much more effort to do so. This is a case of balance between power and interests of the teachers and those of the organization.

In an organization, the implementation of a policy from top-down is a communication and translation process. Mr. Tse of School N brings out another problem that there is always a lack of a middle man to do the communication and translation job between the principal and the frontline teachers.

*Mr. Tse (N): The Principal is willing to do the reform, but he could not do the job directly[...] He needs someone to help him... (Could Mr. Hui play this role?) I don't think Mr. Hui is strong enough[...] his seniority is comparatively low[...] He is not like me, I am very senior in this school[...] The teachers trust me very much[...] When I lead them to prepare the curriculum of LS at HKDSE level, it is very smooth. They follow my instruction, have no question at all.*

In sum, management of human resources such as staffing, placement, compartmentalism and so on is articulated by the informants as a crucial factor that affects the implementation of the curriculum reform. It also involves the balance of power and interests in the school organization in order to start up, implement and sustain a new subject.

#### **4.1.1.3 School Culture**

School culture is also articulated as part of the explanation of whether there is a curriculum change. In School N, for example, in spite of the fact that there has been resistance from teachers in adopting the new subject IH in 2004, the process is in general quite smooth. Mr. Tse said it was due to the school culture which he describes as a “warm campus”.

*Mr. Tse (N): The teachers (do not resist in the beginning because) they are very nice. It is a warm campus. If you are know it well, the teachers are modest and forbearing[...] It is normal to have a try on something new for only a few years (even they are not willing to), after an evaluation after a cycle (they will ask for a restoration of the old practices)[...]*

Mr. Tse holds that, even if the teachers are not willing to change, they would be inclined to try for a few years. It is due to various reasons. First, as the atmosphere in School N is very harmonious, teachers tend to follow the decision of the Principal. It is good to both parties to have an evaluation after a cycle when the students take the first public examination. It would be more persuasive to argue for the abolition of the new subject and restore the old ones after a trial period. Besides, according to Mr. Tse, the teachers felt that the quality of students are not as good as before, they felt they might need a curriculum change somehow. As they do not know the direction, it is reasonable to have a try of the new subject IH.

In School L, the late adopter, the adoption of LS at AS level is generally smooth too. Miss Pong, the panel chairperson of School L and hence the “leader”, mentioned that when there is any problem in the LS team, she will pray with her teammates. As most of the teachers in School L are Christians, most of the problems can be solved by this method. Miss Pong said the atmosphere in School L is quite loving and caring.



*Miss Pong (L): This is a new subject, I am not very clear if I am doing right too[...] Yes, sometimes there are different points of view and might be a fight[...] But we will pray together, we give it to the God[...] We know our intention is good[...] In general we share a loving and caring atmosphere in this school.*

Mr. Fong, a History and LS teacher and the “follower”, and Mr. Man, the Vice Principal and the “decision maker” in School L mention about more or less the same observation too. In general, as they share a Christian identity and comparatively loving culture, teachers are more cooperative in the process of implementation of the new subject.

In School E, Mr. Yeung the Vice Principal remembers in the early days that all the staff share a common culture of enthusiasm on education. In the decade of eighties and early nineties, there were fewer teachers and they always spent time together to have discussions over the topic such as “what is education” and “how to help students”.

*Mr. Yeung (E): We liked to share. Maybe because there were fewer teachers, and all of us were young[...] We always had dinner together, played ball games[...] and went camping[...] it was such a good time[...] We talked about the development of the school, philosophy of education, how to give students the best education[...]*

Besides, Mr. Yeung also mentioned that they have a culture on higher level exchange on knowledge and pedagogic practices.

*Mr. Yeung (E): We have an "Academic Committee"[...] We used to have sharing in staff meetings. It is a tradition, and it still continues today. We have 15 minutes to share (with each other) the new thoughts, experience on teaching, knowledge from some international conferences and so on[...]*

*In fact, the coordinator of the Academic Committee brought up the issue of curriculum reform of the Sixth Form at that time[...] and the philosophy of the subject LS at AS level[...] then we decided to have a try[...] He loved to read and shared with us. He initiated some higher level discussions with us[...] such as the cost-efficiency of project approach[...]*

In addition, the school shares a more open atmosphere than other schools. For instance, since LS has been introduced to the school, teachers are encouraged to join the team. After a try-out, teachers are free to decide whether they stay in the team.

*Mr. Yeung (E): We are quite open to the teachers, to what degree we are open? We ask the teachers to try to teach LS for one year. If he/ she does not feel he/ she is suitable, he/ she can drop it in next academic year. They feel safe in that way. In a case a teacher try to teach in Form 6 and feel he is not comfortable with it, we find another teacher to take over his job in the following year in Form 7. We try to open more rooms for our colleagues to have a try-out.*

Besides, the sponsoring body of the school is more open, according to Mr. Yeung.

The sponsoring body, the supervisors and the principals welcome and even encourage

opinions from below. In addition, they are provided with sufficient resources to try new experience, such as supports on preparation of extra teaching materials, less teaching workloads and so on.

In general, the culture of School E is more liberal in many aspects, which the informants think is a good environment that facilitates them to try the new subject at a comparatively early stage.

Organizational culture describes a specific shared belief, meaning and values system of an organization (Scott 1998:312) which is always taken-for-granted and serves as an informal control of the members. In the articulations of the informants, informants from three schools hold that they share some particular cultures that would facilitate or hinder the implementation of the new curriculum. A Christian loving culture in School L and a comparatively harmonious atmosphere among teachers in School N, for example, facilitate the implementation of the new subject in the first place, or in the process. The liberal culture of School E is also brought up by Mr. Yeung as a supporting factor for the experiment of new subject in such an early stage and supports among colleagues. In general, the shared belief such as Christian faith, certain educational philosophy, or practices such as more out-spoken atmosphere can

be positive factors to adopt new subject. Comparatively the specific, liberal school culture of School E is a key factor Mr. Yeung brought up in the interview which he thinks they could have such an experiment at a relative early stage, with lesser expedient concerns. In summary, school culture is articulated by the actors as a universal component in an organization. It can be regarded as a background or a supporting factor of the institutional change.

The expedient explanation of the curriculum change is shared by all three decision makers, or bricoleurs. It conjures up the major part of the explanations. It includes the survival of the organization, the management of daily educational activities and the management of human resources. Generally the expedient explanation is around interests and power in the school organization. In summary, the decision makers, or the bricoleurs tried to explain the whole story in the context of an organization. In some way the articulations reflect that they tend to define school as a modern organization<sup>4</sup> more than an educational organization, and give explanation in the context of a modern organization.

A modern organization is social entity which is a collective and sovereign actor which is highly rationalized, formalized and coordinated around unified sovereignty (Drori,

Meyer & Hwang 2006:1-2; 16). School as a modern organization is characterized as highly rationalized, formalized, adaptive and innovative. In the curriculum reform, individual actors in organization share an expedient consideration such as resource allocation, interaction of power and interests when they decide whether, or how quickly they adopt the change.

In new institutionalist perspective, actors respond to the institutional environment in a taken-for-granted way. Institutional environment, on the system level, is defined as “those characterized by the elaboration of rules and requirements to which individual organizations must conform if they are to receive support and legitimacy” (Scott & Meyer 1991:123). From the narrations that the three informants present, we find that most of the time they are responding to the institutional environment of a modern organization compared to the curriculum institution, and adopt the categories within.

For instance, the first answer of the decision makers of all three schools to the question “what triggers your school to /not to adopt the new curriculum?” is an expedient one. All three informants said the decision is a result of a response to the official curriculum reform. In the case of School E, it is the Sixth Form curriculum reform, in School N and L, it is the NSS curriculum reform. The informants

presented that the organizations are to achieve legitimacy from the official curriculum, responding to state policies, which is only order-affirming rather than task-performing (Brint & Karebel 1992:342). It can be regarded as a concern of the survival of school organizations. In the organizational framework, the issue of the formal structure such as organizational goals (survival, quality student output etc.), subjects and timetabling are articulated as a major concern in all three schools, in particular School N. Informal structure which refers to the interaction among groups and the interests and power interplayed (such as the distribution of teaching workload, teacher promotion etc.) is also given an important account on as the explanation of whether adopt the new subject. The key concerns of an organizational actor are to achieve the standard of effectiveness and efficiency, and the management of resources and human resources. In Mr. Tse's (from School N) words, it is not about "the big question" (i.e. something about ideas or educational objectives) most of the time, but about "the concern of the school administrator". These are well-accepted discourses of modern organization. In sum, the issues are articulated in the context of organization institution which is equal to, if not more than an education institution.

#### **4.1.2 A response to the legitimate curriculum discourse**

In addition to the expedient explanation, the informants respond to the curriculum institution in order to achieve legitimacy in the context of an educational organization as well as a modern organization.

In the new institutionalist perspective, actors have to respond to the institutional environment in order to gain legitimacy. In the previous section, we have identified one of the institutional environments that the informants respond to, that is, the institution of a modern organization. In the expedient explanation, the informants regard school organization as a modern organization, and focuses on the formal structure and informal structure of the organization. The formal structure refers to organizational goals, subjects, timetabling and the like; the informal structure of the interaction among groups, the interests and power interplayed. In spite of regarding the organization and its curriculum change as the institution of a modern organization, we found that the informants put it in the context of the curriculum institution. In the articulations of the informants, the curriculum change is a response to the new educational requirements and the need of the societal change. Whether they refer to the traditional curriculum, or the new ones such as LS or IH, they select the categories from the two curriculum institutions, which co-exist in the official curriculum and both are legitimate curriculum in terms of regulatory and normative aspects. In

general, more categories are adopted from the new institution. It reflects the perception of the individual actors on what a legitimate curriculum should be.

The old curriculum institution refers to a collection code of curriculum and visible pedagogy (Bernstein 1971:96). The collection code of curriculum is characterized by subject with strong classification and strong framing, which refers to a hierarchical organization of knowledge, discipline-based form of curriculum with clear boundaries and between subjects and solid stock of knowledge (*ibid*, p.96). “Visible pedagogy” refers to pedagogy with strong degrees of specificity on rules of hierarchy (hierarchical authority structure), rules of sequencing and pacing (syllabi and curricula) and rules of criteria (explicit or implicit expectations or behavioral standards) (Sadovnik 1991:53). The new curriculum institution refers to an integrated code of curriculum and an invisible pedagogy. The integrated code of curriculum refers to subject with weak classification and framing, which refers to a more weakly defined boundary and content of subject (Bernstein 1971:96). “Invisible pedagogy” is the pedagogy with no clear hierarchical authority presented, no explicit criteria for evaluation, nor any definite sequencing and pacing, such as “play” (Sadovnik 1991:53). The two institutions have their legitimacy in the transition period which both curriculums co-exist in the official curriculum.



To study the perception on the legitimate account of curriculum of the actors, we can study the actor's articulation on the ideal curriculum by how they refer to the current ones.

In School N, the curriculum change takes a particular path. Although the school has not adopted LS at AS level in sixth form, a school-based IH was implemented in the junior form from 2004. In 2009, LS at HKDSE level will be put into practice in senior form; while IH in junior form will be abolished and replaced by LS in junior form. Dr. Wong of School N has been the curriculum planner, with the assistance on planning and execution of the curriculum provided by Mr. Tse.

In general, Dr. Wong tries to defer the curriculum change in the "extreme form", that is, LS, and tried on a more ideal form of curriculum of IH. Having obtained a higher degree in Geography Education, Dr. Wong has strong opinion on what good curriculum should be. He agrees with the idea of LS, however, he believes that the traditional curriculum can achieve the curriculum objectives which LS claims, if only there is a better coordination among the humanities subjects. IH seems to be the balance of the old and new curriculums which serves as an ideal curriculum.

Dr. Wong holds that the traditional curriculum can achieve the curriculum objectives claimed by the new one. For instance, in traditional discipline-based subject students can learn generic skills by using a more interactive approach such as issues, or project learning. Dr. Wong said that these have already been adopted in some disciplines, such as Geography. For some capable teachers, they apply these new forms of teaching, learning and assessment methods in their own disciplines. According to Dr. Wong, the teachers have already achieved the objectives of the new subject.

*Dr. Wong (N): If we examine the curriculum objectives the syllabuses of the traditional subjects, we can find that they cover the objectives LS claims[...] Every subject can, I am sure, respond to the requirements of knowledge-based society in skill development[...]. Geography, for example... has adopted issue-based (enquiry approach) twenty years ago... and data response (form of questions) too[...]*

*If we read the inspection reports of different schools, there has been always a comment of "not enough interaction". It is commonly seen in the reports of different schools. It (interaction) is a basic requirement at all time. The comment has been seen for many years, and we can still see it today.*

In his articulation, the terms such as “knowledge-based society”, “skill development”, “issue-based enquiry approach”, “data response questions” and “interaction” are used.

Dr. Wong also tries to use these terms to defend that the traditional curriculum can achieve the goals. Interestingly, in defending the traditional discipline-based curriculum, Dr. Wong does not identify the specific characteristics of the old curriculum, such as strong classification and framing of the subjects which is more efficient in teaching and assessment, assessment in summative form which is more effective in allocation and selection of students with different abilities and so forth. In his articulation, rather, he states that traditional curriculum is good enough because it can achieve the goals of new curriculum. In other words, it is reflected that from the actor's point of view, a curriculum is legitimate only if they can respond to the requirements of a new curriculum.

However, although Dr. Wong agrees with the new curriculum of LS, and thinks that the curriculum should change to cater for the requirements of the future society, he feels that there is a problem of LS. The major curriculum objective of LS is to develop generic skills of students rather than to enable acquisition of factual knowledge (CDC 1991:7). To Dr. Wong, students are trained with various generic skills but not prepared with sufficient and solid knowledge. The knowledge foundation of the students might be weak. In his words, student might tend to be "bluffing", that is, they have good presentation and communicative skills without

enough “content”.

*Dr. Wong (N): I don't want the practice to swing like a pendulum. When we adopted the new LS and go to the extreme, we found that students might be bluffing without solid knowledge foundation. Their presentation skills might be fine, but they cannot write something solid[...] Students can meet the requirements (of the curriculum objectives of the old curriculum and the new) by the subject we designed (school-based subject IH).*

In this regard, Dr. Wong picks up a component from the old curriculum institution, that is, the knowledge content. The subject IH is said to be a balance of the two extremes, namely, development of generic skills, and the teaching of discipline knowledge. In Dr. Wong's opinion, both skills and knowledge are significant and should be balanced in the curriculum. From the articulation of Dr. Wong, an ideal curriculum includes the development of generic skills and adoption of specific pedagogic practices:

*Dr. Wong (N): I foresee that the content-based curriculum will not be advantageous to students[...] the narrow sense of “knowledge”. On the contrary, “learning how to learn”, general learning skills, thinking skills are the things students need in the future[...]*

*In pedagogic practice there should be many classroom activities, such as discussion, inquiry, and debate[...] there will be issue-based learning[...] I do not expect there is only “chalk-and-talk” in the classroom[...] If we read the inspection reports of different schools, there has been always a comment of “not*

*enough interaction”[...] It (interaction) is a basic requirement at all time.*

In School E, Mr. Kung, the LS panel chairperson, “the leader” is one of the members of LS team in this early adopter since the subject is adopted in 1992. Interestingly he shares the same belief that the traditional subjects can achieve the objective of LS.

*Mr. Kung (E): The two words “Liberal” (Tong) and “Studies” (Sic) have special meaning. “Tong” is the result, that is, “possess thorough knowledge”; while “Sic” refers to the “process of learning”. Traditional discipline-based subjects are viable vehicle to attain the “tong”[...] (only if) the pedagogic practices of LS is adopted.*

He also objects to the implementation of LS and IH in junior form.

*Mr. Kung (E): I don't think traditional subjects need to transform to new subjects. They belong to specific disciplines[...] Students do not have the ability (to discuss an issue) if they do not have solid knowledge foundation[...] LS can only be taught in Form 6. It is impossible to adopt this subject in Form one and two, students don't understand what you are talking about. If we adopt LS in junior form, it is only a self-deception.*

However, LS has its distinct features and it is necessary not only in the knowledge-based society, but it is also a training for citizens, according to Mr. Kung.

*Mr. Kung (E): Education is about how to be a good person, the value orientation. In Hong Kong we concern about academic results, and have lost the basic values... That's what LS is doing[...] We need this subject.*

*In LS syllabus, there is not a definite scope of content to be taught[...] (The special features of LS include) First, it is the current issue; second, the curriculum is more flexible, and third, it is skill-oriented[...] This subject is necessary[...] Maybe students forgot what you taught, but now they are used to read newspaper, and turn to Chinese news[...] They will at least understand some of them because they have certain background knowledge. They do not need to remember all the knowledge and information we teach.*

To Mr. Yeung, the Vice-Principal of School E, deciding to join the LS team in 1992 is based on a simple belief that LS is good for students and a reflection on the weakness of a traditional subject he taught, the subject Biology.

*Mr. Yeung (E): We were simple, we trusted them (CDI), they said the subject is good (for the Form six students), which can broaden students' vision[...] and it is about the training of generic skills of students, learning habits[...] The subject will be one of the admission requirements of the universities, and we know now it was a lie[...] (I believe in LS that) it is different from traditional subject such as Biology, I have been a Biology teacher myself which requires model answers[...] and rigid form of answers[...] In LS there is no model answer, students are only required to be logical, to make sense, to present in orderly form[...] you may have many ways to approach the questions which can all be assessed as good answers, and it can be given marks.*

School E is an early adopter. Mr. Kung and Mr. Yeung are experienced teachers and trainers in the field of LS teaching. In their articulations the school adopts LS right

at the subject is introduced is chiefly a normative consideration. It provides for the practical needs of students of Sixth Form, either they want to promote to the universities or as a general training. The subject is said to be a training of generic skills, learning habits which might broaden the vision of the students, and most importantly, a citizen. The triggering point of curriculum change is a normative consideration as a response to the new curriculum.

In addition, in the articulation of Mr. Kung, the key is not the result "*Tong*", the process "*Sic*" is essential of the new curriculum. He concludes that the discipline-based subjects are viable to achieve the curriculum objectives of the new curriculum, once adopting the pedagogic practice of the new one, that is, the "process". It is very similar to the articulation of Dr. Wong in School N. Both traditional subjects and the new subjects can achieve similar results, "*Tong*", by adopting new pedagogic practices. In other words, there is no difference between the old curriculum and the new if they adopt the new pedagogic practices. Again it is the new curriculum institution he is responding to.

In School L, the informants in general believe the objectives of the new subject LS after they are forced, or feel the necessity to adopt the subject, although all three

informants are not very willing to take the subject at first.

*Mr. Man (L): (Although I said don't think we will adopt the subject if there will be not a core subject in NSS[...]) I have been teaching the subject and being a trainer for four years. I have different view on the subject. I think the spirit and the value of the subject is more positive to me than before. This is a meaningful subject, and we need it.*

*Miss Pong (L): I think the subject is good[...]. Students have more exposure[...], that the subject is not exam-oriented[...]. Critical thinking, for example, and multiple perspectives are taught[...]. It is not only good for analysis of current issues, but it also help to construct students' values[...]. Students are less self-centred.*

*Mr. Fong (L): I believe in LS... Students are smarter in the subject LS[...]. Multiple perspective, logical thinking, and orderly presentation are required in the subject[...]. It is different from Chinese History. We require students provide evidence when they answer the questions. That would make them less willing to speak out[...]. It is rigid.*

School L is a late adopter. The decision of adopting LS at AS level in 2005 is a result of an expedient calculation by the school. Administrators and teachers know it is necessary and expect the change. In the articulations of all three informants, they mentioned they were not very willing to take the subject for different reasons. The Vice-Principal thinks the existing subjects are good for their students in term of university admission; while Miss Pong thinks it is a burden for her to teach a subject other than her discipline. Mr. Fong is still in the struggle between his own discipline



and LS (see chapter 5). However, all three teachers in general agree with the subject objectives and its pedagogic practices.

Concerning the assessment, both Dr. Wong of School N and Mr. Fong of School E hold that it should be in a different form from conventional examinations and quizzes, or the summative assessment. It should take a new form to achieve these curriculum objectives:

*Dr. Wong (N): I think the (public) examination cannot assess the skills of critical thinking[...] creativity of the students[...] we do not use unified tests or exams[...] we use project assessment so that it would not turn to very content-based.*

*Mr. Fong (L): The assessment of LS in this school is "real LS", no more "fill-in-the-blanks" form of questions[...] It should involve the development and presentation of student's opinions, maybe controversial, and involve current issues[...] (We adopt) project learning, that is, IES.*

According to the informants, assessments should be changed to the form that is catered for the new curriculum in order to achieve different subject objectives. To assess the skills rather than knowledge student acquired, the process of learning is more important than the results. An on-going (formative) and comprehensive assessment is therefore more suitable, for example, project or portfolio.

In spite of responding to the institutional environment of modern organization, the organizational actors also respond to the curriculum institution. In other words, the concern articulated is not only about expedience but also normative. School is not only an organization, but also it is education in nature. To respond to the institutional environment of curriculum institution is necessary to achieve legitimacy.

All in all, all the informants, no matter what their opinion is, they refer to the categories and standards which are mostly adopted from the new curriculum institution. It reflects the perception of the individual actors on what a legitimate curriculum should be. For example, Dr. Wong of School N holds that both the traditional curriculum and the new one are good curriculum, the categories and standards he refers to such as “knowledge-based society”, “skill development”, “issue-based enquiry approach”, “data response questions” and “interaction” are from the new curriculum institution. The only category he refers to the old curriculum institution is “knowledge foundation”. It is found that the source of legitimacy Dr. Wong draws are from both the old and new curriculum institutions. In fact both curriculums are official curriculum and normatively accepted by the professionals in

universities and teaching training institutes. The discipline-based teacher training as well as the integrated subject programmes coexist, which both forms of curriculum are regarded as legitimate. In this case, Dr. Wong has drawn the categories from both institutions, largely from the new one, is in fact responding to the institutional environment of both curriculum institutions. From his articulation, the source of legitimacy comes from the new curriculum institution largely, with one category of the knowledge content from the old one. The case is similar with that of School E, early adopter. Mr. Kung holds that both discipline-based subject and LS can achieve the curriculum objectives of the new one only if the new pedagogic practices are adopted. Although he is referring to values of traditional subjects, his emphasis is how the traditional subjects achieve the new curriculum claims (“*tong*”, the result). In School L, the late adopter, all the three informants refer to, and agree with the whole set of categories and standards of the new curriculum. It reflects that the categories and standards under the new curriculum is perceived as a more legitimate discourse by the actors.

In addition, when the informants refer to the new curriculum institution, they mention about both the regulatory and normative aspects of the new subject. First the fact that LS is a subject of the official curriculum (as an optional subject since 1992 and

one of the core subjects in NSS) has been mentioned by the informants as a regulatory argument, no matter they are for it or against it, eventually they have to implement it. Second, in normative aspect, the informants also refer the intrinsic values of the subject, such as the development of students' generic skills, and make them good citizen in knowledge-based society. That might be a reason for their adoption of the subject. Even though it is not regarded as reasons for their adoption of the subject, they tend to bring up the buzz words If not, or as a general description of the subject (Coburn 2004:226).

## **4.2 Conclusion**

In summary, in the articulations of the actors, there are many contributing factors for, or against the institutional change that perceived by the actors. Two types of factors are presented in this chapter. First, it is regarded that school as a modern organization; second, it is a normative considerations about the values of the new curriculum itself. Interestingly it is found that among the articulations of the non-adopter, late adopter and early adopter, there are similar types or categories of explanation and discourse even though they have very different decisions on the adoption of the new curriculum. Applying the new institutionalist perspective, we

could assume that the organizational actors tend to achieve legitimacy by responding to two institutional environments (Meyer 1977), that is, that of the modern organization and the curriculum.

First, actors try to respond to the institutional environment of a modern organization, such as the formal structure such as organizational goals, subjects and timetabling, and informal structure such as interests and power (these have always been part of the formal structure of a school). For example, all the decision makers in three schools spend most of the time explaining the expedient factors for or against the curriculum change, or in the different pace of change, although the school is assumed to be an educational institution. In other words, school is treated by all the actors as a modern organization (Drori, Meyer & Hwang 2006:1-2). Interestingly education value itself is not the primal concern by the actors in the school organization, but rather administrative and management considerations have been brought up most of the time. It is assumed that actors regard school organization as a modern organization in the first place, within which actors should sustain the daily smooth operation and survival of the organization.

Besides responding to the institutional environment of a modern organization, actors

also respond to the requirements of the curriculum institution. In the articulation of the reason to accept curriculum change, actors in Schools E and L say that the curriculum is good in idea and form. Generally it is considered that it could facilitate students to adapt in a knowledge-based society. It can be seen as a response to the normative pillar. Even in the articulation of the non-adopter who does not agree with the subject LS, the actors in School N try to reframe the old curriculum with the categories adopted from the new curriculum institutions, such as learning generic skills, life-wide learning, project-learning and the like. To conclude, all the informants refer to the curriculum claims of the new curriculum, no matter they agree or not, and the institutional environment of the curriculum institution is responded to. The requirements of the new curriculum environment become the dominant discourse in curriculum institution.

All in all, it could reveal actors perceive that they achieve legitimacy by responding to the two institutions, namely modern organization and the new curriculum. A school organization should be a modern organization as well as an educational organization which can cater for the new demand of the society. In the articulations of the actors of the three schools, it is found that there are some structural factors that make the decisions different from one another. To the early adopter who adopts the subject in

very early stage, that the subject is introduced as an optional subject in the curriculum Reform of the Sixth Form. Although one of the considerations is a response to the official curriculum reform, the normative articulations conjure up the explanations provided by both Mr. Yeung and Mr. Kung. To the late adopter, the consideration is basically an expedient one. According to Mr. Man it is a timely response to the policy paper of NSS curriculum reform in 2005. To both Mr. Man and Miss Pong (the Panel Chairperson), the subject will not be adopted if it is not stipulated as one of the core subjects in 2009. Mr. Man recalls that he found subject very helpful to students, and has its intrinsic values only after the subject is implemented in their school and he works as a disseminator on LS subject teaching in the supporting programmes. On the other hand, to the non-adopter, the consideration is a mixture of both expedient and normative considerations. Dr. Wong (the Principal of School N) finds that it does not do any good in terms of school survival and university entrance rate, nor it does not increase the chance of students to enter university. It is an expedient calculation for him not to adopt the subject at an early stage, and in senior forms that affects the public examination. However, Dr. Wong holds that there is a need to adopt a newer form of subject to cater for the needs of the new era. He then initiates the subject IH in lower form in 2004. He claims that the subject can accomplish the curriculum objectives of the new subject LS and also incorporates

the knowledge content of the old subjects, which he thinks is lacking in the new subject. Obviously it consists of both expedient and normative considerations.



## **Chapter 5 Reconstruction of Subjective Reality: How Actors Make Sense of their Actions and Agencies**

How human beings make sense of their actions in the face of institutional change is influenced by their schema, namely the repertoire such as training they receive, resources and network they possess (Coburn 2004; Spillane, Rieser & Gomez 2006). The outcome of this sense-making process on their actions and agencies, therefore, is a bricolage which might have different sources of legitimacy. For instance, a Chinese History teacher with the discipline training in undergraduate study and post-graduate teaching diploma might believe disciplined-based is the best form of knowledge; while he finds that the project learning and interactive mode of pedagogic practices in LS are good too. In this case, this teacher responds to the institutional environment of the traditional curriculum institution and the new one at the same time (Meyer & Rowan 1977). However, the subjective reality could be discontinuous and incoherent especially when they are experiencing institutional changes which force them to make significant changes in their habitualized practices, taken-for-granted knowledge and most importantly their cognitive schema. It is a bricolage within the actor (Campbell 2004) which involves what Archer coined “internal dialogue” (2003) to make sense of the discontinuity and ambivalence within themselves. In the following, we will present the findings which illustrate how the schema works as a

framework of actors's sense-making process.

## **5.1 How does the Actors' Schema Work?**

According to Spillane and his colleagues, a "schema" is a specific knowledge structure that link together related concepts used to make sense of the world, that the teachers process, encode, organize and interpret the messages received (Spillane, Reiser & Gomez 2006:49). The specific schema is shaped by the repertoire of the teacher, such as the training in undergraduate programme and teacher education, network and resources that he or she possessed.

### **5.1.1 Teachers' Schema as Explanans**

There are a number of factors that shape the schema of the teacher and their sense-making process. The character, capability, perception and psychological preparation of the teachers are the factors that most of the informants have brought about. In addition, the training received in undergraduate and teacher training education, current position as an organizational role, network and seniority have effects on the schema of the teachers.



### 5.1.1.1 Personal factors

It is articulated by nearly all the informants that the personality traits such as character, capability or psychological preparation are very important. In general, the teachers of the new curriculum are portrayed to be more capable, psychologically prepared and they are mostly described as possessing certain characters.

For instance, open-mindedness rather than particular discipline training is generally regarded as a more significant characteristic to be a good teacher of the new subject.

*Mr. Tse (N): (In the preparation of the new subject), our teammates are from different disciplines. All of them are open-minded. This is very good. We think in different ways, we (Science teachers) are more logical and analytical, when we look into an issue, we focus on evidence and reasons; others teachers are more explanatory[...] there is no difference among the disciplines; it is your own personality that counts.*

*Mr. Yeung (E): (In undergraduate studies) I am very inquisitive person[...] I used to take different courses. I have taken the courses from Social Work, Biochemistry, Science and Psychology[...] I believe it has a big influence on my teaching.*

*Mr. Kung (E): My character matches that of LS. I don't limit myself to any particular area. I will learn whatever I need or am interested[...] Everything is a new stimulation to me.*

The informants, most of them bricoleur or leaders, believe that different disciplines do

not bring the obstacles in the cooperation of the teachers. It seems that the open-mindedness of the teachers that would facilitate them to be a good LS teacher in the way that they do not resist any kind of knowledge or skills, and try to learn in various areas. Willing to learn and open up to various kind of knowledge is also perceived as a very “LS” character that is congruent to the requirements of the new learners described by the policy document.

Liberal Studies[...]helps learners to make connections among various disciplines and forms of knowledge, and to learn with and from other people (CDC 2007:83-84)[...] To acquire a broad knowledge base (*ibid*, p.3)[...] To enable students to develop multiple perspectives on perennial and contemporary issues in different contexts (*ibid*, p.5)

Apart from the openness, there are some personality traits of the teachers that are generally perceived as matching the requirements of an LS teacher, such as flexibility, vigorousness and reflectivity, according to different informants.

*Mr. Kung (E): There is no need to plan ahead[...] I teach whenever I feel like[...] or I will give them a brief when I come across the topic[...] This requires the teacher to be flexible[...] My character matches the requirement of an LS teacher, reflectivity[...] I studied History, and I like to reflect[...] that equips me with) multiple perspectives.*

*Mr. Man (L): Personality (makes me be different from Mr. Fong), this is my style. I love to be more interactive with students, discuss with them[...] even when I*

*teach Chinese History other than LS.*

Nearly all the informants believe that there are certain personality traits which an LS teacher might have to possess. In the articulations of the informants, it seems that it is more crucial of possessing certain personality traits than the training in certain disciplines in undergraduate and post-graduate studies. Informants who are bricoleurs and leaders refer their own experience that certain traits are crucial, such as open-mindedness and flexibility. Similar discourses are brought up by the followers. Other than experience, the traits are congruent to the description in the policy paper (CDC 2007).

Mr .Tse of School N mentions psychological preparation is a factor that makes the teachers resist the reform.

*Mr. Tse (N): Except for the competence of the teachers, (the problem lies in their) psychological barrier[...] It is under the paradigm shift, (the teaching mode changed) from teacher-centred to interactive. There are various modes of assessments... In fact all the teachers have to learn from the very beginning[...] They resist because they perceive themselves as incompetent teachers.*

Mr. Tse holds that the feeling of readiness is very important for the teachers to accept

the reform and take initiative to change. The perception of the teachers rather than their ability is the key factor is regarded as the determinant factor of whether they can be ready for the new subject.

In addition, from the articulations of the informants, it is found that there are some other requirements of the teachers in the new curriculum. For instance, the activity approach is adopted in the new subject, which is more interactive and spontaneous than the traditional chalk-and-talk mode of teaching and learning. It is said that some specific capabilities of the teachers are required:

*Dr. Wong (N): The teachers are required to be a good "conductor" in the classroom (in the new mode of teaching). Teachers must be very capable[...] There is a problem of discipline in the new subject[...] If we conduct discussion, role-play, student presentation[...] We cannot manage the classroom like before[...] In fact it is demanding for our colleagues.*

In this regard, the whole setting requires teachers to be more open, responsive and flexible. Dr. Wong of School N believes that teachers are expected to be more capable in the implementation of the new subject.

All in all, it is revealed by the informants that the personality traits such as character,

capability and psychological readiness is the key of a “teacher for the new curriculum”. It can be regarded as a technical change of the curriculum institution, in which the requirements of the teacher in their mentality and daily practice change. In fact, as the new curriculum institution is totally new in respect of curriculum objectives, content and form from the old one, teachers are necessary to respond to the new technical environment.

It is believed that the technical environment, that is, the different requirements of daily routine of those new subjects is the source of change. By technical environment the theorists refer to the set of rules and regulations which the organization responds to which is technically more certain and more market-driven (Rowan 2006:210). However, it can also be interpreted as a response to the institutional environment rather than a technical requirement of the new curriculum institution. First, the technical requirements are perceived in a quite unified way, that is teachers are expected to be willing and able to pursue professional development in capabilities building, life-long learning, having broad knowledge foundation and have more exposure and so forth. Besides, the requirements of the teachers for the new curriculum are completely different from those of the old one (CDI 2009). It is neither sensible nor practical for the teachers to meet the requirements, while firstly,

the teachers are more or less from the same population who are not likely to change abruptly towards the opposite direction; secondly, the old curriculum coexists with the new since the introduction of the latter, and it will continue after the curriculum reform in 2009/10, it is not sensible to expect the teachers to change to a complete different form. We believe that the discourse does not only respond to the technical environment, but also the institutional environment, which is somehow not very functional to meet the needs of the curriculum change.

In this sense, the discourse on “ideal teacher” for the new curriculum works along the discourse of the new institution itself around the breadth of knowledge and capacity building through life-long learning. Most interesting, it includes the teacher’s personality traits such as character and psychological quality. This is considered to be the special attribute of the teaching profession which is not completed with the process of secularization (Abbott 1988:186).

The teaching profession is regarded as a marginal profession or semi-profession (Tsang 1984:30). Assessed by trait model, for example, neither does the teaching profession have a set of specific professional knowledge, nor does it have a professional code of ethics. From a new institutionalist perspective, teacher is a



profession that has not completed its secularization, that it still bears some traits of sacred values. To Abbott, the source of legitimation of profession changes when there is a value shift. The secularization movement, for instance, brought the change of the profession of clergy in 18<sup>th</sup> Century (Abbott 1988:186). When the divine power failed to be the source of legitimation of the clergy, the profession turned to seek support from social melioration and education (*ibid*, p. 187). The teaching profession has its origin from the clergyman, which we found that the secularization of the teaching profession has not completed yet. In some professions, the legitimation comes from individual values such as happiness, self-actualization, and personal culture (*ibid*, p. 187). The teaching profession can be regarded as one of them.

In this case, the informants draw the source of legitimacy of the ideal teacher for the new curriculum from the personality traits of the individual, psychological quality or the individual capability largely. First of all, the teaching profession is regarded as a semi-profession, which cannot be defined by an established set of objective criteria (Tsang 1984). Without the established and objective standards for the teaching profession, the teachers can only achieve legitimacy by establishing a new discourse around the new, official curriculum; or a legitimate membership in the organization;

or a rational actorhood (Meyer & Jepperson 2000) in modern society. In this regard, teachers' personality traits such as a "team-player" in the context of school organization, or a rational agent with autonomy, capacity and responsibility to the world (*ibid*, p.101-2) are referred as a source of legitimacy of the "new form of teachers". In addition, as the secularization of the teaching profession has not completed, the sacred components such as personal mission towards a higher end, faith and belief, ignorance of secular rewards are cited as a source of legitimacy too.

#### **5.1.1.2 Undergraduate and Teacher Training**

According to Coburn (2004) and Spillane and his colleagues (2006), the training teachers received, for example in undergraduate or post-graduate diploma studies shapes the schema of the teacher and have influence on their sense-making process. However, in the articulation, some of the informants consider the training is a key factor that influences the schema, while others do not.

Dr. Wong, the decision maker of School N, for instance, believes that the teachers are shaped by their own training. Taking himself as an example, with undergraduate training in Geography and a master degree in Geography Education, he thinks that his

vision on education in general was shaped by the training. According to Dr. Wong, Geography is an inter-disciplinary subject and organized in a holistic approach, which he thought as an ideal form of subject. Facing the new curriculum, he says that he accepts it more easily with this training. He takes a very active role in the preparation of the subject IH at the outset.

*Dr. Wong (N): I think (my concept of an ideal curriculum) relates to my training, Geography is a multi-disciplinary, or interdisciplinary subject which adopts holistic approach[...] the subject has been adopted issue-based (enquiry approach) twenty years ago[...] and data response (form of questions)[...] My area of expertise is curriculum (studies), other teachers might not have this kind of experience[...] I sat in every preparation meeting in the first two years.*

*Mr. Tse (N): Even in Science discipline, we have STS for a long time[...] Like Biology, Bio-Chemistry, Chemistry[...] Yes if we consider Social Science and Science discipline, (teachers with) Social Science training is more advantages than Science teachers[...] The format of assessment is similar[...] But later we have STS[...] if the teachers area able to change the mentality (of STS), it would be fine.*

*Miss. Ng (L): I studied Geography in both undergraduate study and post-graduate diploma in Education[...] If we see the module "Environmental Studies" is very similar to Geography[...] Both LS and Geography is issue-based, and discuss the pros and cons. In particular Human Geography[...] We have similar mindset.*

*Mr. Man (L): Yes, History teacher matches the requirements of LS. We have multiple perspectives, and do analysis.*

The informants think that there are some similarities between LS and certain

disciplines such as Geography and History, which both make it easier for teachers to take up the new subject such as the philosophy of curriculum, the pedagogic practices and method of assessment. For example, a holistic approach to knowledge in Geography and History, issue-based enquiry approaches in Geography, a more life-wide approach of STS (Science, Technology and Society) in Science subjects are mentioned as sharing similarities with LS. Miss Pong, the leader of School L says it is a training of similar mindset, in other words, the schema.

For the teachers with the training of other disciplines, Dr. Wong of School N thinks they are limited by the training of their subject discipline. The subject perspective and clearly defined scope of knowledge is confined in the specific disciplined-based training. Dr. Wong described the teachers have to “de-learn and relearn” when they implement the new subject IH. Some teachers have to learn the other humanities subject content as well as the perspectives, as they might drop the subject after form three in secondary education. It is a painful experience to the teachers. Dr. Wong thought it is a limitation to the teachers with specific discipline training.

However, some other informants hold that discipline training is least important

compared to other factors. Mr. Hui of School N, the Panel Chairperson holds that the qualification cannot transfer to the tacit knowledge and skills in everyday real classrooms. In his words, the experience of “actual combat” (實戰), or the contextual knowledge and skills are much more important than the certificate.

*Mr. Hui (N): If I am a PhD in Physics and teach in secondary school, do you think it is good? Everyone knows that... I would rather hire a teacher with five years' experience (than one with a higher degree but is less experienced)[...] Teachers with experience in the flow of teaching, can better handle problems and difficulties, and have a way to solve the problems... As a secondary school teacher, the most required quality is the competence, and the good delivery skills, quick response, and the ability to lead the discussion. The experience in the “actual combat” is more important.*

Mr. Tse of School N holds that the personal capability of the teacher, such as different skills in conducting a lesson is more significant than the qualification, or the higher level certificates. However, to further study is useful in some aspects:

*Mr. Tse (N): However, when they pursue a higher degree, they might be more liberal to the subjects and the students[...] but it is not easy to observe[...] Anyway I am quite happy that I have teammates with Master degrees, PGDE, MA degrees[...] I encourage my colleagues to study, but I warn them not to expect they can learn a lot of new things[...]*

To pursue a higher degree to Mr. Tse is a way to liberate the teachers and broaden their horizons. As mentioned, it is the personal capabilities and personality traits

that are essential in making the discourse of good teacher for the new curriculum.

Mr. Hui believes that the training of teachers are not critical factor to be good teachers, therefore teachers from almost all disciplines can be good teacher for the new subject.

Nevertheless, some teachers from certain disciplines are better than others. For instance, Mathematics is a discipline Mr. Tse holds that might not fit for the requirement of the teachers for the new subject.

*Mr. Hui (N): The concept application (of Mathematics teachers) is very different from Social Science Teachers. They operate only at conceptual level, without application to real life.*

Miss Pong, the chairperson and the leader of School L shares a similar observation that teachers from Science stream are comparatively less capable of raising questions in a higher order.

*Miss Pong (L): It is related to the discipline training[...] For example, we played CJ7 (長江七號) in the class and discussed the topics of poverty and father-son relation[...] The (Science) teacher asked: "Do you want to be like him?", "Why don't you want to be poor?" and they stopped. They can ask some higher order questions and be more integrated. Science teachers usually stop in this stage, (the discussion) is general. Of course individual can be smart.*

The discipline training in Mathematics and Science training are regarded as less fit to the new subject. Besides, Mr. Fong, the follower in School L thinks that his undergraduate training of Chinese History might limit himself in some way to be a good LS teacher.

*Mr. Fong (L): I feel very difficult (in teaching LS)[...] The “reasoning” (言之成理) of Chinese History is very different from that in LS[...] In LS there requires multiple perspectives[...] and critical thinking[...] Students can get high marks if they can give reasons and be critical, but less rigid[...] (In Chinese History) we have rigid requirements on historical evidence and proofing process, when it comes to LS, how much is evidence, how far to prove is enough[...] I know LS is not bluffing, I believe that it is good[...] But I believe there should be evidence to support, or I will feel that it is not solid.*

Mr. Fong discloses his struggle between the mindset of a Chinese History teacher and that of an LS one in the interview. On the one hand the training of Chinese History Mr. Fong received focuses on argumentation, historical evidence and proofing; on the other hand, LS requires students to be using “multiple perspectives”, “critical thinking” and “clear presentation” as he presented. He finds that he cannot grasp the standard of LS, with his training of Chinese History which has always be commented as being too rigid by other members in LS team. However he has a solid belief in the standard of Chinese History and he does thinks that LS is not solid enough.

In a visit to School L for a teaching practicum in November 2008, a group of four final-year Sociology students led by me conducted an LS lesson for a group of Form Six students in Mr. Fong's class. The topic they taught is "Law of the People's Republic of China on Employment Contracts in China", which is about the implementation of the Law. A role-play activity of a case of labour dispute was the major teaching activity. Students of Mr. Fong's class took part in the activities actively. Students discussed in a relatively casual and a common-sensical way, questions such as "why don't the labour have more guts and sue the factory owner", or "why don't the officials perform their duties" and so on are raised in the discussion. In sum, students discuss in a relative superficial level and try to explain the problem as a consequence of individual choice. After the discussion and conclusion by the Sociology students, Mr. Fong raised his hand and asked me "what critical thinking is". He further questioned whether the students had achieved the objective of critical thinking in the previous discussion session by using common sense with little, if not none solid evidence and arguments at all. In fact, the three requirements, "multiple perspectives", "critical thinking" and "clear presentation" as a guiding principles to Mr. Fong are far too vague than those needed in the studying of Chinese History. When things are different from the training Mr. Fong received he feels anomic in the teaching of LS.



In general, no matter the informants believe whether the undergraduate or post-graduate discipline training is a crucial factor that makes a good LS teacher, or in what way it does, they all agree that it is not only discipline knowledge that construct an appropriate schema of the teachers. Rather they think that the discipline perspective or the mindset they get from the training that could be a facilitating or hindering factor for teachers to teach LS. This is the making of a set of mentality, the habit of the mind, which is a training of ability rather than knowledge.

#### **5.1.1.3 Psychological factors**

Expectation is a very crucial factor that influences the sense-making process of the teachers in institutional change. For instance, different pedagogic practices might also be a source of incompatibility between the old subject and the new. Mr. Hui of School N thinks that both teachers and students would have difficulties in adapting where the tradition mode coexists with the new one. He said that both teachers and students would find it difficult to adapt to different pedagogic practices, that is, while traditional subject is conducted in chalk-and-talk mode, the new subject acquires a more interactive mode. Both students and teachers are expected to play a very

different role in two respective forms of subjects. To teachers, they are expected to be facilitators in one subject and a traditional chalk and talk teacher in another subject; while students are expected to be active participants in one subject and passive learners in another. Mr. Tse of School N agrees that it is not easy to shift to the new mode, however, no complaints are received from the teachers so far.

*Mr. Tse (N): We all know the problem but we do not mention or complain (about it). We think it is OK[...] The students know the rules and the expectations clearly. There won't be a great discrepancy between the old mode and the new. In fact not only IH, there are discrepancies between other subjects, P.E. (and other subjects) for example.*

According to Mr. Tse, there is no complaint received because the teacher are aware of the fact that there is a change of the curriculum and hence, so should their expectation. Teachers and students know the difference among different subjects, and they will have respective expectations towards the forms and contents of these subjects. They will act in accordance to these expectations. Although there are discrepancies and differences among the subjects, both teachers and students do not find it difficult to adapt to.

Mr. Fong the follower in School L shows his awareness throughout the whole interview. As said, he is in the struggle between his own Chinese History training

and the requirements set in LS. On the one hand, he gives LS positive comments:

*Mr. Fong (L): I know LS is not bluffing, I believe that it is good[...] I believe in LS, only the assessment guidelines are clearer[...] LS is more liberal, students will be smarter[...] LS is more comprehensive[...] employs more multiple perspectives[...] Students like the subject.*

While on the other hand he shows his struggle between an LS teacher with Chinese

History training:

*Mr. Fong (L): I believe there should be evidence to support, or I will feel it is not solid... When students answer the questions, they make the point without evidence, like bluffing, not sure (what they are writing), no data support, I know we do not emphasize evidence in this subject[...] In Chinese History we put emphasis on argumentation, we used to have solid supports[...] We are rigid on that[...] data, evidence. I know it is not the requirement of LS[...]*

The above internal dialogues appear throughout the interview, and Mr. Fong talks with frowns from time to time. It is clear that he used to approach LS by his own mindset of a Chinese History teacher, and he finds it is very difficult to make sense. However, the fact that the new curriculum has been implemented in School L and later full-scale in Hong Kong makes his expectation change. He does not reject the very different subject, although he feels difficult, he tries to confirm the new subject is a good one and learn how to be a good LS teacher, as in the case of school visit in

section 5.1.1.2.

Change of expectation is a critical factor of sense-making. When actors know that the change is inevitable, and accept the change, the sense-making is smoother, while the resistance will be weaker. This is what Archer (2003) coins the “internal dialogue”, a mechanism through which an individual specifies the goals he/ she desires to achieve and delineates the means for achieving at least something to them. In the internal dialogue, an individual conducts one’s own description of action with instrumentality (*ibid*, p.303). Eventually the individual reduces the psychological hurdle and move him/ herself towards the specific goal. This is a process of sense-making.

Awareness is another crucial factor in the sense-making process. As Mr. Tse puts it, if the teachers are aware of the change, and open enough to change their expectations, it is easier to face the paradigm shift.

*Mr. Tse (N): LS teacher must be aware of the change. There is a paradigm shift, a change in education[...] The teachers should at least feel it is relevant to them, concerned about the change[...] Some teachers think that the only change is the name of the subject, and go on to teach as he/ she used to[...] the awareness of change is critical. It is for the survival of the teachers, or they will find it very difficult[...] Many teachers cannot be convinced why they have*

*to change[...]*

Mr. Yeung in School E, the early adopter mentions similar reflection of himself in the course of change.

*Mr. Yeung (E): At that time (1992), all the schools considered a curriculum reform of the Sixth Form. We heard that Liberal Studies is a subject which can broaden students' vision, not only that it provides students with knowledge, but also to train students with generic skills and habits. So we decided to adopt the subject[...]. I am a Biology teacher, I was very frustrated teaching Biology[...], the marking scheme is rigid[...], but not very sensible[...]. LS is a subject I agree to[...]. This is good to students, and we do it.*

Awareness is in fact the initial step of the change of schema. When there is a curriculum change, teachers might find it difficult to adapt to the new curriculum with the old schema, or simply feel that they are not willing to. To Mr. Tse, it is a threat to their "survival" if they are not "aware" of it. What he meant by awareness is willing to consider it is relevant to them, to accept an institutional change, and to prepare for a new form of training. In other words, it is the change of the schema. If they do not change the schema and try to accommodate the new subject with the old schema, as Mr. Tse described that the teachers perceived "the only change is the name of the subject, and went on to teach as he/ she used to", it would affect their survival as a teacher. Mr. Tse also mentioned that taking the training courses of EDB, the

enrichment course in particular, is a way to enrich the awareness of the teachers. In Mr. Yeung's case, the awareness to adopt a subject which is good to students also prepare him to be an LS teacher.

### **5.1.2 Presentation of the schema: Ambivalence**

In general, the informants agree that the schema works as the mindset of the teachers to categorize and understand the reality. All informants agree that teachers have built up their own schema in undergraduate and postgraduate training, in different ways. Generally the schema is conceptualized as discipline knowledge, perspective (or the mindset) and sometimes it is regarded as general capability (Coburn 2004). Some of the teachers are believed to have the schema that has affinity to the new subjects than the others.

In fact, the essential capabilities for a teacher in the new curriculum are not well-defined and accepted by the practitioners in the field. The informants do not share the same notion on what is the best-fit schema to the new curriculum. However, some commonalities are found. First, the informants tend to state that their schema somehow match the requirements of the new curriculum. Dr. Wong of

School N, the principal with Geography undergraduate and Geography education training, says both the discipline perspective as well as the knowledge itself (knowledge on curriculum) is useful for him to implement the new curriculum; while Mr. Hui of School N thinks that there is no specific training is most suitable to be a teacher for the new curriculum, only teacher with Mathematic training does not quite fit the requirement, as the discipline training is mainly on conceptual level and requires no application. To Mr. Hui, some particular disciplines are more related to the new curriculum, such as Social Sciences. However, it is the capability training provided by discipline training rather than specific knowledge is more significant. The capability is the only thing that counts to be a good teacher for the new curriculum. For instance, Mr. Tse the Physics teacher mentioned logical thinking as a relevant quality, while Dr. Wong identified the need of the teachers to accept the concept of holistic approach to knowledge. In summary, according to the informants, some of them hold that the knowledge in specific training is important, while others think that the capability or the mindset is crucial to build a suitable schema for the new curriculum. There is ambivalence among the interpretation of the schema that is best fit the new curriculum.

The discourse of the “best-fit-schema” is built around the new curriculum. The new

curriculum is regarded to be free from a static stock of knowledge, and it is to cultivate generic skills. In this regard, although some discipline knowledge or approach is considered important, the discipline perspectives/ mindset or the capability is believed to be crucial by all the informants. In fact, what kind of approaches, perspective and capability are not defined very clearly in the new curriculum, nor shared by the practitioners. The articulations of the best-fit-schema are around an imaginary requirement of the new curriculum. What is best fit the nine generic skills, the six modules and the IES is somewhat casually assumed and related to their own schema by the informants.

The case is similar to Coburn's view on policy message (2004). He suggests that that the nature of the policy message affects the perception of the teachers, and the pre-existing belief and practices have effects on the individual perception on policy implementation. LS at AS level was implemented in 1992, as said, it was described as with high complexity and low clarity by the teachers and principals in the study, and is said to be rather difficult to understand and follow (Deng 1995:93-5). To examine the characteristics of the policy, it is found that the degree of congruence, intensity, pervasiveness, voluntariness cannot be easily assessed (Coburn 2004:226-234). To the practitioners, the policy is neither comprehensible enough



nor it is congruent to the old curriculum, yet it is a top-down policy to follow (involuntary) in a very big-scale in 2009 (which is large in intensity, pervasiveness).

In this case, the informants try to make sense of the new curriculum by responding it with the discourse in curriculum documents. As the discourses of the new curriculum are neither clear nor solid (*Deng 1995*), the informants tend to pick up the familiar elements and relate them with their own schema, such as “knowledge-based society”, “generic skills” and so on.

In conclusion, as the policy message is not clear, the informants incline to rephrase the policy message in their own understandings with their schema to reduce uncertainties and anxieties. As this is their own understandings, it might be the case that they would conceptualize their own schema as the “best-fit” one. Some of them relate the training of logic a relevant requirement while others relate the personality or certain psychological traits as the most crucial requisite among others. In these arbitrary and ambivalent articulations, we might try to assume that it is a way to reduce insecurity and uncertainties in the context of institutional change by the familiar schema they possess. It is the strategy of assimilation that fit the new curriculum into one’s own existing schema (*Coburn 2004:223-4*). It is most useful when the policy message is unfamiliar to the actors, which has not been well-defined

or less elaborated, with less standardized assessment (Spillane & Burch 2006:95) and they feel the pressure to follow. That's how the practitioners make sense of the curriculum change and position themselves and others.

### 5.1.3 Schema of the Students

According to the informants, the students, on the contrary, face fewer challenges than the teachers. Their schema is relatively extensive. On one hand, they are used to the traditional mode of teaching and learning; on the other hand they have tried the new paradigm, according to Dr. Wong of School N, since they were in primary school.

*Dr. Wong (N): I am not worried (about the students), they got used to the activity approach from primary education... The teacher would say they were not academic enough[...] but they do not have any problem to adopt the form of new subject[...] Somehow they feel the form of the new subject is the norm.*

The case in School L, the late adopter is similar to School N. Miss Pong said the students have established a pedagogic pattern in LS, though it is very different form that of other subjects. The students adapt very well.

*Miss Pong (L): They know how to do grouping, follow the format of discussion[...] the classroom dynamics as you can see, is different[...] They can change the mode smoothly from one subject to another[...] In fact, students are familiar with the change of pedagogic practices. We adopt these practices more in other subjects such as Geography and History.*

Mr. Hui of School N also thinks that the students can easily adopt the new form of learning, although it is rather different from the old one. The student intake is quite good and they are well-behaved which makes them more receptive to any change school introduced. In addition, students enjoy the new subject IH which they feel more liberal in the form and relevant to their everyday lives in the content. Mr. Hui believes that they are happy to take such an interesting subject, and they have no objection to it if it is implemented from top-down.

*Mr. Hui (N): The students enjoy the new subject[...] They learn many different thinking methods, (and teach) the topics related to their daily lives[...] They can (learn through) discussion[...] Our students are not bad[...] they know the boundary and the requirement (of different subjects and teachers).*

In sum, Mr. Hui thinks that the schema of the student is relatively flexible. They are happy and willing to take the new subject which is more interesting and involves more activities. The intake of the students is not bad, which implies there are not many behavioral problems when they adopt the new subject. There are only minor adaptation problem like form of assessment. In general, the informants do not hold

that the students have any problem of taking the new subject IH.

The only thing Mr. Hui thought they might have difficulties in adaptation to the new subject is the form of assessment. The formative assessment is taken, which is continuous, diagnostic of learners' progress in different activities and exercises. In sum, the assessment is on the student's learning process as well as the outcome. To the students, they have to be accustomed to the all-encompassing form of assessment.

*Mr. Hui (N): They raised their hands and answered the questions and got assessed. There are some advantages and disadvantages. Some of them do not like to be assessed in this all-encompassing way, that will be counted as average marks if they raise their hands, answer the questions in-class, participate in discussion, even sit there and pay attention to the teachers[...] we are talking about a 24-hour assessment.*

Miss Pong of School L observes that her students choose a specific pedagogic practice due to the public examination. The only case that students are not willing to take the new form of pedagogic practices is in the classroom of senior forms. Miss Pong mentions the senior form would require the teacher to conduct the lesson in chalk-and-talk way. They are afraid that they could not complete the contents syllabus covered.

*Miss Pong (L): I think students from senior forms are repressed by the public examinations[...] They are stressed to finish the syllabus. Sometimes I ask them to discuss, they will say "Miss Pong, we don't want to discuss. Please teach directly or we could not finish the syllabus." In fact discussion doubles the time than direct teaching.*

Form of assessment is an effective mean of control over curriculum and pedagogic practice. As Mr. Hui said, students are not used to the continuous form of assessment, however the assessment will change the practice of students eventually. The assessment defines awards and punishments, which shape their expectation and behavior in the classroom, or in other word, schema. It is also true in the case that Miss Pong presented. If the form of public examination remains the same where there is a syllabus with contents clearly-defined, the form of pedagogic practices will not change, and students do not change their schema.

In summary, the schema of students is relatively extensive and flexible than that of their teachers'. There are various pedagogic practices students experienced in schools. To the secondary school students, the experience is heterogeneous combining both traditional chalk-and-talk and teacher-centred approach as well as student-centred, or activity approach. As Dr. Wong said, their students are familiar with the new approach when they were in primary schools. The new approach is the "norm" as Dr. Wong put it, in some schools. In sum, students are quite flexible and

adaptive to both old and new paradigms. Besides, student has no control over the pedagogic practice. They are defined by schools and authorities. In one case, when the practice does not fit the schema of students, as the case presented by Mr. Hui in School N, it is only found that “some of the students do not like it” with no further action. Students will passively resist (such as refuse to take active role in the class and assessment), if they do not accept the practice defined by teachers and schools directly. In another case, when there are contradiction among the authorities, for instance, when the assessment is in conventional form of public examination with straight syllabus, and the pedagogic practice in classroom is the new one, students will require the teacher to stick to the old one as Miss Pong of School N said, as a rational calculation. This is the sense-making process of the students in a comparatively flexible schema.

To examine how the sense-making process influences that of teachers, it is found that students are passive receivers who do not have say over the instructional process in class. The only case they can make a different is that, when the two institutional practices co-exist and even are contradictory, they can require the teachers to stick to one of them, in other words, to respond to one of the requirements of one curriculum institutional environment. In this regard, it is found that there is no impact of the

schema of students on that of teachers.

## **5.2 Network**

Network serves as a positive resource of the curricular change. It includes the network among teachers, administrators, government officials and students. Among the informants, we can identify that some serve as disseminators; while others work as receivers in the network. Sometimes the network serves in the way of a source of legitimacy by being the core, as a disseminator; while others receive the “proper”, or legitimate source of assistance helps the curriculum change attaining its legitimacy. The network is conceptualized as the association of the teachers, professionals, administrators, government officials and students. It is assumed that the network provides exchange of resources as well as ideas.

In the three cases, only the non-adopter School N acts as a receiver, peripheral. School E, the early adopter and School L, the later adopter mostly act as a disseminator or core. To School N, the resource got from Dr. Wong’s network is chiefly Mr. Tse, a retired CDI officer who serves as a resource to facilitate the curriculum change; while School E is a well-known members of Seed Project of CDI,

which help disseminate the idea and practices of LS, and School L is a very famous exemplary school of LS in Northern school district. All three schools can attain legitimacy from the networking.

Mr. Tse of School N, for instance, is the key resource person in School N to facilitate the curriculum reform in School N whom was invited by Dr. Wong. He was a Physics teacher in School N from 1982 to 1997. Then he joined CMI (Chinese as the Medium of Instruction) Support Centre of Hong Kong University for almost two years, and joined the Curriculum Integration Section and Project Learning Section of CDI. In 2000, he joined the Liberal Studies Section in CDI until he retired in 2008. He is regarded as a major patron of the curricular change in School N for the preparation of IH in 2004, and LS at HKDSE level in coming 2009.

Mr. Tse as a resource person has several roles. First he brought the professional knowledge and skills of new curriculum to School N, such as teacher training and curriculum design. Second, he acts as an assistant to Dr. Wong, or a middle man between the Principal and the teachers to prepare and implement the new subject, both IH and LS at HKDSE level. Had been an ex- CDI officer for over a decade and senior member of School N for 15 years, he is knowledgeable as a trainer and



curriculum designer, and his good relationship with the Principal and teachers makes him perform the role very well.

*Dr. Wong (N): We invited Mr. Tse because we want the training for our teachers are more school-based[...] Mr. Tse was a member in our school who worked in related section in CDI, he is the perfect one to help. He is retired now and worked as a freelancer[...] He can even go to our church to brief the parents the knowledge about LS.*

*Mr. Tse (N): Before they prepare IH, I was invited to present the models of curriculum integration to the teachers. I worked in CDI then[...] Finally they adopt one of the models for the subject IH[...]*

*As a Principal, even though he wants to initiate the reform, he needs a middle man to help him[...] The principal cannot do it on his own[...] The teachers are senior teachers[...] They trust me, first, I am now an external agent; second, I maintain good relationship with them... I used to be a senior member of the school.*

The networks Dr. Wong and the teachers possess bring them the professional knowledge and skills of the official version. Mr. Tse as a senior curriculum officer in CDI, he provides the official, authoritative and legitimate interpretation of the new curriculum. With this assistance, the teachers are more persuaded, which makes the subject LS at HKDSE level implemented more smoothly. Compared to LS, the implementation of IH is said as less successful as it is without the help from Mr. Tse.

Mr. Tse also articulates a useful network of himself. He was an active member of

Hong Kong Association for Science and Mathematics Education (HKASME) when he was a Science teacher in the eighties. He finds it serves as a very useful network in his later stages of his career.

Mr. Tse was an early member of the association. HKASME was founded in 1964 to promote science and mathematics education. This was a professional organization consisted of science and mathematics teachers, curriculum officers and subject inspectors of the Education Bureau, subject officers of the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessments Authority and teacher trainers from the tertiary institutions (local universities and the Hong Kong Institute of Education)<sup>1</sup>. At first, it is set up as a self-help teachers group to help teachers with affordable experiment materials, and teaching materials such as transparencies for various science topics. As a self-help group, their concern is not only the teaching materials, but also the philosophy of Science education, and pedagogic practices. In fact, it worked as an active assistant to the Education Bureau at early seventies on Science education. Mr. Tse said he knew a lot of Science teachers in the association. Some of whom, like himself left the frontline teaching posts and become government officers, or scholars in tertiary institutions. The network facilitates him with the “comrades” who work on

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<sup>1</sup> HKASME website [online]. Available: <http://www.hkasme.org/>. Retrieved on 1st Aug, 2009.

necessities for the frontline practitioners, with actual material resources, and ideas resources. Later when some of the co-workers move to other areas, Mr. Tse said it is very helpful when he works as a CDI officer later.

Individual actor can be conceptualized as disseminators or receivers in the network. If the individual actors are the receivers, they benefit from the network of material and symbolic resources, such as financial supports or ideas exchange. If the individual actors are the disseminators, they benefit others with material and symbolic resources, while they get the legitimacy when they play the role of the disseminators.

In the case of Mr. Tse, he was one of the key members of the HKASME in which he worked with other professional teachers. As he said, the EDB received assistance from the professional groups who define and disseminated the right material as well as symbolic resources. Taken this active role, the HKASME was mandated by the EDB as legitimate actor in the field of Science education.

It is also found that the network is more useful when it is perceived as legitimate. In the case of Mr. Tse, he is accepted by the teachers in School N and serves as an important resource person because he has the legitimacy. First, he was an officer of

CDI who is an authority to identify the official version of the curriculum. He has been working in various sections in CDI, which is more or less related to the new curriculum, such as Curriculum Integration, Project Learning and Liberal Studies.

Mr. Tse said he is trusted by the teachers due to his personal connection to the teachers. Most importantly it is owing to his official position before he retired.

Particular in this case, LS is regarded as a subject that is far from clearly defined, and the form and content of the subject is still in process of formation. As Mr. Tse is perceived as the legitimate actor in the field, he is the one that the others have to follow. The network itself is best mobilized if the member in it gets the legitimacy.

Both School E (early adopter) and School L (later adopter) take the role of disseminators, the former started in earlier year since mid-nineties and in a larger scale which the whole school is a “Seed school” and various teachers involved; while the latter is in a lesser scale that only Mr. Man and Miss Pong are involved and started from 2005. Mr. Yeung, the Vice-Principal of School E, said their school joined the Seed Project of CDI as a disseminator in early year.

*Mr. Kung (E): I consider myself as a Public Relation Officer. In the previous five years, we have shared our experience with almost one-third of the secondary schools in Hong Kong. I was in a secondment to work as a training to do sharing with teachers in other schools.*

*In the school years 05/06 and 06/07, on average thirty schools visited us. In 07/08, 08/09 there were fewer school visits, about four to five per year. (There are fewer schools because) we started to help the school on-site on their school development day. We usually offer lesson demonstrations or seminars.*

*Other than school support, we have interview requests from mass media such as newspaper, radio programmes, magazines[...] and some schools pay visit and have lesson observations[...] recently scholars from two universities in GuangDong have visited us and had a lesson observation on LS teaching.*

School E is a member of the Seed Project, it has played the role of disseminator which holds seminars, demonstrations of LS lessons to other teachers. They are very popular and are invited by many schools. Individual teachers such as Mr. Kung and Mr. Yeung are also invited to many seminars or teacher training programmes in different occasions.

In School L, Mr. Man himself plays the role of disseminator too. He is comparatively junior in the field of LS teaching. However he is invited to join the support groups organized in tertiary institutes and teacher training programmes.

*Mr. Man (L): In 07/08 I started to help as guest speaker or a part-time lecturer in Chinese University[...] In 2005, we just started LS at AS level. I went to a sharing programme, I expressed my opinion, and then I was asked if I am interested to second to STILLS (Support for Transition to the Implementation and Leadership of Liberal Studies) (at CUHK). Then I had been seconded in this programme for two years.*

It is Mr. Man's personality that makes the School well-known. As Miss Pong said:

*Miss Pong (L): I do not have the network, only Mr. Man does[...] We call him "super-net" [...] He is very active in networking[...] Sometimes he listened a good talk, he will "cold call" the speaker, and talks to them for a long time[...] He exchanges his views to others too.*

The school or individual acting as disseminators is a source of legitimacy. As Mr.

Yeung of School E said:

*Mr. Yeung (E): (Our school is) famous for the implementation of the subject (LS), we won high regard for that all these years.*

The source of legitimacy is actually obtained by mandate given by state authority, for example, CDI; and professional groups, like training programmes or support groups of the tertiary institutes. For instance, Mr. Yeung of School E was seconded to committee of LS and PSHE (Personal, social and health education) in CDI since mid-nineties and to STILLS and PILT (Partnership for Improvement of Learning & Teaching) in Chinese University of Hong Kong until today; while Mr. Kung was seconded to HKEAA from 1997. Mr. Man of School L has been invited to STILLS and to be a part-time lecturer of the teaching training programmes in the Chinese

University of Hong Kong. In Schools E and L, schools or individuals are mandated to be officially chartered, or professionally identified agents to present the most legitimate version of LS in terms of regulatory and normative terms. In sum, they obtain legitimacy from the two rationalizers in the modern world, namely the state and the professionals.

The mandate and practice of dissemination might have positive impact on the actors too.

Mr. Man (L): I have been going out (to be a trainer) for a while, I have given some input[...] Our school has done a good job, I can tell... I am more positive to this subject (after I had been a trainer myself).

Both teachers and schools who are mandated tend to justify their role of trainer and become more and more positive to the subject and its role as a disseminator. It helps to strengthen the belief of and the conformity to the new institution.

In sum, network shapes the sense-making process of the actors in both case in School N as receiver and School E and L as disseminator. In the former case, Mr. Tse as a retired CDI senior officer in LS Section provides an official, authoritative and

legitimate interpretation of the new curriculum. Teachers are more persuaded and follow the instruction of Mr. Tse without questions. It helps the preparation of the subject LS at HKDSE level works in a more smooth way. In this case it is seen that if the network is more legitimate, the more the frontline workers are willing to receive. This is a sense-making process of the workers towards a new curriculum.

In the latter case, School E and L play the role of disseminator in the network. They are the ones who are to mobilize to support other schools and frontline workers. In the course of support, both resource teachers and schools attain legitimacy as LS teacher trainer, or Seed School. The legitimacy comes from the mandate of the state authority such as CDI or HKEAA, and the professional groups such as tertiary institutions like University teacher training programmes or professional support groups. It helps the disseminator, that is, the teachers and the school organization strengthen the belief and conform to the new institution.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the sense-making process of the actors on their perception and action towards the institutional change are studied. Through the articulations of the actors,



we examine how the schema and network contribute to the sense-making process of the factor in the curriculum change in a new institutionalist perspective.

In general, the informants agree that the schema works as the mindset of the teachers to categorize and understand the reality. However, the actors have varied opinions about what the best-fit schema is to the new curriculum. It is found that when the policy message is not clear, and the actors cannot make sense of the new policy message, they try to interpret the policy in an arbitrary way with their own understanding (or schema). As a result, it seems that there are different versions of the new policy, vaguely relates the buzz words in the policy paper that every one is familiar with such as knowledge-based society, generic skills, project learning and so on. In this study, it is seen that the actors try to present their own version of education reform and best-fit-schema. Most importantly, as the version of policy messages presented by the informants seems to be individual understandings, they could arbitrarily assign the best-fit schema according to their own conception. In this case, there is the ambivalence of the best-fit-schema. It could be discipline training or some personal psychological traits. This is how they make sense of the new curriculum in order to reduce insecurity and uncertainties in the context of institutional change.

The schema of students is found to be not very crucial to the sense-making process of the teachers. Students are passive receivers of the curriculum arrangement. There is no impact of the schema of students on that of teachers.

Network shapes the sense-making process in two different cases, namely the roles as a receiver and as a disseminator. In the case of receiver, if the network received is more legitimate, the sense-making process is in a smoother way. In the case of disseminator, the resource teachers and schools attain legitimacy in the process of dissemination with the mandate from state authority and professional groups when they are invited and seconded by these state authorities and professional groups (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:64). It helps the disseminator, that is, the teachers and the school organization to strengthen the belief and conform to the new institution. In other words, it is the lagged socialization (Meyer 1977), which refers to the situation that actor “tend to adopt the qualities appropriate to the roles and expectations to which their educational status have assigned them” (*ibid*, p. 60). In summary, the disseminators internalize and socialize the belief towards LS after they are mobilized in the network.

From the articulations of the actors, it is found that the subjective reality of actors has its structural source. It is found that all of the actors agree that the schema serves as a contributing factor that influence the sense-making process towards the subject LS, with some components of the schema are believed to be better fitted the subject, and some are not. The actors mention that trainings received from undergraduate and post-graduate studies, personality traits and psychological factors that make up individual schemas. Network is another factor that influences the process in the way of learning (to the receiver) and internalization and lagged socialization (Meyer 1977:60) (to the disseminator). It is found that the network which is mandated by state authorities or professional groups, that is, the two great rationalizers (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:64), will be more accepted and facilitates a more positive impression towards the new subject. The framing and reframing of the actors' schema in the institutional change is in a more positive way.

As discussed in the previous section, the individual schema is articulated in an ambivalent way. It is believed that there are two reasons. First, it is due to the special features of the subject LS. LS is characterized with weak classification and weak frame. It can be easily identified with one own's schema. It is believed that

the special feature of LS that allows actors to fit in their schema easily in their articulations. Knowledge, skills, perspective, personal psychological traits can match any parts of the subjects. In sum, the subject serves as a source of legitimacy for the actors to frame or reframe their own schema, which can be described as “best-fit” the subject.

Second, in the articulations of actors, they regard themselves having modern rational agentic actorhood (Meyer & Jepperson 2000) in modern society. It is also a sense-making process that the actors respond to the institutional environment of the institution of a modern agentic actorhood. A modern agentic actor refers is rational and sovereign. Its rationality and independence makes the actor adaptive and capable of learning. It is noted that there are some structural source of the schema the actors mention in the interview, such as the undergraduate and post-graduate training. The chartering effect (Meyer 1977:60) of qualification is still crucial in their articulations which shared among the actors. Besides, the personality traits and psychological traits are significant source too. Network serves as another structural source of the subjective construction of the actors that influences the sense-making process. In their articulations it is found that the actors do not only review the structural sources of their schema, rather, they can frame and reframe their own

schema to be the “best-fit-schema” to the new subject. To deal with the discontinuity and ambivalence schema within themselves, or the bricolage within the actor (Campbell 2004), the actors respond to the institution of modern agentic actorhood, and articulate and reframe their schema in a rational and adaptive way.

In sum the sense-making process is an interaction and negotiation between subjective construction with the actors’ own schema and network with the objectivated reality. By the presentation of the actors, they select and articulate necessary components from the individual schema and the structural factors in the environment. In this case, actors have their own schema and network. Facing the institutional change, actors articulate to and select the components of their own schema and reconstruct a new one. It is a process of the interaction between an actor’s internal dialogue (Archer 2003:303) and his/ her presenting his/ her own schema to others. It is the agentic aspect of the sense-making process of the actors.

## **Chapter 6 Conclusion**

This study investigated the sense-making process of teachers on their actions in the institutional changes in curriculum organization in Hong Kong secondary schools, as LS at AS level (and subsequently LS in HSDSE) was introduced since 1992 with new institutional perspective. I try to develop my study on the micro-process of sense-making of the actors on their action and agencies towards the institutional change.

### **6.1 Rethinking the Curriculum Reform with New Institutional Perspective**

In the study it is found that the key actors in the institutional change have ambivalent opinions about the change. Some of them resist the reform, while others embrace it, and most of them incorporate it with their own framework. The contributing factors on whether adopt the new curriculum are as follow. The major concern of the actors is the administrative as well as management dimension of daily practices in school organization. An expedient explanation is shared by all the actors, concerning various daily operational factors, such as sources of teachers, resource allocation and reallocation of money, personnel, time-tabling and candidates who are sent for public examination; efficiency and effectiveness. Besides, a normative consideration on adopting a new curriculum as a functional necessity in knowledge-based society is

also widely shared by the actors. On the discussion of “best-fit schema” of the actors to LS, the actors have rather diverse opinions that no particular academic backgrounds they agree upon. Rather, they tend to believe that there is either no relation between particular academic backgrounds that fits the subject, or they find their own academic backgrounds fit the subject very well. Most actors hold that some personal character traits or psychological factors are the best-fit-schema of teachers that facilitates them to take up the subject more easily.

At the first glance, the findings are confused and ambivalent. Yet if we put them in a new institutionalist perspective, it is found that the actors share similar grammar and vocabularies when they talk about the reform. According to Wuthnow, in every public discourse there is an inner structure of form and content, which he refers to the vocabularies of public life.(Wuthnow 1992:9). In this case, the organizational actors of school organization adopt similar discourse when they make decision on whether adopt the institutional change. They are the expedient explanation for the survival and smooth operation of the organization, a normal consideration of a better curriculum for students in the knowledge era, and a cognitive account for the best-fit-schema of the actors to the new curriculum. The common structure of the form and content of this discourse can be regarded as the response of the actors to

three institutional environments of modern school organization. In this case, the school is regarded as a modern organization (expedient explanation), an educational organization (normative explanation), and individual actor as modern agentic actor (cognitive explanation)..

### **6.1.1 Sources of Legitimacy**

In new institutionalist perspective, organizational actors are assumed to respond to the requirements of the institutional environments where the organization is situated. In this case, the source of legitimacy the organizational actors (the decision makers as well as leaders in this study) select to respond to is not only the curriculum institution. By asking the questions of what triggers the institutional change, it is found that the actors respond to the institutional environment of organization other than curriculum institution. The early adopter, late adopter and even the non-adopter adopt similar categories of explanation from the respective institutional environment, namely modern organization and curriculum.

First of all, the actors chose to respond to the institutional environment of school as a modern organization in a quite unified way. All the decision makers and leaders in



three schools spend most of the time explaining the expedient factors for or against the curriculum change, although school is assumed an educational institution. Even in the three cases there are very different decisions on adoption of the new curriculum, all adopt the categories from the institutional requirements of a modern organization to explain why they adopt the new curriculum in an early stage, a later stage or not adopt at all. The categories of both formal and informal structures of an organization are adopted. They include organizational goals (the output, for example, public examination results of students, university entrance rate and so on), structure of subjects and timetabling, and the survival and sustainability of the organization (the adoption of official curriculum, positive response to state policies, efficiency and effectiveness of carrying out educational activities etc.). Besides, the categories of informal structure are adopted such as interests and power, for example, the vertical (ranking) and horizontal classifications (discipline) of teachers, vested interests and compartmentalism of teachers and the like. In sum, it is not the concern on education itself but the administration and management side of the change has been brought up most of the time.

As an education organization, the actors also respond to the institutional environment of curriculum institution when they understand what triggers the institutional change.

Other than the considerations of accomplishing the goals of a modern organization, the actors also have to justify the direction of the change by responding to selected elements of official curriculums. Curriculum objectives such as preparing students for a knowledge-based society, to acquire generic skills, to learn how to learn, and the pedagogic practices such as project learning, activity approaches are frequently mentioned by the decision makers and leaders. By responding to the selected categories in a curriculum institution, the actors define the sources of legitimacy of their decisions, whether they take the new curriculum in another form as the non-adopter does, or adopt the subject right when the subject has been introduced into official curriculum as the early adopter does, or adopt the subject when it is stipulated as a core subject in the upcoming curriculum reform as the late adopter does.

In general, when the informants respond to the institutional environment of curriculum, the categories are selected primarily from the requirements of new curriculum institution. Interestingly, even though the decision maker of the non-adopter school, who maintains the curriculum objectives of the new curriculum can be achieved by the traditional discipline-based subjects, also frames the old curriculum with the categories adopted from the new curriculum institutions. In Dr.

Wong's words, for example, students can learn generic skills and critical thinking in the traditional subjects, if they are implemented well. Categories from the traditional institution are seldom included in the discussion. The only category he mentions is the discipline-based curriculum that could equip students with discipline knowledge. It is a way to avoid students bluffing as he criticizes the way LS is.

From the articulations of the actors, it can be said that the new institution has been successfully established and accepted by the actors. The categories in the institutional environment of the new curriculum institution are well defined. In order to attain legitimacy, all the actors include the early adopter, later adopter and even non-adopter discuss around the similar, if not the same categories selected from the new institution.

In sum, when the actors make sense of the curriculum change of case LS, they perceived that they were responding to the requirement of a modern organization as well as a new curriculum institution. In other words, actors regard school as a modern organization and an educational organization, where the sources of legitimacy come from the responses to these two institutional environments.

## **6.2 The Sense-making Process of Actions and Agencies**

It is assumed that there are some factors that influence the sense-making process of actors in the time of institutional change. It includes schema and network of the actors, subject characteristics, and the communication of policy message.

First of all it is found that the actors agree that the schema works as the mindset of the teachers to categorize and understand the reality. The schema is conceptualized as discipline knowledge, perspective (or the mindset) and sometimes it is regarded as general capability. It is assumed that certain schema fits the new curriculum better than the others. However, from the articulations of the actors, it is found that they differ in opinions and have arbitrary interpretations about what the best-fit schema is to the new curriculum.

The arbitrary interpretations of a best-fit schema are in two ways. First, actors tend to present the best-fit-schema with their own understandings, vaguely relate to the buzz words in the policy paper such as generic skills, learning through project participation and so on. It is particularly true when the policy message is not clear, or the actors cannot make sense of the new policy contents. As it is not clear,

furthermore, actors tend to interpret the best-fit schema to the new curriculum in relations to their own schema, such as discipline training or personality traits. This is how they reduce insecurity and uncertainties in the context of institutional change.

Apart from the teachers' schema, the schema of students is also studied in the study, but it is found that students' schema is not very crucial to the sense-making process of the teachers. Students are passive receivers of the curriculum arrangement. There is no impact of the schema of students on that of teachers.

The articulations of the actors about the best-fit schema to the new curriculum can be interpreted as a response to modern actorhood (Meyer & Jepperson 2000). To deal with the uncertainties and insecurities in the transition of curriculum change, on the one hand, actors try to interpret the new requirements through ones' own schema and around the buzz words in the policy documents in an arbitrary way. On the other hand, most of the actors think that the capability or the mindset is crucial to build an appropriate schema for the new curriculum. It can be easily understood if the actors think some undergraduate or post-graduate training of knowledge fit the new curriculum; however, the significance of mindset, capability and psychological factors are shared in the articulations of most of the informants. In this regard, facing

uncertainties and insecurities, the actors seek to appeal to actorhood. The actor is an individual that is regarded as an active, rationalized and empowered agent, in response to the social and moral cosmos (Boli, Ramirez & Meyer 1985; Meyer 2000:215). In other words, the actor is agentic, who is not only constrained by the structure, but also able to act upon the environment, have the capacity to learn and make progress, and can be ones' own law-giver. Responding to this modern conception of actors, informants define actors as the ones possessing schema which can be built and rebuilt; with generic capacity such as learning ability and social skills; and with characteristics as open-mindedness, flexibility, vigorousness and reflectivity, which are all qualities of a voluntaristic, agentic actors. To respond to the requirements of modern actors, informants feel comfortable in face of the uncertainties and insecurities.

Last but not least, network serves as another source that shapes the sense-making process. Network influences the process in two different cases, namely an actor as a receiver and as a disseminator. In the case of receiver, the network received is more legitimate, the sense-making process is in a smoother way. In the case of disseminator, the resource teachers and schools attain legitimacy in the process of

dissemination, with the mandate from state authority and professional groups. It helps the disseminator, that is, the teachers and the school organization strengthen their beliefs and conform to the new institution.

### **6.3 School as a Modern Education Organization, Individual as Modern Actor**

Although it is found that the actors provide a purposive or functional explanation when they make sense of the curriculum reform, the cultural and ideological account is a better explanation for the sense-making process in this case. School is an organization, or an educational organization to be exact. Actors as school administrators or teachers make sense of the curriculum reform not only as an educator, but also someone with an organizational role.

What is a modern organization? It is different from the traditional bureaucratic one. Modern organization is a social entity which is a collective and sovereign actor which is highly rationalized, formalized and coordinated around unified sovereignty (Drori, Meyer & Hwang 2006:1-2; 16). Not only the organization as an actor, the member within are to participate actively in the rationalization and formalization of the organization and are to help make the organizational dynamic, adaptive innovation

and so on. They are no more passive actor who obey external sovereign, with role specification, rather, they are sovereign actors with rights and responsibilities themselves. In other words, actorhood is the organization and everybody in it (*ibid*, p.16).

In this regard, the cultural account shared by the actors is the source of the sense-making process of the actors. The informants make sense of the curriculum reform by regarding they are actors in modern organization. The modern organization itself is a modern actor too. School as a modern organization is highly rationalized, formalized, adaptive and innovative. In the case of curriculum reform, individual actors share an expedient consideration when they decide whether, or how quick they adopt the change. The expedient consideration such as resource allocation, interaction of power and interests is not particular to modern organization but to all organization, illustrating the rational and formalized aspect of the actor. As a modern organization, all individual as well as organization actors in these three cases choose to respond to the new curriculum institutional environment is not only expedient calculation, but also to have a vision that the organization as well as individual actors to be progressive, futuristic and visionary. For example, in the case of non-adopter, after the expedient calculation, the decision is made to adopt a



school-based subject IH which perfectly fit the curriculum framework of new curriculum. The consideration of “keeping up the trend but in their own way” can be seen throughout the interviews of the decision maker and resource person in the case of non-adopter. The actors in other two schools, in particular the early adopter emphasize the change is good for students in the context of a knowledge-based society. The actors adopt an adaptive, progressive and visionary view on themselves and the school organization. Individual actors also regard themselves as rational, adaptive agentic actor. In the articulations of the actors it is found that they try to make sense of the curriculum reform and decrease the anxiety of facing uncertainties and insecurities in the reform by defining themselves as learning actors with capacity, in other words, by confirming themselves as modern actors.

#### **6.4 Significance and Implications**

The research is a study on the sense-making process of the actors on their actions and agencies in the context of a real case of institutionalization of a new curriculum institution (LS) into an existing one. Researches elicited by new institutionalist perspective are usually comparative studies by quantitative methodology in macro view, global scale. Criticisms on new institutionalist perspectives that it is fail to

demonstrate the mechanism of the cognitive process in such a large scale. This research is an attempt to look into the micro process of sense-making of the actors which serves as a foundation of the large-scale cognitive argument. Organization actors are identified who are mediated by organizational context. They perceive, negotiate and respond to the institutional requirements among others in the organizational field (or the institutional environment). This is an attempt to bridge the micro with the macro analysis in new institutionalism. The research direction turns to a micro-process is a congruent move with most of the new institutional theorists in recent years (Coburn 2004; Spillane 2006).

In the study of the schema of the actors, it is found that the schema of an actor can be a bricolage, which might be ambivalent and even conflicting. By adopting Accher's concept of "internal dialogue", the sense-making process within the actors has been investigated. It is found that they tend to frame and reframe individual schema in a voluntary way. The schema therefore is not only a static "mindset" which is a source of interpretation and negotiation of the actors. It can be regarded as a source while it can also be shaped in the interpretation and negotiation process. It is very significant for the further development of the theory at micro level.

In addition, with a new institutionalist perspective, we can grasp the cognitive aspects of individual actors on how they define and redefine the institutional environment. In a real school organization, actors respond to various institutional environments rather than regarding themselves as educators only and respond to the institutional environment of education institution. The process of sense-making could be complicated when the actor is situated in the crux of various institutions such as curriculum, a modern organization (Scott 2001), and individual as rationalized agentic actor (Meyer & Jepperson 2000). This research serves as an empirical study to document the sense-making process of organizational actors in organization in the institutionalization process in various dimensions.

The study also sheds light on better strategies on policy implementation in the future. We know that the success of policy implementation depends largely on the frontline practitioners. By understanding the micro-process of teacher sense-making, particular facilitating factors as well as difficulties teacher encountered can be identified in this real case study. We can then strengthen the positive factors and reduce the negative ones in different dimensions such as teachers training, school organization and environment. In this regard, the study can be seen as a reference for initiating other curriculum preparations in the coming future.

The study also informs the future needs on teacher training programmes. As seen in the study, informants emphasize the significance of the rational, adaptive characters of the modern actor of themselves and organizations. Although administrators and teachers, particular those in late adopter and non adopter respond to the new institution and feel they have to move forward, however, their frustration can be seen in the interviews. It is due to the perception that they found inadequate support in training. According to the findings of this study, we could strengthen teacher's perception on appropriate teaching training. LS is a subject which is characterized with weak frame and weak classification. It is found that the informants frame and reframe their schema with accordance to their perception on what LS is. The study elucidates that the best form of training is where teacher training institutes consolidate the discourse of a basic undergraduate study with post-graduate diploma on LS. Actors can actually use the perspective of their own discipline or subject knowledge as a foundation of teaching, that facilitated by the practical training on pedagogic practices in Post-graduate Diploma would be enough.

## **6.5 Limitations**

There are a number of limitations pertaining to the research method. One of the major limitations is that the sample of informants might not be representative of all the school organizations in Hong Kong. In my research design, three types of school are sampled as three cases for study by the method of theoretical sampling (Ragin 1994). Theoretical sampling is not a method to achieve representativeness, but rather to gain a deeper understanding of the selected cases. The cases are selected according to the period of adoption of the new subject, which is theoretically-informed. However, the scope might not be comprehensive enough. The gap will be filled by other documentation such as other existing related studies and further studies.

Moreover, there will be a number of biases in the method of in-depth interviews. It includes selection bias or memory error (Hitchcock & Hughes 1995). This is particularly true in my study in the case of “Early Adopter”, in which the interviewees are required to memorize the incidents that happened years ago. As this study is an attempt to research the sense-making process of the actors, the focus should be put on how the actors interpreted and framed their experiences. Armed with new institutionalism, the focus of the study is the discourses and rhetoric of the actors, or

in other words, how do they make sense of the situation in the legitimate account they perceived. The error itself can be a source of data for interpretation. However, some measures will be adopted to cross check the error, such as “triangulation”. Triangulation refers to the use of more than one method of data collection, is a technique used to cross-validate the data obtained from the interview (Hitchcock & Hughes 1995).

Another limitation concerns about data collection. In the original research design, school documents such as minutes of subject panel meetings, subject circulars and lesson plans are planned to included as triangulation or supporting data for the research. However, all the decision makers in three schools declined my request as they think those are sensitive information which they think would be inappropriate to release. Without the mentioned documents triangulation is not possible, and thus we cannot have a comprehensive picture of curriculum change in these three schools.

In addition, the sampling of the interviewees does not cover the teachers who have left the school. It excludes the teachers who could not or were not willing to take part in the curriculum change, which might be crucial in the understanding of the sense-making process of the frontline practitioners facing institutional change.

However it is suggested to add the relevant interview data in further studies.

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**Appendix 1:**  
**Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)**

1988			
Date	Source	Title	Area/ Parties involved
3-10-1988	大公報 Pao	中文大學社會學系學者在報章撰文建議改革中六預科教育 Scholars of Department of Sociology( CUHK) call for a curriculum reform in Matriculation level	Curriculum/ Experts (Scholars)
24-5-1988	華僑日報 Kiu Yat Po	政府欲推出新中級程度考試課程，課程內容多元化 The government plans a new exam syllabus at intermediate level with diversified syllabus	Curriculum/ Education Commission

1989			
Date	Source	Title	Area/ Parties involved
16-11-1989	星島日報 Tao Daily	爲了擴闊中六課程，設立全新課程：「社會及人文學科」下設七個單元 New curriculum to enrich Form 6 syllabus: "Social science and humanities", seven modules will beincluded	Curriculum
16-11-1989	明報 MingPao	將中級程度會考更改爲高級補充程度會考 The Intermediate level is renamed as Hong Kong Advanced Supplementary Level	Assessment
28-11-1989	文匯報 Wen Wei	通識課程雖然是有進步，但對學生仍有不少局限性	Curriculum

**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

	Po	LS is a progressive subject, there are still limitations to students	
<b>1990</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Area/ Parties involved</b>
16-3-1990	華僑日報 Wah Kiu Yat Po	開始編制中六新課程 Start preparing new F6 syllabus	Curriculum
1-6-1990	明報 Ming Pao	社會與文化科推出了課程綱要 New Syllabus of "Social and Cultural Studies" published	Curriculum
14-4-1990 16-4-1990	快報 Hong Kong Standard	教育署決定於高級程度會考「社會與文化」科開設「環境學」單元，教署及考試局正研究有關課程 EMB decided to offer the module of "Environmental Studies" in "Social and Cultural Studies". EMB and HKEAA are working on the related syllabus	Curriculum/ EMB
5-6-1990	?	考試局闡述通識課程對中六學生的好處：表示了通識科考試與以往傳統學科考試的不同，包括著重學生的思維分析、邏輯推理，並需根據資料作答 K.EAA explained the benefits of the new LS to F6 students. The format of the examination is different from that of traditional subjects, with more emphasis on analytical thinking, logical deductions and data-based questions	Curriculum/ HKEAA
5-8-1990	信報 Hong Kong Economic Journal	不少教師開始擔心通識教育教學內容、教學方法和教材，而教育署則考慮邀請師資培訓機構培訓教師 Many teachers are worried about the subject content, teaching materials and teaching method of	Teacher Training/ Teachers' Association

**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

		LS. EMB considered inviting teacher training organizations to train the teachers.	
<b>1991</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Area/ Parties involved</b>
8-4-1991	明報 Ming Pao	津貼中學議會一項調查顯示，五成受訪學校不贊同把高級程度會考的「人文及社會」(及後的通識教育) 列為必修科 Survey done by Hong Kong Subsidized Secondary Schools Council showed that 50% school disagreed that "Humanities and Society" (later "LS") at AS-level is listed as a core subject	Curriculum/ Hong Kong Subsidized Secondary Schools Council
19-5-1991	成報 Sing Pao	教育署署長李越挺表示高級補充程度課程將增設社會與文化科，以擴大中六課程。教育署亦會資助各大專院校為教師開辦有關訓練課程。 Mr. Lee Yuet Ting, the Director of Education said there will be a new subject "Society and Culture" at AS-Level in order to broaden Form 6 Curriculum. EMB will provide more resources to the tertiary institutions on teacher training programmes.	Curriculum & Teacher Training/ EMB
23-5-1991	明報 Ming Pao	有關司法制度、法律制度及執法課題，將在 92 年列入高級補充程度的通識教育課程內。 Topics related to Judicial System, Law System and Execution will be listed in the syllabus of LS at AS-level in 1992	Curriculum
6-11-1991	/	教育署容許學校增聘教師應付新開辦的高級補充程度會考 EMB allowed school to increase the number of LS teachers at AS-Level	Teacher Training

**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

1992			
Date	Source	Title	Area/ Parties involved
3-1-1992	華僑日報 Wah Kiu Yat Po	有中學指出，高級補充程度會考課程開科困難，以通識教育為例，此科並不是指定入學的科目，故難以吸引學生修讀 Some secondary schools point out that it is difficult to offer LS at AS level as the subject is not listed as the basic requirement of University admission, students are not likely to take the subject	University Admission/ Secondary School Principals
25-4-1992	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	香港大學決定不將「通識教育」列入入學科目，科技大學則尚考慮將此科列為入學條件之一。有教育界人士指出這均影響對學校是否開辦通識教育的取向。 University of Hong Kong decided not to list LS as basic requirement for admission, University of Science and Technology is considering to make it one of the entrance criteria. Some educationists point out that this could affect whether secondary schools offer LS as a subject.	University Admission/ Universities and Educationalists
13-7-1992	快報 Express News	通識教育備受冷落，調查機構指不足一成學校選修該科，該機構解釋有受訪學校表示學校和教師均欠時間了解此科 Research institute found that less than 10% students offer LS at AS level. Teachers and students feel that they do not have enough time to understand the subject.	Implementation/ Research Institute
17-9-1992	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	全港有一成半，約三十多間預科學校開設「通識教育」 There are 30 schools, around 15% of the total number offer LS	Implementation
20-10-1992	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	教育署下月為高補課程提供津貼，開辦通識教育的學校將獲署方發放二千元非經常性津貼，較中國歷史和歷史科還要高。	School Allowance/ EMB & Secondary

**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

		<p>EMB will provide subsidies for ASL courses, there will be \$2000 extra to those who offer LS.</p> <p>The amount is higher than that of Chinese History and History.</p> <p>考試局對學生選修 ASL 課程發表調查報告，通識教育六個單元中，科學、科技與社會選讀人數較少，只有 8 個；最多人選讀的是人際關係，接近 800 人。考試局發言人解釋今次統計的數字較預期好</p> <p>HKEAA releases a report on LS at AS level. Among the six modules, there were only eight students who selected "Science, Technology, and Society"; while there were approximately 800 students who selected "Human Relationships". HKEAA said it is better than expected.</p>	School
28-10-1992	快報 Express News		Assessment, Implementation/ HKEAA

1993									
<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Area/ Parties involved</b>						
16-12-1993	華僑日報 Wah Kiu Yat Po	<p>1994 年高補程度會考通識教育科報考統計(Summary on Students who sat for Examination of LS at AS-level in 1994) :</p> <p>開設通識學校 (Number of School offered LS at AS level): 34</p> <p>考生人數 (Number of Candidates) : 904 (自修生 Private Candidates : 20)</p> <p>各單元報考情況 Modules sat for :</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;">單元 Module</th> <th style="width: 25%;">學校數目 No. of School</th> <th style="width: 25%;">自修生人數 No. of Private Candidates</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	單元 Module	學校數目 No. of School	自修生人數 No. of Private Candidates				Assessment, Implementation
單元 Module	學校數目 No. of School	自修生人數 No. of Private Candidates							

**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

		人際關係 Human Relationship	23	17	
		環境教育 Environmental Edu.	21	11	
		香港研究 Hong Kong Studies	19	11	
		今日中國 Today China	4	4	
		現代世界 Modern World	3	3	
		科技與社會 Technology and Society	1	0	

1994				Area/ Parties involved
Date	Source	Title		
7-12-1994	/	對於通識教育一科，有數間大學答允若學生在該科獲 E 級或以上成績，學院亦會給予較優先的取錄考慮。 Some Universities agree to grant students who get E grade or above in LS a priority in university admission.		University Admission

1996				Area/ Parties involved
Date	Source	Title		

**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

7-6-1996	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	高補通識科修訂本將推出，聯合聲明實施課題改為基本法實施，增設傳播媒介與社會 The amended version of syllabus of LS at AS level will be launched. The issue "Sino-British Joint Declaration" will change to "Basic Law" and will add media and society.	Curriculum
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1998			
Date	Source	Title	Area/ Parties involved
08-6-1998	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	仁愛堂中學校長戴希立表示，指出把語文訓練及通識課程搬到大學去做並不符合將來社會需要。故學制改革建基於中小學的基礎語文訓練及通識教育應從中小學開始，以培養出五育均衡發展的人才。 Mr. Tai, The principal of Yan Oi Tong Tin Ka Ping Secondary School said to cater for the social needs, we should start language training and liberal education in Primary and Secondary education, not in the university. This is a way to cultivate all-rounded students.	Curriculum/ Secondary School Principal
8-7-1998	南華早報 South China Morning Posts	Education Convergence chairman Cho Kai-lok said LS should be made a compulsory admission requirement for universities.	University Admission/ Education Convergence
6-8-1998	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	大學校長與中學校長聯席會議轄下的工作小組昨日就學制問題達成初步共識，建議取消高級程度會考，實行五年中學、一年預科及四年大學。而新學制下的中學課程，分核心科目及文、理、通識等選修科目。 The working group on Academic Structure of Joint Committee of Universities and Secondary	Curriculum/ Academic structure

**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

		<p>School Principals came to a conclusion that, A-Level Examination is suggested to be cancelled, 5-years secondary education, 1 year Matriculation and 4 year University. Education should be implemented. The curriculum of the new secondary education should include core subjects and elective subjects including art, science and LS.</p>	Curriculum/ Academic structure
9-9-1998	<p>大公報 Ta Kung Pao</p>	<p>由大學及中學校長組成的‘三改四’工作小組，經過近六個月的會議後，建議實行‘五—四’新學制，即五年中學、一年預科及四年大學。新學制將會取消香港高級程度會考考試。學生在預科這一年中，有十節是通識課程，如德育、國際關係與世界形勢、中國文化、民族發展。</p> <p>The working group on “3 to 4” of Joint Committee of Universities and Secondary School Principals suggested a “514” new academic structure. There will be 5-years secondary education, 1 year Matriculation and 4 year University education. A-Level Examination will be cancelled. In the one-year Matriculation, there will be 10 lessons for LS such as moral education, international relationship and world situation, Chinese culture and the national development.</p>	

1999			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Area/ Parties involved</b>
1-2-1999	<p>星島日報 Sing Tao Daily</p>	<p>大學校長會就學制問題舉行的首個公開論壇上，理大校長潘宗光指本港學生的專科知識並不比外國差，但通識、語文能力等卻未夠水平，故四年制大學，可增設上述課程幫助學生提升水平，不過有與會者質疑本港高補程度本設通識教育，但大學在收生時卻未予重視，</p>	Curriculum/ University Principals



**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

		<p>現又反過來說學生需要在大學在此下苦功，實在自相矛盾。</p> <p>In a forum organized by The University Principal Committee, Mr. Poon, the principal of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, stated that Hong Kong students are no worse than their foreign counterparts on subject knowledge. However, they are not up to certain standards on liberal education and languages. 4 year University programme is good for enhancing students' ability. However, some participant doubted that while the universities think LS is significant, and they do not list the subject as a basic requirement in admission.</p>	
1-2-1999	明報 Ming Pao	<p>曹啓樂在報章撰文，指把通識教育列作高中預科核心科目，似乎亦是大勢所趨。</p> <p>There is a global trend that LS will be one of the core subject in A-Level</p>	Curriculum/ Teachers Association
16-8-1999	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	<p>高級補充程度通識教育科正進行課程內容改革，「現代世界」及「今日中國」兩部分內容將全面更新，增加切合時宜的課題，以及刪減課程內單純闡述歷史的部分，增加課程的趣味性，全新課程將於明年九月正式實行。</p> <p>There will be a subject reform in LS at AS level. More current issues will be added in the module "Modern World" and "Today China". The new curriculum will be implemented in the next academic year.</p>	Curriculum/ EDB
28-8-1999	新報 Hong Kong Daily News	<p>仁愛堂田家炳中學為使初中學生能夠有更佳適應能力，便將舊有的歷史、經濟、地理、社會等科目合併成通識教科。負責這學科的教師自行設計課程，以理論、參與、實踐作教學藍本。</p> <p>To enhance students' ability, Yan Oi Tong Tin Ka Ping Secondary School offers LS in Junior Secondary level which integrated several subjects like History, Economics, Geography and Society. It is a school-based curriculum which includes theories, participation and practical works.</p>	Curriculum/ Secondary School

**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

29-9-1999	文匯報 Po	<p>中文大學校長李國章學生應從小接受通識教育，以引起他們的好奇心，中學畢業時，就不會只懂「死讀書」，令到「腦都實埋」。他認為入到大學才強調通識教育已經太遲。</p> <p>Mr. Li Kwok Cheung, The Principal of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, thinks that student should receive the training of LS when they were young in order to arouse their curiosity. It would be too late to receive the training in university.</p>	Curriculum/ University Principal
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2000			
Date	Source	Title	Area/ Parties involved
11-5-2000	明報 MingPao	<p>新會商會中學副校長在明報撰文指將通識科列為必修科，實施「文中有理、理中有文」等，久於穩定的教師們能否動員起來呢？</p> <p>The Deputy Principal of San Wui Commercial Society Secondary School wrote in Mingpao that LS is a compulsory subject, in which arts and sciences are combined. Can teachers who enjoyed stability be mobilized?</p>	Curriculum/ Vice-Principal
17-5-2000	文匯報 Po	<p>教育統籌委員會發表《教育制度檢討、改革方案》諮詢文件在中學學制方面，則以三年初中、三年高中為根本，取消高考會考，改以「大學入學試」，好令中學教育不囿於公開試的框框，而有更大的彈性和空間發展通識教育，開拓學生的視野。</p> <p>The Education Commission publishes "Review of Education System, Education Reform Recommendations" consultation paper. The basis of the secondary school system comprises of three years of junior high school plus three years of high school. HKCEE is cancelled, replaced by the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination, so that secondary education</p>	Curriculum/ EMB

**Appendix 1:**  
**Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)**

		is not confined to public examinations. The flexibility and room for liberal arts development become greater, broadening students' horizons.	
2-11-2000	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	城大高級專業學院於2001年九月開辦兩年制的通識教育副文學士課程。 College of Higher Vocational Studies at the City University of Hong Kong started a two-year liberal arts associate degree course in September, 2001.	Curriculum

2001			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Area/ Parties involved</b>
11-1-2001	公正報 Hong Kong Globe	個人、社會及人文教育學習領域著重探究知識的能力，考試會怎樣配合呢？鮑慧篤表示，通識教育考試同樣著重能力評估，可作為參考。除了筆試外，還可透過其他方式進行評估，例如：校本評估和專題研習式評估，考試局正研究哪些評估方法比較理想。Personal, Social & Humanities Education emphasize the enquiry learning ability. How will the examination as a method be line with the goal? Pau Wai Seung said, LS examinations also stress the assessment of ability, which can be used as reference. Except for written examinations, other assessment methods are feasible: School-based, project-based evaluations. The HKEAA is discussing the assessment methods.	Assessment/ HKEAA
17-10-2001	南華早報 South China Morning Posts	All senior secondary students would take LS, covering a wide range of topics in arts, science and public affairs, to broaden their fields of learning	Academic structure

	Curriculum/ CDI
<p>17-10-2001</p> <p>星島日報 Sing Tao Daily</p>	<p>課程發展議會建議，除了中英數外，亦將通識教育課程列為高中必修科，用以扣緊社會脈搏和培養學生價值觀</p> <p>The Curriculum Development Council suggests, besides Chinese, English Language and Mathematics, LS should be included as one of the core subjects in senior secondary curriculum, in order to keep Hong Kong students in line with the society and establish their value system.</p>
<p>17-10-2001</p> <p>明報 MingPao</p>	<p>東華三院黃笏南中學校長韓孝述認為，讀通識科的人數一向少，為大學沒有將通識科列為入學條件。他說：「的統整性高，師難掌握教學，學應提供培訓。」</p> <p>香港大學署理教務長韋永康則歡迎將通識列為大學入學必修科。但通識要求學生做研究和分析，學生必修科目太多，心應付不來，失去原本的意義。</p> <p>The principal of TWSGHS Wong Fut Name College, Hon Hau-sut says, due to the fact that LS is not a compulsory subject for university enrollment, few students take the subject. He said, "Students study LS are requires to develop the ability of integration. Teachers may find it difficult to handle. Universities should provide the related training on this kind of ability."</p> <p>The registrar of the University of Hong Kong Mr Henry Wai welcomes the LS as compulsory subject for admittance. He is concerned that students studying LS to do research and analysis. If students are required to study too many subjects, they may be hard to manage, which would result in the effective in achieving the original goal of learning.</p>
<p>17-10-2001</p> <p>東方日報 Oriental Daily</p>	<p>中大會計學院院長何順文擔心，通識科目只是綜合科目，缺乏深度，難教亦難考，較適宜於在學校課餘活動內引入，而不適合作為高中大學預備課程的必修科目，否則學生以應考貼題目方式修讀，失卻設立該科目的意義。</p> <p>Prof. Simon HO, Director of the School of Accountancy was concerned that, LS is merely a general subject which lacks the depth in knowledge. He thinks that it is difficult to both teach</p>

**Appendix 1:**  
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		and assess. The subject is more appropriate to be introduced in ECA instead of being a compulsory subject for admittance for universities. Otherwise, students may put the effort on guesswork on the examination questions, which hurts the original goal of setting LS.	
15-11-2001	明報 MingPao	<p>教統會轄下的「高中學制及與高等教育銜接工作小組」，最近就高中科目設計已達成一些共識，在科目數目方面，建議高中學生修六科，中英數及通識教育為必修科，其中通識又會分成多個單元，包含綜合文科和科學知識，以擴闊學生知識層面。</p> <p>The committee has come to consensus on new senior secondary curriculum. On subject number, the group suggests students to study six subjects, which includes Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics and LS. In LS, the subject will be divided into sessions such as integrative arts and science, in order to broaden the horizon of knowledge of students.</p>	Curriculum/ Education Commission

2002			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Area/ Parties involved</b>
28-1-2002	明報 MingPao	<p>明年九月推出的新會考選修課程綜合人文科及綜合科學與科技科，預料 2007 年實行高中三年制後，將與現時預科的通識科合併為必修通識。</p> <p>Certificate of Education Examination in September of next year's new Integrated Humanities courses and the Integrated Science and Technology Division, is expected to implement at 2007. After 3 school years, it will be combined with the Advanced Level (AL) LS into a compulsory LS liberal.</p>	Curriculum
28-1-2002	明報 MingPao	<p>教署高級課程發展主任李志雄上周五在諮詢會上承認，預料 2007 年將實行高中三年制，</p>	Curriculum/ EDB

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		<p>教統會小組暫建議固時設必修通識科，教署亦將另外成立委員會，研究將該兩科與現時的          高考通識科合併為新的必修通識科，故該兩科壽命僅四年。</p> <p>Last Friday, the Senior Curriculum Development Officer of Education Department, Lee Chi Hung, was recognized in the consultation and expected to implemented at 2007 for seven years in New Senior Secondary Curriculum (NSSC). The EC will set up the temporary proposed compulsory LS, the Education Department will also set up a committee to study the two subjects which will combine with the Advanced Level LS to become NSSC LS. Thus, the two subjects will be closed after four years.</p>	
28-1-2002	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	<p>為配合教育改革提出高中課程「文中有理，理中有文」的概念，教育署將於明年推出「綜合人文科」及「科學與科技科」會考課程，供理科及文科生修讀。不過有教師憂慮，課程內容牽涉面太廣，學生未有足夠的探究精神，容易淪為一場「吹水遊戲」。</p> <p>兩個新課程與目前的通識教育科的內容相若，均強調提升學生的探究及自學能力。</p> <p>To coordinate with the concept of "Art in science, science in Art" in NSSC, the Education Department launched the "Integrated Humanities" and "Science and Technology" HKCEE courses for science and arts students next year. However, there is concern of teachers that the curriculum covers a too wide. The students may not have enough of an inquisitive mind which can easily become a "blabbing game."</p> <p>Two new courses and the current LS have similar contents. They are emphasized to enhance exploration and self-learning ability of students.</p>	Curriculum/ EDB

2003			
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**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

Date	Source	Title	Area/ Parties involved
21-5-2003	蘋果日報 Daily	<p>新制下高中學生除修讀中英數三科主科外，需修一科通識科</p> <p>Under the NSSC, in addition to study in the Chinese Language, English and Mathematics, students need to compulsorily take LS</p>	Academic structure
2-10-2003	文匯報 Po	<p>培僑中學校長羅慶琮表示，規定全校中一至中七生修讀通識課。課程內容是因應時事發展，把有關題目列入教材範圍內，學生除了讀書、抄寫筆記外，更要接受思想方法的訓練。預科學生亦需在高級程度會考中應考通識課。</p> <p>The Principal of Pui Kiu Secondary School, said students from form one to form seven would take LS. Course content is developed in response to current events into the context of relevant topics included in the textbooks. Students reading, copying notes, but also to receive training in ways of thinking. Students need to take LS as a core courses for Advanced level examination.</p>	Curriculum
16-12-2003	明報 MingPao	<p>一項向近 1300 名港滬中學教師進行的問卷調查指出，21%上海教師認為所教的學生對國際議題較感興趣，但持相同意見的香港教師卻僅 3.5%。逾六成香港教師亦自認對國際議題認識不足，較上海教師高出逾倍。</p> <p>教院公民教育中心主任李榮安說，調查反映香港師生的「國際觸覺」較上海低，「香港自以為是國際大都市，但卻忘記了要有國際視野」。他又解釋，「通識、綜合人文等學科，在香港不是必修科，內地卻有政治課」，加上本港師訓不設世界公民教育，令本港師生對國際議題認識較少。</p> <p>A survey asked nearly 1300 secondary school teachers in Shanghai and Hong Kong point out that 21% of Shanghai teachers think that students are taught more interested in international issues, but hold the same opinion of the Hong Kong teachers had only 3.5%. Over 60% Hong Kong Teachers also consider themselves as inadequate understanding of international issues</p>	Curriculum

**Appendix 1:**  
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	<p>compared with the teacher in Shanghai.</p> <p>Education Institute Director, Center for Civic Education, Lee Wing-on said the survey indicated that the "international touch" of Hong Kong teachers and students lower than those in Shanghai, "Hong Kong self-righteous international metropolis, but has forgotten to have an international outlook." He further explained, "LS, Integrated Humanities and other disciplines, is not a compulsory subject in Hong Kong. In mainland there is the political class", coupled with no citizen of the world education for our local teachers, thus teachers and students in Hong Kong know little of international issues.</p>	
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		Area/ Parties involved
2004		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Title</b>
5-1-2004	明報 MingPao	<p>《高中學制檢討報告》亦有建議高中課程學習時間的確實百分比，若高中生每周上 40 堂，高中各科所佔的課時，將是中英文各 5 堂、數學 4 堂、通識 6 堂、選修科各佔 4 堂，其餘時間涉獵其他學習經歷。不少中學校長反對通識佔課時最多。</p> <p>"Senior Secondary Academic Structure Review Report" also suggests that high school course of study time, the exact percentage of 40 a week if the high school students, high school subjects share class, will be in English and Chinese of all 5, Mathematics 4, Liberal 6, 4 elective subjects each, the rest of the time adopted the materials from other learning experiences. Many secondary school principals think that LS should not be allocated more timeslots than other subjects</p>
10-1-2004	明報 MingPao	天水圍的順德聯誼總會翁祐中學校校長蔡澤群認為，學校應在現有課程加入通識元素，為高
		Curriculum



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		<p>中課程作好準備，將來高中三年制科目減少了，學校須善用餘下時間，高中會一場糊塗</p> <p>Mr. Choi, the Principal of Tin Shui Wai Shun Tak Fraternal Association Yung Yau College Principal, believes that schools should join the Liberal elements of existing courses for senior secondary curriculum to prepare for the future, fewer subjects a three-year high school, and schools are required to make the best use for the rest, or high school would be mess.</p> <p>課程發展議會轄下研究通識教育的專責小組主席黎樹濠說，新高中通識教育有跨學科、內容講求「闊和廣」的特色，他理解學校擔憂沒經驗可循，但有信心教師能用自己的人生經驗，配合學科專長教好通識教育。</p> <p>Curriculum Development Council Chairman of the Task Force's study of general education Lai Shu-ho, said the new senior secondary general education are inter-disciplinary, content, emphasis on "broad and wide" character, he understood the concerns about the school did not experience to follow, but there are confident that teachers can use their own life experience, with the expertise to teach general education subjects.</p>	Curriculum
<p>13-1-2004</p>	<p>明報 MingPao</p>	<p>教育統籌局下月發表的高中及大學新學制諮詢文件，將列出本港實行三年初中及三年高中的課程安排，文科及理科各有兩至三科的主修科目，另需修讀一科通識課程，主修文科的學生要修讀理科的通識科，相反，主修理科的學生要修讀文科的通識科。</p> <p>通識科的內容主要是基本的常識，例如日常的生活科學、各地文化、世界大事等。目的是增加學生的常識。</p> <p>Education Bureau published the consultation paper on new academic structure for NSS and university next month. It is suggested that a three-year junior secondary and three years of our high school curriculum, arts and science subjects have two to three major subjects, and the other</p>	Curriculum
<p>4-2-2004</p>	<p>蘋果日報 Apple Daily</p>		

**Appendix 1:**  
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		<p>must take a Division General Education courses, majoring in liberal arts students who want to take science in LS, on the contrary, the students majoring in science who want to take liberal arts in LS.</p>	
9-2-2004	成報 Sing Pao	<p>計劃08年推行 配套嚴重不足 中學生應否修通識教育嗎?            教育政策關注社秘書李瑞美: 或會令學生適得其反、課程指引欠清晰、恐學生一竅不通;            獅子會中學校校長林日豐: 讓學生更能切合社會要求</p> <p>Program in 2008 to implement Supporting a serious shortage of Revised LS, students should do?            Education Policy Concern Association secretary Li Rui America: or would be counter-productive for our students, curriculum guides not clear enough, fear that the students know nothing about; Lions Secondary School Lam Yat Fung: to enable students to better meet the social demand</p>	Curriculum
9-2-2004	成報 Sing Pao	<p>保良局教育總主任麥桂圃: 通識教育政策欠周詳</p> <p>Po Leung Kuk Education Secretary Kenneth Mak: lack of thoroughness in general education policy</p>	Curriculum
28-2-2004	明報 MingPao	<p>教院增通識職業導向師訓</p> <p>香港教育學院校長莫禮時說, 教院的2005至08年度學術發展計劃書, 將與嶺大合辦的四年制通識教育(LS)師訓課程, 配合高中學制改革。</p> <p>HKIED will have liberal career-oriented teacher training. Hong Kong Institute of Education president, said Morris, the Education Institute's 2005-08 annual academic development plan, which will be co-organized a four-year general education LU (LS) teacher training courses to cope with the reform of senior secondary academic structure.</p>	Teacher Training

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	信報財經新聞 Hong Kong Economic Journal	新設的通識教育必修科將是吃力不討好的科目：校長反映很難找到教師任教 The new LS as a compulsory subject will become thankless Subject: Principal reflects the difficulty in finding teachers to teach	Teacher Training
23-3-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	家長亦憂慮將被列入規範課目的通識科教師，未能達至水平。 教育統籌局高級課程發展主任黃志堅不諱言，普通教師的通識水平參差不齊，而通識科教師是知識的指導者，較一般的傳遞者的要求高，所以當局將會培訓大量教師。  Parents are also concerned that subjects would be included in the standard LS teachers, failing to meet the standards.  Education and Manpower Bureau Senior Curriculum Development Officer Mr. Wong does not deny that the level of ordinary teachers in liberal uneven, while the Liberal Teachers director of knowledge than the general's request to pass high, so a large number of teachers will be trained.	Teacher Training
2-4-2004	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	戴希立指新高中中的通識課程，是否應加入有關大珠三角的內容作為其中一個選修單元，也可進一步探討。 Tai Hay-lap saying that the new high school core curriculum courses, whether it should be added to the contents of the Greater Pearl River Delta as one of the optional modules can also be further explored.	Curriculum
7-5-2004	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	羅范淑芬提出專科專教長遠目標，有中學校長認同，但提出先決條件，一是大學須開辦通識教育學士課程，二要培訓大批教師。 Fanny Law Fan Chiu Fen a specialized teaching long-term goal, there are secondary school principals agree, but the preconditions First, universities are required to offer general education degree courses, two to train a large number of teachers.	Teacher Training

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10-5-2004	星島日報 Tao Daily	<p>教育統籌局常任秘書長羅范椒芬坦言老師要適應轉型，掌握新的教學法，學習通識教學。</p> <p>Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower Fanny Law Fan Chiu Fen. Tan made by teachers to adapt to restructuring, learn new teaching methods, such as learning liberal education</p>	Teacher Training
19-5-2004	星島日報 Tao Daily	<p>資深老師坦言部分課程會被削去，原先任教的老師，一是離職，若仍留在學校的話，便要轉型教其他科目，例如通識教育。</p> <p>Veteran teachers to frankly some of the courses will be trimmed away. The original teacher either resigns, and for those who remains at school, then has to be changed to teach other subjects, such as general education.</p>	Teacher Training
6-6-2004	星島日報 Tao Daily	<p>中六新學制需三千通識教師</p> <p>NSS needs 3000 LS Teachers</p>	Teacher Training
6-6-2004	明報 MingPao	<p>任教通識教育科的教師，約需接受 100 小時的師訓，即等於修讀教育文憑主修課程所需的時數。 LS Teachers should participate a 100-hours training course.</p>	Teacher Training
20-7-2004	明報 MingPao	<p>為配合教統局鼓勵大學優先考慮錄取修讀通識教育的高考生，港大今年計算高考生分數時，會略為提高該科所佔的分數比重。</p> <p>In line with the Education Bureau's policy for encouraging universities to give priority to LS A level candidates, in the University of Hong Kong has slightly increased the proportion of intake requirement of LS this year.</p>	University Admission
9-9-2004	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	<p>香港教育學院進行課程改革，增強學生的通識教育培訓，以配合中學學制改革。學院的通識教育課程將會由選修科轉為必修科，並會有系統分成 4 大範疇，為未來教師奠下廣泛的知識基礎。</p> <p>Hong Kong Institute of Education reforms the curriculum, enhancing the general studies training for students to meet the reform of secondary education. College of General Education courses</p>	Teacher Training

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		will by an elective subject to compulsory, and there will be system that is divided into four main areas, thus teachers to lay a broad knowledge base for future.	
2-10-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	<p>教育統籌局官員透露，爲了應付未來會推出的新通識教育課程，教統局將於明年開始推行新通識課程培訓工作，培訓通識科教師。</p> <p>Education Bureau officials mentioned that, in order to meet the future launch of a new general education curriculum, Education Bureau will launch the training of the new General Education curriculum, general studies teacher training next year.</p>	Teacher Training
2-10-2004	明報 MingPao	<p>嶺南大學文化研究系副教授許寶強說，擬於明年9月開辦自負盈虧的通識教育研究文憑課程，爲在職教師提供一年或一年半的培訓。</p> <p>Department of Cultural Studies, Lingnan University, Associate Professor Hiu Po-keung said, they will open a self-study diploma courses in general education, in-service teacher training for a year or year and a half.</p>	Teacher Training
8-10-2004	明報 MingPao	<p>通識科校本評分將佔三成，較現有的預科通識課程的校本評分高一成。</p> <p>The SBA of LS will account for 30%, comparing with the existing school-based preparatory core curriculum courses that count 20%.</p>	Assessment
8-10-2004	明報 MingPao	<p>津貼中學議會執委許俊炎則要求，教統局額外增加通識教師人手，減輕教師工作量。</p> <p>Executive Committee has requested that the Education Bureau should increase the number of general studies teachers in order to reduce their workload.</p>	Teacher Training
8-10-2004	新報 Hong Kong Daily News	<p>中學校長張百康表示，應以正面角度看通識教育科列入必修科，認爲人手分配較易，未必專科專教，不同教師可以合作</p> <p>Secondary School Principal Cheung Pak-hong said that we should positively include general studies as a compulsory subject, in return, this will lead to an easier allocation of staff, not</p>	Teacher Training

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		necessarily specialized teaching, different teachers can work together.	Teacher Training
13-10-2004	明報 MingPao	<p>沙田循道衛理中學通識科教師說，訓練學生獨立思維非於朝夕，學校宜由中一起建立全校「通識」文化。</p> <p>Sha Tin Methodist College General Education teacher, said the independent thinking takes period of time to develop, the school should start developing the General studies culture in the beginning of secondary school.</p>	
13-10-2004	明報 MingPao	<p>為增加中學對通識這個未來必修課程的認識，教統局去年在 9 所中學試行以通識為藍本的「綜合人文科」會考課程作過渡</p> <p>In order to increase the school awareness of the new general studies curriculum, in this transition period, the Education Bureau had imposed Integrated humanity as the reference of Examination Course in nine secondary last year.</p>	Teacher Training/ EDB
13-10-2004	明報 MingPao	<p>課程發展處已擬定高中通識課程，新課程將「一國兩制」列為必修課程範疇，但當代中國部分卻抽起政治、只談經濟發展</p> <p>立法會教育界議員張文光直指是「跛腳鴨」，批評課程迴避政治討論，對中國介紹欠全面；教育界建議引入黨政關係、六四事件等課題。他擔心，課程最終培訓本地學生成為欠缺政治醒覺的「經濟動物」。</p> <p>The Curriculum Development Department has prepared high school core curriculum courses, the new courses included the "one country two systems" as a compulsory subject areas, but in contemporary China, some of them taken out of politics, mainly focuses on economic development</p> <p>Education sector, Legislative Council member, Mr Cheung Man-kwong commented that the course avoiding political discussions is unnecessary. It gives an incomplete picture of China.</p>	Curriculum/ CDI

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			Educators propose to introduce the party and government relations, 6/4 events will be covered.	
14-10-2004	蘋果日報 Daily	Apple	八大校長會昨日發表聲明，表示有意將通識科列為大學入學條件 Eight Rectors of Hong Kong Universities states that they have intention to include LS as a university entrance requirements	University Admission
14-10-2004	明報	MingPao	中史教師會會長許振隆表示擔心將來學生只靠通識課程認識中國歷史，未能深入了解。 Chinese History Teachers Association Hui Ching Lung expressed concern about the students will rely on general studies for understanding Chinese history, but not the subject itself.	Curriculum
15-10-2004	大公報 Pao	Ta Kung Pao	課程發展議會通識教育專責小組主席黎樹濠估計，每間中學需要四至八名全職的通識教育教師。 Curriculum Development Council Chairman, Lai Shu-ho estimates that each secondary school needs 4-8 full-time general education teacher.	Teacher Training
15-10-2004	大公報 Pao	Ta Kung Pao	香港大學教育學院副院長謝錫金透露，將在學位教師教育證書和高級教育證書課程增設通識教育師資培訓。 University of Hong Kong, Faculty of Education, vice president Tse Shek-kam said, they will impose general studies in graduate Certificate in Education and Advanced Certificate of Education	Teacher Training
15-10-2004	大公報 Pao	Ta Kung Pao	嶺南大學計劃開辦自資的通識教育課程。 Lingnan University plans to offer self-financing general education curriculum.	Teacher Training
15-10-2004	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	Ta Kung Pao	城市大學副校長黃玉山稱，該校中國文化中心幾年來累積不少教學經驗，校方也有興趣協助培訓通識教育師資。 Vice-Chancellor, City University of Hong Kong, Wong Yuk-shan said with the teaching experiencing of the Chinese Cultural Centre, the school is interested in assisting in training	Teacher Training

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		general education teachers.	
15-10-2004	大公報 Pao	科技大學理學院院長鄭紹遠則認為，通識教育應加入德育內容。 Mr. Cheng, Dean of Faculty of Science of HKUST, believes that general education should include the contents of moral education	Curriculum
16-10-2004	明報 MingPao	通識科備課時間長 教師嘆轉型困難，期望學校靈活調配人手支援教師減低工作量。 Teacher claims that LS require long preparation time. Teacher finds difficulties in transition and expects schools to support flexible human resources policy to reduce workload.	Teacher Training
16-10-2004	星島日報 Tao Daily	有中學校長反對教統局堅持把內容含糊的通識課程列作必修主科，與常任秘書長羅范椒芬爭辯兩小時。 Principals of secondary school opposed that the Education and Manpower Bureau adhere to the contents of the core curriculum courses vague classified as compulsory core subjects.	Curriculum
16-10-2004	星島日報 Tao Daily	許為天校長就批評，四年時間培訓教師不足夠，很多學者、教師都已表示憂慮通識教育課程及校本評核方法，令前線教育工作者工作量激增。 Hui Wai Tin, the Principals, criticized that four years of training is not enough, many scholars, teachers have expressed concern about general education curriculum and school-based assessment methods, this will dramatically increase the workload of front-line teacher.	Teacher Training
16-10-2004	南華早報 China Morning Posts	Dominic Chu Fu-yan, president of the Subsidized Secondary Schools Council, feared there might not be sufficient teachers for LS, as it required general knowledge in arts, science and social sciences.	Teacher Training
19-10-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	浸大擬設中心 提供通識教材，香港公開大學亦有意推出通識的師訓課程 HKBU proposed to provide a LS material centre, the Open University of Hong Kong also intends to launch a teacher training course.	Teacher Training



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19-10-2004	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	「通識」列必修科惹爭議 團體促增教師資源 LS listed as compulsory subject has led to controversy. Organizations urge to increase teacher resources	Teacher Training
19-10-2004	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	中學教團聯盟反對必修通識 Secondary School Mission Union's opposes to make LS as compulsory subject.	Curriculum
19-10-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	目前約七成中學沒有開通識教育，故此有些中學校長反對將這科列為必修，以免教師無法發揮強項，影響學生入大學的機會。 Since 70% of schools do not have LS as a current subject, some secondary school principals object that to set this subject as a compulsory, so that teachers can not play the strengths and affect students entering university opportunities	Curriculum /Teacher Training
20-10-2004	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	有任教通識科的教師建議全面推行通識科時，要分組上課。 There are teachers who teach LS suggest a full implementation of LS, we should group classes.	Teacher Training
20-10-2004	成報 Sing Pao	教育學院社會科學系系主任羅天佑表示，改制後全港約需要 3000 至 4000 名通識科教師，現在卻缺乏這類人才。他認為，長遠計需開設通識教育學士課程。 Mr. Law, the officer of Department of Social Sciences of HKIED, said that after the reform, it needs about 3,000 to 4,000 liberal teachers. With the shortages now, he claims the long term needs to set up general education degree programs.	Teacher Training
20-10-2004	英文虎報 The Standard	Concern group Education Convergence vice-chairman Ho Hon-kuen said there might not be enough LS teachers if the subject was made compulsory.	Teacher Training
20-10-2004	明報 MingPao	教育統籌局今日公布《改革高中及高等教育學制---對未來的投資》諮詢文件，最快在 2008 年推行新學制 Education Bureau announced today that "reform of senior secondary and tertiary education ---	Academic structure

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		investment in the future" consultation document, the earliest implementation of the new academic structure in 2008,	
20-10-2004	成報 Sing Pao	通識教育將成爲未來高中必修科，但不少中學老師都對此一科茫然不知，故相當擔心一旦正式推行 LS will be the future compulsory subject in the high school, but many secondary school are very worried that once the formal implementation of LS, they are clueless about it.	Teacher Training
20-10-2004	太陽報 The Sun Daily	政府不希望教育界投放大量資源在培訓通識教師，反而希望透過「再培訓」來解決超額教師的問題。 Government does not want to invest heavily in the training of liberal teachers, but hoped that "re-training" to solve the problem of surplus teachers.	Teacher Training
21-10-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	羅范椒芬強調：「不會有新的通識教師.....不會只由一個老師教通識，是全校老師一齊教！」 Mrs Law stressed that "no new liberal teachers ... not just teach by one LS teacher, but the whole school teachers to teach together!"	Teacher Training
21-10-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	教協會會長張文光質疑，政府要求任教科目被刪減的教師轉教通識科，令教師教非所學 Education Association challenged that the Government requested the deletion of the teachers to teach LS, have been transferred to teach LS, to enable teachers to teach non-learned	Teacher Training
21-10-2004	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	按政府構思，通識科由三個學習範疇組成，分別爲「自我與個人成長」、「社會與文化」、「科學、科技與環境」。每個學習範疇又分必修部分以及選修部分，再加上獨立專題探究學科。 According to the Government the idea of liberal Division consists of three learning areas, namely "self and personal growth," "Society and Culture", "Science, technology and environment." Each study area was divided into parts, as well as a compulsory elective part, plus	Curriculum

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		the independent special inquiry subjects.	
21-10-2004	文匯報 Po	教育評議會及補助中學議會反對將通識列為必修科 Education Convergence, and grants Secondary Schools Council, as opposed to the LS as a compulsory subject.	Curriculum
21-10-2004	大公報 Pao	有教師表示通識課程欠清晰 Some teachers have expressed unclear LS Curriculum.	Curriculum
21-10-2004	大公報 Pao	對於零八年落實「三三四」學制，中學校長普遍表示支持，但有校長擔心時間太短，通識教師調配有困難 For 2008 the implementation of "334" academic structure, generally expressed support for secondary school principals, but there are principals worried that time is too short, liberal deployment of teachers have difficulty	Teacher Training
21-10-2004	明報 Ming pao	家長擔心教師未必能在短短約3年間轉型任教通識，恐影響教學質素 Parents are concerned that teachers may not necessarily be able to in just about three years to teach core curriculum in transition, fear of affecting the quality of teaching	Teacher Training
21-10-2004	蘋果日報 Daily	教育評議會副主席何漢權認為，全面推行通識科的計劃欠周詳內容空泛，教師數目亦不足 Chairman of Education Convergence Ho Hon Kuen, that the full implementation of General Education Division plans to a lack of thoroughness, content, too vague, the number of teachers is not sufficient	Teacher Training
21-10-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	諮詢文件指出，將向教通識教育的在職教師提供最少35小時培訓 Consultation paper pointed out that general education will be taught for at least 35 hours in-service teacher training	Teacher Training

21-10-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	教育學院副院長陸鴻基指出，35小時培訓根本不足以裝備教師轉教通識 Mr. Luk Hung Kei, vice president of HKIED, points out that the 35-hour training is simply not sufficient to equip teachers to teach LS	Teacher Training
21-10-2004	成報 Sing Pao	通識教育科則建議佔總課時 12.5%。 LS, it is recommended that 12.5% of the total hours.	Curriculum
22-10-2004	成報 Sing Pao	教師憂通識評卷乏標準 Teachers worry about lack Liberal marking standards	Curriculum
22-10-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	教育統籌局局長李國章昨日表示，若教師反對教通識教育，政府可能要延遲實施學制改革。 Education and Manpower Arthur Li, said yesterday that if the opposition to general education teachers, the Government may have to delay the implementation of educational system reform.	Curriculum
22-10-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	教育統籌局常任秘書長羅范椒芬學校可以考慮於 05 或 06 年引進通識科，讓教師及早適應。 Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower, Mrs Fanny Law, the school may consider 05 or the introduction of LS in 2006 to allow teachers to adapt as soon as possible.	Curriculum
22-10-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	教師表示通識教育的課程綱要很籠統，不像傳統科目有具體範疇 Teachers have expressed the syllabus of LS is very broad, unlike the traditional subjects which have their own specific areas	Curriculum
22-10-2004	蘋果日報 Apple Daily	有大學學者認為，指通識教育有助提高學生一般知識水平 Some university scholars said that they were referring general education students to help raise the general level of knowledge	Curriculum
22-10-2004	蘋果日報 Apple Daily	香港僱主聯合會行政總監馬黎碧蓮表示，現時畢業生缺乏分析及表達能力，通識教育可以改善這問題。 Executive Director of the Employers Federation of Mrs.Ma said that the current graduates lack	Curriculum

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		the analysis and communication skills, general education can improve this problem.	
22-10-2004	成報 Sing Pao	新增的「通識教育」課本，因需要更多專家編寫及內容極多，故售價更會高達 300 元 The new "LS" textbooks, because of the need to prepare more experts and content of many, so prices will go up to 300 yuan	Implementation: Textbook
23-10-2004	星島日報 Tao Daily	教局與大學合作培訓課程助轉型 通識列必修將欠三千老師 Bureau of the Republic in cooperation with the University training courses to help in transition Liberal column will be less 3000 Teacher Required	Teacher Training
23-10-2004	明報 Ming Pao	教統局會撥出 3 億元，免費為教師提供 35 至 100 小時培訓，但不會要求通識水平通過基準或考核。 Education and Manpower Bureau will allocate 300 million, free of charge for teachers to provide 35-100 hours training, but will not require the level of General Education by the benchmark or examination.	Teacher Training
23-10-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	教育統籌局常任秘書長羅范椒芬否決推行通識教育試驗計劃 Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower, Mrs. Fanny Law, has rejected a general education pilot project	Teacher Training
23-10-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	教統局高級課程發展主任（議會及中學）黃志堅稱，當局將設立配合新課程的通識教育資源中心，方便老師找資 Education and Manpower Bureau Senior Curriculum Development Officer (Council and Secondary) Mr. Wong, said the authorities would be established with the new general education	Teacher Training
24-10-2004	香港商報 Kong Commercial Daily	李國章鼓勵中學盡早推行通識課程，令初中學生可更早適應。 Mr. Li encouraging secondary schools to the early implementation of core curriculum courses, so that junior high school students earlier adaptation.	Curriculum/ University Chancellor

**Appendix 1:**

Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

25-10-2004	星島日報 Tao Daily	前教育署副署長湯啓康指通識課程的要求很高，憂慮準備不足會被異化，他呼籲政府延遲把通識教育列為必修科。 The former Deputy Director of Education, Mr Anthony Tong refers to demanding core curriculum courses, anxiety lack of preparation will be alienated, he called on the Government to postpone the general education be made compulsory.	Curriculum/ EDB
30-10-2004	星島日報 Tao Daily	張文光呼籲當局勿堅持○八年將通識列作必修，建議把通識列為選修科及試行三年 Cheung Man-kwong urged the authorities not to insist ○ Banian will be included as a compulsory core curriculum, it is recommended as an elective for the Liberal and the pilot for three years	Curriculum/ Teachers' Association
30-10-2004	文匯報 Po	校長倡通識成績不設等級 Chancellor advocated liberal accomplishments no rating	Assessment/ Principals
31-10-2004	香港商報 Kong Commercial Daily	考試及評核局主席顧爾言昨日表示，「三三四」學制改革後，通識教育科的考試會有小部分涉及政治性題目 Examinations and Assessment Authority, said yesterday, Mr Irving Koo, "334" academic structure reform, LS will be a small part of the exam topics related to political	Curriculum/HKEAA
1-11-2004	大公報 Pao	前迦密中學校校長張子江籲用母語教通識 The former principal of Caramel Secondary School Mr. David Cheung called on the mother tongue to teach General Education	Curriculum
1-11-2004	太陽報 Daily	補習社變招迎戰新學制 派員接受通識培訓 擬開辦重讀速成班 Tutorial class against the new academic structure Send some tutors for training in General Education. Re-read crash course to be offered	Tutorial Centre
4-11-2004	文匯報 Wen Wei	教育統籌局考慮將通識科的選修單元減少，協助學生建立廣泛，但紮實的知識基礎。	Curriculum

**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

	Po	Education and Manpower Bureau to consider an elective modules Liberal reduced to help students to develop a broad, but a solid knowledge base.	
6-11-2004	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	教聯會提議通識科公開試只設及格和不及格兩個等級，以紓緩師生的教與學壓力。 Liberal Education Bureau Federation proposed that the public examination pass and failure is located only two levels, to alleviate pressure on teachers and students teaching and learning.	Assessment
10-11-2004	成報 Sing Pao	中學校長則建議政府於新學制實施首數年的過渡期，將通識教育科的單元數目由 15 單元微調至 12 個，減低課程的複雜性。 Secondary school principals suggested that the implementation of the new academic structure for the first few years of the transition period, the number of modules will be LS Unit fine-tuning from 15 to 12, reduce the complexity of the course.	Curriculum
10-11-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	教育統籌局常任秘書長羅范椒芬表示當局會積極研究通識教育科的師生比例，屆時會給予額外教師，進行分組教學。 Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower, Mrs Fanny Law, said that the Administration would actively consider LS teacher-student ratio, additional teachers will be given time to conduct split-class teaching.	Curriculum
14-11-2004	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	教育評議會昨日舉辦的論壇對此有不少反對聲音。校長及教師則質疑將通識教育列入考試科目的必要性。 Education Council held a forum yesterday, there are a lot of this opposition. Principals and teachers, however, questioned the need for general education included in the examination subjects.	Curriculum
16-11-2004	明報 MingPao	教院教務長蘇國生建議，通識教育科的成績不應分為五級，應只設及格、不及格及成績優異「三級制」。教統局局長李國章表示，有關建議值得考慮。	Assessment

**Appendix 1:**

**Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)**

		Mr.so Stated that the results of LS should not be divided into five, should only set up a pass, fail, and outstanding "three-tier system." The Education and Manpower, Professor Arthur Li, said the proposal was worth considering.	
18-11-2004	太陽報 The Sun Daily	考評局質疑通識評核三級制 HKEAA questioned liberal three-tier system assessment	Assessment
20-11-2004	星島日報 Tao Daily	教統局常任秘書長羅范椒芬表示，會議新高中通識科進行分組教學，為學校提供額外資源 The Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower, Mrs Fanny Law said that it will be the new senior LS group teaching, and to provide additional resources for schools	Teacher Training
2-12-2004	星島日報 Tao Daily	《中學概覽》四百六十多所中學資料，當中只有八十六所列明開辦與通識教育相關科目 "Secondary School Profiles," more than 460 secondary schools in the information set out, only 86 start-up LS related subjects	Curriculum
2-12-2004	大公報 Pao	學者反對通識科必考 Scholars must be tested against the LS	Assessment
3-12-2004	文匯報 Po	香港大學生對通識教育持肯定意見，6成大學生亦認同將通識教育科列為高中必修科。 Hong Kong university students hold a positive opinion of General Education, 60% university students agree with the LS as a compulsory school subject.	Teacher Training
3-12-2004	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	考評局學科部總監張光源稱，為增加通識教育公開試批改可信度，當局研究安排兩人改一份卷 Dr Thomas Kwong-yuen Cheung, the Director of Development and Educational Assessment, stated that EDB, said Liberal public examination marking in order to increase the credibility of the research agenda for both the change of a volume	Assessment
5-12-2004	文匯報 Wen Wei	學者：通識科應設過渡期	Curriculum



**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

	Po	The Scholar stated that LS will have a transition period.	
5-12-2004	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	教統局計畫將通識教育科十五個單元減少至八至九個	Curriculum
7-12-2004	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	EDB planned that the number of chapters of LS will be deducted from 15 to 8 中大增通識師訓課程	Teaching Training
21-12-2004	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	The Chinese University of Hong Kong will provide more training programme for teachers. 教統局接納以小班教通識，並削減學習單元	Curriculum
21-12-2004	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	EDB accepted LS will teach in small group, some chapeted will be deducted. 津貼中學議會建議將通識分為必修及選修兩類，前者須應考公開試，後者只須作校內評估。 The committee suggested that LS will have 2 part :compulsory and elective. Compulsory part will have a public examination. Elective part just have a SBA.	Assessment

2005			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Area/ Parties involved</b>
2-1-2005	成報 Sing Pao	有教育界人士反對政府計劃將通識教育列為高中課程中「必修、必考」的學科，批評屬「本末倒置」，並完成有關的報告書，提交教育統籌局。 Educationalist opposed the government proposal of LS as one of the major subjects in the high school curriculum. They completed the report and submitted to the EDB.	Curriculum
6-1-2005	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	教統局表示，教育電視將配合三三四學制改革，把節目內容由中英數，擴展至通識教育	Implementation:
	Pao	EDB stated that ETV will coordinate with the "3-3-4 Reform" by adding the subject of LS.	Support/ ETV

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	大公報 Pao	教育評議會副主席曹啓樂表示，早前向一百多所中學校長作出調查，結果顯示百分之八十的校長反對通識科和學制改革同步進行。 Mr. Tso Kai Lok, the Vice president of Education Convergence, said the survey with over a hundred secondary school principals showed that 83% of them opposed the simultaneous introduction of LS and "3-3-4 Reform".	Academic structure
10-1-2005	成報 Sing Pao	教育局擬與考試及評核局和八大院校研究具體放寬通識科的評級。 EDB showed intention to investigate with HKEAA and eight local universities in the specific adjustment of assessment of LS.	University Admission
11-1-2005	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	大學校長會決定把通識教育科連同中、英、數、四個核心科目作為大學收生的必要條件。 The University Principal Committee agreed LS as one of the four required subjects in University Admission.	University Admission
14-1-2005	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	全港二十二所傳統名校組成補助學校議會，約見香港大學、中文大學及科技大學代表，反映中學對三三四學制下高中必修通識課程的憂慮，並游說大學不要將通識課程列為入學必須條件。 The Grant School Council, formed by 22 famous high schools, arranged a meeting with representatives from HKU, CUHK and HKUST. The council expressed their worries of new required LS under the new academic structure and persuaded the universities to call off adding LS as required subject of University Admission	University Admission
15-1-2005	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	為消除中學界對通識課程的憂慮，教統局透露，計畫每年撥款三億元，發放通識教育現金津貼，資助中學通識科小班教學。 EDB stated that they planned to appropriate fund of \$3000M annually, as allowance of LS, so as to take away the worries of the new subject.	School Allowance

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	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	教育統籌局計劃不將通識教育科選修單元，列入公開考試範圍 EDB planned not to adding LS into public exam.	Curriculum
17-1-2005	明報 MingPao	調查顯示，大部分家長都贊成將通識教育列為必修科目，分別超過四成及逾三成，但對於通識教育成為必考科目，家長則意見不一。 The survey showed that more than 40% of parents agreed to add LS as major subjects, while showing no indications whether LS should be a required subject in examinations.	Academic structure
17-1-2005	明報 MingPao	教育工作者聯會去年中進行了一項「中學看學制改革」的問卷調查，七成半人認同加入通識科有助學生適應社會 According to the survey of "Opinions of Educational Reform from Secondary School" by HKFEW, 75% of interviewees agreed that the new LS subject will help students to understand the society.	Curriculum
19-1-2005	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	不足 2 成教師贊成將通識科列為新高中必修科。 Less than 20% of teachers agreed to add LS as the major subjects in high school curriculum. 應否開設通識教育科？ "Should schools offer LS?" 贊成必修 Agree, LS as core subject : 206 (19.9%) 贊成選修 Agree. LS as elective subject : 628 (60.7%) 反對引入 Disagree : 99 (9.6%) 中立 Neutral : 101 (9.8%)	Academic structure
19-1-2005	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	教協建議通識有三年選修期 HKPTU suggested a 3-year-elective period for LS	Curriculum/ HKPTU
20-1-2005	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	校本評核準確性受質疑 通識教育評分落差高達二十分 The 20-mark range LS assessment showed the low validity of School-based Assessment	Assessment

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20-1-2005	蘋果日報 Apple Daily	津中議會贊成必修通識 HKSSSC agreed to add LS as required major subject	Curriculum
21-1-2005	成報 Sing Pao	教育統籌局考慮就通識科設兩至三年過渡期，期間將放寬通識科的評級。 EDB showed intention to propose a 3-year-elective period for LS and loosen the assessment of the new subject.	Assessment
24-1-2005	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	中大動員各學系教授、專家，組成通識教育顧問團，就通識課程結構、內容，向教統局提供意見。 The educational consultancy team, formed by professors and experts from different departments in CUHK, provided suggestions to EDB in terms of curriculum and content of LS.	Curriculum/ University Scholars
25-1-2005	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	教統局借調查資深老師 支援他校辦通識 EDB temporarily transferred experienced teachers to other schools to support introduction of LS	Curriculum
27-1-2005	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	浸大為中學作通識支援 HKBU as backer of introduction of LS in secondary schools	Implementation: Support
27-1-2005	明報 MingPao	教育統籌局傾向由 9 個必修單元減至 6 個，選修單元則由 6 個減至 2 個 EDB tended to change 9 required chapters to 6, and 6 elective chapters to 2.	Curriculum
27-1-2005	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	通識擬增基本法等內容 Proposal of adding Basic Law Content into LS	Curriculum
5-2-2005	明報 MingPao	教院 9 月開辦 通識兼讀文憑 HKIED open part-time diploma of LS in September	Teacher Training
5-2-2005	成報 Sing Pao	檢討中學教學語言及中一派位機制工作小組主席田北辰指通識可用母語 Michael Tien, The Chairman of EC on Review of Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools and Secondary School Places Allocation, said Cantonese can be one of the teaching languages.	MOI

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	成報 Sing Pao	教師籲通識科加理財教育 Teachers suggested adding financial management into LS	Curriculum
15-2-2005	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	考評局反對通識評核減至3級，但會推行「雙重評卷」，增加評分可信度。 EDB opposed the new 3-grade assessment of LS. But it will introduce "dual assessment" to increase the validity.	Assessment
18-2-2005	文匯報	科大辦一年制通識碩士班 HKUST opened a one-year Master Programme of LS	Teacher Training
9-3-2005	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	教統局資料顯示，計畫五學年開辦高中綜合人文科、科技與科學，及預科通識教育科的中學，分別激增六成、五成及四成 EDB showed that the number of secondary schools which proposed to introduce the new subjects of Integrated Humanities, Technology and Science and LS (HKALE) increased 60%, 50% and 40% respectively.	Implementation
19-3-2005	明報 Ming Pao	教統局建議大學在通識推行初年，學生只要考獲最低標準，即可獲大學的最低入學資格。 EDB proposed to universities that, in the beginning years of introduction of LS, the minimum standard of public examination in LS are the minimum requirement of university admission.	University Admission
21-3-2005	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	學友社調查顯示，百分之四十四的受訪學生有興趣修讀通識科，但有百分之三十三的受訪學生，反對將通識科列為必修科目。Survey by Hok Yau Club showed that 44% of students were interested in studying LS while 33% opposed to introduce LS as major subject 措施：通識科需要必修 LS as core subject 同意 Agree : 28% 不同意 Disagree : 33% 措施：通識科需要必考 LS as a subject of public examination	Academic structure

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			同意 Agree : 13% 不同意 Disagree : 45%	
22-3-2005	大公報 Pao	Ta Kung	中大評議會支持 中學通識必修考	Curriculum
5-4-2005	太陽報 Daily	The Sun	CUHK Convocation agreed to introduce LS as core subject and required subject in examination. 通識課程必修單元只剩六個單元的課題包括自我與個人成長、今日香港、現代中國、全球化、疾病與公共衛生，以及能源與環境。 LS consisted of 6 required Modules left, including Personal Development and Interpersonal Relationships, Hong Kong Today, Modern China, Globalization, Public Health and Energy Technology and the Environment.	Curriculum
11-4-2005	大公報 Pao	Ta Kung	家長建議通識科辦模擬考試 Parents suggested mock exams for LS	Curriculum
26-4-2005	星島日報 Tao Daily	Sing	教統局回應通識含國民教育 EDB replied enquiries of national education in LS	Curriculum
27-4-2005	明報 MingPao	MingPao	全港共有 71 間中學在中一級開設通識教育，佔本港七分一中學。 71 secondary schools, one-seventh in Hong Kong, opened LS in F.1.	Curriculum
30-4-2005	明報 MingPao	MingPao	教育統籌局堅持通識教育科列為高中必修考科，並維持 5 級評分 EDB insisted on LS as major and required subject in examination in high school curriculum, as well as 5-grade assessment.	Assessment
30-4-2005	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	Hong Kong Economic Times	通識教師不需考「基準試」 LS teachers do not need to take benchmark exam	Teacher Training
19-5-2005	明報 MingPao	MingPao	「三三四」學制第二輪諮詢課程有所改動，列為核心科目的通識教育科維持「必修必考」，	Curriculum

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		但課時則減少至 270 小時。 The second round proposals of "3-3-4 academic structure" remained LS as major and required subject in exams while lowered the class hours to 270 hours.	
19-5-2005	明報 MingPao	配合教師轉型任教通識科，文件建議通識科教師必須至少接受 35 小時培訓，政府將提供不少於 100 小時通識師訓課程。 The document suggested teachers are required to receive at least 35 hours of training, so as to teach the new subject of LS. The government would provided more than 100-hour LS Teachers Training Programme.	Teacher Training
19-5-2005	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	新高中學制核心科目—通識教育科但核心單元將由原訂的 9 個減至 6 個，並以專題研習取代選修單元，通識科課時由佔總課時 12.5%減至佔總課時 10% The core modules of LS in high school curriculum changed from 9 modules to 6, and replaced elective modules by project investigation. The class hour was lowered from 12.5% to 10% of the total class hour.	Curriculum
19-5-2005	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	校長冀大學 降通識科要求 Secondary schools principals suggest the universities to lower the admission requirement of LS.	University Admission
19-5-2005	新報 Hong Kong Daily News	教協會長張文光反對通識列必考 Cheung Man Kwong, the chairman of HKPTU, opposed LS as required subject in examination.	Curriculum
19-5-2005	明報 MingPao	家長對新高中通識課程存有疑慮，擔心屆時沒有足夠師資教導通識 Parents showed worries of LS in high school curriculum, that inadequate qualified teachers would be available.	Teacher Training
19-5-2005	文匯報	教育統籌局建議通識科的班級與教師比例更升至 1:2.1。	Teacher Training

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	Wen Wei Po	EDB suggested to raise the class-teacher ratio of LS to 1:2:1.	
19-5-2005	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	大學校長會終達成初步共識，通識教育科則要考獲第二級才可入大學 The University Principal Committee came to common consensus that the 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade will be the minimum university admission of LS.	University Admission
19-5-2005	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	教統局為教師提供的專業發展培訓計畫，通識科約四千個培訓學額。 EDB provided about 4000 training and development vacancies of LS teachers.	Teacher Training
22-5-2005	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	多位市民致電電台表示對通識教育科有所質疑 A number of citizens phoned to radio programme to show their worries about LS	Curriculum
22-5-2005	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	教統局局長李國章指出，新高中課程中的通識科需要打通不同科目的知識，所以老師需要加強教學法的訓練 Arthur Li, Secretary for Education, stated that teachers need training as new LS should link up different subjects.	Curriculum
1-6-2005	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	優質教育基金撥款資助項目關乎通識教育的課程教材和師資培訓 Approved projects of Quality Education Fund related to teaching materials and training	Teacher Training
7-6-2005	明報 MingPao	考評局在港台節目列出多條新高中通識的考試例題，給聽眾參考，並表示將來試題會分為較簡單的「基本資料」，和較複雜的「延伸回應」題目，分辨學生能力的高低。 HKEAA showed several example exam questions of LS under new high school curriculum for reference in radio programme of RTHK. The questions will consist of "Data-response questions" and more difficult "Extended-response questions".	Assessment
7-6-2005	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	通識教育科 校本評核法諮詢 Consultation of School-based assessment of LS	Assessment



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	大公報 Pao	通識教育科學行四場諮詢會聽取教師意見 Four consultations of LS to collect opinions from teachers	Curriculum
11-6-2005	文匯報 Po	政府計劃將通識教師 100 小時的培訓圍繞 5 個範疇，包括課程詮釋、學習評估、獨立專題探究、學與教策略及知識增益 The 100-hour teacher training covers 5 areas, including curriculum interpretation, assessment, independent enquiry study, teaching strategies and content knowledge.	Teacher Training
11-6-2005	星島日報 Daily	教育統籌局首次派發通識科樣本試題初稿，供教師作參考。 EDB distributed the first draft of sample questions of LS for teachers' reference.	Assessment
11-6-2005	明報 MingPao	有教師批評樣本試題流於粗疏，未能準確反映考評要求。 Some teachers criticized the sample questions were unable to assess the student.	Assessment
11-6-2005	蘋果日報 Daily	教師看過模擬試題後直指內容比想像中廣泛，憂慮授課有難度。 Some teachers stated that the content were more widespread than expected, and were worried about giving lessons after reading the sample questions	Assessment
13-6-2005	明報 MingPao	教統局表示現時坊間通識書未符高中課程 EDB stated the current LS textbook did not meet the standard of new high school curriculum	Implementation: Teaching support
13-6-2005	星島日報 Daily	教育統籌局表示當局九月會推出通識教育科網上資源庫，為教師提供更多相關資料。 EDB stated the introduction of online data base of LS in September would help teachers in gathering related information.	Implementation: Teaching support
15-6-2005	成報 Sing Pao	考試及評核局建議新高中通識教育科，公開考試佔整體評核成績七成 HKEAA suggested the public exam of LS should weigh 70% of the total assessment.	Assessment
15-6-2005	成報 Sing Pao	公開試試卷會分資料回應及論述題兩個部分，資料回應題側重議論性題目，而論述題就會根據課程要考實用質例證輔助答題。	Assessment

Appendix 1:

Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

		<p>The exam would consist of data-response questions and extended-response questions. The data-response questions focus on giving comments while extended-response questions require students to answer questions by giving factual evidence.</p>	
15-6-2005	<p>香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times</p>	<p>學界憂通識設校本評核會偏私，但考評局稱，若發現學生校內成績與公開試差距很大，會「傳召」有關學校或考生查問，更交由廉政公署調查。</p> <p>The academic industry worried the possible favouritism school-based assessment of LS. But HKEAA stated students and schools would be investigated for the huge difference between SBA and public examination, or even sent to ICAC.</p>	Assessment
25-6-2005	<p>蘋果日報 Apple Daily</p>	<p>當局建議通識科公開試總分的三成由校內評核決定，包括佔總分二成的獨立專題探究報告及一成的課堂表現</p> <p>HKEAA suggested the SBA of LS should weigh 30%, which consisted of 20% of individual project report and 10% of classroom performance.</p>	Assessment
14-7-2005	<p>文匯報 Wen Wei Po</p>	<p>教育統籌局常任秘書長羅范椒芬表示，暫時無意修改通識的課程內容</p> <p>Fanny Law, the Permanent Secretary for EDB, showed no intention to change the content of the LS.</p>	Curriculum
10-8-2005	<p>文匯報 Wen Wei Po</p>	<p>被視為新高中學制的「準備」或「試驗」科目綜合人文科合格率是各科目最高，達到 80.3%。</p> <p>The Integrated Humanities, which is regard as the "testing" subject of the new curriculum, had the highest passing rate of reaching 80.3%.</p>	Others
20-9-2005	<p>大公報 Ta Kung Pao</p>	<p>社工籲通識加入生命教育</p> <p>Social Workers suggested adding Life Education to LS</p>	Curriculum
22-9-2005	<p>文匯報 Wen Wei Po</p>	<p>新高中通識教育科委員會認為通識科可用中國歷史及地理作為課程骨幹，使通識科兼備國民教育的功能。</p>	Curriculum

**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

		HKEAA Committee on LS (Senior Secondary) suggested Chinese History and Geography as the main stream of LS as the element of National Education.	
28-9-2005	明報 Ming Pao	<p>新學年開始，許多學校以配合新高中通識課程為名，乾脆以初中通識課取代部分人文科目。</p> <p>Starting from the new academic year, many schools replaced some humanities subjects by junior secondary LS, in the name of coordinating with new high school curriculum of LS.</p>	Curriculum
9-10-2005	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	<p>學者及教師昨在一個通識教育論壇上批評，部分必修單元的內容太多、太專業，若不作出修改，教學時定會遇上重重困難。</p> <p>Scholars and teachers criticized some modules as too excess in content and too professional in a LS Forum. It was necessary to make amendment or there would be difficulties in teaching.</p>	Curriculum
9-10-2005	大公報 Ta Kung Pao / 成報 Sing Pao	<p>中文大學亞太研究所、通識教育教師聯會和中大社會學系日前聯袂訪問近百名通識教師，調查他們對《新高中通識教育課程及評估架構建議》第二次諮詢稿的意見。</p> <p>結果顯示： Survey, conducted by Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, Hong Kong LS Teachers' Association and Sociology Department of CUHK, interviewed more than a hundred LS teachers, about their opinions of the second draft of "Suggestions of Programme LS (Senior Secondary) and Assessment Structure Under New Curriculum". The result showed that:</p> <p>86%受訪者認同通識教育科的課程架構 agreed with the structure of the LS Programme</p> <p>93%受訪者同意課程設計的理念 agreed with the concept of programme design</p> <p>95%受訪者支持獨立專題的目標 agreed with the aim of the individual project</p> <p>94%的受訪者認為教統局需要訂立師生比例的上限 believed EDB should establish the upper limit of the teacher-student ratio</p> <p>36%的受訪者認為通識教育科的內容設計未能照顧學童的學習差異 believed the content of LS were not able to consider the difference in learning progress</p>	Academic structure/ curriculum

Appendix 1:  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

17-10-2005	明報 MingPao	新高中課程剛完成第二階段諮詢，教育統籌局表示，逾八成中學認同通識科的理念和宗旨 The 2 <sup>nd</sup> round consultation of new high school curriculum completed. EDB stated more than 80% of secondary schools agreed with the objectives and aim of LS.	Curriculum
17-10-2005	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	教育統籌局指出初中引入通識科恐怕會適得其反，令學生他日讀高中通識科時欠缺根基。 EDB pointed out that the introduction of LS in junior secondary level might have an opposite effect, which led students to lack foundations when they pursued LS in senior secondary level	Curriculum
11-11-2005	明報 MingPao	教育統籌局於2009年新高中通識推行首年，即減低通識科師生比例，至1比20 EDB would lower the teacher-student ratio of LS to 1:20 in 2009, the first year of introduction of new high school curriculum.	Implementation
13-11-2005	新報 Hong Kong Daily News	關注青少年發展研究社調查顯示，三成受訪中學生反對在二零零八年同時實施「三三四」學制和通識教育。 Survey conducted by Youth Development Research Society showed that 30% of secondary school students opposed the implementation of "3-3-4" structure in NSS and LS at the same time in 2008/	Academic structure
13-11-2005	新報 Hong Kong Daily News	近7成學生支持在高中推行通識教育，反對人數只有近2成。對於通識教育的考核方式，有超過半數的學生表示，應以課堂表現來代替現時評分標準。 About 70% of students agreed the introduction of LS in new high school curriculum, while only nearly 20% opposed. More than 50% of students stated that the current assessment criteria should be replaced by classroom performance in terms of the assessment of LS.	Academic structure/ Assessment
21-11-2005	成報 Sing Pao	有教師組織自行收集以往其他學校高考的通識科教案，輯錄成書 Some Teachers Association collected the past teaching materials of HKALE LS from other schools and compiled a book.	Implementation: support

**Appendix 1:**

**Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)**

-24-11-2005	文匯報 Po	Wen Wei Po	港台進行調查有 66.4%教師表示，相信自己能夠勝任教通識科：但擔憂課程太廣泛，缺乏足夠時間預備及學習，而且沒受過適當訓練，無所適從。 Survey conducted by RTHK showed that 66.4% of teachers believed they were able to teach LS, but worried about the widespread of content, inadequate time to prepare and understand the new subject and lack of appropriate training.	Teaching training
24-11-2005	大公報 Pao	Ta Kung Pao	有教師倡初中設通識課 Some teachers proposed the introduction of LS in junior secondary level	Curriculum
8-12-2005	蘋果日報 Daily	Apple Daily	統局昨公布的《中學概覽》中，全港已有一百六十一間中學已開設與通識科有關的課程，為銜接新學制作好準備。 “Secondary School Profile” released by EDB showed that 161 secondary schools had Liberal-studies-related subjects to prepare for connection with new curriculum.	Implementation

2006				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Title</b>		<b>Area/ Parties involved</b>
7-1-2006	文匯報 Po	Wen Wei Po	中文大學今年新開辦配合新高中通識教育科而設的通識教育科課程發展與教學文學碩士 The Chinese University of Hong Kong will run the Master of Arts Programme in Curriculum Development and Teaching of LS.	Teacher Training
9-1-2006	星島日報 Tao Daily	Sing Tao Daily	中大將開辦一個教育文憑課程供在職學位教師報讀，以協助部分教師轉教通識科。 The Chinese University of Hong Kong will run the Programme of Education Diploma for the on- job teachers.	Teacher Training

12-1-2006	星島日報 Tao Daily	教師中心調查發現，八成受訪教師自感未有足夠能力教授通識科 80% teachers thought that they have not sufficient ability to teach LS	Teaching training
12-1-2006	星島日報 Tao Daily	有中學副校長指師訓機構的教員大多缺乏教授通識科的「實戰」經驗，質疑師訓機構能否培訓教師任教通識的能力。 Some Vice-Principals stressed that several teacher training institutes are lack of experience for teaching LS. They questioned that whether the teacher training institutes can train the teachers' abilities for teaching LS.	Teacher Training
19-1-2006	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	公開大學向有學位及經驗的教師提供專科式的「教育碩士（通識教育）課程」 The Open University of Hong Kong will run the Master programme of Master of Education (LS) for on -job teachers.	Teacher Training
22-1-2006	成報 Sing Pao	行政長官曾蔭權表示，09年推出新學制時，當中通識科會加入國情元素 LS will have more discussion about the China.	Curriculum
8-2-2006	成報 Sing Pao	教育統籌局舉行首個中學教師分享會，與會提出有關任教通識的語言問題及是否放寬讓任教中文和史中的教師，也可任教通識科。 EDB organized a meeting for secondary schools teachers. They discussed the teaching language of LS and whether it is suitable or not for Chinese and Chinese History teachers to teach LS.	Teacher Training
21-2-2006	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	香港教育學院增加通識教育教育碩士 The Hong Kong Institute of Education increase the number of master of LS	Teacher Training
7-3-2006	明報 MingPao	民建聯主席馬力建議在通識課內加插〈基本法〉 Mr. Ma, The President of Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong, suggested that Basic Law will include in LS.	Curriculum
9-3-2006	香港經濟日報	浸會大學推出全港首個一年制「通識科及倫理學」碩士課程，課程舉起宗教旗幟，強調倫	Teacher Training

Appendix 1:  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

	Hong Kong Economic Times	理與不同價值觀的關係 The Hong Kong Baptist University will run a one-year programme named Master of Arts in LS & Ethics	Implementation: support
17-3-2006	文匯報 Po	香港電台的教育電視因應教育改革推出以通識教育為題材的教育節目。 The Educational Television Programme of LS will publish soon.	Implementation: support
20-3-2006	星島日報 Tao Daily	為協助中學向學生推廣品德教育，廉署率先推出全港首套通識影音教材。 ICAC will publish the Teaching kit for the LS	Implementation: support
23-3-2006	文匯報 Po	浸會大學成功爭取到教統局的通識研究計劃帶領 12 間學校發展通識科。 The Hong Kong Baptist University will cooperate with 12 School for developing LS.	Implementation: support / Scholars in University
23-3-2006	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	浸會大學「學校通識教育資源中心」表示該中心會為第 2、3 組中學，度身訂造通識教育課程，並為學校提供教材 School LS Resource Centre of The Hong Kong Baptist University will help some Secondary schools to design the curriculum of LS and provide the teaching material.	Implementation: support/ Scholars in Universities
30-3-2006	文匯報 Po	教育統籌局總學校發展主任勸喻中學不要「一窩蜂」開辦初中通識 The officer of school Development of EDB advised that Secondary school should think twice for setting up the Junior form LS.	Curriculum
3-4-2006	大公報 Pao	大學關注組舉行記者會關注教統局過度干預資助項目，例如二零零六年的「通識教師教學法」課程 CUHK Alumni Concern Group stressed that EDB over-intervened some allowance projects.	Implementation: support
6-4-2006	明報 MingPao	12 所中學結成伙伴，聯合創辦了本港首個「通識教育科學習社群」，建立電子學習平台 12 Secondary school become alliance for setting up the first electronic learning platform for LS.	Implementation: support
11-4-2006	明報 MingPao	教局提出在 2009 年起設 4 年過渡期，英中通識可用中文	MOI

Appendix I:

Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

		EDB proposed that there will be a 4 years transition Period for the EMI Secondary to teach LS in Chinese.		
18-4-2006	大公報 Pao	通識師資認證仍無時間表，有學者表示通識教師各有專精，難統一認證 Liberal Teachers have their own specific qualification and knowledge, so it is difficult to have a unified certification.	Teacher Training	
25-4-2006	大公報 Pao	課程發展議會主席黃玉山反對初中設通識科 Mr. Wong, The President of CSC, opposed the Junior Form LS.	Curriculum	
4-5-2006	星島日報 Tao Daily	中中反對英中通識有過渡期 CMI Secondary school opposed EMI Secondary school have the transition Period for LS.	MOI	
4-5-2006	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	中文中學聯會發表聲明，指英中取錄大部分適合以英語教學的學生，理應以英語教授通識科，以免令人質疑英中成效。英中聯會則反駁，指通識科有別於一般學科，若要硬性以英語教授當中的中國文化，只會顯得滑稽，質疑有人「意氣用事」。 CMI school stated that EMI school should teach LS in English.	MOI	
22-5-2006	星島日報 Daily	教統局擬計畫取消「課堂表現」評核，只以學生「獨立專題探究」評分 EDB may use IES for assessment instead of class performance.	Assessment	
23-5-2006	星島日報 Daily	教育工作者聯會調查發現約六成中學指應讓中學自決通識科教學語言 According to the survey, Hong Kong Federation of Education worker find out that about 60% Secondary school consider choosing the teaching language of LS on their own interest.	MOI	
23-5-2006	文匯報 Po	教育工作者聯會的調查發現，九成受訪者認為準備通識教學時遇到的最大困難是教材設計工作繁重。 Survey conducted by Hong Kong Federation of Education found that 90% interviewee consider the most difficult for preparing LS is the heavy workload of designing teaching materials.	Implementation: Support	



Appendix 1:  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	教育工作者聯會建議教統局應為教師提供各單元的基礎知識。 Hong Kong Federation of Education worker suggested EDB should provide some basis knowledge of every unit for teachers.	Teacher training
26-5-2006	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	教育統籌局舉行「通識教育多面睇」論壇，有校長表示憂慮中學在課時、教師轉型、科目組合等問題將湧現。 EDB organized a Forum for LS. Some principals feel worried about the lessons, transformation of teachers and subject combination.	Curriculum
1-6-2006	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	中學教學語文工作小組主席田北辰，明確回應高中通識科教學語言爭議。 表示在○九至一三年四年間設立過渡期，中文中學和英文中學可自決通識教學語言，一三年至一四學年便要用所屬語言教通識科。 Michael Tin, the president of secondary school teaching language committee, stated that 2009-2013 will set up a transition period, CMI and EMI school can choose teaching language as their own interest. From the academic year 2013-2014, School should use the original teaching language for teach LS.	MOI
6-6-2006	東方日報 Oriental Daily	喬台節目《架勢堂》以「最想非禮的女藝人」作討論題目，有社會人士促請中學通識科目須加入性別教育元素，避免侮辱女性內容大行其道。 Some people suggested that LS should have more discussion about gender education.	Curriculum
29-6-2006	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	教育統籌局發出通告表示，決定維持英文中學須以英文教授新高中通識科的決定，但將在○九年起設下四年過渡期，期間英中可自行選擇通識科的教學語言 EDB published a notice that EMI should use English to teach NSS LS, but 2009-2013 will set up a transition period which EMI school can choose teaching language as their own interest.	MOI
6-7-2006	香港商報 Hong	大學校長會公布 8 大院校大學四年制最低入學要求，會以 4 個核心課程包括中國語文、英	University Admission

Appendix 1:  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

	Kong Commercial Daily	國語文、數學及通識科為基礎 The University Principal committee published the requirement of University Admission for 4 year undergraduate programme. The basic requirement includes 4 core subjects such as Chinese, English, Mathematics and LS.	Implementation: Support
7-7-2006	大公報 Pao	大型辦學團體保良局宣布斥資逾百萬元設立「課程發展基金」，籌組「通識教育發展委員會」支援屬下十多校施放通識教育科等新高中課程 Po Leung Kuk announced that it set up a curriculum development fund and committee for supporting the NSS LS.	Academic structure
8-7-2006	文匯報 Po	文匯報公佈「中學教師對新高中學制意見」調查，發現，42%的中學教師不同意通識科應成為核心科目。 HKIED reported 42% Secondary school Teachers disagree LS becoming the core subject.	Curriculum
10-7-2006	新報 Daily News	新報稱通識科進行的諮詢已進入最後階段 The consultation of Liberal Studies enters the last stage.	Teacher Training/ Assessment
10-7-2006	新報 Daily News	不少家長普遍對通識科有保留，特別是憂慮教授通識科教師經驗不足，希望當局盡快公布課程的評分準則。 Many parents are worried that teachers are lack of experience to teach LS. They hope EDB will publish the assessment guidelines as soon as possible.	Assessment
10-7-2006	大公報 Pao	考評局經理盧家耀表示新學制通識教育科擬題模式及評核方法已擬定。 The model of NSS sample paper and assessment are confirmed.	Assessment
10-7-2006	大公報 Pao	出題模式主要為資料回應題和延伸回應題，評核方式則為開放式、跨學科、議題為本及課程範疇，會較目前的高考通識容易。 The model of exam question is mainly based on information and extended feedback. The method	Assessment

**Appendix 1:**  
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14-7-2006	成報 Sing Pao	of assessment is open-ended, interdisciplinary and issue-based .It will be easy than As-level LS. 聯合出版集團總裁陳萬雄博士表示通識教育別於公民教育或常識教育，擬定學習內容的同時，也必須思考其背後的理念。 Dr. Chan Man Hung, the CEO of Sino United Publishing (Holdings) Limited, stated LS should focus on the teaching philosophy and content knowledge.	Curriculum
2-8-2006	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	保良局莊啓程預科書院首次開辦高補通識科目 Po Leung Kuk Vicwood K. T. Chong Sixth Form College will open the AS-level LS.	Teacher Training
19-8-2006	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	有中學校長表示，教統局發出的通識科課程內容現只屬諮詢稿，老師難有清晰方向作好準備 Some Principals stated that the curriculum content of LS is just a draft. Teachers are difficult for preparation.	Teacher Training
28-8-2006	明報 MingPao	書商出版初中通識教科書，教科書相當「熱賣」；出版通識課本的出版商亦由去年的 1 間，激增至今年的 6 間。 Booksellers published Junior Form LS. The number of Booksellers increased from 1 to 6.	Implementation: Textbooks
31-8-2006	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	英中批評，教統局提供的英語通識科教材不足 EMI Secondary school Criticized that there are lack of LS in English Version.	Implementation: Support
3-9-2006	成報 Sing Pao	2500 名將教師接受通識教學的訓練 2500 teachers will have the training of LS	Teacher Training
3-9-3006	成報 Sing Pao	理工大學社會科學系副教授何國良坦言通識科的評分感到疑惑 Dr. HO Kwok-leung said that he feels doubtful about the assessment of LS.	Assessment
4-9-2006	明報 MingPao	公民黨調查發現，不足一成通識科教師認為自己對通識科的理念、課程設計、教與學和考試評核有深入認識。	Teacher Training

**Appendix 1:**  
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			Civic Party find out that less than 10% LS teachers fully understand the philosophy of LS, curriculum design, teaching and learning as well as assessment.	
2006-09-12	星島日報 Tao Daily	Sing MingPao	高補通識科考生人數○五年度增加八點五個百分點。 The candidates of AS-level LS increase 8.5% in 2005.	Assessment
14-9-2006	明報	MingPao	浸會大學計劃下學年開辦通識教育及歷史雙學位課程，收生名額約 20 人 The Baptist University of Hong Kong will run the Programme of BA (Hons) in History and BEd (Hons) in LS Teaching.	Teacher Training
15-9-2006	明報	MingPao	港台委託城市大學社會科學部進行調查，過七成半的受訪教師認為，教育電視應加插通識科內容支援教學 Survey showed that over 75% teachers suggested the ETV should add the content of LS for teaching support.	Implementation: support
16-9-2006	大公報 Pao	Ta Kung Pao	教統局和考評局就新高中課程展開第三輪諮詢，當局就通識科校本評核的要求由三成減為兩成。 During the third stage of consultation of NSS, EDB and HKEAA lower the weigh of SBA from 30% to 20% in total.	Assessment
2-10-2006	星島日報 Tao Daily	Sing MingPao	教局協助新界西四所中學計畫於十一月成立通識支援網絡 EDB helps 4 Secondary schools in NTW for setting up a LS supporting network in November.	Implementation: support/ Secondary schools network
10-10-2006	明報	MingPao	聖公會林護紀念中學中一通識科工作紙被家長投訴涉意識不良 The worksheet of Form 1 LS form S.K.H. Lam Woo Memorial Secondary School is complained by some parents.	Curriculum
16-10-2006	明報	MingPao	教育統籌局總課程發展主任提醒學校，初中通識課時不應超 8%	Implementation: time

**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

		The officer of curriculum development reminds school that junior from LS should not over 8% in total lesson time.	Allocation
16-10-2006	大公報 Pao Ta Kung	<p>教統會委員兼教聯會主席黃均瑜透露，當局或容許英中生以中文應考新高中通識科的中國文化題目。</p> <p>EDB may permit EMI school students use Chinese for answering the question about Chinese Culture in the NSS LS Examination.</p>	MOI
16-10-2006	大公報 Pao Ta Kung	<p>課程發展會議主席黃玉山則指出，學界推行通識教育科的三大誤區：一以為讀通識就不用讀書、二覺得「多角度等同無對錯」、三是隨意把學科拼湊就叫「通識」。</p> <p>Mr. Wong, The President of CSC, pointed out that there are some misunderstandings about LS:</p> <p>1. No need to learn and study in LS; 2. No right and wrong because of multiple perspectives; 3. LS is a bricolage</p>	Curriculum
18-11-2006	明報 Ming Pao	<p>考試及評核局完成第三輪新高中課程諮詢後，提出新的通識科校本評核的比例由佔總分30%，減至只佔20%，並將騰出的10%撥歸公開試卷一。</p> <p>SBA will count form 30% to 20 % in the whole subject and 10% for paper 1.</p>	Assessment
5-12-2006	大公報 Pao Ta Kung	<p>教統局推出新高中通識教育科課程詮釋予教師參加</p> <p>EDB promote the NSS LS Course for teachers</p>	Teacher Training
7-12-2006	文匯報 Po Wen Wei	<p>聖公會教育幹事夏永豪，反對通識列高中必修科。他透露「現時學校為了資源及課程的評分問題而頭痛」</p> <p>S.K.H Education officer Mr. Ha Wing Ho opposed LS acted as a senior form core subject. His reason is the problem of resource allocation and the curriculum assessment.</p>	Curriculum
14-12-2006	星島日報 Tao Daily Sing	<p>香港大學地球科學系擬於明年初與通識教育聯會及六至八所中學組成支援網絡，試行一系列專題研習教學策略。</p>	Implementation: Support/ Universities

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Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

		<p>The Department of Earth Science (HKU), Hong Kong LS Teachers' Association and some secondary schools may</p> <p>Et up a supporting network for implementing some teaching methods.</p>	
18-12-2006	<p>星島日報 Tao Daily</p>	<p>考評局決定，取消2012年通識教育校本評核中的「課堂表現」部分；校本評核的佔分比率，亦由原本的三成降至兩成，但資料回應題的佔分比率，則相應由四成增至五成。</p> <p>HKEAA cancel the class performance in the SBA.</p>	Assessment

2007			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Area/ Parties involved</b>
5-1-2007	<p>大公報 Pao</p>	<p>中大通識教育學部新開辦「通識教學社會科學碩士」。此課程有別於教育學部的通識課程，前者重內容，後者重教學技巧。</p> <p>The office of University General Education (CUHK) will run the programme of M.S.Sc (LS).</p>	Teacher Training
19-1-2007	<p>大公報 Pao</p>	<p>教育評議會副主席曹啓樂認為通識科校本評核2012年實施不恰當。</p> <p>Mr. Choi, The Vice President of Education Convergence, stated that the implementation of the SBA of LS is not suitable in 2012.</p>	Assessment
8-2-2007	<p>明報 MingPao</p>	<p>保良局將從轄下的優質教育基金撥出500萬元，成立「通識教育基金」，供所屬中學培訓教師、購買教材和更新設備</p> <p>Po Leung Kuk will provide 5 million for setting up the Education fund to provide the teacher training, buy the teaching materials and renew the facilities.</p>	<p>Implementation: Support/ Sponsoring Bodies</p>
14-2-2007	<p>大公報 Ta Kung</p>	<p>考評局推出新高中校本評核新建議後，香港教育工作者聯會調查發現，五成三受訪者接納</p>	Assessment/ Teachers'

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Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

	Pao	<p>考評局建議，二〇一二年通過通識科推行校本評核。</p> <p>After HKEAA published the new idea of NSS SBZ, Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers find out that 53% interviewees agree the Implementation of SBA in 2012.</p>	Association
27-3-2007	大公報 Pao	<p>教統局公布由課程發展議會與考試及評核局聯合編訂的《新高中課程及評估指引》，包括通識教育。</p> <p>EDB publish "NSS Curriculum and Assessment Guide" which is prepared by CSC and HKEAA including LS</p>	Curriculum
27-3-2007	大公報 Pao	<p>通識科佔三年制高中課程總課時不少於一成。</p> <p>LS count at least 10% in NSS.</p>	Implementation: Time Allocation
27-3-2007	大公報 Pao	<p>根據《課程及評估指引》，「獨立專題探究」是通識科不可缺少的部分，學生可選擇通識科六個單元以外的題目作研究，並作為校本評核成績。</p> <p>Independent Enquiry Study is the important part in LS. Student can choose their own topic for SBA.</p>	Assessment
27-3-2007	大公報 Pao	<p>通識科知識內容將佔科目涵蓋範圍及探究學習的五成至六成。</p> <p>Content knowledge will count around 50% in the subject.</p>	Assessment
27-3-2007	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	<p>家長關注教育政策聯盟委託香港大學民意研究計劃，訪問逾 500 名家長，發現，七成家長表示沒信心協助子女預備通識科考試。</p> <p>350 parents reflected that they are lack of confidence for helping their children to prepare the examination of LS.</p>	Assessment
22-4-2007	東方日報 Oriental Daily	<p>教統局透露，已有八百名老師接受通識教育培訓，預計至〇八年底有二千五百名教師完成培訓。</p> <p>Education Bureau disclosed that there were 800 teachers already have teacher training.</p>	Teacher Training

26-5-2007	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	在三四學制的進展報告中，教統局表示鼓勵通識科採用分組形式教學。 Education Bureau encourage LS will teach students in group.	Curriculum
20-6-2007	明報 Ming Pao	教統局網頁撰文，向家長提供學生學習通識的「貼士」，如多與子女討論時事。 EDB provides some tips for parents learning LS such as discussion the current affairs.	Implementation: support/ EDB & Parents
22-8-2007	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	綜合人文科考生升 38%，科學與科技的報考人數亦輕微上升 The candidates which are sit for the examination of Integrated Humanity increased 38%. The numbers of candidates apply the exam of Science and Technology also increased.	Assessment
13-9-2007	星島日報 Tao Daily	教育局課程發展議會與考試及評核局公布的《通識教育科課程及評估指引》(中四至中六)，通識教育科將採用水平參照方法 The Curriculum Development Council and HKEAA published "LS curriculum and assessment guide (secondary 4-6)", LS will use level -reference method.	Assessment
13-9-2007	星島日報 Tao Daily	公開考試分為卷一的資料回應題，以及卷二的延伸回應題，前者佔全科總分百分之五十，後者則為百分之三十；校本評核則佔去餘下的百分之二十，並獨立專題探究方式進行。 The public examination will have two section: Paper 1: based on information (50%); Paper 2: Extention (30%); SBA: Independent Enquiry Study (20%)	Assessment
13-9-2007	星島日報 Tao Daily	當局計畫於明年年初公布模擬試題及評核準則，以平息學界憂慮。 EDB will publish the sample paper and the assessment guidelines.	Assessment
13-9-2007	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	通識教育科公開試題目屬開放式問題，答案講求言之有理，沒有標準答案；其評分方法與傳統學科有別，不少教師對此感到無所適從。 Due to the examination of LS is open-ended question. Teachers feel confused.	Assessment
17-9-2007	東方日報 Oriental Daily	香港大學民意研究計劃調查發現家長對教育改革的信心幾近崩潰，並批評日後推行通識教育，將令學生出現「知識不足，通識難讀」及「通通不識」的困境。	Curriculum and Others



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26-9-2007	大公報 Pao	<p>According to the survey, The University of Hong Kong find out that parents are lack of confident to Education Reform. They also criticize that LS cause students more confuse.</p> <p>香港教育工作者聯會主席兼福建中學(小西灣)校長黃均瑜說，很多教席應徵者擁通識教育學位教師教育文憑，令通識教師出現供過於求的情況。</p> <p>他指出，通識科在09年才全面起行，加上屆時人文科及理科節數會相對減少，部分教師會轉教通識科，所以新入職通識教師的需求未必如預計中多，單以通識專業入職並不可行。</p> <p>Mr. Wong, The principal of Fukien Secondary School, said that many job applicants have the qualification of Education diploma (LS), so the oversupply of the LS teacher appeared. He pointed out that the demand of new LS teachers is not much as expectation.</p>	Teacher Training
30-10-2007	大公報 Pao	<p>教育局將開辦新高中通識學習評估講座，由課程發展主任、考評局科目經理和借調教師，講解該科公開試的理念、設計、評核目標和工作進程</p> <p>Education Bureau will organize some talks for NSS LS.</p>	Teacher Training
9-11-2007	星島日報 Tao Daily	<p>近四成中學料不夠通識教師</p> <p>40% secondary expected that there are not enough LS Teachers.</p>	Teacher Training
9-11-2007	文匯報 Po	<p>九成人認新高中學制及通識科增老師工作量</p> <p>Many people believed that NSS and LS will increase teachers' workload.</p>	Teacher Training
13-11-2007	明報 MingPao	<p>明報網站開設通識網 多功能專題討論區</p> <p>Ming Pao set up a LS website to serve as a discussion platform</p>	Implementation: Support
19-12-2007	明報 MingPao	<p>突破五年投 3000 萬製通識教材</p> <p>Breakthrough will invest 30 millions for producing the teaching kits of LS</p>	Implementation: Support/ Other organ'n

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2008			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Area/ Parties involved</b>
29-1-2008	明報 MingPao	教學語言傾向按科分流，包括通識科 Teaching Language is base on the subject, including LS	MOI
11-2-2008	信報財經新聞 Hong Kong Economic Journal	教育局藉奧運教材推國民和通識教育 Education Bureau hopes that though the teaching kit of Olympic can promote the National Education and LS	Curriculum
25-2-2008	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	英中擬用中文教通識 EMI School may teach LS in Chinese	MOI
29-2-2008	明報 MingPao	支援教通識中心傳招式 Teaching support centre pass some teaching techniques for LS	Implementation: Support
4-3-2008	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	教育電視多拍 300 套迎三三四 製作新節目 助教師家長了解新學制及通識科 There will be more than 300 Educational Television Programme in order to help teachers and parents understand more about NSS and LS	Implementation: Promotion
13-3-2008	明報 MingPao	新高中必修國家政績京奧航天三峽工程入通識課推國民教育 Promoting the National Education, the issues of Beijing Olympics, Space Project and Three Gorges Dam Project have to be included in the NSS LS	Curriculum
13-3-2008	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	中國改革開放課題 通識科研增 The topic of China Reform may included in LS	Curriculum

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13-3-2008	新報 Daily News	提升國民身分認同及民族自豪感 改革開放列入教材 China Reform will include in the teaching kit in order to enhance the national identity and national pride	Curriculum
18-3-2008	星島日報 Daily	首個通識教育電視節目五月開鑼 (通識特攻隊) 招募學生討論時事參與製作 The Educational Television Programme recruits students for participation.	Implementation: Promotion
7-4-2008	文匯報 Po	聖保祿中學與港大教授合作英語授通識 St. Paul's Secondary School is cooperated with the Professor of the University of Hong Kong for Teaching LS in English	MOI
14-4-2008	明報 MingPao	ICAC 出通識教材 ICAC published the Teaching kit for the LS	Implementation: Support/ ICAC
17-4-2008	星島日報 Daily	赴四川認識國家發展，通識教師考察國情 Some LS Teachers have been Sichuan for understanding the development of China.	Teacher Training
20-4-2008	東方日報 Oriental Daily	莊啓程預科書院轉型高中校 學校與香港大學地球科學系合作 為通識科教師提供培訓。 Po Leung Kuk Vicwood K. T. Chong Sixth Form College will become a high school. It will cooperate with the department of Earth Science (HKU) for providing the teacher training.	Implementation: Support
22-4-2008	大公報 Pao	夥拍大學優化通識教學 麗澤中學參加了由香港中文大學教育學院屬下的大學與學校夥伴協作中心舉辦的「優化教學協作計劃」，以協助設計新高中通識課程及提升教學效能。 Lai Chack Middle School take part in Partnership for Improvement of Learning & Teaching (PILT) Project which is organized by The Centre for University & School Partnership (CUSP) so as to design the NSS LS Curriculum and To enhance teaching effectiveness	Implementation: Support
14-5-2008	星島日報 Tao Daily	嶺大社區學院服務社區建通識平台 The Community Collage at Lingnan University build a platform for LS	Implementation: Support/ Universities

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15-5-2008	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	<p>教評會響譽報四份一初中棄中史科 通識綜合人文科代替</p> <p>Education Convergence warned that 1/4 Junior Form will have Integrated Humanity instead of Chinese History.</p>	Curriculum
20-5-2008	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	<p>星島通識網刊地震雙語教材</p> <p>Sing Tao published the Bilingual teaching kit of earthquake in the internet.</p>	Implementation: Support/ Mass Media
21-5-2008	明報 Ming Pao	<p>程介明指質素參差尤其通識科，建議師訓課程倡引評分制</p> <p>Due to the large differences of quality, Mr. Ching recommend that there should be a assessment system for teacher training</p>	Teacher Training
27-5-2008	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	<p>四份一校無中史科初中生不曉楚漢爭霸國史真空欠承傳削弱民族認同感 香港通識教育會副主席黃家樑亦質疑，通識或綜合人文等學科需兼顧其他知識領域，若同時要分擔國史教育的責任，便需壓縮涵蓋的中史部分，學習內容因而變得鬆散零碎。</p>	Curriculum
29-5-2008	香港經濟日報 Hong Kong Economic Times	<p>通識科各自為政 嶺大研教法</p> <p>Lingnan University is studying the teaching methods for LS.</p>	Teacher Training
29-5-2008	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	<p>通識教育欠緊密連扣學者指教師需花時間思考</p> <p>Lack of planning. Scholar said teachers should spend more time for organizing the teaching content.</p>	Curriculum
29-5-2008	明報 MingPao	<p>嶺大研究：初中綜合人文科評核單一</p> <p>Lingnan University reported that junior form Integrated Humanity should have the same assessment standard.</p>	Assessment
29-5-2008	文匯報 Wen Wei Po	<p>初中通識教育 嶺大批眼高手低</p> <p>Lingnan University criticizes the junior form LS is too high in expectation.</p>	Curriculum

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3-6-2008	大公報 Pao	教局推網上通識課程 Education bureau promote the LS course on web.	Implementation: Support
10-6-2008	大公報 Pao	「批判性思維」課程培訓三百位老師 The training course of critical thinking trains 300 teachers	Teacher Training
24-6-2008	大公報 Pao	三十教師為通識考察南沙 30 Teachers visited Nansha	Teacher Training
24-6-2008	大公報 Pao	中學生城大上課學通識 Secondary school students had LS lessons in The City University of Hong Kong	Implementation: Support/ Universities
27-6-2008	明報 MingPao	科大教育發展組設計一系列活動推廣科普及通識教育 The Education Developed Program of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology designed a series of activities for promoting LS	Implementation: Support/ Universities
29-6-2008	星島日報 Tao Daily	家計會推〈性教育通識〉 The family planning association of Hong Kong published the teaching kit of sex education	Curriculum
7-7-2008	大公報 Pao	學者反對中史融入通識身為中國人不懂歷史好可恥 Scholars opposed Chinese History will integrate into Liberal Studies. It is so shameful that Chinese do not know their own history.	Curriculum
11-7-2008	明報 MingPao	新高中通識課培訓 4500 教師超額完成 4500 Teachers finished the Professional Training of NSS LS.	Teacher Training
11-8-2008	大公報 Pao	教局二十團體合辦今起四天 500 新教師培訓迎新制 500 new teachers will participate a training course for NSS	Teacher Training
13-8-2008	明報 MingPao	新通識試題學生指靠寫作文憑試模擬題曝光教師稱有效評估能力 Student considered that the questions of LS are depend on writing. Teachers determined that it	Assessment

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		can assess the ability effectively.	
13-8-2008	明報 MingPao	校本評核教師多疑團 Teachers feel doubtful to SBA	Assessment
14-8-2008	明報 MingPao	新通識校本評核教師憂工作激增 SBA may increase teachers, workloads	Assessment
12-9-2008	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	應用知識、運用能力、分析價值觀：通識科公開評核的綜合要求 The requirement of the assessment of LS is: knowledge application, use of generic skills and analysis of various values.	Assessment
17-9-2008	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	全港四所中學專業發展通識 Four secondary schools in Hong Kong had the Professional development in LS.	Implementation: Support / Secondary schools
17-9-2008	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	考評局首上載模擬試題通識教育考核立論須有理據 HKEAA uploaded the questions and stressed that LS should have their t standpoint with proofs.	Assessment
25-9-2008	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	青少年題材貼身反思兩性相處〈性本善〉首推教材套家庭學校雙管齊下 Sex Education online published Teaching kit for family and schools.	Implementation: Support
29-9-2008	星島日報 Sing Tao Daily	學生參與編劇貼近年輕人角度〈廉潔選舉〉通識教材套處境式探討議題 Students participate the making of ICAC Moral Education teaching kit	Implementation: Support/ ICAC
10-10-2008	明報 MingPao	支持師生迎三三四明報通識網資源廣 The website of Ming Pao provides a lot of resource for NSS LS	Implementation: Support
24-10-2008	明報 MingPao	邀教局為教師增值 開放通識課室交流 More opportunity for teachers to exchange their ideas in LS	Teacher Training
30-11-2008	星島日報 Sing	考試及評核局於本月二十日推出新高中通識科樣本試卷	Assessment

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Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

	Tao Daily	The Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) will release the sample paper of NSS LS	
30-11-2008	星島日報 Tao Daily	浸會大學教育學系學校通識教育資源中心主任李玉強，在「新高中通識科考試」交流會上指剛出版的樣本試題，無邊際試題深淺差異大。 Mr. Lee, the officer of School LS Resource Centre of The Hong Kong Baptist University, said that the questions in the new sample paper are large difference in the testing level.	Assessment
2-12-2008	明報 MingPao	津中倡校本評核分時段呈分 議會新主席廖亞全：首要任務過渡三三四 Secondary school recommended that SBA should have submitted the grade in several periods. Mr. Liu Ah Chuen said that the first mission is transit NNS probably.	Assessment
4-12-2008	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	通識教師素質備受關注 The quality of LS Teacher is concerned	Teacher Training
6-12-2008	東方日報 Oriental daily	教育局局長孫明揚向校長解釋，部分科目如通識科未必適合以英語授課 Secretary for Education Mr Michael M Y Suen explained to school principals that some subjects such as LS may not be suitable to teach in English.	MOI
12-12-2008	大公報 Ta Kung Pao	教師網上學通識學通識迎新制 Teacher can learn LS in the internet	Implementation: Support
14-12-2008	明報 MingPao	通識卷評分倡每題訂獨立標準 The Examination papers of LS are encouraged that each question should have the independent standard for assessment	Assessment
18-12-2008	太陽報 The Sun Daily	有報章指出新學科救亡搵學生較飛 教師空槍上陣授通識 Teachers are not well preparation for teaching LS	Teacher Training
18-12-2008	東方日報	通識科唔識教書苦老師	Teacher Training

**Appendix 1:**  
Chronological table: News Clips about LS in Hong Kong (1988-2008)

	Oriental daily	It is so hard for the teachers to teach LS	
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**Appendix 3:  
Types of informants to be interviewed**

<b>Types of informants to be interviewed</b>		<b>Description</b>
<b>Early Adopter</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The decision maker, "bricoleurs"</li> <li>2. The operational leader (the leader teacher)</li> <li>3. The follower teachers</li> <li>4. Others:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The Principal if he/she is not the bricoleur</li> <li>❖ Other relevant teachers</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>The resource person who brought LS into the school with resources and connection with other organizations (the principal/ vice-principal or a senior teacher...)</p> <p>The in-charge of the subject LS, initiator/ assigned by school administration, who is relatively familiar with the subject (the panel chairperson or a senior teacher)</p> <p>LS teachers (discipline/ original subject/ seniority/ assigned or not etc.)</p> <p>Final decision maker</p>
<b>Late Adopter</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The decision maker, "bricoleurs"</li> <li>2. The leader teacher</li> <li>3. The follower teachers</li> <li>4. Others:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The Principal if he/she is not the bricoleur</li> <li>❖ Other relevant teachers</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>The resource person who brought LS into the school with resources and connection with other organizations (the principal/ vice-principal or a senior teacher...)</p> <p>The in-charge of the subject LS, initiator/ assigned by school administration, who is relatively familiar with the subject (the panel chairperson or a senior teacher)</p> <p>LS teachers (discipline/ original subject/ seniority/ assigned or not etc.)</p> <p>Final decision maker</p>
<b>Non-Adopter</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The decision maker, "bricoleurs" (The Principal)</li> <li>2. The potential Panel chairperson</li> </ol>	

**Themes to be discussed with each type of informants**

<p>1. How is the schema built</p>	<p>The repertoires: teachers' history of or current involvement in various related organizations, professional associations and professional training programmes (both pre-service and in-service) and other related experiences</p>
<p>2. The interactions among actors</p>	<p>Professional communications/casual discussion about the subject</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Between Government officials and school administrators</li> <li>➤ Between schools administrators of various schools</li> <li>➤ Between school administrators and teachers</li> <li>➤ Among teachers</li> <li>➤ Between teachers and students</li> </ul>
<p>3a. Teachers' interpretation on policy messages</p> <p>3b. Teachers' interpretation on the subject</p>	<p>The degree of congruence of the new policy on LS (AS) and LS (HKDSE) to the old principles and practices; the degree of intensity that the pressure teachers received; degree of pervasiveness that how the messages are interlocking and overlapping; and degree of voluntariness that whether the teachers follow the message by coercive means or normative ones.</p> <p>How the teachers perceive the specific instructional practices of the subject LS will be asked, including the subject objectives, teaching and learning strategies, form of assessments, the actual operation of the subject in classroom, resource allocation and related arrangements.</p>

## The sample semi-structured lists of questions for the informants

Early Adopter	The decision maker, the bricoleur	具體題目
		<p>1. 你的學校在甚麼時候開始推行高補通識課？</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 籌備情況/ 執行情況</li> <li>❖ 參與人數</li> <li>❖ 課程設計/ 編寫</li> <li>❖ 教署支援情況/ 與其他學校/組織的支援情況</li> </ul> <p>2. How is the schema built</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 有甚麼人參與/ 你為甚麼會參與/ 推行？</li> <li>❖ 你從甚麼途徑得知通識科/ 你的培訓機構/ 參與任何專業組織/ 哪些人曾給予你對這科目的啟發/ 給予幫助等</li> <li>❖ 辦學團體的態度/ 支援</li> </ul> <p>3. The interactions among actors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 多與其他他人討論嗎？專業討論/ 普通閒談</li> <li>❖ 學校外：專業團隊的討論/ 校長或行政人員交流/ 學校間的討論/ 政府官員/ 大學教授</li> <li>❖ 學校內：行政人員與教師/ 科目會議/ 教師之間的討論/ 專業培訓日/ 實際在課堂與學生上課的影響</li> </ul> <p>4. Teachers' interpretation on policy messages/ on the subject</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 對 AS 91 年課程的看法 (目標/ 內容/ 評核)</li> <li>❖ 這個科目與其他科目的分別/ 相容度/ 難度</li> <li>❖ 校內教師對執行這科目的看法</li> <li>❖ 在教學上/ 課堂安排/ 有甚麼不同</li> <li>❖ 工作量：課程編排/ 編寫</li> <li>❖ 資源分配的問題：教師分配/ 時間表編排/ 參與高補考試人數等</li> <li>❖ 團隊合作</li> <li>❖ 支援：校內/ 校外</li> <li>❖ Modules 是一文一理？如教署建議？</li> </ul>

Late Adopter	Bricoleur	1. 具體題目
		<p>❖ 你的學校在甚麼時候開始推行高補通識課？</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 邊個建議</li> <li>▶ 起初有幾人做呢科</li> <li>▶ 點解要開呢？如果不是必修你會唔會開呢？</li> <li>▶ 學生報考情況</li> <li>▶ 入大學的情況（起初怕唔怕修通識有無咩影響？依家呢？）</li> </ul> <p>❖ 籌備情況/ 執行情況</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 教師人手幾多？會唔會比其他科目多</li> <li>▶ 教師背景？</li> </ul> <p>❖ 課程設計/ 編寫</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 起初係邊個寫？</li> </ul> <p>❖ 教署支援情況/ 與其他學校/組織的支援情況</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 有無額外津貼</li> <li>▶ 有無同其他機構合作，例如通識教師會／大學／其他學校交流呢？</li> </ul> <p>2. How is the schema built</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 有甚麼人參與/ 你為甚麼會參與/ 推行？</li> <li>❖ 你從甚麼途徑得知通識科/ 你的培訓機構/ 參與任何專業組織/ 認識哪些人曾給予你對這科目的啓發/ 給予幫助等</li> <li>❖ 辦學團體的態度/ 支援</li> </ul>

5. The interactions among actors

- ❖ 多與其他人討論嗎？專業討論/ 普通閒談
- ❖ 學校外：專業團隊的討論/ 校長或行政人員交流/ 學校間的討論/ 政府官員/ 大學教授
- ❖ 學校內：行政人員與教師/ 科目會議/ 教師之間的討論/ 專業培訓日/ 實際在課堂與學生上課的影響

6. Teachers' interpretation on policy messages/ on the subject

- ❖ 對 AS 92 年課程的看法 (目標/ 內容/ 評核)
- ❖ 這個科目與其他科目的分別/ 相容度/ 難度
- ❖ 校內教師對執行這科目的看法
- ❖ 在教學上/ 課堂安排/ 有甚麼不同
- ❖ 工作量：課程編排/ 編寫
- ❖ 資源分配的問題：教師分配/ 時間表編排/ 參與高補考試人數等
- ❖ 團隊合作
- ❖ 支援：校內/ 校外
- ❖ 一文一理？

# Appendix 2 : School Profile

## School N

### Mission Statement

We aim at preaching the gospel and leading students to know the truth. By following the standard curriculum prescribed by the EDB, we provide students with whole person education.

### School Information

District			
Other District(s)			
Supervisor/Chairman of School Management Committee			
Principal (with Qualifications/Experiences)			
School Type	Aided	Co-ed	
	Remark -		
School Size		Year of Commencement of Operation	
School Motto	FAITH, HOPE, LOVE	Has the Incorporated Management Committee been established?	No
School Sponsoring Body		Total No. of Students	1104
Religion	Protestantism / Christianity	Parent-Teacher Association	Yes
Total No. of Teaching Staff (including teachers not in the approved establishment)	58	Student Union/ Association	Yes
		Alumni/ Past Students Association	Yes

### Information of Teaching Staff (including School Head) (2008/09 s.y.)

Number of teaching staff in approved establishment	Number of teaching staff not included in approved establishment	
56	2	
<b>Qualifications (As a percentage of all teaching staff)</b>		
Certificate Master/ Mistress	3%	
Bachelor Degree	52%	
Master Degree	43%	
Doctoral Degree	2%	
<b>Working Experience (No. of Teaching Staff)</b>		
0-4 years	5-9 years	≥10 years
14	5	39
<b>Supplementary Information (No. of Teaching Staff)</b>		
Native-speaking English Teacher (NET)	1	
Teachers with training on special educational needs (SEN)	0	
Teachers with teacher training qualification	55	

### Class Structure (2008/09 s.y.)

	S1	S2	S3
No. of Classes	5	5	5
No. of Places Provided	200	200	200

	S4						S5						S6						S7					
	Arts	Sci.	Comm.	Arts & Comm.	Sci. & Comm.	Arts, Sci. & Comm.	Arts	Sci.	Comm.	Arts & Comm.	Sci. & Comm.	Arts, Sci. & Comm.	Arts	Sci.	Comm.	Arts & Comm.	Sci. & Comm.	Arts, Sci. & Comm.	Arts	Sci.	Comm.	Arts & Comm.	Sci. & Comm.	Arts, Sci. & Comm.
No. of Classes	2	2	1	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
No. of Places Provided	80	80	40	0	0	0	80	80	40	0	0	0	30	30	0	0	0	0	30	30	0	0	0	0

Remarks	The school has 29 classes.
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**Subject offered (2008/09 s.y.)**

S.1 - S.3	Chinese as medium of instruction	Chinese Language, Mathematics, Visual Arts, Christian & Life Education, Computer Literacy, Integrated Humanities, Integrated Science, Music, PE, Putonghua
	English as medium of instruction	English Language
	Use either Chinese or English as medium of instruction by class or by group	-
S.4 - S.5	Chinese as medium of instruction	Chinese Language, Chinese History, Chinese Literature, Commerce, Ethics, PE
	English as medium of instruction	English Language, Mathematics, Additional Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Computer & Information Technology, Economics, Geography, History, Physics, Principles of Accounts
	Use either Chinese or English as medium of instruction by class or by group	-
S.6 - S.7	Chinese as medium of instruction	Chinese Language, Chinese History, Chinese Literature, Ethics, PE
	English as medium of instruction	Use of English, Applied Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Economics, Geography, History, Physics, Pure Mathematics
	Use either Chinese or English as medium of instruction by class or by group	-

Remarks (Use other languages as medium of instruction)	Other Languages
-	-

Applied Learning & other learning experience etc	New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum
-	Planning in progress

**Chargeable Fees (2008/09 s.y.)**

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7
School Fee	waive	waive	waive	waive	waive	waive	waive
Tong Fai	-	-	-	\$290	\$290	\$290	\$290
PTA Membership Fee	\$50						
Student Union Fee	\$30						
Charges for Specific Purposes	-						
Others							
\$300							

**★ School Characteristics****School Management**

School Organization: -

Incorporated Management Committee/School Management Committee: -

School Green Policy: -

**Learning & Teaching Plan**

**Learning & Teaching Strategies:** The Academic Promotion Sub-committee, Chinese panel, English panel, and the library have co-ordinated plans to encourage reading (including morning reading period, book exhibition, extensive reading schemes, etc.).

Four Key Tasks: -

**Teaching & Learning in Information Technology:** Besides the MMLC and the computer room, all classrooms and special rooms have multimedia teaching equipment. Most teachers have achieved the intermediate level or above in using information technology in education.

**Development of Generic Skills & Policy of Medium Instruction:** School adopts CMI in junior forms. Meanwhile, measures to strengthen students' language ability are also taken.

**Student Support**

Whole-school Approach to Catering for Student Diversity: -

**Curriculum Tailoring and Adaptation for Learning and Assessment:** School adopts 2 uniform tests and 2 examinations for the whole year. Parents will be interviewed when the first-term reports are issued. The strength and development potentials of students will be discussed

Policy on Class Promotion/ Detention: -

**Home-school Co-operation and School Ethos**

Home-school Co-operation: -

School Ethos: -

**Future Development**

School Development Plan: -

Teacher Professional Training & Development: -



**Others**

School has strong emphasis on character education.

**★ School Facilities and Activities****School Facilities**

MMLC, Computer Room, English Corner, Religious Activities Room, Counseling Room, School Social Worker's Room, Student Activities Room, Air-conditioned Hall, Library, Classrooms & Special Rooms

**Secondary One Admission & Orientation Activities**

Our school will participate in SSPA 2007/2009 (applicable for admission to S1 in September 2009).  
The scheduled orientation day will be on 22 August 2009, followed by the orientation camp in the very beginning of the new school term. Rank order of students 30%, conduct 30%, extra-curricular activities 20%, comments by primary schools 20%.

**Extra-curricular/Co-curricular Activities**

The 4 Houses, together with over 20 clubs will organize different activities. School will also arrange social service activities. Students perform well in visual arts, recital activities, music and sports

**School Healthy Life****Direct Public Transportation to School**

# Appendix 2: School Profile

## School L

### Mission Statement

We aim to provide students with an ideal learning environment with which to nurture talents and abilities, as well as to instill in every student the proper moral values based on sound Christian principles. We educate our students to become responsible citizens.

### School Information

<b>District</b>			
<b>Other District(s)</b>			
<b>Supervisor/Chairman of School Management Committee</b>			
<b>Principal (with Qualifications/Experiences)</b>			
<b>School Type</b>	Aided	Co-ed	
	Remark		
<b>School Size</b>		<b>Year of Commencement of Operation</b>	
<b>School Motto</b>	Fides, Spes and Caritas	<b>Has the Incorporated Management Committee been established?</b>	Yes
<b>School Sponsoring Body</b>		<b>Total No. of Students</b>	1123
<b>Religion</b>	Protestantism / Christianity	<b>Parent-Teacher Association</b>	Yes
<b>Total No. of Teaching Staff (including teachers not in the approved establishment)</b>	63	<b>Student Union/ Association</b>	Yes
		<b>Alumni/ Past Students Association</b>	Yes

### Information of Teaching Staff (including School Head) (2008/09 s.y.)

Number of teaching staff in approved establishment	Number of teaching staff not included in approved establishment	
57	6	
<b>Qualifications (As a percentage of all teaching staff)</b>		
<b>Certificate Master/ Mistress</b>	2%	
<b>Bachelor Degree</b>	65%	
<b>Master Degree</b>	33%	
<b>Doctoral Degree</b>	0%	
<b>Working Experience (No. of Teaching Staff)</b>		
<b>0-4 years</b>	<b>5-9 years</b>	<b>≥ 10 years</b>
13	4	46
<b>Supplementary Information (No. of Teaching Staff)</b>		
<b>Native-speaking English Teacher (NET)</b>	1	
<b>Teachers with training on special educational needs (SEN)</b>	3	
<b>Teachers with teacher training qualification</b>	63	

### Class Structure (2008/09 s.y.)

	<b>S1</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>S3</b>
<b>No. of Classes</b>	5	5	5
<b>No. of Places Provided</b>	200	200	200

	<b>S4</b>						<b>S5</b>						<b>S6</b>						<b>S7</b>					
	Arts	Sci.	Comm	Arts & Comm.	Sci. & Comm.	Arts, Sci. & Comm.	Arts	Sci.	Comm	Arts & Comm.	Sci. & Comm.	Arts, Sci. & Comm.	Arts	Sci.	Comm	Arts & Comm.	Sci. & Comm.	Arts, Sci. & Comm.	Arts	Sci.	Comm	Arts & Comm.	Sci. & Comm.	Arts, Sci. & Comm.
<b>No. of Classes</b>	2	3	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
<b>No. of Places Provided</b>	80	120	0	0	0	0	80	120	0	0	0	0	30	30	0	0	0	0	30	30	0	0	0	0

<b>Remarks</b>	
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**Subject offered (2008/09 s.y.)**

S.1 - S.3	Chinese as medium of instruction	Chinese Language, Putonghua, Mathematics, Science(S1-2), Chemistry(S3), Physics(S3), Biology(S3), Chinese History, History, Geography, Religious Studies, Liberal Studies, Life Education, Music, Visual Arts, PE, Computer Literacy, Design and Technology(S1-2), Home Economics(S1-2)
	English as medium of instruction	English Language
	Use either Chinese or English as medium of instruction by class or by group	-
S.4 - S.5	Chinese as medium of instruction	Chinese Language, Chinese Literature, Chinese History, Religious Studies (Christianity), Visual Arts, and PE
	English as medium of instruction	English Language, Mathematics, Additional Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Geography, History, Economics, Principles of Accounts, Computer and Information Technology
	Use either Chinese or English as medium of instruction by class or by group	-
S.6 - S.7	Chinese as medium of instruction	Chinese Language & Culture, Chinese Literature, Chinese History, Liberal Studies, Ethics & Religious Studies, PE
	English as medium of instruction	Use of English, Pure Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Economics, Geography, History, Principles of Accounts, Mathematics & Statistics
	Use either Chinese or English as medium of instruction by class or by group	-

<b>Remarks (Use other languages as medium of instruction)</b>	<b>Other Languages</b>

<b>Applied Learning &amp; other learning experience etc</b>	<b>New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum</b>
There are over 30 extra-curricular activities, covering aspects such as religion, sports, academics, volunteering, interest, uniform teams etc. Besides, there are the Student Union, 4 Houses, as well as several services teams; these help in training the students' leadership Assembly, workshops, competitions, seminars, visits, field trips, and exchange programmes broaden the horizons of the students and their learning experiences. An online platform has been established for students to build their own learning portfolio.	Core subjects: Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics, Liberal Studies Electives: Chinese Literature, Chinese History, History, Economics, Geography, Business, Account & Financial Studies, Ethics and Religious Studies, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Combined Science, Information & Communication Technology, Mathematics (Extended Part I & II), Visual Arts

**Chargeable Fees (2008/09 s.y.)**

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7
<b>School Fee</b>	waive	waive	waive	waive	waive	waive	waive
<b>Tong Fal</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$290	\$290	\$290	\$290
<b>PTA Membership Fee</b>	\$40						
<b>Student Union Fee</b>	\$10						
<b>Charges for Specific Purpose</b>	\$200						

<b>Others</b>

## ★ School Characteristics

### School Management

**School Organization:** The staff are divided into several committees, which are responsible for teaching and learning, curriculum development, student learning, assessment & evaluation, religious affairs, discipline, student guidance & counselling, career guidance, co-curricular activities, home-school co-operation, etc.

**Incorporated Management Committee/School Management Committee:** The Incorporated Management Board is composed of professionals who actively involve in the development of the school, and are in close contact with the teaching staff. Besides representatives from parents, teachers, and sponsored body, there is an independent member from educational field.

**School Green Policy:**

1. Save energy and water in daily uses.
2. Reduce waste by re-using and recycling resources.
3. Discuss environmental issues in lessons and assemblies. Encourage students to get involved in projects based about green concerns.
4. Run recycling schemes for old books, clothes and more.
5. Plant trees within the school grounds.

### Learning & Teaching Plan

**Learning & Teaching Strategies:** The purpose of establishing the "Curriculum Development Committee" and the "Student Learning Committee" is to improve the teaching effectiveness of teachers and the learning ability of students. The School encourages collaborative teaching and classroom observation, so that teachers can learn from each other, and build up the team teaching spirit. Furthermore, "co-operative learning", "enquiry approach learning" and "high-order thinking" are the emphasized teaching strategies of the current school year. Through these new teaching and strategies, the School hopes to stimulate the students in their learning. The School is fully prepared for the coming of the New Senior Secondary (NSS) Academic Structure. Policies have been made by the Academic Committee concerning issues such as the curriculum development, human resources and school spaces. Teachers' professional development, Parents' education and Students' equipping are proceeding as planned, and the whole School would be ready for the commencement of the New Senior Secondary (NSS) Academic Structure.

#### Four Key Tasks: 1. Reading to Learn

Students are encouraged to develop a good reading habit. There are reading sessions after lunch, one Chinese newspaper reading session on Wednesday and an English one on Friday. The English and the Chinese Departments establish Extensive Reading Schemes and prepare supplementary reading materials to promote a love of reading. Students are also trained to think critically and share their reading reviews in the morning assemblies. By doing so, students not only broaden their horizons and gain knowledge outside of class; but also attain language proficiency in the two languages.

#### 2. Project Learning

The purpose of project learning is to let students to combine their knowledge, abilities and attitudes through diversified learning experiences, and eventually build up knowledge of their own. To tie in with the New Secondary School System, the School has started to develop students' abilities in handling project learning in Junior forms. The focus of S1 is on defining questions, interviewing and observing. S2 students are trained in questionnaires design and data analysis. The S3 course emphasizes on the students' ability to investigate and collect raw data. The 3-year basic training helps the students to master the skills of project learning.

#### 3. Information Technology for Interactive Learning

A school intranet has been set up to enhance teaching and learning with broadband and wireless internet access in most parts of the school premises. E-class containing virtual classes, discussion forums and online assessment and exercises are in operation to facilitate communication and learning among all the members of the school via the internet. Teachers can enhance the interest of students in learning science by using the data-loggers to demonstrate the experiment more explicitly.

#### 4. Moral & Civil Education

Through the presentations and discussions during the Ethics & Religious Studies and Life Education lessons, assemblies, as well as special activities, students are guided in establishing the correct values and to be responsible citizens.

**Teaching & Learning in Information Technology:** See above section and school facilities.

**Development of Generic Skills & Policy of Medium Instruction:** The aim of the language policy is to produce students who are biliterate and trilingual. To better motivate the students, Chinese is used as the medium of instruction for S1-3 students whereas English is adopted for S4-7 students in order to prepare them for future studies. Besides recruiting foreign English teachers, teachers and students from a Canadian high school are invited to the School regularly to hold the "English Week", so to increase the students' chance to learn and practice English. During summer, English remedial classes are provided for students of all forms. There are also bridging course of each subject for the pre-S4 students, so that they can be better familiarized with the English learning environment, and to strengthen their foundations in English.

On the issue of student learning, the School has been allocating more funds to give students training in critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Organizations and graduates of the School are invited to hold workshops and talks for the students on topics of study skills and examination skills. The learning attitude and self-management skills of students are also the School's concern. The School has set up prizes to encourage those students who have made the effort to come to school on time and hand in all their assignments punctually.

### Student Support

**Whole-school Approach to Catering for Student Diversity:** Extra funding is used to foster gifted and remedial classes for Chinese, English and Mathematics from S1-5. Tailor-made materials are adopted to suit the needs of different students at all levels.

**Curriculum Tailoring and Adaptation for Learning and Assessment:** In order to evaluate students equitably and accurately, and to guide them into the habit of studying with perseverance, tests and exams are held each term, and all subjects have continuous assessments.

**Policy on Class Promotion/ Detention:** Students are evaluated individually in the Class Promotion/Detention meeting. For those who do not meet the promotion requirements, they would be retained in the same form for another year so to help them build a better foundation.

## Home-school Co-operation and School Ethos

**Home-school Co-operation:** Taking into account the development of school and the needs of the parents, the Home-school Co-operation committee designs and holds a wide range of activities with the Parent-teacher Association every year. We have developed mutual trust and a lasting harmonious relationship. Through close communication and hearty co-operation, we are actualising a shared dream that the next generation can grow happily and healthily.

**School Ethos:** Founded upon the Bible's teaching, the School has always emphasizes on establishing and maintaining a loving and caring environment, and to build up students' lives by the school motto of "Fides, Spes, Caritas" (Faith, hope, love). The down-to-earth style and the harmonious relationships between teachers and students have long been praised by parents in the district. The School aims not only at building up the students' proper appearances, words and deeds, but also accomplishing their thoughts and minds. Outside the classroom, teachers always grasp the opportunity to get to know their students through activities such as devotional groups, lunch gatherings, hiking trips, after class counselling, etc. Because of these interactions, teachers become acquainted with the students, and are often like friends to them as well.

## Future Development

- School Development Plan**
1. To implement English Enhancement Scheme
  2. To coordinate cross-curricular English bridging programmes and prepare to use English as MOI in junior forms
  3. To implement Liberal Studies in junior forms.
  4. To build a strong interface between the junior and senior secondary curricula.
  5. To facilitate lesson study and foster collaborative teaching.
  6. To educate students to be virtuous and be good followers of Christ

**Teacher Professional Training & Development:** Teachers are encouraged to attend refresher courses and professional development programmes. Lesson studies, mentoring scheme and collaborative teaching are implemented to encourage teachers to conduct collective lesson planning, mutual class observation and reflection, so as to enhance teaching effectiveness.

## Others

## ★ School Facilities and Activities

### School Facilities

English Corner, 14 special rooms, Assembly Hall, Chapel, Student Activities Centre, Dancing Room and 2 playgrounds. Multi-media learning centre, 2 computer rooms, CAL room. All classrooms are installed with computer and projector, visualizer and video-player.

### Secondary One Admission & Orientation Activities

Our school will participate in SSPA 2007/2009 (applicable for admission to S1 in September 2009).

The selection process comprises 2 rounds:

1. Short-listing applicants on documentary information (60%) Selection criteria: School academic results 35%; Conduct, Extra-curricular activities & services in school 15%; Other exposures & achievement 10%;

2. Administering interviews (Chinese and English) (40%)

Selection criteria: Comprehension/analytical power/ presentation skills: 20%; Communication skills: 20%.

### Orientation activities

All Secondary 1 students will be streamed into sets for different orientation programmes, including bridging programmes, talks on study skills, school tour, and English drama workshop. There is an orientation day for parents as well.

### Extra-curricular/Co-curricular Activities

There are more than 30 interest clubs, uniform and service groups, sports teams and academic societies. We provide students with the opportunity to develop their potential to the full. Students are allocated to 4 different Houses when they enter Secondary 1. The Student Union also holds various functions after school hours and during post-examination periods in order to develop the talents of students and to enhance inter-personal relationship and the cooperative spirit among students.

### School Healthy Life

The School has been actively promoting the importance of a healthy lifestyle, and striving to build a hygienic and healthy campus.

1. The hygiene of the campus as well as the teachers and students is important, so as to prevent contagious diseases;
2. Student health records are kept, so that attention can be given to students in need;
3. Healthy eating and exercising habits are promoted;
4. The School would supply healthy and hygienic food and beverages;
5. Anti-smoking and anti-drugs education is being carried out in the School, and the School aims at building a smoke- and drug-free campus

### Direct Public Transportation to School

# Appendix 2: School Profile

## School E

### Mission Statement

Sustain the mission of the Methodist Church by providing all-round education, which encompasses the development of the spiritual, intellectual, academic, physical, social and aesthetic aspects.

### School Information

District			
Other District(s)			
Supervisor/Chairman of School Management Committee			
Principal (with Qualifications/Experiences)			
School Type	Aided	Co-ed	
	Remark: Aided		
School Size		Year of Commencement of Operation	
School Motto		Has the incorporated Management Committee been established?	No
School Sponsoring Body		Total No. of Students	1212
Religion	Protestantism / Christianity	Parent-Teacher Association	Yes
Total No. of Teaching Staff (including teachers not in the approved establishment)	68	Student Union/ Association	Yes
		Alumni/ Past Students Association	Yes

### Information of Teaching Staff (including School Head) (2008/09 s.y.)

Number of teaching staff in approved establishment	Number of teaching staff not included in approved establishment	
60	8	
<b>Qualifications (As a percentage of all teaching staff)</b>		
Certificate Master/ Mistress	3%	
Bachelor Degree	60%	
Master Degree	37%	
Doctoral Degree	0%	
<b>Working Experience (No. of Teaching Staff)</b>		
0-4 years	5-9 years	≥10 years
17	18	33
<b>Supplementary Information (No. of Teaching Staff)</b>		
Native-speaking English Teacher (NET)	1	
Teachers with training on special educational needs (SEN)	3	
Teachers with teacher training qualification	63	

### Class Structure (2008/09 s.y.)

	S1	S2	S3
No. of Classes	5	5	5
No. of Places Provided	200	200	200

	S4						S5						S6						S7					
	Arts	Sci.	Comm.	Arts & Comm.	Sci. & Comm.	Arts, Sci. & Comm.	Arts	Sci.	Comm.	Arts & Comm.	Sci. & Comm.	Arts, Sci. & Comm.	Arts	Sci.	Comm.	Arts & Comm.	Sci. & Comm.	Arts, Sci. & Comm.	Arts	Sci.	Comm.	Arts & Comm.	Sci. & Comm.	Arts, Sci. & Comm.
No. of Classes	2	2	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	1	1.5	1.5	0	0	0	0	1.5	1.5	0	0	0	0
No. of Places Provided	80	80	0	0	0	40	80	80	0	0	0	40	40	50	0	0	0	0	40	50	0	0	0	0

Remarks	F.1-F.5:200 F.6 & 7:90
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**Subject offered (2008/09 s.y.)**

S.1 - S.3	Chinese as medium of instruction	Chin. Language, Putonghua, Hist & Culture, R.E., M & C Ed., Liberal Studies
	English as medium of instruction	English Language, Maths, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Integrated Science, Geography, Computer Lit, Visual Arts, Music, H.E., P.E., D & T
	Use either Chinese or English as medium of instruction by class or by group	-
S.4 - S.5	Chinese as medium of instruction	Chin. Language, Chin. Lang & Culture, Chin. History, Hist & Culture, R.E., M & C Ed., Integrated Humanities
	English as medium of instruction	English Language, Maths, Pure Maths, Add Maths, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Geography, Economics, Computer Lit, Visual Arts, P.E.
	Use either Chinese or English as medium of instruction by class or by group	-
S.6 - S.7	Chinese as medium of instruction	Chin. Language, Chin. Lang & Culture, Chin. History, R.E., M & C Ed., Integrated Humanities.
	English as medium of instruction	English Language, Pure Maths, Add Maths/App. Math, Economics, Geography, Computer Application, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, P.E.
	Use either Chinese or English as medium of instruction by class or by group	See above the teaching medium of each subject.

<b>Remarks (Use other languages as medium of instruction)</b>	<b>Other Languages</b>

<b>Applied Learning &amp; other learning experience etc</b>	<b>New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum</b>
A pilot course is offered again this year - Foundation of Chinese Medicine and Herbs Education. (Students have to use their out-of-classroom time for studying)	Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Combined Science, Economics, Business Account and Financial Studies, Geography, Chin. Lang & Culture, Chin. History, Computer Application

**Chargeable Fees (2008/09 s.y.)**

	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7
<b>School Fee</b>	waive	waive	waive	waive	waive	waive	waive
<b>Tong Fai</b>	waive	waive	waive	\$290	\$290	\$290	\$290
<b>PTA Membership Fee</b>	\$20						
<b>Student Union Fee</b>	\$20						
<b>Charges for Specific Purposes</b>	\$130						

<b>Others</b>
Air-con. fee \$250

## **School Characteristics**

### **School Management**

**School Organization:** The school uses School-based Management to carry out various school policies. School Board Members include professional from all walks of life. The school has different committees responsible for school-based management, school development, employment selection, staff appraisal and financial matters.

**Incorporated Management Committee/School Management Committee:** School Board Members include representatives from Methodist Church, parents, teachers, Alumni Association and professional from all walks of life.

**School Green Policy:** We organise No Air-Con Day every year. Our school's Geography & Conservation Club promotes environmental protection activities like refuse classification and environmental protection outdoors activity day, also encourages students not to waste food in the Christmas celebration.

### **Learning & Teaching Plan**

**Learning & Teaching Strategies:** 1. Student-centered learning.  
2. Offer enrichment programmes and activities for the gifted to best develop students' abilities and skills.  
3. Arrange small-class teaching in English, Chinese and Mathematics from S1 to S3 to cater for individual differences.  
4. Enable students to set their own goals for studies and monitor their own progress.

**Four Key Tasks:** English Reading Scheme, Extensive Reading Scheme; Two reading sessions per each cycle, Reading Day (Whole day), Summer Holiday Reading Scheme, Articles of Teachers' Favorite Book. A formal curriculum of Moral and Civic Education and a club are established so as to nurture positive value among students.

**Teaching & Learning in Information Technology:** Our school has totally attained 3 million dollars from the Education Fund. The school has set up the following rooms for IT education: multimedia learning centre, millenium classroom, creative art and music studio, entire school classrooms are network connected, campus TV and campus TV production room.

**Development of Generic Skills & Policy of Medium Instruction:** 1. A seed school under the CDI for the development of Gifted education, History and Culture, Chinese Medicine and Herbs, Liberal Studies and Integrated Humanities.  
2. Implement liberal studies education on both the junior and senior form curriculum so that students are equipped with training in science and technology as well as humanities which in turn develop their critical thinking and generic skills and facilitate the construction of knowledge.  
3. Liberal Studies has been offered in the F.6 curriculum since 1992. Currently, Integrated Humanities and Liberal Studies are one of the electives for F.4 and F.6 students respectively.  
4. Enhance students' language proficiency of the two languages (Chinese and English) so that they can be trilingual (English, Putonghua and Cantonese) in communication and learning.  
5. Extra-curricular activities including Chinese writing class, English Speaking Day and Mandarin Speaking Day.  
6. Small group teaching for English for all Form one students

### **Student Support**

**Whole-school Approach to Catering for Student Diversity:** 1. Our school admitted several students with mild hearing impairment or students who need to use a wheelchair. We have sufficient facility and education experience.  
2. We have small group teaching in English, Chinese and Mathematics as well as gifted programmes in English, Chinese, Mathematics and Science after school so as to cater different needs of our students.

**Curriculum Tailoring and Adaptation for Learning and Assessment:** The traditional report card has been replaced by the "Student Profile", which provides a much more comprehensive assessment of individual students. The Student Profile consists of nine personal qualities under three categories as follows: Personality: Honesty, self-discipline and courtesy. Abilities: Thinking, inter-personal relationships and leadership. Attitude: learning attitude, willingness to serve and initiative. Each student has to do a self-evaluation each term and revise their goals and talk to their teachers.

**Policy on Class Promotion/ Detention:** Each form has its own academic requirement for promotion. Summer classes and follow-up work are provided for those students who cannot meet the basic academic requirement.

### **Home-school Co-operation and School Ethos**

**Home-school Co-operation:** The School's Parent Teacher Association was set up in 1993 having a long history of home-school cooperation. Parents are very willing to be volunteer for the school. Each year the Parent Teacher Association organizes lectures, workshops, seminars, home-school talks, parent groups, IT courses, picnic and barbecue to enhance communication between parents and school and to promote parent education.

**School Ethos:** 1. Cultivate students to take care of themselves well.  
2. Create a trusting and free school atmosphere to nurture students' sense of responsibility and establish a school culture that is striving and innovating.  
3. Promote the student organization to have multi dimensional activities and social services so as to recognize students' uniqueness and emphasize the opportunity for every student to shine and the need for mutual respect and care as well as a reward to the society.  
4. Run a "My-ile" (My file) Scheme to enable students to set their own goals for studies and personal growth and monitor their own progress, with the supervision by parents and teachers.



**Future Development**

**School Development Plan:** \*The aim of the school program plan for 2008–2011 is:

1. Broadening students' perspectives towards life and career goals.
2. Stretching students' academic potentials.
3. Strengthen the learning of English.

\*In the External School Review conducted by the EMB in the school year 2003'04, the 14 areas for assessment were all rated either 'excellent' or 'very good'. Among all the rated items, four of them, namely, professional development, support for students' growth, school culture and attitude and behaviour were all rated 'excellent'.

**Teacher Professional Training & Development:** Our school was selected to be

1. One of the resource school in Hong Kong.
2. One of the member schools under the Professional Development School Scheme (PDSS) to design junior form school-based curriculum for transition to senior form Liberal Studies.
4. Collaborate with the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, School of Education, CUHK (STILIS) to support for transition to the implementation and leadership of Liberal Studies.
5. Work with Methodist Church for Life Education Curriculum development as a mentor school to share our successful experiences with the other schools.

**Others**

Over the past years, our school has got several QEF fund including:

Green School Scheme, Speak Trilingually in Virtual Reality, General Education on Chinese Medicine and Learning Centre, Chinese Orchestra, Western Orchestra, Cluster School Gifted Project, Multi-media classrooms, Notebook computers, Professional Development and Collaboration Project, Curriculum of General Education on Chinese Medicine and Resource Center, Developing Teaching and Self-Access Learning materials using Web-based and Multi-media Resources, enhance the platform for educational proficiency and Quality Life Education, lesson plans for NSS Liberal Studies: Integrating The Core Learning Objectives & The Independent Enquiry Study in The LS Lessons, Use of New Technology for School Administration Work.  
-Web-based Platform

**★ School Facilities and Activities****School Facilities**

Five Multi-Media Learning Centres including Multi-Media Language Lab & Digital Music and Creative Art Workshop, Campus TV Production studio, Chinese Medicine and Herbs Education Centre, Chinese Herbal Medicine Exhibition Gallery, Eco-Green House, Herb Corner, Religious Education Centre, Resource Room for parents, School Computer Network, all classrooms have air-conditioners.

**Secondary One Admission & Orientation Activities**

Our school will participate in SSPA 2007/2009 (applicable for admission to S1 in September 2009).

Academic results 55%;

Awards, extracurricular achievements and conduct 20%;

Performance in the interview 25%.

English Bridging Programme, Orientation Day, Briefing Sessions of Extra-curricular Activities, Parents Day, Fun Activities Day.

**Extra-curricular/Co-curricular Activities**

Extra-curricular activities in the school can be grouped under five categories, namely academic, sports, aesthetic, interest and services. There are 22 clubs and societies, 48 sports teams, 6 music groups, 2 uniformed groups, a campus TV station and literature & art groups, providing a wide range of extra-curricular activities for students.

**School Healthy Life**

1. Both students and parents participate in the management of the tuck shop.

2. We organise different activities to promote healthy lifestyle such as a green campus, environmental activities, hiking and long distance race.

(Direct Profile: Transparency for Parents)

**Appendix 3:  
Types of informants to be interviewed**

<b>Types of informants to be interviewed</b>		<b>Description</b>
<b>Early Adopter</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The decision maker, "bricoleurs"</li> <li>2. The operational leader (the leader teacher)</li> <li>3. The follower teachers</li> <li>4. Others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The Principal if he/she is not the bricoleur</li> <li>❖ Other relevant teachers</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>The resource person who brought LS into the school with resources and connection with other organizations (the principal/ vice-principal or a senior teacher...)</p> <p>The in-charge of the subject LS, initiator/ assigned by school administration, who is relatively familiar with the subject (the panel chairperson or a senior teacher)</p> <p>LS teachers (discipline/ original subject/ seniority/ assigned or not etc.)</p> <p>Final decision maker</p>
<b>Late Adopter</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The decision maker, "bricoleurs"</li> <li>2. The leader teacher</li> <li>3. The follower teachers</li> <li>4. Others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The Principal if he/she is not the bricoleur</li> <li>❖ Other relevant teachers</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>The resource person who brought LS into the school with resources and connection with other organizations (the principal/ vice-principal or a senior teacher...)</p> <p>The in-charge of the subject LS, initiator/ assigned by school administration, who is relatively familiar with the subject (the panel chairperson or a senior teacher)</p> <p>LS teachers (discipline/ original subject/ seniority/ assigned or not etc.)</p> <p>Final decision maker</p>
<b>Non-Adopter</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The decision maker, "bricoleurs" (The Principal)</li> <li>2. The potential Panel chairperson</li> </ol>	

**Themes to be discussed with each type of informants**

<p>1. How is the schema built</p>	<p>The repertoires: teachers' history of or current involvement in various related organizations, professional associations and professional training programmes (both pre-service and in-service) and other related experiences</p>
<p>2. The interactions among actors</p>	<p>Professional communications/casual discussion about the subject</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Between Government officials and school administrators</li> <li>➤ Between schools administrators of various schools</li> <li>➤ Between school administrators and teachers</li> <li>➤ Among teachers</li> <li>➤ Between teachers and students</li> </ul>
<p>3a. Teachers' interpretation on policy messages</p>	<p>The degree of congruence of the new policy on LS (AS) and LS (HKDSE) to the old principles and practices; the degree of intensity that the pressure teachers received; degree of pervasiveness that how the messages are interlocking and overlapping; and degree of voluntariness that whether the teachers follow the message by coercive means or normative ones.</p>
<p>3b. Teachers' interpretation on the subject</p>	<p>How the teachers perceive the specific instructional practices of the subject LS will be asked, including the subject objectives, teaching and learning strategies, form of assessments, the actual operation of the subject in classroom. resource allocation and related arrangements.</p>

## The sample semi-structured lists of questions for the informants

<p>Early Adopter</p>	<p>The decision maker, the bricoleur</p>	<p>1. 具體題目</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 你的學校在甚麼時候開始推行高補通識課？</li> <li>❖ 籌備情況/ 執行情況</li> <li>❖ 參與人數</li> <li>❖ 課程設計/ 編寫</li> <li>❖ 教署支援情況/ 與其他學校/組織的支援情況</li> </ul> <p>2. How is the schema built</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 有甚麼人參與/ 你為甚麼會參與/ 推行？</li> <li>❖ 你從甚麼途徑得知通識科/ 你的培訓機構/ 參與任何專業組織/ 哪些人曾給予你對這科目的啟發/ 給予幫助等</li> <li>❖ 辦學團體的態度/ 支援</li> </ul> <p>3. The interactions among actors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 多與其他人士討論嗎？專業討論/ 普通閒談</li> <li>❖ 學校外：專業團隊的討論/ 校長或行政人員交流/ 學校間的討論/ 政府官員/ 大學教授</li> <li>❖ 學校內：行政人員與教師/ 科目會議/ 教師之間的討論/ 專業培訓日/ 實際在課堂與學生上課的影響</li> </ul> <p>4. Teachers' interpretation on policy messages/ on the subject</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 對 AS 91 年課程的看法 (目標/ 內容/ 評核)</li> <li>❖ 這個科目與其他科目的分別/ 相容度/ 難度</li> <li>❖ 校內教師對執行這科目的看法</li> <li>❖ 在教學上/ 課堂安排/ 有甚麼不同</li> <li>❖ 工作量：課程編排/ 編寫</li> <li>❖ 資源分配的問題：教師分配/ 時間表編排/ 參與高補考試人數等</li> <li>❖ 團隊合作</li> <li>❖ 支援：校內/ 校外</li> <li>❖ Modules 是一文一理？如教署建議？</li> </ul>
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Late Adopter	Bricoleur	<p>1. 具體題目</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 你的學校在甚麼時候開始推行高補通識課？ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 邊個建議</li> <li>▶ 起初有幾人做呢科</li> <li>▶ 點解要開呢？如果不是必修你會唔會開呢？</li> <li>▶ 學生報考情況</li> <li>▶ 入大學的情況（起初怕唔怕修通識有無咩影響？依家呢？）</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ 籌備情況/ 執行情況 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 教師人手幾多？會唔會比其他科目多</li> <li>▶ 教師背景？</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ 課程設計/ 編寫 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 起初係邊個寫？</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ 教署支援情況/ 與其他學校/組織的支援情況 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 有無額外津貼</li> <li>▶ 有無同其他機構合作，例如通識教師會／大學／其他學校交流呢？</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>2. How is the schema built</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 有甚麼人參與/ 你為甚麼會參與/ 推行？</li> <li>❖ 你從甚麼途徑得知通識科/ 你的培訓機構/ 參與任何專業組織/ 認識哪些人曾給予你對這科目的啓發/ 給予幫助等</li> <li>❖ 辦學團體的態度/ 支援</li> </ul>
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5. The interactions among actors

- ❖ 多與其他人討論嗎？專業討論/ 普通閒談
- ❖ 學校外：專業團隊的討論/ 校長或行政人員交流/ 學校間的討論/ 政府官員/ 大學教授
- ❖ 學校內：行政人員與教師/ 科目會議/ 教師之間的討論/ 專業培訓日/ 實際在課堂與學生上課的影響

6. Teachers' interpretation on policy messages/ on the subject

- ❖ 對 AS 92 年課程的看法 (目標/ 內容/ 評核)
- ❖ 這個科目與其他科目的分別/ 相容度/ 難度
- ❖ 校內教師對執行這科目的看法
- ❖ 在教學上/ 課堂安排/ 有甚麼不同
- ❖ 工作量：課程編排/ 編寫
- ❖ 資源分配的問題：教師分配/ 時間表編排/ 參與高補考試人數等
- ❖ 團隊合作
- ❖ 支援：校內/ 校外
- ❖ 一文一理？