

Re-thinking Pacific Teacher Standards

Reflections on a value-theory approach to conceptualizing the 'ideal' Pacific teacher



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Background: Teacher Standards in the Pacific

- Curriculum reviews since the 1970's have found that (a) Pacific education systems require much work/improvement; and (b) teacher education/training and skills is an ongoing critical concern
- Well documented link between effective teaching and learning, student attainment, educational outcomes and teacher effectiveness (i.e. quality education requires quality teachers)
- Widely known disparity in PICs between trained and untrained teachers in the teaching profession
- Growing moves in the islands towards Teacher Registration processes
- Increasing awareness about the need for the establishment of regional and national standards to help maintain 'teacher standards'
- In May 2008, SPBEA presented the UK Teacher standards document to Pacific Education Heads & as a result were requested to work with UNESCO to consult with countries to develop regional standards (inline with regional & international practice)

The Value-theory approach

- Schroeder (2008) – link to axiology or classification of things into ‘good’ (desirable) and how good (or desirable) those things are
- The theory of value – relates to morals, ethics and expected standards of behavior/practice
- Problematic use of subjective terminology without a baseline goal or set of standards ... such as ‘good’ i.e. a good teacher, ‘quality’ i.e. quality education, or ‘better’
- Without a baseline for comparative purposes, these ‘descriptors’ are rendered meaningless except to the user as communication requires a shared understanding of the baseline
- In the absence of the baseline goal/vision any ‘official’ documentation using such descriptors becomes dangerous in its overt “open to wide interpretation”
- Little more than propaganda utilizing the marketing strategies of the language of advertising e.g. cleans whiter and brighter – i.e. sweeping, generalist language

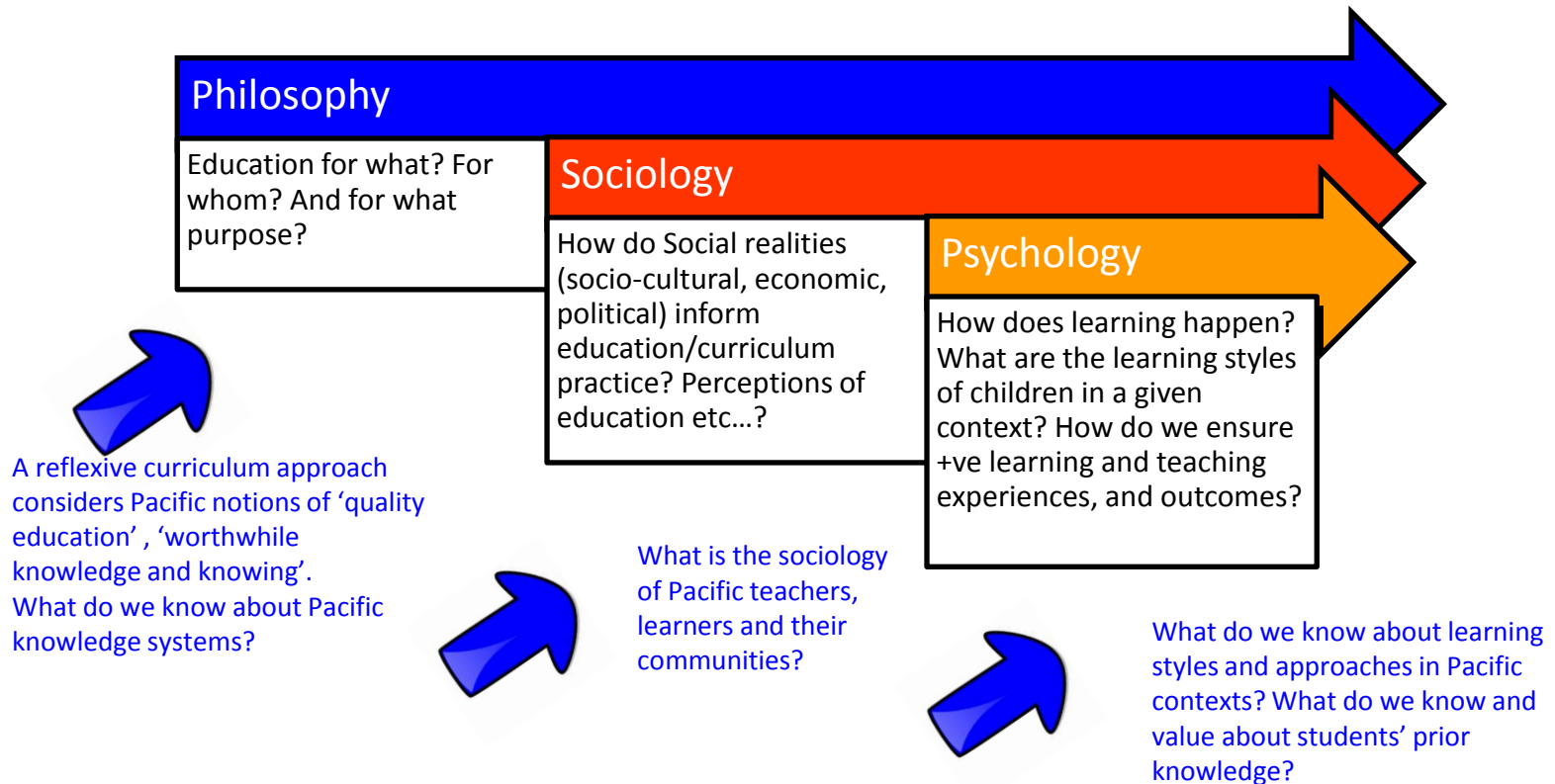
Value theory Universalism Value
Worth Subjectivity Context Good Better
Bad Best Worst Worldview evidence
Values as beliefs tied to emotions indicator
Perception Value laden curriculum qualifier
Descriptor Measure Standards ethics

Applying the value-theory approach

- Thaman (2004) – emphasizes the need for re-centering of “Pacific values in Pacific education” *“...when we do question the value assumptions of many modern educational projects we find that the claim of cultural neutrality is at best naïve and at worst arrogant.”* (p9)
- Need to question – **whose** values?
- Who determines what is valuable or worthwhile in Pacific education? Whose agendas are prioritized in educational development? Who is consulted and how are they engaged?
- Urgency to balance the race for international comparability vs. context, relevance and sustainability in the Pacific islands
- Problematic reality of ‘everyone’ being an educational expert and having something to say about standards

Returning to curriculum basics

- Significance of curriculum expertise and the reflexive approach to “curriculum as praxis” (basic definition - informed and committed action)
- Use of the foundations of education or curriculum disciplines as the base for critical inquiry
- Value approach = balancing educational goals against the teaching profession IN CONTEXT using the foundations of education as the benchmark for curriculum development



UK Teacher from
"Working in the UK
as a Teacher"



Otago Teacher Graduate
NZ "Otago Daily Times,
Dec 2011"

Setting Teacher Standards across the globe – 5 examples



A US Teacher from "US History Teaching Resources"



Image from an Australian Classroom "Australian
Teacher Regulatory Authorities"



Pasifika Playgroup Rotorua, "The New Zealand
Education Gazette March 25, 2012"

- Australia – National Professional Standards for Teachers (2010).

Professional Knowledge	Professional Practice	Professional Engagement
<i>Includes values, attitudes & beliefs</i>		

- NZ – Registered Teacher Criteria (2009).

Professional relationships & professional Values	Professional knowledge in practice
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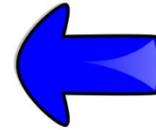
- California Standards for the Teaching Profession (2009).

Engaging and Supporting All students in learning	Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning	Understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning
Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students	Assessing students for learning	Developing as a professional educator

Wisconsin Educator Standards – Teachers (2008)

Ten Standards for Teacher Development and Licensure

1. Teachers know the subjects they are teaching.
2. Teachers know how children grow.
3. Teachers understand that children learn differently.
4. Teachers know how to teach.
5. Teachers know how to manage a classroom.
6. Teachers communicate well.
7. Teachers are able to plan different kinds of lessons.
8. Teachers know how to test for student progress.
9. Teachers are able to evaluate themselves.
10. Teachers are connected with other teachers and the community.



These examples and others shows that

- (1) international Practice i.e. country/state approaches purposefully linked to national education/ curriculum frameworks and policies;
- (2) A strong board is put in place to review, consult and compile these teacher standards (comprising educators, teacher collectives/unions, educational researchers and evaluators, officials from Departments of education, scholars etc...
- (3) Wide consultation process and purposeful research as the basis for the development of these standards

UK Professional Standards for teachers in England (2007)

Professional Attributes	Professional Knowledge & understanding	Professional Skills
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What about the Pacific?

- 2008 - SPBEA presented the ***UK Teacher standards*** document to Pacific Education Heads
- SPBEA & UNESCO asked to consult with countries to develop regional standards
- Clear mention that these standards should be inline with regional & international practice



SPBEA presentation to FEDMM 2009

Development of a set of proposed regional standards for teachers and principals, Session 6. Forum Education Ministers' Meeting Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 24 – 26 March, 2009.

The document states as background...

- “2.1. Within the Pacific Region, **Quality of education** is a recurring theme of discussion, deliberation and action within political and educational circles, between education ministries and aid donors, and under partnership arrangements servicing the education sector” (p3-4).
- “2.6 ... on the strength of what was presented SPBEA and UNESCO were requested to **consult with countries** to come up with a set of standards that could be agreed to by countries as region standards but **based on what is used regionally and globally**” (p4)

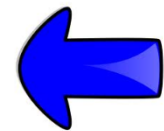
The process



- 3.1 In November 2008, **a letter** was sent to all countries represented at the Pacific Heads of Education meeting regarding the intended development of 'Teacher Standards' for use in the Pacific. **These were based on an analysis of what the countries currently have. The letter was accompanied by a set of standard descriptors, each of which could be ranked for importance on a four-point scale.** Each country was requested to consider each standard descriptor and to rank its level of importance in a Pacific context. Countries were also invited to offer modified versions of the descriptors if they considered that it was appropriate.
- 3.2 **The letter was sent out to fifteen countries** and SPBEA received a total of **eleven completed responses**. These responses were then compiled into a single spreadsheet from which overall priority levels for each standard descriptor could be established. (p5).
- 3.3 A similar exercise is yet to be done with a selection of standards that could be considered for Principals. (p6).

Where did the proposed standards come from?

<p>UK : Professional Standards for Teachers: Why sit still in your career? (2007) http://www.tda.gov.uk/teacher/developing-career/professional-standards-guidance/~/_media/resources/teacher/professional-standards/standards-a4.pdf</p>
PROFESSIONAL ATTRIBUTES
Relationships with children and young people
Frameworks (this is the only criterion that is not included in the SPBEA standards listing)
Communicating and working with others
Personal Professional Development
PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING
Teaching & Learning
Assessment & Monitoring
Subjects & Curriculum
Literacy, Numeracy & ICT
Achievement & Diversity
Health & Well-being
PROFESSIONAL SKILLS
Planning
Teaching
Assessing, Monitoring & Giving Feedback
Reviewing Teaching & Learning
Learning Environment
Team Working & Collaboration



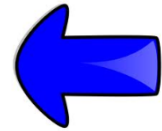
Frameworks (not included)
 Q3. (a) Be aware of the professional duties of teachers and the statutory framework within which they work; (b) Be aware of the policies and practices of the workplace and share in collective responsibility for their implementation (p7).

Efforts to contextualize the UK standards?

5. Amended wording of standard descriptors

The survey form sent to each country, invited respondents to offer alternative wording to standard descriptors if it was considered to be appropriate to do so. Some countries took advantage of this portion of the survey (p6).

- 28 words added (*no change to content or context of phrases/statements*)
- 'New' words are found in six descriptors - A2.1, B1.2, B 1.3, B3.3, B5.1. and C5.4
- Note: Not including the words "*learners and young people*" which is replaced (14x) with the word "students"



Concerns:

(a) Contextualization is not the same as "rewording";

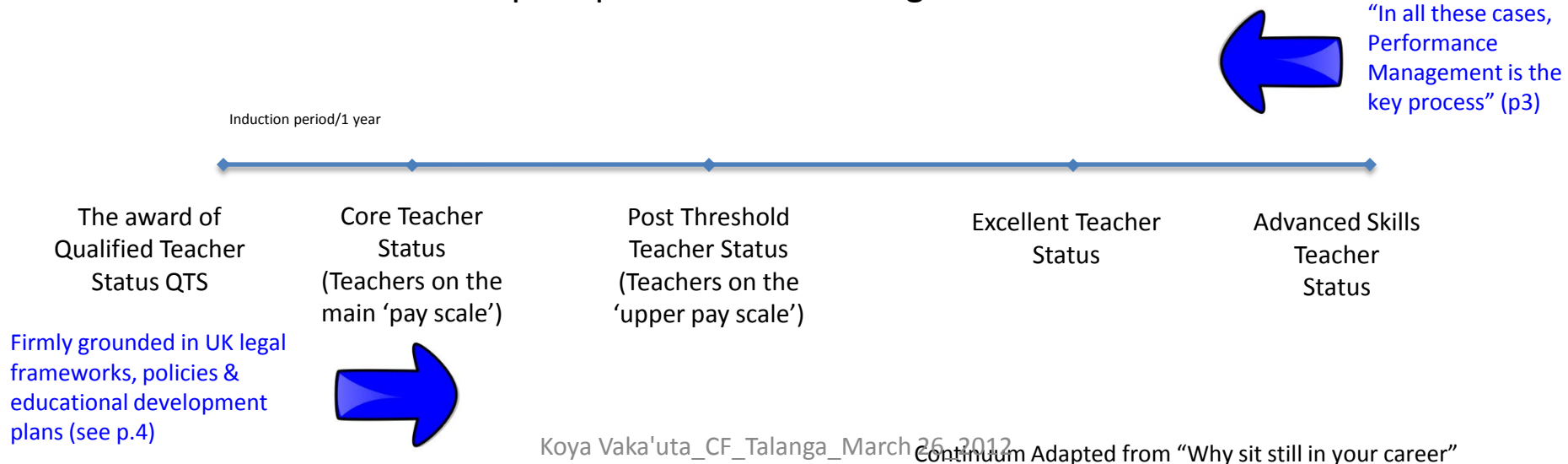
(b) 28 added words (of 1223 (2.27%))

(c) 98% word for word with UK standards

UK Standards for what?

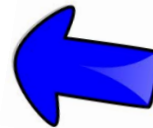
1. The framework of professional standards for teachers will form **part of a wider framework of standards for the whole school workforce**. This includes the Training and Development Agency for schools (TDA) review of the National Occupational Standards for Teaching/Classroom Assistants and the Professional Standards for higher level teaching Assistants **in consultation with social partners and other key stakeholders and a review of leadership standards** informed by the independent review of the Roles and Responsibilities of Head Teachers and the Leadership Group. (p1).

The UK Standards maps expected standards against the teachers' career



Proposed Pacific Standards *for what?*

- “to monitor and improve the quality of teachers’ (p4)
- “The monitoring should strictly ONLY be used for the purpose of improving the teacher’s competencies rather than for performance management and remuneration” (footnote, p3)
- Reference to Uni. Of Auckland Prof’s conference presentation as a primary source (p3) to validate the role of the teacher as a major factor of ‘students achievement.



Are there no other reputable sources than a conference paper to cite in a regional standards recommendation paper?

On this basis...

Presenters made the following recommendations...

6. Recommendations

Ministers are invited to:

- (a) **agree** that the attached list of professional teacher standards **developed by the Pacific Heads of education systems in consultation** with development partners **be adopted** as the Pacific Regional Standards for Teachers;
- (b) **agree** that these standards be considered by countries as the **minimum set of standards for teachers**, allowing for each country to add additional standards as they see fit to reflect national situations;
- (c) **agree** that development partners; in particular **SPBEA and UNESCO**, work closely with countries **to develop a strategy** for collecting information that each country could use **to monitor the performance of teachers against each standard and develop a plan** for improving on such performance; and
- (d) **agree** that an approach similar to that adopted for teacher standards is used for developing standards for school principals and head-teachers. (p6).

Questions about
(a) 'due consultation';
(b) Establishing a stakeholder working group that is representative of educational leaders and teachers organizations as is the usual practice;
(c) What is 'Pacific' about the standards? i.e. what has been contextualized?? Only 22% difference to the original UK framework.



Questions about why SPBEA –UNESCO 'in particular' ? Is this a funding agenda? What 'approach' is being advocated here? Consultation via a letter? Or lifting the UK standards and adopting in full for Pacific standards while claiming "development in consultation"

Is there a need for connectivity to relevant regional guiding educational frameworks and policies?



- Two references to the Pacific plan
- On *labor mobility* [section 2.8] (p4) and
- In relation to National Qualifications Register (NQR) and Pacific Regional Qualifications Register (PRQR) [section 2.10] (p5).
- **No mention at all** of ANY of the regional educational frameworks/strategies i.e. Forum Basic Education Plan (2001); Pacific Education for Sustainable Development Framework (2006) or Action Plan (2008) or the Pacific Education & Development Framework (March, 2009).
- No link to wider vision or goal for education in the Pacific islands.

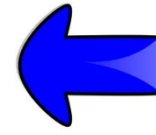
- Elsewhere in the world, teacher standards are guided by National frameworks and policies that provide the basis for the shared vision/goal of education in that country context.
- The Pacific recommended standards does not do this. Why?
- Can we 'assume' that vision/goals of education and teacher standards are the SAME in the UK as they are the Pacific islands? What is the basis for this assumption?

What do the Regional Frameworks say about the vision of education in the Pacific islands?

34. A vision of Pacific education encompasses that already defined in conjunction with the world community, **but** it must of necessity be also [a response to a vision of Pacific countries for their people's](#), which include the **maintenance and enhancement of their own distinctive values, and social, political, economic, and cultural heritages; and the development of the capacities that could create balance between these and those promoted and adopted at the international level.** It is education not only for the survival of Pacific communities but for their transformation as well to become equal partners with other members of the global community. (FBEAP, p9)

50. The vision of Pacific nations for the future goes far beyond elementary requirements. **So far basic education in the region has remained fixated - though not necessarily with success - on formal primary education and the development of literacy and numeracy skills.** If basic education is also about human rights and democracy, good governance and equity, the maintenance and enhancement of Pacific heritages, and participating in the global community, then **the contents of education, the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values taught and learned as part of basic education must reflect these purposes.** (FBEAP, p13).

FBEAP 2001 on teachers...



Is this the basis for regional standards?

66. **Ideal teachers** are competent and confident in the content and methodology of their subject, are positive in their attitudes towards themselves, their students, their profession and community, and can communicate with students effectively in the language of instruction. This ideal - which requires a high standard of appropriate training - is based on **the belief that teachers are the most important factor in the provision of quality and meaningful education.**

67. It does not matter how brilliantly conceived a program is, or how well supported with excellent resources, it will all go to naught **if the teachers do not believe in it, understand its rationale, content and methodology, or possess the capability, imagination and the confidence to implement it.** Much of the inequalities experienced in the provision of education and in the outcome of the process is caused by differences in teacher quality.

68. Critical indicators of the quality of education include the number of trained teachers in a system; the level and **quality of initial training of teachers** in the field; the **capacity of the teacher training institutions** for providing sound teacher education programmes; the nature and extent of **in-service training** being provided for serving teachers, and **the overall environment in schools** (as shown by the availability of teaching and learning resources and conditions of classrooms and related physical facilities). (p18).

On curriculum & teachers

Curriculum

69. Quality curricula in any context does not merely mean materials which are professionally developed containing high level content. It means that the materials are meaningful and worthwhile to the teachers and students of a particular context; that they **relate to their experiences, beliefs, values, attitudes and knowledge; that they will assist the child to interact more meaningfully with his environment and will provide him with the means to manipulate and control it** (p18).



How does this inform what a Pacific teacher does/ or ought to be able to do?

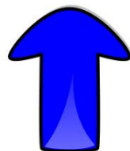


USP Education students discuss the influences on their personal philosophy of teaching, Induction 2008

On Pacific Island contexts...

72. Thus formal education system largely ignores the strengths and advantages of the prior learning and knowledge, values and attitudes brought by the children to formal education. To make the best use of these advantages would require a reorientation of the training of teachers, the curriculum, teaching and learning methodologies, assessment procedures, what counts as knowledge and education and, therefore, what counts as outcomes and how these could be measured to ensure that the Pacific heritages are appropriately embedded in the process. (p19).

77. The type of assessment and evaluation tools and the indicators that are used within institutions and in national education systems to measure educational outcomes significantly influence not only the attainment and success of individuals and social groups and therefore, equity of outcome, but the allocation of rewards outside of the school system. Educational measurement tools are themselves socially and culturally based, and can be used as political tools to the advantage of some socio-cultural groups and to the detriment of others. (p20).



Is there any basis here
for teacher standards?

Improving the quality in Basic Education

12.6 Towards Enhancing Professionalism in Teaching that enhances professionalism in teaching, whereby the profession is guided by the ethos, standards and ethics of the profession itself, be promoted as a long-term goal for enhancing teachers' capacity for managing changes and their identity as teachers. (p24).



- What is the identity of a Pacific teacher?
- How is this identity different to that of a UK teacher?
- What are some generic shared (universalisms) standards?
- And what are some context specific standards? Are these insignificant to teaching practice?



PESDF (2008)

2.5 Building teacher capacity to incorporate sustainable development topics into their teaching programmes using a practical and relevant approach (p5).

And...

ESD as part of core-teacher training by 2014 (p9).



- If ESD is a regional priority area requiring a policy document that guides 'educational development in the region' is it not worthy of consideration?



PEDF (2009 – 2015)

The critical input in quality of education in the Pacific is **teacher quality**. All countries have critical challenges in terms of teacher and head teacher/school principal competence. Commitment of teachers and principals in terms of leadership remains a major challenge.

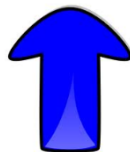


Commitment links directly to attitudes, values and beliefs which is ill-represented in the proposed standards.

Quality: Investing in teacher quality needs to be the highest priority investment for Pacific countries to improve their education systems. Key specific priorities for many countries in addressing the quality challenge are the development of teacher and principal accountability frameworks and standards and development of ongoing and sustainable programs for in-service training of teachers and school leaders is a major challenge. (p8).

On teacher development...

- There is a substantial body of research internationally which affirms that quality education is not possible without quality teaching. Teachers are at the heart of every education system, and plans and strategies for the initial preparation and ongoing professional development of teachers are central elements of the process and dynamic of achieving goals and targets relating to quality, access and equity in education. This area **requires close partnerships between ministries and teacher training providers**. Regional strategies are necessary in the Pacific to support national strategies in teacher development. (p13).
- Teacher education is **still heavily influenced by colonial mindsets**. Pacific pedagogies need to be developed and encouraged. Aid dependency is still very strong in the pre service training of teachers. (p13)



Is the suggested standards an example of neo-colonialism from within? What about here at USP/SOE? What is our position on this?

Priority areas in PEDF...



Quality:

Enhancing the professional status of teaching

Further development of professional standards of practice.

More selective recruitment of teacher trainees.

Development of viable Pacific teacher education models that *link* theory, practice and research.

Development of initiatives to incorporate indigenous approaches to teacher education.

Efficiency & Effectiveness:

Improved coordination and communication between ministries of education and teacher training institutions.

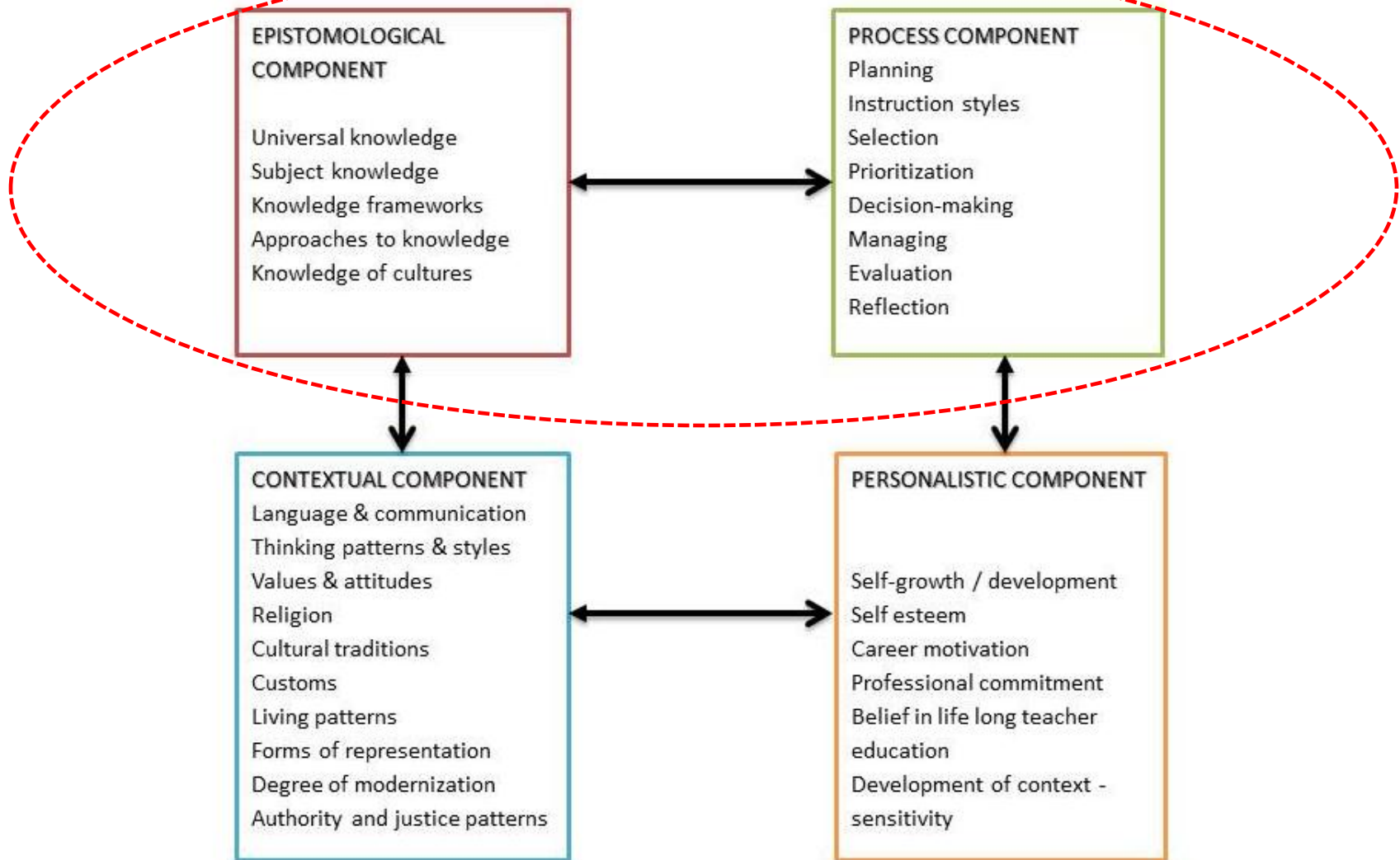
Development of regional protocol for teacher recruitment (**FEdMM 2005**).

Should these be reflected in Pacific Teacher standards?

Conceptualizing the 21st Century “Pacific Island Teacher”

- Why a value-theory approach?
- What about ownership? Is this a “Pacific” set of standards or is this neo-colonialism under the façade of symbolic interactionism? i.e. The “*Pacific Plan*” ?
- Due consultation process?
- Does context matter? How much value do we place on context and relevance?
- What about cultural/cross-/multi-cultural competencies?
- Setting teacher standards CANNOT happen in a vacuum – it is essentially about ‘Curriculum Mapping’ from vision to intended curriculum to enacted curriculum to assessed curriculum against the multi-faceted roles of the teacher “as a curriculum practitioner”
- Consider Thomas’ Pedagogical Components Model (used to be included in ED355 – Curriculum in practice)

A Pedagogical Components Model (Thomas, 1997)



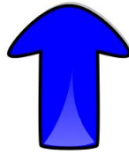
The technocratic approach

- The teacher as a technician
- Responses show that *knowledge* appears to rank higher on the priority scale than does professional *skills* and *attributes* (*values/beliefs/attitudes* – lowest).
- Need to find out what are the widely held beliefs about Teachers in the region?
- If there is a shift towards “knowledge” what happens to Teacher Education and Training?
- ‘Old-school’ approach of technical teachers is the return to ‘teacher-proof’ curriculum approach. i.e. uncritical, passive vs. creative, critical thinkers
- Vs. the idea that teachers should/do have an educational worldview that is premised on a foundation of beliefs, values and attitudes that expands into contextual teaching practice.
- Basis for a personal philosophy of teaching.

Technical Teacher

Premised on the *singular view that the teacher is little more than 'implementer' and 'transmitter' of curriculum*

Here the teacher knows what to do and goes about it systematically and technically



Of top 20 ranked standard descriptors - 10 relate to knowledge; 4 relate to teaching skills; 4 relate to assessment, 1 safety; 1 inclusion; 1 reporting; 1 on +ve values/attitudes and professionalism (there are some overlaps in the descriptors)

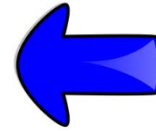
Teacher as curriculum practitioner

Premised on the realization that a teacher is and does more than 'implement' and 'transmit'

Requires a thinking teacher approach based on strong teacher identity, worldview about teaching and learning and education

Values, attitudes, beliefs and behavior are mapped at the CORE of teaching and forms the basis for the personal teaching philosophy

Will we look before we jump?



Are we asking the right questions?
What distinguishes Pacific education systems? What is Pacific about them other than mere geographical location?
Are we taking ownership of our development process?
Are we developing conscientious Pacific peoples who will question and seek to improve our collective future?



“I am suggesting that we look and learn from Pacific cultures and their accumulated knowledge, skills and values, in order to expand our own teaching and learning in our various countries so that we may become better teachers as well as more critical learners” (Thaman 1999, p26-7)

“My vision of a responsible Pacific society therefore is one in which Pacific people are able to learn and benefit from their own cultural values and beliefs, knowledge and understandings, and wisdom; where teachers use culturally appropriate methods of teaching, including teaching in a language that students can understand, and recognizing the importance of context specific learning” (Thaman 2004, p11).

Who is a Pacific teacher?



USP SOE Pre-service teacher trainees, 2007



A Tongan Teacher with some of her students at "Ocean of Light International School, Tonga"



A Science class moves outdoors, Fiji



A Solomon Islands Classroom



Inclusive Education Project, Samoa



Professional Development of ECE Teachers, RMI



Two boys in a Solomon Island Classroom

What distinguishes a Pacific teacher from teachers elsewhere in the world?

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Credits for Images

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