Challenges for Educators in Meeting the Needs of Students Bridging into Tertiary Education

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Abstract

Tertiary pre-entry programmes are designed to assist students in attaining an academic qualification that will allow entry into undergraduate study programmes. This study explores the challenges that educators encounter in meeting the needs of students bridging into tertiary education. It includes a review of programme purposes from historical, political and social viewpoints. It also describes the traditional and current profile of students accessing such programmes. The educator role within tertiary pre-entry programmes is outlined, interlinked with teaching and learning theory.

Integral to the study is an exploration of the philosophical assumptions underpinning current teaching practice in relation to students, programmes and the future direction of tertiary pre-entry education. However, it is difficult to isolate an educator perspective from institutional and political perspectives. Hence this study addresses all these. The various perspectives all closely connect to create the learning environment that comprises current tertiary pre-entry programmes.

The study identifies a number of tension areas between philosophical assumptions and practice that educators need to consider in meeting current student needs in their learning endeavours. These areas are:

- The learning environment that students encounter
- The people who interact in these environments
- Future directions of tertiary pre-entry programmes.

The study makes recommendations, from an educator's perspective, on what is required to lessen the tension and successfully meet the needs of the diverse student populace accessing tertiary pre-entry programmes.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND

Introduction

Non-traditional students, who leave school with no conventional qualifications, are becoming an increasing percentage of those entering tertiary education. Some tertiary institutions offer programmes designed to assist these students to achieve entry criteria by providing the opportunity to develop skills required in tertiary study. These programmes are marketed as foundation, bridging or 'equity' programmes which provide a stepping-stone into an undergraduate programme (diploma or degree). Many of the students enrolled in the programmes do not have the prerequisite academic skills of traditional students i.e. those who have left school with a university entrance qualification. Therefore, it is important to take into account their learning needs when developing and implementing programmes designed specifically to achieve the skills required for tertiary study.

This research originated from a desire to explore the broader aspects of tertiary pre-entry education with the aim of clarifying areas of incongruity and inconsistency. The perceived confusion as to intent and purpose of various programmes offered within tertiary institutions is compounded by institutional and political input that appears at odds with educator philosophies and practice.

I chose to explore and then identify areas of tension from an educator's perspective. This involved a degree of uncertainty during the research process due to my increasing awareness of key areas that needed to be considered. Added to this was a parallel process of institutional and political change that occurred (and continues to change) while this research was progressing. The research was undertaken from an educator's perspective and evolved into four categories:

Tensions, **Philosophies**, **Considerations** and **Recommendations**.

The literature and resource review illustrated broad areas of tension for educators and was guided by the question:

What are the tensions for educators in meeting the needs of students 'bridging' into tertiary education?

The research study, which involved interviews with adult educators, explored assumptions underpinning educator practice in pre-entry programmes in tertiary institutions. It focused on the philosophical views of educators that underpin their practice and identified areas of tension. The study was guided by the question:

What philosophical assumptions underpin current adult educator practice in tertiary pre-entry programmes?

The data collected clarified key tensions that appeared integral to the current and future direction of tertiary pre-entry programmes. The key areas identified were; programme purposes and future direction, educator philosophies and practice and educator-student relationships.

This led to comparison of literature/resources with findings from the study and was guided by the question:

What considerations by educators are required to meet the needs of students bridging into tertiary education?

The key areas identified as requiring consideration were; learning environments, people who engage in the learning process and the future of tertiary pre-entry programmes.

This discussion led to **recommendations** for educators on future actions and research in a perceived move towards congruency between educator philosophies, educator practice and institutional/political objectives in meeting student needs to successfully bridge into tertiary education.

The rest of this chapter provides an overview of the context in which the research is located. It describes the researcher's role in this sector of education and how/why this role has evolved.

An Evolving Perspective

The purpose of this section is to provide a personal perspective to this study and highlight my own philosophical assumptions underpinning educator practice. I wanted to reflect on my own journey from nurse clinician into education and why I chose to progress to the sector of tertiary pre-entry education. It briefly discusses aspects of my teaching career that have challenged my thinking and practice and provided turning points in my perception of adult education practice. This section has been written in the 'first person' to express ownership of that process.

Adult education has been a focus of my professional life for twenty years. Over that time I have gravitated towards assisting students in their learning endeavours, predominantly those who have required additional help in making the inroads to 'academia'. I believe my educational purpose is to ensure individuals are not excluded or alienated from tertiary study, achieving this through providing a 'bridge' across the gap between academia and everyday life. This includes a personal commitment to ensure individuals do not become displaced as a result of past belief mingled with present and future aspirations (Ribbens and Edwards, 1998).

Personal Transition

I began my teaching career in the School of Nursing at Wellington Polytechnic in 1984, following completion of a nursing qualification from Hutt Hospital and a psychology degree from Otago University. I sensed in myself a desire to explore learning processes, possibly originating from a concentrated internship of prescribed task orientated training while a nursing student in contrast to the 'enquiring' nature of undergraduate study. The latter challenged my own learning towards a new perspective orientation (Mezirow, 1991). It was opportune that a teaching role within a tertiary institution became a reality for me on completion of my undergraduate study.

Between 1984 and 1988, I perceived a definite distinction between teaching and learning. I was the teacher who was expected to 'fill empty vessels' and the students (learners) were there to be filled. Whilst at TTU (Tutor Training Unit), I gained insight into methods of teaching to enhance learning. Added to this, was an awareness that students thought and learned in different ways. Although they might be unaware of these cognitive aspects, students 'hooked' into learning processes more enthusiastically and effectively if they were taught and interacted in their learning in preferred modes. It was at the teacher learning sessions that I became inspired with the notion that teaching had a creative component and I was able to foster that creativity if I chose. Content was often prescribed but I could impact on the teaching-learning process through my own creativity. Those notions remain with me to this day and underpin my teaching practice. I realised that I was capable of teaching within many areas of health but it was the teaching-learning processes I facilitated that created an environment fostering successful learning.

During a second phase of my teaching, when I became co-ordinator of a specific 'unit' in the Comprehensive Nursing Programme, I enjoyed the freedom to develop and implement teaching processes to enhance student learning. I chose to involve

students actively and co-operatively in their learning through group work. I sensed that students had much to offer in terms of the teaching/learning process and I realised that involving the students released me from a didactic role that didn't sit comfortably with me. From an enculturing perspective, I also believed that the nursing profession should value group processes within clinical practice. 'Co-operative' learning was a step in this direction (Cummins, 1989).

In 1989, following maternity leave, I was contacted by the newly created Tutor Education Centre (TEC) and asked to contract teach at the centre. TEC had replaced the centralised Tutor Training Unit (TTU) and was affiliated to the Central Institute of Technology (CIT). This proved a most rewarding time for me in my teaching. I was amongst an eclectic group of tutors who had quite diverse areas of teaching expertise. They all worked towards defining and refining theoretical perspectives to collectively guide their teaching. As well as this exciting environment of professional collegiality, there was an array of adult students who connected with the centre.

Institutionally, there had been a shift from centralised tutor training of polytechnic staff to training within individual polytechnic 'Professional Development Units (PDU's)'. The Tutor Education Centre was an accessory to CIT that assisted in tutor training but was also expected to generate its own income in terms of teaching contracts within the wider community. In meeting this challenge a variety of courses was developed and implemented, all resulting from needs analysis with organisations in line with 'consumer' requirements. The emphasis was predominantly on processes of learning as opposed to being content driven. The courses provided wonderful exposure to group and individual dynamics and to the power of teaching effectively to assist others to empower themselves in their learning (Mezirow, 1991).

One area that I became actively involved in teaching was the Certificate of Adult Teaching (CAT course), which was modular and accessible to the general public.

Each course was well supported by individuals who chose to enrol on the course for personal reasons; some with the desire to teach, others to boost their confidence and others for the interest it generated. In hindsight, this was my first encounter with adult students from diverse backgrounds. Their only commonality was meeting one evening a week to experience techniques of adult teaching and learning. The initial reserve I noted in participants disappeared over time and was replaced by cohesive and decisive group communication. I was continually amazed that individuals from such extremes of social, cultural, gender, ethnic and age groups gelled and supported each other in their learning endeavours towards (often) major life changes. I think this aspect of adult interaction is graphically illustrated in the novel 'Evening Classes' by Maeve Binchy (2001).

Relationships

During this time in my teaching, I became acutely aware of the importance, for me, of connecting with individuals on a deeper level than the traditional intermittent educator-student relationship. Many individuals arrived at the formal learning environment with personal challenges in forms of background experiences, family, commitments, aspirations and heart-wrenching stories. None of these could be ignored or left at the door on entry. The 'fabric' of individuals interwove the groups and added to the experience of each group. Being a part of these groups changed my thoughts on 'teacher telling all' to 'students who learn'.

My interest in equity courses for mature learners sprang from this time. I became fascinated by the linkage of personal backgrounds with adult learning, to assist not only in learning but also in many situations, truly transforming individuals' life perspectives (Mezirow, 1991; Brookfield, 1986). At times I felt responsibility for my perceived role in assisting these transformations. There were situations when individuals transformed their personal goals and lives dramatically as a result of group interaction and perspective alteration during a course. As an educator, I was

aware that I too played a part in the transformation of these students and the stress that often resulted from major life changes (Mezirow, 1991).

Embracing Change

In 2001, following a lengthy time spent overseas, I applied for a job at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) in the School of Nursing and Midwifery. I was offered a position teaching in a foundation programme specifically designed to prepare students for entry into the Bachelor of Health Science (BHSc) degree in Nursing. The programme had been developed to encourage 'non-traditional' students into tertiary education and specifically nursing. Non-traditional students were defined as those who enter a university programme without the required school leaving entry criteria (Hayes, King & Richardson, 1997). I felt I was ideally suited to this teaching area owing to my past teaching experience with non–traditional students in the private sector.

Over the following year, along with total structural change of the Health Faculty at AUT, the teaching staff in the 'Introduction to Nursing' programme developed a faculty-wide foundation programme. The institutional purpose of this programme was to subsume and streamline existing foundation programmes within the Health Faculty into one programme that would prepare students for entry into any of the eleven majors offered in the Bachelor of Health Science (BHSc) degree.

Although all teaching staff across the faculty were invited to participate in development and implementation of the new programme, there was limited enthusiasm. Many educators resisted the change and reluctantly relinquished their current certificate programmes, even though these programmes were no longer viable options within the AUT strategic plan. Those who did embrace the change are now teaching in the Certificate of Health Care foundation programme that commenced in February 2003.

My Current Role

I am a member of the development and teaching staff in the Certificate in Health Care foundation programme at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT). As with previous teaching interaction with students, I continue to feel honoured in being involved in learning endeavours that appear to include far greater scope than the academic requirements at hand. This occurs through a connectedness between educators–student–peers that Harford (2002) believes includes those who are highly motivated but under-confident in their ability, frequently with a history of negative experiences in education.

I reflect on the privilege and enjoyment I derive from interaction with tertiary pre-entry students and why I have chosen to teach in this sector of education. There are areas I wish to explore from an educator's perspective, namely the choice to teach in tertiary pre-entry programmes and the underlying philosophical beliefs that guide educator practice. The reason for my exploration is to attempt to expose assumptions amongst those of us teaching in this sector, which may result in an understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of adult educators' purpose and practice.

In the current educational climate, institutional and political objectives often appear at odds with educator purposes in meeting student needs. In this atmosphere of incongruity, I aim to determine what the role of tertiary pre-entry programmes is (both currently and in the future) in meeting the needs of students who wish to access these programmes, as this impacts on educator practice. To achieve this I have integrated literature, personal perspectives and research findings from other educators in this education sector to determine the following:

What are the areas of tension for educators in meeting the needs of students bridging into tertiary education?

The 'tension' appears to arise from a mismatch between educator's philosophical beliefs (of equity, social engagement, involvement in learning processes, as highlighted in personal background and practices within an environment of immense diversity of student) and institutional needs in bridging students into tertiary education. The overall aim is to identify and explore the tension areas between educator philosophy and practice in a dynamic environment. Adult learning processes interweave within this environment, creating the links and the challenges for both students and educators.

Over 20 years, I have been involved in the development and implementation of programmes to assist adult learners to succeed academically. In this time, I have experienced a personal perspective alteration which has seen me choose to progress from a professional health-educator role, which underpinned my practice throughout the years, to my current role of adult educator in tertiary pre-entry programmes. I have not taken this step lightly. I believe that my skills in teaching are now greater than my health-related knowledge and therefore I am best suited to an environment where I can utilise these skills to the advantage of others.

In examining the areas of tension that provide challenges for educators, I am exploring where I am positioned, philosophically and in my educational practice. I am also aiming to identify the future direction of programmes in meeting the needs of students bridging into tertiary education.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE / RESOURCE REVIEW

Introduction

In order to determine the key areas of tension for educators in assisting students to bridge into tertiary education, it has been important to determine the context from which tension arises. This has led to a focus on four primary areas; programmes, students, adult educators and teaching/learning processes.

This chapter is therefore divided into four sections. The first section discusses pre-entry programmes offered within traditional tertiary education organisations; namely Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. This includes an historical view of where, how and why these programmes originated. The section includes a political and institutional overview which contextualises tertiary pre-entry programmes within the broader picture of tertiary education.

The second section provides a profile of students participating in tertiary pre-entry programmes. This profile is complex and reflects both the needs requirement of students enrolling in tertiary pre-entry programmes and the challenges facing educators in meeting those needs.

This leads into a section on adult educators and the roles they have in assisting students towards educational success. It profiles the historical influences on adult educators and, within the context of this study, the choice to teach within tertiary pre-entry programmes.

In the fourth section, teaching/learning processes are reviewed, as they provide the

connection between educators and students. I believe adult learning processes guide educator practice and definitely enhance or deter educator-student interaction towards meeting student needs in 'bridging' into tertiary education. In this review two contemporary learning theories and 'interactionist' approaches to learning are introduced, with discussion on their suitability to tertiary pre-entry education. This section also includes specific discussion on the concept of andragogy and its relevance to teaching/learning processes. The rationale behind focusing on the concept of andragogy is to determine whether there are principles of learning that are specific to adults, and in particular, the relevance to student learning within the defined education sector.

Tertiary Pre- Entry Programmes

Many tertiary institutions offer pre-entry programmes designed to meet the needs of students who do not have the educational qualifications allowing automatic entry into university (Cantwell & Mulhearn, 1997). These programmes have various titles, e.g. Foundation, Bridging, Enabling, Access, and are designed to enable a student to commence a tertiary education. The programmes tend to originate from a social equity ethic, offering access to those people who have not gained secondary schooling qualifications that would allow them entry into tertiary institutions (Hayes, King & Richardson, 1997).

Historical Orientation

Some pre-entry programmes offered in tertiary institutions have traditionally targeted mature adults who want to assess their ability to undertake formal tertiary education (Watt, 2002, Findsen & Harre-Hindmarsh, 1996). Those targeted included individuals who were trying to gauge their confidence and interest in formal learning before attempting undergraduate study. The programmes were offered as equity initiatives to encourage a return to formal learning and as a

staircase for those who had not achieved formal qualifications within secondary schooling to allow entry into tertiary institutions (Harford, 2002).

In the twenty-first century, the term 'equity' covers an increasingly diverse perspective of potential adult learners. As recently as 10 years ago, 'equity of access' referred to targeting 'mature' students who could enter a university to study but did not have the confidence or previously-learned skills to cope successfully with academia. Pre-entry programmes assisted these individuals in providing a 'bag of tools' that would launch them into degree programmes with a high expectation of subsequent success.

Mature women, who have subsequently moved into higher educational study with variable success rates, accessed the majority of these programmes offered at universities (Bailey, 2002; Findsen, 1996; Harre-Hindmarsh, 1993). Bailey (2002) claimed that the aim of the programmes was to enable access for those who were previously excluded, particularly those from groups who had been historically under-represented in tertiary education. This included mature women and underrepresented ethnic groups within New Zealand society. Tertiary pre-entry programmes were one growth area that endeavoured to address equity issues.

Since 1985, there have been foundation or bridging programmes designed and taught at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT). The numerous faculty-wide programmes have targeted students who, historically, would not have accessed tertiary institutional study. The aims of these programmes have varied. In foundation programmes, specific content and process focuses have assisted students into specialised degree programmes e.g. the Introduction to Nursing Programme in the School of Nursing and Midwifery. Bridging programmes e.g. Education Bridging for Women, were designed more broadly to *introduce students to the tertiary environment to gain a taste of vocational and tertiary study and to address learning needs* (Bailey, 1999, p. 7).

The aims of bridging programmes appear to have focused on a gradual 'staircase' into a variety of tertiary programmes. In contrast, foundation programmes have specifically channelled into clearly defined undergraduate study programmes. The overall goal for each programme type was to equip students with a 'bag of tools' that would assist them in future learning endeavours.

In summary, tertiary pre-entry programmes provide an educational service. These programmes are usually at certificate level or below but can include diplomas. The programmes have the specific educational objective of preparing individuals for tertiary undergraduate study. Most pre-entry programmes are geographically situated within a tertiary institutional setting. The institutions involved invest resources to provide a fee-paying service which will ideally generate future students at undergraduate level of study in that institution. The purpose in committing to these programmes of study is to provide a platform of social equity, as previously stated by Bailey (2002) and Harre-Hindmarsh (1993) and referred to by Auckland Tertiary Equity Committee (2002). The programmes also appear to provide additional financial gain for the institution.

The Purposes of Programmes

Many of the pre-entry programmes offered at traditional tertiary institutions do not sit easily within the 'official' definition of what constitutes a foundation programme of study (Ministry of Education, 2001). Traditionally, tertiary pre-entry programmes were not assessed formally, nor did they credit towards a qualification (Benseman, Findsen, & Scott, 1996). They served the purpose of providing a forum for encouraging a return to formal learning. However, there is a progressive trend towards tertiary institutions providing creditable programmes at tertiary pre-entry level, characterised by clearly defined learning outcomes, effective use of both needs analysis and assessment tools and an increased capability of teachers (Ministry of Education, 2002).

Political Purpose

Personal communication with the Ministry of Education (2003) to clarify the term 'Foundation' reveals an ambiguous definition. Foundation skills are perceived as being:

> *Sufficiently broad to encompass many bridging and foundation programmes, and indeed skills development in a broad range of contexts, including mainstream industry training and general education programmes* (Tertiary Education Learning Outcomes Policy Analyst, Ministry of Education, 2003).

There appears to be an ability to define 'foundation skills' but an inability, or unwillingness, to differentiate between the various programme types offered within tertiary institutions. This is reinforced by Benseman (2002) who emphasises the dilemma of terminology and programme intent with regard to government funding.

In an opening address at the New Zealand Association of Bridging Educators conference in 2002, the Associate Minister of Education used the term 'Bridging Education' to describe any pre-entry programme for individuals wanting to access tertiary education but who did not have the traditional qualifications for entry (Maharey, 2002). This definitive stance appears directive but I believe it contradicts the Tertiary Education Strategy (2001). This strategy specifies the acquisition of foundation skills at levels one and two on the National Qualification Framework (NQF) but there is no mention made of how tertiary institutions would accommodate these lower level study programmes. Within the context of tertiary education systems, universities are named as higher education providers offering qualifications at level 5 and above (p.40) on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). However, the role of universities is then documented as providing foundation skills programmes that feed into undergraduate programmes and which assist in the integration of foundation skills, both at lower level tertiary

qualifications and beyond into degree programmes (Ministry of Education, 2002).

The Tertiary Education Strategy (TES) goes on to view universities as engaging in research surrounding foundation skills acquisition, training of teachers within this sector and supporting adult learners *into higher-level qualifications through bridging courses or links with foundation education providers* (Ministry of Education, 2002, p.41).

Tertiary pre-entry educators appear to have difficulty in defining distinct differences in the purposes of the various programmes offered. This has been articulated by Benseman (2002) and frequently discussed by members of the New Zealand Bridging Association.

The New Zealand Bridging Association was founded in 2001 as a collective of adult educators working in tertiary pre-entry programmes. This association aims to provide a cohesive and supportive network for those involved in this sector of education, and to increase the profile of this sector within the wider educational arena. One goal of the association members is to build a strong research base that will guide future personal, institutional and governmental direction. Another goal is to strengthen the institutional networks to better determine and meet the needs of students bridging into tertiary education.

Politically, the scene is set for tertiary pre-entry programmes to become visible and recognised for their worth, particularly targeting the 18-20% of school leavers that exit secondary schooling with no formal qualifications (Ministry of Education, 2002). Possible tension may occur in educator philosophy versus practice, as traditionally the focus has been on mature student enrolment in foundation programmes (Collison & Drayton, 2002).

In the near future, these programmes will have a large proportion of under-twenty-year-olds enrolling. This coincides with the current New Zealand government

commitment to implement an 'Education and Training Leaving Age Strategy' which proposes to *ensure that all young people under 19 years will be engaged in education, training or employment* (Maharey, 2002, p. 3). This is already evident in programmes running in the Auckland tertiary sector. One example is the Auckland University of Technology Foundation Certificate in Health Care programme, where approximately 65% of current enrolments are in this proposed 'category' of students (AUT Foundation Certificate in Health Care statistics, 2003).

Social Purpose

Tertiary education institutions throughout New Zealand perceive the relevance of addressing societal equity issues. They do this through offering certificate and diploma level foundation programmes for 'non-traditional' students, usually at levels three and four on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). There are two reasons for this. The first encompasses the notion of 'tapping' into a large sector of society that would otherwise be ineligible or perceive difficulty in commencing formal tertiary study (Harford, 2002). The second concerns an economic viability issue. 'Opening' doors to wider societal participation guarantees tertiary institute funding that would otherwise be unattainable. Those who traditionally accessed pre-entry programmes within tertiary institutions were mature students who were assessing their own ability to progress into formal tertiary study (Findsen & Harre-Hindmarsh, 1996).

The future will see an increasing number of school leavers enrolling in pre-entry programmes. These school leavers will aspire to undergraduate study but have exited secondary schooling without the necessary qualifications to allow automatic entry into formal tertiary education (Ministry of Education, 2002). Student numbers and diversity are increasing and this will necessitate an alteration in educator practice to accommodate the needs of students. This is evidenced in the University of Waikato, where distinctly different teaching strategies are developed and overtly implemented for teaching school leavers versus older students returning to study

(Collison & Drayton, 2002).

The Student Profile

Non-traditional students (those other than school leavers with conventional qualifications) are becoming an increasing percentage of those entering tertiary education in New Zealand tertiary institutions. 'Non-traditional' students include those from non-English speaking backgrounds as well as mature students. Many of these students do not have the formal admission qualifications to commence tertiary education. For the students who do, it may have been many years since they achieved the admission qualifications.

In recent times, there has been a trend to viewing 'equity of access' as including 'non-traditional' students who have not achieved the required secondary schooling qualifications that would allow automatic entry into a tertiary institution to study (Watt, 2002). They are predominantly Maori (Ministry of Education, 2002) and Pacific Islanders whose cultures have not been well served by the mono-cultural primary and secondary schooling systems in New Zealand (Jenkins & Ka'ai, 1994). From a sociological perspective, this lack of educational 'fit' creates a generational spiral that has the societal effect of pigeonholing large sectors of society into menial job opportunities with little hope of financial reward (Bell & Carpenter, 1994).

Historically, the lack of educational 'fit' has served the purpose of limiting the numbers of people who have access to professional roles, which require tertiary qualifications to access and benefit from, socially and economically. According to Irwin (2000), a 'gate-keeping' mentality has existed amongst the educational 'elite' that screened those deemed 'suitable' to enter and succeed within tertiary institutions.

A growing, but still significantly under-represented number of non-traditional students i.e. Maori and Pasifika, is slowly accessing tertiary pre-entry programmes with the objective of breaking generational spirals and progressing to university (Ministry of Education, 2002; Findsen & Harre-Hindmarsh, 1996). These individuals do not necessarily lack confidence in their own ability to succeed but struggle to find a niche in the mono-cultural university environment (Pacific Island Students Achievement Collective, 2002).

A third group of individuals adding to the diverse enrolments in the various programme types are individuals with non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB). There is an increasing number of international students in this group who choose to reside in New Zealand for the express purpose of studying in an English-speaking environment, contextualised within an area they aspire to study at undergraduate level. In 2001, 6.8% of all university student enrolments were international students, compared with 2.3% in 1994 (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). These students pay large fees that are welcomed and encouraged by individual tertiary institutions. However, added to the obvious language barriers that can prove isolating for individuals, there are huge cultural adjustments that confront international students, many of whom are in New Zealand alone and away from traditional support agencies (Watt, 2002; Lester, 1998; Taylor, 1994).

Since the beginning of 2003, there is a new cohort of individuals who add to the diverse group accessing tertiary pre-entry programmes. Secondary school students who did not achieve a Bursary qualification in their seventh form year are not eligible to enter a New Zealand University undergraduate programme until they are 20 years of age. Unless they achieve an alternative entry criterion i.e. a level four certificate, they must wait until the designated age to enter a university. In response to this situation, various tertiary institutions have offered tertiary pre-entry certificate programmes at level four, guided by the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Once successfully completed, an 'underage' individual is eligible to enter university.

The numbers enrolling within this group are large. This is evidenced by the contingent now studying in a foundation programme being offered at Auckland University of Technology in the Health Faculty. The numbers who arrived and are near completion of their first semester was nearly double the planned estimate for the first semester of 2003 (Auckland University of Technology, 2003). Primarily these students were focused on getting the required 'grades' to get them into their chosen field of study (Collison & Drayton, 2002). They did not appear to perceive themselves as adults and retained a 'vessel to be filled' mentality whereby they wished to be directed in their learning endeavours.

This raised particular challenges for the academic staff. A focus on assisting students to develop their own learning skills, in preparation for entry to undergraduate study was not well received. The students focused on the minimal amount of content that would be required to meet assessment criteria. They were loath to participate in learning process activities and this necessitated an alteration in practice from educators. Collison and Drayton (2002) state that:

> *School leavers bring with them an expectation that University will be like school and so we need to consciously teach students that learning is their responsibility. This is not the case with adult learners who come with their own motivation for learning* (p.72).

Responding to this challenge, Collison and Drayton altered teaching strategies to meet the needs of different identifiable groups; didactic lectures for the 'younger' set and short courses with seminar style interaction for the 'mature' learners.

In summary, the diversity of student enrolments in tertiary pre-entry programmes is immense. The four 'groups' identified in this review are by no means contained. Each group has various subgroups that possess attributes and needs that are specific to certain educational settings but not to others. The range of student social, cognitive and emotional experience provides both interest and challenges

for those adult educators who choose to teach within this area of tertiary education (Collison & Drayton, 2002). However, the triangulated interaction between educators, students and the learning environment appears to be a common influencing factor towards student success within tertiary pre-entry programmes (Harford, 2002).

Adult Educator Role

A philosophical belief underpinning educator practice is that of educators having a key role in the process of learning. They have the opportunity to make influencing decisions, which contribute to a learning environment. The aim of any learning situation is to maximise student engagement in this process.

Adult educators in traditional tertiary institutions tend to begin their teaching career with little or no theoretical underpinnings to anchor them. The majority of educators at the tertiary level enter teaching from a profession that they have previously worked within, usually successfully, and which they now choose to teach. Teaching ability is usually not one of the attributes they would claim to be an expert in initially (Boyd, 1989). This finding is upheld by a recent unpublished survey conducted by Anderson (2003) of tertiary pre-entry educators in the greater Auckland area. Of the 102 participants surveyed, 18% have undergraduate qualifications, 58% have post graduate qualifications, but very few have qualifications in education.

In the 1980s, adult educators were charged with working in an unidentifiable profession (Brookfield, 1986). This is an understandable claim considering that the majority of adult educators signal their profession as being that which they taught rather than teaching itself. Most still have a primary professional qualification that is unrelated to teaching (Anderson, 2003).

Taken from this perspective, it would seem that the knowledge and skills

attributable to adult educators, as a collective, are varied. This provides a weaving of personalities and skills that create the rich fabric of adult education knowledge. This thinking is reinforced by Jarvis's (1987) notion that adult education is not a discipline in itself but weaves its accumulating knowledge and processes within existing named disciplines to enhance learning.

Adult educators teaching in tertiary pre-entry programmes invariably begin their teaching practice in a faculty that reflects their primary profession. It is difficult to determine at what point in their teaching career they decide to move from a content focus (transmission of knowledge) to a learning process orientation. It may be correlated to the attainment of further qualifications as described earlier in this section (Anderson, 2003), which provides a sound and creditable focus on their own learning processes. Teaching within tertiary pre-entry programmes requires an ability to holistically approach any learning situation with an air of expectancy of the unexpected (Anderson, 2002). To clarify this statement, I wish to draw attention to the diversity of learner needs, aspirations and life experiences that can constantly alter teaching focus and thus teaching practice.

A philosophy that appears to guide educator practice in tertiary pre-entry education is the knowledge, understanding and acceptance of societal change and movement (Bailey, 1999). The behaviours evidenced by those proactively working alongside the diverse student populace reinforce Baileys findings. Educators within this sector of formal learning tend to exhibit qualities of genuineness, acceptance and empathy, with an emphasis on the personal relationship between teacher and learner in establishing a climate conducive to learning (Watt, 2002; Smith & Spurling, 1999: Knowles, 1989). Attributes include respect, trust, support, openness and authenticity. Authenticity is imperative for adult learners to perceive an environment where their thoughts are valued and therefore willing to express views and opinions (Thompson, 1997).

Teaching and Learning

The interface of teaching and learning is crucial in meeting the needs of students bridging into tertiary education. Generally, teaching practice is guided by a theoretical basis that provides both philosophical underpinnings and strategies (Jarvis, 1992). However, contextualising adult learning theories within tertiary pre-entry programmes is challenging. All theories are applicable in part, but none appears to contain the absolute essence of adult learners who, if nothing else, are becoming evermore diverse in both orientation and aspiration as the twenty-first century unfolds. (A succinct summary of twentieth century theory is provided by Merriam and Cafarella, 1991.) Foley (1995) rationalises this claim by stating that adult educators and adult learners have such varied life experiences and understandings that there can be no single body of knowledge that is appropriate to all.

In line with technological and sociological change, formal learning in tertiary institutions must move forward in a state of fluidity that is guided by sound understanding and expectation of adult learners as individuals that arrive at formal learning with differing expectations and purpose (Foley, 1995). This is evident in the present climate of adult learners in tertiary pre-entry programmes, with varied learning expectations and aspirations, as well as prior learning and social experience (Anderson 2002).

Successful learning within this context may be viewed as intellectual advancement, cultural progression and cognitive enlightenment (Illeris, 2002). Illeris believes that an interaction of social, emotional and cognitive dimensions must be recognised and validated by both educators and adult learners for learning to occur. Illeris's 'Contemporary Learning Theory' (2002) allows for contextualising individual learning within a broader and validated social environment. In my opinion, this is applicable to the learning environment cultivated within current tertiary pre-entry

programmes.

Within formal education, Foley (1995) states that there is a general belief that learning occurs when an educator teaches something in a pre-determined context and a student acquires the knowledge, validates its authenticity against the educator's credibility and integrates it within his or her own cognition (thinking processes). This is simplistic in interpretation and Brookfield (1986) emphasises that learning seldom occurs in this way. Students do not learn all they are taught. There may be misunderstandings or they may in fact learn something quite different from what was intended (Illeris, 2002; Cantwell, 2001). Although this conservative orientation to learning is not generally held by adult educators, it does tend to be implicit within the assessment of student learning and thus has a major impact on subsequent attainment of a qualification (MacKeracher, 1996).

MacKeracher defines 'learning' as a process of interaction between an individual and their environment, in making sense of their life experiences and creating meaning from that 'sense making'. Creating meaning requires an exchange of information, primarily in the form of dialogue with other individuals. Because learning is an interactive process, communication is integral to the ability to learn (Watt, 2002).

Contemporary Learning Theory: Illeris (2002)

Illeris (2002) provides a contemporary approach to theory on adult learning that I believe reflects and acknowledges the interacting dimensions that influence student learning in tertiary pre-entry programmes. The premise is that human learning is comprised of an interaction between cognitive, emotional and social dimensions, in two integrating processes that occur simultaneously. An internal acquisition process (cognitive-emotional) integrates with an external interaction process (social) between the learner and material. In stressing the importance of

social interaction, Illeris (2002) emphasises the essential interaction between an individual and their surroundings and concludes that learning is a social process. The three dimensions interact in a triangulation of tension towards acquisition of learning, with social and societal influences spearheading the desire or perceived need to learn.

The triangulation that is both internally and externally channelled from an individual, creates the diverse forces that allow for unique adult learning opportunities. This is due to the fact that learning becomes centred within a social context where a mix of past and present experiences 'flavour' learning.

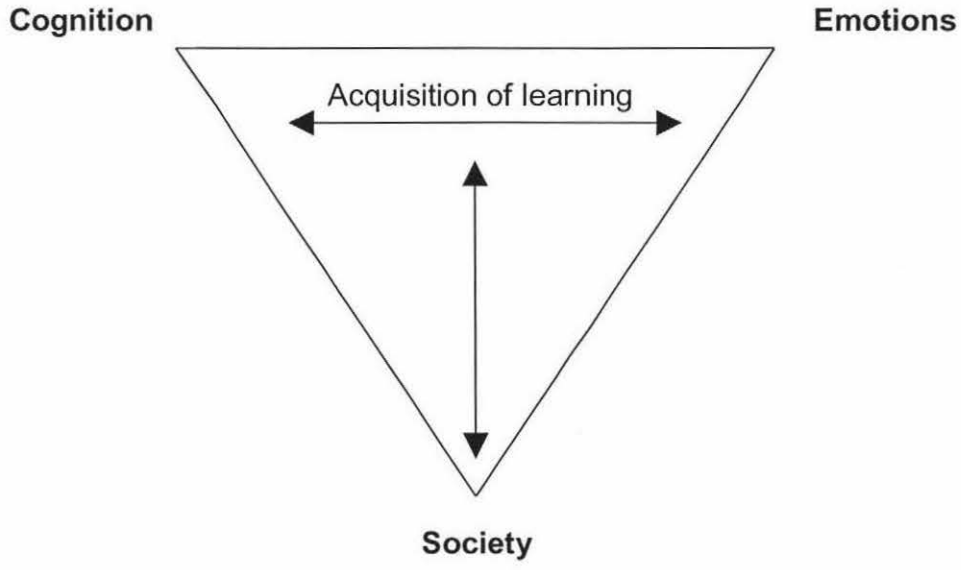

Figure 1: The Interaction between dimensions in the tension field of learning (Illeris, 2002, p.118)

The relevance of this triangulation is paramount to the climate in tertiary pre-entry education. From my perspective as an educator, all three dimensions are acknowledged individually and collectively within the learning environment I currently work in. However, Illeris does state that 'learning' is an ambiguous term. Learning is an enigma with potentially two individuals listening to the same

information, or interacting collaboratively towards a mutually defined goal but gaining quite different knowledge or relevance from each other.

I favour the approach taken by Illeris in addressing the needs (not only learning but social and emotional needs) of students bridging into tertiary education. I believe the 'Contemporary Learning Theory' is broad enough to encompass the diverse teaching and learning needs required to assist students in their endeavours. It also clearly recognises key areas of communication, namely a close interweave of cognition with emotions (which is crucial to insightful learning) plus the triangulation with social factors that centres learning within an 'everyday' context (Ribbens & Edwards, 1998). The 'everyday' context is the essence of a student remaining true to 'self' throughout the process of bridging into tertiary study.

Four Component Model of Learning: Cantwell (2001)

Cantwell (2001) has described similar interaction processes occurring in a 'Four Component Model of Adult Learning'. The four components; efficacy, disposition, regulation and operation are interactive within broad categories of cognitive and metacognitive processes. The 'operative' component is closely aligned with Illeris's cognitive dimension in terms of sensory memory, i.e. attention and perception and the choice to attend.

Cantwell explains at length the cognitive dimension of learning in this component and in particular, the role of memory in metacognitive processes. At a 'dispositional' level, Cantwell discusses the *increasing important role of socio-cultural knowledge as a determinant of the form and direction of learning behaviour* (2001, p.11), in directing learning. I believe this coincides with Illeris's social dimension of learning. 'Efficacy', as viewed by Cantwell, incorporates an affective dimension in terms of perceived awareness of potential success in engaging in a learning interaction. This too relates to Illeris's third triangulation, the emotional

dimension.

One area that Cantwell has enlarged on is that of personal control over learning. This has created a fourth component to the learning model. This is a 'regulative' component and is interlinked with metacognitive processes of sifting and selective regulation of cognitive activity. Although not overtly emphasised by Illeris, this fourth component would overlap with the tension between the internal acquisition of cumulative, assimilative and/or accommodative knowledge (Illeris, 2002).

Both Illeris and Cantwell provide an arena for discourse on the interactive nature of learning and the importance of both internal (cognitive/operative, emotional/affective) and external (social/dispositional) dimensions in a learning process.

Interaction Approaches to Learning

Foley (1995) has taken an 'interactionist' approach to adult learning by dividing learning into four distinct forms; formal education, non-formal education, informal learning and incidental learning. The interaction approach is based on where the learning occurs geographically and with whom.

Formal adult education occurs in a credentialised institutional setting, interacting with educational professionals towards a formal tertiary qualification. Non-formal adult education frequently occurs as an episodic learning opportunity for a specific purpose. An example of this form of learning is observed in various community and learning centre 'night classes' for adults. Informal adult learning involves an adult consciously learning from their own and others' experiences. This requires a degree of personal reflection on the relevancy and validity of experiences. Incidental adult learning occurs as a result of familiarity based on repeated exposure to experiences. This type of learning is often observed in the workplace or home, where routine procedures are actioned. Although all four forms of

learning can occur concurrently, in this study the focus has been contextualised on 'formal' adult education in an institutional setting. However, the informal and incidental learning that 'mature' adults integrate into their formal learning has to be stressed (Brookfield, 1986). I believe that formal adult learning cannot occur without the cognitive patterning and interweave from informal learning in particular and to a lesser degree incidental learning settings.

Vygotsky (1978) is one of the earlier advocates of this 'interactionist' view of learning. In essence, the focus is very much on human interaction as being central and pivotal to learning processes plus the importance of a learning community in defining and fostering essential learning.

Rogoff (1990) proposed that learning under this 'interactionist' view is a process of 'perspective transformation' achieved through participation in an environment that fosters connectedness between past, present and future learning. In order to generate maximum learning potential from interactions, individual learners require the overt ability and desire to reflect on what they are engaging in, the relevancy for themselves as a learner and the applicability within further experience (Schon, 1983). Schon has stressed the importance of 'reflective practice' in contextual learning and in potentially creating new procedures and knowledge from a previous learning encounter.

Moon (1999) emphasises a difference between academic reflection and a 'common-sense' approach, which has relevancy to daily activities. Academic reflection is perceived as a prescribed process that has clearly defined process and outcomes, which are generally evidenced in written form. 'Common-sense' reflective practice is assumed to be a more complicated process. This involves a form of mental processing of complicated and largely unstructured ideas – the process being not easily evident. Moon emphasises that this type of practice requires both further knowledge processing and an understanding of personal emotions. Both Moon (2003) and Illeris (2002) stress the important contribution of

emotions to learning, with Cantwell (2001) referring to this dimension. Moon makes the observation that prior literature on adult learning seldom recognises the importance of emotions, other than as a 'block' to effective learning (Moon, 2003).

Many individuals do possess 'common-sense' reflective skills but have not articulated these as such. For these individuals, formal learning environments can act as a place of enlightenment into their own learning practices, reinforcing and validating their own insight. For others, these skills are not initially within their cognitive repertoire. Hence learning remains for them an episodic activity (non-formal) with variable connections made between these episodes. Growth in personal perspectives is unlikely to occur when learning is fragmented and perceived as meaningful only within certain parameters.

In summary, it is heartening to read of contemporary learning theories that acknowledge and incorporate a truly psychological approach, i.e. integrating cognition, emotion and behaviour (in the form of a social environmental interaction). This may be a biased view based on my belief that social, emotional and cognitive determinants interweave to create learning experiences. However, I do agree with Illeris's approach to learning. I believe this has been guided by critical analysis of preceding theories plus a practical orientation towards the needs and issues facing students in terms of incorporating social with emotional and cognitive dimensions of learning.

Illeris's 'Contemporary Learning Theory' (2002) could provide the basis for developing a theoretical framework to guide teaching practice in tertiary pre-entry programmes. Along with Cantwell's 'Model of Learning' (2001), this may assist in the development of an integrated, informed approach to learning that is applicable to the learning environments (articulated by Foley, 1995) of those students wanting to bridge into tertiary study.

As neither the learning theories nor views discussed are specifically orientated to

adults, I wish to now focus on adults as distinct from children in their learning attributes. I do not advocate that all learning is distinctly different between adults and children but it is worth acknowledging the unique attributes that adults foster in their learning environment.

Andragogy

I believe the term andragogy differentiates adult learning from children's learning and is worth addressing in the context of this review. The adult learning principles outlined by Knowles (1980) have provided a forum for discussion and debate amongst western educators and theorists over the years. These guiding principles include:

- An adult's self-concept is different to that of a child. An adult's self concept is incrementally more complex than a child's due to life experience and accumulating memories.
- An adult has developmental years of life experience that influence and impact on their learning and that act as a resource.
- Adults consciously seek a learning environment to meet their needs.
- Adults possess a problem centred approach to learning, which is generally to meet future goals.

These guiding principles are not exclusive and in fact are open to negation. However, they possess a focus on the interaction between an adult's worldview and their current learning endeavours. It is not the reliance on these principles as paramount to a recognised adult learning theory that intrigues me, but the debate that the concept and principles of andragogy have created amongst educators and theorists.

I favour the development of a theoretical framework for adult learners in tertiary

pre-entry education, requiring guiding principles of adult learner attributes and needs that are specific to the programme types. The principles could potentially underpin a framework, focusing specifically on andragogy (adult learning) as distinct from but not exclusive of, a generalised pedagogy.

Eduard Lindeman (1927) was the first theorist to incorporate andragogical terms within educational theory and declared andragogy *to be the true method of adult learning* (cited Brookfield, 1986, p. 91). The adult learning process was regarded as an effort toward self-mastery.

In the United States, the term 'andragogy' was popularised by Knowles's (1980) work which encompassed the notion that andragogy was instrumental in assisting adult learning and differed significantly from pedagogy. Knowles's original premise for differentiating the two was due to his belief that adult education was hindered by traditional pedagogical practices that stifled inquiry and experiential learning. This sentiment was emphasised by Mezirow (1991) in stating that andragogy is *an organised and sustained effort to assist adults to learn in a way that enhances their capability to function as self-directed learners* (p. 199).

Throughout the years of debate, Knowles has remained open to suggestion and willing to alter parameters along a pedagogical/andragogical continuum. This is evident in his acknowledgement that *some pedagogical assumptions are realistic for adults and some andragogical assumptions are realistic for children in some situations* (Knowles, 1980, p. 53).

Mezirow (1991) took the view that andragogy was a professional perspective of adult educators in both organising and assisting adults towards self-direction in learning. This view was stressed possibly more in line with a professional standpoint to differentiate educator status at various levels of education as opposed to teaching practice (Welton, 1995). Welton clarified the term 'andragogy' as being, for many adult educators, purely an over-eager attempt to

'professionalise' adult education practice. This allows them to believe and profess to adults having unique learning characteristics, differing from children.

In general the term 'andragogy' depicts the field of study of adult education. There is debate as to whether adults do learn differently to children. Over decades writers have elaborated on adult learning principles in an attempt to create a definitive 'theory' of adult learning (Smith, 1982; Brundage & MacKeracher, 1980; Knox, 1977; Kidd, 1973; Miller, 1964; Gibb, 1960). Interestingly, I note that few used the term 'andragogy' in their writing and yet differentiated adult and child learning.

In the following review, I will briefly identify the notable points from various authors in an attempt to determine the applicability of andragogical thinking to the development of a theoretical framework to guide educator practice.

Gibb (1960), in an attempt to create a theory of adult learning practice, was one of the first writers to define adult learning principles as differing from child learning principles. Gibb spoke of learning experiences and how they may occur but did not articulate any noticeable differences to pedagogical procedures already being implemented. Miller (1964) did identify specific conditions for adult learning based on the premise that *at the higher levels of human development in adulthood cognitive models of learning, rather than behaviourist ones, were necessary* (cited Brookfield, 1986, pg. 27). However, all Miller's criteria involved provision of resources for noticeable behavioural changes and thus moved from an original cognitive focus to behavioural.

Kidd (1973) identified concepts rather than principles to assist in the research on adult learner uniqueness. The focus moved from behavioural to that of individual change over the life span and the interaction of the individual with changing societal, cultural, family, physical and emotional roles over time. Thus emerged an emphasis on the social nature of adult learners. The interrelationship between social conditioning and cognition on adult learning was emphasised by Knox

(1977) whose premise was that age and ageing had little or no effect on ability to learn. Individual social difference was a critical factor in both determination to learn and success in adult learning and that *almost any adult can learn anything they want to, given time, persistence, and assistance* (Knox, p. 469).

Brundage and MacKeracher (1980) added to Knox's assumptions by stating that life long learning was exactly that and dependent on past experiences that could both help and hinder learning in later life. However, past experiences also provided the framework for constructing new meanings and values to learned experiences, in that *environments that reinforce the self-concepts of adults, that are supportive of change and that value the status of the learner will produce the greatest amount of learning* (cited Brookfield, 1986, p.29). These writers went on to describe transitional phases of adult lives and stated that these were individualised. Therefore, these phases cannot be transferred or generalised amongst individuals.

Smith (1982) was the first to mention intuition as being a signifying attribute of adult learning. Six general characteristics identified by Smith are those of learning being lifelong, personal, involving change, partially a function of human development, pertaining to experience and partially intuitive. These characteristics are well accepted within today's adult learning environment. Smith took his original premise further by stating the importance of an environment conducive to adult learning, i.e. any situation where adult learners felt a need to learn and took personal responsibility for their own learning. Smith was moving towards the relevancy and necessity of learning for an adult from their worldview that would shift from the pedagogical premise of all learning being important and valued. At this point there are arguably differences in intent emerging from child to adult.

More recently, Darkenwald and Novak (1997) presented a prescribed list of conditions that were to be met for effective adult learning to occur, including most pedagogical principles that do not differentiate between the two codes. The commonalities of these writers are in terms of self-directedness and autonomy,

which are not surprising given developmental differences in adults and their perceived reasons for embarking on learning ventures.

One clear assumption stressed by Brookfield (1986) in critiquing previous writers is that research to date had been undertaken predominantly with monocultural adult learners within the United States and was not able to be generalised to specific cultural groupings. This aspect has relevance within the New Zealand education system where student diversity and educational need necessitates a more flexible and accommodative approach.

Conti (1983) drew on the knowledge of theorists such as Freire (1974) and Knox (1977) to draw some basic assumptions together. His findings were no different to previous writers' in stating that adult learners wished to be actively involved in their learning, that they desired relevancy of life experiences to their learning and that adult educators should act as facilitators of learning rather than *a repository of facts* (p. 63). This fits with my premise that the triangulation of social, emotional and cognitive factors is integral to determining student learning needs which are graphically illustrated by Illeris (2002).

Mezirow's (1981) interpretation of andragogy specifications was outlined by Suanmali (1981) in an instrument designed to *test the presence of effective facilitation in practice rather than to provide empirical measures of forms of adult learning* (cited Brookfield, 1986, pg. 34). This was known as API (Andragogy in Practice Inventory) that complemented Conti's PALS (Principles of Adult Learning Scale), both of which were used widely in America in the 1980s as professional development tools for adult educators. In particular, Suanmali put forward an inventory of educator practices that were designed to assist adults enhance their capability to function as self-directed learners.

The importance of developing self-directed learning principles laid the basis from which both Mezirow (1981, 1991) and Brookfield (1985) developed their theoretical

underpinnings of adult learning. These included such activities as lessening dependency as learning progresses and assistance with accessing and utilising learning resources. Other activities included assistance with students assuming greater self-responsibility in organisation of learning, goal definition and setting. All have relevance and are actively facilitated within adult education but are not credited with a defining terminology.

Rachal (2002) questions whether adult education should *by definition, be andragogical* (p.224). Adult educators working in this sector of education are, one hopes, implementing andragogical principles within their practice. That is not to say that these principles are not encouraged within pedagogy, but to recognise that maturity and life experience of adult learners must be acknowledged and utilised within adult learning situations. It does allow flexibility in maturational status and for adult educators there retains a fluidity of process in response to student aspiration and need.

If nothing affirmative has been generated from Knowles's speculation, in terms of a definitive theory of andragogy, Knowles has created, as with previous thinkers, a climate of active debate and an arena for adult learning to be at the forefront of educational inquiry. At worst, Knowles's concept of andragogy confused educationalists as to relevancy and at best, opened a discourse for active inquiry and research. However, a theory of andragogy has never been formalised, although adult learning theories have utilised andragogical principles (*Transformative Learning Theory*: Mezirow (1991); *Self- Directedness in Learning*: Brookfield (1986)).

The paradoxical situation of adult educators advocating adult education as distinctive within education and yet subscribing to 'a pedagogy of teaching practice' is interesting. Those who advocate the standardisation of a 'universal' definition of andragogy which could be infused into both literature and practice with clear understanding and meaning are well aware of the limitations and fluidity of both

andragogy and pedagogy (Rachal, 2002). To date, there is no clear indication of a definitive terminology emerging.

In a climate of terminology confusion relating to adult education, it may be opportune to overtly re-address the concept and principles of andragogy, with a view to articulating a contemporary theoretical framework contextualised to tertiary pre-entry education. The andragogical principles previously highlighted in this chapter could provide a definitive foundation from which the emotional, cognitive and social dimensions of learning could be articulated, not in contrast to children but as distinct in its own right.

Summary

In this chapter, I have identified areas of tension for educators in terms of practice. An historical orientation of tertiary pre-entry programmes, interlinking with present day orientation has been included, which takes into account an increasingly diverse student populace wishing to access programmes. This has led to a conflict in perceived and actual programme purposes plus a tension created in attempting to match institutional and political purposes with those of educators and students.

Theoretical tension underpinning educator practice has also been discussed, with a specific focus on adult student attributes and the relevance of these to the present educational climate. Two contemporary learning theories have been introduced (Illeris, 2002; Cantwell, 2001) and interlinked with the thinking of others (Moon 1999; Foley, 1995). This has been done in an effort to begin developing a theoretical framework that could inform educator practice. This would occur in an educational climate that is changing quickly in response to individual, institutional and political needs and aspirations.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the methodology used in this research study. Initially, the choice of research method and the purpose of this research will be addressed. The remainder of the chapter will be divided into sections describing the methodology and research process undertaken.

The Research Question

The purpose of this study was to identify philosophical beliefs underpinning the practice of adult educators who currently teach in tertiary pre-entry programmes and to determine areas of tension from their perspective. The information was gathered using a qualitative research perspective. It aimed to expose and analyse areas of congruity and divergence in educator thinking and practice by studying those whose everyday experience could contribute to the research. The research question that guided this study was:

What Philosophical Assumptions Underpin Current Adult Educator Practice in Tertiary Pre-entry Programmes?

Data was gathered from individuals teaching in a variety of tertiary pre-entry programmes in the greater Auckland area. This was done to gauge the areas of tension from an educator's perspective in determining the needs of students bridging into tertiary study.

The Research Method

A qualitative paradigm was chosen for this study due to the nature of information sought; the thoughts and views of individuals. Merriam (1998) describes this research design as that of 'qualitative enquiry'. This focuses on contextual meaning, requiring a data collection instrument that is sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data. Merriam claims that qualitative research lends itself to the study of educational practice, emphasising that:

> *Research focused on discovery, insight, and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied offers the greatest promise of making significant contributions to the knowledge base and practice of education* (Merriam, 1998, p.1).

Tolich and Davidson (1999) suggest that the choice in favour of qualitative methodology is made when there is a need to study reality from the point of view of the subject.

These approaches to research coincide with my own philosophical assumption that education is a social activity and as such lends itself to social research from a human interaction perspective. The subjects in this study were adult educators whose philosophical assumptions were paramount to the very nature of the research.

Further criteria guiding my choice of qualitative methodology were based on my own assumptive preferences for social interaction and inquisitiveness into why others think (and behave) in the way they do. One important personal assumption, articulated by Flick (1991), was that of my perceiving *researcher and researched as elements of the same situation and the research process as a whole unit* (cited Sarantokos, 1993, p.107) in exploring underlying philosophies of adult educator

practice.

In the methodology, I wanted to gather the perspectives of others *to capture reality as it is, that is, in interaction* (Sarantokos, 1993, p.107). Merriam (1998) stated that the impetus to conduct basic qualitative research involved the desire to seek quality subjective information in order to discover, and through analysis, understand *a phenomenon, a process, or the perspectives and world views of the people involved* (p. 11). Possibly the critical element of my choice in embarking on a qualitative as opposed to quantitative methodology, was gathering meaning from participants which I believed would be accessed through communicative dialogue as opposed to statistical data.

Collectively, I intended to analyse these dialogues for commonalities and differences in philosophies underpinning educator practice from an interpretative perspective. I was aware of my own personal reality and bias while engaged in this process. I did not view this subjectivity as detrimental to the process, as I believed social research required an element of subjectivity, allowing for social orientation and interest of *multiple interpretations of reality* (Merriam, 1998, p. 22).

Having decided on a qualitative orientation to this research, I then needed to think of my focus within a qualitative paradigm. I chose an interpretive perspective because:

> *in interpretive research, education is considered to be a process. Understanding the meaning of the process or experience constitutes the knowledge to be gained from an inductive mode of inquiry. Multiple realities are constructed socially by individuals* (Merriam, 1998, p. 4).

As the research unfolded, I became aware of patterns emerging from participant dialogue. At this early stage, I realised that the inductive logic of research was unfolding, i.e. from fieldwork observations. I was beginning to recognise recurring

concepts and excitedly sensed that insight could generate from this (Davidson and Tolich, 1999).

Ethical Considerations

The research proposal for this study was presented to the Ethics committees of Massey University, Wellington and the Auckland University of Technology. Both universities granted approval for commencement. Intending participants were given honest and detailed information about all aspects of the research. This was provided in an information sheet, which was to be given to each participant (Appendix 1) along with a consent form (Appendix 2) and list of guiding questions for a taped interview (Appendix 3). Prior to commencement of the research, both ethics committees approved the three pieces of information.

Research Process

The Participants

Participation for this research was sought from those actively involved in tertiary pre-entry adult education in the greater Auckland area. Through networking within tertiary institutions and the New Zealand Bridging Association, I approached individuals based on a demographic spread throughout conventional tertiary institutions in greater Auckland. I did this deliberately to gain a sense of the emphasis placed on tertiary pre-entry programmes offered by the various institutions within this demographic area.

All individuals approached were adult educators. They were either actively teaching in a variety of tertiary pre-entry programmes or employed in dual roles of student support, programme co-ordinator, research, and student-educator interaction.

There was a natural mix of gender, age and ethnic diversity in the participants although this had not been a specific aim in participant selection. The only commonalities sought in participants were active employment status within tertiary pre-entry programmes and an interest in sharing their thoughts with me.

I interviewed ten adult educators for this study. I chose to stop interviewing at this number as recurring themes were appearing and I was aware of the reality of personal time commitment in interviewing and transcribing taped interviews (Merriam, 1998).

The Process

I spoke with each potential participant to describe the aims of this research. At this initial contact I outlined what would be required of participants in terms of time and effort.

I followed verbal discussion with an email that contained the research objectives, an information sheet, consent form and list of guiding questions for a semi-structured interview. Initially, I chose not to offer the questions as I felt this might narrow the breadth and depth of the interview plus create an environment whereby I could potentially receive prescribed responses. However, following a trial interview with a colleague, the feedback indicated that a list of potential questions given ahead of time would have aided her thinking and retrieval of experiential anecdotes at the time of interview. Therefore I supplied all other participants with the questions but ensured all were aware that they were guides only and that their 'gut' responses (experiences, anecdotes, beliefs, values, and assumptions) were vital to the aims of this research.

Following verbal consent to participate in this research and in conjunction with emailing relevant information, I suggested a range of possible interview dates and times which could then be negotiated to suit the participant. I was aware of

teaching and other commitments that impinge on participant availability and enthusiasm, so chose a time frame for interviews coinciding with the 'wind down period' of the academic year. This was when students were no longer on campuses and final exam and study board reporting was complete.

In determining dates for interviews, I was mindful of the energy required of an interviewer. Following each interview, it was vital for me to take time to write observational field notes on my subjective views, which may have added to the transcribed interview tapes during analysis (Davidson and Tolich, 1999). I wished to reflect on each interview as soon as possible following an interview and time factored this into interview schedules. In general preparation, I constructed a template with interviewee names, assigned an interview number (which was then attached to all personal information and data), date of interview, date of transcription and verification of authenticity of transcribed interview.

Prior to each interview, I ensured I had relevant 'official' documentation prepared for each interviewee i.e. information sheet and consent form with official Massey letterheads attached plus a further copy of guiding questions (Appendices 1,2,3).
I included an A3 envelope to record the preferred address for each documented interview, once transcribed, to be sent to. I numbered each audiotape to coincide with interviewee number and had this positioned in the tape recorder and primed for immediate taping when needed. The preparation maximised the quality interview time required of each participant and allowed my ethical and administrative requirements to be met with minimal inconvenience to those being interviewed (Tolich and Davidson, 1999). All the above information was collated on a spreadsheet following the interview.

Data Collection

Individual Interviews

In order to obtain relevant and useful information for this research project, I decided at the outset that an interview technique was likely to be the worthiest tool for data collection. There were two reasons for this choice.

The first was based on personal preference of social communication. This included verbal interaction with participants that I believed provided the essence of qualitative data collection. The second reason involved the very nature of the research i.e. of gauging others' philosophies and practice within adult education. This was sought from their individual perspective, as outlined by Davidson and Tolich (1999), rather than making sense from a predetermined perspective.

I felt this was best achieved through verbal communication with probes and prompts to elicit both depth and breadth of thought. Davidson and Tolich (1999) describe this approach as 'unstructured interviewing'. In contrast to a 'formal' interview approach, an 'unstructured' interview is shaped and guided by what the respondents tell the researcher. In terms of the researcher role, Davidson and Tolich emphasise the guiding of a respondent into particular relevant areas but tempering this with the view that *what path is actually followed is usually decided by the person doing the talking* (p. 220).

Hence as the researcher, I became a research instrument (Gillham, 2000a). This felt a natural role for me. Although an interviewer's role requires discipline, organisation and focus both in preparation, execution of interview and follow up procedures, I naturally gravitated towards this form of data collection.

In terms of interview dialogue, there appeared to be a 'casual' approach, described

by Neuman (1997) as closer to a friendly conversation than the 'stimulus-response' model found in more structured interviews. However, unstructured interviews do differ from casual conversation. Davidson and Tolich (1999) stress this difference by stating that there is an overt purpose in research interviews whereby the researcher uses prompts and questioning that keep the participant focused on the areas that are being researched.

Data was collected during individual audio-taped interviews. Introductions were made and I ensured each participant's name was used immediately in my acknowledgement of their involvement. This was done for later identification, if required during transcription of audiotapes, as advocated by Gillham (2000a). Each interview followed a similar format of addressing the 'guiding questions'. All areas relevant to the research were covered and talked through but with differing emphasis placed by participants, depending on their own assumptions, beliefs, values and background that guided their teaching practice.

It was important as the interviewer to guide the discussion and remain focused on the task at hand while allowing thoughts to flow. In an early interview, I had a tendency to talk with the interviewee (study participant), enthusiastically affirming comments made. While this encouraged further dialogue, it was of no qualitative use in terms of the research. I learned that for the purposes of a taped interview, I needed to limit my own dialogue at strategic places rather than talk naturally (Gillham, 2000b). This allowed the interviewee to remain the focus of the interview while I was centered on guiding, steering and actively listening. By doing this, I needed only to provide slight probing comments to activate depth or breadth of thought and natural prompts to guide the interview forward.

During interviews, I was also tuned to the paralinguistics of each interviewee. This included non-verbal communication and in particular the tone of voice while discussing certain assumptions. The emphasis and emotional component noted in certain areas was vital and I believe unobtainable in any research method other

than a verbal dialogue.

I ended each interview with a generalised summary of the areas covered. The interviews appeared to end quite naturally within a time frame that sat within the predetermined allocation of 1-11/2 hours. Gillham (2000a) stresses the importance of interview closure in terms of both cognitive and social aspects, stating that:

> *It is easy to give interviewees the impression that you have got what you wanted and just want to hurry them. Carelessness here can undo much of the previous good work* (p. 42).

Termination that occurred naturally had the advantage of providing a valuable cognitive summary for later clarification and possible analysis.

Post Interview

Following each interview, all paper work and audiotapes were methodically collated and number coded. I also allocated time to write observational notes. These included a summary of perceived tensions that emerged and that I believed would assist in later data analysis.

Transcription from audio interview to written document was a time consuming and laborious process. The monotony of transcribing each interview verbatim was offset by the graphic memory of the essence of each interview, which I felt I had recorded in my observational notes. Each participant received a transcript of his or her interview and was asked to verify its accuracy and authenticity. Several participants requested minor changes to wording. These changes were made prior to my commencing data analysis.

Data Analysis

Prior to commencing analysis of written transcripts, I ensured I was absolutely clear on the process I would use to obtain relevant and creditable data. I made this task easier by being mindful of later analysis when constructing interview question guides (Appendix 3). Although these weren't completely adhered to during interviews (applauded by Merriam, 1998), they did guide me in the areas I wished to pursue and therefore created a focal point from which to begin my analysis (Appendix 4).

Nevertheless, the data analysis step of the research process felt daunting. Stake (1995) stresses the importance of reaching the point where the researcher begins to take data apart, of the uncertainty of what may or may not be found, of the possibility of encountering new phenomena and in making sense of data. I was mindful of this uncertainty as I prepared to reduce my transcribed data.

I created 'numerical codes' to assist in data collation, as advocated by Davidson and Tolich (1999). Thematic files, which provided the codes, were initially constructed in diagrammatic form (Appendix 4). The categories were constructed to specify the range of data that was to be included in each thematic file. Each theme related to the list of questions used to guide the interview (Appendix 3). Initially any data incorporating 'learning principles' was coded in a thematic file titled 'Andragogy'. This included definitions, a perceived concept of andragogy, potential comparisons with the concept of pedagogy and any distinctions made between the two terms.

A second thematic file included data that related to the 'Purpose of tertiary pre-entry programmes'. This included concepts and perceived purposes of programmes and any information pertaining to successful learning within a programme.

A third thematic file, under the title of 'Philosophy', contained data related to educator thinking that guided practice. This included perceived choice to work in programmes, apparent role in programmes and data on learner-educator relationships.

The final thematic file contained data related to 'Future directions' of tertiary pre-entry programmes. This contained perceptions of the future directions of tertiary pre-entry programmes in a political-organisational context.

The inter-relatedness of the themes made it difficult to create exclusivity for each file and therefore certain data was entered into one or several files. As the data was progressively refined, I discerned patterns emerging with distinct similarities, differences and inter-relatedness that I would carry through to interpretation and discussion. The thematic subheadings under each of the four primary themes provided the framework for interpretation. The themes held a common strand for re-addressing the original research question by looking for convergence and divergence in thinking.

Tolich and Davidson (1999) emphasised the importance of identifying thematic data in terms of two-directional analysis. The first direction is that of refining data collection interview questions, which in terms of this research was not possible but worthy of consideration in future. The second direction is towards themes, which was my intention. Although I did not consciously espouse to a 'Grounded Theory' methodology (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) I did unconsciously follow many of the principles inherent in this form of data analysis, through definition, refinement, redefinition and so on until I felt I had exhausted the data. This is evident in the redefining of 'Andragogy' (Appendix 4) to 'Practice' following refinement of the data. At this point, I felt ready to formally interpret and discuss my research findings.

Validity

In any research study, it is of utmost importance that the findings are valid. If a research study is not carried out in an accurate way, it may not produce valid results (Merriam, 1998). In order to ensure validity and authenticity of data analysis, I was mindful of not reducing data to the point where it no longer had relevance to the research. I needed to ensure that the data provided information on the underpinning thesis of this study, namely:

What are the tensions between philosophy and practice for educators in meeting the needs of students 'bridging' into tertiary education?

It was important that findings from data analysis were accurate and genuine within the research context and that other researchers could trust them *to represent the reality that is being explored* (Watt, 2002, p. 43).

Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology for this study. Qualitative methodology in the form of individual interviews was used to explore the philosophies and tensions underpinning current adult educator practice in tertiary pre-entry programmes. Detailed and clear information was given to all participants prior to the commencement of interviews, plus each individual's transcribed interview was verified by the participant prior to data analysis. Participation throughout this process was voluntary and participants were able to withdraw their transcribed information at any time prior to data analysis. The collected data was analysed using an interpretative approach. I believe the ethical requirements for this study were fulfilled and issues of validity and reliability acknowledged.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter documents and discusses data collated from individual interviews that informed this research study. The significant themes that emerged from the study were identified and provide the headings under which individual educator perspectives are documented. These themes provided an informative overview of philosophical assumptions underpinning current educator practice in tertiary pre-entry programmes. In relation to meeting the needs of students bridging into tertiary education, four significant themes emerged from this study:

- **Purposes of Programmes**
- **Educator Orientation**
- **Educator Practice**
- **Future Directions**

The themes are assumed to be areas of tension between educator philosophy and practice. The first theme incorporated general and specific purposes of tertiary pre-entry programmes and appeared to delineate programme types. The second theme exposed the philosophical beliefs of participants on the choice to teach in tertiary pre-entry programmes in preference to another tertiary education sector. The third theme looked at the assumptions of learning principles and strategies that guided educator practice and assumed as integral to educator-student interaction. A fourth theme incorporated the participants' thoughts on the future directions of tertiary pre-entry programmes. This included participants' assumptions on the relevance and viability of pre-entry programmes in the tertiary

education sector.

Purposes of Programmes

The information gathered in this thematic file included the participants' beliefs on the learning environment that students encounter in tertiary pre-entry programmes. When asked what the general purposes of programmes were, participants were consistent in their assumptions across programme types. One participant, who had a history of working in several tertiary institutions, was adamant that:

> *Academic skills are really important, but more and more I lean towards personal growth, I guess, as being a big purpose for programmes in so far as giving people or consolidating their belief that they can succeed. I think we do that in pre-entry programmes and I think it is a big part of academic literacy where someone is confident to be able to embark on these challenges.*

The concept of acquiring academic skills (analogous to a bag of tools) was noted, but a strong emphasis was placed on developing attitudes and beliefs that were congruent with tertiary study success.

One participant spoke of the equity aspect of tertiary pre-entry programmes in opening access to 'non-traditional' students and in particular in harnessing talent that could potentially be lost if actively sought by these programmes. The participant emphasised that:

> *It's about equity, it's about access, it's about expanding the talent pool and I think that's critical. I believe there is enormous talent out there, which we want this country to make use of.*

Participants spoke specifically about the programmes they were involved with. It

was interesting to note that when specific programmes were discussed, programme terminology proved confusing. In addition, there was a fundamental difference in perspective of the underlying philosophical basis for different programme types. The general feeling among those in bridging programmes was that bridging education was a stair-casing process towards personal achievement in learning. One participant spoke with animation in describing the purpose of bridging programmes:

> *Bridging education provides a realistic context. In other words, here's your goal, here's where your skills are at the moment, this is what you need to do to get there and build into that the capabilities that are important as you go along. Bridging education is named as such because we are bridging people into tertiary studies. How long it takes them to get there depends on academic and emotional factors in terms of having the confidence, or just understanding the whole academic discourse, the whole way the system works.*

Several participants articulated the purpose of a bridging programme as being one of enabling self-growth in learning and perspective for students. After hesitating briefly, one participant responded with the following viewpoint:

> *I think that the bridging idea is that you're really working with people to transform their notions of themselves and then say, "I can go anywhere I choose". What can happen in bridging programmes is that you can help people to move to be kind of self-authored, giving people tools and frameworks for reading their world.*

Another participant elaborated further on this sense of 'self authoring' by stating:

> *A bridging culture is taking away the myth, I think, or the stereotype out there that bridging is maybe for people who can't quite make it. There's a difference*

between 'can't' and 'haven't' yet made it.

There was a sense of accumulative learning with varying time lines towards personal growth in learning. Added to this assumption, was a belief that students weave their own meanings into an academic environment, particularly applicable to those with cultural perspectives differing from the 'mono-cultural' institutions. One participant, who worked closely with Pasifika students in bridging education, was adamant about the importance of personal ownership of meaning. This was demonstrated by the comment that:

> *Pasifika students come here starting as bridging students and they're learning theories and they often have to link that with their actual practice. Which is often at odds with our cultural imperatives so bridging is about weaving new meaning for theory. It's talking about things like weaving new meanings for Pakeha terminology - western paradigms. Bridging to me is being true to oneself but learning to adapt to the relevancy of what it takes to get where you want to go.*

It was assumed that an individual entering a bridging programme would encounter self-reflective techniques to assist them in determining strengths, areas of weakness, aspirations and goals towards self-determination. These processes would be assisted through interaction with teaching staff and with student colleagues but most importantly by self-analysis over time.

In contrast, tertiary foundation programmes were perceived as deficit processing. A student enrolled in a tertiary foundation programme was assumed to have 'defective' learning patterns which required a specific 'bag of tertiary learning skills' to start effective learning. An experienced educator working in this area described this perception by saying:

> *Foundation programmes are premised on deficit. You don't have the*

prerequisite, we'll give you that and you're just going to learn it and then hey, you'll be right. Foundation for me is simplistically providing the 'nuts and bolts'. Basic upskilling, preparing as you go into writing essays, using the library, paraphrasing stuff, grammar. There has to be an aspect of that because that's what people are seeking. It means to me that students aren't quite up to speed for a degree and it's catch up time.

When asked to clarify the term 'catch up', the participant explained that *academic skills, teaching them how to write essays, reading, writing, literacy, numeracy, a bit of how to operate as a student on campus* were all vital elements for catching up to entry criteria for tertiary study.

There appeared to be hesitation and confusion among participants when they were asked about differences in programme terminology and intent. One participant attempted clarification by stating:

I see foundation programmes as being just what it states, as a foundation for learning, I guess, or on-going learning. Foundation programmes could be seen as a 'stepping-stone' to whatever pathway people choose, whether or not it's tertiary or perhaps applied vocation. The programmes create a foundation that is going to enable somebody to be prepared to go on and succeed at what they want to do.

In contrast to the assumed academic purposes of various tertiary pre-entry programmes, participants voiced similar affective and social purposes of programmes, regardless of terminology. These purposes interwove the emotional and social dimensions of learning as advocated by Illeris (2002) and included demystifying academia and engaging with the learning environment.

Demystifying Academia

Participants identified academic 'demystification' as a factor influencing successful learning, and therefore an inherent purpose of tertiary pre-entry programmes. Removal of the mystique and fear associated with tertiary study could be achieved through alteration of mindset away from *ivory tower* mentality with imposing structures to that of an analogous *emperor with no clothes.* The person who used the analogy of a conventional tertiary institution being symbolised as an 'emperor' was adamant that by removing the trappings of tertiary institutions, by peeling back the layers of social and intellectual elitism, an individual could *walk into a university setting and believe they could achieve.* This educator was emphatic about this process and reiterated the analogy on several occasions:

> *It's about educating people that the emperor has no clothes, it's demystifying, it's not walking past an academic institution and thinking I can't go in there. It's essentially about having analysis of where you are as a person, as an individual in a community and in a country.*

Another participant discussed the area of demystifying concepts of 'self' in order to move forward in academic endeavours and the importance for students to:

> *take the time in a programme to actually think about themselves, what's happened for them in the past, what are some of the issues that have created the situation where they're at now and particularly concentrating on some of the strengths that are going to help move them forward.*

One experienced educator working in a bridging programme, identified the process of self-reflection by commenting that *I think it is important that some students do realise that they haven't had a good deal in the past and there's no fault of their own why they are here.* In discussing specific programme input towards this process, the same educator contemplated before answering:

I hope that the processes that happen here give them a bit of reinforcement. The fact that you know there are others in similar sorts of circumstances and we create an environment that we can hone in on strengths.

There was a general perception of tertiary pre-entry programmes assisting students to 'peel' back layers of previously held ideas, beliefs and attitudes towards academia and move forward with new awareness. This was summarised by one participant as *let's look at it, acknowledge it and then pick up on what strengths and so on, and move forward.*

Engaging in a Learning Environment

The participants were united in their assumption that if students engage in a learning context, if they have internalised a belief in the value of remaining in a tertiary pre-entry programme, they will succeed. Regardless of social commitments that impinge on an individual's time, energy and resources, participants collectively believed that if actively engaged in their learning process, adult learners remained focused towards success. One participant, who had previously talked of the concept of 'self', was adamant that student engagement in a learning environment was crucial to this process, highlighted by the comment:

They'll stay if they really can believe they can succeed; they can see that there's an alternative route to a better life. When things go 'wrong' at home, they (students) will do their best at home but they will maintain the programme because they can see the bigger picture.

The tenacity shown by students, often in the face of compounding negativity, was positively correlated to connections made with teaching staff and also with fellow students for support and motivation. An awareness by teaching staff of personal impinging factors appeared to create definitive turning points for individuals, if staff were actively engaged in pastoral as well as academic assistance i.e. holistically

engaged in more than just the learning objectives of a tertiary pre-entry programme.

It is worthwhile noting that although participants were intent on taking a holistic approach to individual learning, those in tertiary foundation programmes clearly perceived their primary role as that of educators with the goal of working with students towards educational success. This was demonstrated by the comment from one educator that *they* (students) *should experience success, or succeed better within destination undergraduate programmes than direct-entry students ideally.*

The notion of 'success' was important also for those educators working in bridging programmes but balanced with the belief that *we* (educators) *need to acknowledge that different people come to adult education for different reasons and it's not necessarily to credentialise.*

The last belief may be in conflict with a university's philosophical stance in providing pre-entry programmes to increase the student numbers enrolling in undergraduate programmes of study. Added to this is an institutional perception of a 'successful' programme being one where the majority of students have been certificated with the flow-on effect of entry into university.

Educators within bridging programmes, and to a lesser extent those within tertiary foundation programmes, viewed success on an individualised basis, rather than from collective statistics. This was evidenced by the comment of one participant that *successful learning involves finding relevance, drawing on own and others' cultural diversity, plus ideas and concepts that people can actually relate to.* Success was assumed to include learning progressively to speak (or possibly understand) jargon, creating a different mindset of understanding and therefore de-marginalising.

Frustration was evident in describing the processes involved in learning 'academic speech'. One participant spoke out strongly that *it's the kind of stuff you (*student*) don't realise is happening, but the lack of it is what marginalises you.* In addition to the necessity of learning academic speech, participants believed that choice was created through overt demystification and clarification of academia. Several participants gauged successful learning as transparency of choice; academia laid bare ('emperor with no clothes' analogy) to scrutiny and worth, with subsequent choice made as to personal relevance. One participant commented on this by saying:

> *I don't see anybody coming through a bridging programme not having succeeded. It's succeeding by whose definition? If somebody gets accepted into a degree programme that is success. Sometimes it's the actual beginning and actually getting through and finishing something that's the measure of success. I don't see anyone coming through a bridging programme as being unsuccessful or having not been touched in some way. They all succeed because there is no room for not succeeding. It's not in the equation. It's about purpose and transparency of learning.*

These findings indicate that there were generally believed purposes of programmes in meeting the needs of students 'bridging' into tertiary education. These included a stair casing (or analogous 'bridge') into further study, demystification of academia, and engagement in a learning environment. However, specific purpose/focus differences were noted between participants working in the various bridging and foundation programmes offered in the greater Auckland area. Bridging programmes were believed to provide a gradual (individually determined) 'staircase' towards personal growth in learning which may or may not lead into tertiary study. In contrast, tertiary foundation programmes were believed to provide an analogous 'bag of academic tools' that would assist students in undergraduate study programmes.

Educator Orientation

Theoretical Orientation

Study participants were asked what differences they perceived between the way adults and children learn. This led to discussion on the concept of andragogy as potentially distinctive from that of pedagogy and whether there was a need to redefine adult learning and teaching practice in light of this. Participants were pensive when the question was broached. After hesitation, one participant spoke of her orientation towards adult learning in line with the questioning:

> *Andragogy is looking at adult learning, at specific strategies that perhaps could be considered when, I don't even like using the word 'teaching adults' that much, but working alongside adults. I guess it includes some of the things we consider in relation to perhaps the developmental stages and social kind of context of where an adult is, opposed to where a child is and I think there are differences.*

When asked to elaborate on the perceived differences, she was cautious in her reply and clearly looked uncomfortable at pigeonholing distinctive learning differences. She stated that there were:

> *lots and lots of similarities. I don't know that I would deal any differently with considering individual traits and so on of an adult, as you would with a child, but an awareness of the differences between perhaps the worldview of an adult to that of a child in so far as responsibilities. Individualism though, I would hope my kids are treated as individuals as much as I would like to be if I came to this place.*

Amongst all participants, there was hesitation in deciding whether there were

indeed differences in the way adults and children learn but the worldview of an adult was singled out as being an influencing factor. One participant, whose orientation was developmentally inclined, highlighted this. This educator, who had taught in primary schools plus a variety of tertiary programme types articulated differences in philosophy and approach to practice:

> *There's a huge difference, there are some similarities of course but there are different approaches. With children we tend to take a developmental approach to their learning and they master this skill before they can move to that skill and it is often quite linear. Whereas with adult education, particularly with the foundation programmes, I think we work on a more holistic level hopefully.*

When asked to clarify the concept of 'holism' in terms of adult learners as distinct from children, the participant was clear in her orientation towards:

> *acknowledging and recognising the skills that a person has acquired outside the formal learning context; single parents who run households have exceptional mathematical skills. A lot of these skills have not been tapped. With children there isn't the life experience to the same extent because of time.*

Age, life experience and learning needs influenced a differing orientation by educators, noted by two participants who compared their previous teaching in the primary school sector with current tertiary involvement. On the differences in orientation, one of these participants voiced the practice differences related to this:

> *One is age, experience and with adult students they have different needs as opposed to children. I mean with children, you're sort of dictating to them. With adults it would be a two way process of working with them and seeing what they need and they'd be looking to you to see what you could do for*

them.

This orientation was reinforced by another participant who stated that:

> *They're not similar in terms of their psychological development, their experiences of the world, the responsibilities on them, those kinds of things are going to be different. The imperatives for them at the time, they are going to be different.*

The attributes of adult learners highlighted were closely aligned with the original assumptive principles put forward by Knowles (1980). This was noted in the perceived differences between adults and children in relation to self-concept and breadth of life experience. The differences appeared to affect the interaction between educators and students. This was demonstrated by the philosophical belief voiced by one participant that:

> *We're more equitable with an adult because they happen to have life experience and skills, whereas with a child you know they don't have so many of those experiences so you are leading them. The key is to draw out those experiences and skills and reinforce those in a much more equitable way than you would with a child.*

In clarifying the term 'equitable', this person stressed that the learning principles for any age were the same but the approach towards learning differed between adults and children. All participants appeared reluctant to commit themselves to a hypothetical stance on adult learning being distinctive from children. Although participants articulated distinct adult learning characteristics and attributes, they were loath to differentiate andragogy and pedagogy. None used the phrase 'andragogical' to describe adult learning and yet all emphasised distinctive characteristics and experiences that adults bring to learning situations. Andragogy was not a word/concept used professionally although the study participants were

aware of the term. All could clearly articulate adult learning strengths and areas of weakness but none used the term andragogy to encompass these. However, the term pedagogy was used. One participant qualified use of this term by describing pedagogy as a *word you 'adopt' as a professional* but did not believe the same of andragogy. This person did state that andragogy was *to do with adult learning and teaching as opposed to pedagogy* thus assuming a difference.

Although participants did not articulate a differential terminology between adult and children learners, there was a clear sense of differentiation when describing the attributes of each. Comments such as *children don't have life experience to draw on, often interaction is in 'enculturing' them into an education system, expecting conformity and behavioural management* contrasts with adults being *informed and informants within educational programmes.* The emphasis on life experience differences coincided with an original assumptive principle put forward by Knowles (1980) in justifying a concept of andragogy.

Consensus of 'delivering' to individual needs of adult students was considered paramount to successful learning with adults having a greater awareness of life experiences. One participant stated that *the key is to draw out these experiences and skills and reinforce those in a much more equitable adult way* in contrast to children who are being 'led' through formal primary and to a degree, secondary schooling. The participant elaborated on this statement, emphasising that:

> *An adult's world, or context is fuller than a child's, is wider with the amount of experience and things that people come with (to formal education) as an adult. They should be considered foremost, one of the fundamental things of adult teaching and learning.*

All participants concluded their thoughts on andragogy versus pedagogy by stating that teaching and learning principles pertaining to each could be transferable along a continuum. This thinking also coincides with Knowles (1989) who clearly

articulated that andragogy paralleled pedagogy and was never intended to oppose it.

Social Orientation

Participants were asked why they chose to teach in tertiary pre-entry programmes as opposed to degree programmes and/or postgraduate programmes that are often afforded greater professional kudos in institutional settings. One participant stated that *a fundamental belief in people* as capable learners guided teaching practice in this adult education sector.

There was a perceived enjoyment in working alongside individuals from diverse cultural, ethnic and gender backgrounds, at a 'grass roots' level of tertiary education. One participant elaborated on this practice of working alongside students as integral to meeting the needs of those bridging into tertiary education:

> *Where I can see potential and think of ways of looking at things from other perspectives, maybe away from the dominant, generally Pakeha New Zealand way as being the only way things will be looked at.*

In qualifying this comment, the participant added a belief that *people have valuable experience and knowledge that is different to my own, and that's the interesting part, getting to know the students I work with.*

Another participant chose to teach in pre-entry programmes rather than in under/post graduate settings because it *allows me to pursue education from the heart as well as from the head. I want to feel with my work. I don't want to be just treading out, going through the curriculum.* Others held this sentiment.

Following thoughtful hesitation, one participant said:

I always learn lots about myself, it's always challenging me about the way I think... it provides an environment that's always changing and that's what I like about it. It's a huge reality check, and humbling in lots of ways too... this keeps me in touch, grounded in the reality of what education is about. I think we (educators) get caught up in the rules of an institute and for me, these students are a link to what's happening out there.

This last statement reinforces those of Ribbens and Edwards (1998) who emphasise the importance of interacting in 'everyday' lives with individuals whose life experiences differ from one's own, in making sense and meaning of experiences. Several participants spoke of 'person traits' that are attributable to educators choosing to work in tertiary pre-entry programmes. One participant spoke philosophically of these traits and the interaction with practice:

By and large, people that enter this field have got strong values. Effective teachers bring well-developed interpersonal skills to the job and I think that makes a profound difference when you're educating people. I believe students really value a teacher caring about them and their lives, someone who is responsive, who shows warmth and caring, that simply, they actually care.

The traits described coincide with those shown by Watt (2002) and Thompson (1997), of empathy, authenticity, acceptance and an emphasis on advanced communication skills. The philosophical underpinnings of these findings equate to a belief system that values equality and an emphasis on personal relationships in establishing a climate conducive to learning.

Educator Practice

Meeting Student Academic Needs

All participants felt that ideally, individuals, regardless of age or maturation, should have personalised interaction that was developmentally appropriate and coincided with defined goals and aspirations. Each participant spoke of purpose as ideally wishing to make a difference to individual learning. Embedded in this was a pragmatic approach, underpinned by sound understanding of adult learning practice. One participant described this approach to practice:

> *I think we have to be reasonably structured with these students and being really clear of what sort of actual academic skills they need. The more I work in this area, the more I think self direction and so on is a good thing, however at this point I think we have to be really clear about what we're doing and what we expect our students to know.*

All participants believed that successful learning involves active engagement between individuals, with clear intent and direction. This belief was voiced by one participant as *assisting students to negotiate and navigate their way through areas of academia where we, as educators, have knowledge and experience.*

From an educator perspective, it appears that adult learning involves more than a cognitive shift (Illeris, 2002; Cantwell & Mulhearn, 1997). The findings indicated that there is a close link between the social orientation of adult learners, their emotional predisposition and cognition. These links towards successful learning were assumed by study participants to be a primary focus in guiding educator practice.

Meeting Student Emotional and Social Needs

Participants assumed that for sound learning to occur students needed to engage with educators and fellow students in communication and support, plus familiarity with a wider learning environment. The latter encompasses familiarity with physical surroundings and structured support networks.

Making connections with others was viewed as imperative within tertiary pre-entry programmes in *forming analogous bridges* between current perceptions and future direction. Participants spoke emphatically on the importance of connections being made. One participant reflected on this, by describing a personal perspective on connectedness:

> *The connection is vital. Some students I connect with right at the beginning of a semester and for others it sometimes feels too late to have made a difference. Some personalities are more recognisable than others and some students make themselves known. If we had more time maybe I could connect with more.*

In linking the diversity of student attributes and experience that students take to the formal learning environment, this participant went on to say:

> *I am certainly not 'au fait' with lots of cultural norms and other cultures but I am aware of that fact and I am honest about it. I say to students that I would not profess to understand their family norms. I am aware that there are differences and I think it's making that understanding to students overt and that's what starts the connection.*

The connections fostered between educators and students, and increasingly between students and peers are assumed integral to meeting student needs. The connections also provide a vital social dimension to individual learning as

illustrated by Illeris (2002). One participant explained the importance of this connectedness by commenting that:

> *The students expect a lot us* (educators) *in providing understanding, making the engagements possible, the debate, the rephrasing, redoing, making the links. I think good teachers engage with their students towards a co-construction of meaning. It gives students a chance to engage with people's behaviours who are really good at being in an educational environment.*

Participants assumed an educator role within tertiary pre-entry programmes to be one of working alongside students, assisting in goal clarification and working towards successful learning. One participant, who had previously conducted research on the skills required for entry into undergraduate study, identified an educator's role as being that of:

> *helping students develop the kinds of skills and abilities to access the resources that are going to make it possible to succeed in academia. They need to be assisted in thinking of their future orientation. What kind of life are they saying they want to lead, and what are the kinds of things might help them get there?*

Creating Learning Environments

Successful learning was perceived differently between tertiary foundation and bridging programme educators, based primarily on institutional directives as opposed to personal philosophies. However, maintaining a programme focus was stressed by all participants in meeting the needs of students bridging into tertiary education. After some thought, one participant articulated that:

> *You* (educator) *provide a realistic context...here's your* (student) *goal, here's*

where your (student) *skills are at the moment, this is what you* (student) *need to get there, and build into that the capabilities that are important as you go along.*

The educator's role in this interaction was explained as:

working with people to help them make sense of their lives and their experiences. This includes their under-education, so that when they get a new sense of themselves, how they are transformed in terms of how they see themselves, how they see the world around them, how they understand power and power relations, then they can see forward towards goals that they define themselves.

Those interviewed spoke of trust, mutual respect and interest in the lives of others as being integral to social connections being fostered and nurtured. This thinking was emphasised by one participant who explained the interactive process as being:

With adult students, they bring a great wealth of knowledge, of experience into the classroom, which makes a huge difference, it just makes the teaching and learning inside the classroom more dynamic, more interesting, more focused. In order to tap into this knowledge and experience there must be a sense of credibility afforded both teacher and students. The interplay between is what adds to the fabric of the learning experience, enriching it for dual learning.

One person spoke of *knowing you've made a difference* to students' learning. This was achieved through constant interpersonal interaction and connectedness on more than a cognitive level. Personal interest in the lives of others, particularly their social lives, was assumed to enhance student success. In stressing this point one participant clarified the relationship as being *I* (teacher) *support you* (student)

and encourage you to be the best that you can so that you have the power for yourself to make your own decisions.

It was generally assumed that students also 'en-cultured' each other into and within a formal learning environment. Participants cited examples of student connections in forged friendships and study groups, which led to solid support networks both in tertiary pre-entry programmes and beyond. This was shown in the following statement that shows the power of group cohesiveness when confronting uncertainty:

> *A group of foundation students gained strength of purpose from each other. In one session they were asked to 'build a bridge' to where they wanted to go. So about four of them build a bridge, they said, 'yeah, we've built a bridge, straight to the undergrad 'Intro' paper'.*

Participants assumed that once a peer group was formed, adult learners began to derive relevancy and emotional commitment from that connection. The power of student peer group interaction was commented on by one participant as involving:

> *a whole lot of socio-cultural stuff that goes on in the peer groups that adds to their learning, they are scaffolding their own learning around their shared experiences.*

I believe this last statement embodies the relationships that are actively fostered in tertiary pre-entry programmes and provide the rich interweave of cognitive, emotional and social dimensions of learning (Illeris, 2002). This appears to be fostered initially between educators and students, and increasingly includes student peer group connections, in successfully creating an environment that meets the needs of students bridging into tertiary education.

Future Directions for Tertiary Pre-Entry Programmes

Participants were asked where they believed tertiary pre-entry programmes were placed within tertiary institutional learning, the relevance of such programmes and the future of such programmes in New Zealand. This questioning aimed at gauging a focus for programme directions in terms of guiding future recommendations.

Participants were unanimous in their belief that tertiary pre-entry programmes were vital in addressing equity and access to tertiary institutions for more than just 'successful' school leavers. In terms of a larger educational picture, one person believed that New Zealand's secondary school system needed to diminish its *dumb* and *failure* perception, which many school leavers take through to adulthood. One participant who worked closely with students in secondary schools and those bridging into tertiary education believed that:

> *Schools are failing our children, specifically Pasifika and Maori, by heaving them out because of behavioural differences. They are being set up in alternative education, which is taking them further and further away from being able to achieve tertiary level study.*

Another participant, who works alongside Pasifika students and is passionate about the relevancy and importance of bridging programmes in the future, made the following observation:

> *I see tertiary bridging programmes as an imperative and it's not so we can get our kids in here to become clones or perpetuate a status quo. We're getting them into these programmes to think about making changes that come from dialogue and discourse.*

Participants generally believed that both tertiary foundation and bridging programmes were viable options in rectifying learning misconceptions. These programmes were seen as forums for demystification, for valuable connectedness and for engaging diverse potential and talent that would otherwise be lost to academic endeavour.

Universities were perceived as places that needed to be more responsive to a diverse student populace. A participant, who had previously discussed an analogy of tertiary institutions as being an *emperor with no clothes* in terms of academic demystification, now emphasised the importance of flexibility and openness to change. She stated: *It's important that we don't see universities as unchangeable and that everybody around them must change because that impacts on participation issues.*

The idea of increasing enrolment numbers into tertiary pre-entry programmes without additional resources did not fit with educators' philosophical stance on small group numbers enhancing learning potential. One participant voiced concern at this trend by explaining that:

> *The bigger the programmes get and the more productive, the more they are noticed by the university but it's actually diminishing the intrinsic factors of what the programmes are all about. Small groups allow me to know the students, their areas of strength and need. I can work alongside them, interacting, assisting, talking.*

The concern voiced here was in losing the 'personal touch' of active engagement with individual students, which was viewed as paramount to successful learning. It is this personal involvement and interaction that appeared to be one of the main reasons why educators chose to teach within this area of education and possibly, a reason for their greatest concern at current trends.

At an institutional level, there was general belief that tertiary pre-entry programmes required *better recognition and validity within education,* an acknowledgement of the valued role they play in equity of access to universities and tertiary institutes. There was scepticism voiced by several participants at the university's commitment to these programmes, embodied by the comment that:

> *Although we talk about equity and access at University level, it appears that all the energy goes into professional positions and research. I think that tertiary foundation programmes have been a 'poor cousin'.*

In light of this statement, there was the hope that, given time and continued documented success of tertiary pre-entry programmes, tertiary institutions (and particularly universities) would favour them with resources to respond to the varied and valued student populace in both design and delivery.

Summary

This chapter has analysed the data collected from ten interviews which informed this study. The data was thematically collated into four areas, each of which provided an insight into the philosophical assumptions of educators teaching in tertiary pre-entry programmes.

The assumed purposes of these programmes were identified. There were specific differences noted in alleged purpose between programme types, principally in terms of aims and destination outcomes. There were also generalities assumed across programme types. These included 'demystification' of academia and 'engagement in a learning environment' as being paramount to successful 'bridging' into tertiary study.

Educator orientations in tertiary pre-entry programmes revealed similar findings

across all participants. There was a belief in individual learning ability that participants felt they were well suited to tapping into, in providing assistance to meet student needs. In order to do this effectively, participants articulated factors that guided their practice. These included a sound educational focus on adult learners in meeting academic needs plus the engagement required between students and educators in meeting social and emotional needs. It also included educators creating a learning environment where students engaged in processes designed to enhance their abilities.

Strong relationships between educators and students were assumed paramount to successful learning, with educators providing a variety of roles; role models of academic competency, mentor, guide and pastoral care. Peer relationships were also discussed, revealing an assumed connection between supportive peer relationships and successful academic attainment.

Participants were united in their belief that tertiary pre-entry programmes were vital to meeting societal equity issues. However, there was tension noted at the trend to increase sizes of programmes and thus potentially lessen the active engagement between educators and students. This personal connectedness was assumed to be integral to the overall success of pre-entry programmes in meeting the needs of students bridging into tertiary education.

CHAPTER 5

"It is not so much what happens to people but how they interpret and explain what happens to them that determines their actions, their hopes, their contentment, emotional wellbeing, and their performance" (Mezirow, 1991, p. xiii).

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter weaves the literature/resource findings, the findings from the research study and my own evolving thinking towards my practice as an adult educator. The question that guided the literature/resource review was:

What are the tensions for educators in meeting the needs of students bridging into tertiary education?

Tensions result from discord between educator practice and the philosophical beliefs underpinning this. In addressing this question, I focused on tertiary pre-entry programmes that are currently being offered in traditional tertiary institutions. I reviewed the basis of these programmes from an historical perspective, their perceived **purpose** and the influencing factors on the programmes. Factors that did appear to influence programme purpose were social and political and hence these areas of tension were reviewed.

The second area of tension was that of **students**. In this review, I focused on the complexity of a student profile within this sector of education and of the challenges facing educators in meeting the diverse needs of students wishing to bridge into tertiary study.

The third tension area reviewed was that of **adult educators**. This included the roles they have in assisting students and the challenges they face in attempting to maintain congruence between their philosophies and educational practice.

A fourth tension area that was reviewed was that of **teaching/learning processes**. It is these processes that are assumed to expose the basis for philosophical underpinnings to educator practice. The concept of andragogy was specifically discussed to determine the relevance of specific adult learning principles to tertiary pre-entry programmes. In the review of teaching/learning processes an overview of a Contemporary Learning Theory (Illeris, 2002) was introduced. The theory specifies three dimensions of learning that have meaning to tertiary pre-entry students; cognitive, emotional and social. I specifically favoured this approach to learning as the social aspect of learning was incorporated overtly as being important and integral to learning. Cantwell's 'Model of Learning' (2001) explored levels of learning but was aligned closely with Illeris's theoretical basis, specifically in terms of social readiness to learn, and generally across all three dimensions.

The relevance of the qualitative research to this thesis was to gauge current adult educators' philosophical assumptions that guided their practice and in particular their interaction with adult learners. The research was undertaken to compare and contrast with the literature/resource review and was guided by the question:

What philosophical assumptions underpin current adult educator practice within tertiary pre-entry programmes?

Findings from the research identified four main themes that guided my thinking and added an educator's perspective to the literature/resource material already gathered. The themes were:

- **Purposes of Programmes**
- **Educator Orientation**

- **Educator Practice**
- **Future Directions**

Evolving from these findings are matters for educators to consider in order to reduce the tensions that are apparent between educator philosophies and practice, in meeting the needs of students bridging into tertiary education. These have been guided by the question:

What considerations by educators are required to meet the needs of students bridging into tertiary education?

The matters identified as requiring consideration are:

- **The Environment**
- **The People**
- **The Future**

Each area is discussed separately but all areas interrelate closely to create the changing environment of tertiary pre-entry education.

The Environment

Tertiary pre-entry programmes are expected to provide an educational service. There are different perceptions as to what comprises programme types and what the programme purposes are. The findings from this study clearly indicate a difference in philosophical underpinnings of programme types, namely foundation and bridging.

Based on the findings in this study and the perceived differences suggested by educators in the two programme types, it appears that institutions have different

reasons for student enrolments in these programmes. Those enrolling in tertiary foundation programmes are assumed to progress directly into undergraduate study upon successful completion of a certificate programme. That is the perception of the institution and ethically the philosophy underpinning educator practice in that setting. It follows the thinking of Foley (1995) in terms of 'formal' learning when contextually situated. The programme purpose, and those working within it, is to assist the students to successfully move from tertiary pre-entry into undergraduate status.

For bridging programmes, educators assume that students enrol with a perceived expectation of 'staircasing' towards qualifications, which may not necessarily include tertiary undergraduate study. There appears to be a greater emphasis on exploring self-concepts and the self in relation to a wider learning society as discussed by Mezirow (1991) within a 'Perspective Transformation'. This is also evidenced in a practitioner role as advocated by Schon (1983). It appears that the skills that lead to perspective transformation are overtly integrated into bridging programmes but covertly embedded in the philosophy of a tertiary foundation programme.

The difference in educator perception adds to the already confused status and purpose of tertiary pre-entry programmes. The question 'What exactly is 'Bridging' education?' has been posed on recent occasions (Anderson, 2002; Benseman, 2002) with varying answers and perspectives. Findings from this research go some way towards clarifying educators' perspectives but in this educational sector, there is tension based on the confusion resulting from inconsistent terminology and intent of programmes. This occurs at a personal, institutional and political level. Efforts have been made to clarify programme types, purposes, educator, and student involvement (AUT 'Think Tank', 2003). The AUT 'Think Tank' is an initiative to put forward terms of reference to the Ministry of Education in order to lessen the tension created by terminology and purpose confusion and, in communication with governmental officials, provide a sound basis for future policy making.

The institutional aims of tertiary pre-entry programmes have a bearing on educator practice philosophy but not in terms of personal philosophies. There was congruity noted in the educational philosophies of those who participated in this research study, which coincides with prior research (Bailey, 2002). This congruence incorporates a socially-orientated philosophy towards equity of access to tertiary institutional learning, plus demystification of the processes involved in academia. It includes overt scrutiny of the 'power' dimensions of institutional learning in bridging programmes as articulated by Bailey (2002). Demystification in tertiary foundation programmes appears to involve integrating cultural and social aspects of institutional learning to an adult learner's advantage, i.e. an 'enculturation' process. However, in tertiary bridging programmes, demystification appears to draw from individual student perspectives towards an alteration, or shift in perspective.

The learning environment cannot be separated from the individuals who create it, namely educators and students. The diverse student profiles and their corresponding needs are an unknown component in the future learning environment. The initial profile of students (Chapter Two) and the complexity of their needs in bridging into tertiary study have provided a background for considerations that educators must address in meeting those needs.

The purpose of tertiary pre-entry programmes has traditionally been towards equity of access for 'non-traditional' students. This notion has recently encompassed a cohort of students who demonstrate differing needs to those who traditionally accessed the programmes. The University of Waikato has embraced this change by offering programmes that mirror the needs of the differing 'cohorts' with impressive results to date. Collison and Drayton (2002) observed that age alone is not the explanatory reason for altering teaching strategies within tertiary pre-entry learning environments. What was observed were attitudinal trends that related to the age of students and these attitudes impacted on the learning environment. Motivation, based primarily on life experience, was one influencing factor. This was observed in the self-regulatory behaviour of 'adult' students. Within the context of

the tertiary pre-entry programmes offered at the University of Waikato, 'adult' students were nominated as those who had been away from the secondary schooling system long enough to have experienced life away from formal education (as defined by Justice & Dornan, 2001) in contrast to those who enter a tertiary pre-entry programme straight from a secondary-school environment. Self-regulatory behaviour, described by Cantwell (2001), was observed in a desire to share experiences with others and a clear idea of what 'adult' students wished to gain from a university bridging programme. Overall, these students were intrinsically motivated to achieve and were willing to cooperatively embrace learning opportunities. Responding to this, educators offered a learning environment that was largely composed of small interactive sessions where collaborative learning was encouraged.

In contrast, 'school leavers' were motivated by extrinsic factors, primarily assessments and the easiest route to achieving the required grades for entry into undergraduate programmes. A 'school culture' mentality was observed by educators, which included minimal personal responsibility for learning in favour of 'teacher telling all'. Over time, and following a gradual awareness by many 'school leavers' of an adult learning environment where responsibility for personal learning was actively encouraged, these students did begin to take responsibility for their own learning. Educators, through compulsory attendance, structured classes and slowly weaning students off these rigid processes, actively orchestrated this process. This is one example of meeting student needs and worth considering in other tertiary institutions.

In meeting the collective needs of diverse student groups, learning environments will need to be flexible in encompassing increasing student diversity and yet structured in a sustainable way, with clear exit outcomes that are attainable and relevant to the majority of these student groups. This will include individual needs analysis as identified by the Ministry of Education (2001) and then positioning students in programmes that best suit their needs and aspirations. It will also

require a clear understanding by educators, institutions, the wider community and political agencies of the specific purposes of programmes. Regardless of individual student complexities, the learning environment needs to be conducive to assisting students to successfully 'bridge' into tertiary education. I believe this can be achieved through considering educator practice and the underpinning philosophical basis for practice.

The People

Personal Connectedness

Formal educational learning requires an interaction between educator and student (Foley, 1995). Individuals have tended to engage in formal education in the tertiary sector with the idea that they will learn from adult educators who 'provide' knowledge that equates to learning. This notion is negated by both Illeris (2002) and Cantwell & Mulhearn (1997), who claim that perceived learning from an educator's perspective and the reality for students are often quite different. Neither doubts that the degree of engagement in learning depends to a large extent on the connection made between educators and individual learners. The connection is shown to be paramount in the student's motivation to strive for understanding and relevance (Cranton, 1994). Adult learners who are validated for who they are and whose life experiences are genuinely sought as part of their learning process, appear to engage in learning more readily than those who perceive isolation of learning episodes (MacKeracher, 1996).

Philosophical assumptions from participants in the research study supported these claims. A positive learning environment included students being shown respect, names used in communication and an interest in individual lives expressed. This was particularly so for mature students (Bailey, 1999; Bowden & Marton, 1998; Cranton, 1994). Cranton (1994) explained the importance of personal advisement

in nurturing a relationship of trust between student and educator, which reduced learner anxiety and may increase confidence in an individual's ability to participate in learning discourse. Bailey (1999) supported this view in relation to mature women enrolled in tertiary pre-entry programmes. Bowden and Marton (1998) emphasised that personal connectedness was required throughout a tertiary pre-entry programme. This increased student retention rates in the programme, and the likelihood of subsequent enrolment into a tertiary study programme. Assumptions made by study participants endorsed these views. Comments of *providing a realistic context, building on capabilities, moving towards being self-authored, giving people tools and frameworks for reading their world* illustrated engagement in a learning context instigated and fostered by educators.

Overall, personal connection with individual and groups of students has a greater chance of meeting needs towards success than any academic programme. This was evidenced in the philosophical stances of study participants towards the importance of interacting with students on a personal level. The importance of personal connection between educator and student for active learning engagement to occur has been viewed as imperative for a student to remain focused and committed to formal learning (Harford, 2002). Research participants believed that this was achieved through small group structures, which allowed optimal interaction between educators and individual students plus the promotion of peer group communication.

Group Connectedness

Educators do face challenges in facilitating learning groups when confronted with the myriad of diverse cultural and societal experiences that students bring to the learning environment. This diversity has been previously documented (Chapter Two) as accommodating four distinct groups, based on assumed needs in bridging into tertiary education. Within each of these groups there are further sub groups with even more specific needs, which provide challenges in terms of active

engagement in a learning environment.

Findings from this research indicate that the assumed role of educators in meeting student needs is to work alongside individual students. Watt (2002) stated the importance of educator traits of genuineness, honesty, respect and trust as being crucial to this relationship. The study participants agreed with this view and this was demonstrated by the comment from one participant that *students connect better with a teacher who is open and gives of him or herself, who appears human, and treats students as they would like to be treated.*

Interacting with students can be exhausting but it's vital for making the connections that foster success. In order to nurture this connection with students, it is preferable to interact in smaller groups, which increases the likelihood of trust, dialogue and consonance amongst members regarding implied learning outcomes (Jacques, 2000). In a group environment where dialogue is active, educators can then gauge the learning that occurs. The effectiveness of learning appears to be determined by sharing of individual ideas and the meaning created individually and by the group. Philosophical assumptions made by study participants supported this. It was suggested by one participant that:

> *Successful learning involves finding relevance, drawing on individual and other's' cultural diversity, plus ideas and concepts that people can actually relate to.*

Integration of new ideas appears to extend learners' experiences by building on what they already know with qualitative feedback from peers and educators adding to the learning engagement for meaning. Bowden and Marton (1998) have explained that within a supportive, cognitively stimulating environment, students and educators gain from the pooling of ideas and experiences to a personal schema of meaning. Both appear to learn to value their own perceptions whilst also questioning their efficacy in an environment that celebrates the individual's ways of

'seeing', as described by Cantwell (2001).

Engaging with a student peer group has also correlated positively with perceived and actual student success, and a communal strength of purpose. This cohesiveness can be observed in a learning environment under Rogoff's 'Interactionist' viewpoint and is fostered in reflective practice as advocated by Moon (1999). The links that are made foster a social connection that interweaves traits of commitment, responsibility and accountability, not only to individual learning but also towards others. This parallels the internal (cognitive/operative, emotional/affective) and external (social/dispositional) dimensions of learning advocated by Illeris (2002) and Cantwell (2001).

Academic Connectedness

The various roles enacted by the educator in any learning situation are not easily learnt or implemented. An educator who chooses to teach in tertiary pre-entry programmes must wear many 'hats' in engaging with students. One study participant articulated these roles as requiring *well-developed interpersonal skills.* A second participant expressed roles of providing *academic skills, giving people tools and frameworks for reading their world* and a third as *working with people to transform their notions of themselves* as well as providing a theoretical curriculum to meet assessment outcomes.

In terms of theoretical orientations underpinning educator practice, it would appear from the findings of this research, and backed by the various authors discussed in Chapter Two, that there is no reason or interest in pursuing an andragogical stance towards adult education. I agree with Mezirow's (1991) belief that andragogy is a professional perspective of adult educators but not necessarily articulated as such. It is interesting to note that although adult educators agree with Knowles's (1980, 1989) distinct adult learner principles and appear to actively utilise strategies to assist those principles, they choose to remain within a pedagogical frame of

thinking about education. Within the context of this research, I believe it has been worthwhile acknowledging the existence of an andragogical concept and delving into its historical orientation. This may be an area for later research and engaged debate between educators.

Institutional Connectedness

It is important that the environment and philosophical ethos of tertiary institutions are stripped of traditional 'mystique' so that students may feel safe and develop confidence in their being physically 'centred' and involved. The 'demystification' of academia is an area of education that has not been well documented. The notion that enculturation does demystify has been inferred (Bailey, 1999) but not discussed at length previously.

Interestingly, 'demystification' was emphasised by study participants with a different perspective noted between those working in bridging and foundation programmes. Educators in bridging programmes were intent on 'demystifying' academia and the institutions involved in academia. As one of the original purposes for establishing tertiary pre-entry programmes was to promote a return to formal learning for mature students (Bailey, 1999; Cantwell & Mulhearn, 1997), 'demystification' of academia is a commendable process and needs to be actively implemented.

In order to achieve this, students in bridging programmes appear to be taught the skills of self-reflection, the importance of self-analysis and working towards self–determination and choice of direction. Needs assessment and analysis assume a large interactive role in bridging programmes with choice and change of learning direction reflecting the process. This has been documented by Trewartha and Coltman (2002) in joint research on the retention of students in tertiary pre-entry programmes. Results indicate that pre-entry needs analysis data and intervention procedures do assist in the retention of students within programmes. However, a

different philosophical approach is seen in tertiary foundation programmes. It appears that the programmes offered at universities are keen to assist in an 'enculturation' process so that students may enter undergraduate study with the skills required to succeed at undergraduate study. This is achieved by working with students to demystify academia through experiential learning of literacy, numeracy, information technology and communication skills required to succeed at undergraduate study.

Overall, there appears to be a clear philosophical difference noted in terms of 'demystification' in each programme type. Nevertheless, all participants assumed a similar aim in terms of assisting individual students towards a perspective alteration that would assist them towards success (Barr & Tagg, 1995). This includes an emphasis on personalising learning processes so that individual students take increasing responsibility for their learning.

Developing a Philosophical Framework

In considering the connections that are assumed vital to meeting student's needs in bridging into tertiary study, I chose to revisit Illeris's Contemporary Learning Theory (2002) and enlarge on the applicability of the framework to tertiary pre-entry programmes. When interweaving the review of andragogy and various theoretical frameworks (Cantwell (2001), Foley (1995), Illeris (2002)) with the study findings, it appears that educators in this sector have an orientation to their practice that is not firmly theoretically based. This may be due to a lack of specific theoretical focus for practice but countered by a socio-educational ethos, as shown through Anderson's (2003) research. The research indicates that 58% of tertiary pre-entry educators surveyed in the greater Auckland area have post graduate qualifications but very few of these are in education. This finding demonstrates a highly qualified workforce which is not necessarily cohesive in educational theory or practice.

In light of this, a philosophical framework may be of use in guiding educator

practice within an environment that is dynamic yet unpredictable. Hence, I have adapted Illeris's triangulation of cognitive, emotional and social tension of learning into a philosophical structure. Each of the three dimensions has been revealed as being integral to adult learning and all are essential factors for educators to consider in meeting the needs of students bridging into tertiary education. I have adapted Illeris's triangulation (see Figure 1, p.24) to illustrate my perception of the interaction between educators and students in a learning process. Figure 2 illustrates the developing framework and positions of educator-student connectedness within the three important dimensions.

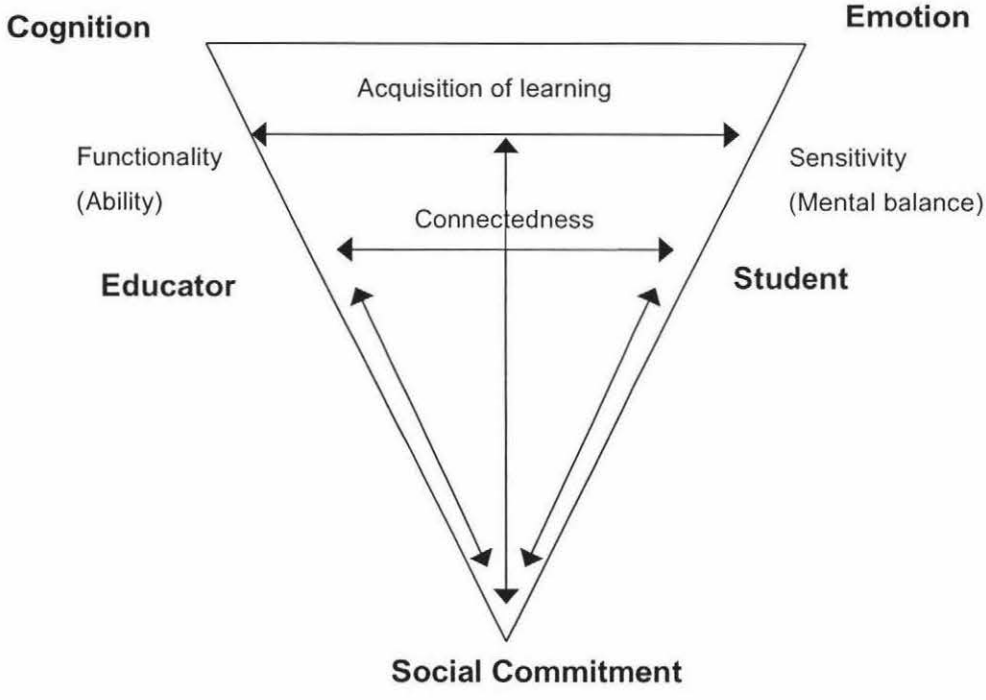

Figure 2: Adaptation of Illeris's *Interaction between dimensions in the tension field of learning.*

In Illeris's triangulation of tension, I perceive educators to lie within the socio-cognitive continuum, as I believe they provide impetus for function of meaning (functionality) and applying knowledge (ability). I placed students on the socio-emotional continuum as they may experience vulnerability (exposure) and sensitivity (deep feeling) within a socially determined context (tertiary institution).

The tension between the educators (socio-cognitive continuum) and students (socio-emotional continuum) creates the connectedness or engagement in purpose.

Inside the framework described, the relevancy of the social context comes into focus between the educator and student when engagement occurs. When a link occurs between the social environment (tertiary institution), educator and student, then acquisition of learning is probable through the connection (engagement). Study participants pointed towards this link when discussing the 'demystifying' aspect of academia. This included the integration of the social elements of students' lives into the current learning environment.

The triangulated framework provides a basis for logically assessing the relevancy of the three dimensions that are interlinking components of educator-student interaction but often articulated separately. The framework also reiterates the importance of connectedness between educators and students that was stressed by study participants. The applicability of the social and societal dimension has been highlighted throughout this study and emphasised by those interviewed, in terms of past and present life experiences and self-determination towards the future direction. I have nominated the 'social' apex of the triangulation as embracing a social commitment, comprised of past experiences of the student, present interactions and future expectations. This includes the experiences and memories students bring to a learning environment and which need to be acknowledged. It also includes the present interactions a student is committed to that connect social obligations in the learning environment and beyond, and which impact on the individual. Future expectations are the learning interface with cognitive and emotional dimensions in the learning environment and provide much of the impetus and motivation to learn.

As the framework develops, there could be an amalgamation of Cantwell's framework (2001) into Illeris's broader dimensional overview to integrate levels of

learning readiness within the framework. Foley's (1995) 'Forms of Learning' could also be incorporated to meet specific programme purposes in terms of formal, non-formal, informal and incidental learning experiences that are considered beneficial to the programme type. I believe Illeris provides a starting point for devising a philosophical framework on which to base educator-student interaction in a tertiary pre-entry programme that views the interaction of cognitive, emotional and social dimensions of learning as vital. It would also guide educator practice by keeping in focus the vital component of educator-student 'connectedness' in meeting student needs (Harford, 2002).

This developing framework is a positive step towards creating congruency between educator philosophies and practice. This framework overtly positions educators and students within the tension dimensions of learning. It implies that the interaction between educators and students will involve these three dimensions (emotional, cognitive and social) and will guide educator and student practice in meeting the needs of the students bridging into tertiary education.

The Future

Equity of Access

The present climate of tertiary pre-entry education gives rise for concern amongst educators and requires consideration for future development. Study participants expressed unease about the reality of the diverse student groups enrolling in the programmes and the philosophical assumption of addressing social equity issues. The tension created by this unease is due to the attempts to reconcile the current educational climate, created by diverse student needs and expectations, with the assumed purpose of programmes in addressing social equity. Social equity within the context of this study refers to access for groups of domestic students who traditionally have been excluded from tertiary education (Jenkins & Ka'ai, 1994).

Study findings indicate the desire of educators to ensure that groups of students who traditionally have not featured in tertiary education are visible and targeted for enrolment. Several participants spoke with real passion about *making sure we don't lose the talent pool among Maori and Pasifika* and *having the right people supporting their endeavours.* One participant was resolute in emphasising that educators guard against stifling Maori and Pasifika students in a 'Pakeha' orientated mould:

> *Bridging programmes are imperative but not so that we can get our kids in here to become clones or perpetuate a status quo. We're getting them into these programmes to think about making changes that come from dialogue and discourse.*

It is imperative that programme structures take into account the nature of learning for Maori and Pasifika and the relevance of connectedness factors that foster a desire to join and then remain in a programme of study (Anae, Anderson, Benseman & Coxan, 2002). This necessitates consideration of impinging societal and emotional factors that influence students while studying, ensuring that these are recognised and appreciated in the learning environment. Representatives from the Pacific Island Students Achievement Collective (PISAAC) at the University of Auckland have articulated factors that constrain learning and achievement for many Pasifika students and offer educators practical measures for addressing these factors (PISAAC, 2002).

Other institutional initiatives are in place in tertiary institutions to monitor and make contact with those students who are 'missing' from classes. An example is an initiative in place at Auckland University of Technology to support Pasifika and Maori students through their study programmes and contact students personally if there are substantial absences from teaching sessions. This is done in an effort to encourage a return to class and an engagement in learning. Preliminary evaluation of this scheme appears to have the desired results of a return to campus and study

(Integrated Team Model of Student Support (ITMOSS): Auckland University of Technology,2003).

Processes

A further area for educator consideration is that of maintaining an educational ethos of connectedness between educators and students. Ideally this is achieved through structuring the learning environment around small group learning with active participation via group processes, as articulated by Watt (2002). However, in the present educational climate, this appears at odds with the large numbers of students enrolling in programmes and the expectations they have (Collison & Drayton, 2002). In response to this situation, educators will need to develop and implement programmes that take account of the diversity. I believe this requires a mindset shift in terms of educational viewpoint. This is already demonstrated by the documented success of programmes run at the University of Waikato (Collison & Drayton, 2002). Development of a philosophical framework could assist in this process by ensuring the centrality of the educational ethos of student/educator connectedness and its fundamental importance to the success of tertiary pre-entry programmes.

Partnership

In determining the future directions of tertiary pre-entry programmes, it appears that consideration needs to be given to the terminology identifying programme types and general purposes assigned to programmes. Study participants clearly articulated differences in perception of purpose and educator practice within bridging and foundation programmes. However, study participants indicated similarities in belief and practice ideals. Demystification of academia and student engagement in a learning environment were seen as being integral to successful learning and therefore a focus for educators in considering and anticipating the

future of tertiary pre-entry programmes.

Anderson (2002), who has been actively involved in bridging education and research in New Zealand, provides a fitting summary comment and a way forward for future planning:

> *Bridging education must acknowledge ethnic, cultural, gender and age diversity but also prepare students for the frequently more closed environments of higher education and the professions. Further, while there is a focus on traditional/mainstream destinations, the students in bridging education have limited experience in traditional learning environments. The tensions created by these contradictions are not to be resolved but to be acknowledged and considered as the core drivers in the intentional designs of the pedagogy in the 'decision making' of the teacher* (p.12-13).

I believe this can be achieved through collaboration between educators, institutions, the wider community and governmental agencies with the central aim of meeting the needs of students bridging into tertiary education.

Summary

The essential matters considered in this section are closely interlinked. The environment that students encounter and interact with cannot occur without the people who form and sustain the environment. Educators and students together do this through connections made initially between educators and students and then progressively between student peer groups. It appears that the three areas requiring consideration, i.e. the environment, the people and the future, are filled with challenges.

I believe this is due to the variety of learning environments involved in meeting

student needs, the variety of student groups that educators are concerned with in meeting student needs and an unknown future in meeting student needs (and what those needs may be). Interweaving each of these areas are the educators, who provide the meaningful links with and for students. In order to do this, educators collectively need to communicate on and clarify the considerations made in response to this research.

The considerations that have been identified within this section are:

- The **environment** in which educators and students are engaging. This includes the expectations of programmes as to purpose and meaning, including terminology congruence. It also involves articulating the demystification processes involved in tertiary pre-entry programmes, so that these are clear to both educators and the students in programmes. The final consideration identified is the flexibility required to analyse individual student needs and then put into place appropriate study programmes to meet those individual needs.

- The **people** who are primarily the educators and students, and the relationships fostered between the two. The considerations within this section are those which ensure that connections between individuals and groups are made and fostered. This creates educational challenges in terms of class sizes and groupings to promote active engagement in learning endeavours. It also includes connections made between individual students and institutional ethos plus educational debate on theoretical underpinnings that guide practice. A philosophical framework has been outlined and this could become the basis for further design and clarity of educator purpose.

- The **future** of tertiary pre-entry programmes in meeting the diverse needs of students bridging into tertiary education. The primary consideration required within this area is that of ensuring equity of access for students who

traditionally have accessed tertiary study through bridging education. It would appear that educators are mindful of this purpose, but they must also consider implementing strategies that clearly address this essential basis to tertiary pre-entry programmes, as well as the myriad of groups currently accessing tertiary pre-entry programmes. This can be achieved through careful consideration of future processes and active connectedness with all students.

In this section essential matters have been considered. They pave the way for recommendations to assist the decision-making by adult educators on how best to meet the needs of students bridging into tertiary education.

CHAPTER 6

REFLECTIONS

I feel privileged to have undertaken this academic process. Through the elongated process, there have many insightful moments when I could clearly perceive the relevance and enjoyment in research. In daily life, I observe and interact with others and often come to personal conclusions that are mere assumptions with no basis. Throughout this study, I have been able to clarify assumptions, many of which were disclosed in Chapter One of this study. Other individuals have validated assumptions that I hold. In this respect, I have clarified my own purpose for engaging in adult education in tertiary pre-entry programmes. Other assumptions have been negated and illuminated my thinking.

I have gained knowledge through this experiential process. One particular area of insight has been the assumed differences between programme purpose, aims and educator focus in tertiary pre-entry programmes. This has been an unintentional benefit of this study. It was an area that puzzled me prior to this study, mainly because I was aware of the variety of programmes offered in tertiary institutions but was unable to gauge programme commonalities or difference. I am actively involved in the New Zealand Bridging Association and even within this energetic group the idea of programme differentiation had not been addressed adequately. I believe this study has done this. It has also demonstrated the need to clearly define areas of convergence and divergence in programme types, purpose and terminology. One of the assumed educator roles within tertiary pre-entry programmes is to work with students towards self-determination in pathway choice. A clear understanding of the qualities and aims of programmes offered in the various institutions would assist in recommending an appropriate choice of programme to meet personal needs and aspirations for adult students bridging into tertiary education.

Recommendations

Following consideration of tension areas between educator philosophies and practice in meeting the needs of students bridging into tertiary education, I recommend that the following actions be taken to move towards congruence between educator thought and action.

- National consensus between educators, tertiary institutions, communities and political agencies on the general and specific purposes of tertiary pre-entry programmes and the terminology associated with programmes.
- Clear indication on equity policies associated with tertiary pre-entry programmes.
- Exploration of a 'Bridging Theory' of learning based on sound educational practice and an acknowledgement of adult learners as having distinct intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for learning.
- Further development and implementation of a philosophical framework, which underpins educator practice.
- Guaranteed educator-student connection as an integral component to programme design, development and implementation.
- Development of processes that demystify academia which are overt to both educators and students and clearly recognised in programmes.

Future Research

There are a number of areas for further research that I believe will add to the body of knowledge in tertiary pre-entry education. These are:

- Exploration of student perspectives on the purposes of tertiary pre-entry programmes, examining congruence and divergence with adult educators.
- Exploration of the relevance of social dimensions of learning for adult

students within tertiary pre-entry programmes.

- Exploration of the assumed relevancy of interaction between cognitive, emotional and social dimensions of learning for students.

Based on findings from this study, I believe greater insight into the interaction between educators and students would be achieved through research in the above areas. My focus on further development of a philosophical framework to guide educator practice within tertiary pre-entry education has been sharpened as a result of this study. I feel confident in commencing this development with the knowledge I have gathered and the insight I have gained from my interaction with others in this sector of education.

APPENDIX 1

This consent form will be printed on Massey University letterhead paper once approved by MUHEC.

Philosophical Assumptions Underpinning Current Adult Educator Practice in Tertiary Pre-Entry Programmes.

Participant information sheet.

I'm Jane Morgan. I am currently embarking on a thesis as part of a Masters Degree in Adult Education at Massey University. I also teach within a Nursing foundation programme at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) and I am a member of a group developing a faculty-wide Health foundation programme, which will commence at AUT in February 2003.

I have been involved in teaching within foundation programmes for the past twelve years, having chosen to change my focus from undergraduate teaching to where I am now. I continue to have a passion for assisting adult learners to reach their academic potential and in particular those who request, or require added assistance to reach their goals.

I am aware that tertiary foundation programmes serve academic, social and political purposes and also that the institutions supporting each of these has vested interest in learner recruitment and outcomes.

Within this thesis I believe that I have an opportunity to explore my own personal beliefs and assumptions about foundation programmes; what underlies my teaching practices; and whether they are ideal or realistic within the societal climate of the 21 century.
Added to this exploration I would value input from others who teach in foundation programmes to add personal stories of their beliefs and assumptions underlying their practices.

If you wish to contribute your thoughts I ask that you be interviewed by me on your beliefs and assumptions underlying your teaching practice within foundation programmes. I anticipate this interview taking no more than an hour of your time.
I would like to audiotape the interview to assist with recollection at a later stage in transcribing the information. However, while being interviewed, you have the right to ask for the audiotape to be turned off at any point during the interview. Once interviews are transcribed each interviewee will be given a written transcript of their interview to verify both accuracy and relevancy to the aims of this research.
At any time between being interviewed and completion of transcribed interviews you can withdraw the information you have provided. Please note that due to pseudonyms being assigned it may be difficult to identify information and withdraw

it once it is collated.

The information you provide will be used as data within the body of my thesis, to guide and add to my own views within the context of the research project.

Any information you give me will remain confidential in terms of identification. I would however like to acknowledge all those who do contribute their thoughts but this will depend on approval being sought individually. All personal information will be collected by me and stored within a locked office either by my thesis supervisor, Dr. Margaret Gilling (Massey Wellington) or myself for the mandatory period of five years as per Massey University protocol.

Your perspectives are valued and a real contribution. A copy of the written thesis documentation will be made available to all those who participate in the research.

The findings of this research may be published and/or presented at a conference.

Should you have any further questions, please contact me.

With thanks,

Jane Morgan

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This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, WGTN Protocol No (02/129). If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Pushpa Wood, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Wellington, telephone 04 801 2794 x6723, email P.Wood@massey.ac.nz.

APPENDIX 2

This consent form will be printed on Massey University letterhead paper once approved by MUHEC

Philosophical Assumptions Underpinning Current Adult Educator Practice in Tertiary Pre-entry Programmes

CONSENT FORM

THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE (5) YEARS

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: **Date:**

Full Name - printed

APPENDIX 3

Interview Questions.

Philosophical Assumptions Underpinning Current Adult Educator Practice in Tertiary Pre-Entry Programmes

<u>To clarify</u>

- **What does the concept of 'Tertiary Foundation Programmes' mean to you?**

- **What is your interpretation of the term "Andragogy"?**

<u>Potential questions</u>

- **What do you believe are the purposes of Tertiary Foundation Programmes (TFPs)?**

- **Why do you choose to teach in TFPs?**

- **What is your perceived role as an educator in TFPs? / What guides your educator role?**

- **How would you describe your relationships/interactions with students in TFPs?**

- **Your thoughts on why students succeed / do not succeed in TFPs?**

- **What future direction do you envisage for Tertiary Foundation Programmes in NZ?**

APPENDIX 4

Data Analysis

THEMES		CATEGORIES
Andragogy: Interpretation Comparisons with Pedagogy	What are the commonalities / differences in thinking?	• Definition • Concept of Andragogy • Comparison with concept of Pedagogy • Distinctions between Andragogy and Pedagogy • Thinking convergence / divergence between interviewees
Purpose: Of TFP/Bridging	What are the links between the 4 areas?	• Concept of TFP/Bridging • Perceived purpose of TFPs • Successful learning in TFPs • Thinking convergence/divergence between interviewees
Philosophy: Underlying practice		• Choice of teaching in TFPs • Perceived role within TFPs • Learner / educator relationships • Thinking convergence/divergence between interviewees
Direction: Of TFP in NZ		• Personal visions of future direction • Thinking convergence / divergence between interviewees

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