

Internationalisierung Internationalisation

Semantik und Bildungssystem
in vergleichender Perspektive

Comparing Educational Systems
and Semantics

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Re-Framing Educational Borrowing as a Policy Strategy

Gita Steiner-Khamsi

In comparative education, a large rift yawns between those implementing and those studying educational borrowing and lending. A common misconception among practitioners holds that scholars in comparative education compare educational systems and selectively borrow or lend what "works," transferring it from one system to the other. Consistent with this view, policy analysts, for example, believe that the "comparative advantage" often lies in "learning from elsewhere" or "lessons learned from abroad."¹ This normative, ameliorative approach toward comparative studies – extracting models that are perceived as effective from other systems – holds huge appeal. In fact, it has generated a tremendous interest in comparative studies that is uncanny to comparativists. Scholars in comparative education have repeatedly referred to and warned against educational borrowing as an example of practitioners abusing the comparative study of educational systems to decontextualize education. For example, Robert Cowen recently revisited Sadler's hundred-year-old question as to what can be learned from the study of foreign systems, and illustrated that, in practice, the comparative study of educational systems has fueled a "cargo-cult," that is, wholesale export and import of educational models across national boundaries.²

¹ David Phillips, "Learning from Elsewhere in Education: some perennial problems revisited with reference to British interest in Germany," in *Comparative Education* 36:3 (2000), pp. 297-307; see also Jürgen Schriewer, "The Method of Comparison and the Need for Externalization: Methodological Criteria and Sociological Concepts," *Theories and Methods in Comparative Education*, ed. by Jürgen Schriewer & Brian Holmes (Frankfurt/M. etc.: Peter Lang, 1990), pp. 25-83.

² Robert Cowen, "Comparing Futures or Comparing Pasts?" in *Comparative Education* 36:3 (2000), pp. 333-342.

1. Making a Case for the Comparative Method: A Historical Perspective

The contemporary skepticism of many comparative researchers against educational borrowing and lending should not conceal the historical accounts of early comparativists who used borrowing as one of the key justifications for comparing "foreign systems."

From the early comparativists, Victor Cousin was perhaps the most ardent supporter of educational borrowing, recommending a three-step approach to comparative studies in education: first, to study local problems and needs in a particular educational system; second, to search for educational systems that had resolved similar problems and faced similar needs; and finally, to recommend borrowing of solutions from these other educational systems.³ Many comparative researchers point to Victor Cousin's accomplishment of advancing scientific credibility for the comparative study of educational systems. Cousin's survey of educational systems, closely related to what we nowadays would label a local "needs assessment" study, was a preliminary step to justify, at a later stage, educational borrowing from one educational system to another, or more broadly speaking, from one context to another. Cousin's early advocacy for educational borrowing, provided that the educational systems were similar, certainly helped to convince skeptical by-standers of the usefulness of the comparative method.

The question of "why compare?" has been re-phrased in many different ways over the past one and a half centuries. Sir Michael Sadler's question "what can we learn from the study of foreign systems?" is, for example, both perennial and centennial.⁴ In fact, as comparativists we seem to collectively suffer from a Zeigarnik effect.⁵ Precisely because the task of responding to this key question

³ Historical accounts of Victor Cousin's contribution to comparative education can be found in Walter V. Brewer, *Victor Cousin as a Comparative Educator* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1971); Patrice Vermeren, *Victor Cousin: le jeu de la philosophie* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1995). See also emerging new research by Joyce Goodman who documents that Sarah Austin (1793-1867), a political activist, scholar, writer and translator for Cousin, was instrumental in disseminating Victor Cousin's work in the United Kingdom: Joyce Goodman, *Lecture in the History of Education Program*, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York (December 17, 2001).

⁴ See George Z. F. Bereday, "Sir Michael Sadler's 'Study of Foreign Systems of Education'"; reprint of the notes of an address given at the Guildford Educational Conference, on Saturday, October 20, 1900, by M. E. Sadler, Christ Church, Oxford," in *Comparative Education Review* 7:3 (1964); see Cowen 2000.

⁵ Bluma Zeigarnik, Russian psychologist, first described in 1927 the psychological tendency to remember an uncompleted task rather than a completed task.

in comparative education has been neglected, it is constantly being asked and surfaces in other related research such as educational borrowing and lending. In fact, Sadler's question is still haunting us in comparative education to this very day. Sadler's ambivalence towards educational borrowing appears to be typical for many comparative researchers. In comparative education, there is a long-standing history of both warning against and fully embracing educational borrowing. Early comparative educational researchers went back and forth on whether the comparative study of educational systems should serve the borrowing and lending of educational reforms. As scholars they tended to warn against selective educational borrowing, as practitioners, however, they tended to advance educational borrowing by providing scientific proof for the comparability of the two systems involved; the one from which was borrowed, and the one to which reforms were transferred. Sir Michael Sadler (1861-1943), much cited for his 1900 speech on the "study of foreign systems of education",⁶ in which he warned against the selective borrowing and transfer of educational systems from one continent to another, in practice actively engaged in educational transfer. Sadler, the scholar and intellectual, repeatedly pointed out the inaccuracy of comparing and borrowing from one (national and cultural) context to another, whereas Sadler, the colonial advisor and practitioner, provided the stamp of scientific approval for transferring the American model of education for African Americans in the segregated South – known as the Hampton-Tuskegee model – from the United States to the African continent.⁷

Coming to grips with cross-national comparison, as a method that potentially de-contextualizes education, was also an academic concern of Sadler's student Isaac L. Kandel. For more than three decades (1915-1946) faculty at Teachers College, Columbia University, and for almost two decades (1946-1962) consultant for UNESCO, Kandel clearly advocated the contextual study of educational systems, also referred to as the historiographic method in comparative education. The *Education Yearbook*, which he edited between 1924 and 1944, consisted of a compilation of historiographic "one-country studies" or single

⁶ Sadler 1900, reprinted in Bereday 1964.

⁷ Michael E. Sadler to Booker T. Washington, September 23, 1901, Washington Papers, box 209 (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1901) cited in Edward H. Berman, "Tuskegee-in-Africa," in *The Journal of Negro Education* 48:2 (1972), p. 99; for the importance of obtaining a "scientific stamp of approval" for transferring education from one context to another, using the case of the transfer of the Hampton-Tuskegee Model from the United States to British colonies in Africa, see Gita Steiner-Khamsi & Hubert Quist, "The Politics of Educational Borrowing: Re-Opening the Case of Achimota in British Ghana," in *Comparative Education Review* 44:3 (2000), pp. 272-299.

case studies, was developed with the intention to identify the "national character," presumably underlying each educational system.⁸ Yet as a government advisor in charge of re-organizing the school systems of Japan and Germany, on behalf of the Allied Forces (during and after World War II, respectively), he transferred "re-education models" from one context to the other. As a scholar, Kandel was an astute historiographer and contextualizer, and as a government advisor and practitioner, he advanced cross-national borrowing and, in effect, de-contextualized education.

2. Coming to Grips with De-contextualization

Given the long-standing practice of comparative researchers warning, in theory, against de-contextualization, and at the same time, advancing, in practice, educational transfer from one context to another, specific questions arise: How have comparativists dealt with the discrepancy between theory and practice of comparative education? In particular, how have they justified educational transfer from one context to another? These questions address issues that are hosted in the sociology of knowledge. It is important to bear in mind that comparative education researchers are not alone in having to come to grips with the intricacies of the comparative method. Their concern is in fact shared by scholars in various fields of the social sciences such as in comparative political science, comparative sociology, comparative religion, comparative history, and comparative philosophy. A brief answer to the basic dilemma of the comparative method, one that has remained surprisingly understudied is, and can be, for now, summarized as follows: The comparative researcher first establishes comparability, then she/he transfers from one context to another, or framed methodologically, and she/he transfers from one case to another.

Naturally, the issue of comparability is a key topic for any researcher who engages in comparative studies. Nothing is *per se* comparable.⁹ Unless the

⁸ For a more detailed description of Kandel's work, and the historiographic method in comparative education, in particular, see Erwin Pollack, "Isaac Leon Kandel (1881-1965)," in *Prospects* 3 (1993), pp. 775-787. Philip G. Altbach poignantly labels Kandel's historiographic one-country studies as the "education in ... series," in "Trends in Comparative Education," in *Comparative Education Review* 35:3 (1991), pp. 491-507.

⁹ For more details on comparative methodology, see Dirk Berg-Schlösser, "Comparative Studies: Method and Design," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2002); Adam Przeworski & Henry Teune, *The Logic of*

researcher identifies a commonality, or more accurately constructs a specific dimension against which two or more cases/contexts can be compared, comparison is ruled out (apples and oranges can only be compared if there is an agreement on the construct "fruit"). Establishing a "tertium comparationis," that is, identifying a construct against which two or more educational systems can be compared, has therefore been a key methodological concern of comparative education researchers.¹⁰ It is important to point out here that the "tertium comparationis" varied at different times, depending on the interpretive framework utilized by comparative researchers. From a historical perspective, "civilization," "modernization," "development" and "democracy," only to list a few of such constructs, has each served as an interpretive framework or as "tertium comparationis" for justifying comparison of educational systems.

The early comparativists, such as Sadler and Kandel, used Civilization Theory to construct comparability. Individuals, groups, or nations that were perceived to be at the same stage of "civilization" were deemed comparable. Most commonly, they identified the particular developmental stage for each of the "races," nations and educational systems.¹¹ African Americans, native Americans, and Africans (and later all colonized people in the British colonial empire) were regarded to be at the same (low) stage of civilization. Since these groups were perceived to be comparable, transfer of educational models from one continent (North America) to another (Africa) was viewed, methodologically and morally, as permissible. For example, Jesse Thomas Jones, chairman of the Phelps-Stokes African Education Commission, justified the transfer of the American Hampton-Tuskegee model to the African continent as follows:

Comparative Social Inquiry (New York: Wiley, 1970); Charles Tilly, *From Past to Future* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997); Charles Tilly, "Micro, Macro, and Megrim," in *Mikrogeschichte – Makrogeschichte: komplementär oder inkommensurabel?* ed. by Jürgen Schlumbohm (Göttingen: Wallstein, 1998), pp. 34-51; Charles Tilly, *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1984); Charles C. Ragin, *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987); see also special issue of *Comparative Social Research* 16 (1997).

¹⁰ See F. Hilker's brief discussion of "tertium comparationis", "What Can the Comparative Method Contribute to Education?" in *Comparative Education Review* 7:3 (1964), pp. 223-225; for a more extensive discussion of tertium comparationis see Berg-Schlösser 2002.

¹¹ Anthony Welch also highlights Kandel's (and Hans') development approach for comparing national systems of education, in "New Times, Hard Times: Re-Reading Comparative Education in an Age of Discontent," *Discourse Formation in Comparative Education*, ed. by Jürgen. Schriewer (Frankfurt/M. etc.: Peter Lang, 2000), pp. 189-225; Welch's reference to Isaac Kandel's and Nicholas Hans' development theory is on page 190 f.

[T]hough village conditions in Africa differ in many respects from those in America, where these activities [of Hampton and Tuskegee] had great influence on the improvement of rural life, the resemblances are sufficiently numerous and real to warrant the belief that the plans above described may be adapted to colonial conditions in Africa.¹²

Similarly, since the newly formed nation-states in Europe and the United States were at the same (high) stage of civilization, the transatlantic transfer of educational models that dealt with nation-state building and compulsory schooling was justifiable. In 1944, Kandel wrote,

The development of education appears in most countries to have followed the same rhythm. The 19th century opened with a movement to establish systems of universal and compulsory elementary education.¹³

According to Kandel and other educational researchers of the time, the next stage in the development of educational systems was the expansion of secondary schooling, followed by the implementation of vocational and technical education, and culminated in the establishment of a higher education system.

In the first half of the 20th century, scholars in North America and Europe discovered the Third World as a laboratory for social research and educational studies. They were fascinated by what First World educational systems could learn from less developed countries, and what Third World countries, in turn, could adopt from past experiences with education and nation-building in more civilized countries. In 1944, Kandel, for example, contended that 20th century reform in Jamaica could benefit from lessons learned in the United Kingdom a century earlier: With great compassion for the difficulties of implementing a fundamental educational reform in Jamaica, Kandel noted that the Jamaican educational system had "to meet all these demands for education at one time, while other countries have met them slowly and piecemeal."¹⁴ He encouraged

¹² Jesse Thomas Jones, *Education in Africa: A Study of West, South and Equatorial Africa by the African Education Commission* (New York: Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1922), p. 141.

¹³ Isaac L. Kandel 1944, reprinted as "The 1944 Kandel Report on Education," in *The Jamaican Gleaner* (Fall 1999). The report was printed in four parts, published on October 19, 20, 21, and 25, 1999. Note that there are no page numbers available for the citations used in this chapter. All citations are from part 1 (published October 19, 1999) and 2 (published October 20, 1999) of the report.

¹⁴ Kandel 1944 (reprinted 1999), part 1.

educational officials in Jamaica to learn from experiences of other educational systems,

Nevertheless, Jamaica has the advantage that she can avoid the mistakes which other countries have made in the past and which they are now in the process of correcting. She has the further advantage of being able to profit from the educational throes and practices of other countries.¹⁵

He specifically mentions educational reform in England,

From the point of view of the administration and organization of education, Jamaica stands today [1944] in the same position as did England in the last years of the 19th century.¹⁶

In education, renowned scholars, including John Dewey, did not conceal their excitement about turning back the clock on educational development, learning from the mistakes that "educationally advanced" countries made in the past and transferring an improved version to "educationally new" countries. Compared to many other scholars of the time, John Dewey was hesitant to transfer educational models from "educationally advanced countries" to "less civilized," "less complex" and "less developed countries." However, his visit to Mexico in 1926 was a turning point. Upon his return from the Mexican rural education program, he "revived his faith" in these countries. Dewey was fascinated by the opportunities of "educationally new" countries for "starting afresh, with the most enlightened theories and practices of the most educationally advanced countries".¹⁷

Scholars of the time saw educational transfer as mutually beneficial: While Third World countries could benefit from educational reforms that were previously tested and improved in First World countries, First World countries, in turn, were able to study in depth the various stages of educational development in "educationally new" countries of the Third World. The latter transfer transformed each educational system of a Third World country into a laboratory for European and North American educational researchers. Kandel, again, hoped to gain insights from peoples who were "just beginning to go to school" to generate

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ cited in Ronald K. Goodenow, "The Progressive Educator and the Third World: A First Look at John Dewey," in *History of Education* 29:1 (1990), pp. 23-40. p. 29.

a more comprehensive educational theory. He wrote in the 1931 Year of the International Institute,

Education in colonial dependencies cannot be regarded as an isolated matter in which the educator has no concern. Actually, these areas, because from some points of view conditions are simpler and more easily subject to analysis, constitute laboratories in which the new philosophy of education can be tested perhaps better than under the complicated conditions of Europe and the United States where certain traditions have long become established. It is not improbable that experimentation with peoples who are, as it were, just beginning to go to school will in time have important contributions to make to educational theory in general.¹⁸

With the quantitative turn in comparative education studies in the sixties and seventies¹⁹ social, political, and economic indicators replaced previous vague notions of "more developed" and "less developed" educational systems with

¹⁸ Isaac L. Kandel, "Introduction," in *Educational Yearbook 1931 of the International Institute of Teachers College, Columbia University*, ed. by Isaac L. Kandel (New York: Teachers College, 1932), p. xiv.

¹⁹ Altbach used the term "quantitative turn" to describe the paradigm shifts that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s: the "quantitative turn" in comparative education reflected, among other factors, the new focus on cross-national studies rather than one-country studies. As a result, the disciplinary focus on history of education, until then the primary disciplinary framework of comparative education, was supplemented by new disciplinary foci of the social sciences, in particular, psychology, economics, sociology, and political science. In retrospect, it appears that the "quantitative turn" was relatively short-lived. Since the early nineties, a growing body of research has criticized the emphasis on quantitative cross-national comparison (OECD or IEA type comparative studies) and has demanded smaller and more meaningful units of analysis ("communities"), multiple levels of analysis, and in general more qualitative studies. Among others, the following authors have reflected on paradigm shifts within comparative education methodology and theory: Altbach 1991; Rolland G. Paulston, "Mapping Discourse in Comparative Education Texts," in *Compare* 23:2 (1993), pp. 101-114; Mark Bray & R. M. Thomas, "Levels of Comparison in Educational Studies: Different Insights from Different Literatures and the Value of Multilevel Analyses," in *Harvard Educational Review* 65:3 (1995), pp. 472-490; Jürgen Schriewer, "Comparative Education Methodology in Transition: Towards a Science of Complexity?" *Discourse Formation*, ed. by Jürgen Schriewer, pp. 3-52; Gerald LeTendre, "Cross-National Studies and the Analysis of Comparative Qualitative Research," in *New Paradigms and Recurring Paradoxes in Education for Citizenship: An International Comparison*, ed. by Gita Steiner-Khamsi, Judith Torney-Purta & John Schulle (Oxford: Elsevier Science, 2002), pp. 239-277.

more precise measurements. Development was re-defined in quantitatively measurable terms such as the Human Development Index, GDP or GNP. The past half a century of quantitative comparative education research, mostly visibly established in the field of educational indicator research, saw a pre-occupation with constructing comparability in terms of quantitative measures. However, it needs to be pointed out that determining "development" in more precise and measurable terms has not, by implication, advanced the field of comparative studies. On the contrary, it appears that the attention to methodological issues has diverted from earlier conceptual criticisms of "development." In fact, the use of more sophisticated and complex indices has made it more difficult to abandon the indicator "development" altogether based on its underlying ideological content.²⁰ Using "development" as a sociological marker has remained problematic even though the methodological approaches to measuring it have become more sophisticated.

From a methodological perspective both qualitative and quantitative measures of comparability aimed at exploring similarity or dissimilarity of context and thus provided practitioners and policy analysts with a much-needed justification for transferring an educational model from one (similar) context to another (similar) context. Not in this book chapter, but perhaps in another study, it would be worthwhile to trace the history of comparative education by describing the preferred "tertium comparationis" that were used in different time periods to define or establish commonality among educational systems. As mentioned earlier, these tertium comparationis varied in different historical periods, spanning from analyzing the various "stages" of civilization, the "degree" of modernization, the "extent" of development in a given society to, most recently, comparing countries and educational systems with regard to their "level" of democracy. Along with such an epistemological approach to understanding the developments within comparative education research, the history of exclusion that draws from such markers or "tertium comparationis" needs to be studied in more detail and documented.

Sketching over a couple of pages a century of research on comparability and transfer in comparative education meant to illustrate the argument that comparative researchers have a long-standing history of specifying the conditions under

²⁰ A Foucauldian approach in education, advanced, for example, by Thomas Popkewitz would be useful here in order to trace the history of exclusion, surveillance, and partitioning based on "tertium comparationis" used in comparative studies. See, for example, *Foucault's Challenge. Discourse, Knowledge, and Power in Education*, ed. by Thomas S. Popkewitz & Marie Brennan (New York: Teachers College Press, 1998).

which the controversial practices of borrowing and lending are scientifically permissible. Over the past century, theoretical frameworks have become more "heterodox"²¹ and the methodological approaches vary considerably, enabling comparative education to draw from different disciplines of the social sciences, but the ways in which borrowing is rationalized has remained basically the same. The controversial act of educational transfer, which *sui generis* requires de-contextualization and de-territorialization of education, has been justified by researchers in comparative studies by first constructing comparability, then establishing similarity or dissimilarity of contexts, and, finally, providing arguments for or against educational transfer.

3. Setting a New Research Agenda: Schriewer's Externalization Theory

More explicitly than any other comparativist, Jürgen Schriewer's externalization theory marks a radical departure from earlier research on educational transfer, which I presented in some detail in the previous section.²² In the past decade, comparative research on borrowing and lending – in German and in many other European languages is more commonly referred to as "reception" and "diffusion" – has undergone a visible paradigm shift influenced by Schriewer's work on educational reception and diffusion.

In contrast to the normative endeavor of renowned early comparativists – illustrated with the work of Victor Cousin, Sir Michael Sadler, Isaac Kandel in the previous sections of this chapter – which seeks answers to the questions "what can be learned and imported from elsewhere?" (borrowing or reception)

²¹ Paulston (1993) refers to "heterodoxy" in comparative education to describe a new era in comparative education in which the "orthodoxy" of structuralism and functionalism was abandoned, and subsequently replaced by a host of different theoretical foundations from which comparative researchers could choose.

²² For a description of the theory of externalization, see Jürgen Schriewer 1990; Jürgen Schriewer, Jürgen Henze, Jürgen Wichmann, Peter Knost, Susanna Barucha & Jörn Taubert, "Konstruktion von Internationalität: Referenzhorizonte pädagogischen Wissens im Wandel gesellschaftlicher Systeme (Spanien, Sowjetunion/Russland, China)," in *Gesellschaften im Vergleich*, ed. by Hartmut Kaelble & Jürgen Schriewer (Frankfurt/M. etc.: Peter Lang, 1998), pp. 151-258; Jürgen Schriewer 2000; Jürgen Schriewer, "World System and Interrelationship Networks. The Internationalization of Education and the Role of Comparative Inquiry," in *Educational Knowledge*, ed. by Thomas S. Popkewitz (Albany: SUNY Press, 2000), pp. 305-343.

and "what can be taught and exported elsewhere?" (lending or diffusion), Schriewer describes, analyzes and attempts to understand in detail, *why* and *how* references to elsewhere are used to advance local educational reform. To do so, he examines the *politics of educational borrowing and lending* ("why") as well as the *process of the transfer* ("how"). He finds that references to external systems (borrowing of discourses) serve as a policy strategy to provide additional meaning (German: *Zusatzsinn*), weight or legitimacy for domestic reforms that are regarded as controversial. In addressing the discursive, strategic, and political dimensions of educational transfer, he has shed light on a long-standing research territory of comparative education. It is a terrain, however, that is at the same time the most widely applied and yet the least examined field of comparative education. Moreover, the significance of Schriewer's books and essays far exceed the scope of research on educational transfer and comparative methodology, and contribute to a more comprehensive and coherent explanation of globalization and international convergence in education.

This chapter is dedicated to Schriewer's groundbreaking approach to the study of educational borrowing and lending. A brief explanation of externalization theory, followed by an illustration of how his theory applies to other research areas, which are commonly not associated with comparative education, attempts to demonstrate that Schriewer's work is both concise and relevant. There are, in particular, two research areas that I would like to highlight in this chapter: the application of externalization theory to education and political change, and the use of an externalization framework for explaining globalization and international convergence in education.

4. Schriewer's Externalization Theory

A growing number of researchers are interested in analyzing the politics of educational transfer, in particular, in examining political reasons for importing or exporting educational reform.²³ Several observations inform this particular field of research.

²³ David Halpin & Barry Troyna, "The Politics of Educational Borrowing," in *Comparative Education* 31:3 (1995), pp. 303-310; David Phillips, "Borrowing Educational Policy," in *Something Borrowed? Something Learned? The Transatlantic Market in Education and Training Reform*, ed. by David Finegold, Laurel McFarland & William Richardson (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1993), pp. 13-19; For German publications see, for example, Bernd Zymek, *Das Ausland als Argument in der pädagogischen Reform-*

First, references to other educational systems ("externalization") tend to occur more frequently for those domestic reforms that are politically highly contested such as privatization of education, standardized student assessment, outcomes-based educational reform or the de-unionization of teachers.²⁴ Second, at the local (implementation) level, borrowed models barely resemble their original sources either because they had been locally adapted and re-contextualized or because the references to lessons from elsewhere had served exclusively to justify a locally developed educational reform. Thus, very often references to educational reforms from elsewhere, having originally served as a model, are eradicated once domestic reforms have been implemented.²⁵ Third, educational stakeholders and policy makers sometimes make international references and borrow successfully implemented educational reforms from other countries, even though similar educational reform models already exist in their own (domestic) backyard.²⁶ Triggered by this kind of observations, researchers in comparative policy studies have started to explore the political dimension of educational transfer.

At least two social theories – Margaret Archer's theory of external transactions²⁷ and Niklas Luhmann's theory self-referential systems²⁸ – lend themselves

diskussion: Schulpolitische Rechtfertigung, Auslandspropaganda, internationale Verständigung und Ansätze zu einer Vergleichenden Erziehungswissenschaft in der internationalen Berichterstattung deutscher pädagogischer Zeitschriften, 1871-1952 (Ratingen: Henn, 1975) or Philip Gonon, *Das internationale Argument in der Bildungsreform: Die Rolle internationaler Bezüge in den bildungspolitischen Debatten zur schweizerischen Berufsbildung und zur englischen Reform der Sekundarstufe II* (Bern etc.: Peter Lang, 1998).

²⁴ See, for example, Timothy Jester, *Standards-Based Educational Reform in an Alaskan School District: Implications for Implementation* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, Ed.D. Dissertation, 2001).

²⁵ See, for example, Carol Anne Spreen, *Globalization and Educational Policy Borrowing: Mapping Outcomes-Based Education in South Africa* (New York: Columbia University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Ph.D. Dissertation, 2000); Iveta Silova, *From Symbols of Occupation to Symbols of Multiculturalism: Re-conceptualizing minority education in post-Soviet Latvia* (New York: Columbia University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Ph.D. Dissertation, 2001).

²⁶ See, for example, Steiner-Khamsi and Quist 2000.

²⁷ Margaret S. Archer, "Structuration versus Morphogenesis," *Macro-Sociological Theory. Volume 1: Perspectives on Sociological Theory*, ed. by Samuel N. Eisenstadt and H. J. Helle (Beverly Hills and London: Sage, 1985), pp. 58-88; Margaret S. Archer, "Sociology of One World: Unity and Diversity," in *International Sociology* 6:2 (1991), pp. 131-147; Margaret S. Archer, *Culture and Agency. The Place of Culture in Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996; revised edition).

as interpretive frameworks for studying the politics of educational borrowing. The theory of self-referential systems (Luhmann) asserts that educational systems perpetuate themselves by using internal references, notably references to (1) scientific rationality, (2) tradition and values, and (3) organization. In times of rapid social, economic, and political change, however, internal references fail to justify the introduction or persistence of reforms. It is precisely in these times that externalization is useful to break radically with the past, and to import or borrow models, discourses, or practices from other educational systems.

Education constitutes an ideal site for studying referentiality. In fact, using references as sources of authority – internal or external, domestic or international – is endemic to education; it is under constant public pressure to legitimize its policies and practices. In the domain of education, each and every citizen feels entitled to act as "natural expert" and stakeholder. This is not to suggest that other domains of public policy (e.g., legal reform, tax reform, health reform) are less contested, but it is predominantly in education that citizens feel entitled and capable to participate, as Habermas would frame it, in "communicative action"²⁹ and decision-making. Having said this, it becomes clear that public contestation is an essential feature of educational reform. As a result, educational decision-makers are constantly under public pressure to justify their policies vis-à-vis an assertive and vocal "informed public."

In formulating his theory of externalization, Schriewer draws heavily from the theory of self-referential systems (Luhmann) and, to a lesser extent, from Margaret Archer's work on external transaction. Schriewer frames educational borrowing, in particular, the references to lessons from elsewhere, as an act of externalization. He analyzes the emergence of references to other educational systems in policy discourse and educational research, and finds that precisely at those moments when educational policies and practices become contested, policy makers and educational researchers resort to such international references, that is, use experiences in other educational systems as sources of authority.³⁰ International references, thus, help to legitimize the introduction of those reforms at home which otherwise would have been contested. Under certain circumstances, self-referentiality, that is, more precisely internal references to

²⁸ Niklas Luhmann, *Essays on Self-Reference* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990); Niklas Luhmann & Karl-Eberhard Schorr (eds.), *Reflexionsprobleme im Erziehungswesen* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1979).

²⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *Theory of Communicative Action. Volume 1* (London: Heinemann, 1984).

³⁰ This is my attempt to capture the semantics of *das internationale Argument* in English; see Zymek 1975, Schriewer 1990, Schriewer et al. 1998.

scientific rationality, tradition and values, or organization, which Luhmann defines as the default self-referential strategies of a system, fails to be an effective policy strategy. This means that, under certain circumstances, these three most commonly used self-referential strategies are not sufficient for justifying the implementation of specific educational policies and practices or for gaining broad public support. For example, educational studies that support an educational reform (reference to "scientific rationality") are seen as biased or politically motivated. Also, the second self-referential strategy, "things have always been done that way" or "this model meets the needs of the community" (references to "tradition and values"), lacks public support. Finally, the third commonly used strategy (references to "organization"), which activates commonsensical associations to elaborate concepts such as cost-effectiveness, manageability, or feasibility, also fails to accomplish its goal of defending a contested educational policy or practice.

In those moments of heightened contestation, there is a need for educational decision-makers to reach out for additional sources of authority to legitimize their policies and practices. The momentum for externalization, that is, references to lessons from elsewhere, emerges when the self-referential legitimacy strategies fail.

Schriewer's externalization theory is especially applicable for analyzing educational reform in times of political transition (e.g., post-Apartheid, post-socialism), since it is precisely at those times that internal references or self-references, that is, references to "positive experiences" from the past, are suspended.

5. Externalization in Times of Political Change

In another book chapter,³¹ I reported on and discussed in more detail three case studies from post-Soviet Latvia, post-Apartheid Latvia, and post-Isolationist Switzerland. There, I tried to make a case for the use of externalization theory as an interpretive framework for examining education and political change. In this chapter, I will confine myself to summarizing the case studies and re-iterating the line of argumentation.

³¹ Gita Steiner-Khamsi, "Re-Territorializing Educational Import: Explorations into the Politics of Educational Borrowing," *Imagining a European Education Space*, ed. by Antonio Nóvoa & Martin Lawn (forthcoming Kluwer Publisher).

In all three countries, there was public pressure to develop and introduce a new school reform model that would radically break with past experiences, and more importantly, visibly depart from earlier political agendas. For political reasons, self-referentiality or internal references were not an option. Instead, externalization was selected as a policy strategy.

The Latvian Case Study. In *From Sites of Occupation to Symbols of Multiculturalism: Transfer of Minority Education Discourse in Post-Soviet Latvia*, Iveta Silova examines the erasure of Soviet references and their subsequent replacement with Western European references.³² Silova interprets the shift from the Soviet to the Western European reference system as a marker for the new geo-political educational space that Latvia politically and economically had been aspiring to inhabit at the turn of the millennium. Fascinating about this particular change of political allies is that it has merely affected the discursive level but not the practice of separate schooling. The separation of school systems, one for Latvian speakers and another for Russian and other ethnic speakers, continues to exist, however segregated schools are no longer seen as "sites of occupation" but are now being re-framed as "symbols of multiculturalism."

In the early 1990s the Latvian government came under serious attack from European commissions (Council of Europe, European Union, OSCE) and international human rights organizations for discriminating against Russian speakers and residents in post-Soviet Latvia as reflected, among others, in the practice of separate schooling for Latvians and Russians. The dual educational system that had been enforced across the Soviet Union dates back to Stalin's *nativization policy*, which determined that national cultures needed to be "national in form but socialist in content."³³ With the annexation of Latvia by the Soviet Union in 1944, two separate educational systems were established for the two largest "nationalities" in the Latvian Republic of the Soviet Union, one system for Latvians and another for Russians. Drawing on Michel Foucault's

³² Silova 2001, see also Silova's chapter in Novoa and Lawn (forthcoming), and Silova, "From Sites of Occupation to Symbols of Multiculturalism: Transfer of Global Discourse and the Metamorphosis of Russian Schools in Post-Soviet Latvia," *Lessons from Elsewhere: The Politics of Educational Borrowing and Lending*, ed. by Gita Steiner-Khamsi (in preparation, 2002). All citations in this chapter are from Silova's manuscript "From Sites to Occupation to Symbols of Multiculturalism: Transfer of Global Discourse and the Metamorphosis of Russian Schools in Post-Soviet Latvia."

³³ Stalin cited in Silova, *Sites of Occupation*, p. 17.

framework,³⁴ Silova interprets the separate schooling system policies as "disciplinary technologies" that were based on enclosure, partitioning, and ranking, and enabled an effective surveillance of ethno-nationalistic sentiments, which could otherwise have threatened the plan of implanting pan-Soviet nationalism. In addition, separate schools for Russian students had the advantage of fostering loyalty to their "external motherland", that is, Russia, and prevented them from becoming too attached to the republic in which they were residing. With the political shift in the early 1990s, when the government was under international pressure to prove their transition from "a multi-national society" under Soviet rule to a country that, under the tutelage of the Council of Europe and the European Union, was striving to be regarded as "a pluralist society," the semantics of separate schooling was changed by political fiat. The dual school system remained firmly in place, but the meaning associated with separate schooling underwent a transformation or "metamorphosis";³⁵ segregated schools were no longer seen as sites of (Russian) occupation but as (Western European) symbols of multiculturalism.

The new discourse, that is, the re-interpretation of separate schooling as "multiculturalism," found great resonance with Latvians and Russians alike, however, as Silova argues for quite different reasons:

For them [Russians in post-Soviet Latvia], the recognition of new discourse meant that there were no more threats of ethnic discrimination and no more reasons to fear that the Russian schools would be closed, teachers fired, and students sent to assimilate in Latvian schools. Finally left alone, Russian schools now felt more in control of their future. More importantly, internationalization strategies of referring to Western multicultural education practices are being pursued by the Russian minorities as a mechanism to externalize the autonomy issue and gain international support for their demands locally.³⁶

The discursive shift from segregation to multiculturalism also found fertile grounds within the Latvian community:

For Latvian schools, their teachers, students and parents, the existence of separate school structures allows them to proceed with "healing" of the

national identity and strengthening of the national character in a faster, less painful way. Continuing to perceive themselves as a national minority and being preoccupied with how to protect their own identity against the Russian or, increasingly, English language, many ethnic Latvians fear that incorporation, integration or even assimilation of others into the Latvian identity would require losing or changing their existing "Latvianness." In this way, a continuing separation of schools along ethnic lines, which is presented as an expression of multiculturalism, means that Latvians do not have to "deal" with the Russian minority issue in Latvian language schools.³⁷

The Swiss Case Study. Similar to Silova's case study, which examines the creation of a new "European space" in Latvian educational policy at the expense of the former Soviet space, the second case study on Switzerland explores the establishment of that same (European) space at the expense of the former American sphere of influence.

Surprisingly, Switzerland, notorious for its parochialism and *helvetische Verspätung*³⁸ in complying with international standards in general, and with adopting international trends in school reform, in particular, was in the mid 1990s at the front of the line for promoting the import of non-European school reform models. The Ministry of Education for the Canton of Zürich, in particular, has been an ardent supporter of U.S. standards-based educational reform, school-based management, outcomes-based education, and market-oriented school reform. Over the past four to five years, an interesting shift has occurred: In the mid 1990s the Ministry of Education explicitly referred to U.S. models of educational reforms, and, in fact, hired American educational consultants and firms to develop a reform package for schools in the Canton of Zürich. Two years later, after a period of heated debates and protests by teacher unions, this reference was dropped and the Ministry publicly distanced itself from American models of school reform. With this shift, the Ministry ceased to use external references to U.S. educational reforms and started to use references to European reforms, especially to reforms in the Netherlands and Denmark. In addition, the Ministry resorted to "global standards" in school reforms to legitimize the introduction of these contested reforms in the Canton of Zürich.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 18 ff.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 21.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 27.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 27 f.

³⁸ *Helvetische Verspätung* refers to the Swiss (Helvetic) time-lag in adopting reform movements that had already been in place in other countries for one decade or two.

As in other European countries, the smallest common denominator of the various parties forming a neo-liberal coalition in Swiss parliaments and governments at national, cantonal and municipal level has been to cut the "inflated state apparatus" and to loosen state control allowing instead for market forces to regulate public affairs. What started out as a broad public administrative reform – "New Public Management" – which attempted to introduce lean and efficient management, reduce the state apparatus, abolish the status of civil servants, and replace tenure of civil servants with performance-based promotion and employment, soon became the guiding principles for a major school reform in the Canton of Zürich. Having adapted to the educational sector, NPM (New Public Management) became re-contextualized as effective and market-oriented school reform that would be based on school-based management, choice, and comprehensive quality control in schools. Initiator of NPM and ardent supporter of American school reform models promoting choice, site-based management and standards, was the newly elected Minister of Education Ernst Buschor, former professor of economics. Prior to his election as Minister of Education in 1995, he was heading the Ministry of Health where he first successfully implemented his beliefs in NPM and total quality management (TQM). Interesting, but not novel, is the transfer from TQM health reforms to educational reforms. More striking and unprecedented in the Swiss history of education reforms is, however, the second transfer: the borrowing of U.S. health and educational reform models. The minister's externalization strategy, that is, his reference to U.S. health and educational reforms, encountered first skepticism, and later active resistance, given that from all the public sectors in American society, these two sectors – health and education – were notorious for perpetuating inequality, poverty, and exclusion. Nevertheless the reforms in the Canton of Zürich were commonly referred to as NPM, thus using an American acronym for a Swiss reform, and sailed until 1998 under the American flag of efficiency, effectiveness, decentralization and quality improvement.

Despite the public controversies over the import of U.S. reform models, Buschor has been acknowledged for developing visions that were radically new and different from the step-by-step reform approach that the previous ministry was pursuing. The speed as well as the comprehensive scope of reforms that Buschor implemented at all levels of the system (kindergarten, primary education, secondary education, tertiary education) and in all reform areas (governance, finance, curricula, teacher education, etc.) found resonance among many parts of the population as well as the education community, which had found past reforms too slow, too decimal, too parochial and too ineffective. Buschor promised both fundamental changes and the adaptation of "inter-

national standards" in education; promises that were unheard of in a country that, until recently, firmly promoted local patriotism and local governance and whose local politicians rejected any kind of "external" references as "pressure from abroad," even if they were "coming from Berne," the capital of the country. In fact, until the late eighties, Berne was *Ausland*, that is, any federal policy guidelines that "Berne" released for consideration to the cantons – most of which were in the form of loose recommendations and not binding – were seen as foreign intervention and alienating.

How then did Buschor's externalization, his "lessons learned from abroad", in particular from the United States, translate into local school reform in Zürich? As with most instances of borrowing, lessons from the U.S. school reform were only selectively transferred to the Swiss context. There were, in particular, three concepts of effective and market-oriented school reform that Buschor selectively borrowed from US models of "effective schools"³⁹: private sector involvement in school reform, outcomes-based education, and competition among schools as a driving force for quality improvement. These three borrowed concepts were implemented in a variety of ways: For the first time in the history of school reform in the Canton of Zürich, the private sector was provided access to schools. After being taken by the extensive use of technology in Californian schools, Buschor hired, upon his return to Switzerland, Arthur Andersen Consulting for designing a school reform package that targeted the use of instructional technology in primary schools.⁴⁰ In addition, he supported the massive expansion of the local education industry, which resulted in many small consulting firms with one or two staff offering their services for evaluation, organizational development, supervision, or curriculum design in schools. The second concept, outcomes-based education, enforced accountability of schools based on the performance and satisfaction of their students. Finally, he supported, in theory, competition among schools, which was to be instigated by

³⁹ It is important to emphasize the selective nature of a reference and borrowing process. For a more comprehensive perspective on key features of "effective schools" see Henry M. Levin, "Effective Schools in Comparative Focus," in *Emergent Issues in Comparative Education*, ed. by Robert Arno et al. (Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 1992), pp. 229-248. For an international comparative perspective on "effective schools" see Henry M. Levin & Marlaine E. Lockheed (eds.), *Effective Schools in Developing Countries* (London: The Falmer Press, 1993).

⁴⁰ The project ("Schulprojekt 21") has been implemented in twelve school districts of the Canton of Zürich. It now comprises the introduction of technology as well as the use of English at primary school level.

schools marketing their own "school profile" or curriculum to potential customers, that is, parents.

It is important to note here that the introduction of school-industry partnerships, outcomes-based education, and market orientation, did not generate all those alerting side effects that critics had pointed out based on experiences in the United States. Contrary to all expectations, Buschor's NPM and "effective schools" reform did not lead to a boom in standardized testing, choice, privatization, school rankings in newspapers nor to education firms taking over curricula and governance of school districts firing all "ineffective" teachers and principals and replacing them with uncertified, cheap and un-unionized school staff. On the contrary, the radical reforms that were supposed to bring about fundamental changes in how schools of the 21st century would be financed, governed and organized only led to one visible change: the creation of the new profession of school principal. This modest outcome is surprising given the sensation and the media attention that Buschor's radical reform idea caused in the mid 90s.

The modest outcome of the fundamental reform promise can be seen as a reaction to the great resistance against importing U.S. educational reform models and hiring U.S. consulting firms for revamping Swiss schools. Among the leading critics was the Teachers' Union VPOD⁴¹ that devoted several issues of their journal *Magazin für Schule und Kindergarten* and organized meetings and conferences criticizing Buschor's reform plans for merely advancing short-sighted managerial solutions that were devoid of any pedagogical visions for improving the quality of schools.⁴² Buschor and the ministerial staff responded to their critical comments by emphasizing that the Zürich model of outcomes-based, market-oriented and effective schools merely represented a soft version of reform models borrowed from abroad, that is, a version that had been adapted to the Swiss context of small neighborhood schools and to a history of strong public schooling which remains free of charge. By 1999, four years after the inception of the borrowed reform package, the ministerial staff diligently avoided the use of external references to U.S. school reform models and instead stressed the uniqueness and novelty of the Zürich model of effective schools.

⁴¹ German "Verein des Personals der Oeffentlichen Dienste" (Union of Public Sector Employees)

⁴² Gita Steiner-Khamsi, "Lehren aus Deregulierung und Schulwahl in den USA," in *Magazin für Schule und Kindergarten* 100/101 (1997), pp. 28-39; Gita Steiner-Khamsi, "Szenario 2010 zur wirkungsorientierten Schulreform," in *Magazin für Schule und Kindergarten*. Part 1: 108 (1998), pp. 16-24, Part 2: 109 (1998), pp. 24-29.

The new emphasis was put on "partial autonomous public schools,"⁴³ that is, primary and lower secondary schools that elect a school principal, establish a pedagogical "school profile," and engage in continuous self-evaluation. No more mention of partial privatization, school choice, and quality improvement by means of competition were heard in public. What started out as a radical reform talk that promised to overhaul the entire system, was reduced, four years after its inception, to an unsensational management reform that mainly advanced the professionalization of principals by establishing, for the first time, degree-programs and professional development programs in educational management and administration.

Finally, starting in 2000, the Minister of Education publicly turned its back on (its own) educational import from the United States. At the press conference, in which the new comprehensive education reform was presented, the Minister of Education introduced the reform as follows:

The [proposed] school reform is sending a clear political signal that we are rejecting any Americanization of our educational system.⁴⁴

In 2000, Buschor switched his spatial frame of reference from the U.S.A. to continental Europe, more specifically to school reform models in the Netherlands and Denmark. For example, in an interview with one of the two leading newspapers of Zürich, the Minister of Education explicitly stated that he was modeling his school reform after school reforms in the Netherlands.⁴⁵ Different from the widely discussed and heatedly debated U.S. and British school reforms, the Dutch and Danish models were less known in the Swiss education community and were less subject to criticism and controversy. There were two additional advantages that external references to experiences in the Netherlands and Denmark had to offer. Both European models manifest, to some extent, a social market orientation rather than a completely free market orientation which most of the U.S. reform models are associated with in Europe. The Ministry of Education, for example, revised its financial distribution plan in ways that

⁴³ German "Teilautonome Volksschulen."

⁴⁴ Original in German: "Die Volksschulreform ist daher ein politisches Zeichen, das einer Amerikanisierung im Schulwesen eine klare Absage erteilt." Regierungsrat Ernst Buschor, "Für eine zukünftige öffentliche Volksschule," in *Pressemitteilung für die Medienorientierung der Bildungsdirektion* (Zürich: Bildungsdirektion des Kantons Zürich, 16. Mai 2000).

⁴⁵ Peer Teuwsen, "Ernst Buschors Mission," in *Das Magazin. Wochenendbeilage des Tages-Anzeigers* 1 (2000), pp. 34-45.

include social indicators ensuring that communities in financial need, with low-income students, receive adequate state funding. With the change of reference frames, attention was placed on "school improvement" and school-based management rather than on "school effectiveness" and market-orientation.⁴⁶ Thus, the first advantage was that the Dutch and Danish references succeeded in appeasing critics that attacked the Ministry of Education for pursuing neo-liberal reforms that were oblivious to equity and diversity issues. The second advantage was the re-territorialization of ongoing school reforms into a European space which had already been in existence, and in fact, had shaped the reforms in upper secondary education, lower tertiary level, and universities but, until 1999, had no impact on primary and secondary school reforms.⁴⁷ Buschor's succeeded in tuning into the momentum of Europeanization. He re-framed his controversial reforms, in particular, school-based management ("partially autonomous public schools") but also introduced English⁴⁸ and computer technology at primary school level as part of a greater cause: the need to adapt education to European standards in education.

In retrospect, the "effective schools" reform reflects three different stages of transfer that are partially overlapping: In the first stage, external references to U.S. educational reform models were explicitly made. Once the imported model encountered resistance and faced difficulties in the implementation phase, it was re-framed as a new domestic model that supposedly only vaguely resembled originals in other countries. Hence, in this second stage, externalization was suspended, references to other reform models were erased and emphasis was placed on indigenization. In another publication, I have examined more closely this particular stage in educational policy borrowing. It is a stage in which "institutional amnesia" prevails, that is, state institutions and their repre-

⁴⁶ For the earlier controversy between "school improvement approaches" and "school effectiveness approaches" see Pam Sammons, *School Effectiveness. Coming of Age in the Twenty-First Century* (Lisse, Netherlands: Sweets and Zeitlinger Publishers, 1999).

⁴⁷ The following examples illustrate the Europeanization process that has been going on at various levels of the educational system: at upper secondary school level, the introduction of the "Berufsmaturität" and the accreditation of private providers of technical and vocational education; at lower tertiary education the transformation of "Höhere Fachschulen" into "Fachhochschulen" and at university level the introduction of (relatively modest) student tuition fees.

⁴⁸ which in the fall of 2000 caused a major protest in the French and Italian speaking parts of Switzerland, attacking Buschor for being unpatriotic for favoring the teaching of English over French in primary schools. He was also criticized for publicly announcing the introduction of English in primary schools without conferring first with the 25 other Ministers of Education in Switzerland.

sentatives seem to have forgotten or do not recall the fact that they had originally borrowed the reform model from elsewhere.⁴⁹ Finally in the third stage, the "effective schools" reform was affiliated with the greater plan of Europeanizing the entire Swiss educational systems. In this most recent stage, the Minister of Education and his ministerial staff used references to "lessons learned" in other European countries, specifically in the Netherlands and Denmark. In this stage, the school reform in Zürich, originally modelled after reforms in the United States, became re-interpreted as an exemplar of new trends in European school reforms and, thus, was re-territorialized in the European educational space.

The South African Case Study. Carol Anne Spreen deals in her study *Globalization and Educational Policy Borrowing: Mapping Outcomes Based Education in South Africa* with the concept of lending and borrowing of educational policies.⁵⁰ In particular, she examines how various models of outcomes-based education (OBE) were circulated across Australia and New Zealand, throughout the United States and Canada, and then from there, with funding from bilateral donor organizations, were imported to South Africa by domestic experts in the period immediately following the end of Apartheid in 1994. She traces, in detail, how the current South African *Curriculum 2005* has incorporated and locally adapted elements from OBE reforms in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States.

Her case study on policy borrowing in post-Apartheid South Africa draws on two methodological approaches that appear suitable for studying educational borrowing in other parts of the world including Europe.

First, she analyzes how the OBE school reform model was locally adapted and re-contextualized in ways that accommodated political interests and political alliances of South African stakeholders in education. Hence, her emphasis is on agency and agents of borrowing. Her biographical approach, utilized in her semi-structured interviews with South African policy experts and educational stakeholders, enabled her to shed light on networking and international cooperation structures that accelerated policy borrowing in the South African context. This approach demonstrated how different actors borrowed and emphasized

⁴⁹ Gita Steiner-Khamsi, "Vergleich und Subtraktion: Das Residuum im Spannungsfeld zwischen Globalem und Lokalem," in *Der Vergleich in den Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften*, ed. by Jürgen Schriewer & Hartmut Kaelble (Frankfurt/M: Campus, forthcoming).

⁵⁰ Spreen 2000.

different national versions of OBE, particularly ones that would help legitimate or push their own policy agendas.

Second, she determines the different stages of educational borrowing. Her investigation into the political advantages and disadvantages of "externalization," that is, references to school reform models from abroad, is based on interpretive frameworks of sociologist Archer and comparativist Schriewer. Striking in her study are the findings that South African policy experts and school reform experts made, in the beginning stage of the borrowing process (1994 until 1996), which included explicit references to "lessons learned" from abroad. At that stage, "externalization" or references to models from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, USA and Scotland sailed under the flag of internalization signaling a renunciation of the isolationist Apartheid regime and an embracement of a new educational policy space that was populated by educational systems in North America and other free, democratic and economically developed countries of the First World. Instrumental in this initial stage of international borrowing was the strong involvement of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), an important political ally of the African National Congress (ANC) and the new post-Apartheid regime. COSATU and the labor movement were the first to borrow OBE principles for their worker education programs and became a leading force advocating the adoption of OBE in the overall formal educational system.

However, this initial stage in which political stakeholders, ANC and COSATU representatives, explicitly referred to OBE models in other countries, only lasted for about two years. Critics of educational import, and in particular, of OBE surfaced in great numbers. In this new stage of transfer, political stakeholders were under public pressure to revoke their original announcement that the South African educational system was copying or imitating other countries' educational reform models. In fact, any reference to "lessons learned from abroad" proved to be detrimental to the policy implementation process. Once the imported school reform became internally contested, the external frame of reference was erased and policy and school reform experts stressed the local adaptation, "indigenization" or "hybridization" of the original model.

Drawing from Margaret Archer's work on externalization and external transactions,⁵¹ Spreen identifies three phases of borrowing in the South African educational context.⁵² In the first period (1970-80s) borrowing functioned as an external transaction and was used for external referencing; in the second period

⁵¹ Especially Archer 1985, Archer 1991.

⁵² Spreen, *Globalization*, p. 272 ff.

(1990-95), borrowing was utilized for legitimation and could be interpreted as a form of political manipulation; in a third period (1996-98) a shift from externalization to internalization occurred. This third period was characterized by a vanishing of international or external references. For the purposes of this study, the most relevant stages occurred during the second period (1990-94), in which OBE was imported with explicit references to models abroad, and the third period (1996-98), in which those very strategies of externalization (international and external references) were oppressed, and replaced by internal references.

Returning full-circle to the vignette on externalization and the theory of self-referential systems that were introduced earlier in this chapter, I would like to discuss the case studies on borrowing in terms of the proposed theoretical framework. In times of massive political changes, self-references to scientific rationality, traditions and values, and organization, which, according to Luhmann are the most commonly used internal references to justify the persistence or introduction of reforms, lapse as legitimacy strategies. In fact, what is politically required at these times of political change is a clear rupture with the detested past and a turning point that signals a new (political) future without the legacies of the past. Instead of carrying on with self-references, new references to lessons from elsewhere, policy borrowing, or externalization open up the chance to re-situate an educational system internationally and domestically.

6. Externalization Theory and the Study of Globalization and Convergence

Politicians and policy makers in different parts of the world tend to increasingly resort to "globalization" – not only in the realm of the economy but also in education – as an argument for re-vamping and reorganizing local or national policies. References to reforms abroad, in particular, comparisons with developments in other countries that are perceived as successful seem to serve politicians and policy makers as a tool to substantiate the need for dramatic change at the local and national level.

I would like to make the point here that research on educational transfer, and in particular Schriewer's externalization theory, provides important clues for understanding globalization processes, and allows us to examine the larger issue of educational convergence: Are national educational systems indeed becoming increasingly similar as a result of globalization?

There is no doubt that the transnational flow of communication and the global transfer of ideas have increased dramatically over recent years leading to a new

global "ideoscape."⁵³ This landscape of supranational ideas today bridges geopolitical spaces that used to be distinctly separate. The "ideoscape" of educational reform, concepts of "good education" and "effective school reform," for example, now surface in the First World, Third World and the former Second World. Several scholars in comparative education point to the role of multilateral organizations⁵⁴ and international non-governmental organizations⁵⁵ in advocating for a particular approach to educational reform that they subsequently fund and disseminate to every corner of the world. Their strategies of educational transfer have been so successful that we may wonder whether we are witnessing the contours of an emerging international model of education. Several other studies emphasize this role of lenders and analyze how multilateral organizations, professional associations, and international non-governmental organizations design, disseminate and monitor an international model of education. Acting as the "global civil society"⁵⁶ or the "international civil society,"⁵⁷ these international organizations see themselves in charge of worldwide educational reform, whilst nation-states are assigned to the backseat as borrowers, local adaptors, and implementers.

The proliferation of references to "globalization" made both by lenders and borrowers is striking. Schriewer coined the powerful expression "semantics of

⁵³ Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," *Global Culture, Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*, ed. by Michael Featherstone (Newbury Park, California: Sage, 1994), pp. 295-310. Appadurai explains his concept of "ideoscape" on p. 299 ff.

⁵⁴ Phillip Jones, "Globalisation and the Unesco Mandate: multilateral prospects for educational development," in *International Journal of Educational Development* 19:1 (1999), pp. 17-25; Phillip Jones, "Globalisation and Internationalism: democratic prospects for world education," in *Comparative Education* 35:2 (1998), pp. 143-155; Karen Mundy, "Educational Multilateralism in a Changing World Order: Unesco and the limits of the possible," in *International Journal of Educational Development* 19:1 (1999), pp. 27-52.

⁵⁵ Michael Edwards & David Hulme (eds.), *The Magic Bullet: NGO Performance and Accountability in the Post-Cold War World* (West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1996); Marc Lindenberg & Coralie Bryant (eds.), *Going Global: Transforming Relief and Development NGOs* (West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 2001); see also the special issue "Are NGOs Overrated" by the on-line journal *Current Issues in Comparative Education* 1:1 (1998) www.tc.columbia.edu/~cice.

⁵⁶ Karen Mundy & Lynn Murphy, "Transnational Advocacy, Global Civil Society? Emerging Evidence from the Field of Education," in *Comparative Education Review* 45:1 (2000), pp. 85-126.

⁵⁷ Gayatri C. Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason. Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); her reference to international NGOs as the "international civil society" is explained on p. 399 ff.

globalization"⁵⁸ to denote the tremendous political and economic pressure on politicians and policy makers to compare educational systems and to "learn" or borrow from each other. Implicitly, the semantics of globalization promotes de-territorialization and de-contextualization of reform, and challenges the past conception of education as a culturally bounded system. The semantics of globalization has been so effective that policy analysts and practitioners often resort to a new sort of patriotism, one that claims the nation-state must transcend national boundaries in order to survive, economically and politically, in today's "global village."⁵⁹ As Schriewer and Mundy & Murphy have demonstrated,⁶⁰ the "global civil society" and other international agents acting on behalf of globalization have contributed considerably to constructing and creating "global education" at a discursive level.

Keeping Schriewer's focus on externalization as a discursive policy strategy in mind, it becomes essential to distinguish whether a discourse of educational reform (e.g. the "effective schools" discourse) has been borrowed from elsewhere, or whether the actual model(s) have been imported (e.g., models of "effective schools"). This distinction between discourse (references made to other educational models) and practice (actual borrowing or import of models) is essential for the study of globalization and convergence. It helps us to understand why policy makers in different parts of the world use similar concepts (e.g., "effective schools") as if educational systems are in the process of gradually converging toward a set of uniform models of school reform. Externalization theory explains why we are seeing the contours of a "global education model" at discursive level without witnessing a convergence of educational practices.

From a historical perspective, the current semantics of globalization is reminiscent of earlier expansionist, transnational agendas. Earlier discursive educational campaigns such as the semantics of civilization, modernization, development, or democratization each had a transnational agenda and impact similar to that of globalization. From a critical historical perspective, the semantics of globalization may be regarded as yet another "education for" campaign⁶¹. Consistent with its older cousins, it places external political pressure on local educational reform. In which direction local educational reforms move,

⁵⁸ Schriewer, *World System*, p. 330.

⁵⁹ See Jones 1998.

⁶⁰ Schriewer 2000; Mundy and Murphy 2000.

⁶¹ Gita Steiner-Khamsi, "Transferring Education, Displacing Reforms," *Discourse Formation*, ed. by Jürgen Schriewer, pp. 155-87, p 180.

however, depends on local reactions, that is, on resistance or adaptation of external influences. Hence, there may be greater convergence among the voices of policy analysts and researchers justifying their models, rather than among the education reforms themselves.

7. Externalization Theory in U.S. Educational Research

Schriewer's work has been translated into several languages and has also found great resonance in US research institutions. At Columbia University, for example, several dissertations rely on externalization theory as an interpretive framework or "mental model"⁶² for studying the politics of education borrowing have been completed.

While Schriewer tends to focus on the period during which externalization occurs (phase 1 in the following chart), the aforementioned dissertation studies apply his externalization theory to analyze other phases of an educational policy cycle. In several other publications,⁶³ we have proposed that the application of Schriewer's theory be extended and used for understanding how borrowed educational reform models are subsequently "recontextualized" (phase 2) and "internalized" (phase 3).

The following chart illustrates the transition from self-references to external references (borrowing), and highlights three distinct phases in the process of borrowing: externalization (phase 1), recontextualization (phase 2), and internalization (phase 3). Applying externalization theory, comprehensively, to cover all phases of a borrowing process demonstrates that borrowing is an effective policy strategy able to temporarily intercept and suspend self-referentiality. At the same time, externalization is short-lived for a variety of reasons. Once a borrowed educational reform model has been internalized (phase 3), traces of external references are erased, and self-references are re-introduced to justify educational policy and practice.

In addition, Schriewer's framework triggers a host of methodological issues that strike a cord with comparative researchers. For example, I have argued that the comparative study of transnational transfer processes is well-suited to understand context.⁶⁴ A methodological focus on the "residual," that is, on analyzing what has not been affected by external influence, or has actively resisted externally induced change and transformation, tells us something about local political alliances and tensions.

In this remaining section of the chapter, I would like to point at a few dissertations from Teachers College and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Columbia University,⁶⁵ that have explicitly used Schriewer's externalization theory to either examine externalization (phase 1), re-contextualization (phase 2), or internalization (phase 3).

Theory of Externalization (Politics of Educational Borrowing)				
Self-Referentiality	Borrowing (external references)			Self-Referentiality
	3 phases within borrowing process:			
3 strategies of legitimation:	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	3 strategies of legitimation:
Internal references to ...	Externalization	Recontextualization	Internalization	Internal references to ...
a) scientific knowledge b) tradition & values c) organization				a) scientific knowledge b) tradition & values c) organization

Externalization (Phase 1). Timothy Jester analyzes how standards-based education was interpreted differently at the district level than at the school level.⁶⁶ In this case study, Alaskan education authorities conducted a comprehensive needs assessment prior to borrowing standards-based education. They also conducted their assessment in the schools located in Yupik villages that

⁶⁴ Steiner-Khamsi 2002 ("Vergleich und Subtraktion").

⁶⁵ For historical and other reasons, Teachers College hosts two doctoral international comparative education programs: the doctoral program in Comparative and International Education (Ph.D. degree) is affiliated with the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Columbia University, whereas the doctoral program in International Educational Development (Ed.D. degree) is housed in Teachers College, Columbia University.

⁶⁶ Jester 2001.

⁶² Charles Tilly, *From Past to Future* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997), p. 20 ff.

⁶³ Steiner-Khamsi 2000, 2002 ("Vergleich und Subtraktion"), 2002 ("Re-Territorializing Educational Import"); Steiner-Khamsi and Quist 2000.

Jester examined. In the next phase, the education authorities framed the import of an external model as a (universal) solution for local problems. Jester illustrates why and how Alaskan education authorities, at the level of "policy talk"⁶⁷, reconciled two divergent policy strategies, one emphasizing the scrutiny of "local needs" and the other the borrowing of "global solution."

Talia Yariv-Mashal (2001) investigates the "Israeli Black Panthers," a grass-roots political movement of Sephardim activists, which started in 1971.⁶⁸ Borrowing the name and the strategy of political resistance from the U.S. Black Panthers, the Israeli Black Panthers successfully introduced the Integration Reform in Israel by using external references to the de-segregation movement in the United States. The differences with regard to social context are striking in her study. The forms of exclusion toward Sephardim in Israel, as well as the substance of the movement (emphasis on vocational schooling and comprehensive high schools) were quite different from those toward African Americans in the United States.

William deJong-Lambert describes the response of the Polish academic community to the prohibition of genetic research, which took place in several states of the former Soviet Union from the late 1940s until the early 1960s.⁶⁹ Genetics was described as a "reactionary," "imperialist" science which sought to justify the inequalities of capitalism and promote the bourgeois, capitalist agenda. This study shows the way in which previous self-references to "scientific objectivity" were replaced with new ones that matched the new political context based on the Marxist-Leninist ideology of science. Although the substance of the argument was replaced, the discursive strategy, that is, references to "scientific objectivity" remained the same. DeJong-Lambert illuminates the tensions that emerged during the transition from one ideological framework to another, and demonstrates how the increasingly marginalized and oppressed reference system (genetics) struggled for survival in the scientific underground of the Polish academic community.

Recontextualization (Phase 2). Carolyn Kissane presents a comparative study of "transitional societies," focusing on Kazakhstan and the Central Eurasian

region.⁷⁰ She analyzes how U.S. and European civics programs are imported and hybridized for use in the classroom. Her study investigates the dual policy strategy of Kazakh educational reforms: active transnational borrowing and local development of curricula and textbooks. There are many political and economic reasons that account for the dual policy strategy. For example, not only do imports of U.S. or European civics programs effectively demonstrate a "democratization effort" but there is also international funding attached for the borrowing of such programs. At the same time, however, ethno-nationalizing agendas prevail and make their way into civic education, history curricula and textbooks. In contrast to the borrowed democratization agendas, the latter ones are treated as "internal policy" and not readily discussed in public.

Elizabeth Cassity investigates, from a historical perspective, how the University of the South Pacific in Fiji used references to a "regional identity" to gain institutional autonomy from the original funders (Australian government), and to appease the beneficiaries (residents of Fiji and from surrounding small nation-states), who regarded the establishment of the University of the South Pacific as an emerging hegemonic power in the region.⁷¹

Dana Burde traces the transfer of the "best practice" of encouraging community control over education, embodied by parent-teacher associations (PTAs), to countries emerging from conflicts.⁷² Social scientists and humanitarian aid practitioners alike consider small civic associations such as PTAs to be ideal units for the building blocks of civil society. As a result, many international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) administering aid in foreign countries have promoted PTAs as providers of multiple benefits for school and society. Burde scrutinizes in detail how and why local project staff and partners interpreted "community participation" (in Bosnia and Herzegovina) differently than project staff and funders based in the United States.

Internalization (Phase 3). The dissertations of Iveta Silova and Carol Anne Spreen have been mentioned earlier in this book chapter. Silova examines the erasure of Soviet references and their subsequent replacement with Western

⁶⁷ Larry Cuban, "How Schools Change Reforms," in *Teachers College Record* 99:3 (1998), pp. 453-477.

⁶⁸ Talia Yariv-Mashal, *Ph.D. Proposal in Comparative and International Education* (New York: Columbia University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 2001).

⁶⁹ William deJong-Lambert, *Ph.D. Proposal in Comparative and International Education* (New York: Columbia University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 2001).

⁷⁰ Carolyn Kissane, *Schools and History "in Transition." The Case of Kazakhstan* (New York: Columbia University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Ph.D. Dissertation, 2001).

⁷¹ Elizabeth A. Cassity, *Spheres of Influence and Academic Networks: A History of Official Australian Aid to the University of the South Pacific (USP), 1960-1990* (New York: Columbia University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Ph.D. Dissertation, 2001).

⁷² Dana S. Burde, *Creating Community? PTAs in (post) Conflict Zones* (New York: Columbia University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Ph.D. Dissertation, 2001).

European references in bilingual education reform in Latvia.⁷³ She interprets the shift from the Soviet to the Western European reference system as a marker for the new geo-political educational space that Latvia, politically and economically, has been aspiring and preparing to inhabit at the turn of the millennium. It is notable that this particular change of political allies has affected the discursive level but not the practice of separate schooling. Although the separation of school systems, one for Latvian speakers and another for Russian and other ethnic speakers, continues to exist, segregated schools are no longer seen as "sites of occupation." They are now re-framed as "symbols of multiculturalism."

Spreen contends that the dominance of global rhetoric on local reforms has been relatively well documented in comparative education research. What has received less attention however, are the processes by which reforms are incorporated, adapted and how they are eventually understood locally. Using a culturalist framework, her dissertation explains how outcomes-based education (OBE) was borrowed, transformed and internalized by policy makers and educators in post-Apartheid South Africa.⁷⁴ By mapping and comparing definitions and intentions of OBE-driven curricula across different countries and continents, her study illustrates how reforms are not static and how ideas undergo considerable transformation to fit with local needs and understandings about the nature, purpose and function of education. This detailed description of the process of indigenization of OBE in South Africa shows that in order for reforms to be successfully implemented, they needed to be identified as "home-spun," relevant and locally applicable. Using a culturalist framework, the chapter shows the extent to which different mechanisms facilitate and impede global movements and the significance of making meaning out of the rhetoric at a local level.

Bernhard Streitwieser analyzes how teachers in former East German schools deal with the imposed educational transfer from Western to Eastern Germany.⁷⁵ His case is a study of internalization in that he investigates how teachers in former East German schools integrate the distinction made by West German pedagogy between *Erziehung* (emphasis on personal and social development)

⁷³ Silova 2002.

⁷⁴ Spreen 2000.

⁷⁵ Bernhard Streitwieser, *Negotiating Transformation: East Berlin Teachers in the Post-Unification Decade* (New York: Columbia University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Ph.D. Dissertation, 2000).

and *Bildung* (emphasis on literacy) into a unified concept that resonates to some extent with conceptions of education held in socialist times.

The dissertations from Columbia University, which have been completed in the past two years, have empirically investigated Schriewer's externalization theory. Several dissertations are currently in progress and it is likely that this particular research focus will continue to attract academic curiosity and interest. There is no doubt that the growing body of empirical research on educational transfer both in US research institutions and elsewhere is a great tribute to Schriewer's novel interpretive framework. Coherent and precise in its formulation, externalization theory lends itself to the study of transnational policy interactions, and on a broader basis, to the scrutiny of the process of globalization and international convergence in education.