On the making and faking of knowledge value in higher education curricula

Jim Hordern

School of Education

Bath Spa University

j.hordern@bathspa.ac.uk

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Abstract

This paper uses Bernstein's sociology of knowledge and studies of professional knowledge and expertise to identify how knowledge value is constituted in higher education curricula. It is argued that different knowledge structures and forms of disciplinary community influence how curricula are determined, and lead to distinctive types of knowledge value that reflect curriculum purpose. Three models of curriculum construction are presented to distinguish between the constitution of value in the curricula of (i) pure disciplines, (ii) 'stronger' professional disciplines and (iii) 'weaker' occupational disciplines. These illustrate how processes of knowledge selection and transformation, and the dynamics of disciplinary and professional communities, can lead to the strengthening or undermining of knowledge value.

Introduction

This paper addresses questions of knowledge value in the higher education curriculum, identifying how the processes by which knowledge value is constituted vary by the type of discipline, and exploring ways in which that value can be secured or undermined. Bernstein's sociology of knowledge and theoretical works by Muller, Young, Winch and Barnett are employed to differentiate between knowledge structure in 'pure' and 'applied' disciplines (Becher 1994), and to identify how disciplinary communities and other stakeholders shape curricula. This leads to an analysis of the processes by which knowledge is selected, appropriated and transformed (or 'recontextualised') to constitute a curriculum subject, and of how this varies in pure and applied disciplines. This provides the basis for three models that demonstrate differing processes of curriculum construction, with a particular focus on the complexities of professionally and occupationally-orientated curricula. Curriculum examples from a range of disciplines are used to illustrate the argument

The argument presented in this paper is underpinned by the assertion that certain forms of knowledge have inherent value, and therefore should be foregrounded in higher education curricula. This value arises through processes of knowledge production which are specific to disciplines and their 'particular socio-epistemic formations' (Young and Muller 2013, 238) and purposes (Muller 2009; Young and Muller 2007). It is forms of disciplinarity that therefore maintain the standards by which new knowledge claims can be judged and their credibility established. It is suggested that this knowledge should form the core content of a higher education curriculum, as it offers a credible basis for reasoning, theorisation and inquiry (Muller 2009; Young and Muller 2013, 2014). This foregrounding of disciplinary knowledge suggests also that the acquisition of types of skill, competence, or graduate attribute, are ancillary benefits of the curriculum, and that these are enhanced via a curriculum that is knowledge-based (Winch 2013; Muller 2009).

This is not, however, an argument simply in favour of the pure disciplines of the physical sciences or humanities (Becher 1994), although inherent value in these disciplines may be more immediately perceptible. Instead there is an emphasis here on the importance of certain conditions for the production of inherently valuable knowledge and the organisation of this knowledge within a curriculum in forms that recognise different curriculum purposes. In the applied disciplines, with their professional and vocationally orientated higher education curricula (Becher 1994), issues of knowledge value are complicated by the need to take account of the demands of occupational practice, and by the involvement and influence of a wider variety of stakeholders in disciplinary communities. These complexities can lead to the foregrounding of types of knowledge that do not have disciplinary origins but may be valued by employers or governments for their perceived relevance or utility. This can lead to confusion and contestation, as opportunities emerge for non-disciplinary knowledge to be fraudulently ascribed with special value in the curriculum.

Bernstein's knowledge structures and disciplinary communities

Bernstein's (1999) differentiation between vertical and horizontal discourses, and between hierarchical and horizontal (segmented) structures within vertical discourse provides a framework for thinking about knowledge value. The systematic and disciplined vertical discourse is differentiated from the 'everyday' and ephemeral horizontal discourse (1999, 158-9). There are two types of vertical discourse – the hierarchical structures, represented primarily by the physical sciences, proceed by 'integrating propositions' (ibid., 162) within a relatively coherent structure, while the horizontal 'segmented' structures (i.e. sociology, psychology) contain a series of theoretical 'languages' (162), providing differing perspectives on objects of study. Within the segmented structures, Bernstein differentiates between those disciplines that possess languages that have a 'strong grammar', or 'explicit conceptual syntax capable of 'relatively' precise empirical descriptions' (1999, 164) (i.e. economics, linguistics and parts of psychology), and those with a 'weaker grammar', where there is a weaker relation between the internal conceptual structure and the external language of description (i.e. sociology, social anthropology and cultural studies) (164).

Assumptions that vertical discourses are simply relatively static bodies of theoretical knowledge are erroneous (Muller 2014). What is considered systematically organised within a discipline can include forms of propositional knowledge (know that) and the knowledge of how to make inferences between propositions and to use procedures for assessing knowledge claims (know how) (Winch 2010; Muller 2014). In many disciplines, and their curriculum forms in higher education, types of experiential knowledge (or acquaintance knowledge) may be particularly important (Winch 2013) for students to get a feel for the subject matter and to engage in disciplinary practice. Curricula may contain differing admixtures of know that, know-how and acquaintance knowledge, and this may vary between disciplines and within disciplines, with differing institutions accenting aspects of the discipline differentially. How history is taught in one institution may vary from another, within certain parameters. Certain disciplines, by their very structure, may negate certain types of variance. Thus, an adept chemist might be expected to be acquainted with key aspects of experimental work in a laboratory, and with the fundamentals of physical, organic and inorganic chemistry, irrespective of the institution in which they study.

While knowledge value in a pure discipline (or what Bernstein (2000, 52) refers to as a 'singular') may be represented by a hierarchical or segmented knowledge structure, valuable knowledge in an occupationally orientated or applied discipline (that which Bernstein (ibid.) refers to as a 'region') has to 'face both ways' (Barnett 2006, 152) to the worlds of the disciplines and the contexts of practice. Valuable knowledge in such applied disciplines demonstrates value both through its disciplinarity and its purchase on the variable contexts of practice (Muller 2009). The occupational and academic communities that are responsible for the production and iteration of knowledge in an applied discipline ideally need to apply the same rigour in assessing claims to knowledge as those used in the purer disciplines, and yet this knowledge must also have relevance to the changing context of practice. Valuable concepts are developed in relation to, or cognisant of, the circumstances of occupational practice, and how that practice is defined and understood has considerable bearing on which

aspects of purer disciplinary knowledge are selected and transformed for the knowledge base, and how production of knowledge for the occupation ensues (Barnett 2006; Hordern 2014a).

The idea of a disciplinary community is fundamental to the development and sustenance of knowledge value. As Bernstein implied, communities associated with purer disciplinary forms can be inward looking and 'narcissistic' (2000, 52), orientated towards esoteric and seemingly obscure objects of study, and sometimes subject to forms of social 'profanity' that exclude newcomers and their ideas without warrant. These communities may be strongly 'insulated', with strict 'rules of entry' (Bernstein 2000, 52) that exclude new, disruptive, claims to knowledge, sometimes for reasons that are less to do with maintaining the value and quality of disciplinary knowledge and more to do with preserving the status of existing members. Disciplinary communities can thus be poorly equipped to pursue inquiry and iterate knowledge, but this does not mean that they necessarily *only* represent particular dominant interests and that the knowledge that they husband is *just* a reflection of their particular predilections and preferences (Muller 2009, 2011). Disciplinary communities should have the capacity to judge knowledge claims on the basis of their relation to existing disciplinary knowledge and their strength of argument, not on the basis of who has made them and their strength of association with the existing community. Without such a capacity the community risks becoming self-referential and focused on its own preservation, leading to ossification and inertia in the knowledge base. For the community and its knowledge to remain dynamic and emergent established ways of thinking must be defended but yet remain open to challenge and development. There must be a degree of respectful disrespect.

While for many pure higher education disciplines the notion of a disciplinary community may be relatively unproblematic, involving primarily academic staff and researchers, in certain more occupationally-orientated or applied disciplines the notion of the community may need to be extended to include organisations related to that occupation. In the classical professions, such as medicine or architecture, professional associations or colleges have considerable influence on what is considered valuable disciplinary knowledge (Beck and Young 2005). These associations provide a bridge to practice and the input of practitioners, ensuring that the knowledge is fit for purpose and cognisant of the 'organisational and technological problems' that relate to that occupation (Barnett 2006; Muller 2009). While there may be contestations within the disciplinary community around claims to new knowledge, the application of disciplinary procedures is generally systematic – contestations are dealt with in a disciplined fashion. In contrast, in occupations where there is a weaker form of collective organisation, the 'discipline' of the disciplinary community may be less well-developed, resulting in less coherence and contestations that may be less 'disciplined' in nature.

How is knowledge value constituted in the HE curriculum?

Processes of what Bernstein (2000) terms 'recontextualisation' are central to the constitution of knowledge value, and yet they differ with knowledge structure and knowledge purpose

(Barnett 2006; Hordern 2014a). Recontextualisation is understood here as the process by which knowledge is 'delocated' from one context and 'relocated' in another (Bernstein 2000, 33), or selected, appropriated and transformed (Bernstein 2000; Barnett 2006) as it moves between contexts. It is the process by which new disciplinary forms are generated (Bernstein 2000, 52-53) and from which curricula are constructed. As knowledge moves from a discipline (where the focus is knowledge production and conservation) to a curriculum subject (where the focus is knowledge transmission) it is selected, appropriated and transformed (i.e. recontextualised) by 'agents with recontextualising functions' (Bernstein 2000, 33) with particular agendas and interests which may be concurrent with those involved in producing disciplinary knowledge or in transmitting curriculum subject knowledge. Indeed the particular people, organisations or institutions involved in recontextualisation (the agents or 'stakeholders') may not be the same as those involved in knowledge production. The process of recontextualisation may be quite specific to the discipline and the context in which the stakeholders are operating. Rules that indicate how knowledge can be recontextualised are present in the systematically organised vertical discourse of disciplines, where particular knowledge structures and conceptual schema suggest particular patterns of curriculum organisation and 'epistemic ascent' (Muller 2009; Winch 2013). Such 'recontextualisation rules' (Bernstein 2000) are not present in unstructured horizontal discourse where knowledge has no necessary schematic relation to other knowledge, other than through everyday patterns and routines (i.e brushing one's teeth and tying shoelaces (Bernstein 1999, 160)).

 It is important to distinguish between disciplinary knowledge production and the development and enactment of a curriculum (Bernstein 2000; Luckett 2009). In higher education the same academics may be involved in producing knowledge, recontextualising it for higher education programmes and then teaching the modules within those programmes, although the reference points for these activities may be distinct (i.e. research communities for knowledge production and teaching and quality assurance communities for programme development). However, the extent to which the same individuals are involved in all activities will vary across higher education institutions and between disciplines, and indeed within national contexts. While a traditional research intensive university may pride itself on a work process that sees academic staff teaching their own research, other institutions may maintain greater distinction between knowledge production and curriculum development. In some cases the disciplinary communities that produce knowledge may seem distant from the realities of curriculum design and development.

In certain higher education systems the authority to select knowledge for the curriculum may not be in the hands of individual academics, and programmes may need to be developed in accordance with stipulations or guidance put in place by a central curriculum authority. An example of this is the work of the National Council for Technological Awards (NCTA) and its successor the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) in the United Kingdom between 1955 and 1993, awarding bodies created by government which played a substantive role in shaping higher education curricula in the colleges and polytechnics of the 'public sector' of UK higher education (Pratt 1997; Burgess and Pratt 1970). Under these arrangements non-university higher education institutions developed their proposed awards in

negotiation with the guidance provided by the awarding body. Although there was considerably flexibility and innovation in curriculum development, the polytechnics remained 'under the aegis of the CNAA' (Pratt 1999, 263) until they became universities in 1992, meaning that the selection, appropriation and transformation of knowledge was always subject to potential constraint, a 'hierarchical distinction' (ibid.) between these institutions and the universities. The CNAA model has informed the development of similar accreditation models elsewhere, including for example for non-university higher education in Hong Kong and Australia (Harman and Meek 2000), while public bodies exercise programme-level accreditation for some forms of higher education in many European countries, such as Norway and the Netherlands (Stensaker and Harvey 2006).

The knowledge structures underpinning disciplines suggest particular forms of curriculum. For the purer disciplines with hierarchical knowledge structures (i.e. the physical sciences) the opportunity for structural difference between the discipline, representing the current state of knowledge, and the curriculum appear minimal. The integrating propositions form the basis for the curriculum as planned and implemented. The discipline is highly structured, the structure is transparent, and this should therefore form the basis for the curriculum. The purpose of such a curriculum is to produce 'disciplinary adepts' (Muller 2011) who have mastered the subject matter and have started to assume a disciplinary identity (Bernstein 2000; Muller 2009), even if, ultimately, few of those who complete undergraduate programmes in these disciplines subsequently contribute to disciplinary communities and their knowledge production. For other pure disciplines with horizontal or segmented knowledge structures (Bernstein 1999) there is greater potential for difference between knowledge production and curriculum knowledge. This is because the segmented disciplinary structure may allow for certain disciplinary languages (or theoretical perspectives) to be prioritised as knowledge is recontextualised into the curriculum, while other perspectives may be downplayed or ignored. Thus a sociology undergraduate programme may consist of Marxist or post-modernist perspectives while minimalising functionalism.

However, if the purpose of a pure curriculum is to produce disciplinary adepts, it would seem unreasonable to drift too far away from a synoptic coverage of a range of prominent theoretical approaches in the curriculum. It is difficult to see how a sociology adept would be able to convincingly justify her use of one theoretical approach without understanding how it has arisen in relation to others, and how it can be distinguished from them. Work undertaken on sociology undergraduate programmes in the U.K. has demonstrated a degree of consistency in the coverage of theoretical perspectives in the curriculum across institutions (Mclean et al. 2013). Nevertheless, the segmented structure of sociology leads to ongoing contestations between differing 'allegiances, interests and identities' (Luckett 2009, 451) as curricula are determined.

When considering the constitution of curriculum knowledge in applied disciplines the picture is more complicated. In such disciplines the recontextualisation process has to take account of occupational requirements. The purpose of the curriculum is not, generally, to produce disciplinary adepts but rather to produce adept practitioners at a novice or competent level who will be able to meet the demands of the occupation. The process of curriculum

development may involve input from professional associations, employers or others connected with the occupation, and may need to take account of standards, competences specified by governments or their agencies. Knowledge production in pure disciplines may or may not influence the curricula in the occupationally orientated discipline. Recontextualisation from these pure disciplines into an applied discipline may be a one-off or continual process (Hordern 2014a), and (if the purer source disciplines are segmented knowledge structures) may result in certain recontextualised theoretical perspectives achieving particular prominence (Hordern 2014b) in ways that are not possible in pure disciplines. For example, management studies exhibits a reliance on certain forms of sociology, psychology and economics, 'borrowing' and 'blending' these into indigenous theories in ways that can neglect or ignore original disciplinary problematics and intra-disciplinary dialogues and debates (Oswick et al. 2011; Hordern 2014c). The purpose of management studies can be seen as inherently different from that of purer disciplines, with a focus on providing knowledge for management practitioners and their organisations, although such a claim is contentious and subject to ongoing debate, with some seeking to take the discipline in a purer direction (Alvesson and Sandberg 2013).

 There may also be substantial knowledge production taking place within the applied discipline, and this may or may not meet standards or criteria that would be expected of other disciplines. Problems and purposes of practice may be subject to contest, resulting in differing conceptions amongst stakeholders of what knowledge should be recontextualised for the curricula. Moreover, within occupational practice there is a ready availability of alternative knowledge types that could be called upon to substitute for vertical disciplinary forms. These alternative knowledge types may include forms of sectoral, organisational and workplace knowledge that are highly contextual and situated, and represent forms of everyday occupational knowledge (Hordern 2014a). Both employers and governments may assert the value of including this occupational and organisational knowledge in the curriculum, arguing for its relevance and proximity to the realities of practice. While there is no doubt that familiarity with the everyday realities of a particular occupation is important for development as a practitioner, these forms of everyday knowledge have a fast diminishing value in the context of occupational, organisational and technological change.

Constituting curriculum knowledge: three models of recontextualisation

Through the recontextualising process of the constitution of curriculum knowledge, there are opportunities for contestation to emerge and knowledge value to be lost, but the risks of this occurring vary by the purpose of the curriculum and the structure of the disciplinary knowledge. Three models of curriculum construction are outlined below that relate to the discussion above, and can aid the identification of points of contestation that emerge through recontextualisation processes. In all cases recontextualisation, through the process of 'delocating' and 'relocating' knowledge, opens up spaces 'in which ideology can play' (Bernstein 2000, 32). In effect opportunities emerge for stakeholders to 'fake' knowledge value in ways that accord with their priorities or educational beliefs, and thereby to

(potentially) obscure or downgrade forms of inherently valuable knowledge. Knowledge that emerges from non-disciplinary sources can be falsely presented as having value in such circumstances, with value linked to markets, policies or standards rather than disciplines. Inevitably the typology suggested here only approximates to the realities of curriculum development. To ground the analysis illustrations are provided from studies of higher education curriculum carried out by the author and others.

The first model depicts the recontextualisation of a pure discipline into its pure curriculum form to be taught in higher education. This pertains to the recontextualisation processes at work for physics and chemistry (hierarchical knowledge structure) or psychology or sociology (segmented knowledge structures, albeit with differing grammars). As noted above, knowledge production and its recontextualisation for curricula may be the responsibility of the same individual academics or these functions may be distinctly separate, occurring within the same institution or not. Nevertheless knowledge is undergoing a process of selection, appropriation and transformation from discipline into curriculum subject, even in the purist instance of research-led teaching. This recontextualisation process may be at the discretion of an individual academic, or involve a broader constituency. Disciplinary communities set explicit or implicit parameters as to what is considered valid curricula, and thereby shape the recontextualisation process. For example in the U.K. subject benchmark statements provide an explicit reference point for curriculum development at the institutional level. Those who produce knowledge and those who transmit it in this model are usually part of the same disciplinary communities, providing the conditions through which inaccuracies and misinterpretations in the curriculum can be challenged. Which forms of knowledge and inquiry are part of the discipline are generally agreed, whatever the substantive disagreements about the significance of that knowledge within the community. Institutional contexts may, however, constrain what can be included in the curriculum, with factors such as staffing, curriculum time or political sensibilities resulting in particular curricula forms.

It could be argued that in segmented disciplines with horizontal knowledge structures (i.e. sociology, psychology, economics) there is greater flexibility in assembling a valid curricula, as a consequence of the multiplicity of valid perspectives that can be included to afford the curriculum value, and this can lead to potential contestation in the recontextualisation process with intra-departmental disputes around appropriate content and inter-institutional variance. On the other hand, in the those disciplines with a hierarchical knowledge structure (i.e. physics and chemistry) there is minimal room for contestation, as the structure of integrating propositions and fundamental conceptual hierarchy indicates that only certain curriculum sequences and assemblages of content can be afforded validity. With hierarchical knowledge structures, therefore, there is minimal opportunity for differences to emerge between the approaches of those involved in researching and teaching in the discipline. That notwithstanding, there is still the potential for curricula to become out of date, as the recontextualisation of validated new knowledge from discipline to curriculum requires time. Greater potential for dislocation between research and teaching within disciplinary communities could be said to exist in segmented knowledge structures, with certain theoretical perspectives persisting in curriculum while effectively redundant as sources of

new knowledge and insight, as a consequence of the advocacy of particular academics with allegiance to a specific perspective. In practice, however, as Becher (1994) and Muller (2009) have observed, many academics operating in the 'soft pure' disciplines are heavily involved in both teaching and research and thus the two activities cannot be easily separated.

Diagram 1 about here

An alternative, second model, focuses on the constitution of a professionally or occupationally orientated curriculum, in what we might term a 'region' (Bernstein 2000, 52). Disciplinary knowledge, potentially sourced from a variety of disciplines, is brought into relation with the organisational and technological problems of practice through a process of what Barnett terms 'reclassificatory recontextualisation' (2006, 147). Various stakeholders (including possibly professional associations, educational institutions and employers) may be involved in interpreting the problems of practice and determining what knowledge is required for the occupation. If this interpretation is swayed towards what seem to be particularly pressing problems experienced by one group of employers of practitioners this can orientate the curriculum excessively towards specific contexts and undermine coherence (Muller 2009; Hordern 2014a). To achieve a coherent curriculum that provides a basis for practice the recontextualisation process thus needs to assemble a meaningful conceptual structure that relates to a broad range of occupational practice contexts. Where occupational communities have strong links with disciplinary communities (i.e. in the ideal typical model of the classical professions of medicine, law, architecture and engineering) the problems and purposes of practice are more likely to be accurately defined. The strong links support a shared understanding of what constitutes specialised knowledge for the occupation, and while everyday occupational or organisational knowledge may have a role in making judgements in specific situations, this is clearly distinct from specialised knowledge that underpins informed processes of diagnosis and inference in many professional practices (Abbott 1988; Shalem 2014). In these more classically professional occupational practices, the potential to 'fake' knowledge value is limited, as what is special to the practice and what isn't is more likely to be clearly defined in both the 'workplace curriculum' (Billett 2006) of the occupational practice and in the formal institutional curriculum.

Durable frameworks that bring together institutions and professional bodies tend to characterise recontextualisation processes in these regions, with knowledge selected, appropriated and transformed in ways that transcend organisational and institutional boundaries. For example, In the U.K. context, the higher education engineering curriculum is shaped by the regulatory function of the Engineering Council (EngC), which is responsible for 'regulating the engineering profession in the United Kingdom, setting the standards for the practice of engineering, and maintaining the registers of professional engineers and technicians' in addition to providing 'Accredited Programme Status' to those higher education programmes that are 'rooted in UK-SPEC' (the UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence) (EngC 2014a, 2). The EngC thus has a regulatory, registration and accreditation function, as well as providing a forum for the 35 separate professional

engineering institutions that represent different engineering specialisms. Importantly, each of these institutions or associations must offer 'learned society activities…..to keep its members (if any) abreast of advances in its specific field of engineering' (EngC 2014b, 12), encouraging engagement with research activity in higher education. Higher education institutions, through the Engineering Professors' Council and the Royal Academy of Engineering, work closely with the Engineering Council on issues of professional formation and education for engineers (EPC 2015), shaping engineering knowledge in accordance with the problems and purposes of the engineering profession, with recontextualisation led by an inclusive and self-governing professional community that incorporates practitioners and disciplinary communities alike. The transnational context in which the engineering profession is co-ordinated is also important here in guiding how practice problems are defined and curriculum developed. The Engineering Council must demonstrate that its 'accreditation process is compatible with the standards developed by the International Engineering Alliance (IEA)' (EngC 2014a, 3), and is also a signatory to the Sydney and Washington accords (ibid., 3), which establish a framework of equivalence for professional engineering degrees (IEA 2014). Nevertheless, despite enjoying relatively benign recontextualisation configurations, the engineering curriculum in many countries is under pressure to deal with the increasing 'specialisation' in knowledge production, resulting in a curriculum that is 'bursting at the seams' (Muller 2015, 410), providing ongoing challenges for programme development.

Diagram 2 about here

The third model: extra-disciplinary claims to knowledge value

The third model is in essence a 'weakened' version of the 2nd, with diagram 2 sufficing as an approximation of the recontextualisation processes involved, although here these processes are compromised and contested to a greater extent. In occupations that have not achieved the societal esteem or and comparative stability of professions such as medicine, law, architecture and engineering, there is greater potential for alternative (non-disciplinary) versions of knowledge value to gain prominence. One possible source of disruption to recontextualisation processes is the involvement of governments or agencies in specifying curricula when these governments or agencies are particularly unsympathetic to the values of disciplinary communities. In such scenarios the problems and purposes of an occupation may be contested leading to differences concerning where to source disciplinary knowledge from. The role of disciplinary knowledge may itself be questioned, and the indiscriminate derivation of curricula from occupational practice instead preferred. Governments in a position to determine elements of the curricula can also encourage or force the selection, appropriation and transformation of knowledge forms in ways that are not observant of disciplinary knowledge structure. This can result in the juxtaposition of elements of disciplinary and occupational knowledge in ways that confuse issues of knowledge value, and

in curricula that exaggerate the value of non-disciplinary knowledge for particular sectoral or governmental ends.

Two examples of government influence on recontextualisation will be useful here. Firstly, early childhood professionals have seen increasing interest in their professional formation from governments in a number of countries with differing early childhood education systems, primarily as a result of the focus put on early years education and care as a means for increasing female participation in the labour market and economic growth, and also because of pressures to prepare young children for formal education (Oberhuemer 2005; Penn 2014). In the U.K. we have seen professional formation of early years practitioners at a higher level increasingly specified by government agencies, as demonstrated by the recent moves away from an Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) towards an Early Years Teacher (EYT) model which is much closer to the existing model of formation for schoolteaching, albeit without a comparable professional status. While the professional and disciplinary communities were involved in the development of the EYPS (Miller 2008), the U.K. Coalition Government of 2010-2015 introduced reforms that undermined this professional status and sought to re-align early years professionalism with its 'school readiness' agenda for early years work (Hordern 2013). The consequences for higher education curricula are significant, as a system of recontextualisation that has developed through co-ordination between respective communities, and valued forms of disciplinary knowledge, is increasingly challenged by a version of what Young (2006) terms a 'standards-based approach' driven from outside the disciplinary community. Potentially this can lead to a reductive focus on knowledge and behaviours emphasised by governments and inspection agencies, and the valorisation of non-specialised occupational practices. For example, the degree of specification included in the recently introduced early years teachers standards (NCTL 2013), coupled with a framework for assessing young children over which practitioners have limited control, risks downgrading those traditions of early years education that cannot easily demonstrate their contribution to sustaining 'good progress and outcomes by children' (ibid, 2), if these 'outcomes' are interpreted narrowly, as concerning solely 'readiness' for schooling. Bernstein described these non-disciplinary modes of knowledge value arbitration as 'generic modes', that use forms of 'functional analysis' to unpack what are assumed to be 'the underlying features necessary to the performance of a skill, task, practice or even area of work' (2000, 53). In so doing they seek to 'silence the cultural basis' (ibid.) of academic, professional and vocational traditions alike, leaving space to insert new, fake, notions of knowledge value.

An equally powerful example of the 'faking' of knowledge value can be found in teacher education, as governments in England and, to some extent, Sweden and the Netherlands re-orientate curricula away from the (applied) disciplinary communities housed in universities and teacher education institutions, and towards notions of 'school-based' practice (Maandag et al. 2007; Beach and Bagley 2013). With an increasing focus on high quality teaching as a key factor in a 'high performing' education system, and criticisms of elements of university-led teacher education as often overtly ideological or ineffective preparation for teaching practice, these governments have sought to encourage new routes into the profession. More

broadly, this can be seen as part of a process of wresting control over definitions of the purpose of education, and the key 'problems' of schooling, away from educationalists, with governments introducing new ways of valuing educational knowledge that are aligned primarily with economic or national policy objectives. As a consequence of this championing of school-based practices, the contribution of the discipline of education (al) studies (or science) is called into question, leading to efforts by the university-based research community to defend the role of higher education institutions (BERA 2014). At the heart of these contests are contrary positions on the nature of expert teaching knowledge and on the role of teachers and their professionalism (Hordern 2014d). Some policy-makers assert that educational disciplinary knowledge is blinkered by ideological concerns and has questionable validity, while schools that produce successful assessment outcomes are presented as providing the expert environments and work-based knowledge into which novice teachers should be immersed. Novice teachers are thus steered towards knowledge that is valued for its effectiveness in meeting externally-imposed objectives, rather than towards knowledge constituted through processes that take account of disciplinary structure and conceptual coherence.

However, it is not just the intervention of government that can undermine disciplinary knowledge structures or downplay their importance. In many of the 'corporate professions' such as recruitment or management consultancy, it is clear that how knowledge is valued is closely aligned with market concerns (Muzio et al. 2011). Thus disciplinary forms of knowledge, derived most frequently from economics, psychology or sociology, or indeed from extant recontextualisations of these disciplines in management studies, become increasingly redundant if they do not prove themselves as assets in a search for greater profitability and efficiency. Forms of network and company-specific knowledge may be perceived as particularly useful in securing advantage for individuals and the company. Additionally, entrepreneurial professional associations may seek to take control of the recontextualisation process for the occupational knowledge base, assembling a 'body of knowledge' that becomes the barometer by which claims to knowledge value are judged. 'Professionalising' management occupations such as project management or business process management invest considerable resources in developing these bodies of knowledge (Morris et al. 2006; Bandara et al. 2011), and then seek to promote them as part of their strategy for gaining credibility with both employing organisations and practitioners. The consequence is pressure on those recontextualising knowledge for the higher education curricula in these occupations to acknowledge the claims of the profession's body of knowledge, particularly if they seek the validation of their degrees by the relevant professional association. Notions of disciplinary knowledge value are thus undermined, as value is equated with 'effective' use in current practice.

Concluding remarks

The analysis above suggests that configurations of stakeholder interests are particularly influential in shaping knowledge value. Higher education is subject to 'an unprecedented pull….from external constituencies' (Shay 2015, 2), which can challenge the recontextualisation authority of disciplinary communities, both those of a pure and a more

applied nature. However, knowledge value is clearly 'made' in different ways, with the relationship between knowledge production and its recontextualisation into curricula varying depending on the discipline, and thus for professionally-orientated higher education at least some forms of externality must play a role (Muller 2009; Bernstein 2000). External constituencies that relate to particular occupations do not necessarily undermine the constitution of knowledge value – providing they contribute to a better understanding of the nature of occupational practice, and do not seek to re-orientate the curricula solely towards the current concerns of dominant voices. Where higher education curricula becomes heavily influenced by government policy or corporate occupations bound to market interests then 'fake' claims to knowledge value seem likely to emerge to challenge the perceived 'irrelevancies' or 'subversion' of disciplinary communities.

The occlusion or 'de-differentiating' (Muller 2015, 413) of valuable knowledge emerges in curricula if there is little appreciation of importance of offering students access to forms of conceptual coherence and the procedural and inferential know how that enables them to find their way around the knowledge base and evaluate new knowledge claims (Winch 2010, 2013). Recognising what should comprise a curriculum subject is invaluable, but the complexity, subtlety and differentiation that this entails run counter to trends towards the 'generic' in higher education (Bernstein 2000, 53), and instrumentalist demands for accountability and 'value for money'. The making of knowledge value has a certain fragility, and the relaying of this value relies on recontextualisation processes that can be easily and readily undermined (Shay 2015; Muller 2015).

Acknowledgements

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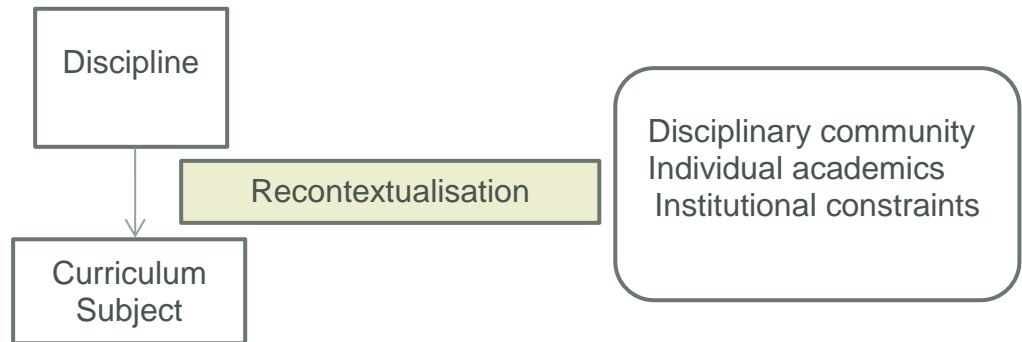**Diagram1 : Recontextualisatising pure disciplines for curricula**.

Diagram 2: Recontextualisation for professionally/occupationally orientated curricula