

# **Development of Criticality among Undergraduates in Two Academic Disciplines**

## **Full Report of Activities and Results - R000239657**

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### **Background**

Although 'criticality' and related concepts have long been recognised among the aims of higher education (e.g. Newman 1899/1996), the processes by which criticality is developed, and indeed the nature of the concept in the contemporary university, have been subject to little empirical study. Discussion about criticality has existed uneasily within a debate about the purposes of higher education (for example, how does it relate to the university's role as provider of specific skills directly usable in employment, or as developer of general intellectual skills which can be used later in different contexts, or as the source of an environment in which personal and cultural development can take place?). Despite some careful analyses of aspects of the critical process, or of the goals of critical education (e.g. Barnett's 1997 theorisation of criticality; Bailin et al.'s 1999 theorisation of resources needed for critical thinking to take place), practice in universities across a range of disciplines and levels has not been analysed in any detail. This project started the process of examination, with the following objectives:

### **Objectives**

To provide:

- (1) an integrated theoretical interdisciplinary framework for beginning to understand the teaching and learning of criticality;
- (2) rich empirical descriptions of the development of criticality;
- (3) clarification of current epistemological and curricular confusion about the teaching and learning of criticality;
- (4) discussion of how reality on the ground relates to the world of policy initiatives; and
- (5) a foundation for future work on:
  - (a) the transfer of criticality to other disciplines and life situations and;
  - (b) more effective teaching and learning of criticality at undergraduate level.

The realisation of these aims and objectives is discussed below in the section **Research Findings and Theoretical Developments**. Issues related to empirical data are also addressed in the **Methods** section.

## Methods

### Overall research strategy

To achieve our overall aim of theorising the teaching and learning of criticality in contemporary higher education, we worked on a number of different fronts, both conceptual and empirical. To develop our understanding of contemporary debates and conceptualisations of criticality, we undertook an extensive literature review, and mounted a seminar series to which a number of key theorists of the higher education curriculum were contributors. We also included in the research team an additional member with interests in contemporary educational philosophy (Prof C Brumfit). To develop empirically based conceptualisations of criticality and its place in higher education learning and teaching, we undertook ethnographic studies of two contrasting disciplines in a Russell Group university: a traditional arts subject (Modern Languages) and a vocational social science subject (Social Work Studies).

The project involved a wide-ranging programme of data collection of multiple types, relevant to the teaching and learning of criticality, in order to increase the power of the conclusions. Data collected focused on both formal and informal learning, and on group interactions as well as individual student case studies. Observational data has been central to our analyses of undergraduate classes. In interviews with students, their written products were an important stimulus for discussion, as were the classes and other learning events attended by the fieldworker.

In both disciplines studied, the undergraduate programme at the target university was 4 years long, with Year 3 devoted to residence abroad in one case (Modern Languages) and the final two years to substantial period of fieldwork practice, interwoven with time in the university, in the other (Social Work Studies). Project resources did not allow for systematic direct participant observation of these significant learning experiences. However, we gathered indirect evidence about them through interviews with students and staff, and through analysis of related written products.

### Data collection

The data collection was carried through very successfully, thanks to careful preparation, negotiation and building of relationships in the early stages, plus fieldworker persistence and flexibility once data collection was under way. The discipline-based members of the research team acted as 'gatekeepers', for example facilitating access to classes and case study students. The detailed procedures used and resulting data were as follows:

- a) *Regular observation and digital audiorecording, where feasible, of teaching/learning interactions* (e.g. seminars, lectures, individual tutorials), throughout one semester in each discipline. We tracked two study courses in each of three years of study in both Modern Languages and Social Work Studies (12 in all), as well as a selection of language classes and a small number of Social Work placement interactions. A selection of classes of different types were audiorecorded and transcribed (80 protocols in all) and observation notes were typed up from others (98 protocols).

- b) *Scrutiny of diverse interim and final written /spoken case study student products.*  
For each case study student, documents relating to 2-4 major assignments were collected.
- c) *Digitally audiorecorded interviews with students, course teachers, department heads and administrators* as appropriate to probe:
- (i) what students think they have learned,
  - (ii) what teachers think they have taught and that students have learned
  - (iii) what institutional representatives aim to achieve.

We tracked 9 case study students per department, 3 in each year of study to build up a cross-sectional picture of the development of criticality. We tracked a range of students in terms of age, educational qualifications, gender and social background. (In each department, one case study student dropped out of our study for reasons unrelated to the project and we recruited substitutes.) We interviewed each student several times during the course of a semester, with a follow up interview at the end of the year for students tracked in the first semester. In all, a total of 100 student interviews were conducted (45 in Social Work, 55 in Modern Languages).

To encourage student participation, small financial incentives were offered, and we believe this was helpful in recruiting participants initially, though once recruited, student participation was largely maintained through the development of constructive working relationships by the main fieldworker (Johnston).

We interviewed eighteen staff members formally. Supplementary data/background information was also gathered on an ad hoc basis from informal encounters with staff and students.

We had planned to run a number of student focus groups in each department. However, given the richness of other data, we found this was unnecessary.

- d) *Collection and analysis of relevant policy (e.g. relevant benchmark statements) and course documents* to investigate their proposals and claims regarding criticality.

In addition to data we had planned to collect, we observed (1) two Social Work students and their practice teachers in a placement supervision session at the placement site; (2) dissertation supervision sessions for two final year Modern Languages students.

### **Data analysis**

The analysis has been conducted qualitatively using ethnographic-type techniques (Johnston 1998; Smagorinsky 1994) in combination with microanalysis of talk, reading, writing and thought as dynamic social and learning activities (e.g. Vygotsky 1962, 1978; Bruner 1985). These analytical methods have given us access to localised meanings of events, processes and changes (Miles and Huberman 1994). Transcripts of interviews and of classes, student academic products (written and spoken), and departmental/course documentation, have been central to our empirical analysis. Most of the data are stored electronically (with some exceptions such as student written

products), which promoted data sharing across the research team. Data analysis was supported by the software package NVivo, which provided a flexible means of coding different types of document and pursuing emergent themes across the dataset.

By cross-relating the findings from each type of data, integrating these with the theoretical approaches outlined later and considering the wider higher educational context, it has been possible to address the issues raised by the research questions. We have focused particularly on (1) the relationship of our data to Barnett's (1997) framework, modifying and developing this as appropriate; (2) constructing our own developmental and curricular frameworks. This has been an iterative process where we have moved backwards and forwards between theory and data. We have examined the expressed priorities of students, teachers, and departmental and institutional officials in relationship to their actions as well as underlying agendas and contextual realities. In all cases specific detailed exemplification has been sought (Ericsson & Simon 1980; Smagorinsky 1994). A major feature has been the analysis of ongoing processes of criticality construction, both collaboratively in class/group settings, and individually through production of written assignments.

## **Research findings and theoretical development**

We have made substantial, if somewhat uneven, theoretical and empirical progress. We would like to acknowledge our theoretical debts, especially to Barnett (1997), and Bailin et al. (1999). What follows is a brief interim statement, organised around our original research questions, of our current position. We suggest some empirically grounded hypotheses, as distinct from speculation, arising out of our study. We refer throughout the discussion to our interim analyses (*Key skills, Katy, Olivia, Modern Languages Content Classes, Language Classes, Year Abroad, Year Abroad: Critical Moment, and Practice Placements*), as listed at the end of this report, where rich empirical evidence is made available. Although we believe our hypotheses may have wide application within social sciences and arts, we suspect that their application to scientific disciplines is unlikely to be straightforward.

### **Research question 1a: How can criticality most usefully be conceptualised for the analysis of student learning?**

We have done extensive work on the conceptualisation of criticality which can only be summarised here, through presentation of (1) *a definition of effective criticality* which is the end-product of; (2) *a developmental framework*, showing how students respond to; (3) *a curricular framework*, which exploits and helps to develop (4) a resources framework.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Definition*

In line with our theoretical understandings and our data, we define fully effective *Criticality* as:

- the motivation to persuade, engage and act on the world
- through the operation of critical understanding of a body of relevant knowledge

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<sup>1</sup> Fuller discussion will be available in a forthcoming paper: Johnston, B. Brumfit, C., Mitchell, R., Myles, F. and Ford, P. The Nature and Development of Undergraduate Criticality in the Humanities and Social Sciences: Some Conceptual Proposals and Empirical Realities.

- mediated by assimilated experience of how the social and physical environment is structured
- combined with a willingness to question and problematise shared perceptions of relevance and experience.

This definition incorporates our assumptions about the multi-domain nature of criticality as well as the centrality of knowledge, context, dispositions and motivations in its practice.

Criticality can also exist at partial, developmental levels. Most of the students in our study operate at these partial levels as the interim papers illustrate.

#### *Developmental framework*

We suggest that practices directly relating to the development of criticality show themselves at three broad levels (a) *Pre-criticality*, (b) *Criticality in use, with others' agendas*, and (c) *Criticality and world knowledge, with autonomous agendas*. Each level incorporates a range of elements relating to theory and data (broadly conceived).

Our analyses suggest that undergraduates do not make a regular progression through these levels; rather, they show signs of all three levels (depending on their technical or world knowledge and experience, their personal motivation, and their level of skilled performance in relation to these) operating simultaneously. Collectively they show varyingly effective performance of the whole system of critical engagement from the beginning, but - and this is very clear from tutor comments, from the students' perceptions of their own progress, and from the work they produce - they become increasingly effective as programmes progress (*Modern Languages Content Classes, Practice Placements*).

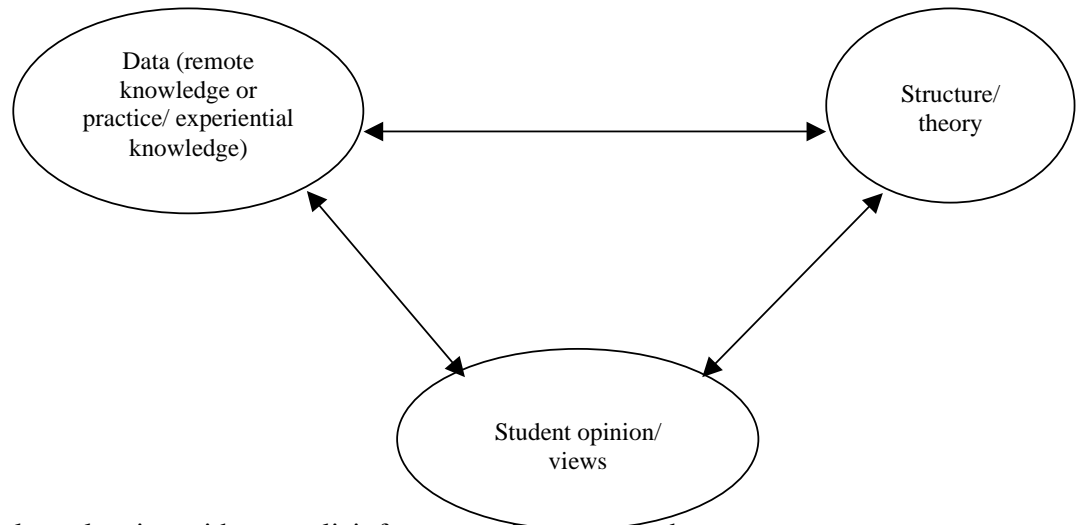
Each level incorporates both processes and products. For example, in "recognising the indeterminacy of theories and concepts" (an element of *Criticality in use*, see above), students will read about theories and concepts, listen to others talking about them, reflect on the information, and later perhaps write about these theories. They may only be able to cope with parts of the process at certain times. They may carry out the activities in each level with varying levels of competence and consistency, even within one assignment (*Olivia, Katy*). Although a student's final written product may indicate a relatively low level of criticality, the process of creating it may have taken place at a somewhat higher level and the student may have learnt significant amounts from this (*Olivia*).

#### *Curricular framework*

For undergraduates, the university is structured as a learning environment, and the curriculum is planned, by individuals and committees, organised in time and space by timetabling procedures, and described in documentation. It is possible to identify specific practices oriented towards criticality as a desired outcome. In these practices it is clear that there are key similarities within the two disciplines of our study as well as significant differences. Broadly, the curriculum as envisioned by those who create it, can be pictured as in the three models below. These may or may not reflect reality on the ground.

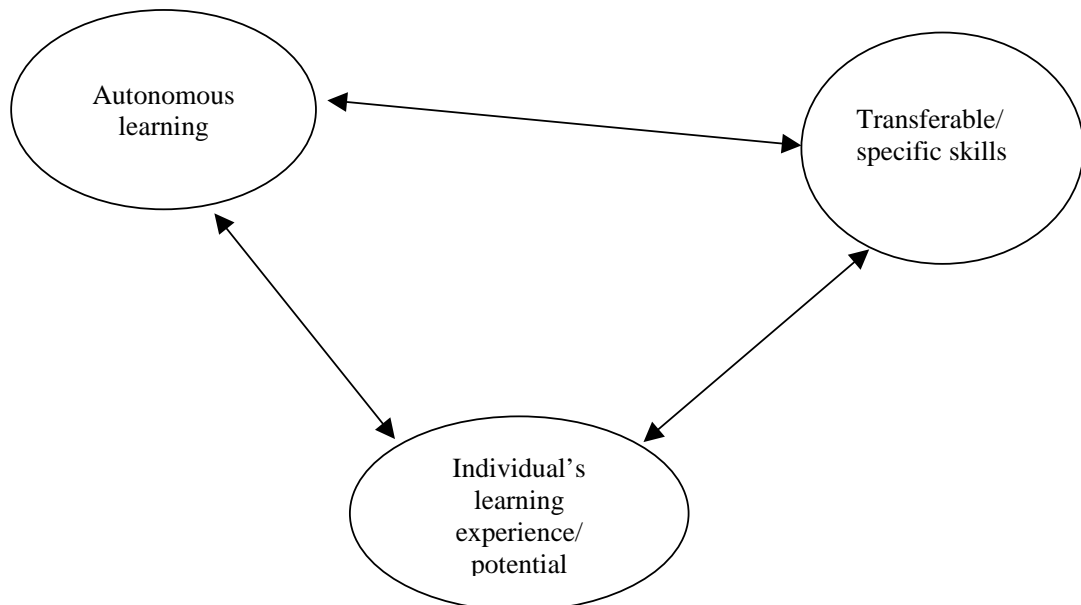
### **Criticality in the Curriculum: Three Models**

**Figure 1: Criticality**



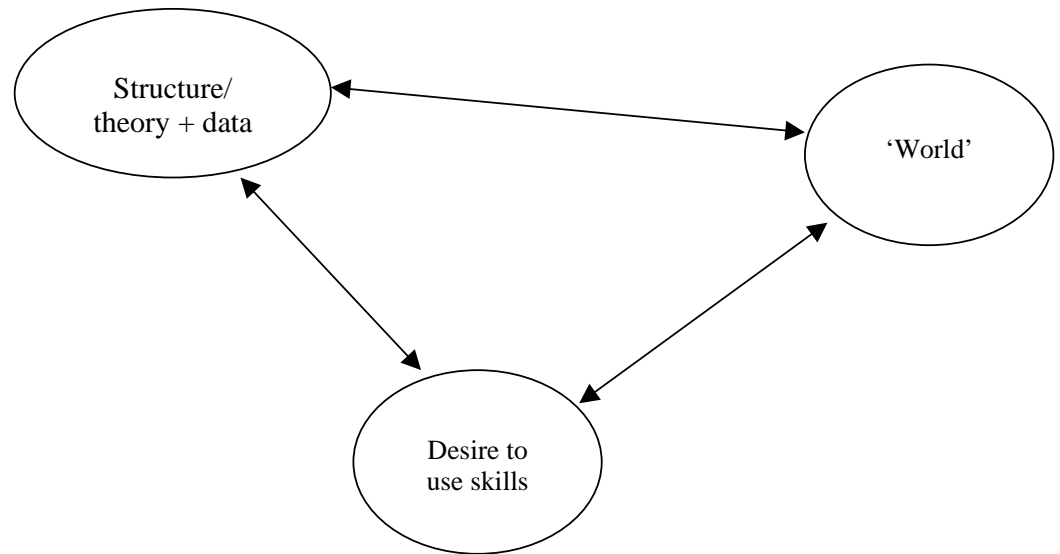
Curriculum planning with an explicit focus on criticality may be seen as an attempt to shift students from being holders of opinions to users of appropriate, theoretically interpreted and structured data to inform considered views of cultural, social and linguistic phenomena. The three elements above are increasingly brought together into one single experience of incorporating (1) knowledge as data, and (2) interpretation as structural process, into students' formation of their own understandings. For Social Work students there was an emphasis on interpreting both 'remote' knowledge (located in e.g. books and articles) and knowledge of practice as anticipated, remembered or experienced in formal professional placements (*Practice Placements*). For Modern Languages students the knowledge of practice took the form of remembered or hypothetically constructed life experience (*Modern Languages Content Classes*).

**Figure 2: Skill-oriented work**



Students' individual learning experiences and potential are the starting point, but on their courses they are guided towards increasing autonomy and independence, while being provided with the information and activities necessary for the development of transferable skills (such as communicative competence in target languages or the core competences for social work), or of skills specific to the discipline, such as those of descriptive linguistics or use of social work theory. The intention is that the three are merged into one single process of autonomous skill-acquisition. This capacity is not the same as, but facilitates critical awareness.

**Figure 3: Whole-person engagement with the world: criticality in practice**



Students are expected to be motivated to use the skills they have developed to bring their understandings about evidence and interpretation into engagement with, or even confrontation with, the world beyond the university. The motivation is merged with processes of grounded interpretation, plus commitment to developing a critique and sometimes (particularly for social work students) to providing (at least partial) solutions to outside-world problems.

#### *Resources necessary for doing criticality*

We take the general notion that resources are necessary for criticality to take place from Bailin et al. (1999) who were writing in the context of critical thinking and formal knowledge. We extend their notion of resources to the domain of action and the world. Students need various resources (knowledge, skills, personal qualities and values) to cope with the criticality expected of them, and these resources will, in turn, be enhanced by their experiences as undergraduates, both within formal higher education and in out-of-university settings (see interim papers). Students will require appropriate resources to operationalise the elements proposed in our curricular and developmental frameworks.

#### *Vehicles and levers for encouraging critical development*

In our investigations, we saw *modelling* of criticality; *co-construction of critical understandings* in lectures, seminars and other small group interactions; *practice activities* and the *influence of assessment* on the particular shape of criticality development. In social work, processes of dynamic, iterative linking between formal knowledge (theory, law, research), practice experience and the professional self (including values) are strongly encouraged in the students through vehicles such as (1) classes and tutorials where the linking is modelled by lecturers and where discussion focuses around co-construction of critical understandings of practice situations and (2) summative assessment (*Practice Placements*). Similarly in Modern Languages, lecturers modelled and co-constructed understandings with students. The Year 1 Modern Languages lectures were substantially concerned with the building up of students' knowledge resources, and of relevant analytical frameworks. However, the

lecturers did not limit themselves to providing an apparatus of facts and concepts. Overall their practices in formal lecture situations could be interpreted to a considerable extent as the modelling of disciplinary critical reasoning (*Modern Languages Content Classes*).

**Research Question 1b: How do cognitive, social, political, social and emotional aspects impinge on criticality?**

Any study of criticality has to conceptualise and examine the micro practice of individuals as they interact with their social and educational context. Sociologists have complex conceptions of the relationship between structure and individual agency (see e.g. Giddens 1984; Bourdieu 1996; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Drawing on these, we argue that any critical act takes place in a context which consists of social, educational, disciplinary, emotional, ethical, cognitive and political elements; these are themselves in dynamic interaction and will be mediated by the choices of individuals. The shape and quality of the individual self is a central element in criticality.

In our data, we have found that the students all have different experiences according to their study settings; out-of-university situations (Social Work placements, Year Abroad settings); individual resources (e.g. intellectual, family, personal history); motivations, dispositions and responses. The nature of all these experiences impinges on their capacities to be critical. However, we can also see *general* patterns in the data (see interim papers).

**Research Question 2: What is the nature of criticality, if any, that undergraduates are learning in their courses?**

The shape and nature of criticality itself in higher education is socially constructed and contextually permeated, with localised (sub-)disciplinary and other variations, but mediated by individuals. In many ways criticality can be viewed as a social practice, although one that has significant cross-disciplinary commonalities and underlying intellectual rules as we outline in our development and curricular frameworks. We have tried to highlight what the rules are and how the standards are enforced, illustrate the effectiveness or otherwise of initiation practices and raise awareness of the values underlying these practices and standards (*Katy, Olivia, Social Work Placements, Modern Languages Content Classes*).

We found some evidence for a significant divide in patterns of criticality development between vocational and non-vocational disciplines. In a professional discipline like Social Work, elements which link personal/ professional experience with theory are likely to be emphasised from the early stages of the degree (*Practice Placements, Katy*). In the later years of the degree, there is a heavy focus on reflective practice with active connection-making between theory, practice and the law as well as an awareness of values (*Practice Placements*). In a 'pure' humanities discipline such as Modern Languages, students are required increasingly to critique theory, but not necessarily to make systematic links to practice/ action (*Modern Languages Content Classes, Olivia, Year Abroad*), although some Modern Languages lecturers did have aspirations for their teaching to foster long-term changes in graduates' way of thinking (*Modern Languages Content Classes*).

**Research Question 3a: How does the nature of criticality actually learned relate to perceptions of students, academics and other relevant individuals?**

Many lecturers had a coherent and sophisticated view of critical development. In Modern Languages, for example, this centred on the domain of formal knowledge. These lecturers were in favour of unbounded criticality, although that was clearly understood to operate within disciplinary rules (*Modern Languages Content Courses, Olivia, Katy*) and so, in practice, entailed considerable restriction. The lecturers held a clear view of development, related to year group, although at least some of the first year apparent relatively low level of critical development may be due to student lack of understanding about what is expected of them (*Modern Languages Content Classes*). Students were increasingly aware of lecturer expectations as they progressed through the course.

**Research question 3b: How does the nature of criticality actually learned relate to policy aspirations for the teaching/learning of criticality (institutional and national)?**

In Social Work, institutional and national policy documents (i.e. the departmental student handbook which includes the programme specifications, the QAA Benchmarking Statement, the National Occupational Standards for Social Work), all emphasise the critical application of theory to underpin practice, the emphasis on practice as a source of intellectual growth, and consideration of complex ethical and social factors. These goals are reflected in the focus and aspirations of the social work degree and student experience (*Practice Placements*).

In Modern Languages, our data showed teachers committed to advanced development of criticality in the domain of formal knowledge and critical thinking (with respect to literature, culture, society and politics of the target languages), to a level arguably beyond the requirements of the QAA Benchmarking Statement for languages (*Modern Languages content classes*). In line with the Benchmarking Statement, they also aimed to promote intercultural understanding (including capability to reflect critically and comparatively on both the home and target cultures). The main learning experience relevant to this was the Year Abroad, which usually led to considerable developments in students' independence, confidence and problem-solving abilities (*Year Abroad*). However preparation for, and reflection upon, this experience was integrated much less systematically with students' academic experiences in the university, than was the case for Social Work students on practice placements.

**Research question 4: How far can the teaching/learning of criticality be made more coherent and transparent?**

Becoming critical and practising criticality are complex educational and life processes, dependent on experiences for which transparency and coherence may not always be possible. But much of the learning and teaching of criticality that we have analysed appeared effective and principled.

At times there could have been greater constructive alignment between different elements of the courses. For example, although appropriately scaffolded formative assessment could potentially promote critical development, students received little formative assessment on the observed courses (*Katy, Olivia*). Assignments were typically handed in at the end of semester and received summative assessment which

the student might or might not find useful as formative assessment for future assignments. In some cases, there were mid-semester assignments which were also summatively assessed, but which were intended to provide scaffolding for a later assignment (e.g. reviewing an article to practise evaluation and referencing skills). Occasionally, a student might be able to discuss an assignment with a lecturer or tutor, in advance of handing the assignment in. Dissertation writing was more strongly supported. The Modern Languages students received high quality feedback over the course of a year from their dissertation supervisors which assisted the process of complex critical development (*Dissertation supervision observations*).

Formative assessment, however, if it takes place, can have a complex, ambiguous role in the development of criticality. The tensions between the relative learning gains of dependence and independence were clear in Olivia's case study (*Olivia*).

At times, especially in Modern Languages, there could have been greater formal attempts to link student experiences in their Year Abroad with the theoretical explorations of earlier and later years of study (*Year Abroad*). In Social Work, students were encouraged to make connections between theory, practice, law and values, but could have been encouraged also to critique theory more systematically (*Practice Placements*).

### **Additional issues arising**

We realised, through our investigations, that the out-of-university experiences, the Year Abroad for the Modern Language students, and the practice placements for the Social Work students, had a profound effect on the development of criticality.

The Year Abroad encourages self development and problem-solving. These have a strong impact on student personalities, identities and capacities to be critical which influences their fourth year study and later life (*Year Abroad, Year Abroad: Critical Moment*).

In Social Work, the processes of dynamic, iterative linking between formal knowledge (theory, law, research), practice experience and the professional self (including values) are strongly encouraged during practice placements as well as in the university setting (*Practice Placements*). Early student case study assignments on law in the early part of the social work course, for example, encouraged students to think how law might apply in real situations and the placements increased this capacity (*Katy, Practice Placements*).

### **Concluding comments**

The theoretical framework proposed above can be refined to particular groups of students and the needs of particular disciplines. For example, disciplines are likely to vary at undergraduate level in the relative roles played by data/knowledge, and structure/theory in Figure 1, or on the emphasis on autonomous learning in Figure 2. Whether, for example, science subjects expect active criticality to be postponed to a later stage in the degree than arts subjects, or even to postgraduate level, is a matter for further investigation. Similarly the roles of 'world-based' experiential learning for professional courses and for entirely-within-university courses will differ. The relationships between knowledge, experience of the world, and the skills developed

within the university will be increasingly clarified as we extend research on criticality to other disciplines, levels and types of student.

## **Project team activities**

We have made presentations at a variety of conferences and other events as listed in Annex 1. These included a one day event for senior figures in Modern Languages, organised jointly with the Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, presentations at national conferences, local seminars, feedback sessions and workshops.

In addition, with Social Sciences Faculty funding, we hosted a seminar series 'Criticality in the Disciplines' in 2003-4. We invited a range of experts in their field on the subject of criticality, to lead seminars to assist us with the conceptual work of the project. Full details can be found at <http://www.critical.soton.ac.uk/Events.htm>.

## **Outputs**

We have created a major database which reflects current processes of higher education in two disciplines, Social Work (vocational social science) and Modern Languages (traditional humanities) in a Russell group university in the UK. The database comprises a corpus of audiorecordings of lectures, seminars, tutorials and interviews with case study students, lecturers and other stakeholders, with accompanying anonymised transcriptions. It also includes a range of university/departmental academic documentation and student written outputs (assignments, projects etc). The dataset is archived at the School of Education, University of Southampton, and is available, with appropriate safeguards, to other higher education researchers.

We have also created a webpage (URL [www.critical.soton.ac.uk](http://www.critical.soton.ac.uk)) which hosts information about the project as well as copies of our interim papers and lists of events, past and forthcoming. Publications to date are listed on the REGARD database, and full details of interim papers are given in Annex 2.

## **Impacts**

Considerable interest has already been shown in our research by Modern Languages and Social Work research and practitioner communities.

The one-day event held in May 2004 for senior HE managers in Modern Languages was very well attended, and participants were especially interested in our work on the critical development encouraged during Modern Languages degrees, given the threats to language education in recent years. Our work on the distinctive Year Abroad was of particular interest.

Our findings on the effects of social work practice placements were presented to the 6<sup>th</sup> Joint Social Work Education Conference in Glasgow in July 2004. Participants at the conference included not only senior social work academics, but also those involved directly in social work practice and its regulatory body, the General Social Care Council as well as officials from the Department of Health. Our work attracted

interest in particular from the team carrying out a major review, commissioned by the Social Care Institute for Excellence, of the learning outcomes of the new social work degree. Our data spans both the old Social Work diploma and the new degree, so they expect us to make useful contributions to the review.

It is clear from these immediate reactions from very different academic and professional communities, that the present project provides both short term input for policy and pedagogic debates, and a conceptual and empirical base on which to move forward in future research on transfer and on effective teaching. Some of our future outputs will therefore address higher education curriculum developers, staff developers, institutional managers and policy makers, to ensure ongoing communication of relevant findings to these groups.

## **Future research priorities**

Future priorities are to investigate the nature and development of criticality in (1) science disciplines; (2) students from other cultures; (3) postgraduates; (4) less elite higher education institutions.

This would broaden the study of criticality to include disciplines where it is likely to take a fundamentally different form. By investigating students from different cultures and levels and higher educational backgrounds, it would be possible to throw additional, contrastive light on the nature of UK student criticality development and also address questions related to the adaptations of international students to UK academic life.

## **Ethics**

This research was conducted in general accordance with the Ethical Guidelines of the British Association for Educational Research, plus guidance supplied by Qualidata. Informed consent was obtained from research participants at the outset of the project. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identity of individuals, places, institutions and agencies. This process of anonymising the data has been ongoing throughout the project. A particular issue has been the use of data for public presentation regarding student participants who have not yet graduated, even in anonymised form. Where in doubt, we have opted to suppress data to protect students.

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## Annex 1: Events and presentations

| Event   | Date                  | Presenters   | Title  |
|---|-----------------------|--|--|
| Symposium at British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, UMIST, Manchester  | 14-18 September 2004  | Brenda Johnston, Christopher Brumfit, Rosamond Mitchell, Peter Ford, Florence Myles    | The development of criticality among undergraduates: the role of work placements and residence abroad  |
| Critical Reasoning and Technology Workshop, University of Oxford  | 28 July 2004          | Brenda Johnston  | What do we understand by critical reasoning and can we identify its elements and processes?  |
| 6th Joint Social Work Education Conference, University of Glasgow   | 8-9 July 2004         | Brenda Johnston, Peter Ford and Rosamond Mitchell                                      | How the practice placement experience affects the development of social work students as 'critical practitioners'  |
| Navigating the New Landscape for Languages, LLAS and CILT Conference, School of Oriental and African Studies, London  | 30 June – 1 July 2004 | Brenda Johnston, Florence Myles and Rosamond Mitchell                                  | The year abroad: a critical moment   |
| Criticality and the contributions of Modern Languages Degrees to student development, One day event for senior figures in Modern Languages, CILT, London organised by the project team and the Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies | 28 May 2004           | Rosamond Mitchell, Brenda Johnston, Florence Myles, Peter Ford and Christopher Brumfit | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development of criticality in MLs content courses</li> <li>2. The special contribution of the year abroad to student critical development.</li> <li>3. How language classes contribute to students' critical development.</li> </ol> |
| Centre for Applied Language Research, feedback seminar on research findings to participating department, Modern Languages   | 12 May 2004           | Rosamond Mitchell, Brenda Johnston, Peter Ford, Florence Myles, Christopher Brumfit    | Development of criticality among undergraduates in Modern Languages  |
| Researching Educational Practice Seminar, School of Health Professions and School of Education, University of Southampton   | 9 March 2004          | Brenda Johnston, Rosamond Mitchell, Peter Ford and Florence Myles                      | Investigating the development of criticality among undergraduates: why we did what we did and how we did it  |
| Society for Research in Higher Education Annual Conference, Royal Holloway College, London  | 16-18 December 2003   | Brenda Johnston, Rosamond Mitchell, Peter Ford and Florence Myles                      | Critical thinking, undergraduates and social practices   |
| British Educational Research Annual Conference, Herriot-Watt University, Edinburgh  | 11-13 September 2003  | Brenda Johnston, Rosamond Mitchell, Peter Ford and Florence Myles                      | Critical thinking, undergraduates and intellectual resources   |
| 5th Joint Social Work Education Conference, University of Warwick   | 21-22 July 2003       | Peter Ford   | Social work education and critical thinking – some thoughts from research  |

|  |                  |  |   |
|--|------------------|--|---|
| Identifying, Teaching and Assessing Key Skills in Linguistics, Seminar, Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, London | 23 May 2003      | Rosamond Mitchell, Florence Myles, Brenda Johnson and Peter Ford | Criticality and the 'key skills' agenda in undergraduate linguistics  |
| Internal seminar, Social Work Studies Department, University of Southampton  | 4 February 2003  | Peter Ford   | Social work education and critical being: first thoughts  |
| Introductory presentation to participating department, Modern Languages  | 11 December 2002 | Rosamond Mitchell, Florence Myles and Brenda Johnston            | Development of criticality among undergraduates   |
| Internal seminar, Research and Graduate School of Education, University of Southampton   | 29 October 2002  | Rosamond Mitchell and Brenda Johnston                            | Development of criticality among undergraduates   |
| British Association of Applied Linguistics, Annual Conference  | September 2002   | Rosamond Mitchell  | Development of criticality among undergraduates in two contrasting academic disciplines: modern languages and social work studies |
| Introductory presentation to participating department, Social Work Studies   | 1 July 2002      | Rosamond Mitchell and Brenda Johnston                            | Development of criticality among undergraduates   |

## **Annex 2: Project written outputs to date**

### **Our journal publications**

Ford, P., Johnston, B. Mitchell, R., and Myles, F. Social Work, Education and Criticality: Some Thoughts from Research. *Social Work Education*. Vol. 23, No.2, p.185-198.

Ford, P., Johnston, B., Mitchell, R., Brumfit, C., and Myles, F. Practice Learning and the Development of Students as Critical Practitioners - Some Findings from Research. *Social Work Education*. (Submitted September 2004)

Brumfit, C., Myles F. and Johnston, B. Modern Languages and the Development of Criticality. *Applied Linguistics*. (Submitted September 2004)

### **Our interim papers**

We give our interim papers shortened titles (as indicated in italics at the end of each reference), for ease of reference in the text of this report.

Mitchell, R., Myles, F., Johnston, B. and Ford, P. Criticality and the 'Key Skills' Agenda in Undergraduate Linguistics. Paper presented at Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies Seminar, "Key Skills in Linguistics", CILT, London, 23 May 2003. (*Key Skills paper*)

Johnston, B., Mitchell, R., Ford, P and Myles, F. Critical Thinking: Undergraduates and Intellectual Resources. British Educational Research Association (BERA) Conference Paper. September, 2003. (*Katy paper*)

Johnston, B., Mitchell, R., Ford, P. and Myles, F. Critical Thinking, Undergraduates and Social Practices. Society for Research in Higher Education (SRHE) Conference Paper.. December 2003. (*Olivia paper*)

Mitchell, R. and Johnston, B. Development of Criticality in MLs Content Courses. Paper presented at CILT, 28 May 2004. (*Modern Languages Content Classes paper*)

Myles, F and Brumfit, C. How Language Classes Contribute to Students' Critical Development. Paper presented at CILT, 28 May 2004. (*Language Classes paper*)

Johnston, B and Ford, P. The Special Contribution of the *Year Abroad* to Student Critical Development. Paper presented at CILT, 28 May 2004. (*Year Abroad paper*)

Johnston, B, Myles, F., Mitchell, R. and Ford, P. The Year Abroad: A Critical Moment. Paper presented at LLAS and CILT Conference, 30 June-1 July, 2004. (*Year Abroad: Critical Moment paper*)

Ford, P., Johnston, B. and Mitchell, R. How does the Practice Placement Experience Affect the Development of Social Work Students as 'Critical Practitioners'?

Paper presented at the 6<sup>th</sup> Joint Social Work Education Conference, July 2004.  
(*Practice Placements paper*)