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**Raisa Ahtiainen**

**Shades of change in Fullan's and Hargreaves's models**

**Theoretical change perspectives regarding Finnish special education reform**

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**Raisa Ahtiainen**

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**Abstract**

Change-theories and theoretical conceptualizations of educational development are the primary focal points of this investigation. Specifically, Michael Fullan's and Andy Hargreaves's change theories are examined for their breadth and depth and for their utilitarian value. Then the Finnish special educational reform measures (2005–2012) are thoroughly investigated. The four main research questions concern, first, what are the key characteristics of selected Fullan's and Hargreaves's works? Second, what are the most compelling similarities and differences in the theoretical models of educational change? Third, to what extent is the construction of a synthesized Fullan-Hargreavesian change model of value and even possible? And fourth, how well does a Fullan-Hargreavesian model apply to Finnish special education reform? Consequently, the investigation relies on two separate approaches to change, to reflect them against each other, and to merge them into one Fullan-Hargreavesian model. That model provides a change-theoretical tool for explicating the policy documents concerning the Finnish special education reform and to analyze the Finnish reform process in a change-theoretical framework. Moreover, the focus is on examination of the nature of and purpose for change theorizing, understanding how educational change appears in the theories, and also to draw a picture of Fullan and Hargreaves as professionals working in the field of educational change in general.

Three data sets undergird the research: 1) Interview data. Fullan was interviewed in 2013 in Helsinki (Finland) and Hargreaves in 2011 in Boston (the United States); 2) Selected works from Fullan (n=4) and Hargreaves (n=4), and 3) Finnish policy documents (n=19) representing different phases of the entire reform process in 2005–2012. These included municipal initiative documents in 2005-2007, Ministry of Education documents in 2007, and Government and parliament documents covering the years 2009-2010. The documents span across the years 2005-2010. However, for the purposes of this research the reform has been defined as lasting until 2012 because processes supporting the change, in-service training and development project, were carried on until 2012. The examination of Fullan's and Hargreaves's theories resulted in two lines of thought about educational change. Alongside theoretical aspects lie an assortment of professional practice pathways. There were gleaned through interview data and

substantiated through analysis of their literature. By combining their change-theoretical approaches a Fullan-Hargreavesian model was constructed consisting of four categories: *Entry*, *Objective*, *Dissemination*, and *Impact*. Through the conceptual framework of change the nature and content of political eloquence in the policy documents became visible, the process explicated upper and lower level reasons for the reform, visiting the means for disseminating the new policy, and reflected the means for evaluating the impact of the reform measures in Finland.

The contributions to the field of educational change are multifold, including the examination and comparison, and the incorporation of Fullan's and Hargreaves's change-theories. The quest is to deliver an innovative theoretical approach to policy analysis. The analysis of the Finnish reform process points toward a new phase in the theoretical model, *Preparation*, as a type of understanding of long-term pre-reform happenings, and a dimension that is absent in Fullan's and Hargreaves's theories included in this study. The field of special education benefits from the thorough description of the reform process, and the analytical approach to the reform process brings new insights to the research in that field. The Finnish education system, and no doubt many other systems, could benefit from a more systematic and well-structured theory-oriented approach to educational change that would be applied in the early stages of the process.

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*Keywords:* special education, reform, educational change, policy analysis

## **Raisa Ahtiainen**

### **Fullanin ja Hargreavesin muutosajattelun vivahteet**

Muutosteoreettinen näkökulma Suomen erityisopetusopetusreformiin

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#### **Tiivistelmä**

Tässä tutkimuksessa tarkastelen Michael Fullanin ja Andy Hargreavesin muutosteorioita ja käytän heidän muutosteorioitaan viitekehyksenä Suomen peruskoulun erityisopetuksen uudistuksen analysoinnissa. Muutosteorioiden avulla voidaan selittää koulun muutokseen liittyviä tekijöitä ja tehdä muutosta ymmärrettävämmäksi koulumaailmassa työskenteleville. Muutosteoriat tarjoavat malleja, joiden tavoitteena on tukea työntekijöitä kohtaamaan muutosprosessissa eteen tulevia ongelmakohtia, ratkaisemaan niitä ja tunnistamaan muutosta eteenpäin vieviä tekijöitä.

Tutkimuksessani on kaksi päälinjaa: Fullanin ja Hargreavesin muutosteorioiden analyysi sekä Suomen erityisopetustuudistuksen kuvaaminen ja uudistuksen muutosteoreettinen analyysi. Ensin erittelin Fullanin ja Hargreavesin muutosteorioista niiden keskeisimmät ominaisuudet sekä vertailin niiden yhtäläisyyksiä ja eroja. Systemaattisen vertailun avulla rakensin niihin perustuvan muutosteoreettisen mallin (*the Fullan-Hargreavesian change model*). Tämän jälkeen esittelin erityisopetuksen uudistusta tarkastelevassa osassa uudistuksen käynnistymiseen ja toteutukseen liittyvät vaiheet sekä analysoin uudistusta rakentamani mallin avulla. Tässä tutkimuksessa erityisopetuksen uudistus määriteltiin ajallisesti vuosille 2005–2012.

Tutkimukseni kolmiosainen aineisto koostui pääosin kirjallisesta materiaalista eli muutosteorioita käsittelevistä teoksista ja koulutuspoliittisista asiakirjoista. Lisäksi aineistoon kuului kyseisten teoreetikoiden haastattelut (vuosina 2011 ja 2013). Valitsin tutkimukseeni mukaan neljä teosta kummaltakin teoreetikolta. Koulutuspoliittisten asiakirjojen (N = 19) aineistoon sisältyivät kuntatason aloitetta käsittelevät asiakirjat, opetusministeriön asiakirjat sekä uudistuksen hallitus- ja eduskuntakäsittelyä koskevat asiakirjat. Eri aineistokokonaisuuksia eriteltiin systemaattisen tekstiaineiston analyysin ja filosofisen rekonstruktion menetelmin.

Teoreettinen analyysi tuotti kaksi muutosajattelullista päälinjaa, joiden kautta toin esiin koulunmuutokseen liittyvät keskeiset tekijät. Tein kahdesta päälinjasta teorioiden synteessin, jota käyttäen rakensin muutosteoreettisen mallin. Malli koostui neljästä osa-alueesta, jotka kuvasivat uudistukseen toteutukseen liittyviä vaihteita ja niihin sisältyviä tekijöitä. Ensimmäinen vaihe oli uudistuksen esittely

(*Entry*) ja toinen tavoitteiden erittely (*Objective*). Kolmannessa vaiheessa kuvataan keinoja, joilla tietoa uudistuksesta levitetään (*Dissemination*) ja neljännessä tekijöitä, joilla uudistuksen vaikutuksia arvioidaan (*Impact*). Malli toimi tarkastelukehikkona erityisopetus uudistukselle ja kuvasi uudistusta muutosteoreettisen käsitteistön kautta.

Tutkimukseni tuottaa uutta sekä muutosteoreettisen että erityispedagogisen tutkimuksen kentille. Ensinnäkin tutkimukseni on tuottanut käyttökelpoisen tavan hyödyntää Fullanin ja Hargreavesin muutosteorioita konkreettisissa muutosprosesseissa. Syväluotaavan muutosteoreettisen analyysin lisäksi tutkimuksessa käy ilmi, millaista muutoksesta teoretisointi on ja minkälaisista rooleista teoreetikon työ koostuu. Tutkimustulosteni mukaan Fullanin ja Hargreavesin teorioihin pohjaava malli ei kata kokonaisuudessaan kaikkia suomalaisen erityisopetuksen kehittämistyöhön lukeutuvia vaiheita. Malli ei selitä Suomen koulutuspolitiikkaan olennaisesti kuuluvaa, uudistuksia pohjustavaa vaihetta, joka voi kestää useita vuosia. Analyysini tulosten perusteella mallia tulisikin muokata siten, että siihen lisätään ensimmäiseksi tarkastelukohteeksi valmistelu (*Preparation*).

Erityisopetuksen uudistuksen yksityiskohtainen analyysi tarjoaa uutta tutkimuksellista näkökulmaa myös kansainväliseen erityispedagogiseen tutkimukseen. Tutkimuksen kuluessa ilmeni, että erityisopetuksen uudistuksen suunnittelusta ja toteutuksesta puuttui muutosteoreettinen viitekehys. Johtopäätelmänä esitän, että suomalaisessa uudistusten suunnittelussa ja toteutuksessa tulee hyödyntää systemaattista teoriaperustaista koulunkehittämisen viitekehystä. Teoreettinen malli kannattaa tuoda mukaan prosessiin jo sen varhaisessa vaiheessa eli sisällyttää se kokonaisuuden suunnitteluun, kuvaamiseen, toteutukseen ja arviointiin.

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*Avainsanat:* erityisopetus, reformi, koulunmuutos, politiikka-analyysi

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On a warm summer day in Helsinki, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2017

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Appendix 5E. Lessons by Hargreaves.

# 1 Introduction

Let me start by following an idea from Stephen Ball (2008, p. 6), who explains in his work how he uses sociological concepts “as tools for making sense of policy”. The idea here is not necessarily to tell the audience how things are, but how they may be. Therefore, Ball’s description of his work resonates relatively well with the idea guiding this study. The aim is to explain how things may be, or more specifically, how things appear, concerning the Finnish special education reform, when examined through the North-American-based change theory framework, and therefore, by using change-theoretical concepts and a change-theoretical lens. This kind of research orientation includes exploration and comparison of two change theoretical approaches, namely those of Michael Fullan and Andy Hargreaves.

The purpose of an introduction is to describe the basics of the study, what it is for, what it consists of, where it could be placed in the field of education, and what it represents in the narrower sector of special education. Further, this chapter provides brief introductions to the main components of the study: Fullan, Hargreaves, educational change, special education, and support for students in Finland. The study as a whole is characterized by the theme of educational change from Fullan’s and Hargreaves’s perspectives, and it aims towards an understanding of the phenomenon and its processes, and the use of a theoretical lens as an analytical tool for the Finnish case. This makes the study theory- and conceptualization-oriented.

## Positioning the study

The study has been formed around two main components. *The first* consists of Fullan’s and Hargreaves’s theories about educational change. This part includes an introduction to their books selected for this study, through which their viewpoints are explored and compared with each other. Further, a theoretical mindset, a frame that functions as an analytical tool for Finnish special education reform, is created through this exploration. Along with the textual material, this study includes interviews with Fullan and Hargreaves that add their voices to complement the story of theorizing in the field of educational change. *The second* component is the Finnish special education reform that took place during the second half of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The reform process that is traceable in policy documents is analyzed in the framework of the change theories, based on the analysis and comparison of Fullan and Hargreaves. This phase shows how a change theoretical lens can explicate policy agendas, and identify the kinds of nuances that exist in the texts; it is about selling and justifying the ideas, and persuading the audience.

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Thus, this study represents a theoretical approach that, through analysis of theorizing about educational change, builds a theory-based tool for exploring policy documents related to the Finnish special education reform. The written works of Fullan and Hargreaves and the Finnish reform represent approximately the same time period in order to reflect the theoretical approach of that time with the reform. In many ways, this study concentrates on concepts and conceptualization, while aiming to explain and understand the phenomenon called educational change. It aims to compare the two theorists, to reformulate their theoretical approaches, and to depict the Finnish reform within that frame, and in that process, to translate the Finnish reform into change theoretical language – to make these two entities meet each other, despite their differences.

These two main components build a whole that shows how a reform process can be cut into analytical pieces through systematic theoretical approach. Further, this study depicts the essence of theoretical work, why and how these theories have been built, and what purposes they have been intended to serve. Thus, it forms a comprehensive understanding of the meaning of theorizing, and also about the applicability of theories in (real) reform cases. The study looks at the formulation of policy strategies and shows that a text is never written in a vacuum. The purpose is to emphasize the meaning of this kind of change theorizing in understanding and explaining reform processes and related policy-making. In addition, the use of a theoretical framework provides a surface for reflection of national characteristics, and opens the process for international audiences as well as the actors within the national context. Further, this study suggests a future use for a theory base in the planning and implementation of educational change in Finland. Moreover, while this study supports in-depth theory use and modification, it also points to challenges related to theory-oriented analyses of national educational processes, especially in narrowly-focused approaches like used in this study.

This study has been done as a part of postgraduate studies in special education. However, my research interests have been a mixture of material from several areas within the educational sciences, bringing together educational policy-making in general, and educational policy processes with regard to reform in the field of special education in particular, as well as leaning on knowledge about educational change and reforms.

The study stands out from the general research trends within special education in two ways, and contributes to the field of educational change in one. First, traditionally, doctoral studies in special education are closely related to the actual school world and support for students there; for example, the studies from the past

10 years at the University of Helsinki<sup>1</sup> show that perspectives often vary from specific learning difficulties, such as literacy (e.g. Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2009; Panula, 2013) or mathematics (e.g. Aunio, 2006; Mononen, 2014) to more comprehensive challenges in life (e.g. Raudasoja, 2006; Rämä, 2015). Consequently, this affects the orientation of the researchers in general. Therefore, studies that are concerned purely with the educational policy related to special education, or specific systemic features within it, are at the margin, and thematically grounded somewhere between special education, education, and educational sociology.

Second, in special education, but also in the educational sciences in general, the use of theories is often closer to multiple theory use than to using one or two, in order to create an in-depth theoretical approach; it is relatively rare to narrow the theoretical scope and concentrate on exploring one or two selected theorists<sup>2</sup>. Also, this makes this study stand out from the most commonly used research approaches in education, and gives it a philosophical tone. However, the study does not aim to follow any orthodox rules within a philosophical field. Although this kind of approach is at the margin, it brings together many aspects that affect the actual practice of special educational issues in schools, and more widely, in society itself.

Third, despite being central theorists in the field, Fullan's and Hargreaves's approaches have not been explored and compared at this level before, neither in Finland, nor perhaps elsewhere – at least the theorists themselves are not aware of similar studies about their theories. Therefore, this study contributes to the field, and provides one entry to their theorizing, and also provides an example of how it is possible to modify and combine two change theoretical viewpoints – viewpoints that contradict each other from time to time. Further, the story of Fullan's and Hargreaves's professional paths, running alongside other lines of the study, enlightens their work.

### **Michael Fullan and Andy Hargreaves**

Michael Fullan (born 1940) and Andy Hargreaves (born 1951) are both well-known and likely also to be among the most cited in the field of educational change. Both have their backgrounds in sociology<sup>3</sup>. Fullan is a Canadian scholar, and his most recent position was at the University of Toronto, where he was Dean

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<sup>1</sup> Inspecting the webpages of Universities of Jyväskylä and Eastern Finland indicate the same phenomenon (University of Jyväskylä, 2016; University of Eastern Finland, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> This often applies to educational sciences in general.

<sup>3</sup> Fullan was awarded his doctorate by the University of Toronto, Canada, and Hargreaves by the University of Leeds, England.

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of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) until 2003 (Fullan, 2016). Fullan is known for his work on educational reform and change through his books and collaboration with various educational administrations. Fullan has written books about educational reform and change, using various perspectives to the issues. For example, his book *The Meaning of Educational Change*, with its many editions, is one of the classics in the field, defining the nature of educational change and providing a rather universal picture of the basics of the process (AH2011<sup>4</sup>).

Hargreaves currently occupies the Thomas Brennan Chair at Boston College. He is originally from England, where he studied and spent the first ten years of his academic career (AH2011). However, Hargreaves has been working in North America since the late 1980s. He entered the field of educational change whilst still in England, but his approach started to become more extensive during his years at OISE, Toronto, where he co-founded the Centre for Educational Change, and the central journal of the field, the *Journal of Educational Change* (Hargreaves, 2016).

OISE in Toronto is the place that connected Fullan and Hargreaves, and where they started their writer collaboration with a book called *What's Worth Fighting for in Your School* (1991). Since the OISE years, Fullan and Hargreaves have had a professional relationship with its ups and downs over the decades; they have been distancing themselves from, and getting closer to each other in terms of their understandings and interpretations about educational change (AH2011; MF2013<sup>5</sup>). Therefore, one could claim that they have been both competing and collaborating with each other during their careers in the field.

Both Fullan and Hargreaves have been consulting, evaluating, and participating as critical friends in various projects focusing on school development, whole-system reform and change in the United States and Canada, and widely outside North-America. Currently they both are policy advisers in Ontario, and separately in some other jurisdictions. Consequently, through that work, both have visited Finland several times over the past ten years, and have cooperated with multiple actors here, such as representatives from the Finnish National Board of Education <sup>6</sup>, educational leadership consultants, municipal educational administrators, principals, and teachers. For example, Fullan has given speeches and presented workshops for Finnish principals and administrators (e.g.,

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<sup>4</sup> This refers to the interview with Andy Hargreaves in 2011, see subchapter 2.3: Stories of the theorists.

<sup>5</sup> This refers to the interview with Michael Fullan in 2013, see subchapter 2.3: Stories of the theorists.

<sup>6</sup> Currently it is the Finnish National Agency for Education as the Finnish National Board of Education and Centre for International Mobility (CIMO) merged at the beginning of 2017.



Microsoft's Summer Institute 2016; the Topptkompetens Project 2013), and Hargreaves has made many study visits and met with Finnish educators in order to learn and write about the system (e.g., Hargreaves, Halász & Pont, 2007). This connection is especially evident in Hargreaves's recent writings with Dennis Shirley; they picked Finland to be a national case in their Fourth Way series of educational change (see Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; 2012).

### **Perspectives of educational change**

Educational change as a concept is placed at the core of this study, and the approach is narrowed down to Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing about it. Fullan and Hargreaves have been chosen, because they are acknowledged scholars in the field of educational change, as noted above. For example, Simola (2012) slightly sarcastically says that the most visible Anglo-American school of educational reform of past decades, the postmodern or systemic approach, has been personified in them. However, instead of concentrating on Fullan and Hargreaves who will be examined in depth later, this section focuses on some viewpoints concerning educational change in general. The viewpoints presented next are mainly of North American or British origin, which seems natural when orienting to move deeper into Fullan's and Hargreaves's ideas.<sup>7</sup>

The term educational change is closely related to concepts of reform and improvement. They often appear in policies<sup>8</sup> advocating measurable aims in student achievement, and through that stem from national educational policy-making concerning the effectiveness of education systems<sup>9</sup> (e.g. Barber, 2009; Fullan, 2003; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Sahlberg, 2011a). The actual education policies and cultures draw the frame within which the change is discussed, however, theorizing about change usually suggests something that differs from the current situation – the written works reflect the ongoing policies, criticize them, and provide a new angle. Consequently, in contrast to local small-scale development initiatives, educational change is understood in large scale here, and it refers to national-level attempts to steer the system in a direction that has been interpreted as making the whole function better. In this context, the question of what *better* means, is to some extent bound to national context, and internationally steered to another (e.g. Schleicher, 2009; Wiseman, 2013).

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<sup>7</sup> The distinction between this tradition and one Finnish education reform process will become visible later in this study.

<sup>8</sup> This represents the ongoing, and current, phenomena.

<sup>9</sup> The relations between these three concepts will be elaborated in more depth in Fullan's and Hargreaves's (see subchapter 3.2).

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In terms of theorizing about educational change, it is common to talk about theories of change or theories of change in action. These theories aim to capture the essence of change and processes related to it, and further, to provide advice and tools for managing it (Darling-Hammond, 2009; Elmore, 2009; Fullan, Cuttress & Kilcher, 2009; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012; Levin, 2009). The theorizing about change often combines several perspectives, such as reform agendas and educational policy aims, research about attempts to implement these policies with lessons learned from other researchers, and theoretical approaches in order to create new or modified views about the issue. Thus, in that sense theories about educational change are related to and reflect education at the level of practices, and are formulated and reformulated in that context. This study also visits that corner of theorizing, and sheds light on it in Fullan's and Hargreaves's work.

In general, when looking at educational change, it appears to be a topic that is concerned about multiple questions within education systems, and the issues researchers emphasize vary. However, there are some factors in the educational change literature that are often included, one way or another. For example, the centralized and decentralized approaches to change are often covered, and they may be referred to with concepts such as top-down and bottom-up, or centrally- and locally-driven strategies. How these approaches or tensions between them affect the adoption of reform is in the interests of researchers in the field; questions about sustainability and the scale of intended changes emerge. Further, related to that, the literature includes considerations about the roles of actors working at different levels within the educational system: state and local level, as well as the mid-level (e.g., district). In addition, the field involves school communities, and the people related to them; it is about principals, teachers, students, and parents. It touches the question of professional qualifications and teaching methods, and through that, reflects the assumed quality and the professional tendency to change. Moreover, the issues highlighted or criticized reflect the values of educational system(s) and the writer(s); what seems to be the aim of current policies; what could be done differently; and how. (E.g., the variation in emphasis in Hargreaves, Lieberman, Fullan & Hopkins, 2010a; 2010b, and in Hargreaves & Fullan, 2009; and in Tomlinson, 1994; cf. also, enlightening examples from Datnow, 2002; Elmore, 1996.)

Along with the points mentioned above, one common aspect in change literature, and in debates about educational change and reform, is related to international comparisons of education, and learning from others, also referred to as international benchmarking (e.g. Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012; Sahlberg, 2011a; Schleicher, 2009). These considerations stem mainly from international tests of student performance that are conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), for example. Thus, the debates

cover questions of standards in education, strive for better performance and establishment of league tables, and further, raise issues concerning the nature and meaning of international comparison and how they could (or could not) benefit national educational development. (See Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012; Sahlberg, 2011a; 2011b; in special education, e.g., Tomlinson 2012; Richardson & Powell, 2011).

### Special education

Special education is rather a vague concept. Definitions of the group of students it is targeted at vary, and the way these issues are understood and defined may depend on various factors. For example, perspectives that have been formed through historical time points, national policies, professions, cultural traditions, and differences in linguistics and semantics affect how the area of special education is perceived (see e.g. Jahnukainen, 2011; Tomlinson, 2012). Thus, in this wider conceptual context, no exact definition of what belongs under special education seems to exist: for whom is it aimed, and how its relationship to (general) education is or should be formed. Instead, there seems to be more than one interpretation about the nature of the service delivery. Further, another question is the angle from which special education is approached; whether it is the point of view of the education systems, schools, teachers, students and their parents or professionals<sup>10</sup> co-cooperating with the educators and parents, or other possible stakeholders, such as disability organizations. All this influences which corners of special education are emphasized, and what is left for lesser scrutiny. In this study, special education has been looked at from above, from the system level and through policy documents, and hence, special education will be described accordingly.

In general, if looking at the concept of special education as such, it is not without contradiction. It is both a system- and an individual-level definer and classifier (cf. e.g. Thuneberg et al., 2014). Moreover, currently it seems to be almost impossible, at least in Western countries, to talk about special education without any reference to inclusion. Inclusion is often recognized as an ideal as a policy aim and/or implemented practice or just a part of political eloquence. Therefore, before describing the Finnish system, let me briefly follow one path of general level conceptual problematics related to the concept of special education, and through that, visit the concept of inclusion.

Over the years, the separation between *special education* and (*general*) *education* appearing in policy, literature, and research has been interpreted as problematic, as it underlines the parallelism of structures and practices of (the

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<sup>10</sup> For example, psychologists, social workers, and doctors.

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hoped-for) school that includes all children and youth. Also, the growing emphasis of inclusive education during the past few decades has highlighted the problematics of this dualistic model. (E.g. Tomlinson 1985; 2016; cf. also Graham, 2006; Thuneberg et al., 2014.) Despite being less polarized, the concept of inclusion is not straightforward. As a part of the global ideology of education, it has worldwide definitions related to international conventions and declarations (e.g., UNESCO, 1994; United Nations, 1975; 2006), policy recommendations (e.g., European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2016; OECD, 2012), and national level interpretations and adoptions, and most importantly, local level applications or non-applications (cf. Richardson & Powell, 2011). However, for example, concept-wise inclusion has been criticized for creating implicit contraries, thus, having features that imply that inclusion assumes some level of exclusion. Thus, if simplified, it can be interpreted that inclusion implicitly covers the idea of bringing someone in, someone who was (at least) not (fully) included before. (Cf. Graham & Slee, 2008; Graham, 2006.) However, the conceptual debate is one corner of the issue; less stigmatizing labels may not lead straightforwardly to less stigmatizing practices (e.g. Richardson & Powell, 2011).

Thus, concept-wise, special education as a part of educational solutions is a complex field, and by scratching the surface of that complexity, the idea is to refer to some of the understandings, interpretations, and assumptions (and feelings). Moreover, the idea is to point to the challenges in these concepts, and to point to the interpretational differences that may be met when talking about national-level policies and practices (Richardson & Powell, 2011). These factors are important research-wise, and worth noting in this study in terms of conceptual use and understanding. The aim is to translate Finnish special education reform into global(ish) change language and the conceptual challenges emerging at the general definitional conceptual level of special education cannot not be bypassed without any reference. Further, pointing out these challenges may highlight the sensitivity of the field, and remind us of the attention that must be paid to the description of country- and culture-specific features. In addition, the visited conceptual issues prepare the grounds for the introduction of current conceptualization of special education in Finland, and for the special education reform introduced later in this study (see Chapter 6).

## Supporting students in Finland

Special education in Finland, or support for learning and school attendance, as the conceptual expression today would more accurately be, is a rather organic construct. *Organic* here refers to its responsiveness and part-time nature that form support models for several purposes and over different periods of time. (Cf. e.g. Hammerness, Ahtiainen & Sahlberg, 2017, 36). In a statistical sense, Finland seems to have had a rather high proportion of students receiving some form of

support that can conceptually be categorized under special-educational approaches. Globally, the numbers have sometimes been theatrically described as some sort of a world record. (See Graham & Jahnukainen, 2011.) However, the numeric information does not always reveal the *content* behind the numbers. Thus, the numbers should be interpreted carefully and in relation to national policies, definitions, and practices. (Cf. Lintuvuori, 2015.) The current Finnish support system will be looked at from the statistical perspective later in this section.

In general, support provided under the umbrella concept of special education has its roots and justification in the comprehensive school system Finland adopted in the 1970s. Thus, the movement from the previous two-track<sup>11</sup> school system to one unified track gathered students with various abilities to study together. (E.g., Kivirauma & Ruoho, 2007; Sabel et al. 2011; see also Aho, Pitkänen & Sahlberg, 2006.) Therefore, the education system needed to form structures that would help and support all students to learn, despite their individual differences (i.e., background, learning styles, or other personal characteristics). Further, the creation of a comprehensive educational system also required professionals specialized in the learning and developmental deficits that emerged in the heterogeneous student population. The new educational system gave birth to the profession of special educational needs (SEN) teachers<sup>12</sup>. (For a more detailed description see, e.g., Sabel et al., 2011; Kivirauma & Ruoho, 2007; cf. Tomlinson, 1985; 2012).

During the years of comprehensive school, the approach adopted to diversity in the student population has been described as the one providing the least restrictive learning environment for everyone, and a system that does not wait for the students to fail before acting (e.g., Jahnukainen, 2011). However, if we look at the system level, the movement towards true comprehensive (-ness of) school did not happen overnight; it took years, even decades, to form the system in terms of integrating and segregating structures. For example, the education of students with moderate intellectual disabilities was social welfare authorities' responsibility until 1985, and education of students with severe or profound disabilities was placed under social welfare authorities until 1997. However, the students with other types of disabilities were participating in the comprehensive school system. (Jahnukainen & Korhonen, 2003.) Thus, basically every student gets educated in the comprehensive school, and ought to get all the support needed for schooling. In that sense, the special education system is both comprehensive

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<sup>11</sup> The educational tracks divided after four years of elementary schooling and determined the students' professional paths, thus, creating unequal future options for the students. Consequently, the comprehensive school reform in 1968 aimed for equal educational opportunities through a nine-year educational path for all (Aho et al., 2006).

<sup>12</sup> SEN teachers in the way we know them today.

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and multifaceted (e.g., Hammerness, Ahtiainen & Sahlberg, 2017), and has been named as a reason that can explain the Finnish PISA results, alongside the most popular one concerning Finnish teachers (e.g. Kivirauma & Ruoho, 2007; Sabel et al., 2011; Sahlberg, 2011).

Today the concept of special education is rather limited in use, due to changes in language and practices brought by recent special education reform. However, there is *special language* included in the form of special support and part-time special education. Basically, the reform was not about dramatic changes, but more or less about modifying and rethinking the concepts and practices already in use (cf. Ahtiainen, 2015; Hautamäki & Hilasvuori, 2015; Jahnukainen & Itkonen, 2016; Thuneberg et al., 2014; see also Pesonen et al., 2015). The key changes suggested by the reform were increased emphasis on preventive practices and early intervention, moving from medical to pedagogical language, and restructuring the support system for students struggling with their learning and schooling (see, e.g., Ahtiainen, 2015; Pesonen et al., 2015; Thuneberg et al., 2013; Vainikainen, 2014). For example, in terms of conceptualization, the language including *diagnostic terms* was diminished or removed, and replaced with language of *support* and *pedagogy* (Thuneberg et al., 2014). Structurally, there was a movement from so-called two-tiered support (general, special) to a three-tiered model (general, *intensified*, special), consisting of different forms of practices that intensify when moving from one tier to the next; for example, teacher collaboration, differentiated instruction, and work coordination among teachers and other professionals working in schools (e.g., Ahtiainen 2015; Jahnukainen & Itkonen, 2016; Thuneberg et al., 2013; Thuneberg et al., 2014). These changes are the focus of this study, and will therefore be covered in more detail later (see Chapter 6). However, the three-tiered support system will be introduced next.

## Tiered support

As noted above, currently support is built around three gradually intensifying phases or tiers; general, intensified, and special<sup>13</sup>. When moving from one tier to the next, the steps of intensification are primarily based on pedagogical assessment and evaluation processes. Consequently, support intensifies if the means already in use in one tier are observed as being insufficient<sup>14</sup>. The Basic

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<sup>13</sup> There are some similarities in the basics between the Finnish model and the RTI model in the United States (see, e.g., Vainikainen, 2014; also, Thuneberg et al., 2014).

<sup>14</sup> However, it is possible to assign a student directly to special support, if the need for support is serious and so clear that going through general and intensified phases would

Education Act and the National Core Curriculum guide schools and teachers in the support process. The education is mainly organized by the municipalities, which are rather autonomous in Finland. They have a lot of decisional power concerning the local educational arrangements. (E.g. Simola, Kauko, Varjo, Kalalahti & Sahlström, 2017.) Within that context the Basic Education Act defines the overall framework for education organizers' and schools' duties and rights, as well as students' position and rights within the system, whereas the National Core Curriculum provides more detailed information about possible practices for support (BEA 628/1998, amendments up to 1136/2010; NCC 2004; 2014).

The first tier is the widest, as it is where all students are, and the leading idea is quality education for everyone. General support is part of that structure, and the system should be reactive to any observed struggling among students. The general phase can include different forms of support: differentiated learning and instruction, flexible groupings, part-time special education<sup>15</sup>, and co-teaching (Thuneberg et al., 2013; Vainikainen, 2014). If general support is not enough, support will be intensified. The movement to the second tier includes pedagogical assessment and formulation of a learning plan. However, this step forward does not require any official decision-making, and teachers can put the intensified means for support into operation even before the paperwork has been finished (e.g. Thuneberg et al., 2013). Smoothness of movement from one tier to another is at the core of this policy emphasizing early intervention and preventive actions. The means for support within the second tier are basically the same as those in use in general support, yet they should be more intense and follow the learning plan. Again, if the means for support are insufficient, the process will be intensified by moving to the third tier, special support. This phase requires official decision-making that is based on pedagogical evaluation, and the pedagogical evaluation can be supported by psychological and/or medical evaluations and statements, if needed (e.g., Thuneberg et al, 2013; Vainikainen, 2014). All tiers are based on collaboration between teachers and parents, SEN teachers and regular teachers, and, when needed, between teachers (and parents) and the multi-professional

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not solve the problems (cf. Vainikainen, 2014), and in that sense, it might not be purposeful to take the previous two steps.

<sup>15</sup> Part-time special education is basically available for all students, and can be given without any specific preceding procedure. It is a form of targeted support given for a short period of time to a student who is struggling with his/her studies for one reason or another. Part-time special education is given by a special educator in a clinic as individual or small group education, or by using co-teaching in a regular class. (See, e.g., Graham & Jahnukainen, 2011.) The term "part-time" refers to the nature of it; it is often short-term, and the student spends only part of their weekly classes with the special educator as described above. Part-time special education has remained a part of the support system after the reform.

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work groups. Also, the students themselves should be involved in and heard during the process.

The placement of the student throughout the three-tiered system should primarily be in general education groups, but that is not obligatory. For example, the Basic Education Act states the following concerning special support<sup>16</sup>, and thus, gives leeway for other options as well:

Special-needs support consists of special-needs education and other support provided under this Act. Special-needs education is provided, allowing for the pupil's interests and the facilities for providing the education, in conjunction with other instruction or partly or totally in a special-needs classroom or some other appropriate facility (BEA 628/1998, amendments up to 1136/2010).

Further, the Act does not give any specific guidelines for the placement of students receiving intensified support, and probably it has been assumed that they would study in general education settings. Consequently, there is variation in the placements between municipalities concerning both students receiving intensified<sup>17</sup> and special support (e.g., Lintuvuori, 2015).

## Statistical perspective

In terms of numeric information, the current three-tiered structure directs the compilation of statistical information<sup>18</sup> (Figure 1). Data describing the delivery of intensified and special support have been compiled since 2011 (see subchapter 6.1: The Reform in 2008-2012 for an example of the statistics before the reform).

Figure 1 shows the shares of students who have received intensified or special support since the reform in 2011. General support is basically part of the overall services of Finnish comprehensive school and should be provided flexibly. There are no specific processes related to it (i.e., learning plans or such), and it has not been included in the compilation of statistics as its own unit (e.g., Lintuvuori, 2015; Official Statistics of Finland, 2015b).

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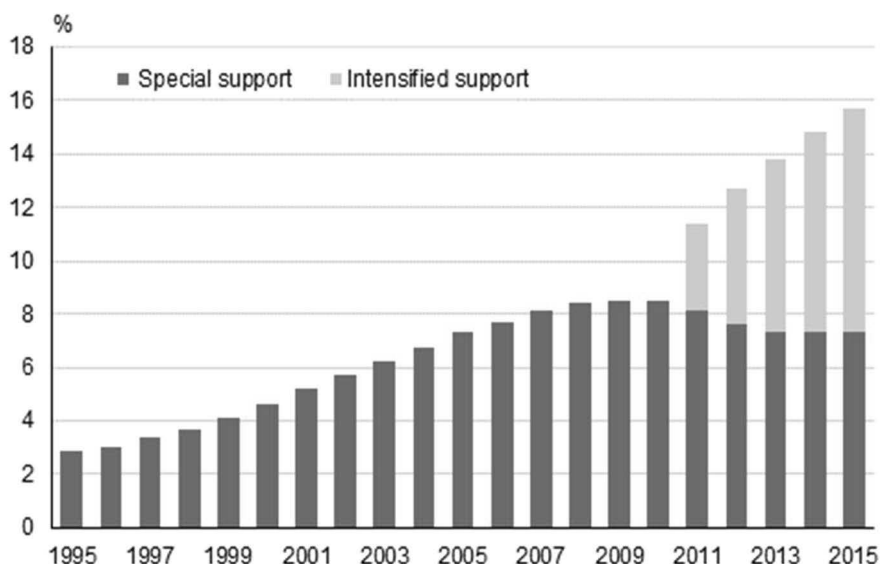
<sup>16</sup> Thus, if referring to inclusion, the Finnish legislation does not force it on schools (cf. e.g., Paju et al., 2016).

<sup>17</sup> It has been observed that some schools have formed specific small groups for students receiving intensified support (Kupiainen & Hienonen, 2016; Lintuvuori, 2015).

<sup>18</sup> Prior to the reform the compilation was directed by various diagnose-based classes and is now based on the three-tiered support structure.



## Shades of change in Fullan’s and Hargreaves’s models



**Figure 1.** Share of comprehensive school students who have received intensified or special support among all comprehensive school students 1995–2015, % (figure retrieved from Official Statistics of Finland, 2015a).

The latest numbers from autumn 2015 show that 8.4% of all comprehensive school students received intensified support and 7.3% special support, which means a total of 45 900 students<sup>19</sup> receiving intensified support, and 40 000<sup>20</sup> students special support. (Official Statistics of Finland, 2015b.) The figure also reflects the development of special support (previously named special education) over time. However, the basis for compiling the statistics has changed over the years, and thus, too far-reaching interpretations should be avoided (e.g., Lintuvuori, 2015).

This figure shows only the overall trend, and does not tell the whole story of the structures behind the numbers. For example, the 7.3% of special support receivers is not homogenous. The percentage can be broken down into smaller shares reflecting the placements of students. Namely, about 3% of all comprehensive-school students were studying fully in special groups in special schools (1%) or other settings (2%), approximately 1.5% studied fully in general education groups<sup>21</sup>, and the rest of the 7.3% describing special support receivers had a placement that was something between these two extremes (see Official Statistics of Finland, 2015c). Thereby, the figure is here to depict the current

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<sup>19</sup> Of which 65% boys and 35% girls.

<sup>20</sup> Of which 70% boys and 30% girls.

<sup>21</sup> Due to changes in the statistical classification, this number is not comparable with the conceptually corresponding ones before the reform in 2011 (see Lintuvuori, 2015).

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shares of students under these two support forms, and in that sense, does not give the whole picture. For more detailed information visit Statistics Finland.

### Reformed system

What seems characteristic to the Finnish system is that it tends to maintain strong structures for supporting students. If reflected with the issues raised earlier concerning the conceptual questions in special education, the Finnish system accepts the dualistic model in its structures. This is most visible in placements of students receiving tier-three special support, and can be observed among tier-two intensified support receivers as well. Thus, it looks like despite being sensitive and avoiding *medical* expressions, it is possible to form groups based on *specific* needs in tier-two. Therefore, language-wise, the dualism of special education–general education is diminishing; however, the practice seems not to be following, and it could be asked what kind of message the forming of small groups for intensified-support students is sending (cf. Kupiainen & Hienonen, 2016; Lintuvuori, 2015; Richardson & Powell, 2011).

The recent reform intended to reduce conceptual labeling in schools, and to smooth the structures for supporting students. Connecting the Finnish reform to the conceptualization of educational change visited so far, the reform was about a whole system change targeted at every comprehensive school in the country. In the Finnish context, one of the core concepts in that process was *development* – developing special education. In change-conceptual terms, the reform consisted of two particular factors. First, it was ignited through collaborative acts between the state and municipal<sup>22</sup> levels, and thus, top down-bottom up interaction was included. Moreover, to this collaboration can be added the involvement of various stakeholders in the reform preparation phase: for example, a hearing was organized to learn viewpoints of disability organizations, parents' league, and municipal representatives. Second, the Ministry of Education used a smooth implementation strategy that was started before the legislative changes, and that first prepared most of the municipalities for the actual change. This happened through a nationwide development project targeted at municipal participants. Along with the development project, in-service training for teachers was organized. Thus, there were multiple parallel actions going on simultaneously. The state level of government supported municipalities and schools by providing pre- and post-reform funding – thereby supporting municipalities and schools

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<sup>22</sup> Municipality in the Finnish context corresponds to school districts in North America and are “the essence of local democracy”. They can be defined as being the lowest level of elected government, as Hargreaves and Shirley (2012) define Finnish municipalities. (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012, 59.)

### Shades of change in Fullan's and Hargreaves's models

before and after the changes were made to the Basic Education Act and the National Core Curriculum. Further, the types of changes were not dramatic; they were modifications by their nature. All these points will be visited in more depth in this study.

## 2 Methodological framework

This study has been built up from three data sets: interviews with Michael Fullan and Andy Hargreaves; analysis of their selected publications about educational change; and policy analysis of the official documents concerning the Finnish special education reform process in 2005-2012<sup>23</sup>. These data sets have different roles. The interviews function as a basis for understanding the work of Fullan and Hargreaves, their written works are both a target of analysis and a tool for analysis, and the policy documents are a target for policy analysis conducted by using the theoretical frame based on the examination of the publications. This chapter introduces the overall framework of the study and introduces the data sets, method, and analyses.

### 2.1 Research questions

Four main questions triggered this study, and they form the basis of the process.

- 1) What are the key characteristics of Fullan's and Hargreaves's works in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
- 2) What are the differences and similarities in theoretical models of educational change as represented by Fullan and Hargreaves?
- 3) What would a Fullan-Hargreavesian educational change model contain?
- 4) How does a Fullan-Hargreavesian model of educational change apply to the Finnish special education reform?

Asking the questions above led to exploration of smaller but essential matters related to them that will be covered along the way. The orientation of this study is based on an aim to understand a phenomenon, namely, educational change and theorizing about it, and further, the interest is in theoretical modeling and its applicability.

### 2.2 Data

The data consist of interviews and written material, and are threefold. First, there are interviews with Fullan and Hargreaves. Second, there are the written works of

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<sup>23</sup> The reform process has been understood rather widely in this study, including pre-reform years and reaching beyond the normative changes.

Fullan and Hargreaves. And third, there are Finnish policy documents concerning the special education reform 2005-2012. Consequently, the data sets have been used for different purposes.

The interviews were done in order to get to know more about the theorists behind the books, and to learn about their work outside the theorizing. Thus, the interview data have a supportive role in this study. The main focus has been on the publications and the policy documents. Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing represents their written views about an ideal (or best possible), but still somewhat possible, way to realize educational change, whereas the Finnish policy documents are an actual policy-making-based representation of one national reform process – however, the policy documents can also be interpreted as ideal representations of education as the policy aims to implement educational policy ideals into practice. Anyway, the texts differ from each other in terms of the language. The differences are in the manners of representation and in the languages themselves; it shows through a possibility for speculation in one and as sticking to exactness in the other, and further, it is about two languages, English and Finnish. Thus, Fullan's and Hargreaves's literature forms the theoretical basis against which the Finnish policy documents are reflected. Therefore, theories are explored to gain an understanding about educational change itself. Furthermore, the aim is to study, reflect on, and further compare and combine their viewpoints, in order to create a change model, a theoretical mindset. Thus, the publications are both a target for analysis and a basis of a theoretical model for analyzing the policy documents.

In that context, Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing represents the Western world, and more specifically, a North American view and conceptualization of educational change. Also, they represent the academic lingua franca, English (e.g., Kaplan, 2001). These aspects naturally affect their usability in other cultural and lingual contexts, such as the Finnish one. Consequently, their use requires consideration of the possible differences in meanings and emphasis in policy. (E.g., Dimmock & Walker, 2000.) For example, policies related to testing and ranking are familiar features in North-American education cultures but not in the Finnish one. This subsection describes the data and the selection criteria used, starting with the interviews of Fullan and Hargreaves, moving on to their publications, and finally, the Finnish policy documents.

### **Interviews**

The interviews with Fullan and Hargreaves were planned at the beginning of the research process. The aim was to understand their work better, and hence, to look at them more closely as scholars and active professionals working in the field of educational change and leadership. Before the interviews, I had met them both

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once or twice at conferences<sup>24</sup>, and had an emerging understanding about them as public speakers along with the understanding gained through reading their books and journal articles. However, the interviews were done before the thorough exploration of their theories.

The interviews were guided by a framework that was sent to the interviewees beforehand, in order to prepare a common ground for discussion (see Appendix 1). The framework concentrated on five main areas:

- 1) The shared history of Fullan and Hargreaves
- 2) Educational change: past, present and future
- 3) Fullan's and Hargreaves's work on the field of educational change
- 4) Global aspect/the supranational actors (e.g. OECD, the World Bank, McKinsey, Microsoft)
- 5) Finland's position

Hargreaves was interviewed on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2011 at Boston College in the US, and Fullan on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013 at the Hilton Hotel in Helsinki, Finland. The length of each session was approximately the same: Hargreaves 81 and Fullan 80 minutes. The interviews were recorded and transcribed.

There was almost two years between the interviews, and therefore, their stories do not reflect the same precise moment. The position of the interviews in this study is as background information, and the voices of Fullan and Hargreaves will be heard throughout the study in the places where they can add something outside the books and analysis conducted along the way.

## Publications

Both theorists have been productive as writers. They have published individually and together. In this study, the publications chosen as part of the data are limited to books, and do not include any other type of published works. Thus, this was the first delimiting decision that had to be made, and it was based on the idea that a book as a product is a commensurable unit among the vast amount of written material.

Visits to Fullan's and Hargreaves's websites provided a pre-understanding of them as authors. On the websites, their book listings show that Fullan has produced 30 books<sup>25</sup> including 20 as sole author and ten for which he was a co-

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<sup>24</sup> Fullan in Helsinki in 2010 and in Stockholm in 2012, and both Fullan and Hargreaves in Toronto in 2010.

<sup>25</sup> Since 1991.

author or editor<sup>26</sup>. The corresponding number for Hargreaves indicates 31 books<sup>27</sup>, four of which he was the sole author and 27 that were co-authored or edited<sup>28</sup>. (See Fullan, 2016; Hargreaves, 2016; 2017.)<sup>29</sup> These numbers do not cover all their written works<sup>30</sup>, and therefore exclude their other works, such as journal articles and public talks. However, it provides some information about the volume of available literature from which the publication selection was made.

The selection was guided by criteria based on the aim of the study: to explore and compare Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing, and further, analyze the Finnish policy documents through a Fullan-Hargreavesian model. Thus, there needed to be criteria consisting of aspects that connect these entities. For the first time, the formulation of the criteria was thought up and discussed with Andy Hargreaves during my two-week visit to Boston in 2011, and elaborated further afterwards.

First, there was an underlying assumption that the books listed on their personal websites have some level of importance to the audience, according to Fullan and Hargreaves themselves. Second, the detailed exploration of theories, namely meticulous note-taking, breaking down the contents, and putting them together again, required an amount of written material that is exhaustive enough, and yet limited to a degree that can be treated in a meticulous manner within a reasonable timespan. Consequently, four-step criteria, introduced and explained below (i-iv), was formed to guide the selection.

- i) Books that were written in the first decade of the 2000s, because it is parallel to
  - a. The time span of the Finnish special educational development process, starting from pre-reform years 2005, and leading to changes in legislation in 2010<sup>31</sup>, and
  - b. The first decade of the PISA era starting from 2001.

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<sup>26</sup> Fullan has listed 10 co-authored books of which three mentioned on the website were co-written with Hargreaves.

<sup>27</sup> Since 1989.

<sup>28</sup> These 27 include seven that were written or edited and written together with Fullan.

<sup>29</sup> The numbers do include only one edition per book, and do not include translations, specific book-related action guides/work books or collection of texts.

<sup>30</sup> For example, the choice led to an exclusion of a research report covering special education reform in Ontario (Hargreaves & Braun, 2012). Ontario's reforms were in many ways similar to the Finnish experience.

<sup>31</sup> Elsewhere, the reform's timespan is defined as ending in 2012, since that is when the development project supporting the implementation of the reform ended. The wider timeframe also covers the year 2011, when amendments to Basic Education Act 628/1998 came in to effect (BEA 628/1998). Further, in this study the roots of the change will traced back into mid-1990s.

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- ii) Fullan's and Hargreaves's books that have high impact according to the Publish or Perish<sup>32</sup> (PoP) citation metrics (see Harzing, 2007).
- iii) Fullan's and Hargreaves's important books, according to themselves.
- iv) Limitation of four books from each, because
  - a. The number of books from each theorist should be considered carefully in terms of content.
  - b. To ensure systematic analyses and to support more focused examination of Fullan and Hargreaves.
  - c. The overlapping in content.

(i) Firstly, the timeframe was set to be approximately parallel with the Finnish special education reform, because that way, the two data sets, Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing and the policy documents, would speak the language and ideas of the same historical timepoint, the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The parallel nature of the timeframe for the books and reform was crucial, and strongly emphasized in the selection process, as the aim was to examine how the change appeared at approximately the same time in the change theories and the actual reform that took place in Finland. However, to ensure that there was an equal number of books from each theorist, one book from Hargreaves that was slightly outside the set timeframe was included. The decision for doing that was supported by feedback that was received during the research process, and the fact that *The Global Fourth Way* published in 2012<sup>33</sup> is a follow-up for the *Fourth Way* (2009), and therefore it provides a perspective to the continuum in change theoretical thinking. In Fullan, similar cumulative thinking is clear in his *Change Forces Trilogy*<sup>34</sup> of which the third book, *Change Forces with a Vengeance* (2003), represents the crystallization of his ideas of change forces that is among the selected publications. Secondly, the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is also the period during which PISA testing started, and that has had an effect on the global and national level policy talk (e.g., Meyer & Benavot, 2013; Novoa & Yariv-Mashal, 2003) and also to the way the change has been approached in theories.

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<sup>32</sup> "Publish or Perish is a software program that retrieves and analyzes academic citations. It uses Google Scholar and (since release 4.1) Microsoft Academic Search to obtain the raw citations, [and] then analyzes these (...) [It] is designed to empower individual academics to present their case for research impact to its best advantage." (Harzing, 2007)

<sup>33</sup> The book does not show in PoP metrics printed out in 2012, and was not mentioned individually by the theorists in the time when they were asked about the important publications. See points ii-iii on the list.

<sup>34</sup> The two other books of that trilogy were examined as well, in order to confirm the continuity.



Further, through PISA, Finland became clearly visible in the international educational discourse (e.g. Laukkanen, 2008; Sahlberg, 2011b; Simola, 2015).

(ii) The PoP citation metrics (printed out in November 13, 2012) classification was used to guide the selection, because the PoP was interpreted as providing information about each book's impact at a general level (see Harzing, 2007). The interpretation of the ranking of Fullan's and Hargreaves's books was done with caution, taking into account the way the year of publication influenced the book's placement on the list. In other words, not only was the placement interpreted as indicating the impact of certain book, but the lifespan of the book also was noted (see Appendices 2A-2B).

(iii) Further, it was important to hear the opinions of the theorists themselves, how they saw the importance of their books. Therefore, Fullan and Hargreaves were asked to name a) the most important books they had sole-authored, b) the most important books from each other and c) their most important co-authored books (Appendix 3). This information was gained from Fullan via email in 2013, and from Hargreaves during the interview in 2011, confirmed via email in 2012. However, in this study, their co-authored books were left out, because the aim was to depict two theoretical lines, one for Fullan and one for Hargreaves<sup>35</sup>.

(iv) These three phases guided the final selection of the books (Table 1). Furthermore, the list consists of books that are seen as being important by PoP and the theorists themselves. However, there was variations between these listings. The selection was more straightforward with Hargreaves than it was with Fullan. With Hargreaves, there was a closer match between his own selections compared with Fullan's selections and the selections from the PoP software. However, in Fullan's case, the selection weighed more towards the selections by Hargreaves's and from PoP than Fullan's own. (See Appendix 4.) One reason for that was that one out of the three books in Fullan's own listing fell outside the chosen timeframe, and the other was not selected either by Hargreaves or by PoP. Further, in Fullan's case, there was more overlapping in the content between the books, even in the chosen ones<sup>36</sup>, than there was with Hargreaves, and therefore, the interpretation is that nothing crucial concerning his understanding about the educational change was left out when framing the selection as shown in Table 1.

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<sup>35</sup> Despite the fact that only one book forming the Hargreavesian approach is written by him, three other books have co-authors. That dilemma will be discussed later in this subsection.

<sup>36</sup> In the selected books, there are exactly the same lessons (i.e. a list of ideas, advice or suggested steps that support and guide the change process), *Ten Elements of Successful Change*, in *Turnaround Leadership* (2006) and *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (2007). Namely, the chapter surrounding the lessons is mainly copy-pasted from one book to the other, with minor changes here and there in the content.

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**Table 1. The Fullan and Hargreaves publication data.**

<b>Michael Fullan</b>	
Change Forces with a Vengeance	2003
Leadership and Sustainability. System Thinkers in Action	2005
Turnaround Leadership	2006
The New Meaning of Educational Change 4th edition	2007
<b>Andy Hargreaves</b>	
Teaching in the Knowledge Society. Education in the Age of Insecurity	2003
Sustainable Leadership (with Dean Fink)	2006
The Fourth Way. The Inspiring Future of Educational Change (with Dennis Shirley)	2009
The Global Fourth Way. The Quest for Educational Excellence (with Dennis Shirley)	2012

The total extent of this data set is 1652 pages, 679 pages from Fullan and 875 pages from Hargreaves. The selection of books above reveals an issue with the data that needs to be discussed, namely that three of Hargreaves's four books were co-authored. The names of the co-authors are visible throughout the study in references. However, as the focus in this study is on Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing, the other authors' names were omitted in the analysis in order to make the setting less confusing. Anyway, both Fullan and Hargreaves state in their books that they have learned much about educational change through collaboration with colleagues around the world. Thus, the influence of others must be present in their writings anyway, whether any specific book was co-authored or not. Therefore, labeling the theoretical structures Fullanian and Hargreavesian is a stretch, and especially in Hargreaves case may be questioned.

## Policy documents

The data set of the Finnish policy documents covers a collection of documentation concerning the various phases of the special education reform 2005-2012. The timespan of the special education reform has been defined rather widely in this study; the process has been interpreted as starting from some years before the white paper guiding the reform was launched (MoE, 2007a), and it reaches beyond the year 2011 when the legislative changes came into effect, because the development project and in-service training supporting the reform were still ongoing in 2012. The documents have been classified into three different categories:

- i) Municipal initiative documents (N=3+2)
- ii) Ministry of Education documents (N=4)
- iii) Government and parliament documents (N=10)

Documents in the last two categories are public and available in Finnish on the Ministry and Government websites. Some documents in the first category are not publicly available, but were received privately from an administrator involved with the municipal-level initiative at the time.

The first category described as (i) municipal initiative documents, covers the pre-reform years 2005-2007, and includes a letter to the Ministry of Education, a hearing (a paper), and a report. These documents describe and summarize the collaboration between the largest Finnish municipalities in 2006<sup>37</sup>. These documents have been enriched with the Finnish National Board of Education's evaluation report called *The State of Special Education*<sup>38</sup> (Blom, Laukkanen, Lindström, Saresma & Virtanen, 1996) and the Ministry of Education's *Development Plan for Education and Research 2003-2008* (MoE, 2004) because they are a part of long-term policy planning preceding the municipal initiative.

(ii) Ministry of Education<sup>39</sup> documents cover the actual launching phase of the reform process in 2007. The central document is a white paper entitled *Special Education Strategy 2007* that guided the educational development work in Finnish municipalities in 2008-2012. In addition, Ministry press releases concerning the nationwide educational development project, and the funding program related to it are included in this collection.

(iii) Government and parliament documents cover the years 2009 and 2010 of the parliamentary process enacting legislative changes into Basic Education Act, BEA 628/1998. The collection includes bills, education and culture committee reports, government proposals, and plenary session records.

The policy document data set has reform-related documentation from the years 2005 to 2010, hence, covering discourses that preceded the reform, launched and guided the reform, and in the end, legitimized it. The data offset comprises 247 pages, of which 41 pages were Municipal initiative documents<sup>40</sup>, 97 pages are Ministry of Education documents, and 109 pages are Government and parliament documents. However, the policy document data set is not as strictly defined by Fullan and Hargreaves, and as noted above, some additional sources have been brought in to enrich the story about the special education reform process.

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<sup>37</sup> There have been constant changes, i.e. reductions, in the number of municipalities in Finland due to consolidations of municipalities. In 2006, the biggest municipalities behind this initiative were Espoo, Helsinki, Jyväskylä, Kuopio, Lahti, Lappeenranta, Tampere, Turku, and Vantaa.

<sup>38</sup> Erityisopetuksen tila.

<sup>39</sup> The name of the ministry was Ministry of Education until 2010, when it was changed into Ministry of Education and Culture.

<sup>40</sup> The additional documents, the State of Special Education report (Blom et al., 1996), and the MoE's development plan for education and research, make an additional 678 pages.

## 2.3 Methods and policy analyses

The three data sets used in this study differ from each other in their essence, they serve different purposes, and vary in their extent. The interviews are the most limited data, and have the role of a fellow traveler in this study as a whole. Despite this minor-sounding role, they provide information that is unique in nature and personal in terms of the work of Fullan and Hargreaves. Fullan's and Hargreaves's publications form the core of this study; they have been explicated in detail and they form the theoretical basis. Finally, the policy documents are a target for theoretical analyses, and they ground this study in the Finnish context. The approach for each set has been carefully chosen, in order to meet the nature and the role of the set.

### Stories of the theorists

The interviews with Fullan and Hargreaves were approached as background stories for this study, as an additional source of information for the theoretical work. Due to the interviews being used as background, they were not given much of a methodological emphasis at the beginning. In general, the interview framework guided, but did not determine, the interviews, and some parts of the framework were given less attention. Fullan and Hargreaves were encouraged to talk about themselves, about each other, and their professional relationship. The interviews opened a new door to the theorists' work, an insight to their mutual relationship. Hence, the interviews consisted of several brief stories about Fullan's and Hargreaves's careers, collaboration, work, and also their views about educational change. Consequently, in places the interview data form narratives of them as professionals, and as they considered their shared history and their current relationship, the stories have parallel schemes. Through this parallelism, the narratives complement each other and partly intersect.

When beginning to process the interviews, the information was fed into the software for qualitative data analyses (Atlas.ti, 2013) in order to read through and re-organize it according to the content. Thus, it was a process of combining similar parts of the stories told. Consequently, five central categories were formed:

- Influencing
- Difference in influencing
- International comparisons
- Writing together
- Finland

Despite partly unintentionally distancing the interviews from any specific methodological approach at the beginning, the emergence of professional stories under the categories *influencing* and *difference in influencing* started to resonate

with what Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008) call small stories, or also with what Bamberg (2012) refers to as story-telling or narrative practices. In the narrative practice approach, the narratives are told for a purpose, and they are entities within a larger context to which they can be embedded, and by doing that, the narrative finds its functional value. Further, within this frame, the narratives have points of contact in the world of events, places, and actors, and the stories constructed can be about the narrators themselves or about third persons outside the exact situation where the story is being told (cf. Bamberg, 2012).

The processing of interviews showed that they were built around a question that is close to a *who-are-you* question in terms of professional identity. Thus, methodologically, *the who-are-you* question functioned as an invitation for the interviewee to reflect himself within a given context, the field of educational change, and further, to make sense of oneself, and the others, in relation to referenced actions and people in the stories. (Cf. Bamberg, 2012.) In the interviews with Fullan and Hargreaves, the professional identities were formed through developmental professional steps that emerged through some encounters with events in their history and other actors in the stories.

Thus, however limited, some parts of the interviews formed narratives that reflected Fullan's and Hargreaves's professional identities and self-positioning in the field of educational change, both their own and each other's. For example, glimpses of professional identities became visible in Fullan's and Hargreaves's stories about their position in relation to policy-making and the work within different levels of the system. Further, most clearly the professional identity was formed in relation to each other, through contradictions between roles given to themselves and to each other.

Within this frame, this study situates the interviews along with the other analysis and interpretations; they add viewpoints outside the data based on written material. The interview quotes and the interviews have been referred to as AH2011 and MF2013, and in the quotes, the places referring to their professional self are shown with *emphasis* in the text. Despite finding points of contact in narrative practices, the interview data have mainly been usable as an additional source of information. However, the relevant parts of the professional identity frame have been used to enlighten the professional self-positioning of Fullan and Hargreaves, their approach to change and their theorizing.

### **Systematic analysis of the publications**

I had read all the publications chosen for this study in recent years. Thus, I had an idea about their contents. However, the analysis for this study needed to be thorough, and the books had to be read and examined with thought. The systematic analysis method was used to examine the publications.

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As noted earlier, the publication data are both a target of and a tool for analyses forming the theoretical basis for the study; a target of theoretical exploration leading to a theory-based mindset, or reflective surface, for the third data set, the policy documents. The selected works of Fullan and Hargreaves approach the phenomenon of educational change by using a more or less speculative touch: What is change in an educational context? What is the current state of affairs (according to them)? What is there to criticize? What could be done differently?

In terms of understanding educational change, and especially how it is approached by Fullan and Hargreaves, the main focus was on and needed to be on the conceptualization itself. Moreover, my aim was to come to a comprehension of what the phenomenon called educational change is. Consequently, the main questions I sought to answer from the books were:

- What does change consist of?
- What components are related to it?

To explore all this, I decided to employ the methodological ideas of systematic analysis (see Jussila, Montonen & Nurmi, 1993), and also to be informed by a method of philosophical reconstruction (see Holma, 2009), in other words, the process of disassembling and reassembling the textual material. The combination of approaches chosen functions as a methodological tool for textual analysis, and guides exploration of the concepts and ideas in order to gain an understanding about them (Holma, 2009; Jussila, Montonen & Nurmi, 1993). Holma (2009) describes philosophical reconstruction as a method that is about looking at the texts as such, and capturing the writer's thinking, without adding the researcher's own criticism or argumentation. Hence, it resonates with what Rorty (1984) calls *historical reconstruction*, which refers to the description of the studied writer's views, not the researcher's own viewpoints (Holma, 2009). Moreover, Rorty<sup>41</sup> (1984) criticizes processes of reading, interpretation, and analysis of old writings that take the texts as if they were the writings of our contemporaries. This kind of an approach often leads to ignoring all the historical events between the time of writing and the present – interpreting the past through the present. Thus, there is a danger of misinterpretation if the texts are disconnected from their historical time points, and it is assumed that the risk for misinterpretation grows bigger the older the texts are.

What we can infer from Rorty is that a text should be understood as a product of a certain context and a certain historical time, whether we talk about distant

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<sup>41</sup> Rorty (1984) refers, for example, to readings of Aristotle, Hume, Locke or Newton, thus, the gap in knowledge and understandings between now and then can be seen more clearly.

history or a more recent one. In this study, Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing is approached in a way that emphasizes the priority of the writer's own voice, and at the same time, it is important to take into account the differences between the historical time when the books were written and the time they were read<sup>42</sup>. Further, the theorizing by Fullan and Hargreaves has been restricted to publications from a certain historical time, thus, the time in which they were written is approximately parallel with the years when the Finnish reform took place. The reason for this is an understanding that change theories are formed in interactions between theorists and actual happenings in education. Therefore, a theory that clearly precedes or exceeds the historical time of the reform would consider a different time perspective. Along with the question about historical time, the possible cultural and lingual barriers between the reader and the texts must be kept in mind and evaluated in the process.

Systematic analysis is defined as a methodological tool that belongs under the philosophical research tradition. However, it is not strictly defined as belonging under a certain branch of science, but as being applicable to various humanistic and social studies, and thus, also in education. In this study, it has been used in one of its typical forms, as a tool to examine two theoretical views by concentrating on the core conceptualizations within them. (See Jussila, Montonen & Nurmi, 1993.) The systematic analysis, as well as philosophical reconstruction, consists of two main phases:

- 1) The first phase is to approach a text by breaking down the writer's ideas or conceptualizations. Thus, basically, this phase is content analysis that explicates a specific text. However, it is differentiated from content analysis. For example, systematic analysis aims to capture the range of thoughts that are related to the text. (Jussila, Montonen & Nurmi, 1993.)
- 2) The second phase is about putting the ideas together again, in order to build and create something new, *a new mental structure*, based on the analyzed material(s)<sup>43</sup>.

In this two-step process, the latter phase is more challenging. Yet, there do not seem to be any general methodological *rules* for building the synthesis, but it often happens as an interaction between the two (Jussila, Montonen & Nurmi, 1993). Hence, it is about building on existing ideas and conceptions, and formulating a modified model based on them, and all this is guided by the questions that are posed by the texts in the study's framework.

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<sup>42</sup> The distance in time varies between 6-13 years in this study

<sup>43</sup> Thus, it is the process of analysis and synthesis.

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In practice, the process of analysis consisted of five steps that were not fully straightforward but interacted with each other; there were steps forwards and backwards, constant checks and specifications.

- 1) **Reading and marking.** Each book, four from Fullan and four from Hargreaves, was read through with special focus on all expressions that pointed directly or indirectly to the phenomenon of educational change, and conceptions or processes closely related to it. Every part of the text containing these elements was marked up on the text.
- 2) **Disassembly of the books.** The marked excerpts were read again and written down word for word on a specific Excel file labeled “MF [or AH] literature reform change”. Each book was given its own column. In this first phase, the intention was to capture the ideas about educational change of each book, and hence, the excerpts were chosen rather on too loose than too tight grounds.
- 3) **Scrutiny of the disassembled books.** The literature notes formed in the AH and MF literature Excel files consisted of 35 pages (22 286 words) for Fullan and 32 pages (19 017 words) for Hargreaves. These were printed out for further examination. During this round, the notes were carefully read through twice, and on the second reading, all central words related to educational change, such as change, reform, and improvement, were marked. These key words were selected during the first reading, because they seemed to be somewhat intertwined in the process of aiming towards a change in educational context.
- 4) **Emergence of categories defining change.** The notes were further processed by paying specific attention to the text around the words marked, namely, change, reform, and improvement. Through this, the phenomenon of educational change started to emerge, and this enabled the creation of seven categories (Table 2). The notes per book were reorganized under these categories, and during this phase, some sections of the notes were left out as they were not central to the phenomenon of change. As the phenomenon of change is complex, and has many intertwined characteristics, to some extent these categories have connections with each other.



**Table 2. The seven categories for disassembling Fullan’s and Hargreaves’s theorizing.**

<b>Change is..</b>	The characteristics of change. What kind of change are Fullan and Hargreaves talking about. The core nature of change.
<b>Aims</b>	The main aims of the change. How they are described.
<b>Prerequisites</b>	The (pre)conditions and factors that enable and/or support change.
<b>Means</b>	How to reach the set aims: what has to be done and what has to happen.
<b>Challenges</b>	The assumed and observed challenges in a change.
<b>Time frame</b>	A definition/estimation for the expected time within which the change could or should happen.
<b>Lessons</b>	The specific instructions provided in the publications. Often named as lessons, principles, elements, or pillars, for example.

- 5) **Reassembly.** Based on the categories, eight separate files were formed, one for each book. That reassembly of the contents of the books enabled integration of the books from both theorists, and the creation of one Fullanian and one Hargreavesian approach to change. Further, the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches laid the grounds for their comparison.

To sum up, systematic analysis was the tool used to explore the phenomenon of educational change in Fullan and Hargreaves. During the analytical five-phase process, their texts were examined in detail, and that process resulted in two separate perspectives on educational change: the Fullanian and Hargreavesian. Consequently, the two perspectives enabled the comparison of these two separate approaches. Further, the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches formed the basis for building the theoretical mindset that is the analytical tool for the third data set, the Finnish policy documents.

### **Theoretical exploration of the policy documents**

The data set of the Finnish policy documents covering the special education reform from its pre-reform years to normative changes has been approached in two ways, of which the latter was the actual analysis. First, the documents functioned as written sources for a descriptive phase. Thus, they were examined

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and the whole reform process was summarized under three categories; *Pre-reform Years 2005-2007*, *The Reform in 2008-2012*, and *Reading Years 2009-2010*. The aim was to outline a picture of the processes that preceded the reform, moved educators towards it, and legitimized the new strategic lines of thought.

Second, the documents were read again through the lens of the Fullan-Hargreavesian change model, so as to put the Finnish reform within the theoretical frame. The Fullan-Hargreavesian change model consists of four categories: *Entry*, *Objective*, *Dissemination*, and *Impact* (see subchapter 5.2). In practice, this happened through two steps.

- 1) **The Fullan-Hargreavesian lens for analysis.** The Finnish policy documents were analyzed by taking each Fullan-Hargreavesian category under scrutiny. The main characteristics of a category were identified, and a mind map depicting the core idea of the category was drawn.
- 2) **Theoretical examination of the documents.** The mind map was used to direct the examination of policy documents. Excerpts of a policy document belonging to the category were marked, and examined again as a whole in relation to the theoretical model.

Thus, the process of examination of the policy documents by using the conceptual tools provided by the Fullan-Hargreavesian change model means analyzing the Finnish policy documents through change-theoretical language. Further, the aim was to discuss the similarities and differences between the theoretical mindset and the Finnish approach. Hence, the process was theory-guided, and the focus was on the discourses reflecting the viewpoints given in each category of the Fullan-Hargreavesian change model. The analysis moved step by step, and examined the aspects of each Fullan-Hargreavesian category in every document, then gathering them together to form the Finnish story under the theoretical categories.

The theoretical explication reflects a discourse analysis of policy documents (e.g. Silverman, 2001). The theoretical mindset looks at the reform as a process, and as the data are documents, it draws attention to various possible expressions concerning reform and multiple aspects surrounding it, to what is said and how, also paying attention to persuasion in the policy documents' language. Consequently, this method is guided by change-theoretical language that directs the analysis to focus on specific expressions and use of language. This process reflects the functionality of the language used in the documents; it is related to the timepoints when the documents were written, and the reasons for writing them. (E.g., Pietikäinen & Mäntynen, 2009.) However, the policy documents differ from each other especially in terms of the reason for them having been written. The municipal initiative documents and the Ministry of Education documents are persuasive in their tone, because they were intended to sell ideas, whereas the

government and parliament documents are based on official use of language. All documents offered a surface on which the theoretical approach could be reflected. However, they were not without limitations, which will be discussed later.

### **Critical examination of the study**

Every study consists of factors that can and should be discussed critically. There are points that ask for questioning and scrutiny. The first one concerns the overall design. It is about how the study has been outlined, and how that has resulted in the choice of data. Are the data appropriate for the study? The second aspect is the methods and analysis chosen. It is about examining the justifications for the decisions that have been made, and evaluation of the processes. In the context of this study, it would feel comfortable to talk about the trustworthiness of the process. Studies focusing on interpretation of written material are in constant danger of looking at the data through lenses that are too subjective and individually-based. In the purview of this investigation these aspects are especially related to the theories and policy documents, the different cultural and lingual backgrounds of the theorists and my own evolution of thinking. These are factors that were taken into account on a systematic basis precisely because they affect the processes of data collection and analysis. Acknowledging the dangers, two main steps were taken. First, the methods introduced here were chosen to systematize the reading, note-taking, and thinking processes. Second, Fullan and Hargreaves agreed to participate in the process, and have read the analyses, interpretations, and conclusions drawn from their books and interviews. This was done by sending the draft to both of them with a letter that included questions about this study in general, the method, chosen publications, interview excerpts, and the Fullan-Hargreavesin model. Their critique and viewpoints have been merged into my own reflection in Chapter 7.

Further, the participation of the theorists themselves points to the way in which research ethics concerning the use of interview data has been taken under consideration. Thus, Fullan and Hargreaves have been able to read and comment on the citations used. The issues visited here will be discussed in the final chapter.

### 3 Fullan's and Hargreaves's change theories

Fullan's and Hargreaves's theories of change have been read and examined carefully. Further, their own views about their work, i.e. the interview data, have been involved in the process. The focus has been on gaining an understanding of both theorists' approach to educational change. Also, the aim has been to understand their work as theorists in the field; what does the work itself consist of. The examination was done by keeping the guiding research questions concerning the theorizing in mind.

- What are the theories of change as theories?
- How have these theories been built?
- What does theorizing consist of from the perspective of the theorists?
- How educational change has been approached in these books?
- How Fullan and Hargreaves talk about change?

This chapter consists of the first round of exploration of the second data set, the books, which has been enriched with stories emerging from the first set, the interviews. Fullan's and Hargreaves's literature has been explored in order to draw a comprehensive picture of the general nature of their theorizing. The exploration led to the formulation of three aspects: theorizing about change; change as a phenomenon and a process; and the manners of representation. Fullan's and Hargreaves's own voices will be heard along with the aspect of theorizing about change; the interviews add to the ideas drawn from their books. The parts of the interview citations reflecting their *professional roles and identities* are *emphasized*. A more in depth exploration and comparison of Fullan's and Hargreaves's theories is presented in Chapter 4.

#### 3.1 Theorizing about change

The concept of theory is often used rather loosely, and the intended meaning may include "everything from minor working hypotheses, through comprehensive but vague and unordered speculations, to axiomatic systems of thought" (Merton, 1968, p. 39). This study examines theories about educational change or theories of action in change as the theorizing can also be labeled (see e.g. Fullan, 2003; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). Hence, it is necessary to look at the kinds of theory they are; what do the concepts of theory and theorizing consist of in this context. Further, the aim is to point out through the interviews how the theorists themselves reflect their own writing and work, and identify themselves and each other as professionals.

## Shades of change in Fullan's and Hargreaves's models

Fullan and Hargreaves have been put in the roles of theorist within this study's frame. However, theorizing represents only one corner of their work in the field of educational change. The books they write are artefacts that have been produced through the whole scale of their work. Fullan and Hargreaves define the books as one of the channels for being influential as professionals, a certain message can be sent through the book. Hence, the books are identified as one of the tools for influencing and reaching people working in different positions within education.

One [way of influencing] is [that], we write a book, *Professional Capital* [Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012], is very much of a powerful criticism, so publication is one way of doing it. Second way we [i.e. mainly his own team] do it is by interacting, just thinking of the system now, interacting at the policy level, doing consultancies (MF2013)

[One way to have] influence on policy is your influence on professionals up to the highest level. So, because of our work on *The Fourth Way* [Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009] the teachers' association in England really developed a strategy to fight the remaining standardized tests in England and have had great success (AH2011)

Thus, writing the books functions as one of the ways of getting one's work to become visible, and have an influence on the audience. Further, the book is also the mark of one's work that remains the longest. As scholars, both Fullan and Hargreaves have a background in sociology. In their theories about educational change they combine knowledge from different sources and disciplines, and the theories are characteristically interdisciplinary (cf. Biesta, 2011). The phenomenon of change and the processes related to it in the field of education, and in its institutions, resonate with change in any other organization or work community. Consequently, these other fields are reflected in the argument building, and further, combined with their own observations as Hargreaves demonstrates here:

Our book draws directly on the corporate and environmental literature of sustainability and sustainable development as well as on our detailed research, which examines educational change over long periods of time, to provide concrete strategies for realizing seven principles of sustainability in leadership and change in schools and school systems. (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 17-18)

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Yet, educational change<sup>44</sup> is different, having its specific characteristics related to the societal position of education. Education systems, and schools as their units, have a general social function<sup>45</sup> in educating children and youth. Education keeps up or aims towards a certain level of knowledge, skills, and all-round education of young people with different societal backgrounds (e.g. socio-economic, ethnic, religious, and lingual). Moreover, education systems consist of various ambitions, aims, competencies, and understandings of education and schooling as such. Education systems bring adults and children to work together in differently resourced environments<sup>46</sup>. These systems are sensitive to the influence of unexpected factors stemming from as simple a source as the people themselves. Combining people of different ages from different backgrounds, different intentions, and wide variation of abilities and competence levels working for a common purpose<sup>47</sup>. These things form the core of complexity of and challenge for educational change in practice, and also in theorizing.

Despite their sometimes-differing emphasis, both Fullan's and Hargreaves's approach change in the context of educational systems and structures by considering their various actors and factors. The change and reform are parts of, and consequences of, education policy making, and also can be influenced by societal changes and factors. Not forgetting the influences of global educational reform trends, and international student achievement tests conducted by the OECD<sup>48</sup> and IEA<sup>49</sup>, for example. The international perspective in national education policy making and reform makes the whole question about developing education on a certain basis in a certain direction complicated and challenging, as Fullan and Hargreaves point out while pondering the role and the future of global-level testing.

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<sup>44</sup> Here educational change is understood as being rather large-scale, not as a small local development initiative, and hence, for example, the context for the change could be the whole country in Finland or one state in the US or one province in Canada.

<sup>45</sup> The core idea stays the same whether the education system consists of public or private education providers. However, in this study the emphasis is on public schools.

<sup>46</sup> Here resources consist of provided funding for education, human resources in terms of different available teacher and school leader competencies, school buildings, and the wider school environment geographically and demographically.

<sup>47</sup> Here we are talking about all levels within a system such as policymakers, administrators, school leaders, teachers, students, and parents.

<sup>48</sup> The Programme for International Student Assessment, PISA.

<sup>49</sup> See the next two footnotes for TIMSS and PIRLS.

## Shades of change in Fullan's and Hargreaves's models

Officially the OECD says, and we do here [at Boston College] with TIMSS<sup>50</sup> and PIRLS<sup>51</sup>, that the purpose is not to rank countries, it's to ask good questions. But in practice many ministers respond to PISA like this. (...) The important thing therefore is not for the OECD [or McKinsey or the World Bank] to do something different (...). The important thing is to create some platforms where other organizations or groups, networks, with equivalent authority can really be able to have access to data about reforms and their impact in different kinds of countries and to interpreting what those data means, so, that we have a more democratic platform for it making sense of international comparisons. (AH2011)

So, there is a real sense now, an unsettled sense around the world, that there's too much testing, and PISA is perhaps a good example of testing but it's still an example of too much testing, too much reliance put on the test. It's a wrong kind of a thing that's steering things, so, I think there's going to be a backlash against testing (...). (MF2013)

In Fullan's and Hargreaves's written works, there are often both theoretical and practical viewpoints included. Both scholars draw from and build on aspects such as accumulating literature and research on educational change, their own previous theorizing and literature, and also on their own research and experiences as consultants and researchers in the field. The theorizing is somewhat dynamic and interactive. It is in a constant process, reflecting itself and correcting itself, and aiming for a deeper understanding of the change as a whole.

Our understanding of sustainability comes from fifteen years of work together in which, with other colleagues, we have set out to investigate educational change over long periods of time and to work in partnership with schools and districts to bring about lasting improvement (...). (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 21)

My colleagues and I have been fortunate to be partners, co-developers, critical-friend observers of several significant large-scale reform initiatives around the world [e.g. Canada, the UK, the US, Australia, and England]. (Fullan, 2005, p. xi)

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<sup>50</sup> The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study by IEA. IEA is located in Boston College's Lynch School of Education. (TIMSS & PIRLS, 2016.)

<sup>51</sup> The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study by IEA (TIMSS & PIRLS, 2016).

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To describe the nature of Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing more specifically I have employed Hirst's (1966, 1983; also in Biesta, 2011) ideas about educational theory, or practical theories as he also calls them (Hirst, 1966). Hirst's (1966, 1983) view on educational theory is a rather interdisciplinary<sup>52</sup> framework, and it emphasizes both the importance of theory and practice. In these circumstances, this kind of theory "must do justice for both to its connection with educational practice and its connection with a vast range of different forms of purely theoretical understanding" (Hirst, 1966, p. 42). For example, in Fullan this Hirst's connection is expressed as follows.

I said that for every abstract concept we need to be able to point to a corresponding concrete policy or strategy that is intended to advance the concept in practice. (Fullan, 2005, p. 43)

Fullan also talks about a reality test for theoretically constructed concepts:

(...) system thinking has squandered its potential because it has stayed at the level of *thinking*. The reality test is to put it into practice. (...) Good theories get better through continuous reflective action. (Fullan, 2005, p. 85) Emphasis in the original.

Furthermore, none of this should, and cannot, happen without consideration of values and beliefs related to the questions at hand (Hirst, 1983).

Theorizing in a practical field such as education is concerned about collecting knowledge about the practical level issues, and also about connecting this processed theoretical knowledge again with the practice; "It is the theory in which principles, stating what ought to be done in a range of practical activities, are formulated and justified" (Hirst, 1966, p. 66). Hence, in this light the theory aims to provide instructions and suggestions for practice. Further, the field of theorizing consist of numerous approaches.

The theory of change, or action, concerns what policies, strategies and mechanisms are going to be used, in effect, to implement the theory of education<sup>53</sup>. (Fullan, 2003, p. 53)

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<sup>52</sup> This seems to be typical for Anglo-American construction of the field according to Biesta (2011).

<sup>53</sup> "Theory of education includes the substance of content and pedagogy" (Fullan, 2003, p. 53).



## Shades of change in Fullan's and Hargreaves's models

In the world of educational change, theories of what to change and how to change abound. (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012, p. 4)

In Fullan and Hargreaves this *ought to be done* instruction part is often provided as a list of crucial steps one needs to take in order to accomplish targets set in each book. These steps are identified as lessons, pillars, or principles, for example Fullan's *Ten complex change lessons* (Fullan 2003) and Hargreaves's *Six pillars of purpose and partnership that support change* (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). This *ought to be done* is one of the main characteristics in Fullan's and Hargreaves's books, yet, the aim is not to prescribe or impose but to guide the process. Along with this, they see the fighting against *wrong drivers* or *bad policies* as a crucial part of their work – one way of influencing the audience.

Choosing the Wrong Drivers is a paper [on my website] that says that governments in some countries, like the US and Australia, are choosing accountability and other things that don't work, and the right drivers are professional capital, pedagogy, capacity building and so forth. (MF2013)

(...) that is in not promoting good policies but in fighting bad ones. (...) I've written a book called Teaching in the Knowledge Society [2003] (...) We worked with a group of schools, six secondary schools, and collected lots of data but also worked collaboratively with them (...) ***I appeared*** a lot in the newspaper, on the television, radio, a lot with other people (...) ***really fighting bad policies***<sup>54</sup> that drove good teachers out of the profession and harmed children and equity. (AH2011)

Theorizing according to Hirst (1966, 1983), and the theorizing of Fullan and Hargreaves may be interpreted as an activity of formulating certain educational activity guiding and activity improving practice-related principles that are grounded in education, and at the same time including all the supporting and significant elements drawn from other disciplines<sup>55</sup>. Hence, in the process of developing theory through interaction with the actual practice it is possible to improve and expand the already gained knowledge. Therefore, in the crusade of

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<sup>54</sup> The parts in the interviews citations that reflect how the theorists identify themselves and each other as professional and what roles they give to themselves and each other have been emphasized.

<sup>55</sup> Hirst (1983) emphasizes philosophy (of education), sociology (of education), and psychology (of education). However, he does not limit the disciplines here, but sees that any other sciences should be combined with educational study if they support and bring significant and needed viewpoints. That viewpoint seems to be present also in Fullan's and Hargreaves's work.

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theory-making about certain activity, its problems, and possible solutions, it is almost necessary, at some point, to be engaged with the activity itself (Hirst, 1983). However, the level of engagement may vary. In the work of Fullan and Hargreaves there has been a difference in the level of the education system with which they have tended to engage.

So, now *I've* actually *been working* in one way or the other *with the decision makers* (...) [And more recently with] new politicians and policymakers coming into positions, they *are coming to me* and say please work with us (...) whereas *Andy has stayed outside* that direct line and had a reputation for a while as providing criticism (...) [Hence,] *Andy* always *avored the underdog*, let's say the people in the receiving end of policy, so, *he would be very popular* with teachers and teacher union but *not so popular* with the politicians (...) Yes, *he* [Andy Hargreaves] *would be more on the teachers strand*, and *I more with the leadership strand*, administrative strand, although *we both now*, we would say *he appreciates the leadership* more and *I appreciate the teacher* side more. (MF2013)

*Michael's work now in the US is incredibly critical*, it's *probably more critical than my work* actually, of what is happening here; this is in a way *a new way of being for him*. *He's often being critical of things in the abstract but not of particular places or policies* (...) So, I think that shifts your interpretation slightly particularly in terms of recent work. But I would say mainly I am, *my position to policy is, I need to be just underneath it*, on just about every level until you get to the minister (AH2011)

I don't think that's a bad division of labor. I think there's some people who work on the inside and some people work on the outside and usually there are two kinds of relationships. One is they ignore each other and two is they fight each other all the time. We're not the only ones, but what Michael and I have been able to do, is to have differences, sometimes quite small. So, *when both your work fits the times the differences are quite small, sometimes quite large* (...) But *we've* always *remained in communication* and we've always *been prepared to discuss things with each other and also in public*. And that is absolute, because this then means that *the differences from other people can be productive* rather than distractive. (AH2011)

Thus, Fullan has been collaborating with people at the administrative level, and has worked directly with the policy makers at the high level whereas Hargreaves's

work has concentrated more on school-level practitioners. Consequently, this difference in their engagement with the field shows in their writing, as will be noted in the following chapters. This also points to their perceived professional identities. What roles they give to themselves and also to each other in different times, and how these identities have affected their mutual relationship.

Everything presented so far also finds some points of contact in Merton's (1968) writings about theories of the middle range in the field of sociology. These types of theories can be placed between the minor (but necessary) working hypothesis and all-inclusive systematic efforts to develop unified theories referred to at the beginning of this chapter. The point where the connection to Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing lies is that the theories of the middle range interact with empirical factors, and aim to understand the activity more throughout, in order to know what there is still to learn in terms of how to approach and solve the practical problems better. Furthermore, in the process of interaction between the existing knowledge and theory base and the practical problem the idea is that the problem becomes less of a problem, if not non-existent. (See Merton, 1968.)

Summing up all this draws a picture of theorizing that proceeds cyclically through interactions between the theorist and the educational reality which is explored and interpreted via the theorist's own visits, communications, observations, and research, and also by reading what others have found and written. All this seems to form a process that aims towards better-functioning solutions, and creates new conceptualizations for various issues; it desires improvement - improvement of the theory, its realization, and the real practices. Further, theorizing is a means to influence, by distributing one's ideas among educators and policy makers along with other kinds of interaction and encounters with the field. Moreover, the theorists may position themselves in various ways and choose to take different stances within the field. This process of positioning and stance taking may be interpreted as professional profile creation, and at personal level as a way to form a professional identity.

### **3.2 A phenomenon and a process**

Examining and further processing the eight books of Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing about educational change brought out a conceptual distinction between two different, yet intertwined, matters. On one hand, there seems to be change as a phenomenon, and on the other, there is change as a process. This study started with the question concerning the essence of educational change considered in Fullan's and Hargreaves's. Hence, the question went beyond the actual happening of change. It was more widely about the phenomenon of change discussed in the chosen literature. Furthermore, this study has also been targeted to educational change as specific structure of action, thus, one aim was to gain an understanding about the process of change itself. The conceptual distinction made here includes

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a certain level of hierarchical thinking. Change as a process functions as a specification for the change part in the idea of change as a phenomenon.

The first of these two, change as a phenomenon, is built around and approached by using three core concepts of which one is change, and the other two are reform and improvement. These concepts are linked together, and in the change literature they are implicitly included to one another<sup>56</sup>. While chasing after the essence of educational change it was almost impossible to avoid the combination of these three in a way that seems to form a kind of framework within what the phenomenon is being captured. In this conceptualization, each of the three parts has a role that is specific to it and is connected to the others, and together they form the whole that is interpreted as being change as a phenomenon. Next, the roles and connections of the concepts, reform, change, and improvement, as parts of the phenomenon will be looked at in more detail.

Reform as a concept in theorizing about educational change often refers to an agenda or a strategy that has been formulated as a consequence of education policy making. Such agenda making names a problem and then provides suggestions to address the issues. Thus, it both names the problems and introduces the solutions. It includes aims and the possible means to reach them, and also provides justifications for them. Reform often has an epithet, such as large-scale or system-wide indicating the intended scope of it. The connection between reform, change, and improvement is that reform is aimed the improvement of something, and it is hoped that the improvement will happen through change put into action by the agenda (i.e. reform).

In this change as a phenomenon framework, reform as such that it is not much about activity; it is more like the moving force to make something happen. It initiates the change. What then actually happens through the activity part is change. For example, Fullan (2003, p. 22) refers to reform as something that unfolds: “don't expect reforms to unfold as intended”. Even though in this excerpt the process of unfolding does not happen in the way intended, the reform is presented as a target of some happening. Change can be interpreted as an engine, the action that is supposed to take place within the education setting. Improvement is produced through this activity. Change as activity consists of the process, and further, opens the hierarchical link downwards to the second conceptualization of change as a process (described later).

Improvement consists of two main components that are related to the reform: the problem named and the targets set. Improvement is something that can somehow be measured and observed as, for example, Hargreaves states "Reasons

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<sup>56</sup> For example, when *improvement* is mentioned in Fullan's and Hargreaves's it seems to include, at least at implicit level, the idea that there has been a reform agenda and something is hoped to change or has changed.

for optimism are evident in the capacity of schools and leaders to bring about long-term, lasting, measurable improvement when they are allowed and encouraged to put learning first (...)” (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 255-256). It is about making progress in terms of something we can give a rank and assess the expected and hoped change in its essence.

In this interpretation of change as a phenomenon, every part of it may be given an attribute that defines the core idea of the concept. Reform can be seen as an *agenda*, change attributed as *action*, and improvement as *aim*. This threefold structure may sound like a simplification of the matter, because it actually is a simplification as one can infer from this short excerpt from Hargreaves: “Improvement can be narrow or superficial; reform can be wrong-headed or repressive; change may be not for the better but for the worse” (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 53). Despite Hargreaves's suspicious tone in terms of possible success, he adds connotations to each concept showing them in more complex light than has been presented so far. For example, the quote implies that reform forces educational activity in a certain direction and it may include sanctions. It refers to the measurability of improvement, and suggests that if it happens it may not be real after all. It also gives change wider essence than just as an activity in the reform agenda's realization; what actually changes and how may not be what was hoped for. Change as a phenomenon described here is a crystallized thought that emerged through the reading of Fullan and Hargreaves, and it forms the core of the discourse surrounding the phenomenon. Furthermore, after many rounds of reading, it appeared impossible to proceed at an analytical level without bringing out this underlying implicit idea.

The second of these conceptual distinctions, change as a process is more specifically about the activity itself. Thus, it is the action that was defined as part of change as a phenomenon above. While contemplating what theorizing and theory mean in Fullan's and Hargreaves's writing, it was stated that they often include a certain kind of instructions or lessons or principles that are meant to guide the practice of educational change. The idea of a change as a process is tied to the knowledge base behind the instructions, and also to the instructions themselves. The process includes various aspects about understanding the construction of change as activity and happening. Moreover, one cannot talk about a process and exclude the aspects put under the phenomenon perspective, because they all are present and they are all parts of the reality where change happens.

### **Manners of representation**

Included in the themes of this study are interpretations, comparisons, and reconstructions of the North American-based theorizing about educational change that has been chosen, and the formulation of a communication between that and the Finnish education policy documents concerning the recent special education

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reform<sup>57</sup>. Thus, this approach consists of a kind of reading that needs to consider the contexts surrounding the books and the policy documents and the two languages used. The examination of Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing, making notes, and further extracting notes from notes, led to the emergence of some general level and shared characteristics in the tone and in certain expressions.

What describes the overall tone in Fullan's and Hargreaves's work could be described as the language of efficiency that, for example, appears through the following expressions: Adequate Yearly Progress indicators (AYP), targets, league tables, student achievement levels, teacher quality, test-based educational accountability, and achievement gaps (e.g. in Fullan, 2006; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). These are aspects stemming from the context. In the texts, they are not welcomed as givens; they are contemplated, criticized, altered, and reflected on. Anyway, they frame the theorizing, and give it the tone that is present in the examples below, for instance. However, there is a difference in these chosen excerpts; in Fullan the pace of change has more escalation, and in Hargreaves there is an idea of diminishing the scope of testing. Yet, efficiency is present in both.

Part of the initial goal is to take quick action (it still takes a few years) in order to raise the floor of student achievement, close the gap between high and low performers and raise the bar of achievement. (Fullan, 2003, p. 68)

Continuing to collect standardized data will maintain system-wide measures of effectiveness, but doing this through a sample rather than a census will also reduce the negative instructional impact on schools as well as the overall cost to the system. (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006 p. 259)

Hence, Fullan's and Hargreaves's language of efficiency reflects the society in which the books have been written. Further, it reflects the time of writing. It includes the state of education policy discourse of that time, and therefore a certain cultural mindset is present in the text – a mindset that is not familiar in the Finnish context. Moreover, the efficiency terms listed above are often criticized when talking about educational reform and change – they are challenges in education policy making. However, they should not be abandoned but refined. Thus, instead of fully abandoning them it often seems to be about renegotiation and development of the ideas, means, and practices around them<sup>58</sup>.

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<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, the mediator and observer in this process is a Finn.

<sup>58</sup> The actual suggested ways for change will be explored in more detail in the following chapters.

## Shades of change in Fullan's and Hargreaves's models

Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing is characteristically involved with giving guidelines to educators whether they are policy makers, administrators, principals, school leaders, teachers - or students. These guidelines are here and there framed with stories that have a poetic tone:

Endless change, like endless travel, is external exile: tragic destiny of homeless minds. The line between being committed to change and addicted to it is a very thin one (...) [It is] important that teachers and leaders stay on the right side of it. (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 50)

Furthermore, providing guidelines includes the use of captivating mental images, such as horizons of hope<sup>59</sup> and the new theoreticians<sup>60</sup>. These concepts are aimed at capturing readers' attention, and also to express a hope for a possible solution for the existing challenges in reaching the aims set for reform agendas or change. The books offer readers captivating images side by side the more practice-based guidelines (e.g. lessons, principles, and pillars).

These new principles start to delineate a Fourth Way of change that will bring together an energized profession with an engaged public and a guiding but not controlling government, in an interactive partnership of equals dedicated to serving and improving the public and educational common good. (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009, p. 69)

It is crucial to stress that complexity theory is systemic, that is, the eight lessons operate in interaction providing internal checks and balances. To put it directly, if you use any of the lessons in isolation you will end up making mistakes; by using the eight in combination you can't make a mistake, or more accurately, what mistakes are made are inevitably corrected because the very processes guarantee it. (Fullan, 2003, p. 68)

In summarizing the manners of representation in Fullan and Hargreaves it is possible that alongside the language of efficiency, in terms of both criticizing and/or promoting them, the books are constructed of languages of hope and options. While Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing criticizes current policies, explores the challenges to be met, and provides guidelines that are systematic and structured, they occasionally promise a better future framed in a marketing like

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<sup>59</sup> Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009.

<sup>60</sup> Fullan, 2005.

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speech (e.g. the quotes above). Hence, this has been the mix from which the ideas of Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing used in this study has been extracted.



## 4 Exploration of the works of Fullan and Hargreaves

In this chapter Fullan's and Hargreaves's approaches to educational change are presented as a result of analysis process that has produced one view of change for both. During the process the views have been described as the Fullanian and Hargreavesian views. The sections covering the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches to change have been compiled, first, by disassembling their ideas, and then reassembling them in order to create a view that builds on the ideas interpreted as forming the core of the books examined. To make the theorists' manners of representation and theorizing more visible and traceable, references and direct quotes have been included.

Here Fullan's and Hargreaves's viewpoints are first presented separately starting with Fullan. After that the contrasting points that emerged are reflected against each other. Differences in the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches will start to become visible through the chapters in which their theorizing is considered separately.

### 4.1 Fullan on change

Four books by Fullan have been examined here. When looking at the book titles, they seem to form two groups: educational change and leadership. The change books are the third book of Fullan's Change Forces Trilogy<sup>61</sup>, Change Forces with a Vengeance (2003), and the fourth edition of his The New Meaning of Educational Change (2007). The leadership books are Leadership & Sustainability, System Thinkers in Action (2005) and Turnaround Leadership (2006). The classification into two groups is rather superficial, since they all are books about educational change and they discuss similar phenomena despite the different emphases of the titles.

In all four books, there is a shared idea about the nature of change; the change is a complex, non-linear, unpredictable and dynamic process. The complexity theme is the clearest and strongest in Change Forces with a Vengeance (Fullan, 2003). In that book the change is depicted as something that is exhausting, and it is described through expressions that suggest that change is overwhelmingly a challenging and demanding process.

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<sup>61</sup> The other two are: Change Forces Probing the Depths of Educational Reform (1993) and Change Forces: the Sequel (1999).

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(...) complexity theory<sup>62</sup> is the operative paradigm which means that systems can't be "managed" and that reforms rarely unfold as intended. (Fullan, 2003, p. xi)

The edge of chaos (could just as easily be called the edge of order): when systems avoid too little and too much order. (Fullan, 2003, p. 22)

You cannot get to the new horizons without grasping the essence of complexity theory. The trick is to learn to become a tad more comfortable with the awful mystery of complex things, to do fewer things to aggravate what is already centrifugal problem, resist controlling to uncontrollable, and to learn to use key complexity concepts to design and guide more powerful learning systems. You need to tweak and trust the process of change while knowing that it is unpredictable. (Fullan, 2003, p. 21)

This theme is carried through all four books and it forms the core of Fullan's approach<sup>63</sup>, but the emphasis varies. Change causes various experience-related feelings to people involved in it. Change affects people in both/either positive and/or negative way. For example, in *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (2007) change is talked about as follows:

Real change, then, whether desired or not, represents a serious personal and collective experience characterized by ambivalence and uncertainty; and if the change works out, it can result in a sense of mastery, accomplishment, and professional growth. The anxieties of uncertainty and the joys of mastery are central to the subjective meaning of educational change and to the success or failure thereof - facts that have not been recognized or appreciated in most attempts at reform. (Fullan, 2007, p. 23)

Hence, there seems not to be any easy route to change. Further, in *Turnaround Leadership* (2006) Fullan states:

Take any hundred books on change, and they all boil down to one word: motivation. If you want more words, the holy grail of change is to

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<sup>62</sup> Fullan leans on some ideas from chaos theory that is called complexity theory in his writings. Through that he employs concepts such as auto-catalysis with the meaning of systems' movement toward new patterns through their interaction, and influence on each other. (Fullan, 2003, p. 22)

<sup>63</sup> In the books chosen for this study; this chaos theme was typical for Fullan that time.

## Shades of change in Fullan's and Hargreaves's models

know under what conditions hordes of people become motivated to change (because we are talking about whole-system reform). The answer is not as straightforward as we would like. (Fullan, 2006, p. 35)

In *Leadership & Sustainability* (2005) Fullan draws a picture of an ongoing public service reform, education as one of its components, and the need for pursuing a long-term sustainable improvement, not just aiming for short-term results. In this context, the required change is referred to as *new revolution* and *system transformation* of which the latter is described as “changing the very contexts within which people work” (Fullan, 2005, p. xiii). People play an important role, and further, in order to transform the system, *a new breed of leaders*<sup>64</sup>, as Fullan says, has to be produced (see quote below, and Fullan, 2005, p. x).

Systems consist of individuals, so what does it mean to say that systems must change, and, furthermore, they must change toward sustainability? My answer is that you do this through leaders at the system level and all other levels, becoming explicitly conscious that they are engaged in widening people's experiences and identification beyond their normal bailiwicks. The proposition is that the key to changing systems is to produce greater numbers of 'system thinkers' (...) they will gravitate toward strategies that alter people's mental awareness of the system as a whole, thereby contributing to altering the system itself. (Fullan, 2005, p. 40)

Understanding change is not limited to education but is seen as a part of the whole society, its development and welfare. Therefore, the aim of closing the gap and raising the bar for all students is constantly present in Fullan's contemplations of the change.

(...) reduce the gap between high and low performers (at all levels of the system) (...) reducing the gap (...) is part (...) of societal development in which greater societal cohesion, developmental health and economic performance are at stake'. (Fullan, 2003, p. 18).

Thus, what can be inferred from all this is that the educational change is a complex and dynamic process that does not proceed in a predictable linear manner. This very essence of change can cause people anxiety but also pleasure. Change is demanding. Change is aimed at large scale and sustainable system wide

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<sup>64</sup> The new breed of leader would be “the new theoretician”, hence, the system thinker kind of leader Fullan is after in *Leadership & Sustainability*.

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transformation that improves the society's prospects. The route to changing the system is through people's minds, people's thinking and beliefs and in a wide sense it is about *altering people's mental awareness of the system as a whole*, as stated above. This aspect seems to be the source of the biggest barriers to, but also the greatest opportunities for, change.

Framing educational change like that does not explain much. The change remains an abstract unattainable happening and is located somewhat outside our everyday reality. In Fullanian thinking, the social context within which the change is supposed to happen brings the aspects of complexity, non-linearity, unpredictability, and dynamism together. That affects the opportunities to capture the meaning of change which always retains its novelty because change process is a human endeavor that involves interacting variables (see e.g. Fullan, 2007).

Fullanian theorizing moves closer to practice through the variety of lessons<sup>65</sup> provided in every book. In *Change Forces with a Vengeance* (2003) Fullan introduces the Eight Complex Change Lessons. *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (2007) provides a comprehensive view on the change process itself and introduces it through three phases: initiation, implementation, and continuation. *Leadership & Sustainability* (2005) is built on the Eight Elements of Sustainability and the Ten Guidelines for System Leaders<sup>66</sup>, and in *Turnaround Leadership* (2006) Fullan introduces the Ten Elements of Successful Change<sup>67</sup>. The lessons are related in that they build on each other, add new aspects, and are modified on the way. Some ideas are present in every book, and those interpreted as the main ones are introduced next: sustainability and tri-level reform.

## Sustainability

Fullan often presents the idea of sustainability alongside an example about England's numeracy and literacy strategy in which he has been personally involved as an evaluator<sup>68</sup> through his connections with Sir Michael Barber<sup>69</sup> who

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<sup>65</sup> The lessons provided in Fullan's and Hargreaves's books are the basis for the theoretical change framework that has been used to reflect the second data set, the Finnish policy documents. It has been introduced in the chapters that follow.

<sup>66</sup> Ten guidelines in *Leadership and Sustainability* are modifications of Fullan's work with Michael Barber in 2004.

<sup>67</sup> This set of lessons is also included as a new chapter to the *New Meaning of Educational Change*; thus, Chapter 3 of *Turnaround Leadership* is copy pasted to the *New Meaning* book (Chapter 3) with just minor modifications and changes. However, this fact is not mentioned.

<sup>68</sup> Fullan and his team were evaluating the numeracy and literacy strategy in 1999-2002 (e.g. Fullan, 2003, 2006).

<sup>69</sup> During British Prime Minister Tony Blair's first term (1997-2001) Michael Barber served as Chief Adviser to the Secretary of State for Education on School Standards.

## Shades of change in Fullan's and Hargreaves's models

worked for the British Prime Minister Tony Blair's administration at the end of 1990s. This strategy concentrated on improving the test scores of the two basics (literacy and numeracy), and was centrally driven. They achieved good results at the beginning, but it was observed that after a while, the test scores stopped rising. Fullan states in *Leadership and Sustainability*:

(...) are even good results sustainable? In a word, NO. The strategies have required tremendous energy and supervision, which in their own right cannot be sustained for long (burnout, turnover, overload take their toll). Related to this, motivation to continue was evident as long as results were improving; what happens when improvement plateaus and takes the same great effort just to stand still? (...) we will see that centrally driven reforms can be a necessary first start (when performance is seriously unacceptable) but can never carry the day of sustainability". (Fullan, 2005, p. 6, 7)

Hence, in light of the change process, sustainability is related to moving towards continuation, how to carry on with the newly implemented strategy, and how to go beyond the first good and promising results. Making change happen cannot be a state in which people would need to put extra effort into their work all the time because that is an unbearable option. Sustainability defined as system's capacity to get involved with improvement is one way to approach the problem.

Sustainability is the capacity of a system to engage in the complexities of continuous improvement consistent with deep values of human purpose. (...) Not just the outcome of continuous improvement we need to observe, but we must also understand the key characteristics of systems that display dynamic sustainability. (Fullan, 2005, p. ix)<sup>70</sup>

Sustainability is very much a matter of changes in culture: powerful strategies that enable people to question and alter certain values and beliefs as they create new forms of learning within and between schools, and across levels of the system. (Fullan, 2005, p. 60)

This discourse around sustainability has highlighted two essential and intertwined points in educational change in Fullan's work: changing cultures and system's capacity. System change is about changing cultures within the education system

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<sup>70</sup> While defining sustainability Fullan also states what it is not: "It is not how to maintain good programs beyond implementation. It is not how to keep going in a linear, sustained fashion. It is not how to keep up relentless energy." (Fullan, 2005, p. ix)

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in which educators work. Thus, change happens only if people who it concerns can rethink education practices and question the old habits and practices. Educators at all levels need get involved with the change, to work on it collectively. These aspects point directly to the tri-level reform, and also to one of Fullan's' favorite themes: capacity building, which will be discussed later alongside tri-level reform as an inseparable part of it.

Changing cultures requires powerful strategies, as Fullan stated above. However, the strategies cannot be only centrally driven, powerful top-down pressure so to say, because that may lead to teacher dependency or alienation, leaving out teachers' learning and capacity building, which are prerequisites for change aiming at deeper understanding and sustainability (Fullan, 2003). Anyway, sometimes, especially at the beginning, some centrally-led imposing may be needed depending on the overall capability of the educators and schools. This viewpoint leads to one of the classical dilemmas in educational change, namely, the tension between centralized and decentralized reform strategies. Fullan is an advocate of them both. They can be useful and can be used during the one and same change process, and the emphasis should be tailored in terms of the phase of change and the capacity of the people involved. Too early decentralization may lead to unintended results.

(...) in an era of urgency and accountability, what happens if you invest in and give over to informed professional judgement, but it turns out the group does not have the capacity (resources, skills, culture) to act effectively? Won't such an investment drift into uninformed judgement? (Fullan, 2005, p 9)

(...) decentralized schools will have variable capacities to engage in continuous improvement, and therefore some agency has to be responsible for helping develop capacity and for intervening (with a goal to developing capacity) when performance is low. The second reason is even more fundamental for sustainability: We can't change the system without lateral (cross-school and cross-district) sharing and capacity development. It is very much the district's role to help make the latter happen. (Fullan, 2005, p.66)

Further, in *Change Forces with a Vengeance* Fullan (2003) mentions Phase I and Phase II reform solutions, with which he refers to modifying the tension between centralized imposing and decentralized steering. In Phase I the pressure is on informed prescription in order to bring about some level of order on an unproductive and chaotic system, whereas Phase II is about informed professional and public judgement that requires more creative thinking and aims to increased ownership and commitment. Hence, the latter phase is about creating

sustainability and continuity for the ongoing process, and also decentralizing the power.

### **Tri-level reform**

'Tri-level' refers to education system's three levels: the schools, the district, and the state. Education system can be understood as including not only the educators at all its levels, but also as including the communities surrounding the schools. Through tri-level thinking it is possible to reach the main target of Fullan's change ideology, the system. Fullan talks about tri-level solutions and tri-level argument for educational change.

Tri-level argument is that the educational transformation will require changes (new capacities) within each of three levels and across their relationships. (...) Each level has two responsibilities - work hard at increasing interaction within your level; work hard at increasing exchange across levels. (Fullan, 2003, p. 39, 40)

Thus, according to Fullan (2003, 2007) the real change is possible only if the reform agenda is internalized and new capacities created on every level of education system. This is meant to happen through interaction and exchange with others within the system. Support within and across levels plays an important role; without it the planned system transformation may be slowed down if not stopped entirely.

(...) the tri-level argument is that each layer is helped or hindered by the layer above it (and each layer needs the commitment and energies of other layers in order to be successful). (Fullan, 2003, p. 52)

We need dramatically more intensive interaction within the schools, across schools within districts, across districts, and between districts and the state. (Fullan, 2003, p. 39-40)

The Fullanian way urges every level in an education system to collaborate with each other; without overall commitment, the system will not go through the system transformation Fullan is talking about. Within this framework, some examples and an examination of what Fullan is after are called for.

First of all, Fullan (2007) reminds that change is a learning experience for adults, and he means every adult in the education system, and the learning also involves children. Thus, the work methods Fullan suggests are related to learning and to overall capacity building of which the latter is defined as involving "developing the collective ability - dispositions, skills, knowledge, motivation,

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and resources - to act together to bring about positive change" (Fullan, 2005, p. 4).

The aspects of capacity building may become a bit more realistic, for example, at the school level if it is reflected against Fullan's three crucial components of change that "represent the means of achieving a particular educational goal or set of goals". (Fullan, 2007, p. 30)

[1] The possible use of new or revised materials (instructional resources such as curriculum materials or technologies),

[2] The possible use of new teaching approaches (i.e., new teaching strategies or activities),

[3] The possible alteration of beliefs (e.g. pedagogical assumptions and theories underlying particular new policies or programs). (Fullan, 2007, p. 30)

Further, at the practical level, changes are needed in all three of these dimensions "in order to have a chance of affecting the outcome" (Fullan, 2007, p. 31). Moreover, in systems thinking, capacity building and three-dimensional change perspectives are expanded to involve not just educators in one school, but to those in all schools in the same area, through exchange that happens in interactional learning and cooperation among educators in order to understand and act the change.

The real crunch comes in the relationships between these new programs or policies and the thousands of subjective realities embedded in people's individual and organizational contexts and personal histories. (..) It is perhaps worth repeating that changes in actual practice align the three dimensions (...) Acquiring meaning, of course, is an individual act, but its real value for student learning is when shared meaning is achieved across a group of people working in concert. (Fullan, 2007, p. 37)

Only if the social environment improves (other schools around us, for example) will the conditions for continuous improvement be possible. This is another way of altering the context for the better. (Fullan, 2005, p.19)

Even though Fullan's tri-level argument concerns everyone, the key players are the leaders who have to be able to move and interact within and across the education system's levels. In this context, the leadership's function is to connect the thinking and knowledge of their own schools (or administrative units etc.),



with others aiming towards the same goal. The connections and links within and across levels are formed through the leader's actions.

(...) leaders who can create a fundamental transformation in the learning cultures of schools and the teaching profession itself. (...) who are (...) good operating at all three levels of the tri-level reform, which means that leaders must be highly effective within their level, and in interactions with other levels. (...) ongoing interaction within and across levels is a fundamental premise of complexity theory (and correspondingly system transformation). (Fullan, 2003, p. 92)

At this point one could ask where Fullan is aiming with these thoughts, and how should we understand them. One way to approach this would be to see that Fullan's theorizing is not a description of any existing education system. These ideas are ideological and demanding, yet probably not impossible. This kind of transformation throughout the system can be interpreted as creating a more functional and dynamic basis for future reform agendas. It is about changing the overall thinking and understandings of the system's functionality. Hence, when interpreting further, after the system has gone through the transformation, for example, *the continuous improvement* Fullan sets as a constant condition for the education system will not take as much effort as the already established capacity of the system and its people to engage in the new challenges. Thus, it does not necessarily mean that all changes would need to be total transformations but more like minor modifications in the way the work is done.

(...) through (...) the strategies described in this book - we enable more and more leaders to develop accordingly. And the more the leaders develop in this direction, the more similar leaders they, in turn, produce. Once these developments reach critical mass, the context changes (...) (Fullan, 2005, p. 34)

Therefore, the transformation Fullan talks about happens through people, starting from leaders who will be able to keep the movement of the system on the intended course by facilitating the overall interaction between people. As noted earlier, in the end the main aim is "to alter people's mental awareness of the system as a whole, thereby contributing to altering the system itself" (Fullan, 2005, p. 40).

### 4.2 Hargreaves on change

Four of Hargreaves's books were chosen for this study. Two of them form an *own entity* and two represent a *continuum of thinking*. Yet, they all are connected: they are about changing educational environment, reforms, and improvement and

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innovation. They concern societal issues, and highlight humanity. As noted earlier, only one of the books is entirely under Hargreaves's name, namely, *Teaching in the Knowledge Society, Education in the Age of Insecurity* (2003). He had got co-authors for the other three books. He has written *Sustainable leadership* (2006) together with Dean Fink, and the *Fourth Way, the Inspiring Future for Educational Change* (2009) and the *Global Fourth Way, the Quest for Educational Excellence* (2012) with Dennis Shirley.

The difference in emphasis in these books shows in the titles, hence, they concentrate on three dimensions within education; teaching and teachers, leadership, and the whole system. Despite the variations in title, in Hargreaves's theorizing teachers and teaching as a profession have been given much emphasis throughout the journey.

Hargreaves looks at his topics in a multidimensional way, thus, the books are not explicitly only about education or education as part of a society as such, but rather they approach the issue from a wider perspective. This can be seen especially in *Teaching in a Knowledge Society, Education in the Age of Insecurity* (2003) and *Sustainable Leadership* (2006). In the former, Hargreaves ponders broadly on the concept of knowledge society, and what it means for the people living in it. The knowledge society is covered at general level; how it affects business life, and what level of competence it requires from people, and what that rather fast-paced and intelligently demanding society model looks like from education's perspective. Then, in *Sustainable Leadership* (2006) the topic of sustainability has been looked at from the environmental perspective; how to live in a way that does not harm the environment we are living in, and how corporate life takes into account the aspect of sustainability in its actions, and again, as in *Teaching in a Knowledge Society*, education is brought into this wider discourse. In the third book, the *Fourth Way, the Inspiring Future for Educational Change* (2009), Hargreaves focuses more directly on educational change and education policy making by building an ideal future model from which to enact change (and make policy). In this one Hargreaves has presented Finland as an example of a well-performing nation, and Finland, along with examples coming from the US and England, forms a basis from which the theory of change has been drawn. The fourth book, the *Global Fourth Way, the Quest for Educational Excellence* (2012) is a follow-up for the first *Fourth Way* book and in that Hargreaves further elaborates on his ideas. This one consists of case examples from Finland, Singapore, England, California, and two Canadian provinces, Alberta and Ontario. Thus, in these two *Fourth Way* books, there are parts in his theorizing that resonate with the actual Finnish way. In this study's context, they are visible in the Hargreavesian view about national tests and in the way he approaches the use of top down and bottom up strategies, and also partly in his understanding of the role and participation of teachers in the change process.

## Shades of change in Fullan's and Hargreaves's models

These aspects will be visited in more depth later in this chapter and in the following one.

In the books chosen, there appears to be a conceptual shift concerning the concept of improvement – improvement (solely) is more present in the two books preceding the Fourth Way series. The shift happens through combining improvement with the idea of innovation – innovation and improvement is a combination that often has aroused doubts about their compatibility.

Innovation in public services is not about governments withdrawing from public life. It is about shifting from the government driving and delivering services, to a position where it creates platforms so that people can support themselves. (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012, p. 29)

In Hargreaves's theorizing it is almost impossible to bypass the universal tone of how reform agendas and the ideal future change ought to be based on public life and engagement, humanitarianism, and democracy. Educational professional communities should be open and possible for everyone as places for learning and development.

The essential task, I argue, is to redesign school improvement on developmental lines so as to make professional community ultimately available to everyone, and to end the educational and social impoverishment that undermines many nations' and communities' capacity to improve at all. (...) This should be one of the central social and professional missions of educational reform in the twenty-first century; one of its greatest projects of social ingenuity". (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 1)

The Fourth Way is a way of inspiration and innovation, of responsibility and sustainability. (...) it brings together government policy, professional involvement, and public engagement around an inspiring social and educational vision of prosperity, opportunity, and creativity in a world of greater inclusiveness, security, and humanity". (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009, p. 71)

Thus, in Hargreaves's work, educational change is a comprehensive view about society, and the change includes professionalism, humanity, and an idea about adapting educational change into time and space in a way that would not exhaust the educators.

Hargreaves lists educational change-related lessons in his books. There are the Seven Principles of Sustainability in Sustainable Leadership (2006). In the Fourth Way, the Inspiring Future of Educational Change (2009) Hargreaves provides a

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threefold lesson package consisting of the Six Pillars of Purpose and Partnership that Support Change, the Three Principles of Professionalism that Drive Change, and the Four Catalysts of Coherence that Sustain Change and Hold It Together. Further, in the Global Fourth Way, the Quest for Educational Excellence he provides principles forming 15 Fourth Way factors under three categories: Six Pillars of Purpose, Five Principles of Professionalism, and the Four Catalysts of Coherence. There was no corresponding lesson-like approach in Hargreaves's Teaching in the Knowledge Society, Education in the Age of Insecurity (2003). However, it introduced the idea of complementary growth that was called an alternative<sup>71</sup> strategic approach to improve schools, and to support teachers and school communities to develop<sup>72</sup>.

The Hargreavesian theorizing about educational change has been divided into three sections: time, sustainability and comprehensiveness. These three capture the Hargreavesian thinking, and the core ideas that emerged through the analysis process.

## Time

Time as a concept in the Hargreavesian approach has two meanings, both of which are important in terms of change. Firstly, time is related to the time required and the pace of happenings, and further, to the demands of the surrounding society. Secondly, time is understood as historical time points: past, present, future. Thus, it is about the temporal dimension of being.

When looking at the first perspective of time, there seems to be a mismatch between some of the ideas of fast-paced knowledge society and the way education functions. Thus, there tend to be premises that support the beliefs that a constant change and movement are just the way of the world. In that world chaos is a necessity, whereas, educational change takes time.

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<sup>71</sup> It was provided as an alternative for sectarian performance training.

<sup>72</sup> This approach consists of vertical and horizontal complementary of which the vertical strategies: "would entail schools that are 'failing' or in trouble, embarking simultaneously on a short-term rescue plan for more sustainable improvement. (...) to compose a leadership team of complementary strengths - some managers, some leaders; some who can bring about short-term efficiency, others who can secure long-term improvement (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 150). Further, the horizontal complementary strategy includes both performance training and professional learning community approaches: "[Professional Learning Communities, PLCs] and performance training sects are parallel and not just sequential categories of development. Their sequencing over time is a matter of changing the balance of two components, with training element diminishing as the progresses" (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 157).

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Advocates of the fast-paced knowledge economy might want to go further and argue that organizations are necessarily chaotic and demanding for everyone nowadays. (...) They should thrive on the chaos and go with the flow. This, after all, is what the knowledge society is all about. Life is today fast for everyone. (...) The problem, however, is that schools and educational policy systems are behaving nothing like fast-paced, flexible knowledge organizations. (...) At the very least, implementing change requires time to understand, learn about and reflect on what the change involves and requires. (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 80, 83)

With this Hargreaves is not saying that the knowledge society is bad as such but therein lie dangers if one unconditionally accepts the fast-pacedness. Hargreaves (2003; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006) states that in order to make change happen, people involved in it would have to share knowledge and information, to reflect, to think and to learn, and to question and to be creative. All that processing requires time. Therefore, rather than fighting against or trying to deny or change the existing reality it would be more beneficial to think how best to adapt the education to it in a way that benefits the whole education system in terms of development and learning. That aspect is characteristic to Hargreaves; to bridge the gap between the demands posed by the society and the strategies for planning and enacting the change.

The second perspective on time is about understanding change and its aims in relation to the continuum of time. The change is not just now and here but it is a professional requirement presented to educators, and to the whole education communities, that, while moving forward, function in relation to their past and present.

Most change theory and change practice has only a forward arrow; it is change without a past or a memory. (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 20)

Hence, educators, school communities, and basically also education systems, have their histories. Past experiences, understandings of the present and hopes for the future. Hargreaves talks about respecting the past while aiming toward change, and toward developing education, educational practices, and learning.

Thus, what Hargreaves is saying is that time is a relevant factor in educational change; it is a multidimensional component that needs to be considered in discourses related to change. From time dimensions, it is natural to move on to the idea of sustainability in Hargreaves's.

## **Sustainability**

In general, when talking about change, Hargreaves suggests that it is relatively easy to propose. What is challenging is to implement it, and further, to make it durable and sustainable. The difficulties in succeeding in sustainable change and improvement are multifaceted. Hargreaves, like Fullan, states that evidence exists about promising starts and even good first tests scores. People can put extra effort into their work, gain results and get excited, but all this is exhausting and nothing really is improved in the long run.

Pilot projects show promise but are rarely converted into successful system-wide change. Innovations easily attract early enthusiasts, but it is harder to convince more skeptical educators to commit to the hard work of implementation. (...) Large-scale literacy reforms achieve early results but soon reach a plateau. Extraordinary effort and extreme pressure can pull underperforming schools out of the failure zone, but they quickly fall back as soon as the effort is exhausted and the pressure is off. (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p.1)

Moreover, Hargreaves adds a school environment-based viewpoint, and contemplates how some exemplary successful schools may affect the whole community's options for sustainable improvement as a community.

Beacon schools and lighthouse schools may shine brightly, but they often draw outstanding teachers and sometimes even the best students from schools around them, leaving these other schools to skulk in the shadows. (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p.1)

Thus, Hargreaves brings a larger communal perspective to the sustainability discourse. This also can be seen as an equality perspective that is aimed at educational change, and education policy strategies that enable every school to improve and have quality teachers in contrast to there being continuous competition between schools within the same locality. Moreover, that includes an ideal about providing more-equal learning opportunities and quality teaching for every student.

The prerequisite for sustainable improvement is successful leadership. In Hargreaves, it is called sustainable leadership. Sustainability in educational change as an idea includes the time perspectives, and is defined through a Hargreavesian ideal of educational leadership and improvement. Further, the Hargreavesian school leader has a background in teaching as that provides the leader with more perspectives on teachers' work.

## Shades of change in Fullan's and Hargreaves's models

(...) sustainable educational leadership and improvement preserves and develops deep learning for all that spreads and lasts, in ways that do no harm to and indeed create positive benefit for others around us, now and in the future. (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 17)

(...) school leaders who have long tenures in teaching so that they have the necessary professional capital to inspire and guide classroom teachers. (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012, p. 185)

In short, sustainable leadership and improvement consists of successful leadership succession planning and realization, it requires understanding the meanings of time in terms of change, and it is enacted in humane and democratic manner. Through sustainable leadership it is possible to survive change, and make something out of it.

Amid the chaos of change, sustainable leadership is steadfast about preserving and renewing its long-standing purposes (...) Understand and communicate that deep change takes time (...) Retain depth in staff development, so there is time to think through and question changes before changing ahead to implement them (...) If change is to matter, spread, and last, sustainable leadership that stretches across many leaders must now also be a fundamental priority of the systems in which leaders do their work. (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 20, 53, 273)

Thus, in Hargreaves's thinking, changing and developing education in a way that enables sustainable leadership to emerge and grow increases schools' opportunities to create sustainable and consistent ways to improve. Despite not going deeper in explaining sustainable leadership it should be noted that leadership does not equal an individual principal<sup>73</sup> but is a more comprehensive concept including people working in teams, shared responsibilities, and further, in addition to concentrating in present it looks back and forward.

### **Comprehensiveness**

In the Hargreavesian theorizing about educational change there is a sense of community present, it is about communal participation and responsibility. There are individual schools and sets of schools in the same local area or district, and they all form communities of people inside and outside schools. Some can be labeled professional communities, and others are something else. In a very wide

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<sup>73</sup> In Fullan, leadership has a wide conceptualization too.

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sense education policy making should be based on knowledge and work of a large professional community of educators. In this Hargreaves moves close to typical Finnish way of education policy-making. In the Fourth Ways (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; 2012) one of the cases comes from Finland, and through that, the importance of teachers' shared responsibility has been emphasized. Further, it shows in the idea of participation, thus, giving the teachers a more central role in planning and modifying the policies locally. However, these kinds of ideas have been present or had been emerging (at some level) in the Hargreavesian thinking even before that. Hence, in the Hargreavesian approach, policy making should be a process that benefits from the expertise provided by people working in different positions within the system. Therefore, in this approach, for example, the process of educational target setting needs to be arranged in way that considers all perspectives within the system in order to gain mutual commitment.

(...) we see the school, the locality, and the state or nation interconnected in spheres of mutual influence, each one a network of strong cells organized through cohesive diversity rather than mechanical alignment and with permeable membranes of influence between the spheres. Leadership in each sphere has its own dynamic and responsibilities, but it is also intimately related to leadership in the others. (...) Governments and districts will need to work in partnership with schools to ensure that targets are neither excessively cautious nor overly ambitious, but at the end of the day, the targets need to be matters of joint commitment, not required compliance. (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 265, 266)

The Fourth Way is about professionally developed change rather than administratively driven reform that professionals then have to deliver. Professionally developed change can originate in many places and with many groups. (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012, p.123)

Thus, it is about an involvement throughout the education system. Educators from all layers of the spheres of mutual influence having a say about common matters<sup>74</sup>. Further, the Hargreavesian vision about the ideal way of participation extends beyond professional communities.

It involves parents and the public as highly engaged partners, along with businesses that show corporate educational responsibility. (...) In all

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<sup>74</sup> These are also called the spheres of sustainability (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).



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this, students in the Fourth Way are not merely targets of change. They are vigorous and active partners with a leading voice in their own development. (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009, p. 107, 108)

In other words, Hargreaves's approach is comprehensive. He emphasizes the areas of the education system that often have been left out of educational decision making and policy aim setting: teachers and students, the group of people who are involved in the most practical realization process of educational targets and means. Therefore, what can be read from Hargreaves is that there seems to be an interactional gap in the education planning and policy making structure between the two realities; the one of decision makers and the one of practitioners.

Hargreaves (2003) states that to educate students in the twenty-first century, educators, particularly the teachers, need to have enough knowledge about the world today's children live in, and be capable of supporting students to develop the qualities required, i.e. creativity and ingenuity. These aspects would need to be included to teachers' preparation and professional development. Moreover, more attention should be paid to overall teacher quality; teachers' professional growth is crucial because the change happens in schools and teachers are the key players in the process.

Teaching is the core profession, the key agent of change in today's knowledge society. (...) If schools are to become real knowledge communities for all pupils, then teaching must be made into real learning profession for all teachers." (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 125)

Teachers are the ultimate arbiters of educational change. (...) Through high-quality teachers committed to and capable of creating deep and broad teaching and learning, it [the Fourth Way] builds powerful, responsible, and lively professional communities in an increasingly self-regulating but not self-absorbed or self-seeking profession. (...) teachers define and pursue high standards and share targets, and improve by learning continuously through networks, from evidence, and from each other." (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009, p. 107)

In the Hargreavesian comprehensiveness of enacting educational change all levels, or spheres as he calls them, need to be included equally. However, this equality is divided into different levels of participation in responsibilities and influencing. All of them have their specific roles within it, yet, it should be possible for actors from all levels to influence and provide their professional expertise in the overall planning in order to gain a comprehensive view of the whole picture. Thus, this approach aims to provide a solution that enables the education system to set meaningful targets, define meaningful and doable means

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to get there in a way that does not violate time dimensions but supports persevering work in every corner of the system. Further, in the Global Fourth Way the Hargreavesian comprehensive view of change considers aspects of how to promote more inclusive school in terms of SEN students – an aspect that has mainly been absent in other written works in this study. This addition highlights the school community's shared responsibility for the development of education to a direction that treats every student's learning in equal manner.

The core of Hargreavesian thinking seems to culminate in a quite humane and thoughtful approach to educational change. This approach does not mean that nothing should be changed radically. Even some good practices can be the target of change if that serves the greater aim setting and can be justified as an appropriate action. The Hargreavesian view emphasizes weighing up multiple aspects and is a considerate way of planning and strategy setting. It advises that hastily made decisions and sudden changes of direction ought to be avoided when thinking about the future way of education.

### **4.3 Fullan and Hargreaves**

There are points at which the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches meet each other, and there are also differences between them. Some differences are clearly brought out, mainly by Hargreaves, and some are not as directly articulated as that. What has been clear throughout the reading is that both theorize about an ideal world yet to come, stating that there is a gap between the change approaches presented in the literature and the actual practices of education systems. That is also where the main motivation for the writing itself lies.

(...) we are closer than ever in knowing what must be done to engage all classrooms and schools in continuous reform (...) knowing (...) as this book amply demonstrates, is not the same thing as getting it done (Fullan, 2007, p. 19).

One thing this new work has taught us is that few systems are purely Fourth Way, Second Way, or any other Way in character (...) The Four Ways are more like what German sociologist Max Weber described as "ideal" (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012, p. 11)

So far, it has become clear that educational change challenges school leaders, teachers, school communities, educational administrators. Aiming at the intended targets of a set reform agenda, enact change, and achieve improvements is a challenge for the whole system. Especially when we are talking about changing the course of education on a large-scale to make a wider societal change possible,

as both the Fullanian<sup>75</sup> and Hargreavesian<sup>76</sup> approaches suggest. Thus, the grand reason for educational change is to make society a better place for people to live through educating its members better in terms of overall well-being and health, but also economically. Hence, education as a part of society, and public services, should increase and support the prosperity of a society. The more specific triggers for change are built within that greater aim. In many places, both, Fullan and Hargreaves, see that the gap between high and low achievers is one question that needs to be tackled through reform agendas and strategies guiding the change. Conceptualizations of achievement gaps, test scores, and some level of measurable improvement are involved. Thus, the idea is to improve the learning outcomes of students, and especially the achievement level of those lagging behind or in danger of doing so. Despite this being present in most of the books analyzed, it is not the whole story. In the Fourth Ways books (2009; 2012) this aspect has been replaced by “inspiring and shared moral purposes to transform learning and achievement for all, with any targets remaining being collectively decided, not politically imposed” (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012, p. 9). Consequently, all that can be interpreted as forming the basis for the *why of educational change*. The next step is to think what it could mean context-wise<sup>77</sup>, and how it could be realized – and the latter one is when theorizing<sup>78</sup> about change begins.

The critical discourse between the theorists occurs in a polite manner. Fullan and Hargreaves have a history together as co-writers and colleagues, and in such works they have combined and merged together their thinking (e.g. Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Thus, there is some common base on which to build their new and revised lines of theorizing. However, this study focuses on the written works selected, and looks at their viewpoints about change within this framework, hence, leaving their other publications outside the analysis. In this section their views are contemplated under three themes: interaction, fast-pacedness and chaos, and context

### Interaction

Interaction is central to both Fullan and Hargreaves. They emphasize interaction that happens vertically and horizontally within an education system. Hence, it is

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<sup>75</sup> For example, Fullan's ideas about system-wide transformation or new revolution.

<sup>76</sup> In Hargreaves it crystallizes in his humane, democratic, and participatory approach to change with environmentally located equality perspective.

<sup>77</sup> What these questions mean in each context, and how one understands the grand aim and the triggers are related to the culture one lives in. Here they are presented at a relatively universal (Western) level.

<sup>78</sup> In the real world; that is when policy making and planning starts.

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about professional level exchange and the sharing of knowledge, information, practices, innovations, and ideas. It happens between and across the levels of the system. The nature of interaction of the professionals differs between professional groups<sup>79</sup>, and is related to their position in schools or in local administration.

Despite the similar emphasis, Fullan's and Hargreaves's approaches differ in terms of which professional group they emphasize. Fullan<sup>80</sup> does not go much below the leadership level whereas Hargreaves stresses the importance of teachers. That difference is visible, for example, in how they name the key factor for successful change. For Fullan it is leadership, and Hargreaves adds teachers to that. If stopping here and drawing from the earlier chapter (see chapter 3) that considered theorizing and touched Fullan's and Hargreaves's professional roles, channels for influencing various groups, and levels they have been interacting with within the education system. Fullan (MF2013) summarized their difference by placing himself on the leadership and administrative strand and Hargreaves on the teacher strand when looking at their work over the long term. Consequently, this emphasis on their work shows in their writing. However, these strands as Fullan call them are not stagnant but are changeable over time, Fullan has moved more towards the teacher strand and Hargreaves towards the administrative strand (as noted in subchapter 3.1).

*We are both committed to make a difference*, and this is the time for teaching profession (...) to making a difference in the profession. ***Not just doing a research on it***, but making actually a practical difference in policy and in practice. (MF 2013)

In addition to the talk about the recent moves in the 2010s, there have been similar characteristics in their collaboration in the 1990s.

In the 1990s, because of the book [What's Worth Fighting for in Your School?<sup>81</sup>] that Michael and I have written together, we did a lot of work developing professional collaboration in schools, before it really became fashionable. So, it never really became an official policy but it became a wide spread practice within the system. (AH2011)

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<sup>79</sup> For example, interaction within or across schools is more based on sharing practices through networking, benchmarking, or mentoring.

<sup>80</sup> Fullan also has included teachers in his theorizing but they were given less of a role if compared to the Hargreavesian approach.

<sup>81</sup> Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996.

Therefore, it is crucial to keep in mind that the comparison of the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches is placed into a specific timepoint and their views presented in the books selected. Hence, the differences or similarities pointed out here may not be applicable throughout their work.

In addition to different emphases on the key factors in change (i.e., leadership or leadership and teachers) in the Fullanian way the people working in the field of education are seen like both as the possibility and the challenge for change. This view includes a tone suggesting that social relationships and interaction are complex, difficult to control or predict, and that they set obstacles on the way of the change process. In contrast, the Hargreavesian approach takes people as a potential resource for change, and his approach has more faith in people as an option. Hence, this difference lies in the tone in which the topic is talked about, and it shows the sides of the issue which are stressed. However, this difference makes the Fullanian approach a bit more hopeless or worrying in terms of the possibility of success; at least the Fullanian road feels rockier. Actually, this aspect of hopelessness is related to the strong Fullanian view about the chaotic nature of change.

### **Speed and chaos**

Fast-pacedness and chaos are attributes of society; they are factors in the overall framework in which educational change takes place. The Fullanian and Hargreavesian thinking both include these aspects. Hence, in this context the fast pace refers to the society that changes within a short time frame on an economic, cultural, and demographic basis, and all these changes suggest that the society would need to change accordingly or respond to the new challenges stemming from these wider changes. Further, society is also affected by international testing, comparisons, and global education policy trends and that may generate pressure for change. Therefore, there seems to be a constant strain in the mindset for change in one direction or another.

The chaos aspect is related to, and was created through the social contexts people are located in and interact, such as school communities, school districts, or the whole education system. This kind of chaos brings unexpected happenings, factors, and consequences to the change process. Thus, these two form the societal framework within which the Fullanian and Hargreavesian educational change theorizing is set.

The description of chaos above is more Fullanian than Hargreavesian. Namely, in the Fullanian thinking, chaos is welcomed as a theoretical tool for explaining the nature of change. Further, Fullan (2003) employs ideas of chaos theory, to which he prefers the name complexity theory. By choosing that road, he adds to

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the theorizing concepts of that framework, such as non-linearity<sup>82</sup>, unpredictability<sup>83</sup>, and auto-catalysis<sup>84</sup>. Approaching educational change that way Fullan raises the abstraction level of theorizing, and creates a vivid image of the complex interaction of various factors in the social reality. The flip side of this approach is that it also seems to complicate things, and brings on the feeling of hopelessness: how to enact educational change in that kind of unpredictable and uncontrollable world. Furthermore, by leaning so strongly on complexity theory thinking, Fullan implicitly accepts it as the state of affairs. In addition, the fast-pacedness of the world in terms of the constant need for change is tied to the complexity of the change process, they both move forward, rapidly. Hence, Fullan urges his readers not to resist these facts stemming from the surrounding society and its needs; in contrast, he asks people to accept them: “It is not the pace of change that needs to slow down but rather the misalignment and incoherence of reforms should be reduced” (Fullan, 2003, 66). Thus, Fullan accepts the chaos and the fast-pacedness as the basis for his theorizing, and through his own theorizing he aims to create ways to make successful change despite these aspects, and also because of them.

In contrast to this, the Hargreavesian approach avoids too hasty moves. Nonetheless, Hargreaves does not deny chaos or fast-pacedness. However, in the Hargreavesian view chaos is hardly present. He only refers to it occasionally when talking about leaders’ roles in change, and how through the leadership it is possible to bring some steadiness to the otherwise chaotic process. The Hargreavesian recognition of the past-pacedness becomes most clearly visible in his contemplation of the knowledge society, such as the kind of demands it poses on people living in that kind of societal environment. In his view, Hargreaves observes that education as such does not have the same preparedness to respond to those demands pushing for quick changes – at least not in a way that would also support people’s capacity to innovate, be ingenious, and gain understanding in order to make the change successful. Hence, the Hargreavesian view acknowledges the fast-pacedness, and the possible chaos-like nature of change, but it does not straightforwardly accept these aspects. In contrast, Hargreaves urges more time for thinking and understanding, and time for making considerate, not hasty, steps towards change. Educators at all levels of the system need time to reflect on what change means and what it involves.

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<sup>82</sup> With non-linearity, he refers to the idea that one should not expect reforms to unfold as intended (Fullan, 2003).

<sup>83</sup> By unpredictability he means that surprises happen as a result of dynamically complex interactive forces (Fullan, 2003).

<sup>84</sup> Auto-catalysis is a process happening when systems interact and influence each other toward new patterns (Fullan, 2003).

## Context

The question of context is crucial in theories of educational change. The context matters for the implementation of change, and for its sustainability. Fullan (2003) states that in general researchers say that *context is everything* with an idea that context explains why an innovation works in one context but not in another. The Fullanian and Hargreavesian views of context are additions to that.

Every context has its own features that are related to the community in general, and school communities in particular. What kind of social backgrounds are students coming from, and how are the schools resourced in terms of, for example, school buildings, teaching staff, leadership structure, and support for learning and instruction? All these factors affect how schooling is and can be organized, and all are related to the capability of certain educational contexts to manage change. In both the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches, there is concern about the capacity of people for change, and that is related to the questions of teacher and leader qualifications, and thus, the kind of professional capacity that is available in each context. The capacity is linked to educators' capability to meet reform agendas and change strategies, to reflect and work together in order to understand what the change means, why there is a need for change, and what all this means in relation their work community.

In the Fullanian and Hargreavesian theorizing there are two ways of talking about the context. Firstly, every context has its own specific features. There is an original educational community and its culture. Secondly, the educational change is aimed at changing the context. Basically, both theorists have included these two aspects in their theorizing, however, there is a difference in emphasis.

Hargreaves (2003) states that in the change process, everything is open to interpretation and teachers should not be led to believe otherwise. Hence, externally introduced change needs modifications because the context always makes the difference in the realization process of change.

If extensive support [for imposed change] addresses only issues of technique and not those of context and values, teachers are put in position of dependency on and submission to other people's questionable certainties of effective teaching that claim universal applicability without any adjustment to context. (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 144)

The Hargreavesian view takes teachers strongly into account as a part of the change process. They are the ones putting the change in action in daily school practices. Thus, the understanding of a context-based need for modification and interpretation is important for actors at all levels of the education system or there is a risk that the change will be taken as given without critical examination of its context-related aspects. Further, without reflecting on the change from the

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context's perspective the educators may not gain agency in relation to their work. Thus, they may stay dependent on outside support and guidance, and that diminishes their options for reflecting on and understanding the context-based meaning of the means for change. Also, it may be impossible to achieve real change if the intended changes stay mainly at a superficial level. Consequently, this sets requirements for the professional qualifications of and support for teachers and school leader; they need to be well- educated professionals with development opportunities.

Fullan stresses the need for changing the context in order to reach the aims of change strategy that has been set. With *context* Fullan is referring to all levels of the system. He also sees that educators at all levels need to understand the whole systemic context to which they belong to as well as the exact context in which they work on a daily basis. Actually, with context he uses the same idea of "altering" as was noted earlier with people's<sup>85</sup> mental awareness, Fullan talks about "altering the context for better" (Fullan, 2003, p. 19). In the Fullanian view that can happen through improving the social environment, such as the school communities, which will make the overall conditions more suitable for continuous improvement. Context change is central to Fullan, and for example, it is placed in Fullan's lessons in *Change Forces with a Vengeance* (2003) and contrasted with individual background<sup>86</sup> as follows:

Individual backgrounds can't be fixed because they are in the past; contexts can be because they are now. Altering context is not up to others; all of us can, to a certain extent, change the immediate context around us - and this starts us down the pathway of transformation. (Fullan, 2003, p. 27)

The questions of contexts are related to the question on the juxtapositions of centralization and decentralization or top-down and bottom-up approaches to change. Neither Fullan nor Hargreaves would be an advocate of just one of these positionings, but their viewpoints differ. Both agree on that without the capacity required for change, too much autonomy will not lead to success. The educators should be able to work with the challenges that come with change; to adjust their educational environment to the new requirements. Fullan (2006) contemplates

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<sup>85</sup> As mentioned earlier in the section about Fullan and change: "The proposition is that the key to changing systems is to produce greater numbers of 'system thinkers' (...) they will gravitate toward strategies that alter people's mental awareness of the system as a whole, thereby contributing to altering the system itself". (Fullan, 2005, p. 40)

<sup>86</sup> In general about the past, Fullan also acknowledges the histories of schools and teachers, but does not emphasize them as powerfully as Hargreaves does.



that instead of leaning on any specific strategies there would need to be local level sharing and interaction in order enact change.

In the too-tight, too-loose<sup>87</sup> world that I am advocating, we would see neither top-down prescription nor site-based management of individual autonomous schools, but rather clusters of networks of schools working together in community (...) It will require sophisticated strategies to get the too-tight/too loose dynamic right - strategies that mobilize local energies, focus on local needs but do so within a state framework of priorities. Local autonomy is not the answer, capacity building with a focus on results is. (Fullan, 2006, p. 42)

Hence, Fullan suggests a combination of types of interaction between schools in order to recognize locally-based needs and the education policy strategy set at the state level. Further, Fullan (2007) sees that top-down strategies for change hinder the local level ownership<sup>88</sup> of the new strategies to emerge and therefore combining the top-down approach with bottom-up strategies would enable the schools to act in problem solving manner.

However, in the Fullanian way the main target<sup>89</sup> for change is closing the gap between high and low performers, and thus, raising the overall test scores of the student population. To reach that Fullan stresses the importance of getting the basis for further improvement right (i.e. the basics).

Get the basics right; the basics are literacy and numeracy in elementary and highs schools. (...) The first thing that governments need to do is focus intensely on the basics to overcome the awful inertia of past decades. Governments need to prioritize and build a solid foundation as an essential start. (...) if you don't get the basics right there is little foundation for doing all the other things that matter.<sup>90</sup> (Fullan, 2005, 89, 90)

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<sup>87</sup> This refers to the tightness of directing coming from the top; whether it is too imposed or too loosely led. Thus, the first may restrict the local level agency and the second may leave the schools drifting without proper knowledge of the intended target.

<sup>88</sup> "Top-down change doesn't work because it fails to garner ownership, commitment or even clarity about the nature of the reforms" (Fullan, 2007, p.10)

<sup>89</sup> The most often articulated target, and also part of the wider societal change Fullan talks about.

<sup>90</sup> Alongside this Fullan asks: "Can some forms of teaching literacy and numeracy raise test scores but turn students off learning? Can targets dominate in unhelpful ways? Is there sufficient attention to capacity building? How do you keep a relentless focus on the basics when there are many competing priorities?" (Fullan, 2005, p. 90). However, the first step are the basics.

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Controversially, from this getting the basics right approach can be read as a tendency to favor top-downness in the Fullanian view. Being an advocate of both top-down and bottom up strategies and through stressing the importance of getting the basics right Fullan urges the educators to concentrate on certain content areas set from above. Thus, all this indicates that the strategy for preparing the schools for further, and more sophisticated, developmental steps is purely top-down. In the Fullanian approach, this strategy becomes visible through examples from England<sup>91</sup> and the Canadian province of Ontario<sup>92</sup>. This is an aspect in Fullan that Hargreaves has directly criticized. That criticism was touched upon in the interviews as well and it finds its place within the timeframe of books analyzed here through Fullan's contemplation of his relationship with Hargreaves:

He [Hargreaves] liked Alberta because Alberta was more teacher centered, he thought Ontario was too top-down, at the time, this is 2003-2004. We actually, from 2003 to 2005 or 2006, had a lot of [professional] conflict (...) but we then started to look more carefully at each other's work, and then I started to work with him again, we did that book together called *Change Wars* [Fullan & Hargreaves, 2008] (MF2013)

There is a difference in the way Fullan and Hargreaves communicate through their theorizing. Fullan occasionally refers to Hargreaves but he does not pose any confrontations. Fullan sometimes notes that there is a difference in the way they have defined some concepts, but he does not go any further than that. Whereas Hargreaves states his critics directly<sup>93</sup>, especially when concerning the basics Fullan advocates. This difference in critics through writing resonates with an aspect that was brought up through the interviews in the earlier chapter; Hargreaves was professionally identified, by both himself and Fullan, as having a greater tendency to be critical.

Despite or perhaps even because of its apparent initial successes, imposed short-term, target-driven standardization is ultimately unsustainable. (...) this is the one place in which we diverge sharply from the improvement ideas of our colleague and friend Michael Fullan, who

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<sup>91</sup> In England, he was evaluating the implementation and first few years of the process.

<sup>92</sup> In Ontario Fullan has been part of the planning and enacting of the change, and they actually borrowed from England the idea of numeracy and literacy as a basis for Ontario's numeracy and literacy secretariat (see Fullan, 2005, 2006, 2007).

<sup>93</sup> Hargreaves criticizes the numeracy and literacy strategies also indirectly in his *Teaching in the Knowledge Society* (see, Hargreaves, 2003, p. 58).

supports top-down impositions of short-term targets. (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 14)

Thus, Hargreaves is against setting short-term and top-down imposed targets, such as Fullan's ideas about basics. Further, in the Fullanian view about basics (Fullan, 2006) a promise that literacy and numeracy strategies will lead to an improvement in test scores within one election period has been included, which basically means in four years' time<sup>94</sup>, and while remembering the Hargreavesian viewpoint about how enacting change requires time (which he does not define in years), that critique is a logical continuation of their theoretical discourse presented so far.

However, this aspect is not the only one that bothers Hargreaves. The whole idea about prioritizing reforms in the Fullanian way is problematic to him.

(..) It makes no educational sense, however, for places such as Australia, New Zealand, or Ontario and British Columbia in Canada to make tested literacy their systemic reforms priority when they already rank among the highest literacy performers in the world. These imported priorities from less-successful systems (...) (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009, p. 77)

Therefore, this is the question where the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approach depart from each other in the most visible way. Hargreaves believes that short-term targets may lead to improvements within a short period of time, and especially within the poorest low-capacity school environments. However, Hargreaves also sees them as ways to increase teacher dependency because without the work community's capacity to reflect, evaluate, and adjust the strategy to meet their school culture's needs, the teachers may only learn to follow the given prescriptions "like karaoke singers" as Hargreaves (2003) puts it.

The Hargreavesian approach is strongly supportive of the professionalism of educators at all levels, and especially the need to increase the capacity to change within educators working in schools, teachers and leaders. Hargreaves sees the ideal way for change happening through democratic and interactional manner where professionals from all levels are included in strategy making. Enough professional freedom is needed in local school communities, but the local actors also must be guided from the top, and supported from the sides in order help them to improve to the intended direction.

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<sup>94</sup> Fullan says: "The task is to create a strategy that will substantially improve literacy and numeracy, within one election period so to speak (...)" (Fullan, 2006, p. 78)

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The Fourth way, rather, is a democratic and professional path to improvement that builds from the bottom, steers from the top, and provides support and pressure from the sides (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009, 107)<sup>95</sup>.

To conclude this, at a general level the Hargreavesian view about top-down and bottom up strategies or centralization and decentralization of power is implicitly similar to the Fullanian, but when Fullan goes further and adds the basics, differences emerge. Thus, both see that school communities with a low capacity for change have to be given more structured guidance at the beginning; thus, they cannot be left to drift alone (and autonomously). The difference lies in the method of doing this. Hargreaves favors a combination of the use of top down and bottom up strategies. He would balance the strategies according to the capacity of a local school context, and in the process, observe and adjust that balance in relation to educators' needs and development. In contrast, Fullan sees that it is important to get the basics right, and in his view that happens through direct top down strategy that provides the leeway for further steps in the process. Therefore, the Hargreavesian approach emphasizes a simultaneous balanced use of top-downness and bottom-upness whereas the Fullanian approach stresses a sequential use of them, starting with imposing a top-down approach.

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<sup>95</sup> This view is actually based on the Finnish way of doing education policy because Finland is one of Hargreaves's four horizons of hope; Finland represents the horizon based on a country example (see Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009, p. 50).

## 5 The Fullan-Hargreavesian change model

This chapter presents the Fullan-Hargreavesian change model that is based on viewpoints introduced in the previous chapter and the lessons provided in the literature. First, the process of forming the model is explained, followed by a description of the model.

The aim of the Fullan-Hargreavesian change model is to formulate a theoretical framework consisting of key aspects of the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches to educational change. These key aspects have been gathered under four categories. The purpose is to analyze whether these aspects exist or not in the Finnish educational reform process, i.e. in the Finnish policy documents. Actually, there are no exact list of aspects but under each category the main ideas drawn from Fullan and Hargreaves have been explained. The idea is to create a mindset through which the change process can be reflected. This model<sup>96</sup> is not aiming to be an all-inclusive tool for analyzing reforms, but it provides a fresh angle for discussion.

Conceptually the model leans on the Fullanian and Hargreavesian language about change analyzed earlier: change as a phenomenon and change as a process (see subchapter 3.2). Thus, the concepts of reform (agenda), change (action), and improvement (aim) are used side by side.

### 5.1 The formulation of the model

The basis for the model has been built on two main elements: eleven lessons<sup>97</sup> drawn from six of the total of eight books included in this study and the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches to change based on all the eight books. The reason for using lessons from only six books instead of all eight is that Teaching in the Knowledge Society (Hargreaves, 2003) did not include lessons, and lessons provided in *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (Fullan, 2007) were already introduced in *Turnaround Leadership* (Fullan, 2006).

Even though the lessons have not been introduced in detail in this study, many elements of them have been merged into the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches (see Appendices 5A-5E for the lessons). The lessons were added to the process to give more structure to the Fullan-Hargreavesian change model. However, against the theorists' advice not to break down their lessons, the lessons

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<sup>96</sup> Also, the model itself is limited to the scope of this study.

<sup>97</sup> They are called lessons here even though Hargreaves avoids the concepts of lesson or guideline in his Fourth Way series.

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were cut into pieces and mixed together following the ideas of philosophical reconstruction and systematic analyses (see subchapter 2.3: Systematic analysis of the publications). In this section I explain the process.

The eleven lessons that were used to structure the model were the ones that have been acknowledged as lessons in the previous chapter. Thus, according to that earlier definition the most lesson-like instructions were:

- The Eight Complex Change Lessons (Fullan 2003)
- The Eight Elements of Sustainability (Fullan, 2005)
- The Ten Guidelines for System leaders (Fullan, 2005)
- The Ten Elements of Successful Change (Fullan, 2006)
- Seven Principles of Sustainability (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006)
- Six Pillars of Purpose and Partnership that Support Change (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009)
- Three Principles of Professionalism that Drive Change (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009)
- Four Catalysts of Coherence that Sustain Change and Hold It Together (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009)
- The Six Pillars of Purpose (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012)
- The Five Principles of Professionalism (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012)
- The Four Catalysts of Coherence (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012)

The lessons went through a two-phased process in order to find the similarities and differences, and to extract the most repeated aspects and form the frame for the Fullan-Hargreavesian model. First, the main components of the eleven lessons were written down during the analysis of all the eight books from Fullan and Hargreaves, and those notes were divided into six files, each representing one book from which the lessons were drawn. The files were brought into Atlas.ti, a software package that can be used for qualitative data analyses (Atlas.ti 2013), and the contents were coded<sup>98</sup> with terms that were based on the thematic framework of education, education policy making, and educational change related to the analyses of Fullan's and Hargreaves's theorizing. The coding process was based on my free association within that frame, and 45 codes were created. Some coded excerpts (i.e. quotations) were given more than one code, and some of the codes were overlapping. The main aim in coding was to reorganize the ideas presented in the lessons, and to find the related or contrasting viewpoints. Second, the codes with excerpts related to them were printed out in order to see the overlaps, the contrasting points, and also to see the relationships between the

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<sup>98</sup> The term "coding" comes from functions used in Atlas.ti, and it means the label given to a certain selected excerpt (quotation) in the data (see Atlas, ti, 2013).

coded lesson excerpts. Through that process, four categories were created to form the frame for the Fullan-Hargreavesian change model<sup>99</sup>. That frame was enriched with the central ideas about educational change discovered earlier in the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches.

## 5.2 The structure of the model

The Fullan-Hargreavesian change model consists of four categories named: **Entry, Objective, Dissemination, and Impact**. Each category summarizes one larger aspect of educational change drawn from the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches, and points from the related lessons. The main points of each category have been summarized at the end of this chapter. These four categories function as reflection points for the Finnish special education reform strategy. This approach to change process focuses on the document level, and it concentrates on how different aspects of the change have been verbalized. Thus, it is related to policy making, what aspects of educational change can be seen through the Fullan-Hargreavesian model in the Finnish policy documents.

The Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches provide comprehensive views about change. In Fullan it can be seen in the way he talks about the system transformation. In Hargreaves, the emphasis is on participation and shared responsibility, and taking into account multiple viewpoints on policy-making and target-setting. Thus, it is about wide involvement of people throughout the education system. Therefore, the Fullan-Hargreavesian model includes aspects indicating that educational change should involve, and participate, at every level within the system, and further, emphasize shared responsibility among educators.

### Entry

The category Entry includes aspects that aim to justify the reform, and convince the audience about its purposefulness. Entry as a whole is about aspects that aim to motivate people, and make them believe that the work they do is meaningful. Moreover, the purpose is to create or strengthen the commitment and feeling of responsibility among educators. These aspects should help the educators, at all levels, to reach for the higher level of the *why* of the reform. The agenda with its more concrete target-setting belongs under the following category. Entry is more about the political pep talk, and eloquence, both of which are important. However, their effect will not last long without any level of commitment to them.

In general, Entry places the reform within the field of education, and also wider in society, and expresses the ultimate need. Under this category, the reform is

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<sup>99</sup> The coded excerpts' relationship to each category will be mentioned in footnotes.

reflected against aspects that are related to moral purpose<sup>100</sup> and public value in the lessons, and to the Fullanian and Hargreavesian views about linking educational change, and in more general education policy making, to the overall betterment of society. Thus, the grand *why* for educational change in the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches is to support and increase the societal well-being and prosperity, to make society a better place for everyone through education.

Moral purpose is something that is not inherently included in the educational change itself, but it needs to be brought in (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). In Fullan's and Hargreaves's view, the moral purpose is related to the idea of putting student learning at the front. That means increasing and strengthening the moral obligation of educators to see every student's learning as equally important, and that includes educators' responsibility for all students. The creation of a shared feeling of responsibility related to moral purpose among educators is seen as a prerequisite for change. Further, moral purpose also works as a Fullanian social attractor<sup>101</sup> that enhances educators' beliefs that their work is worth doing, and through that belief they may want to put in extra effort during the change process. (Fullan, 2003).

On the grand journey towards the betterment of the society the more specific *why* in the Fullan-Hargreavesian model is at student level, it is about student learning and achievement. That lower level *why* has been formed by combining two related yet differing viewpoints. One end is putting the emphasis in reducing the gap between high and low achievers, and raising the bar for every student. Hence, it is about the observed variation in student performance triggering the need for reform (*why*). This indicates the use of specific measures that are needed to verify that *why*. On the other end is the idea about transforming student learning and achievement. This one is not necessarily tied to certain politically imposed targets but is based on collectively set targets for (the betterment of) student learning and achievement. Also, this end requires means for assessing the achievement level in order to know the need for transformation but the ways of realizing it can be more informal. Hence, in the Fullan-Hargreavesian model, the lower level *why* is student learning and achievement that consists of the factors brought in through these two ends and that is against which the *why* of a reform can be examined.

Public engagement arrives along with the public value addressed above. For example, Hargreaves (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009) emphasizes the importance of

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<sup>100</sup> The lesson codes related to this were: moral purpose, public value, and motivation.

<sup>101</sup> Social attractors are factors that support the change process, and especially they create and support the social cohesion of public education system. Alongside moral purpose the Fullanian approach names two other social attractors; quality relationships and quality knowledge. (See Fullan, 2003, p. 34-38.)



verbalizing the future vision of society, and education as a part of it, as a shared vision that should not only be based on a government's decisions. Further, the Hargreavesian approach entails the importance of having educators from all levels participating in the target-setting process. In the Hargreavesian view, these points are related to the comprehensiveness of the approach, and belong under Entry as reflecting the pre-reform processes.

### Objective

This category is straightforward. Objective covers the aim of the reform, and defines the means to get there. Objective is related to Entry, because Entry gives a hint about the overall aim. However, Entry is more abstract and focuses more on *why* reform whereas Objective points to *what* and *how* reform.

As noted in Entry, in the Fullan-Hargreavesian model the *why* reform<sup>102</sup> is student learning and achievement. Therefore, when moving forward, it appears as a factor that must be at the core of defining the aim (*what*) as well. Consequently, in the Fullan-Hargreavesian framework the aim of reform is something that can be assessed against (some) target setting and given a numeric value. When generalizing this aim one step further, its realization is improvement between at least two timepoints: the one when the need for change is observed and a set timepoint in the future. This will require some tools for making the change observable.

Along with the aim, Objective includes the means (*how*) to reach the aim. In Objective, the focus is on naming *the how(s)*. Objective is about defining what would need to be done in order to reach the set aim (*what*). Therefore, the other actions (e.g. professional development) planned to support all this do not belong to this category but are included in Dissemination.

In the Objective category, the *how* reform is reflected structurally at a rather general level, by using the comprehensive idea about reforms in relation to context and how the change is placed in the continuity of practices. Within that frame, the Fullanian approach emphasizes changing the context along with stressing the importance of the basics<sup>103</sup> as means to smooth the road towards the main reform aim. The Hargreavesian approach suggests that the new should build on the old, meaning that the diagnosis of the target for change has to be accurately done in order to know what was precious and usable in the past, what should be abandoned, and what the new that will be brought in is (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).

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<sup>102</sup> This is seen as a route towards the greater societal aim; making the society better place for all through education.

<sup>103</sup> For Fullan the basics are literacy and numeracy or literacy (e.g. Fullan, 2005), numeracy, and well-being (e.g. Fullan, 2006), depending on the book.

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The *what* and *how* of the reform are also related to the aspect of time, within what timeframe the aim is hoped to be reached. To this the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches take quite different stances. Fullan would like to proceed faster, and reach improvement in test scores within four years, whereas Hargreaves is more moderate. Hargreaves avoids setting any timeframes, instead he urges educators to allow enough time to work, test, modify, and gain understanding before being truly assessed against the set reform targets.

## Dissemination

The category of Dissemination is formed of plans and strategies that support the reform's processes of clarity making, professional commitment, interaction, and capacity building within the education system. In the lessons<sup>104</sup> these aspects are defined through transparency of the process, understanding, and processes for sharing knowledge and practices. Under Dissemination are placed strategic actions that aim to make the Big Picture clearer, and more reachable for everyone working in education. The Big Picture refers to a comprehensive understanding of the reform; what does it mean in terms of the whole education system, and how is it related to the society.

This category looks at how all levels within the system have been considered; it is about the comprehensiveness of the reform in terms of the educational system itself. The Fullanian view about tri-level reform indicating that without reaching all levels (state, district, and schools), and creating productive interaction and exchange across and within them, the reform will not have a chance to succeed – or at least the whole system change will not be possible. In the Fullanian approach, the context change is crucial and the idea of context goes beyond the local school district; in order to reach sustainable change all corners within the system must be covered. Therefore, as the leaders at all levels are the Fullanian key players, the change must go through them in order to reach other professionals.

In the Hargreavesian approach the professional communities should be places for everyone to learn and develop, and not least for the teachers they should be like this. There should be enough opportunities for sharing between peers, and there should be opportunities for safe and encouraging professional encounters where to discuss and question the new policy. The accessibility of the Big Picture around and the more detailed requirements of the reform are important when adapting the state level policy to the practices at a lower level.

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<sup>104</sup> Related lessons codes: big picture, clarity, understanding, transparency, communication, interaction, capacity, collaboration, collective view, work methods, sharing, and professional learning.

Hence, Dissemination reflects the reform in terms of various plans for making the agenda understandable, modifiable, and doable for educators. This category reflects the development strategy from various perspectives, including all of the above, and looks at the resource support planned, both human and financial. Alongside this Dissemination has to do with short and long-term targets, and other possible strategies that have been made to support the change process, thus, the supportive steps that have been planned to be taken in order to improve.

### **Impact**

Impact is directly linked to all the previous categories, and especially to Objective and Dissemination. This category stems partly from the efficiency language that is present in both Fullan and Hargreaves<sup>105</sup>. Impact concerns questions of accountability, reaching targets (short-, mid-, and long-term), and results. The government behind the reform has an obligation to assess the success of its own target setting; to gather evidence. To this can be added the government's responsibility for schools and districts; in order to be accountable for taking the required actions and making improvements, they will need to be supported accordingly. Thus, the strategies for capacity building and accountability should be aligned, evaluated, adjusted, abandoned, and revised in relation to their efficacy. (E.g. Fullan, 2003, 2005.)

Accountability as such can be understood in various ways; both Fullan and Hargreaves criticize the external intrusive way that demotivates educators, and in the worst case includes result- and ranking-based sanctions. According to the Fullanian and Hargreavesian approaches accountability can be productive if it has been planned comprehensively, and in a way, that supports development and self-evaluation mechanisms in schools. Alongside external accountability there can be internal strategies for using and understanding the data in a productive way within the school community, and locally across schools. For example, Fullan (2006) talks about assessment for learning, not just of learning. Hargreaves suggests that schools could be assessed through valid samples, not through a census (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009), which is a means that can be traced to Hargreaves's interest in the Finnish education system<sup>106</sup>. In the Fullan-Hargreavesian model the schools should be held accountable for their work in terms of reaching the aims

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<sup>105</sup> The related lesson codes: accountability, assessment, and ownership.

<sup>106</sup> In Finland the testing is based on valid samples, not on a census. However, in contrast to the assumed regularity of the pace of assessment related to the Hargreavesian approach, the national assessment of, for example, the 9<sup>th</sup> graders in Finland is not done annually. In general, the assessment of comprehensive school students does not produce school or student level rankings. Some aspects of assessment will be covered in the subchapter about Impact of the Finnish special education reform.

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set. However, the means for assessment and evaluation ought also to support the work done in schools, not only pushing them externally. Thus, there can be multiple ways to plan and organize the evaluation within an education system.

All in all, accountability means gathering data. In this context, it is about testing student performance, and through that, assessing whether the required level of improvement has been reached. From society's perspective, the data represent transparency; they provide information about how successful the system is in educating the students, and in a wide sense it explains the failure or success of the current policy. Hence, Impact looks at reform in terms of the actions planned for evaluating the progress; what are they like, and how have they been defined.

## Summarizing the model

The Fullan-Hargreavesian model consists of four categories: Entry, Objective, Dissemination, and Impact. The categories are mindsets through which a reform can be examined. The formulation of the model was done in relation to the policy document data set, and therefore it concentrates on a reform's strategy level. The main points of the model have been summarized below.

The first category *Entry* is the opening. It consists of aspects that explain and justify the starting point for the reform. This phase aims to convince and motivate the audience. It provides answers to *why* questions.

### Entry

- Introduction of the agenda;
- Justify the reform and convinces the audience about its purposefulness;
- Includes the wider context and education, grounds for purpose;
- Pep talk: to motivate educators, to strengthen their commitment and feeling of responsibility;
- Higher level *why*: betterment of the society;
- Lower level *why*, the trigger: student achievement and learning;
- Indicators for verifying the why;
- Moral purpose: student learning as priority, equal learning opportunities, and
- Comprehensiveness: participation into preparation (educators from all levels).

The second category *Objective* introduces the proper the aim of the reform. This phase also defines the necessary means to reach the reform aim(s). Therefore, objective focuses on answering *what* and *how* questions.

### **Objective**

- The aim of the reform (*what*);
- Definition of means for reaching the aim (*how*);
- *What*: improve student achievement and learning, includes assessable measurable value;
- *How*: at structural level, context change (partly considers putting emphasis on basics), aspect of the continuity of practices;
- Existing practices: keep, abandon, and add new, and
- Timeframe: one election period or undefined.

The third category, *Dissemination*, concerns the means for making the reform accessible for educators working in all levels of the system. Consideration is made regarding the actions that have been planned to make the reform understandable for all stakeholders.

### **Dissemination**

- Plans and strategies for supporting the reform process;
- Making the Big Picture accessible and understandable;
- Clarity making;
- Comprehensive: covers all levels within the system;
- Interaction among educators;
- Interaction: within and across levels;
- Aspects of capacity building;
- Supporting to educators to understand the reform;
- Enables opportunities for safe and encouraging professional encounters;
- Resource support: human and financial, and
- Naming objectives: short and long-term.

*Impact* is the fourth category, and it is related to the other three categories, most specifically to Objective. The question of the success of reform is of particular significance. It includes the government's obligation to assess its own actions in terms of reaching the set objectives. Also, it takes into account the schools, how well they have been able to improve, keeping the schools, along with the governments itself, accountable for their actions.

### **Impact**

- Plans for evaluating the progress;
- Government's obligation to assess how it reaches its own objectives;
- Evidence gathering;
- Alignment of support to educators and expected results;

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- Set aims and productive accountability: supports development and self-evaluation in schools, external accountability combined with internal strategies for the data use;
- Assessment for and of learning (through valid samples);
- Evaluation/assessment supports schools in their work, and
- Data: measured student performance.

Policy analysis of the Finnish special education reform benefits from examination of these four categories. The main components of each category will be introduced again briefly in the analysis phase.

## 6 The Finnish special education reform

This chapter describes the Finnish special education reform process through the data set of policy documents assembled for this research, and further reflects on the process in light of the Fullan-Hargreavesian change model. The special education reform in the context of this study means the process that started with municipal initiative in 2005 and ended in the parliamentary decision-making about legislative changes: the changes and modifications to the Basic Education Act (BEA 628/1998) in 2010. Consequently, all the documents were formulated in 2005-2010. However, the reform process has been defined as starting in 2005 and lasting until 2012 because the development project and in-service training were ongoing between 2008 and 2012. Further, the reform became effective in 2011.

The interest has been in the steps that preceded the reading, in actors involved in the process, acts taken in the process, and the timeframe for the whole process. The aim is to depict crucial turns in the process of educational change in the Finnish system, and describe that in the Fullan-Hargreavesian framework.

### 6.1 The reform through the policy documents

The description of the special education reform is based on the data set named policy documents, which is in three parts. The three sets of documents included in these data have been labelled according to their content. The first set covers municipal initiative documents enriched with the evaluation report about the state of special education (Blom et al., 1996) and the Ministry of Education's (MoE, 2004) Development plan for education and research (N=3+2). The second set comprises Ministry of Education (MoE) documents (N=4), and the third set includes documents from government and parliament (N=11). The sets represent different phases of the reform process, and therefore the description of the reform has been divided accordingly. The phases are: *Pre-reform Years 2005-2007; Reform in 2008-2012; Reading Years 2009-2010.*

Conceptually both the terms comprehensive school/education and basic education have been used when referring to the nine years of school education for every child in Finland. Thus, it covers the age group from approximately seven<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Children usually go to school in August of the year in which they turn seven years of age, and end their basic education during the year when they turn 16. The possibility for extended compulsory education has been left out this definition. The extended compulsory education is mainly targeted at children with severe disabilities, and it can

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to 16 years. In parts, pre-school has also been mentioned, and that refers to the year that precedes the school start. The concept of reform (*uudistus, reformi*) is basically absent in the Finnish policy documents. The Finnish concepts used most often within this framework are development and change; the documents talk about developing and changing the practices and legislation. However, in Fullan-Hargreavesian terms, all this can be placed in the conceptual framework of reform, improvement, and change.

### Pre-reform Years 2005-2007

The description of the pre-reform years is based mainly on unpublished municipal initiative documents (N=3): a letter to the Ministry of Education (Letter, 2005), a municipal survey report about special education in Finnish municipalities (Report, 2006), and a paper presented at a hearing at the Ministry of Education (Hearing, 2007). Alongside these documents, two reports were read: the evaluation report considering the state of special education (Blom et al., 1996), and the Development Plan for Education and Research 2003-2008 (MoE, 2004). The latter report followed on from the ideas presented in the evaluation report. The content of the municipal initiative includes aspects drawn from these additional publications<sup>108</sup> indicating a long-term process which the actual reform was a crystallization of. Due to the long-term nature of the process, some developmental happenings in special education are briefly looked at in order to form the basis for the municipal activity before describing the municipal initiative in more detail.

The publication of the evaluation report (Blom et al., 1996) was followed by a series of national development projects<sup>109</sup> concerning special education, and they were funded and coordinated by the Finnish National Board of Education, and the Ministry of Education (Ahtiainen, 2010; Oja, 2012). To some extent, all these national development projects included the ideas stemming from the evaluation report (Blom et al. 1996), such as a variation in the realization of special education practices between municipalities, and the need to meet the needs of heterogeneous student population better. Also, the need for increasing teachers' professional development in terms of skills and knowledge requirements, and a vision of a

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last for a maximum of 11 years. However, in that form the basic education includes the normal nine grades but it can be organized differently (FNBE, 2017.)

<sup>108</sup> However, of these two the municipalities refer directly only to the development plan for education and research (MoE, 2004).

<sup>109</sup> Erityisopetuksen laadullinen kehittäminen [the development of the quality of special education] Laatu 1997-2001; Laatu opetukseen, tukea oppimiseen [Quality for instruction, support to learning] LaTu 2002-2004; Erilaiset oppijat, yhteinen koulu [Diverse learners, common school] 2004-2006; Seudullisten palvelujen kehittäminen erityisopetuksessa [Development of regional services for special education] Alpo 2005-2008 (Ahtiainen, 2010; Oja, 2012).



teacher as resource in the process of developing education were mentioned. (Ahtiainen, 2010.) Thus, the project described here (see the end of subchapter Reform in 2008-2012) has been interpreted as being a part of national special education project continuum (e.g. Thuneberg et al., 2013). However, despite being *national projects*, the series of projects preceding the development project 2008-2012 leading to and supporting the special education reform have been relatively small-scale in the Finnish context in terms of participating municipalities<sup>110</sup> or education organizers; the number of participants varied from 24<sup>111</sup> to 80<sup>112</sup>. Anyway, even though the composition of participants differed between the projects starting from 1997, they provided a beneficial ground for interaction for the municipalities and education organizers, and can be seen as furthering the ignition of the municipal initiative.

The debate among the larger municipalities<sup>113</sup> in Finland on organizing special education within comprehensive schools started in 2004. The municipalities wondered how they could affect the state's reform policy about developing the legislation and practices in the direction that would better serve the schooling of students with special needs (Report, 2006). The process started with a letter (Letter, 2005) to the Ministry of Education in 2005; the letter provided a seven-point proposal for the development of the instruction of students with special needs in comprehensive school. The proposal looked at the concern from a wide perspective including the renewal of administrative practices, rethinking the status of special education students, development of teacher preparation and in-service training programs, and linking these concerns to the need for revision of the current funding and legislation accordingly. The larger municipalities also urged that they be given the opportunity to participate in the national level development processes, and they should have their own representatives on the central working groups. Also, the need for comprehensive national development projects, instead of small-scale or one-school-based ones, were emphasized. (Letter, 2005.)

The letter led to a meeting at the Ministry of Education; the Ministry invited the municipal administrators and special education coordinators to discuss the next steps and assigned the larger municipalities with the task of preparing a statement about the core issues the municipalities had highlighted in their letter.

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<sup>110</sup> In 2008 the number of municipalities in Finland was 415 (Official Statistics of Finland, 2008), reduced to 313 by 2016 (Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, 2016).

<sup>111</sup> Erityisopetuksen laadullinen kehittäminen [the development of the quality of special education] Laatu 1997-2001 (Ahtiainen, 2010).

<sup>112</sup> Seudullisten palvelujen kehittäminen erityisopetuksessa [Development of regional services for special education] Alpo 2005-2008 (Ahtiainen, 2010).

<sup>113</sup> In that time the largest were Espoo, Helsinki, Jyväskylä, Kuopio, Lahti, Lappeenranta, Tampere, Turku, and Vantaa.

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The meeting was followed by a survey conducted by the municipality secretariat<sup>114</sup>. (Report, 2006.) The idea was to gather information about the municipal special educational arrangements for support, and to elaborate further on the seven-point proposal outlined in the letter. Moreover, the larger municipalities<sup>115</sup> were compared with each other in terms of the number of students receiving special education, the resources available for supporting students, and the methods and practices used in making decisions, and providing the actual support.

The report (Report, 2006) proposed measures that should be taken in the course of developing the organization of special education in comprehensive schools. The proposal for measures was divided into six themes, which will be looked at briefly in order to depict the scale of the proposal.

First: To reform the legislation. The starting point for this was that the legislation should be based on a principle about every student's right to be educated and have quality instruction. In the current situation, the municipalities saw that this aim should be strengthened, for example, by developing the basis of legislation and funding in a direction that would secure more pedagogical and psychosocial services throughout for a student without having to go through specific official statement procedures<sup>116</sup>. There were also points about developing the administration in terms of coordinating and assessing the quality of education, and the overall development of the flexibility, availability, timing, and collaboration within and between the existing support services for students in pre-school and basic education.

Second: To develop the funding of education. The report expressed a need to take into consideration the forms of support placed under the general funding of education, and further, the forms of support classified under specific financial provisions in education. The concern was the current policy which tied the officially decided status of special education students to the municipal funding of

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<sup>114</sup> The municipality secretariat consisted of representatives from four of the nine municipalities behind the initiative; Espoo, Tampere, Turku and Vantaa.

<sup>115</sup> Municipalities are rather autonomous in terms of decision-making concerning their local educational arrangements. Despite following the same state-level norms the municipalities differ in the way they realize the norms in practice.

<sup>116</sup> In pre-reform years, the process of getting the status of a special education student (under the term of being taken or transferred to special education) was received through a process of diagnosis and other necessary evaluations, and it was considered time-consuming and bureaucratic. Also, it was interpreted that statements written by professionals outside the school did not have enough pedagogical basis (HE 109/2009, 2009).

education. The report noted that this funding mechanism had been used differently among municipalities<sup>117</sup>.

Third: To clarify the role of educational administration. Here there was a need to strengthen the municipality's' or other educational organizers' role in the realization of education, and in schools assuming a specialist role. Moreover, the regional development structures of education should be considered according to the larger municipalities' survey. For example, the report stated that the overlap in educational administration should be checked, and the roles and duties of the state and the municipalities in relation to the organization of education clarified.

Fourth: To develop the national core curriculum<sup>118</sup>. This point focused on the idea of the comprehensiveness of the national core curriculum<sup>119</sup> from the perspective of supporting all students. For instance, the report states that instead of the current division into general and special support, the support system should be based on a comprehensive view about the alignment of different activities and guidance services for supporting struggling students<sup>120</sup>. In addition, the report suggested that the pedagogical approach should be raised next to the psychological and medical one in the processes of planning of and evaluating the need for the support.

Fifth: The pre- and in-service training, professional know-how, and roles of the staff. Within this section was suggested, for example, that the preparation programs for class teachers and special education teachers should be increased in relation to the needs of the municipalities. The report also pointed out that school staff's readiness to collaborate should be strengthened by developing the pre- and in-service training accordingly.

Sixth: The compilation of official statistics. The compilation of statistics should be simplified, and developed in cooperation with the municipalities. For example, the compilation of statistical information about the causes for the provision of support should not be based on diagnosis, but on the pedagogical needs.

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<sup>117</sup> Thus, the official status definitely increased the funding for education, but it did not necessarily secure any specific support arrangements for a student (Report, 2006).

<sup>118</sup> The Finnish National Board of Education reformed the national core-curriculum in 2014, and it will be applied to basic education gradually starting from school year 2016-2017 (FNBE, 2016a). The previous reform of the national core-curriculum was in 2004, thus, it was relatively recent in 2006 when the Report was given to the MoE.

<sup>119</sup> The national core-curriculum functions as a framework for local education planning; they draw on national level guidelines while preparing their own municipal or school based curricula (FNBE, 2016a).

<sup>120</sup> Here it should be noted that the current national core-curriculum (2004) included, for the first time, the guidelines for educating, and supporting, all students (MoE, 2007). Thus, in that sense it already was more comprehensive than its predecessors.

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The municipalities presented the core points of their report in a seminar held in March 2006. The seminar gathered together representatives from the municipalities, the Ministry of Education, and the Finnish National Board of Education. Along with reporting the results of the Report (2006), the seminar was a meeting point for the participants, and provided grounds for discussion and sharing viewpoints. (Report, 2006.)

The Hearing (2007) paper from this data set is related to the development work of the Ministry of Education; the Ministry named a steering group to prepare a proposal for a development strategy for special education in pre-primary and basic education in March 2006 (MoE, 2007a). The hearing was arranged at the MoE in August 2007 in order to learn the viewpoints of the various stakeholders about the strategy work concerning special education, i.e. this was directly related to the work of the steering group, which can be seen as a consequence of the municipal initiative (e.g. Thuneberg et al. 2013). Therefore, the hearing was more or less the end point for municipal activity. In the Hearing (2007) the municipalities relied on the need to develop the Basic Education Act (BEA, 628/1998) in a direction that would better serve the points presented in the letter (2005) and the Report (2006). Thus, this paper summarized all the concerns and suggestions of the municipalities, and linked them to the specific sections of the Basic Education Act. That way, the hearing bridged the municipal initiative to the next phase, *Reform in 2008-2012*.

## Reform in 2008-2012<sup>121</sup>

This section concerning the reform is based on the data set described here as Ministry of Education documents (N=4) of which the central one is the white paper, the Special Education Strategy<sup>122</sup> launched in November 2007 (MoE, 2007a), that was the outcome of the steering group appointed by the Ministry in March 2006. The other three documents are the Ministry's press releases about the strategy, the nationwide development project, and its funding (MoE, 2007b; 2007c; 2007d).

The steering group preparing the Special Education Strategy consisted of representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Finnish National Board of Education, the Trade Union of Education (OAJ), the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, the National Council on Disability (VANE), the City of

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<sup>121</sup> Even though this part concentrates on the years preceding the parliamentary process legalizing the intended changes this timeframe in this phase's name reaches beyond the changes in the Basic Education Act, because the development project described in the end of this section lasted until 2012.

<sup>122</sup> The Special Education Strategy has been referred in the text with the following names: the strategy, the report, and the white paper.

Helsinki's Education Department, University of Jyväskylä (Continuing Education Centre), University of Tampere (Department for Teacher Education), and the City of Hämeenlinna's Education Department. The work of the steering group was strengthened through a hearing at the Ministry in August 2007 to which had been invited various stakeholders. In addition to the larger municipalities, there were representatives from, for example, the Statistics Finland, the Finnish Parents' League, the Finnish Association of the Deaf, and some special schools. (MoE, 2007a.)

The Ministry had described the task for the steering group by naming five topics the group had to cover in their work. The five points concerning various development needs of special education provision within the comprehensive school system were: i) analyses of the needs for increasing the provision; ii) legislation; iii) teacher preparation programs<sup>123</sup>; iv) administrative procedures with regard to the provision; v) other developmental needs of special education.

The Special Education Strategy (MoE, 2007a) consists of eight sections that approach special education from various perspectives. The report starts with national and international definitions of policy, national legislation and other regulations, and then continues to financial issues, realization of special education within different levels of the system, and the recent quantitative development of the provision. It also brings up the research perspective, and teachers' preparation programs and future needs, and finally the actual development proposal.

This section is about the *Reform* and concentrates on the final chapter of the Strategy by summarizing the steering group's proposal, because it depicts the frame within which the development work started. Further, the proposal part also partly bridges the municipal initiative and the white paper. The other aspects of the Strategy will be reflected in the next subchapter about the analyses of the reform in the Fullan-Hargreavesian framework.

The steering group gave a 17-point proposal for the development of special education in basic education. The 17 points were divided into three themes; i) change of legislation and administrative course of action; ii) development of teacher preparation programs; iii) other development needs. Next, the steering group's proposal will be examined according to these three themes; however, the 17 points have been merged under these categories, and not covered in detail.

### i) Change of legislation and administrative course of action

In 2007 there were two forms of support available to students in basic education: general and special. The Special Education Strategy defines general support as including the cooperation between home and school, guidance for studies, remedial instruction, the use of a learning plan, and student welfare services. This

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<sup>123</sup> Teacher qualification in Finland requires a master's degree.

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support form should be available to every student in need of short-term support in schooling. Instead, special support included both part-time special education<sup>124</sup> and instruction for those who have been taken or transferred<sup>125</sup> under the status of special education. The groups of students being the possible receivers of special education had been defined as having challenges in their schooling due to their disability, illness, or other functional deficit. Also, students in need of mental or social support are entitled to special support. Despite this division, in practice the line between these two support forms was regarded as being rather thin, for example, part-time special education in terms of its practices and students receiving it was more or less between these two, not so directly under the definition of special support. Further, the students transferred to special education were entitled to part-time education as well. Also, all forms of general support were basically available for students receiving special support<sup>126</sup>. (SPES, 2007, p. 23-24.)

The figure (Figure 2) demonstrates the situation in 2007 and the proportions of pupils receiving part-time special education and pupils transferred to special education; in 2007 about 22% of basic education students attended part-time special education and almost 8% were transferred to special education. (Official Statistics of Finland, 2007a). The group of students with official special education status, thus, the ones transferred to special education, consisted of students that studied in regular classes (approx. 2%), part-time in regular classes (approx. 1.9%), full-time in special classes in regular schools (approx. 2.5%), and in special classes in special schools (approx. 1,2 %). Thus, almost half of the 8% of students being transferred into special education were placed full-time into special settings. (Official Statistics of Finland, 2007c.) Moreover, the 22% of students attending part-time special education also include some students who were transferred to special education.

The steering group stated that more emphasis should be put on early intervention and preventive practices. The Strategy launched a new form of support, intensified support that would be placed between general and special. According to the definition, intensified support consists of methods of differentiation of instruction, part-time special education, co-teaching, remedial instruction, and intensification of student welfare services. Also, the Strategy suggests that the planning and realization of instruction and support should primarily be based on a pedagogical evaluation, which can be supported with medical or psychological statement. In a principle, it was noted that special

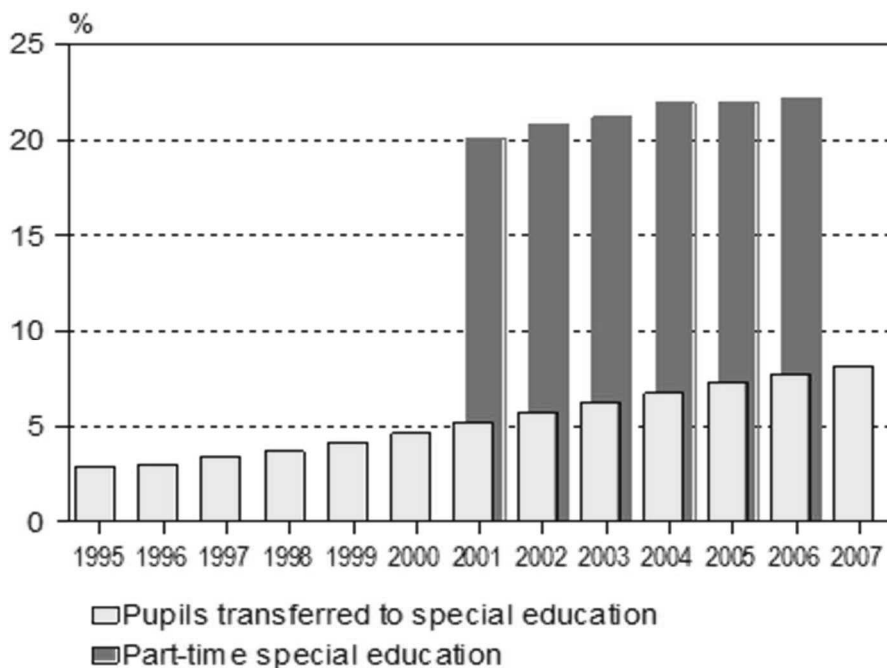
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<sup>124</sup> See Introduction: Tiered support for more detailed information.

<sup>125</sup> This term, *taken or transferred*, belonged to the administrative terminology referring to student who has been officially given the status of special education student.

<sup>126</sup> Thus, the support is cumulative, and basically should be built on the previous layers.

education should be considered only if general and intensified support are insufficient, and it should be avoided in pre-school and on the first-grade.



**Figure 2.** Shares of students transferred to special education and receiving part-time special education among all comprehensive school students 1995-2007, % (figure retrieved from Official Statistics of Finland, 2007b).

The Strategy gives a statement concerning the learning plan for intensified support and individual learning plan for special education; both are defined as pedagogical documents to which the planned actions and follow-ups ought to be written down. The Strategy required more systematic planning, and evaluating and further planning the actions. Further, the Strategy stressed the importance of the continuity of support to student learning throughout the educational path; from pre-school to basic education, and further to the upper secondary education. Alongside that the report suggested that early childhood education should be included under educational administration<sup>127</sup> both nationally and locally to secure the continuity of services for students.

ii) Development of teacher preparation programs

In the introduction for the 17-point proposal the Strategy defined some concepts that are central to the realization of support. One of the concepts is neighborhood

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<sup>127</sup> Early childhood education stayed nationally under social and welfare service administration until 2013 (FNBE, 2016b).

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school which in the Strategy has been defined as the school at which a student would be placed<sup>128</sup> if one had not been given the status of SEN student. This principle is related to the ideology of inclusive education that has been defined in the Strategy as arrangement of the educational settings in a way that every student gets sufficient and well-timed support for their learning and growth. Thus, the education should be provided to every student living in a catchment area of a school<sup>129</sup>, and therefore education should be developed accordingly. This neighborhood principle, alongside the ideology of inclusive education, sets requirements for all educators working in schools; especially in terms of every teacher's readiness to meet, teach, and support the diverse student population.

The steering group suggests that universities' preparation programs for teachers working in general education settings ought to be checked content-wise, and to ensure that all student teachers will have an opportunity to get to know about teaching diverse students, differentiation of instruction, early intervention, and principle of neighborhood school. Also, teacher students should learn how to in practice plan and realize the support for students; knowledge and experiences about intensified support, forms of special education, and networked student welfare work are interpreted as being crucial for all. In addition, it should be ensured that universities educate a sufficient number of special education teachers, and the future needs<sup>130</sup> of qualified teachers will be met.

Moreover, the Strategy took a stand on teachers' continuing education, and according to it, the state should direct funding for teachers' professional development in terms of the steering group's proposal for changes in special education<sup>131</sup>. The report stated that the emphasis in professional development should be more on the continuing education of the whole work community instead of the current trend of individual-based training. Further, the need for strengthening the continuity between teacher preparation and professional development programs was seen as crucial. The Strategy stressed the importance

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<sup>128</sup> Basic Education Act states "Education shall be arranged in municipalities so as to make pupils' travel to and from school as safe and short as possible in view of the habitation, the location of schools and other places of education, and public transportation" (BEA, 628/1998 BEA. Amendments up to 1136/2010. Chapter 2, Section 6).

<sup>129</sup> Municipalities and schools have a lot of decisional power concerning the arrangements of education locally (MoE, 2007 p. 54). Consequently, how these issues have been defined and what are the practices may vary between municipalities (cf. e.g., Kalalahti & Varjo, 2012).

<sup>130</sup> The future needs of teachers are estimated through the Teachers in Finland survey that is carried out every two or three years (Kumpulainen, 2014).

<sup>131</sup> The Strategy proposed funding of 1 million Euros per year for the following five years for this purpose. The actual funding for teachers' professional development was over 4 million Euros in 2010-2013 (Ahtiainen, 2015).



in acting in systemic way in the actions for teachers' in-service training in order to develop teaching and schools. According to the SPES the education organizers and teachers together should prepare professional development plans<sup>132</sup> that would take into account the development needs of individuals, school communities, and the municipality or region as a whole. Teachers' knowledge and know-how base should be strengthened especially in the areas of intensified and special support, principle of neighborhood school, methods of differentiation of instruction, preventive practices, and cooperation skills in multiple environments<sup>133</sup>.

### iii) Other development needs

The other development needs concerned the funding, guidance, and the instruction of students with emotional and social behavior challenges. First, the Special Education Strategy states that the funding for special education provision and other educational services for students with special needs<sup>134</sup> should be secured in the coming reform of the state funding system for pre-school and basic education<sup>135</sup>. Second, the role and funding of state's special schools, reformatories, and hospital-based schools need to be clarified. Some of these institutions also have a consultative role, and they provide services as a resource centers. As the Strategy stresses the principle of neighborhood school, the outside school consultation and special support services may become more important. Third, the instruction of students with emotional and social behavior problems has been observed as being challenging. The Strategy states that the students in the need of mental health examination and mental care should have access to those within three weeks. And the collaboration between schools providing education for hospitalized students and comprehensive schools should be developed within this framework. Further, the Strategy articulated that the education for students suffering from emotional and social behavior problems should be arranged and planned in concert with health and social services in order to secure the continuity of education. Fourth, the research about special education and especially about the effectiveness of intensified support and special education should be increased. In addition, the state of intensified support and the overall development needs have to be analyzed every five years. The Strategy also suggests that in the future the

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<sup>132</sup> Planning with perspective of coming 3-5 years.

<sup>133</sup> For example, cooperation with parents and multi-professional networks.

<sup>134</sup> For example, students staying at hospitals or reformatories.

<sup>135</sup> The funding had been planned to be renewed in 2010.

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national Teachers in Finland survey<sup>136</sup> should include a measure of the class size as well.

In the last three points of their proposal, the steering group concluded that all the proposed changes in special education require changes in the legislation concerning pre-school and basic education, and in the national core curriculum. The report also suggested establishment of a legal protection center for education to guide and monitor the realization of every students' rights within the education system. Finally, the steering group stated that the preparation of all legislative and normative changes should began right after the circulation of the proposal for comments, and they should be put into operation in municipalities and schools in the autumn 2009.

Alongside the launch of the Strategy in November 2007, the Ministry of Education<sup>137</sup> announced that it would provide additional funding for municipalities for the development of early intervention and preventive strategies in basic education. This development work was linked to the government program about the betterment of the quality of education<sup>138</sup>, and it was allocated 18 million Euros for 2008-2009. (MoE, 2007c; 2007d.) Officially the development project was named the Development project for Intensified and Special Support or Kelpo, the latter referring to Finnish words KEhittäminen, Laatu, and PerusOpetus [development, quality, basic education], and it lasted from 2008 to 2012. Alongside the Kelpo project, the Ministry funded eight regional development networks<sup>139</sup> in 2009-2012. Thus, there were different development structures available for municipalities and education organizers. At the beginning, 233 municipalities participated in the development work, and during all four of its funding waves, the project reached a majority of Finnish municipalities. (Ahtiainen et al., 2012; Oja, 2012.) During the years of the Kelpo project the Ministry provided over 45 million Euros of overall funding (Ahtiainen, 2015).

The national Kelpo project was supported by two university units in 2008-2011. The Continuing Education Centre at University of Jyväskylä was responsible for organizing the professional development within the project, and it consisted of regional training days that were targeted for municipal<sup>140</sup> steering and

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<sup>136</sup> The Teachers in Finland report provides information about, for example, the formal qualifications of educators, and their age and gender, and their teaching duties (see Kumpulainen, 2014).

<sup>137</sup> The then Minister of Education Sari Sarkomaa.

<sup>138</sup> Matti Vanhanen's II government's initiative called POP, Perusopetus paremmaksi [the betterment of basic education] (MoE, 2007c).

<sup>139</sup> In total the eight networks consisted of 44 municipalities and nine university-based research units (Oja, 2012).

<sup>140</sup> Every participating municipality or education organizer had representatives in the trainings.

development groups<sup>141</sup> (Oja, 2012.). Further, the Centre for Educational Assessment at the University of Helsinki participated in the project, and their researchers worked as development evaluators, educators, and consultants for municipal developmental work (Ahtiainen et al., 2012).

## Reading Years 2009-2010

The description of Reading Years 2009-2010 is based on government and parliament documents (N=10); bills (HE 109/2009; LA 112/2009), parliament plenary records (PTK 72/2009, 73/2009; PTK 56/2010, 57/2010, 58/2010, 52/2010), a committee report (SiVM 4/2010), and the parliament's statement (EV 90/2010). This third phase of the reform looks briefly at the process starting from the government's bill about changing the Basic Education Act (HE 109/2009) to the parliament's decision about the proposed changes (EV 90/2010).

The government's bill to the parliament (HE 109/2009) was based on the Special Education Strategy (MoE, 2007a), and covered its proposals. Thus, following the Strategy, and thereby also reflecting the Report (2006), the bill's main emphasis was on the early intervention and the modification of the support system from two-tiered to three-tiered by adding intensified support between general and special. The bill also focused on the importance of the neighborhood school principle, and the central role of pedagogical and multi-professional knowledge in the decision-making processes. Further, it underlined that the planning and realization of support should be systematic, and the need for support should be checked and the plans for support revised regularly.

Before giving the bill, the government had asked for comments from various stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, many non-governmental organizations, and some large municipalities<sup>142</sup>, and the bill was revised following their comments. The bill provides a description and evaluation of the current state of affairs (the legislation and practices), and the main aims of the reform. It also reflects the suggested reform in terms of its economic and social impacts, and explains the steps taken during the preparation of the bill. Finally, it provides justifications, and covers the sections of the Basic Education Act that would need to be changed. In addition, the government states that the Finnish National Board of Education should make changes to the national core curriculum accordingly, and the updated core curriculum should be put into operation no later than in August 2010.

The government's bill was followed by a reading process that consisted of plenary sessions, and the education committee meeting that evaluated the bill,

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<sup>141</sup> This training reached over 2000 participants around Finland (Oja, 2012).

<sup>142</sup> In total they received 19 statements concerning the bill draft.

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arranged hearings<sup>143</sup> and suggested some modifications to the government's bill (SiVM 4/2010). During the reading some dissenting opinions were presented: one competing bill concerning the changes in the Basic Education Act and two written protests to the education committee's report (SiVM 4/2010). Finally, the parliament adjudicated on the changes suggested in the Special Education Strategy with modifications done by the education committee.

In terms of the Basic Education Act, the special education reform that was accepted included three new sections: intensified support, individual education plan (IEP), and accessibility of information. Intensified support (16 a §) was defined as being for students in need of regular support or several forms of support for their studies, and the decisions for the need of it should be based on pedagogical evaluation. The IEP section (17 a §) emphasizes the collaboration with parents and student, and the IEP was defined as a plan that should be checked when needed, and at least annually. The section about accessibility to information (41 §) pointed out that education organizers should have access to information from other authorities that is necessary in terms of education concerning their students. In addition to these new sections, the other changes in the Basic Education Act were mainly modifications. For example, the section about remedial instruction (16 §) was widened to include part-time special education, and subsections emphasizing collaboration with parents, and having a systematic recording process were added to the student welfare section (31 a §). However, the section that previously described special education (17 §) was revised throughout; the name was changed to special support and the focus was on pedagogical evaluation and decision-making. Moreover, it stated that the need for special support should be checked and re-evaluated regularly<sup>144</sup>. Also, there were additions in a section covering confidentiality and processing of personal data (40 §) that stressed transfer of information between authorities in order to secure the continuity of necessary support, for example. (EV 90/2010).

The timeline for putting the changes into operation was planned to happen gradually, with changes concerning the support system to be introduced no later than in August 2011, and changes concerning student welfare, and confidentiality and accessibility of personal data in August 2010<sup>145</sup> (EV 90/2010). The changes have been described only from the perspective of the Basic Education Act because it was the focus of this parliamentary process. However, the parliament assigned

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<sup>143</sup> The committee received opinions from 38 people representing a range of positions and interests within the education system and the state.

<sup>144</sup> At least at the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, and before 7<sup>th</sup> grade (EV 90/2010).

<sup>145</sup> The gradation was due to the differences in the changes; the ones concerning special education required more preparation.

the Finnish National Board of Education to update the national core curriculum<sup>146</sup> according to the changes in the Basic Education Act. As the Act drew only the legislative framework, the role of the national core curriculum was to provide educators with more specific definitions and guidelines. The assigning of the Finnish National Board of Education as being responsible for making these changes was included in the overall schedule described above.

The special education reform described here through the policy documents depicts the structure of the process from the pre-reform years to the actual parliamentary decision-making concerning the normative changes required in the Basic Education Act, and as a consequence of that also to the national core curriculum. From this story, it is possible to observe the progression of the main ideas: early intervention, preventive approach, and the need to reform the support system, modify the language and processes within special education to the direction of pedagogical emphasis, and to strengthen the collaboration with parents and between authorities and a range of professionals. Further, the Report (2006) and the Special Education Strategy (MoE, 2007a) stressed the professional development of teachers, and the need to develop the teacher preparation programs in a manner that supported the aims. This aspect was also included in the government's bill but as it was about changing the Basic Education Act, it does not show in the description above. Thus, basically the bill covered the same viewpoints as the Strategy; it reflected the field of special education widely, and pointed out factors within it that should be taken into consideration as a consequence of changing the special education provision.

## 6.2 The Finnish reform through the Fullan-Hargreavesian lens

In the analyses of the Finnish special education reform the aim is to examine the existence of the Fullan-Hargreavesian reflection points; to interpret how they show or become visible. Thus, that means looking for connections, and also the absence of connections. The expectation was not to fit Finnish reform into the theoretical model or vice versa. Rather, the idea was to juxtapose these two aspects with each other in order make the Finnish special education reform understandable through conceptualizations of the change theory.

The Finnish reform will be reflected under the four Fullan-Hargreavesian categories *Entry*, *Objective*, *Dissemination*, and *Impact*. The policy documents

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<sup>146</sup> The amendments to the national core curriculum that followed from reforming the Basic Education Act have not been included in this study, because the focus here is on the reform process in the education system and the Finnish National Board of Education's curricular work can be considered to be a consequence of state-level decision-making.

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data set was used earlier for describing the process of reform: where it started, and the kind of steps that were taken during the journey from the pre-reform to the reform and reading. In the description, an analytical tone was avoided. It focused on depiction. Here the documents were looked at by using the Fullan-Hargreavesian model as an analytical tool. In the analysis, the documents are referred to occasionally. Moreover, the information provided in the policy documents is sometimes enriched with relevant additional detail coming from other sources to avoid having a too narrow interpretation of the reform process. For example, under the categories Dissemination and Impact, the data provide only a limited picture of the overall processes.

### Entry of the special education reform

The Entry category consists of aspects that prepare the grounds for change, and link the reform to a wider societal context along with education. It answers the question about *why* reform was desirable, and includes the higher meaning of it, the ultimate purpose. In the Fullan-Hargreavesian model the grand reason (the upper level *why*) for educational reform is the overall betterment of society, and the more specified one (the lower level *why*) is the student learning and achievement that is related to closing the gap, raising the bar idea or transformation of learning and achievement. The lower level why includes some form of means for measurement and assessment.

The factors examined under Entry are the reason(s) triggering the Finnish reform, and the measures verifying it. Also, the focus was on the moral purpose of education related to strengthening the moral obligation of educators in line with public values and societal visions reflected in the reform measures. Moreover, this category includes the aspect of comprehensiveness of strategy work through the participation of professionals from all corners of the system. Thus, the two-level *whys* along with moral purpose, public value, and public engagement form the frame within which the reform related education policy pep talk can be reflected.

When putting the Finnish reform into the Fullan-Hargreavesian framework, a good starting point is to look at the lower level *why* of it. The Special Education Strategy (MoE, 2007a) was the Ministry of Education's first public presentation concerning the special education reform, and it starts directly from the reasons leading to its formulation. The *why* of the Finnish special education reform is tied to the rise in number of students receiving special education in basic education, and this can be verified by referring to national statistics. The Strategy (MoE, 2007a) refers to the structural factors of the system and the growing knowledge within the field of special education as an explanation behind the phenomenon: the development of statistical methods, diagnostic practices, and the overall knowledge about factors affecting student learning and schooling negatively.

Further, the Strategy identifies the differences observed between municipal practices regarding decision making processes and realization of support as one issue that needed to be paid attention to. These points gave rise to concern of how the student's right for support has been realized around the country<sup>147</sup>, and whether students were treated equally in terms of means and placements for support. Therefore, that was where the justification for reforming the special education provision and drawing up the Strategy to direct the development work were grounded. Educators all over Finland were the targets of what was said, and how, in the Strategy. The aim was to convince the country about the importance and purposefulness of the reform.

When placing all the above into the Fullan-Hargreavesian frame, the connection between the model's lower level *why* and the Finnish reform seems to be missing. The Fullan-Hargreavesian Entry is student achievement and learning that on one hand is about closing the gap between high and low achievers in a context in which the high and low have been verified by test results indicating the standards behind them. On the other hand, as this *why* has two ends, it also has an aspect of collective decision making concerning the frame of targets within which the learning and achievement are observed. What is clear is that the points of connection cannot be found in the concept of achievement. However, the concept of learning may be treated differently.

When defining the triggers for the reform, the national statistics<sup>148</sup> revealed there had been an increase in the number of students receiving special education. However, it was not directly concluded that the number should be reduced<sup>149</sup> even if work remains to improve the organization of the support system that enables it. The point of concern is the national state of education, and, for example, the observed difference (a gap) between the education organizers' practices<sup>150</sup>. The lower level *why* reform is located at system level in contrast to the Fullan-Hargreavesian student-level. Thus, in the Finnish context, the *why* reform is in the structure of the education system whereas in the Fullan-Hargreavesian it is individualized to students' learning and achievement. However, the case is not that simple. They both include the moral purpose of putting the student learning first and seeing every student's learning equally important. In the Finnish reform, it is tied to the idea of securing students' equal right to support, which means support to students who struggle in their learning and schooling. In the Fullan-

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<sup>147</sup> Due to the decentralized education system, see Simola, Kauko, Varjo, Karalahti & Sahlström (2017) for one description about the development of the Finnish system.

<sup>148</sup> Statistics are understood here as reflecting the structure of special education provision.

<sup>149</sup> However, naming the increased number implicitly includes the idea of decrease.

<sup>150</sup> Students were treated differently, thus, the basis of the special education student status was not realized in equal manner.

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Hargreavesian model it refers to providing every student a possibility to improve as learners. Thus, when emphasizing the learning part of the Fullan-Hargreavesian model's lower level *why*, both the model and the Finnish reform seem to have it. Yet, it is approached via different routes.

Even though the Finnish lower level *why* was added to the questions concerning the structure of the system and the Fullan-Hargreavesian the individual student's performance, one can draw references to the school and system from the Fullan-Hargreavesian individualized view, the organization of the education, its requirements, the given instruction, and educators. Also, the local education administration, school, practice and educator based factors can be inferred from the Finnish systemic structure level. However, the basic lines of the approaches stay different, with one pointing to the student, thus the very bottom of the system, and the other to the organization of the system. Yet, there is a difference in the overall mindset. It is a question of where are the origins of the lower level *why*.

Ideologically the Special Education Strategy (MoE, 2007a) and the government bill (HE 109/2009) use three perspectives while putting the reform into a wider context: international (global), European, and national. They point to the worldwide idea about education as the basis for societal development and peace, social cohesion, and economic prosperity; thus, educating our children and youth has a wider sociopolitical aim. Moreover, the Strategy touches the issue of disadvantaged children in the world in regard to lack of access to education. Hence, the Finnish reform is introduced by utilizing a broad-based international perspective. Viewing it through the Fullan-Hargreavesian lenses it appears that the universal meaning of education has been well-incorporated. Moreover, the use of this route affects the feeling of professional responsibility for keeping up the good level of education through implicitly reflecting Finland against the countries in which the education system is not as developed as Finland's. Therefore, this global view is a linkage to educators' morals through professional self-esteem<sup>151</sup>; they are educators of a well-functioning system that has the means to educate (all) its children. In addition, the Strategy refers to the international declarations, programs, and agreements on development of education to which Finland is committed to, such as the Charter of Luxemburg (1995), the UN's Declaration of the Rights of Disabled Persons (1975), and the Salamanca Statement (1994) all of which aim to guarantee the educational rights of all. Consequently, with commitment to these international lines of policy the Finnish education system

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<sup>151</sup> This concept is used rather freely, and it appeared through the analysis. Thus, as the professional self-esteem belongs to a separate branch of research (e.g. McCreary Juhasz, 1990; Ceylan, Bicakci, Gürsoy & Aral, 2009) it has no theoretical connotations in this context.



developed its own system and instruction in schools; the aim is to secure every child's education in the best possible way.

Next, the emphasis moves to the EU level definitions of policy<sup>152</sup> concerning development of special education. Finnish special education is reflected against the diverse special education practices within Europe. Further, it is looked at closely alongside the Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, and Irish practices. What is highlighted in this comparison are, for example, the neighborhood school principle and the trend of turning special schools into resource centers in order to spread their expertise to the benefit of the wider community. Moreover, the SPES points to the greater flexibility of the support system and individualized means for identifying and organizing support in the other countries.

When comparing this summary of the European perspective and the Reading Years<sup>153</sup> described earlier, there is a connection. All the points given here are included in the proposal for measures that ought to be taken to develop the Finnish special education provision. Hence, the agenda bridges Europe and Finland, smooths the way while moving towards the national context. On the whole, through the international and European perspectives Finland is connected to the big global family of educators, all of whom (should) have the same aim in mind. In the Fullan-Hargreavesian sense this is a means to strengthen educators' beliefs in the purposefulness of their work, which happens as a part of moral commitment creation that is done through political eloquence. The political eloquence is understood here as a method of drawing a picture of educational virtues reaching beyond the national context and the actual national concern. It is used to remind all stakeholders of the importance of moral purpose in education and to support educators' moral obligation through global level educational aims along with examples from regional countries. The aim is to clarify *why* this is important in the wider sense. All of the above also function as a self-assuring justification for the steering group and the Ministry of Education behind the Special Education Strategy.

Finally, the story is located in the national context. The Strategy discusses Finnish special education by traveling through history, starting from the 1840s and ending up at the present-day. The strategy explains how the system has been developed, and also reminds us that it could be better. There are still things to develop; for example, more emphasis ought to be put on the neighborhood school principle, and through that, increase the integration of special education students into regular classes. This identification of the need for development opens the

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<sup>152</sup> The EU does not have a common education policy, because all its member countries are independent in that sense. However, the EU countries aim to follow common lines of thought in educational development, and to the sharing of good practices. (MoE, 2007a.)

<sup>153</sup> See the chapter 6.1 about the reform through policy documents.

door to normative regulations within the Finnish system, and in the Fullan-Hargreavesian sense, tends to emphasize for educators what their moral obligation as educators should be based on. Further, this includes the aspect of educators' responsibility. Namely, the Strategy states that the Basic Education Act and national core curriculum are both guided by the principle of every student's right to education, and the education organizers' and educators' obligation to secure that right. Further, the Strategy (MoE, 2007a, p. 55) continues by stressing that it is every teacher's responsibility to teach all students; to teach heterogeneous student groups. If reflected in the theoretical frame, this reference to every student's right to education and every teacher's responsibility to teach is at the core of bringing moral purpose into the agenda; putting the students in the front, and seeing every student's learning as equally important. Thus, this is one place where the Fullan-Hargreavesian and real-world education policy clearly seem to be meeting. However, both can be drawn from the very core of international educational ideology.

Furthermore, the Strategy (MoE, 2007a) and the committee report (SiVM 4/2010) clarify that the meaning of support is not only related to supporting the students in their everyday school life, but also to preparing them for the future. Adequate support throughout school years is seen as of increasing opportunities to be integrated into work life as an adult. Thus, the support in basic education is aiming for a greater societal purpose (higher level why) and in Fullan-Hargreavesian terms, includes public value: it should decrease the later risk of drop-out, and therefore it should be seen as crucial for society.

In Entry, the Fullan-Hargreavesian comprehensiveness of the reform has been tied to the term *public engagement*, which in this context means participation of people from multiple corners of the education system in the education policy planning and decision-making process. The comprehensiveness also implicitly gives a hint about possible pre-reform processes. The Finnish policy documents (MoE, 2007a; HE 109/2009) describe the steps that have been taken during the preparation of the reform starting from the municipal initiative, and the hearings related to both the Strategy and ending with the committee report (SiVM 4/2010). Thus, there has been a strong aspect of shared concern that led to the reform. In addition, the documents also underline that knowledge of various stakeholders coming from different branches of society have been considered in the preparation of legislative changes. Nevertheless, it would be naïve to see the processes of policy making, and public engagement related to special education reform, as being this simple and straightforward. As has been described earlier, the municipal initiative can be related to the development projects in 1997-2006, and further, these projects were a consequence of the State of Special Education report (Blom et al., 1996) in 1996 that was ordered by the Finnish National Board of Education. The delivery of the report was based on a performance agreement between the Finnish National Board of Education and the Ministry of Education in 1995 that

assigned the Finnish National Board of Education to conduct an overall evaluation of the state of special education in basic and vocational education (Blom. et al., 1996). However, even risking simplifying the issue, we should stop the chain of happenings here, and look at the timespan from 1995 to the launch of the Special Education Strategy in 2007. Namely, it depends on the interpretation of who in the first place started the reform (within the long run). In terms of the main areas for development in special education (Blom et al., 1996) the roots go far back to 1996 and supposedly the idea about the need for some kind of development had preceded the Finnish National Board of Education's and the Ministry of Education's agreement in 1995, however, the municipal initiative in 2005 appears to have given a forceful push towards reforming the Basic Education Act, and further, the national core curriculum. Hence, without the latter, would the reform have happened? If yes, then when?

### **Objective of the special education reform**

The category of Objective includes the strategic-level answers to questions: *What? How?* Objective verbalizes the aim of the reform (*what*), and describes *how* it could be done. The Fullan-Hargreavesian Entry introduced two level of *whys*; the grand reason for the reform was linked to the overall well-being of society, and the more concrete reform triggering one based on student learning and achievement. Consequently, Objective includes the same elements; the need to improve or transform student learning and achievement (for the societal good). Hence, the *what* reform is about rising the achievement level and learning capacity of all students. The reform's *hows* come from the Fullan-Hargreavesian views about context change, basics, and the reflection between the existing (old) practices and the new ones that the new practices will be built on.

The government's bill to the parliament (HE 109/2009) bridges the categories Entry and Objective. In the framework of Objective, it presents the core for *what* and *how* by stating that the special education reform aims to strengthen a student's right to be supported from the early stages (*what*) through the suggested changes in the Basic Education Act concerning intensified and special support (*how*). Further, the bill (HE 109/2009) aims to strengthening the neighborhood school principle, which adds to the general level expression about a student's right to support. Therefore, the organization of schooling should be arranged in a way that is primarily an advantage to the student (*how*), systematically and flexibly planned support for short- and/or long-term needs by using the means defined under general, intensified, and special support<sup>154</sup>. Moreover, in relation to a more flexible support system, the reform aims to clarifying the work of multiple

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<sup>154</sup> See *the Reform in 2008-2012* for definitions of the different forms of support.

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authorities and professionals working in collaboration in education by smoothing the processes of getting student-related information that is important for educational arrangements. This was intended to be enabled through modification of the sections in the Basic Education Act concerning student welfare, the accessibility to information and transfer of confidential information. Through raising the level of generality this can be connected with the aim of securing and strengthening the students' and their parents' right of self-determination in these processes.

To put it in a nutshell, in the *what* and *hows* of the Finnish reform under the Fullan-Hargreavesian category Objective, the main *what* of reform is strengthening students' right for support, whereas the means (*hows*) for it are the re-organization of the support system and related processes of multi-professional collaboration. Therefore, when reflecting on the Finnish *what* reform with the Fullan-Hargreavesian aim there is a clear connection between them: the student is at the core. However, the mind-set is still different. The Fullan-Hargreavesian model emphasizes student learning and achievement and the special education reform aims to improve the student's rights. Hence, the theoretical model points to the outcome produced by the student and the Finnish system's capacity to realize the students' rights to be supported in an equal manner.

The overall definition of Objective makes the *what* reform very narrow, and it places the Fullan-Hargreavesian comprehensiveness of the reform fully under the *hows*. Thus, in contrast to the limited *what* reform the theoretical *how* has a loose structural touch. It is mainly based on context change that in Fullanian sense can be smoothed by emphasizing the basics at the beginning, and to the view of continuity in changing the practices, thus, building on the basis of the existing ones coming from the Hargreavesian approach.

Within that framework, it shows that the set aims of Finnish reform are planned to be realized through re-thinking and re-organizing practices in schools and within local administrations. Thus, this refers to changing or modifying parts of the context of schooling in terms of supporting students. At a more practical level, among the means outlined is the early identification of students' needs followed by immediate actions taken for support. Further, the clarification of the processes for special support, and the emphasis of the pedagogical approach in evaluation and planning are the means to strengthen the professional role of school communities and educators in supporting all students. At the local administrative level this increases the responsibility of education organizers for creating structural solutions that support the intended direction of practices in the schools. These definitions of *how* reform answers questions of what are the means for reaching the aims, and as they tend to re-organize the structures and practices they point to the educational context. In the Fullan-Hargreavesian sense, and specifically the Fullanian whole system change, this change in the Basic Education Act moves from the legislative level (state) to local education

organizers (district, local), and further to the schools and classrooms. Therefore, as the Finnish support system in principle is available to every student, and the support should be provided as a basic student right, the special education reform concerns basic education is general<sup>155</sup>, and different levels of support within it in particular.

The contrasting point is in the Fullanian basics (i.e., numeracy and literacy) that are closely tied to the improvement in student performance that can be seen as one crucial factor when considering special educational needs and practices in general. Even if the Fullan-Hargreavesian<sup>156</sup> view would not put the basics in a central position of a reform, they have been present in their theorizing<sup>157</sup>, whereas the Finnish special education reform does not have a stance on that. Therefore, this highlights an interesting contrast between the theoretical model and the Finnish approach. The Finnish reform is built around the idea of supporting student learning and schooling, and still, the factors related to student performance are absent from the agenda.

The continuity of practices is the other half of the Fullan-Hargreavesian comprehensiveness related to *hows*. Consequently, it is about diagnosing the reform need correctly, and reflecting the existing system in terms of what is usable, what should be abandoned, and what could be added. In the Finnish context, the government's bill to parliament (HE 109/2009) suggested changes and modifications to the Basic Education Act. Some sections were replaced with updated ones, some new sections and sub-sections were added, and many were revised to meet the set aims. Thus, it was building on and rebuilding the existing legislation. Moreover, the changes in the Basic Education Act required amendments in the national core curriculum that is the document defining what these changes mean in practice. Thus, the revision of the national core curriculum<sup>158</sup> was assigned to the Finnish National Board of Education, and the changes were made alongside the changes in the Act.

Finally, the Finnish reform in terms of the timeframe of the reform does not fit within the Fullan-Hargreavesian frame. The Finnish schools were obliged to put the new definitions of policy into practice by August 2011 at the latest. However,

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<sup>155</sup> Through the renewed practices in the Basic Education Act, and national core curriculum, more emphasis was put on every teacher's responsibility for participating in the support of a student.

<sup>156</sup> Hargreaves also sees the question of basics as an essential part of education policy-making even though he might not include them in reforms the same way as Fullan does.

<sup>157</sup> Fullan includes them in the agenda, and Hargreaves acknowledges the importance but hesitates to give them a central status.

<sup>158</sup> The work that was done with the national core-curriculum is outside the scope of this study. Thus, the *hows* defined here present the parliamentary process where the decision about these changes was made.

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over half of the education organizers and schools had already started to develop their practices according to the Special Education Strategy in 2008. In that sense the municipalities were in different positions from each other in regard to their activity in the Kelpo nationwide development project, and that must have affected their readiness to apply the new policy in practice. Despite the differences, what should be highlighted is that most of the municipalities had been involved with the development project before the changes became binding. The new practices were already in use or being developed by 2011. In contrast to the Fullan-Hargreavesian model, which does not have a solid<sup>159</sup> definition of a timeframe, the Finnish agenda sets only the final date for municipalities to put the new practices in action, but no sanctions or follow-ups were included.

### Dissemination of the special education reform

Dissemination examines the policy documents in terms of plans and strategies for supporting the reform processes concerning clarity-making, capacity building, collaboration, and sharing knowledge and practices. What is the plan for making the reform reachable and understandable for multiple professionals working for education, and how they are supported in the process of adapting the state level policy to the practices at other levels. Dissemination is about making *the Big Picture* clearer to everyone working in education, and the strategy for doing this should be targeted at all levels within the education system. Therefore, it is linked to the Fullanian context change and tri-level reform thinking, creation of productive interaction and exchange within and across the system. Further, the Hargreavesian approach reminds us about the importance of professional communities as places for learning and development. Thus, different kinds of professional encounters are needed for educators to share, discuss and question the new policy related issues. Consequently, the category of Dissemination looks at aspects that support educators in adapting the state level policy to their everyday practices along with the financial support provided.

The Fullan-Hargreavesian Dissemination shows up in the Finnish reform strategy especially in the form of professional development for the school level actors. That is, the government's bill (HE 109/2009) and the committee report (SiVM 4/2010), and the Special Education Strategy (MoE, 2007a) all recognized that the new requirements could not be reached without organizing professional development opportunities for teachers and principals, and emphasizing the special needs education teachers' preparation programs through increasing the annual intake of students. It is acknowledged in the documents (HE 109/2009;

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<sup>159</sup> Fullan tends to give rather exact number of years whereas Hargreaves avoids doing that.

SiVM 472010) that the set aims require targeted in-service training for the educators and other professionals working with the students in schools on daily basis.

The state level process for preparing municipalities and schools for the coming legislative changes started in 2008. The Special Education Strategy (MoE, 2007a) along with the Kelpo development project were the first nationwide strategic steps taken by the state in the process of igniting the new strategy about special education arrangements around the country. The Kelpo project started in 2008 and lasted until 2012. It was a tool for implementing the new three-tiered support system, (i.e., general, intensified and special) introduced in the Strategy. In 2008, 56%<sup>160</sup> of the Finnish municipalities participated in the first wave of the project (Ahtiainen et al. 2012; Oja, 2012). What should be noted here is the coverage of the project in relation to the fact that the Strategy was the first serious official attempt to realize the new educational ideas and the development project started prior the parliamentary process, *Reading Years 2009-2010*. Thus, the state had started to support the development work around the country both financially and in terms of professional development some years before legitimizing the definition of policy that was driving the education organizers to re-arrange their local plans and practices. The order of happenings becomes clearer through the policy documents. The government's bill (HE 109/2009) refers to the ongoing Kelpo project when describing the steps taken and future plans for supporting municipalities and schools in the reform process.

The Kelpo development project consisted of training days and development support for municipalities. The municipalities could participate in Kelpo either by themselves or they could base their participation on regional collaboration networks. (HE 109/2009.) In the early years of Kelpo, the municipalities were supported in their local special education strategy work by the developmental evaluator, the Centre for Educational Assessment at the University of Helsinki. The Continuing Education Centre at University of Jyväskylä organized nationwide training days in six geographically<sup>161</sup> divided locations around Finland (Ahtiainen et al. 2012; Oja, 2012). The training was targeted at local coordinators and other representatives coming from the participating municipalities. The state

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<sup>160</sup> 233 municipalities out of 415. The number of municipalities has been reduced since 2008 due to gradual consolidations of local government areas, and in 2016 there were 313. (Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, 2016.)

<sup>161</sup> In addition, there was one group for the Swedish-speaking participants and that was not tied to the location but the language.

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supported Kelpo financially and the in-service training that was organized all over the country by providing €49 million in 2008-2012 (Ahtiainen, 2015)<sup>162</sup>.

When looking at the Kelpo development project through the Fullan-Hargreavesian lens it shows that the message about the new special education strategy was sent to municipalities through their representatives participating in the regional training days. In this process the prerequisite for support was based on the municipality's willingness and preparedness to be part of the development project, first, by applying for the position by themselves or as a part of municipal collaboration network, and then being accepted as a participant. However, the municipalities were not equally positioned<sup>163</sup>. For example, the municipalities varied in terms of their size and education administration structure; the larger municipalities had more human resources at the administrative level, and the smaller ones needed more volunteers coming from among the local educators. Consequently, the municipal coordinators having a central role in the development project had different positions in their municipalities, with some working as full-time coordinators concentrating only on the development work within their local context, while others were full-time teachers in conjunction with their position as municipal coordinator (Ahtiainen, 2010). Therefore, the time and energy they were able to put into the development work differed, but so did the size of municipality in which they were working and spreading the word.

Further, a closer look to the Kelpo project shows that there were different types of participants; the municipalities as the primary target for development, and two university units as education policy guiding messengers. As a participant in Kelpo, a municipality was tied to the project through engagement in the re-formulation of their local plan for supporting students. That work was facilitated by the Centre for Educational Assessment who provided feedback directly to the municipalities during the first wave of Kelpo which started in 2008. Moreover, the regional training days organized by the Continuing Education Centre provided an opportunity for people coming from different locations from the same part of Finland to learn, discuss, and share. Thus, the ideas of the Special Education Strategy (MoE, 2007a) were spread through Kelpo project, and the message coming from the top was mediated and interpreted to educators from two university units and the Finnish National Board of Education which was the main coordinator of the development work.

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<sup>162</sup> Kelpo with €45 150 000 and in-service training with €4 051 000 (Ahtiainen, 2015). To provide some perspective: this approximately €50 million would be approximately \$3.2 billion in the US if they adopted the same per capita grant.

<sup>163</sup> Some municipalities had also been involved in earlier development projects, and therefore they had learned the project language, for example (Thuneberg et al., 2014).



## Shades of change in Fullan's and Hargreaves's models

In the Fullan-Hargreavesian sense the project itself offered a place for interaction. The participation was based on each municipality's own activity to make the effort themselves. The university-based actors and the Finnish National Board of Education played a central role in defining the content of the Special Education Strategy (MoE, 2007a). In the framework of Dissemination this was one route to help educators to reflect on the Big Picture, gain the clarity concerning the reform, and to have tools for adapting the new strategic lines of thought to their practices and local needs. The other route was the in-service training for teachers and principals organized locally around Finland.

Starting a reform this way is something that the Fullan-Hargreavesian model has not taken a stance on; ideologically having a start for new practices on this scale with no officially binding validity of the attempted changes does not exist in their theorizing. Even if the Fullan-Hargreavesian thinking does not deny this kind of possibility, it is not present in it at all. In the Fullan-Hargreavesian comprehensive model, the agenda seems to have been binding from the beginning; the Kelpo development project was binding in terms of the money related to it. By fiat the participating municipalities of the Kelpo project moved in the direction the project lead them due to the pre-conditions of the development money they had received. However, the future of the final direction was still open, and the project, at least during its first years, was more or less testing the ideas of the Special Education Strategy than committing to them totally. Also, during this process the Finnish National Board of Education learned how to explain its aim more precisely. In the Finnish reform process with all its phases, there seemed to have been a state level long-term determination in terms of the validity of direction as it traveled through three governmental periods<sup>164</sup>.

### **Impact of the special education reform**

Impact in the Fullan-Hargreavesian model refers to the government's obligation to assess the success of their policy, to gather evidence – to monitor the impact of the process. Through that it is related to the Dissemination category above and the government's responsibility for districts and schools. In order to be accountable for developing their practices in line with the reform aims set, the local actors need to be supported accordingly. In the Fullan-Hargreavesian framework this is mainly based on testing the schools; it is about being after the improvement in results. However, the methods for testing can vary, and do not necessarily need to be done by census. Further, from the perspective of the society, category Impact

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<sup>164</sup> Governments named according to their prime ministers are the following: Vanhanen II 19.4.2007–22.6.2010, Kiviniemi 22.6.201–22.6.2011, and Katainen 22.6.2011–24.6.2014.

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represents transparency, it is the way to show the public how successful the current policy is and has been in educating their children.

In their decision (EV 90/2010) about the changes in the Basic Education Act, the parliament stated that the government had to follow whether a student's right to receive special support according to his/her individual needs will be fulfilled or not. Further, if the government observes that there is a risk that students will not be adequately supported and not provided with all opportunities for successful schooling, the government should take the measures needed to correct the situation. Moreover, the Ministry of Education was assigned with the responsibility to report by the end of 2013 to the Educational Committee about the reform. However, there was no description of the means that should be used to assess the reform. The guidelines the Parliament provided were rather unspecified. Thus, it was the Ministry's responsibility to organize the evaluation of impact.

When describing the assessment of the reform I have added information from sources other than the policy documents, as the information provided by those documents is limited. The Ministry-funded assessment of the special education reform took place through two nationwide evaluation studies, both of which were conducted by the Centre for Educational Assessment at the University of Helsinki. First, the Kelpo project included an element for assessing process impact and the Centre evaluated the Kelpo project in 2007-2011 along with its role as consultant and facilitator of municipal strategy work. The evaluation aimed to gather information on the development work concerning the intensified and special support. The evaluation was done through reading the Kelpo participants' project documents, the written descriptions of their activities, and by interviewing the coordinators participating in the regional training days. Also, Centre's representatives were observers at the training days, and they gathered feedback. The evaluation provided information about the process to the Ministry of Education, the Finnish National Board of Education, and the local education organizers and schools (Ahtiainen et al. 2012). Moreover, the Centre for Educational Assessment also conducted a follow-up study on legislative changes in 2012-2013. In the follow-up, the national state of current organization and practices of support for students around the country was looked at through the school leaders' perspective and municipal level curricula. (Hautamäki, Hilasvuori, Lintuvuori, Thuneberg, Vainikainen, Ahtiainen, Mäkelä, Hienonen, Kivistö & Karjula, 2013.)

The Finnish reform model differs from the theoretical one proposed by the Fullan-Hargreavesian. The Finnish reform does not include specific measures that would define a certain student achievement level, and in the framework of the Finnish special education reform introduced so far it would be difficult to find a place for such measures. The impact of the reform in the Finnish context is formulated through a description of the education system structure and an

interpretation of its functionality in terms of meeting the students' needs. The Centre for Educational Assessment's evaluation of Kelpo concentrated on depicting the good practices, and observed differences between municipalities in their attempts to develop their educational arrangements according to the Special Education Strategy. Further, the follow-up study drew a picture of the organization of the support system within schools and municipalities. Hence, the biggest difference between the Fullan-Hargreavesian and the Finnish approach lies in the target of impact; one focuses on individual performance and the other on the organization of practices.

However, despite the Finnish agenda not including any student level testing, the test-based assessment of the education system is included in the Finnish education context. Therefore, it is necessary to take a brief look at the assessment that goes beyond the specific targets of special education reform and provides information about its success as a part of the functionality of the system by using more general level means to assess the impact of policy. The Finnish education system is put through systematic assessments conducted by the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC) that assess, for example, learning outcomes in relation to the objectives set in the national core curriculum (FINEEC, 2016)<sup>165</sup>. Also, the Centre for Educational Assessment gather nationwide learning to learn data that will provide information about the schools' success in providing students with the necessary capacities for their later life to apply the skills and knowledge acquired throughout their education in comprehensive schools (Hautamäki & Kupiainen, 2014). Actually, the Centre for Educational Assessment provides its testing services in two ways: the Ministry of Education orders the Centre to test 9<sup>th</sup> graders<sup>166</sup>, and further, the local education organizers can order the tests for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> graders in order to evaluate their schools more thoroughly<sup>167</sup>. Consequently, this fits in as one of the means to meet the Finnish education organizers'<sup>168</sup> obligation to assess the impact of the education they provide<sup>169</sup>. The

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<sup>165</sup> FINEEC was established in 2014 by combining three evaluation units, the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council, the Finnish Education Evaluation Council, and the Finnish National Board of Education (FINEEC, 2016). Before that, for example, since the mid-1990s the ninth graders' learning outcomes have been assessed regularly by the Finnish National Board of Education. (See e.g. Laukkanen, 2008; FINEEC, 2016.)

<sup>166</sup> The national level assessments are based on valid samples.

<sup>167</sup> In these cases, the tests often are not based on samples but all students in these grades are tested in order to create student, classroom and school based comparable data for the education organizer that usually is a municipality.

<sup>168</sup> Within basic education the education is organized mainly by municipalities. Also, there are some state schools, and some private education organizers providing education that is tied to specific pedagogical ideology, such as Steiner, or providing education in languages other than Finland's official national languages (Finnish and Swedish), for example English, German, or Russian schools.

<sup>169</sup> They can decide on the tools by themselves.

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assessment data should be used for supporting local education development and decision-making, and it should provide information for the basis of national education policy making. (Statute of the Council of State, 1061/2009.) Thus, all this, alongside the reform based evaluation, provides data for the Government in terms of the validity of the direction of current education policy. When placed within the Fullan-Hargreavesian framework, the overall assessment of the Finnish education system seems to aim to support the government, local education authorities (municipalities), schools, and teachers by providing information about their work, about student learning and students' achievement in applying the cross-curricular knowledge (see Hautamäki & Kupiainen, 2014). The information about the results is basically public, and many of the reports are published, thus, this shows up as one of the means to ensure transparency about the state of education in the country. However, that transparency is limited. The national level tests are based on samples, and the specific school or student based information is not available for public review. Consequently, the aim of Finnish assessment can be labeled under both Fullanian terms of assessment: assessment for, and of, learning. Also, the Finnish way is related to the Hargreavesian suggestion to do sample-based testing in contrast to testing through census. However, the Hargreavesian view has been inspired by Finland, thus, the connection was to be expected. All in all, within the frame of the Fullan-Hargreavesian model the Finnish means for assessing the impact both in relation to reform-specific targets and at a more general level can be interpreted as being student, teacher, and school sensitive.

## **Reflection**

The theoretical model has functioned as a tool to dig out change-theoretical aspects related to the Finnish special education reform and the policy-making process. The Fullan-Hargreavesian perspective has brought out differences between the two mindsets through which the education as such can be approached. The theoretical model has opened up a North American-based conceptual door to one corner of the Finnish education system. To a certain extent, that may have clarified the principles and ideas that direct educational thinking at the policy level concerning Finnish special education, and something has become visible in the Finnish reform when it is examined in a theoretical frame like this. However, the journey towards understanding the actual special educational reform within a theoretical framework is not simple and does not happen without challenges or doubts. Four main points arising from and inspired by the analysis are reflected on in this section.

Firstly, in this kind of theoretical approach, the theory-base provides ways to interpret the policy documents. Consequently, the Fullan-Hargreavesian model has led me to give meanings and to set connotations to the content of the Finnish

policy documents. The theoretical frame has shed light to the political eloquence and found unwritten meanings in it. Therefore, this approach seems to have assumed implicit messages in the texts sent from the policy level to educators – messages that try to touch educators' moral commitment to their work. This is visible especially in the section concerning Entry. One may ponder whether the interpretation represents what actually happened and the ideas that the steering group had in mind while writing the Special Education Strategy (2007). However, this kind of theory use can bring new insights to the policy processes. It may show us how theory-based functions can be used in interpreting the educational policy-making – and remind us that some other theories may affect the interpretation differently.

Secondly, the analysis process made it clear that the policy document data had some limitations. This material describes policy-level steps that have been taken and describes the main aspects related to the reform, but due to the limited scope of the data set, the Finnish aim for reforming special education is strongly based on the aspect of securing every student's right to support, which seems to create a bias towards a rather humane approach. The policy documents hardly mention the fact that the funding of special education was reformed at almost the same time. One reason for that is that the funding reform proceeded along its own path of policy making. The aim of the funding reform and further, the *why* reform related to it have not been given emphasis in the reform of the special educational practices explored in this study. Consequently, this affected the content of the data obtained from the policy documents used here and made them sound *softer* in contrast to the aims guiding the funding reform that were money-oriented and brought out concerns about the increasing costs<sup>170</sup> of special education service provision along with the rise in the number of students receiving special education. (See e.g. Pulkkinen & Jahnukainen, 2016). Therefore, in terms of these issues, the Finnish special education reform explored in this study may give a too *rosy* picture of the education policy making.

Thirdly, special education as the target for change-theoretical analysis has been one corner of the Finnish comprehensive school system both in terms of practices and legislation. Thus, one may wonder about the representativeness of the special education reform under scrutiny – what is its position in the context of basic education. Further, looking at one rather specific part of an education system through a theoretical model that clearly is based on a larger educational perspective is debatable. The theoretical model has a wider approach, aiming for

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<sup>170</sup> Before the reform, the funding was tied to number of students with SEN in nine-year basic education. Currently, the government transfer is calculated in relation to the number of children at the compulsory education age in a municipality. (For more details, see Pulkkinen & Jahnukainen, 2016.)

improvement in the larger student population than a reform focusing on students struggling with their schooling. At least that is what it may seem like. However, various means for support reach approximately 30% of Finnish comprehensive school students annually when one sums up all the available support forms, part-time special education as general support, intensified support, and special support (Official Statistics of Finland, 2015b). When approaching the issue from this angle, it is not that limited anymore. An interesting point in this study has been the compatibility of North American-based theorizing and the Finnish special education system – however, the aim in this study was not reach for compatibility but to create a conceptual tool for examining the Finnish reform process. The aim was to use that route to clarify the differences in processes and educational thinking, and to discuss conceptual transferability between these two entities

Finally, this kind of analysis is tied to concept-related challenges. How to decide whether the conceptualizations would be compatible or not. Sometimes the decision has been straightforward. For example, the concept of achievement does not fit into the framework of the Finnish special education reform. In this kind of discourse, concerning whether a concept belongs to some context or not, it is crucial to keep in mind the limitations of the data analyzed and mentioned earlier. Therefore, as a curiosity, it would be interesting to stop here and take a look outside the special education reform. In the Fullan-Hargreavesian model one aspect to student achievement is reducing the gap between low and high achievers and raising the bar for every student, which is something that does not have a counterpart in the Finnish context, not even outside the special education reform. At least, not in the way it is expressed in the theories. However, it is worth noting that the concept of student achievement is not absent in the Finnish education context, yet it is based on a different kind of testing. It has been brought in through the assessment system described briefly under *Impact*. For example, the ninth grades national sample-based learning to learn assessments along with various municipal-level assessments conducted by the Centre for Educational Assessment at University of Helsinki are targeted at students' cross-curricular achievement<sup>171</sup>. (E.g., Hautamäki & Kupiainen, 2014; Vainikainen et al, 2015.) Further, despite my analysis leading to a conclusion that discussion about student achievement is absent in the policy documents concerning special education reform, the idea of an achievement gap and the aim to close the gap between low and high achievers is present in the ideology of supporting students' learning in comprehensive schools that gather together all children to study within the same school system. It is possible to acknowledge even without a common testing system that there are variations in the learning outcomes of students. There are high and low achievers,

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<sup>171</sup> More precisely, assessment of cognitive competence and learning-related motivational skills (see Vainikainen et al, 2015).

## Shades of change in Fullan's and Hargreaves's models

and there are many students between these extremes. Consequently, the special education provision aim to support the low achieving students so they do not lag too far behind. Therefore, ideologically closing the gap between the two extremes is applicable to the discourse. However, special education and support to students as such focus only on the poor achievers, and the process often proceeds on the expense of the high achieving students, thus, they are not paid specific attention to and therefore may remain without extra push and support to their learning. (Cf. Laine, 2016.) This is, of course, part of the special education discourse in general in educational contexts like Finland's. The crucial question is how strong an emphasis on the lower achieving extreme of students affects students that are quick learners and proceed faster in their studies. Therefore, the other half of the closing the gap idea, namely, raising the bar for every student becomes an interesting addition to the whole as that underlines the aim for not accidentally lowering the upper bar of the achievement gap, but keeping it at least steady if not pushing it up as well.

## 7 Concluding thoughts

This final chapter concludes the study, and discusses the journey and implications of the study. The first two parts sum up the main lines of thought concerning the two entities of the study, Fullan's and Hargreaves's theories, and the Finnish special education reform. The third part looks at the study with a critical eye, and merges the observed challenges and problems with the feedback received from Fullan and Hargreaves. In the last part I conclude by presenting the main implications of the study, and further, express my recommendations for future steps in Finnish education policy-making and development.

### Examination of Fullan's and Hargreaves's change theories

This study was built around four questions of which three concentrated fully on Fullan and Hargreaves. The first question was about finding the key characteristics of their works in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century - the *work* was mainly understood as their publications, yet it was occasionally enriched with the stories stemming from the interviews. The characteristics of both lines of theorizing were followed through separate paths that explored their viewpoints and were covered under headings; *sustainability* and *tri-level reform* (Fullan), and *time, sustainability, and comprehensiveness* (Hargreaves).

The second question searched for the similarities and differences in Fullan's and Hargreaves's written works. These aspects became visible, for example, in how they saw the students' position, and how they approached the time in educational change, the meaning and place of basics in agendas, the use of top down and bottom up strategies, and also in how they emphasize different actors in education in their theories. At the time the books were written Fullan moved more at the level of administrators and school leaders in his theorizing, and Hargreaves's approach included teachers, and emphasized more their role in the change process. Consequently, similar differences were also observed in the interviews.

Their mutual differences and critique that were present in the books in the middle of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, were also present in their work outside the books. In the professional stories emerging from the interviews, both Fullan and Hargreaves mention the time as being a period when their thinking had been distant from each other. However, Fullan and Hargreaves interpret the differences as fruitful instead of seeing them as restricting or negative ones in their professional paths. They have used the differences as a place for debate, and through that as grounds for elaborating the differing viewpoints.

What cannot be emphasized enough is that the book data represent only one area and era of their work. The strict delimitation of the publication data was done



to support a focused approach leading to scrutiny of the core ideas from both theorists, and to merge the theoretical viewpoints into the Fullan-Hargreavesian model. Further, it was seen as being important that the historical time when the books were written was approximately parallel to the time when the Finnish special education reform took place. Anyway, the narrow scope is definitely one aspect for critique concerning this study. Accepting only books that were written during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century as data show only one corner of their publications. For example, this study represents Fullan's thinking about change through complexity and unexpectedness of happenings – the approach has changed over the years. The educators are still challenged with multiple demands and changes, and the pace is not slowing down, however, the style Fullan uses in his approach is different in the 2010s. Things are still complex, but now they have been approached in a manner that is clearer, perhaps more practice oriented, and not so desperate. Thus, the expressions about the factors related to managing and confronting the change have seemed to become simpler, yet the change stays demanding. (E.g. Fullan, 2014; Fullan & Boyle, 2014.) Moreover, the set time frame for publications left out some aspects of Hargreaves's written work as well. The written works chosen for this study show some changes in his theorizing, and the Fourth Way series seemed to draw a line in his thinking. One reason for that is the approach used in the Fourth Way where the change theory had been drawn from examples coming from different jurisdictions around the world - the approach is global.

What is interesting here, and was visited only briefly earlier in this study is the fact that the Hargreavesian model includes a hint of Finnishness through the Fourth Way series in which Finland represents an example of a well-performing nation<sup>172</sup>. That intuitively may seem to make the Hargreavesian approach to change more applicable to the Finnish context if compared with the Fullanian in that sense. That assumption may not be a totally wrong one, and as a Finnish reader it is possible to recognize that in the theory. Some aspects in the Fourth Way that may be interpreted as Finland-related, such as his view about involvement of teachers in local policy work, and that have been included in the Hargreavesian model, had been present in his thinking even before. However, the views have strengthened in the Fourth Ways. Moreover, it also is clear that the change theory<sup>173</sup> presented in that series is a model that has combined Hargreaves's earlier ideas about change with the ideas drawn from the case examples. Also, despite the linkage between the Fourth Ways and Finland and their similarities, it cannot be taken as given. It cannot be assumed that there is a straight correspondence between the two entities of this study, namely policy

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<sup>172</sup> The other examples are from Singapore, the US and England.

<sup>173</sup> The change theories were the targets of the study.

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documents and change theories, in terms of conceptualizations and their meanings and further interpretations. The view of Finland in the theory is already an interpretation of Finland – an interpretation that has been merged into a vast amount of other knowledge.

Along with the above mentioned, it was necessary to leave out the co-written material of Fullan and Hargreaves. The reason for this was clear – the formulation of two lines of change theories set the requirement for keeping the theorists separate. However, that decision can be criticized, and I will return to it later in this section.

In consideration of the first two areas of examination of this study, they represent a typical in-depth exploration and comparison of two theoretical approaches. What takes this study a couple of steps further is the third question (i.e., what would that model contain?). The result was the formulation of the Fullan-Hargreavesian model through merging the core lessons drawn from the chosen publications with the separate Fullan's and Hargreaves's approaches.

In general, a theoretical exploration of two or more views can have two options after their individual examination. On one hand, the next step could be done in a manner that emphasizes the differences and creates confrontations, makes them compete. Further, they could be applied as analytical tools separately, and tested in terms of their applicability. On the other hand, there is also a path for merging them, making them complement each other, and to form one tool for analysis. In this study, I chose to do the latter. Thus, the first analytical step for creating one model for both provided rich theoretical grounds for this second complementary step through which the Fullan-Hargreavesian change model was formulated. The model consists of four categories, *Entry*, *Objective*, *Dissemination*, and *Impact*. It is a mindset for policy analysis. Moreover, the model has been created with the coverage of the policy document data in mind, and therefore it does not include any school or municipal level aspects but concentrates on the policy-making level. Consequently, the limitation of the model has raised interest to move to other levels in the education system as well, to formulate a theory-based model for future studies.

Moreover, the study has not only been about exploring and merging two theoretical lines of thought and visiting professional identities. It has also considered the nature of being a professional in the field of educational change – theorizing about the field with an aim to provide suggestions for practitioners for improvement of their work and to challenge their thinking. In this context, writing about the processes and factors related to education reform making includes interaction with the educators, learning from the actual cases, and applying this knowledge to one's existing knowledge base for further analyses and possible alterations.

Theorizing is a process of naming, conceptualizing and explaining. It is about raising the abstraction level, and through that making the phenomenon debatable

for wider audiences. The work that is done by educators at various levels within the education system can function as a case-type example of concrete happenings in the field, and make theorizing more approachable for many readers. However, the case-examples are always too context-bound and dependent on these individual environments that they as such could give enough grounds for drawing conclusions and formulating theories. They function as instruments for highlighting possible issues that may be encountered in practice, and providing points of contact for theoretical thinking. Thus, moving between theory and practice forms the grounds for theorizing about change. In that process lays the purposefulness of theory-making in the field, the meaning of it.

### **Finnish special education reform**

The fourth research question concerned special education reform in Finland, how it appears when looked at through the Fullan-Hargreavesian change-theoretical mindset. Theoretical analysis of the policy documents explicated the reform process under four categories, *Entry*, *Objective*, *Dissemination*, and *Impact*. This approach applied change-theoretical conceptualizations into the Finnish context, and provided new angles for interpreting the reform. The theoretical tool provided interpretations about the nature and content of political eloquence in the strategy, formed upper and lower level reasons for the reform, visited the means for disseminating the future policy, and reflected on the impact of evaluation procedures. As noted in the previous chapter, there were a couple of challenges in applying the theoretical mindset to the Finnish context. Some challenges were concept related and others were related to limitations of the data. Despite the challenges, or perhaps partly because of them, the discourse that emerged in the process of trying to fit the theoretical approach to the Finnish policy document data revealed some crucial aspects related to theory use in terms of cultural and conceptual differences between the two entities.

This study has provided change-conceptual interpretation of the Finnish special education reform. That provokes a question of theory use in the Finnish reform processes – from planning to realization. The special education reform and its core points had been officially in the air for a decade before the municipal initiative. That kind of buzzing of ideas and testing them in small scale development projects can be interpreted as being a preparation process for something bigger – or for concluding that the direction tested is unfitting. From the time of launching the Special Education Strategy on, the reform was based on shared ideas for elaboration and state level determination. The contents of the Strategy were introduced to Finnish municipalities through the Kelpo development project, which was a tool for supporting and educating the country. Along with Kelpo and its related development networks, the Ministry of Education provided in-service training for educators around the country. The

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reform was studied by the Centre for Educational Assessment at the University of Helsinki. There were two studies and the first looked at the development work in the municipalities and the second was about a follow-up of implemented legislative changes. This all sounds systematic, however, a question remains. How systematic was it in a theoretical sense? There are no visible signs of any change-theoretical applications at policy level, no leaning on a research based framework for the realization of the development work. However, this is not to criticize the methods chosen in that work that was clearly based on the idea of providing educators a place for learning and sharing, yet at policy level, the research base for planning and justifying the development project was absent in documents.

The point about the meaning of theorizing, and work with educators mentioned earlier in this chapter, is one that could be considered in the Finnish context as well. By that is meant the need to use theory and research-based action plans in practice, further study them, and theorize explicitly the Finnish model by combining a theoretical base with experiences and data drawn from the work done when realizing the development initiatives around the country. The Finns have constituted their reform processes in collaboration between actors on different levels in the education system over the years. For example, this has been the usual method in national curricula work. The frame for new policies has been built with various stakeholders, and this has also been shown in this study. All this seem to have been based on trust and mutual understanding among the professionals. However, Finnish education could welcome a more theory-based approach in the future in order to learn more about its own actions, to make it more visible, and to conceptualize it accordingly.

## **Critical viewpoint**

Every study has something it can be criticized for. Here I will discuss concerns rising from this one. I was privileged to get feedback from both Fullan and Hargreaves, and their comments have been included in the critical examination. The first point in this examination covers the data used from Fullan's and Hargreaves's written works. I set a timeframe for the data to be approximately parallel with the Finnish special education reform. Thus, the timeframe emphasized the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, yet it was not too strictly set and it enabled inclusion of one book published in 2012. That extension was done in order to have an equal number of books from both theorists and to follow through Hargreaves's Fourth Way theory thinking. However, the decision about the timeframe has left out some more recent ideas from both theorists. Also, limiting the publication data to the books that were individual works from the theorists excluded their co-written material, such as Professional Capital (Hargreaves &

Fullan, 2012) in which they consciously put their ideas together<sup>174</sup>. Thus, by excluding their co-written works they rendered their own combined vision non-existent. The result is that differences in their thinking are highlighted and the more simpatico thinking that has been merged into shared understanding of the issues in their collaborative works is missing. The differences are real in the works used in this study, however. For example, the co-written books would have made their emphasis on the teaching profession and collaboration more visible. Consequently, through my choices I have identified the theorists according to the books analysed, through which these aspects have not become very central. Therefore, I see that their co-written publications, from the early stages on (i.e., from *What's Worth Fighting for* series), form an inspiring target for future research, how their shared ideas evolve deserves to be examined as well.

The second one is about the scope of data concerning the Finnish special education reform that can be considered narrow, and that may have resulted in emphasizing certain aspects of it at the expense of some other features that were related to the whole. That question has already been reflected in the previous chapter in which it was noted that the policy documents leave out the fact that the support system was not the only target for the reform but the almost simultaneous funding reform had an impact on the organization of special education as well. Further, the policy document data have been enriched with other publications covering the reform, and in some of them I was the author or co-author. These publications were used only as sources for getting a few numeric details correct, such as the amount of the funding the Ministry of Education provided for the development project, and the development project participation rate of the municipalities. All interpretations that have been presented in those documents were left out. However, that may lead to questions about the possible biases. Moreover, the municipal documents (i.e. the Letter) included in the policy document data are not publicly available, and thus, are out of reach for other researchers' evaluation, and that may be seen as limiting the transparency of my analyses.

The third point concerns the method that was used in this study, the disassembling and reassembling of Fullan's and Hargreaves's written works. The method resulted in losing specific features of individual case examples introduced in the books. For example, the case of Ontario (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012, p. 109-131) covering the special education policy was assimilated into the larger lines of thought in the process, and yet the case Ontario has points of contact with

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<sup>174</sup> For example, the Professional Capital have some points that resonate relatively well with the Finnish reform analyzed here. However, that book also has been partly inspired by the Finnish system, and that may explain some of the familiarity between the two entities.

the Finnish special education reform. They appear in the way that the Ontario approach looks at every teacher's responsibility for all students<sup>175</sup>, thus the aim was to "break down the silos between those who had responsibility for special education students and those who had responsibility for the rest" (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012, p. 112) and ideas of that kind can be found in the Finnish policy as well. Further, in Ontario they stressed a direction in the practices that would take into account the diversity in student population better, and that was supported by assisting the educators to develop their work accordingly. Consequently, this resonates with the ideas presented in the Special Education Strategy.

The fourth point is a concern over the concepts that were placed in the core through my analyses, such as efficiency and achievement. My work may imply that their appearance in Fullan's and Hargreaves's publications is similar or almost similar, and it is not. Further, my model seems to put too much emphasis on that, and especially the concept of achievement (understood in the context of closing the gap, raising the bar) is weighted too heavily. These observations turn the critique to my thinking – or ability to be objective with the publication data. Namely, the conceptualizations surrounding the language called *efficiency language* in this study are mainly absent in the context of Finnish basic education. Further, having my roots in this context and having my academic background in special education give me the lenses through which the books have been read. Even though acknowledging this it has been impossible to avoid the effect of my background. Therefore, the text may have appeared differently to me than it would have appeared to some other reader with a different background, and here I could cite the feedback from Hargreaves that pondered the same issue "I know a reader of poetry often sees different things in a work than the poet who wrote it". Consequently, this opens up an arena for discussion about education drawing from culture based thinking.

The fifth point is about naming the approaches as *Fullanian* and *Hargreavesian*, and especially in case of Hargreavesian it is not clear how Hargreavesian it actually is. One of four written works was solely written by Hargreaves, and three of four books represent merged ideas with Dean Fink or Dennis Shirley. Therefore, the approach is not purely Hargreavesian but a product co-authoring and co-thinking.

Finally, all the points above have affected the formulation of the Fullan-Hargreavesian model, and consequently, to the analysis of the Finnish special education reform. The three critical points apply to the whole work. The theoretical model has been formed through analytical steps that have had a

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<sup>175</sup> The responsibility aspect was included in the Fullan-Hargreavesian model as it was also brought there from various other parts of the publication data. However, its connection to this specific case was lost along the way.

tendency to merge ideas. Therefore, my approach has moved at a rather abstract level, and thus, the more concrete level descriptions about change are missing. There is a lot to develop in the model, and as a result of this study it forms the grounds for further examination and improvement of the work.

## Theoretical implications

The study approached Fullan's and Hargreaves's work from a new angle by exploring and breaking down the contents of their change theoretical thinking. Thus, the study provided an example of systemic analysis of theories, and further, used their viewpoints to formulate a change theoretical mindset for policy analysis. Along with that the meaning and nature of theorizing about change was enlightened. Moreover, Fullan and Hargreaves were represented in a wide framework in which their other roles in the field became visible.

The study provided new insights for policy analysis through the use of change theoretical conceptualization. The approach explicates the Finnish policy documents in terms of intentions driving the policy, especially in relation to used political eloquence. Further, in the analysis the processes preceding and following the reform became visible, and the roots of the reform were followed to the mid-1990s. The approach of the study differs from the usual discourse around special education that often focuses on the practical implications and questions about various reasons for support instead of looking at the field as a target and place for policy making. Further, this study describes the policy documents, such as the Special Education Strategy, in a very broad manner, and opens up its content to a wide audience. That is something that has not been done before.

The Fullan-Hargreavesian model provides grounds for further examination and development of change theoretical modeling in my future work. In the analysis of the Finnish special education reform became clear that the theories had very little to say about the processes preceding the actual change. Thus, what was missing in the Fullan-Hargreavesian model was a pre-reform phase that would have provided tools for analyzing the pre-reform processes. To be fair, there were some parts in the theories that gave a hint about their existence, such as the Hargreavesian view about comprehensiveness that would participate educators from different corners of the system in planning processes. However, the long processes that travel over time, evolve in collaboration between various professional groups, and are carried through various governmental periods are more typical in Finland than in North America. Therefore, in developing the whole structure and content of the theoretical model I would add one category covering the *Preparation*, a category for explicating and describing the time of evolving ideas that precede the reform.

## Policy implications

As noted earlier in this chapter, the Finnish special education reform did not seem to have any explicit theory behind it. Hargreaves states that “All reforms have theories of change. (...) These theories can be explicit or implicit, intentional or assumed” (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012, 4). Thus, no reform is without a theory, and in the case of the Finnish special education reform, it is clear that it followed an implicit one – a way of working that is based on collaboration and trust between policy level and various stakeholders (municipal representatives, universities, the teacher union, disability organizations etc.). To what extent has the process taken into account earlier successful experiences of collaborative practices?

I would ask, is *implicit* the only solution? Is it enough? What if we tried an explicit and intentional one in the future? Therefore, I claim that *the Finnish education system could benefit from a more systematic and well-structured theory-oriented approach to educational change* that would be applied from the early stages of the process. The theory-orientation could involve a research-component to the development work right from the beginning. This kind of approach would also benefit from *a well-planned and structured participation of critical friends* whose role could be tailored to fit the context. Furthermore, the evaluation of Finnish education reforms in general could include systematic change theory in order to provide more structured information about the processes. Such an evaluation would benefit future processes of education policy making and planning by creating more comparable elements to different reform processes. These are options that should be seriously discussed, especially during this era when the research base in political decision-making has been emphasized in the speeches of politicians.



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## Appendix 1. Interview structure

### Interview structure

1 Your professional history with Andy/Michael

2 The school reform and educational change

*The past, the present, the future?*

3 Fullan's and Hargreaves' work with educational change

*Relation to education policy*

*Influencing - locally, nationally, globally?*

4 Global aspect

*What is the educational change's and reform policies' relation to the international organisations (e.g. OECD, The World Bank) or corporations?*

*In general, are these theories-of-action transferable to the other western cultures?*

5 Finland's position

*What is Finland's role in the international field of educational change and school development?*

*In general, are these theories-of-action transferable to the other western cultures?*



**Appendix 2A. PoP metrics Hargreaves November 13, 2012.**

<b>Hargreaves/Publish or Perish November 13, 2012</b>			
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Cites</b>	<b>Title*</b>	<b>Year</b>
1	3656	<i>Changing teachers, changing times: Teachers' work and culture in the postmodern age</i>	1994
2	1296	<i>Teaching in the knowledge society: Education in the age of insecurity</i>	2003
3	1229	Profesorado, cultura y postmodernidad: cambian los tiempos, cambia el profesorado	1996
4	1154	<i>What's Worth Fighting for in Your School? Revised Edition.</i>	1996
5	713	Understanding teacher development.	1992
6	668	<i>Sustainable leadership</i>	2012
7	637	Teacher development and educational change	1992
8	544	The emotional practice of teaching	1998
9	526	Cultures of teaching: A focus for change	1992
10	507	<i>What's Worth Fighting for Out There?.</i>	1998
11	435	What's Worth Fighting For? Working Together for Your School.	1991
12	406	Läraren i det postmoderna samhället	1998
13	395	Sustainable leadership	2005
14	395	Four ages of professionalism and professional learning	2000
15	377	Mixed emotions: Teachers' perceptions of their interactions with students	2000
16	316	Learning to change: Teaching beyond subjects and standards	2001
17	310	Os professores em tempos de mudança: o trabalho ea cultura dos professores na idade pós-moderna	1998
18	297	Emotional geographies of teaching	2001
19	289	Mentoring in the new millennium	2000
20	285	Teachers' professional lives: Aspirations and actualities	1996
35	191	<i>The fourth way: The inspiring future for educational change</i>	2009
52	104	<i>Two Cultures of Schooling: the case of middle schools</i>	1986

\*Publications mentioned by both/either Fullan and/or Hargreaves are emphasized.





**Appendix 2B. PoP metrics Fullan November 13, 2012.**

<b>Fullan/Publish or Perish November 13, 2012</b>			
<b>Ranking</b>	<b>Cites</b>	<b>Title*</b>	<b>Year</b>
1	11171	<i>The new meaning of educational change</i>	2001
2	3943	<i>Change forces: Probing the depths of educational reform</i>	1993
3	3060	Leading in a culture of change	2001
4	1590	<i>Change forces: The sequel</i>	1999
5	1154	<i>What's Worth Fighting for in Your School? Revised Edition.</i>	1996
6	1108	Leadership & sustainability: System thinkers in action	2004
7	837	Research on curriculum and instruction implementation	1977
8	808	The moral imperative of school leadership	2003
9	776	Getting reform right: What works and what doesn't	1992
10	713	<i>Understanding teacher development.</i>	1992
11	698	Successful School Improvement: The Implementation Perspective and Beyond. Modern Educational Thought.	1992
12	637	Teacher development and educational change	1992
13	624	<i>Change forces with a vengeance</i>	2003
14	584	The change	2002
15	507	<i>What's Worth Fighting for Out There?.</i>	1998
16	478	Change processes and strategies at the local level	1985
17	435	What's Worth Fighting For? Working Together for Your School.	1991
18	431	The three stories of education reform	2000
19	416	The return of large-scale reform	2000
20	346	What's Worth Fighting for in the Principalship? Strategies for Taking Charge in the Elementary School Principals	1988
32	243	<i>Turnaround Leadership</i>	2006
50	114	<i>All Systems Go: The change imperative for whole school reform</i>	2010

\*Publications mentioned by both/either Fullan and/or Hargreaves are emphasized.



### Appendix 3. Important books according to Fullan and Hargreaves.

#### According to Michael Fullan

July 1, 2013

##### *Authored by himself*

New meaning of Educational Change*	2001
All Systems Go	2010
Leading in a Culture of Change	2001

##### *Authored by Hargreaves*

Fourth Way	2009
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##### *By Fullan & Hargreaves*

Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School	2012
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\*Including previous editions.

#### According to Andy Hargreaves

December 13, 2011; January 24, 2012

##### *Authored by himself*

The Fourth Way	2009
Sustainable Leadership	2005
Teaching in the Knowledge Society	2003
Changing Teachers, Changing Times	1994
Two Cultures of Schooling	1986

##### *Authored by Fullan*

Turnaround Leadership	2006
Change Forces: Probing the Depths of Educational Reform	1993
Change Forces - The Sequel	1999
Change forces with a vengeance	2003
The New Meaning of Educational Change*	2007

##### *By Fullan & Hargreaves*

What's Worth Fighting for Out There?	1998
What's Worth Fighting for in Your School?	1996
Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School	2012



**Appendix 4. The weighing of different aspects in selection.**

**The importance of the chosen books according to PoP, Fullan and Hargreaves.**

<b>Book</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>PoP 2012</b>	<b>MF 2013</b>	<b>AH 2011/2012</b>
Change Forces 1	1993	x		x
Change Forces 2	1999	x		x
Change Forces 3	2003			x
Leadership and sustainability. System thinkers in action.	2005	x		
Turnaround Leadership	2006			x
The New Meaning of Educational Change	2007	x	x	x
Teaching in the knowledge Society. Education in the Age of Insecurity.	2003	x		x
Sustainable Leadership	2006	x		x
The Fourth Way. The Inspiring Future of Educational Change.	2009		x	x
The Global Fourth Way. The Quest for Educational Excellence*	2012			

\*Added later in the process



## Appendix 5A. Lessons by Fullan.

### Fullan, 2003

#### 8 Complex Change Lessons

- 1 Give up the idea that the pace of change will slow down.
- 2 Coherence making is a never-ending proposition and is everyone's responsibility.
- 3 Changing context is the focus.
  
- 4 Premature clarity is a dangerous thing.
  
- 5 The public's thirst for transparency is irreversible (and on balance this is a good thing).
- 6 You can't get large-scale reform through bottom-up strategies - but be aware of the trap.
- 7 Mobilize the social attractors (3).
  
- 8 Charismatic leadership is negatively associated with sustainability.

### Fullan, 2005

#### 8 Elements of Sustainability

- 1 Public service w/ moral purpose.
- 2 Commitment to changing context at all levels.
- 3 Lateral capacity building through networks.
- 4 Intelligent accountability and vertical relationships (encompassing both capacity building and accountability).
  
- 5 Deep learning.
- 6 Dual commitment to short-term and long-term results.
- 7 Cyclical energizing.
  
- 8 The long lever of leadership.





## **Appendix 5B. Lessons by Fullan.**

### **Fullan, 2005**

#### **10 Guidelines for System leaders**

- 1 The reality test
- 2 Moral Purpose
- 3 Get the basics Right
- 4 Communicate the Big Picture
- 5 Opportunities for Locals to Influence the Big Picture
- 6 Intelligent accountability
- 7 Incentivize Collaboration and Lateral capacity Building
- 8 The Long lever of Leadership
- 9 Design Every Policy, Whatever the Purpose, to Build capacity, too
- 10 Grow the Financial Investment in Education

### **Fullan, 2006**

#### **10 Elements of Successful Change**

- 1 Define closing the gap as the overarching goal
- 2 Attend initially to the three basics
- 3 Be driven by tapping into people's dignity and respect
- 4 Ensure that the best people are working on the problem
- 5 Recognize that all successful strategies are socially based and action oriented
- 6 Assume that lack of capacity is the initial problem and then work on it continuously
- 7 Stay the course through continuity of good direction; leverage leadership
- 8 Build internal accountability linked to external accountability
- 9 Establish conditions for evolution of positive pressure.
- 10 Building public confidence



## Appendix 5C. Lessons by Hargreaves.

### **Hargreaves & Fink, 2006** **7 Principles of Sustainability**

- 1 Depth. Learning and integrity.
- 2 Length. Beyond the implementation phase of change. The challenge of maintaining improvement.
- 3 Breadth. Sustainable (SL) leadership spreads. It sustains as well as depends on the leadership of others.
- 4 Justice. SL does no harm to and actively improves the surrounding environment - shares knowledge, resources w/ neighboring schools and the local community.
- 5 Diversity. SL promotes cohesive diversity and avoids aligned standardization of policy, curriculum, assessment, and staff development and training in teaching and learning.
- 6 Resourcefulness. Restraint and renewal. SL develops and does not deplete material and human resources.
- 7 Conservation. History and legacy. SL respects and builds on the past in its quest to create a better future.

### **Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009** **6 Pillars of Purpose and Partnership to Support Change**

- 1 An inspiring and inclusive vision.
- 2 Strong public engagement.
- 3 Achievement through investment.
- 4 Corporate educational responsibility.
- 5 Students as partners in change.
- 6 The mindful learning and teaching.



**Appendix 5D. Lessons by Hargreaves.**

**Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009**  
**3 Principles of Professionalism that Drive Change**

- 1 High quality teachers.
- 2 Positive and powerful professional associations.
- 3 Lively learning communities.

**Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009**  
**4 Catalysts of Coherence that Sustain Change and Hold it Together**

- 1 Sustainable leadership.
- 2 Integrating networks.
- 3 Responsibility before accountability.
- 4 Differentiation and diversity.



## Appendix 5E. Lessons by Hargreaves.

### **Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012** **6 Pillars of Purpose**

1 An inspiring dream that moves a nation/system forward and places teachers in the forefront.

2 Education as a common good

3 A moral economy of education.

4 Local authority within broad central parameters.

5 Innovation with improvement.

6 Platforms for change that enable people to have the capacities to help and develop themselves.

### **Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012** **5 Principles of Professionalism**

1 Professional capital.

2 Strong professional associations.

3 Collective responsibility.

4 Teaching less to learn more.

5 Mindful uses of technology.





## **Appendix 5E. Lessons by Hargreaves.**

**Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012**

### **4 Catalysts of Coherence**

1 Intelligent benchmarking.

2 Prudent and professional approaches to testing.

3 Incessant communication as a way to create coherence.

4 Working with paradox rather than striving for sameness and standardization.

