

SRHE Annual Conference, Bristol, December 2006
“Using large datasets for studying access to and participation within HE”
(Symposium F)

Degrees of success: the transition between VET and HE

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Outline

- Background
- Research design and questions
- Some methodological thoughts
- Preliminary results

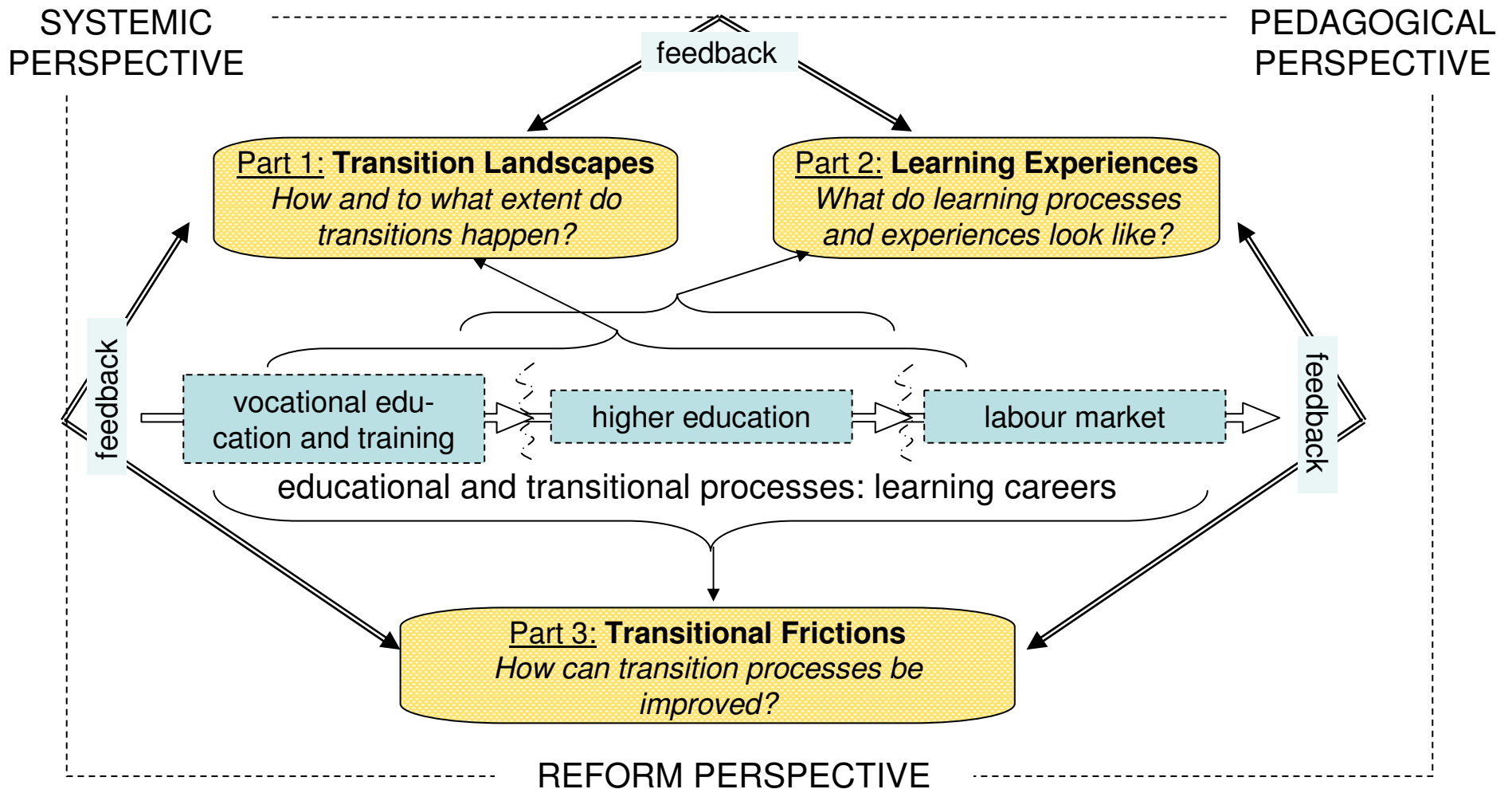


Background: Educational Expansion

- Increase in participation in full-time post-compulsory education
- Increased availability of vocationally-oriented qualifications aimed at 16-year olds
 - Post-compulsory expansion regarded as precondition for HE expansion and of widening participation
- international studies show that formal equality of academic and vocational pathways does not necessarily lead to similar rates of transition to HE in reality
 - opportunities only on paper?

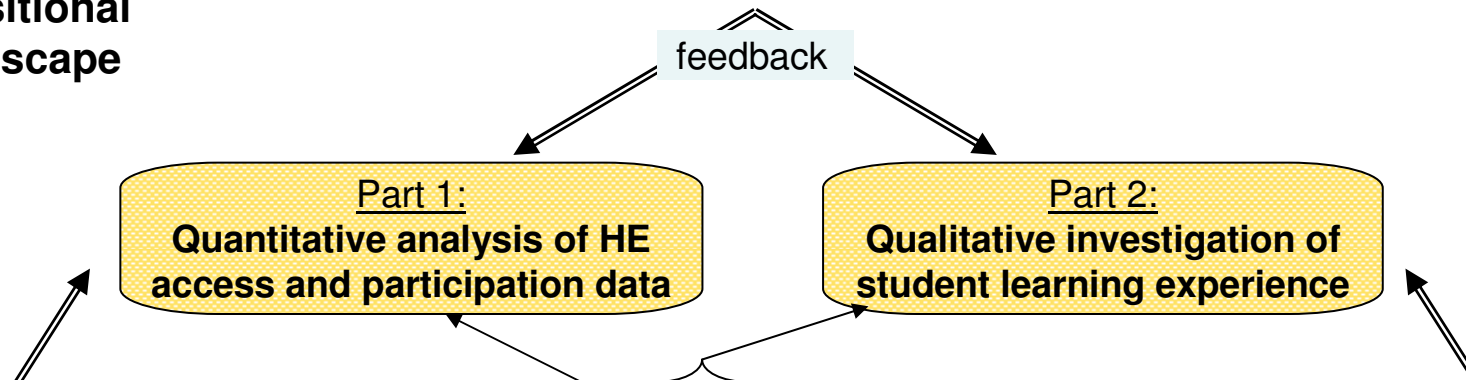


Research Design



Research Design

SYSTEMIC
PERSPECTIVE:
**Transitional
Landscape**



Research Questions:

- How many people with vocational qualifications go on to HE?
- How has this changed over time?
- At what HEIs and in which programmes do people with a vocational background study?
- What are the factors associated with the probability of transition?

HOLDERS IN VET and HE COMMUNITIES

Some methodological thoughts (I)

- Two different kinds of questions:
Description and explanation
- Results of both depend on theoretical perspective
- Clarity of concepts and theory needed to derive to testable empirical hypotheses
- Advanced techniques of data analysis are demanding regarding theory and data quality
- Data-quality issues are central



Some methodological thoughts (II)

Data Quality Issues

- Official data
- Self-reporting of facts
- Matching process
- “Funding-relevant” variables?
- Changes over time in variables



Some methodological thoughts (III)

Conclusion:

Theory and data analysis

and

qualitative and quantitative approach

have to inform each other in a recursive process

Preliminary results (I)

- Database

- 1995 and 2004 (covering 10 years)
- UCAS Applicants dataset
- Focus on students with vocational education and training background

(Problem: Variables describing prior qualifications change slightly over time)



Preliminary results (II)

<u>Qualifications</u>	1995	2004
Only A-levels	59.2 %	54.5 %
Only vocational	13.7 %	10.8 %
Only Foundation- /Access-courses	6.2 %	4.3 %
Only "Other"	3.4 %	6.5 %
A-levels and vocational	3.6 %	6.0 %
A-levels and other non-vocational	7.5 %	7.7 %
Any other combination	.0 %	3.9 %
No qualification given	6.4 %	6.3 %
<i>Total (N)</i>	<i>369.701</i>	<i>413.334</i>

Preliminary results (III)

- Applicants with VET backgrounds
 - Men are overrepresented
 - Older than A-level-applicants, much younger than FaA-course- and “Other”-applicants
 - Have together with FaA-applicants lowest socio-economic background



Preliminary results (IV)

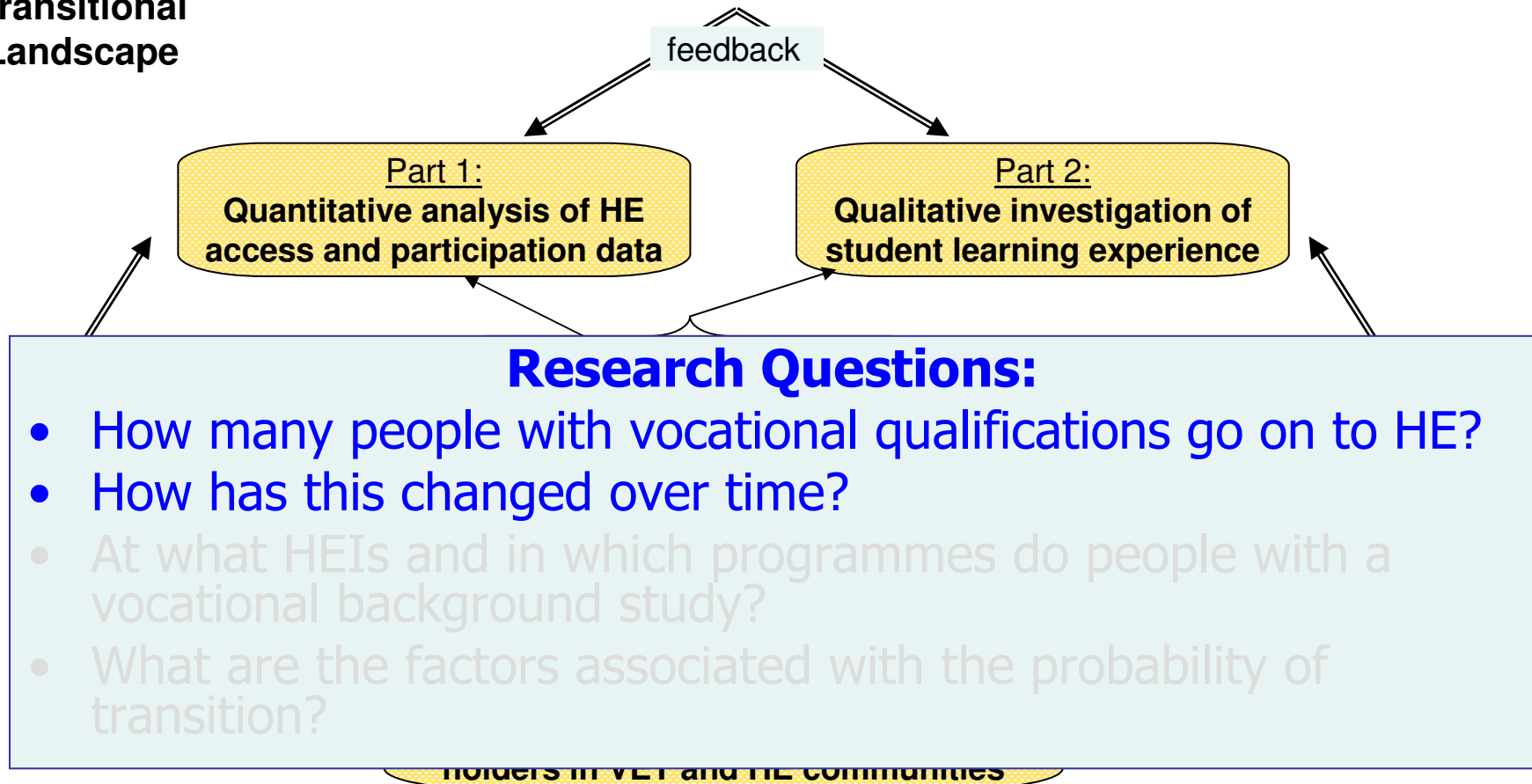
	B	S.E.	EXP(B)
AGE (in years)	.032	.001	1.033
SES (1=high, 7=low)	.041	.003	1.042
SEX (female)	.134	.010	1.143
Only vocational ^{a)}	.636	.014	1.889
Only Foundation- /Access-courses ^{a)}	.538	.025	1.712
Only "Other" ^{a)}	.908	.022	2.479
A-levels and vocational ^{a)}	.027*	.021	1.028
A-levels and other non-vocational ^{a)}	.352	.017	1.423
Any other combination ^{a)}	-.069	.026	.933
CONSTANT	-2.612	.021	.073

**Logistic regression; dependent variable: "Not accepted (no=0; yes=1)" (2004); N= 316.339;
Nagelkerke R²=0.045**

* Not significant at the 0.001-level ; ^{a)} Reference category "Only A-levels"

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... thank you for your interest!



Preliminary results (add.)

	1995	2004
A-level	70.3 %	70.4 %
Vocational	17.3 %	18.3 %
Foundation or Access	7.0 %	8.9 %
Other	10.1 %	16.3 %
No known qualification	6.4 %	6.3 %

Preliminary results (add.)

GENDER

Qualifications	Women	Men
Only A-levels	53.4%	46.6%
Only vocational	49.3%	50.7%
Only Foundation- /Access-courses	69.4%	30.6%
Only "Other"	55.5%	44.5%
A-levels and vocational	55.6%	44.4%
A-levels and other non-vocational	67.6%	32.4%
Any other combination	66.6%	33.4%
<i>Total</i>	55.7%	44.3%

Preliminary results (add.)

AGE (in years)

Qualifications	MEAN
Only A-levels	18.7
Only vocational	20.3
Only Foundation- /Access-courses	29.8
Only "Other"	28.9
A-levels and vocational	19.3
A-levels and other non-vocational	22.1
Any other combination	22.7
<i>Total</i>	20.6

Preliminary results (add.)

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS (1 = high, 7 = low)

Qualifications	MEAN
Only A-levels	3.1
Only vocational	3.9
Only Foundation- /Access-courses	4.1
Only "Other"	3.6
A-levels and vocational	3.6
A-levels and other non-vocational	2.8
Any other combination	3.4
<i>Total</i>	3.3