Journal of

Education

School of Education, University of Natal
Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

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Editorial

Editorial Committee

The thread running through the articles in this edition is that of policy change and knowledge systems lying beneath or alongside change issues. What kind of change is most appropriate is not unproblematic, even though we are generally clear what it is we wish to move away from. Most significantly, this assembly of articles provides theoretically interesting and important practical insights into the difficulties of achieving change.

Philip Higgs is thought provoking and controversial. His project is the quest for a philosophical framework that respects diversity, acknowledges lived experience, and challenges the hegemony of Western forms of universal knowledge. In looking for empowering knowledge that will enable communities in South Africa to participate in their own educational development, Higgs argues for African philosophy and indigenous African knowledge systems. In obvious ways the argument attempts to turn the past on its head. The concern for social transformation also carries with it the search for a new philosophical successor for fundamental pedagogics which in apartheid times dominated a range of competing discourses and served as the handmaiden of CNE. In another sense, however, the argument has some continuity with the past. It invests social groups with an essential and authentic identity. In the case of African identity, Higgs argues for the recovery of communalism, ubuntu, and humanism.

Our gratitude to Philip Higgs for his contribution is augmented by his permission for a response to appear in this same edition of the journal. This follows a number of precedents which were well received: *Journal of Education* 23 featured both Jonathan Jansen's article on the 'Grove' controversy, and a response from Helen Maree and Elizabeth Lowenherz; and more recently, No. 28 carried in the same issue a response from Laurence Piper to Penny Enslin and Veerle Dietliens' argument against participatory democracy in school governance. In both cases, in the interests of a readily accessible debate for readers, authors of the original submissions permitted responses in the same edition. This is a practice we hope to see continued.

Working also within a philosophical framework, Ben Parker commends the
Higgs argument for bringing an interesting repertoire of literature to the fore,
and for the laudable aims the project embodies. However, he suggests that the
case made by Higgs is a little simpler than reality. In particular, the quest for
recapturing essential identity and realising a specific form of philosophy is
located within tensions such as: unity and diversity; individual and
community; scientific knowledge and everyday knowledge. While there are
power relations within discourses, Higgs' discourse is disembodied from
particular contexts and their histories. How do the concepts it supports differ
from similar concepts and practices upheld in other traditions?   In addition,
Parker offers a reinterpreted, historically nuanced account of African
philosophies, which, it is suggested, were also influenced by other traditions.
Parker stresses the importance of contextual understanding. Since philosophy,
like other disciplines, is on the back foot in teacher education, it is unlikely
that an Africana philosophy of education has a context in which to develop
either as a discourse or as a community.

In their different ways, both Higgs and Parker make valuable contributions to
our understanding of a key topical issue.

Also within a philosophical framework, Jane Skinner is concerned that
'cognitive science' (dealing with the individual) and economics (dealing with
social collectives) are moving into the realm of hard science and prediction.
As a result, social policy, including education policy, readily becomes the
province of 'expert' scientists and economists in a way that undermines the
South African social project. Skinner's account reminds us of relevant insights
from a bygone period, most notably captured in Smuts' attribution of the
failure of nineteenth century science to "fixed dogma that there could be no
more in the effect than there was in the cause". Gently written but powerfully
argued, Skinner illuminates the limitations of policy rooted in the linear logic
of a particular version of economic and social thinking.

An issue that has emerged strongly in recent research is that of the identity
dilemma faced by teachers if changed practice is to be achieved (for example,
see Jansen, 2001)[1]. In this edition, Jeanne Prinsloo analyses discursive
practices of the past matriculation language syllabuses of the 1970s and 80s,
showing how learners within racially-based education departments were
variously constituted as the globally elite subject, the nationalist subject, and

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[1]   Jansen, J. 2001. 'Image-ining teachers: policy images and teacher identity in South Africa
        classrooms', *South African Journal of Education,* 21(4): pp.242-246.

the deficient learner. Prinsloo reminds us what it is that transformation hopes to lead us away from, and with reference to Foucault, of the extent to which the present holds within it the past. She argues that it is necessary for attempts at educational transformation to be mindful of how these discursive practices were effected, of the kinds of subjects and practices that were normalised, and of their resilience. While valuable in its own right, Prinsloo's article also begs further research questions: for instance, if education is 'relatively autonomous' (e.g., Hargreaves, 1980)[2] how is it that the political project comes to be so explicitly mirrored in syllabuses? Is there a link here with the dominant linearity of the 'hard science' type of thinking Skinner warns against?

Rob Moore takes the issue of identity to the pedagogic domain and its social base. Drawing on Bernstein, Moore draws attention to differing identity constructions inherent in curriculum policy. South African higher education policy aimed at 'programatization', involving the weakening of boundaries between subjects, implies a shift from a 'retrospective' to a 'prospective' orientation. Against this background, Moore offers a case study of one programme developed in line with policy reform. Its impulse was not, however, an extrinsic principle from outside the academy. Rather, policy opened a space for an enthusiast of interdisciplinarity to convene such a programme. The study explores the identity projections revealed by academics participating in the programme, and assesses the limited extent to which a sustainable social form was emerging. The case study leads to some interesting observations on Bernstein's concept of therapeutic identity. And yet again, readers have cause to recollect Skinner's earlier article on why policy can't be implemented.

Staying with higher education, Muller sketches a broader canvas revealing submerged, contradictory impulses behind policy: equity and access on the one hand, and innovation and economic development on the other. In viewing the contradictory logics of equalisation and differentiation to which higher education institutions must answer, Muller discusses two dimensions of institutionality: organisation and management, and knowledge. His emphasis is on the latter, particularly with respect to the degree to which research profiles have changed from basic to applied research. Although the overall picture is (unsurprisingly) neither direct nor simple, rhetorical accommodation to interdisciplinary curricula is evident. In Muller's nice turn of phrase, institutions are "clothing their usual research practice in the lineaments of the

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[2]   Hargreaves, A. 1980. Synthesis and the study of strategies: a project for the sociological imagination. In Woods, P. (Ed). *Pupil strategies*. London: Croom Helm.

new relevance." This is because knowledge systems have a durability born of their own logic. For policy makers, the important message is that the responsive capacity of institutions should not be underestimated.

The final article links interestingly with the central point made by Muller. The issue is still institutional responsivity to policy, and the effect the same: a gap between policy intention and realisation. However, in this case the institution is not higher education, but the *state* itself, responding here to internationally-inspired education development targets. The article itself, appropriately, emerged as the outcome of deliberations which took place between DFID's four education advisers based in East Africa in 2001 and 2002. Michael Ward, Jo Bourne, Alan Penny and Mark Poston ask whether the countries of East Africa base their education agenda on very different values, processes and priorities to those understood by their funding agency partners. Their analysis of policy failure draws on Chabal and Daloz's (1999) theory on the political instrumentalisation of disorder[3]. Instead of adopting the conventional perspective of the *failure* of African states to achieve good governance contributing to meeting education targets, this explanation turns the question around by asking: What do elites in African states achieve by disorder? The answer is that the informalization of politics, and, ultimately, use of *disorder as a political instrument,* serve to profit the vertical links between patrons and clients within the political and social system. The argument is as disquieting as it is powerful. Amongst the many questions it leads might be one linked to the first article in this edition: What happens to 'authentic' African identity in the modern state?

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[3]   Chabal, P. and Daloz, J.P. 1999. *Africa works: disorder as political instrument.* Oxford and Indiana: James Currey and Indiana University Press.

African philosophy and the transformation of educational discourse in South Africa

Philip Higgs

Abstract

The liberation of Africa and its peoples from centuries of racially discriminatory colonial rule and domination has far reaching implications for educational thought and practice. The transformation of educational discourse in South Africa requires a philosophical framework that respects diversity, acknowledges lived experience and challenges the hegemony of Western forms of universal knowledge. In this article I argue that African philosophy, as a system of African knowledge(s), can provide a useful philosophical framework for the construction of empowering knowledge that will enable communities in South Africa to participate in their own educational development.

Introduction

Philosophical discourse in South Africa about the nature of education, teaching and learning has always been fragmented. Traditionally, there have been those educationists who have worked within the context of a Marxist and neo-Marxist paradigm, while others have located themselves within the more general context of what may loosely be termed "democratic liberalism" which propagates the democratising of schooling and individual empowerment. Then there have also been those who have pursued their endeavours in the analytical philosophy of education tradition emanating from the Institute of Education at the University of London. In other quarters, educationists adopted a Doeyweerdian frame of reference for a philosophical discourse on educational matters. However, during the so-called apartheid years, philosophical discourse about the nature of education, teaching and learning was dominated by Fundamental Pedagogics which was seen to provide the foundational landscape for apartheid education in the form of the system of Christian National Education. As such, Fundamental Pedagogics was regarded as a crucial element in the hegemony of apartheid education as it revealed itself in

the system of Christian National Education (see, for example Higgs 1994,1995).

With the dismantling of apartheid and the abandoning of the system of Christian National Education it became necessary, however, to formulate, or at least begin formulating, a new philosophical discourse in education. But what should constitute such a re-vision of philosophical discourse in education? In this article, I argue for the introduction of an African discourse into the conversation surrounding the re-vision of philosophy of education in South Africa. Such a discourse will have reference to that spoken tradition and body of literature referred to as African philosophy. The role of this philosophical corpus is seen by many, for example, Diop (1996), and Diop (2000), as creating a new foundation and social fabric with the capacity to harness an ethos and intellectual production among African people as agents of their own humanity and collective progress.

Much of the history of Africa, and for that matter South Africa, has been dominated by colonial occupation. According to Ramose (2002), colonialism in Africa provided the framework for the organised subjugation of the cultural, scientific and economic life of many on the African continent. This subjugation ignored indigenous knowledge systems and impacted on African people's way of seeing and acting in the world. In fact, African identity, to all intents and purposes, became an inverted mirror of Western Eurocentric identity. This state of affairs gave birth to numerous attempts to reassert distinctively African ways of thinking and of relating to the world. Such attempts are located in the call for an African Renaissance.

The African Renaissance and educational discourse

The call for an African Renaissance has been present in the period marking the nearly four decades of African post-independence (see, Diop 1996, Maloka 2000, Muiu and Martin 2002). The process of decolonisation that unfolded during this period saw Africa assert its right to define itself within its own African context in the attainment of independence. Wa Thiango (1993) claims that independence was about people's struggle to claim their own space, and their right to name the world for themselves, rather than be named through the colour-tinted glass of the Europeans. In the context of education, Hoppers (2001, p.1) describes this continuing struggle in the following way:

> The African voice in education at the end of the twentieth century is the voice of the radical witness of the pain and inhumanity of history, the arrogance of modernisation and the conspiracy of silence in academic disciplines towards what is organic and alive in Africa. It is the voice of 'wounded healers' struggling against many odds to remember the past, engage with the present, and determine a future built on new foundations. It invokes the democratic ideal of the right of all to 'be', to 'exist', to grow and live without coercion, and from that to find a point of convergence with the numerous others. It exposes the established hegemony of Western thought, and beseeches it to feel a measure of shame and vulgarity at espousing modes of development that build on the silencing of all other views and perceptions of reality. It also seeks to make a contribution to the momentum for a return of humanism to the centre of the educational agenda, and dares educators to see the African child-learner not as a bundle of Pavlovian reflexes, but as human being culturally and cosmologically located in authentic value systems.

What is meant by an the African Renaissance in educational discourse is, therefore, founded on the perception that the overall character of much of educational theory and practice in Africa is overwhelmingly either European or Eurocentric. In other words, it is argued by advocates of an African Renaissance in educational discourse, such as, Teffo (2000), Vilakazi (2000), and Seepe (2001b) that much of what is taken for education in Africa is in fact not African, but rather a reflection of Europe in Africa. The African Renaissance has also, taken on a much greater significance in recent days with the call for the recognition of indigenous knowledge systems by scholars such as Hoppers (1999, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c) and Seepe (2001a, 2001b). The inference here is the distorted view that Africans possess little or no indigenous knowledge of value that can be utilized in the process of educational transformation. This same inference also presupposes, it is argued by protagonists of an African Renaissance in educational discourse, that the norm for educational achievement and success for African children and students is that of Western European capitalist elitist culture, where the English language is sacralized, and internalization of bourgeois European values is seen as the index of progress. And it is in response to this state of affairs, that the call for an African Renaissance in educational discourse goes out, a call which insists that all critical and transformative educators in Africa embrace an indigenous African world view and root their nation's educational paradigms in an indigenous socio-cultural and epistemological framework. This implies that all educational curricula in Africa should have Africa as their focus, and as a result be indigenous-grounded and orientated. Failure to do so, it is argued, will mean that education becomes alien, oppressive and irrelevant, as is seen to be the case with the legacy of colonial and neo-colonial education systems in Africa, including South Africa.

The call for an African Renaissance in educational discourse, therefore, seeks to demonstrate how indigenous African philosophies can be tapped as a foundational resource for the socio-educational transformation of the African continent, and also how indigenous philosophies can be politically and economically liberating. This means that by virtue of assuming the indigeneity of culture, the call for an African Renaissance in educational discourse does not connote a detachment from political radicalization and mobilization. In short, it would claim that the influence of Western Eurocentric culture on Africans, needs to be forcefully arrested by all critically conscious African educators in the struggle for the establishment of an African identity in educational discourse.

I now turn my attention to the contribution made by African philosophy to the establishment of such an African identity, and explore the possible framework that African philosophy can provide for the construction of empowering knowledge that will enable communities in South Africa to participate in their own educational development.

African philosophy and the problem of an African identity

The question of an indigenous African knowledge system, that is, of an African philosophy with a distinctive African epistemic identity is not unproblematic. In the light of Africa's colonial legacy, African philosophy is confronted with the problem of establishing its own unique African order of knowledge. The attempt to establish a distinctively African epistemic identity within the discipline of philosophy has brought into question what it means to be 'an African', and what it means to be 'a philosopher'.

The question of what meaning we attach to the adjective 'African' when we talk about 'African philosophy' is a crucial debate in attempts at establishing a uniquely African order of knowledge. Some African philosophers, for example, Mudimbe (1988) and Hountondji (1983,1985), regard an intellectual product as African simply because it is produced or promoted by Africans. They, therefore, adopt a geographical criterion in their definition of the term 'African' in 'African philosophy' in that they regard African philosophy as the contributions of Africans practising philosophy within the defined framework of the discipline and its historical traditions.

But then another criterion, referred to as the cultural criterion, is also used to determine was is meant by 'African' in African philosophy. According to this criterion, a philosophical work is 'African' if it directs its attention to issues concerning the theoretical or conceptual underpinnings of African culture. Such a view is clearly presented by Gyekye (1987, p.72) when he writes: "Philosophy is a cultural phenomenon in that philosophical thought is grounded in cultural experience." According to this view, then, the study of the traditional African world in terms of views, ideas, and conceptions represents the unique substance of African philosophy and legitimates reference to what is referred to as African philosophy.

With regard to the term "philosophy", two conceptions of philosophy have become prominent in debates about the idea of African philosophy. First is the definition of philosophy as a rational, critical activity. Those who adopt this definition of philosophy, for example, Appiah (1989a), Oruka (1990), Bodunrin (1985), Oladipo (1989), Wiredu (1989, 1996) and Hountondji (1983, 1985), frown at the attempt to equate African philosophy with traditional African world-views. In doing so, they make a distinction between philosophy in the popular sense, and philosophy in the academic sense. In the first instance, philosophy is regarded as being concerned with traditional African world-views whereas, in an academic sense, philosophy is a theoretical discipline like, for example, physics, algebra and linguistics with its own distinctive problems and methods. Scholars in Africa who view philosophy in this academic sense are referred to as universalist African philosophers because they emphasise reason as a universal human phenomenon. There are, however, other African philosophers such as, Anyanwu (1989), Gyekye (1989, 1997), More (1996), Motshega (1999), Mbiti (1970), Kaphagawani (1998) and Kwame (1992) who maintain that traditional African world-views constitute an authentic African philosophy. They insist on a definition of philosophy that is broad enough to accommodate these world-views. Recourse to traditional African world-views is taken up in the practice of what is called ethnophilosophy.

The two conceptions of philosophy that have become prominent in debates about the idea of African philosophy are thus marked by:

• those who insist on a strict definition of philosophy on a purity of form; they are out to defend the professional integrity of their discipline against the popularisation by cultural nationalists

- those who give a rather broad definition of philosophy and emphasise the specificity of the content of whatever is produced by African philosophers in the practice of ethnophilosophy.

The concern with definitions of, be they definitions of 'African' or 'philosophy' is considered by some, for example, Oladipo (1992) and Appiah (1989b) to be misguided and distracting. Oladipo (1992) argues that there are no definitions that capture the essence of either the terms 'African' or 'philosophy'. No one definition can be credited with a universal application, because both these terms are linked with a social history that impacts upon their meaning. In responding to the preoccupation with definition Appiah (1989b, p.12) points out that:

> There are ..... other issues for philosophers in Africa to explore now, which require not preliminary anxieties as to whether our work fits existing labels but confident examinations of some of the questions for which our training happens to have equipped us.

In the light of these remarks it would seem that the problem surrounding African philosophy is not the problem of anything meeting the criteria for being both 'African' and 'philosophical'. Rather it is the problem of the extent to which African philosophers have been able to put their intellect in the service of the struggle and destiny of Africans. In other words, the issue is not that of whether a contributor to a debate is African-born or whether the question under consideration is authentically African in the cultural sense. It is not even the issue of whether what they are doing is pure philosophy, applied philosophy, ethnophilosophy, social criticism or whatever. Rather, in the words of Oladipo (1992, p.24):

> ... it is the issue of the extent to which African philosophers have been able to use whatever intellectual skills they possess to illuminate the various dimensions of the African predicament.

This sentiment is taken up in part by African scholars, such as, Serequeberhan (1994), who adopt a hermeneutical perspective on African philosophy in African philosophy. Rooting themselves in what is traditional to Africa, they seek to escape an enslavement to the past by using that past to open up the future. They contend that philosophy properly construed must move beyond a preoccupation with universalist abstractions and ethnological considerations and call into question the real relations of power in Africa. In this regard, Serequeberhan (1994, p.43) states that:

The discourse of African philosophy is indirectly and historically linked to the demise of European hegemony (colonialism and neocolonialism) and is aimed at fulfilling/completing this demise. It is a reflective and critical effort to rethink the indigenised African situation beyond the confines of Eurocentric concepts and categories.

To appreciate the distinctive features of African philosophy, it is also helpful to compare its method and execution with other systems of philosophy. Appiah (1992) elucidates the difference between African and Western philosophy being mindful of the condescending attitude of the West towards Africa. For Appiah, the West considers the issue of what philosophy is 'for' - that is, its social meaning and relevance - with intellectual and academic contempt. Undoubtedly, the West does philosophize in a different style and method from Africa, although this may be attributed to enormous resources and funding. The West is concerned with perfecting philosophical discourse for its own sake, while Africa wants to use philosophy in a particular sense to address social issues, including the nature of a distinctively African education discourse.

Central to the issue of philosophy in Africa is the question of relevance and usefulness. Africa, perhaps owing to its level of development at this point, wants philosophy to contribute towards the political, economic, ethical and general upliftment of the people. In Africa, philosophy is expected to be pragmatic and to render a 'service'. It must contribute effectively towards the amelioration of the human condition, the lived and existing human condition. Wiredu (as quoted by Anyanwu 1989, p.127) concludes: "... we will only solve our problems if we see them as human problems arising out of a special situation". Thus, Anyanwu (1989, p.127) affirms that African philosophy "invites people to take a stand on the issue of reality as experienced." This experience of an African reality gives rise to a sense of commonality in an enunciation of an indigenous African knowledge system which finds expression in certain general themes in African philosophy.

General themes in African philosophy

Despite the diversity and extraordinary dynamism of the African continent as emphasised by Appiah (1997), it is argued by many (see, for example, Asante and Asante, 1990; Gyekye, 1997) that there are commonalities that unite the African experience. In the words of Diop (1962, p.7), "... there is a profound cultural unity still alive beneath the deceptive appearance of cultural

heterogeneity present in Africa which gives rise to the contents of an indigenous African knowledge system."

What, then, has African philosophy, as an indigenous African knowledge system, to say about a distinctively African experience of life? Letseka (2000) highlights the following commonalities in the African experience of life that are addressed as general themes in African philosophy: African communalism and the notion of "ubuntu".

According to Letseka (2000) the importance of communality to traditional African life cannot be overemphasized. This is because community and belonging to a community of people constitute the very fabric of traditional African life. Unlike the Western liberal notion of the individual as some sort of entity that is capable of existing and flourishing on its own, unconnected to any community of other individuals, not bound by any biological relationships or socioeconomic, political and cultural relationships, obligations, duties, responsibilities and conventions that frame and define any community of individuals, the communal conception of the individual in most traditional African settings is described by Mbiti (1970, p.108) in the following way :

> Whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say: "I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am".

This, Mbiti (1970) claims, is a cardinal point in the understanding of the African view of man. Commenting on traditional life in Kenya, Kenyatta (1965, p.297) echoes similar views:

> According to Gikuyu ways of thinking, nobody is an isolated individual, or rather, his uniqueness is a secondary fact about him; first and foremost he is several people's relative and several people's contemporary.

Menkiti (1979, p.158) concurs:

> A crucial distinction thus exists between the African view of man and the view of man found in Western thought: in the African view it is the community which defines the person as a person, not some isolated static quality of rationality, will or memory.

One is, therefore, a biological relative of a broad family; is linked to a broad network of other people through marriage; associates with others through community roles, duties, obligations and responsibilities, and is several other

people's contemporary or neighbour. In traditional African life a person depends on others just as much as others depend on him/her.

Letseka (2000) also observes that, traditional Africa morality is known for its concern with human welfare, hence "ubuntu", which means humanness. Gyekye (1997, p.158) argues that:

> ... if one were to look for a pervasive and fundamental concept in African socioethical thought generally - a concept that animates other intellectual activities and forms of behaviour, including religious behaviour, and provides continuity, resilience, nourishment, and meaning to life - that concept would most probably be humanism.

Humanism is used here to refer to a philosophy that sees human needs, interests and dignity as of fundamental importance and concern. Letseka (2000, p.182) points out that the expression: "umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu" captures the underlying principles of interdependence and humanism in African life. It translates to "a person depends on others just as much as others depend on him/her". It illuminates the communal embeddedness and connectedness of a person to other persons. It also highlights the importance attached to people and to human relationships. As Sindane (1994, p.8-9) suggests: "Ubuntu inspires us to expose ourselves to others, to encounter the difference of their humanness so as to inform and enrich our own."

In other words, to be human is to affirm one's humanity by recognizing the humanity of others. The underlying concern of "ubuntu" is with the welfare of others. In fact, Letseka (2000) argues that, individuals who strive for and fully embrace the notion of ubuntu as their goal are driven by a humanist concern for treating others with fairness. They are probably hoping that they in turn will also be treated with fairness, should they find themselves in similar circumstances. Fairness and humanness are, according to Letseka (2000), crucial to personal well-being. A fulfilled and flourishing life ought to be one in which persons are reasonably well fed, well clothed and housed, in good health, loved, secure, and able to make a conscious effort to treat others with fairness and humanness because they in turn are treated that way.

These commonalities in African experience, namely, a sense of communality and "ubuntu" (humanness) would indicate, as Teffo (2000) argues, that there is a way of thinking, of knowing and of acting, that is peculiar to the African. For Africans, what they know is inseparable from how they know it in the lived experience of their African culture. This sense of Africanness is, in other words, born out of a deep socioethical sense of cultural unity that provides the

African identity with its distinctiveness. What this may mean for the nature and content of an African educational discourse is my concern in what follows.

African knowledge and educational discourse

In the light of such a sense of Africanness, what then are the implications for the construction of an African discourse in philosophy of education? What ought to be the purpose of education in an African context and within the framework of African philosophy? And how does traditional African educational practice seek to educate the child?

Notwithstanding the diversity inherent in an African knowledge system, I have identified two general themes in African philosophy, namely, African communalism and the notion of "ubuntu". These two themes can be said to be pervasive to African philosophical thought in a socioethical sense in that they transcend the cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity of African peoples. In the light of this, it might be proposed that educating for communal life and "ubuntu" would be crucial to traditional African educational thought and practice.

Educating for life in the community would be rooted in, as Mkabela and Luthuli (1997) note, a welfare concern, where the basis of communalism is giving priority to the community and respect for the person. It also involves sharing with and helping persons. Educational discourse within this African frame of reference would help African people function in relation to one another in their communal tradition. Such a functioning would promote a collective effort directed ultimately at the good of the community. This collective effort in turn, would be characterised by a spirit of "ubuntu" which sees human need, interests and dignity as of fundamental importance and concern. For educational endeavour this would mean that traditional African educational thought and practice would be directed at fostering humane people endowed with moral norms and virtues such as kindness, generosity, compassion, benevolence, courtesy and respect and concern for others. In short, an African educational discourse would be fundamentally concerned with "ubuntu" in the service of the community and personal well-being.

Letseka (2000) is of the opinion that such an educational concern can be promoted through a pragmatic approach in which youngsters learn and acquire

it by example. The condition for such a pragmatic approach would be that youngsters live in communities that fully embrace and value humanism, understood as "ubuntu". It is assumed that persons in such communities would strive to treat others with a sense of "ubuntu", which entails treating them with fairness. A reciprocal expectation would be that those who are treated with fairness will also return the favour and treat others with fairness. As a normative concept, fairness is taken to be a desirable virtue on account of its concern with humane relationships.

The emphasis on communalism and "ubuntu" in traditional African thought and experience, also requires education in the African context to pay attention to interpersonal and co-operative skills. In this regard, Letseka (2000, p.189) argues that: "Certainly interpersonal skills have been shown to be an integral part of educating for ubuntu and the promotion of communally accepted and desirable moral norms and virtues."

The development of cooperative skills in younger people will, therefore, play a crucial role in promoting and sustaining the sort of communal interdependence and concern with the welfare of others that is encouraged by "ubuntu". This sort of interdependence highlights the fundamental principle governing traditional African life, namely, that persons depend on others just as much as others depend on them.

Traditional education in the African context, has sought to instil desirable attitudes, dispositions, skills and habits in children by means of recounting the oral traditions of the community. A great deal of philosophical and educational material is, as Okeke (1982) notes, embedded in the oral traditions and customs of the people. An important aspect of traditional African education thought and practice is, therefore, concerned with teaching children the oral tradition as well as helping them to learn to use language creatively and effectively. According to Boateng (1990) and Fajana (1986), such learning is in essence a central feature in the education of the African child, because it is through oral traditions that much of the history of the community, as well as its values and beliefs are passed on from one generation to the next. Oral traditions, therefore, played an active part in the African's everyday life and were a vital educational force in supplying accounts of a group's origin and related precedents to present-day beliefs, actions, and codes of behaviour. An educated person in an African context will, according to Fafunwa (1974, p.20), therefore, be an individual who is: "... honest, respectable, skilled, cooperative and conforms to the social order of the day."

In this sense, traditional African educational thought and practice is characterized not only by its concern with the person, but also by its interweaving of social, economic, political, cultural, and educational threads together into a common tapestry. And as a result, traditional education in Africa is distinguished by the importance attached to its collective and social nature, as well as its intimate tie with social and communal life. Education, then, in the traditional African setting cannot, and indeed, should not, be separated from life itself. It is a natural process by which the child gradually acquires skill, knowledge, and attitudes appropriate to life in his or her community - an education inspired by a spirit of "ubuntu" in the service of the community.

The centuries-old subjugation of Africa to colonial exploitation, ranging from slavery, to the creation of socioeconomic structures during the colonial era which were singularly designed to achieve maximum extraction and exportation of raw materials, wreaked serious damage that remain palpable years after the demise of colonial rule. This was accomplished, as Nkomo (2000) notes, by a whole range of arrangements including educational philosophies, curricula and practices whose context correspond with that of the respective colonial powers. In order to address this state of affairs in South Africa, a distinctively African knowledge system would have as its objective the goal of recovering the humanistic and ethical principles embedded in African philosophy, and more particularly, in the notions of communality and "ubuntu". Such an African knowledge system would also, as Hoppers (2000) points out, constitute an attempt to develop both a vision and a practice of education that goes beyond schooling, because it is about empowerment, laying the basis for African people to participate in mastering and directing the course of change and fulfilling the vision of learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together as equals with others. An educational discourse of this kind, views knowledge and minds not as commodities, not just human resources to be developed and exploited, and then cast aside, but as treasures to be cultivated to improve the quality of life of both individuals and societies. In such an educational dispensation, educational endeavour is directed, not at human resource development but rather, at the development of resourceful human beings in the service of their communities.

African philosophy, therefore, I would argue, provides a philosophical framework that can, and should, contribute to the transformation of educational discourse in philosophy of education in South Africa. This is primarily because, African philosophy respects diversity, acknowledges lived

experience and challenges the hegemony of Western Eurocentric forms of universal knowledge. Furthermore, such a pluralistically sensitive philosophical framework, such as, African philosophy can, also, contribute to the construction of empowering knowledge that will enable communities in South Africa to participate in their own educational development.

Conclusion

In South Africa, there is certainly much agonizing at the moment over the future form and direction which philosophy of education should take and many calls for new approaches and relevant paradigms (Higgs1999). In this regard, the discourse in philosophy of education in South Africa needs to take note of the contribution that African philosophy can make to the transformation of educational theory and practice. African philosophy, engendered by its appreciation of diversity and directed by a pragmatic concern for a better quality of life for all, can ensure that education ceases to function as an ideological handmaiden serving group interests in maintaining relations of power and domination. Educational discourse in South Africa certainly stands in need of this liberation from ideological hegemony which derives its power from the hegemony of Western Eurocentric forms of universal knowledge. People cannot be empowered if they are locked into ways of thinking that work to oppress them. Nor can people be empowered if they do not have access to those indigenous forms of knowledge which provide them with their identity as persons. The ideal of an African discourse in philosophy of education is for an epistemologically rich society of multiple sets of conceptual schemes, each giving us an entry into reality and maximizing a many sided understanding of whatever educational issues are at question in such a society.

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Back on the chain gang: some difficulties in developing a (South) African philosophy of education

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> We reject the power-based society of the Westerner that seems to be ever concerned with perfecting their technological know-how while losing out on their spiritual dimension. We believe that in the long run...the great gift still has to come from Africa – giving the world a more human face (Biko,1988, p. 61).

Abstract

Higgs (2003) calls for the development of an African philosophy of education as a key element in the transformation of South African education. Although Higgs does not provide a convincing account, his failures are useful insofar as they raise interesting questions about philosophical and educational discourses and the ways they are embedded in communities. These questions relate to tensions between unity and diversity, individual and community, scientific knowledge and everyday knowledge that will have to be addressed in developing a (South) African philosophy of education. I outline one possible beginning to a response to these questions through a brief exploration of *Africana* philosophy.

Introduction

Higgs (2003) provides us a with a useful overview of African philosophy and an interesting claim that it should become a 'voice' within South African philosophy of education. The overview (especially the references) is useful to those unfamiliar with the diverse range of 'philosophies' that are labeled broadly as 'African philosophy'. There are two main arguments running through Higgs' paper. The first uses evidence from the overview to show African philosophy has a set of common values running through its diverse discourses: communalism, 'ubuntu' and humanism. The second argument proposes these values as a foundation for "...the introduction of an African

discourse (based on African philosophy) into the conversation surrounding the re-vision of philosophy of education in South Africa" (Higgs, 2003, p.2).

The first part of this paper examines these arguments and finds them wanting primarily on the grounds that the account provided by Higgs is ahistorical and decontextualised. I provide some glimpses of history and context to support this critique and then move onto a more detailed discussion of African philosophy. Using Higgs' description as a launching pad, I explore a particular strand of African philosophy that is becoming increasingly influential internationally: Africana philosophy. In the final section, I link this discussion of African philosophy back to South African teacher education.

Philosophy of Education in South Africa

Higgs adopts a methodological approach that uses typologies to describe discourses. This can be a useful analytic tool, but Higgs uses it only at a conceptual 'level' and does not explore the power relations operating within and between the different discourses. Higgs distinguishes between five discourses within South African philosophy of education: marxist and neo-marxist; democratic liberalism; analytical philosophy of education (with its origins in the Institute of Education at the University of London); a 'Doeyweerdian' paradigm; and, fundamental pedagogics (FP). This typology is too brief to be helpful, at least in part because it is not 'mapped onto' a social reality: there is a lack of reference to people, institutions and texts, to their histories and to their relations to political and economic contexts.

Higgs does not explore the ways in which these discourses were intimately interwoven with Apartheid education. The boundaries between these discourses were often blurred, and people and their associations and the relations between them changed as broader political events unfolded. Democratic liberalism and analytic philosophy were often inseparable, especially from the early1980s onwards, and they maintained a vigorous debate with Marxists as evidenced in the proceedings of the conferences of the Kenton Educational Association and the journal *Perspectives in Education*. One key distinguishing characteristic shared by all three of these discourses was their opposition to fundamental pedagogics (FP) – the equivalent of philosophy of education in Afrikaans speaking institutions and those ethnic institutions controlled by the Apartheid state. For purposes of simplicity, I will label the first set of discourses "analytic" and the second set "FP".

The analytic discourses mentioned by Higgs were confined in the main to the 'white' English-speaking universities, with some influence in 'white' English-speaking training colleges and schools. The FP discourses were located in the Afrikaans-speaking universities, training colleges and schools and, for our purposes, more importantly, in those universities, training colleges and schools defined by their racial and ethnic identities: the institutions of "Bantu" education. Simple arithmetic shows that the first set of discourses had only a few adherents and little influence on teacher training and the schooling system for most of the second half of the twentieth century.

Given the struggles against Apartheid of the 1970s and 1980s and the 1994 election of a democratic government led by the African National Congress, one may well have expected the analytic discourses to increase their influence while the FP discourses would rapidly dissipate without support from the Apartheid regime. This reversal of influence did indeed happen but was confined, in the main, to policy developments and, as recently as 2002, most teacher education institutions in South Africa remained within discourses descended from FP – albeit stripped of the racist and Afrikaner nationalist language and imagery that characterised FP.

Analytic discourses, albeit from a small institutional base, became influential in policy-making through the major policy initiatives of the early 1990s. The National Education Policy Investigation, the National Skills Development Strategy, the Policy Framework for Education and Training, and the National Commission on Higher Education spelt out the initial visions of a post-Apartheid education system. The global weakening of Marxism and the increasing dominance of an aggressive capitalism saw liberalism emerge as the most influential of the analytic discourses. This can be seen in the emphasis on human rights in The National Education Policy Act of 1996 and in the commitment to devolving state power and encouraging community participation in decision-making in school governing bodies in the South African Schools Act of 1996.

This growing political influence of a 'liberal' discourse was not matched by an increasing institutional presence. It is worth noting the small size of South Africa's philosophy of education community. Through the 1990s, teacher education in South Africa underwent a massive re-structuring. In 1994 there were approximately 150 institutions providing teacher education to 200,000 students. Of these, 120 were colleges, under provincial or 'homeland' control. Out of the 150 institutions, there were probably no more than a dozen that were influenced by analytic discourses.

By 2001, after a massive downsizing in the provincial colleges, the remaining colleges were incorporated into universities and technikons and teacher education became a national competence provided by 27 public universities and technikons. In the period from 2003 to 2006, there will be a reduction in the number of universities and technikons as the higher education system is further re-structured. This will leave 17 public higher education institutions providing teacher education.

This is a small institutional base that remains divided by its history. Of the 17 institutions, perhaps 5 could be regarded as having traditions of philosophy of education characterised by analytic discourses and the remainder, in the erstwhile Afrikaans and 'homeland' universities, by FP. Given a predominantly liberal democratic form of analytic discourse (albeit with some tendencies towards communitarian and participatory approaches) and an FP that has disintegrated into a variety of neo-FPs, there would appear to be no existing discourse that provides a suitable breeding-ground for a new philosophy of education. More importantly, perhaps, the institutional base of philosophy of education has undergone such radical restructuring that the philosophers of education are more concerned about survival than becoming activists for a new discourse.

Within this vulnerable institutional base, Higgs wants to bring about a radical change in philosophy of education by dispensing with analytic and FP discourses and adopting an African educational discourse. Higgs argues analytic and FP philosophy of education in South Africa are Eurocentric: "European values (are) seen as the index of progress" (p. 3). For as long as it remains Eurocentric, philosophy of education will alienate and oppress Africans preventing the emergence of an African identity in educational discourse. What is needed is "....a new philosophical discourse in education" (p. 2). To find a source for this new discourse Higgs turns to African philosophy.

African philosophy

For Higgs " African philosophy respects diversity, acknowledges lived experience and challenges the hegemony of Western forms of universal knowledge" (p. 13). The emergence of African philosophy as a distinct field of study over the last fifty years has been chaotic, often fragmented and marginalised from mainstream fields of study. It would be difficult to pinpoint

a moment when one could say African philosophy had arrived in the sense that one talks about "Indian philosophy" or "Chinese philosophy". One indicator of recognition is the publication of the African Philosophy anthology published in the Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies series in 1998 (Eze, 1998). This anthology gives a clear indication of the diverse bodies of thought that sit underneath the broad tree of 'African philosophy'. Given this diversity, any attempt to provide a typology has a certain arbitrariness. For present purposes, I want to distinguish between three different discourses within African philosophy that provide a brief summation of the comprehensive description given by Higgs. This typology is not intended as an accurate description of African philosophy, it is merely a tool to further my review of Higgs' article in a way that helps to develop my later argument.

The first discourse privileges the "African" in African philosophy and is linked to a geographical definition that suggests that whatever comes out of Africa (people and products) is African; a re-discovering and promotion of traditional African world-views that may have strong religious overtones; a strong oral tradition invoking the importance of sagacity – of wisdom carefully collected and developed through the ages. The primary focus is on grounding 'reflection' in the daily life experiences of ordinary Africans

The second discourse privileges the philosophy in African philosophy and emphasises the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of African culture. Philosophy is a rational critical activity, a methodology with which to address conceptual and/or practical problems. For example, an African philosopher may be concerned with epistemological questions about the nature of knowledge or ethical questions about wealth and poverty or ethical professional conduct. What marks the philosopher as African is not methodological differences with his European or Anglo-American counterparts but the object of concern: African culture and lived experience.

The third discourse has roots in the previous two discourses and has emerged from a melding of a European tradition of hermeneutics, phenomenology and existentialism with an African tradition of philosophizing that expresses the authentic everyday life experiences of Africans. Lives that have been, and continue to be, characterised by poverty, suffering and the lack of dignity that goes with having only negative identities imposed by oppressive others.

Higgs aligns his position with Appiah (1994) and Oladipo (1992) and moves beyond concerns about defining African philosophy to an activism where African philosophers "...put their intellect in the service of the struggle and

destiny of Africans" (p. 6). This 'moving beyond' produces a synthetic discourse that contains elements of all three discourses described above. For Higgs, there must be a strong focus on the 'African predicament' - calling into question relations of power and addressing issues of poverty and violence. African philosophy of education must be relevant and useful. Where "(The) West is concerned with perfecting philosophical discourse for its own sake" (p.7), Africans must develop a philosophical discourse that has positive practical consequences.

Higgs bases this activism on three overlapping values that he claims are common across all discourses of African philosophy: communality, "ubuntu" and humanism (p. 9). Higgs gives some substance to these values. Being human is only possible through relationships with others, through being embedded in 'communities' such as family, neighbourhood, peer group, clan, religion or nation. African values are linked to a vision of human beings within communities where human needs, interests and dignity are of primary concern .

Educating ought to be a process of "fostering humane people endowed with moral norms and virtues such as kindness, generosity, compassion, benevolence, courtesy and respect and concern for others" (pp. 10-11). An education based on African values will encourage the development of co-operative skills and interpersonal skills. There will be a strong emphasis on indigenous knowledge as one source of an African identity. Within philosophy of education, there will be a strong emphasis on the key role of oral traditions and customs and the history, values and beliefs that they contain. Traditional 'sagacity' will be related to present-day beliefs, actions and codes of behaviour. Above all, education will not be separated from life itself; it is a natural process whereby through oral traditions a child acquires skills, knowledge and attitudes appropriate to life in his or her community.

Higgs wants his philosophy of education embedded and contextualised in an African perspective and linked to an activism that supports resistance to an oppressive Eurocentrism:

> African philosophy, engendered by its appreciation of diversity and directed by a pragmatic concern for a better quality of life for all, can ensure that education ceases to function as an ideological handmaiden serving group interests in maintaining relations of power and domination. (p.13)

These are laudable activist aims, but in 'moving beyond' concerns over defining African philosophy, Higgs has avoided key questions necessary for any understanding of what makes the activism 'African'. In moving to a 'transcending' synthetic discourse, Higgs has blurred the boundaries between the three discourses and in doing so produced conceptions of African values and philosophy that are too generic to be helpful. Many non-Africans would support the kind of pedagogies described by Higgs and the belief that education ought not to be the handmaiden of powerful political and/or economic interests, but they would be puzzled by his claim that these were particularly African values.

Higgs' difficulties demonstrate the complexity of defining African values in ways that are distinct from European values. Other values he mentions include: dignity, freedom, fairness, justice and human rights. At times, Higgs links these values explicitly to humanism. The difficulty that arises immediately is that many people and societies that would regard themselves as non-African would embrace these values. Many non-African constitutions are based on these values. So, what makes values distinctively African? Higgs (p.10) responds by asserting that:

> For Africans, what they know is inseparable from how they know it in the lived experience of their African culture. This sense of Africanness is, in other words, born out of a deep socioethical sense of cultural unity that provides the African identity with its distinctiveness.

Higgs provides no evidence for this 'deep socioethical sense of cultural unity', nor is it clear what would constitute such evidence. Were those Hutus engaged in the genocide of their Tutsi neighbours expressing 'a cultural unity'? How does this cultural unity embrace the diversity of the African Diaspora?

Higgs asserts two claims: Firstly, there are three common values underpinning African philosophies and, secondly, that these values must be linked to activism in support of the poor and oppressed through establishing an African philosophy of education. These assertions are not given sufficient support by Higgs' arguments. It is not clear how one distinguishes African humanism from European humanism, or African communalism from Chinese communalism. Although designated by an African word 'ubuntu', the notion that we are human through our relations with other humans, that our individual identity is embedded in social relations within the fabrics of multiple communities, has a long history in European, Chinese and Indian philosophy. Higgs can only claim that these are 'common' values that are uniquely African

if he assumes their meaning is broadly agreed upon by diverse African philosophies in a way that is different from non-African philosophies. This assumption cannot withstand the evidence of similarities with non-African philosophies and of the fierce contestations over interpretations of these values within African philosophy.

The failure of Higgs' first argument directly undermines his claim that these African values lead to, and justify, an activist African philosophy of education. His second argument falls with the first. Without a clear understanding of what makes values into *African* values, we cannot give a clear meaning to an 'activist African philosophy of education'. It would seem, then, that Higgs has not provided a convincing account. As I showed in the previous section, he has not indicated how this new discourse will develop an institutional base under hostile conditions, nor, as I have shown in this section, has he demonstrated that the three values provide a definition of what it means to be 'African'. I want now to go where Higgs did not go in his exploration of African philosophy.

African philosophy revisited

The dominance and pervasiveness of FP and its phenomenological philosophical roots had at least one unexpected consequence - preparing the ground for an intellectual tradition of resistance nurtured by those most brutalised by FP and Apartheid. For the last fifty years, the majority of philosophers and philosophers of education in South Africa were strongly influenced by FP and phenomenology. Following the emergence of Black Consciousness as a social and political movement in South Africa in the late 1960s, there were a few places (the universities of the North and Fort Hare and the University of Natal medical school most prominently) where the phenomenological tradition was appropriated by the students. A cadre of intellectuals emerged reading major theorists of the Western canon (Hegel, Marx, Heidegger, Husserl, Sartre) alongside African authors such as Malcolm X, Cabral, Fanon, Nyerere, Nkrumah (See Eze, 1998, for examples of their writing). In the early 1970s, the most prominent expression of this discourse was through the work of Biko (1987, 1988). This discourse was not widespread in South Africa, but it has persisted through the last two decades with a succession of intellectual voices speaking broadly within this discourse (see, for example, Pityana, et al, 1991, and Coetzee & Roux, 1998).

In the last decade, once freed of Apartheid's travel and communication restrictions, this 'indigenised' South African discourse has become part of a broader international movement known broadly as 'Africana philosophy' (Outlaw, 1998). Outlaw offers the following definition of Africana philosophy:

> ...a gathering notion under which to situate the articulations...and traditions of Africans and peoples of African descent collectively, as well as the subdiscipline or field-forming, tradition-defining or tradition-organizing reconstructive efforts, which are to be regarded as philosophy (Outlaw, 1998, p.23).

Africana philosophy has become a movement that embraces the African continent and the African Diaspora and draws on a long tradition of African philosophy that foregrounds the everyday life experience of Africans as slaves, colonised subjects, poor and oppressed. As a discipline, Africana philosophy draws on oral traditions, early writings (for example, Frederick Douglas) and cultural artifacts such as music as well the rigorous techniques of reason and analytic philosophy to construct African philosophy as a distinct discourse.

There is, then, a discourse that gives substance to the label 'African philosophy' that has addressed the question of what makes a value African. This discourse has roots in all three of the discourses described earlier, but it is not a 'synthetic' discourse. Its strongest roots lie in the first and third discourses; a combination of sagacity grounded in common life experiences of Africans with the Hegelian tradition and existentialism. From this base, it appropriates rather than synthesizes what it takes from the other discourses. One way of understanding this is to turn our question into a dilemma. On the one hand, African values must be a negation of western colonialism, of a western dominated globalisation and of Eurocentric philosophy (a position that Higgs appears to take). On the other hand, African values include many values common to western and other forms of humanism and so cannot be a simple negation.

This dilemma has confronted philosophy for a long time and has taken many forms over the ages. For example, in ancient Greece, philosophers debated how one can reconcile the 'one and the many'. One form of this tension is expressed as conflicting desires: For a universalism recognising that all human beings should be treated equally, fairly and with dignity; and, for a particularism recognising the importance of diverse indigenous identities, languages, religions, cultures, locations, classes, races and genders.

Within African philosophy, there are two responses to this dilemma. The one response is to see particularism as the negation of universalism, the African as the opposite of the European. The role of African philosophy is to invert the definitions and power relations of European hegemony leading to slogans like 'Black is beautiful'. There is a danger that this form of 'Africanism' becomes isolationist and exclusionary of the non-African. If one rejects all Eurocentric values, does one also reject human rights?

An alternative form of Africanism is grounded in resistances that are not negations but contestations. Rather than seek some mythological unity to stand against Eurocentrism, African philosophy can contest the dominance of Eurocentric philosophy by engaging and contesting it – even using its own tools such as rigorous rational analysis - to challenge the power relations that underpin and are expressed through Eurocentric discourses. In this way, an African culture and identity emerges that is similar and different to that of the European. This culture and identity is a consequence of synthesis and negation. Africana philosophy is a 'disciplined' articulation of this culture (reflecting the Hegelian tradition's belief in a close relationship between culture, philosophy and nation-building).

One example of this 'Africana' philosophy can be seen in More's discussion of the tension between universalism and particularism in the South African constitution expressed most clearly in the preamble as 'united in our diversity' (More, 1998, p.369). One expression of this tension is between individual and group or collective rights. More notes that the constitution requires, on the one hand, that one look beyond accidental differences such as race and gender and regard every individual human as essentially the same and, on the other hand, that one acknowledges that cultural, religious and linguistic communities or groups have rights. An example of this ambivalence lies in the Constitution's commitment to non-racism and non-sexism and to redressing race and gender inequalities through programmes predicated on the recognition of race and gender groups (p.372).

From the perspective of a Eurocentric universalised humanism, persons have human rights just because they are rational autonomous individuals. This abstract humanism can be exclusive and oppressive. If one defines Africans as barbarians (non-rational), as did Hegel, one can deny them human rights on the rational grounds that they are not humans. The risk is that human rights discourse becomes a false universalism – a hegemonic particularism pretending to universalism (p.368). By contrast, Africana philosophy, able to

draw useful lessons from the work of a 'racist', locates human rights, historically and contextually, in the real life experiences of Africans.

It is for such reasons that Fanon rejects the Eurocentric humanism of Marxism and liberal democracy for failing to handle problems of racial, ethnic, religious and sexual suppression, but he does not reject humanism: rather, Fanon grounds his humanism in African culture and argues:

> The conscious and organised undertaking by a colonized people to re-establish the sovereignty of that nation constitutes the most complete and obvious cultural manifestation that exists. (Fanon, 1963, p. 245)

And

> National consciousness is the most elaborate form of culture.... and ... is the only thing that will give us an international dimension. (p. 247)

Fanon is not an uncritical African nationalist. While he argues that an African identity is intimately interwoven with culture and nationalism, if "... nationalism is not made explicit, if it is not enriched and deepened by a very rapid transformation into a consciousness of social and political needs, in other words into humanism, it leads up a blind alley" (p. 204).

Fanon's favorite example of a nationalism that has uncritically absorbed the 'consciousness' of its European colonizers and headed up a blind alley is America (p. 313). To avoid this fate, Africa must engage in a culturally based nation-building grounded in the human needs of its citizens based on values that are humanist, though not Eurocentric. One needs to take the European out of humanism and place the African as the central axis of orientation for humanism. To be a successful counter-hegemonic discourse, African philosophy and culture has to avoid the pitfalls of false universalism and engage with the full diversity of humanisms found on our planet. For Fanon, this is the only way that African nations can develop a continental and international identity capable of contesting effectively the unequal power relations that oppress Africans.

Fanon's writing, for all its resonance, predates the emergence of Africana philosophy and the onset of post-modernist discourses and their challenge to traditional myths of Eurocentrism and their recognitions of many particularisms, of a diversity of suppressed identities based on gender, class, race, religion, and location. How to include diversity within liberal democracies has been a major theme in Western political philosophy over the

last thirty years. As Gilroy notes, much of what is identified as post-modern is prefigured in the experiences and cultural expressions of those subjected to slavery and colonialism (Gilroy, 1993, p.42). Moreover, it was the advent of postmodern discourses that opened the door for the emergence of African philosophy as a distinct field of study.

Many postmodern discourses share with Africana philosophy a desire to challenge a false universal humanism, but without losing those values – liberty, equality, dignity – so extolled by that very humanism. One has to recognise that: "... the modern subject may be located in historically specific and unavoidably complex configurations of individualisation and embodiment – black and white, male and female, lord and bondsman" (p. 46).

And, equally, one has to acknowledge the achievement of civil societies that are just and fair, where people are free to realise their potential, be treated with dignity and equal concern, and enjoy the benefits of peace, security and prosperity. Gilroy and More are arguing for a position that does not simply accept the dichotomy between universal values and particular identities (in which African is the negation of European), nor do they attempt some form of synthetic reconciliation that represents a false universalism, rather, they argue for an on-going contestation based on African lived experience (of poverty and violence) that gives rise to philosophical discourses and other cultural expressions such as rap music that assert the importance of being human and having rights but in a way that is distinctively grounded in the circumstances of everyday 'African life'.

What might all this mean in practice? It is worth looking at one practical example: a political philosophy debate from *Journal of Education 28* on what could be broadly labeled as the values of 'freedom' and 'equality'. The debate is between, on the one hand, Dieltiens and Enslin (2002) arguing against participatory democracy, and on the other hand, Piper (2002) arguing for participatory democracy. This debate is linked to a larger debate between critical theorists (Habermas, 2001; McCarthy, 2001) and liberal democrats (Rawls, 1995). Critical theory discourse argues for a deliberative democracy that is as inclusive as possible allowing diverse voices and identities to participate in political decision-making. Liberal democrats believe these procedural approaches collapse into a utilitarianism where the majority is able to override the rights and interests of minorities. Instead, they favour an accountable representative democracy with strong constitutional guarantees for individual rights.

Dieltiens and Enslin suggest that participatory democracy could undermine the goal of equality in the schooling system through creating restrictions on the autonomy and capacity of the state to address inequalities, privileging elites who are able to dominate participatory decision-making forums, and devaluing the intrinsic worth of education as powerful interest groups force schools to cater to economic, political, religious or other perceived extrinsic needs (Dieltiens and Enslin, 2002, p.16) . Piper acknowledges that these are very real difficulties, but suggests that the struggle to achieve more participatory forms of democracy are worthwhile as this promotes more active citizenship, diversity of opinion, and a strong civil society based on trust and solidarity (Piper, 2002, p.36). For Piper, "participatory democracy affirms the transformative potential of rational argument.... thus building both a sense of the common good and a sense of a common identity" (Piper, 2003, p.28).

Piper's argument suggests that freedom and equality are interwoven with trust and solidarity. This would fit closely with an Africana philosophy that emphasises the importance of embedding the autonomy and freedom of the individual in social relations and believes the worth of one's freedom is immediately related to the degree of trust and solidarity expressed in those social relations. This debate maps neatly onto our earlier debates and shows how humanist values such as freedom and equality can be interpreted in ways that are conceptually in tension and reflect distinct social movements and discourses. One interesting characteristic of the articles by Piper and Dieltiens and Enslin is they have a South African context and content combined with rigorous analysis and argument. Moreover, the issue –a choice between more representative or more participatory forms of governance – is of direct relevance to challenges facing the schooling system. In other words, are these articles not examples of the kind of academic activity that Africana philosophy advocates?

Towards a (South) African philosophy of education

Before concluding, it is important to raise the question: Why is an Africana philosophy of education important? I want to suggest that its primary importance lies in the values that it brings to education. In South Africa, the last decade has seen a strong state-driven attempt to integrate education and training through an outcomes based National Qualification Framework (NQF) in order to increase access, mobility and portability within the education

system. This has lead to a strong emphasis on criterion-based assessment and a 'regulatory' approach to the state's control over teacher education.

In 2000, the Department of Education (DoE) produced a new set of Norms and Standards for Educators using an outcomes based approach that does not provide a curriculum for teacher education but represents, in a broad and generic manner, the requirements of the DoE as an employer in respect of knowledge, skills and values that an educator must acquire to be competent and capable. These requirements are heavily influenced by labour law requirements such as the construction of an occupational structure with clearly defined career paths and the ability to identify 'incompetent' or 'incapable' teachers or teachers guilty of 'misconduct'. These criteria are 'formal' rather than substantive and provide little description of pacing, sequencing or progression, and appropriate depths of content knowledge and cognitive processes. While this allows for a significant degree of institutional autonomy over the curriculum, it presupposes that teacher educators and teachers can read the criteria in a way that is meaningful and 'aligned with' the meaning intended by the state in promulgating the criteria.

In their critique of the Norms and Standards for Educators, Shalem and Slonimsky assert:

> ...the point is that any of the 120 specifications displayed for the three kinds of competence (practical, foundational and reflexive) only make sense from within the moral and political values and the pedagogical preferences embedded in the educational perspective held by the competent educator (Shalem and Slonimsky, 1999, p.14).

The criteria are only useful as descriptions of competence from a particular educational perspective. A trainee teacher will only acquire this perspective with its ethical, epistemological and ontological commitments through initiation and inculcation: "I cannot be told criteria. I am in criteria in much the same way that I belong to a community" (p. 14).

This question of being 'in criteria' or 'in community' raises similar philosophical issues to being 'an African'. Within any discourse, be it regulative, instructional, philosophical or musical, meaning emerges from an 'embedded' perspective – speaking and listening with understanding are communal or collective practices – and these perspectives are always value-ladened. In developing the Norms and Standards for Educators, the DoE could do no more than construct an 'ideal community of agreement' through an extensive process of consultation. One problem with an ideal community is

that it does not exist – there is no community of practitioners whose beliefs, attitudes, values and practices are 'pictured' by the criteria. Similar problems face the Ministry of Education's *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (2001). A manifesto is merely a wish list unless it is embedded in a discourse and a community.

For a discourse to exist and develop it must be spoken by a community. For a (South) Africana philosophy of education to develop, it needs a community. This should not be taken to imply that developing philosophy of education is an exercise in community development. It is also an intellectual project - the discourse of an Africana philosophy of education has to develop through addressing philosophical questions that arise in our context. Philosophy provides the methodology, African 'life experiences' provide the content (More, 2003). Unfortunately, the trends in South African education described earlier have resulted in moves away from a discipline-based approach in teacher education to a multi- or inter- disciplinary approach associated with a strong emphasis on applied practice. As a consequence the disciplinary grounding and identity of philosophers of education has been undermined as they become absorbed along with sociologists, psychologists and historians of education, into loose amalgams of social theorists and the curriculum becomes increasingly segmented and applied to everyday life contexts (Bernstein, 1996, p.23). This movement is linked to international trends towards more occupationally relevant forms of training and applied forms of theory and to pressures from the schooling system and education authorities for competent and well-habituated teachers who will re-vitalise and transform the schooling system. This augurs badly for Africana philosophy of education.

For trainee teachers to gain anything from studying Africana philosophy, there must be sufficient time and space within the curriculum and sufficient human and material resources to provide the extensive discipline based education and training required to enter the world of Africana philosophy. Given my earlier descriptions of the present institutional base and discourses of philosophy of education in South Africa, and of the increasing influence of criterion based approaches to teacher education, it is unlikely that an Africana philosophy of education will develop either as a discourse or as a community. There is an opportunity, albeit very slim, to develop a 'positive' Africana philosophy of education promoting a liberating cultural nationalism that appropriates values such as freedom, autonomy and human rights, truth and scientific knowledge, justice and fairness and creates an African nationalism in which state and civil society share a commitment to an equal concern for all people (Dworkin, 2000). Such an Africana philosophy of education would develop at a

discursive level with a disciplinary structure – a field with boundaries – that would maintain a healthy tension with the need to be open and inclusive. One requires both critical, argumentative reason and a community that takes the life experiences and circumstances of Africans as the context and content of the discipline. An ideal community of Africana philosophers of education would demonstrate an activism sensitive to the fragility of trust and solidarity, to the vulnerability of civil society, communities and nations and to the inevitable value and ethical conflicts that face any social enterprise. Even if this opportunity were to evaporate, we may take some comfort in the resilience of African philosophy with its long history of being a marginalised counter-hegemonic discourse of which Africana philosophy is a powerful contemporary force.

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Why (education) policy can't be implemented these days: some philosophical considerations

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Abstract

The natural sciences (most of us would agree) are progressively discoverable and at least potentially open to clear statements concerning what is true or false if, for instance, Newton is not to be entirely discredited. The human sciences would, on the other hand, seem to be inherently relativistic, given that human thought and action are essentially unpredictable. What is true or false here cannot, we imagine, be so precisely stated. This contention – a truism in sociological terms – appears to need rigorous defence at the moment in the light of various theoretically dominant positions that suggest that there is no difference between these two ways of knowing. 'Cognitive science' (dealing with the individual) and economics (dealing with social collectives) are increasingly seen as 'hard' sciences amenable to analysis and prediction. In this situation social policy, including education policy, becomes the province of 'expert' scientists and economists. I argue that the effect of this is to undermine the standing of social policy as conscious, democratic, political and ethical action planning.

Rationalist thinking

For more than two millennia Western society has been strongly wedded to the philosophical idea of the 'excluded middle' (Margolis, 1991, p. xi). This is the idea that there can be just two truth values – true and false, that something must be either 'A' or 'not A'[1], and therefore that nothing indeterminate can exist in between. Add to this the nineteenth century understanding of science as physical, material and mechanical, and that there can be no more in the effect than there is in the cause, and you have the kind of rationalism that

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[1] This idea originated with Aristotle in the 4th century BC.

flourishes just now, even in core aspects of the human sciences. And this is despite an apparent philosophical retreat from positivism.

Cognitive 'science': rationally determined individuals

Let us consider first something of immediate concern to educators – the nature of the developing 'science' of cognition. This broad field of theory, which encompasses biology, psychology and philosophy, assumes that since only material substances and identifiable processes can exist (genes and neurons in this instance) our 'folk psychological' ideas of (non-material) mind are mistaken. This approach is significant enough to have acquired a philosophical term for itself – eliminativism[2] – suggesting that we can eliminate conceptions of 'mind' or 'consciousness' as separable phenomena. Its proponents see the brain as simply the end point of a mechanistic evolutionary process and psychology as parallel, also evolutionary, and also increasingly 'scientific'. Joseph Margolis quotes as representative of these widespread views, Steven Pinker in *How the mind works*:

> The biologist Richard Dawkins called natural selection the Blind Watchmaker; in the case of the mind, we can call it the Blind Programmer … the brain is destined to be an organ of computation. … Every part of the body from the toenails to the cerebral cortex takes on its particular shape and substance when its cells respond to some kind of information in the neighborhood that unlocks a different part of the genetic programme (Margolis, 2002, pp.1-2).

Cognition, in this conception, is 'algorithmic' involving complex stimulus-response mechanisms concerned with rules of calculation, about which we are learning more and more, and all of which allow us to move towards the position where we no longer have to assume a mind that 'does the thinking'[3]. (In this vein, a series of lectures given in 2002 at the University of Natal, Durban, was entitled 'Thinking without a mind'). Note that if our responses are rationally predetermined, we cannot ultimately be seen as agents, and if we are not in the last instant agents, we cannot logically be seen as responsible for our actions. Significant proponents of this view 'insist that our folk

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[2]   These ideas are particularly associated with Wilfrid Sellars, whose philosophy of mind has been developed through this concept of 'eliminativism' which is supported in different ways by two other significant contemporary philosophers – Richard Rorty and Daniel Dennett.

[3]   This computational approach to cognition is associated particularly with Paul and Patricia Churchland.

psychological apparatus for interpreting people, including ourselves, as conscious agents, is a theory and one almost certainly false, at least in its fine details'(Ross, 2000, p.7). In this conception the tendency that may be noted in the human male towards rape, for instance, would have to be treated as a condition to be re-programmed if possible – rather than an issue of moral responsibility.

Now these and related developments clearly represent an up-to-date version of behaviourism, with serious implications not only for ethics but also for teaching and learning. They would leave educators with the primary task of understanding the underlying neural and genetic codes in order to provide appropriately designed stimuli to make learning happen. But the fact that we as educators might feel alarmed by this idea is neither a good scientific, nor a good philosophical, reason for rejecting it. We will need to look for the logical flaws in the theory if we want to challenge it successfully. To recap before considering them: these cognitive theories, as they stand, assume (a) that nothing immaterial exists; (b) that human reactions, however complex, are the result of a mix of genetic preprogramming and neural activity, and (c) that this mix is only the sum of the parts: our assumptions about consciousness as an independent state are mistaken. Thus these 'naturalisers', for their theory to hold, must be able eliminate consciousness as something that differs in kind from the mechanisms that allow it to operate.

Interestingly, compelling arguments against these positions were made almost eighty years ago by two very different thinkers – both South African: the statesman and scholar Jan Smuts, and the natural scientist Eugene Marais. Writing in 1926, Smuts points out that:

> Nineteenth-century science went wrong mostly because of the hard and narrow concept of causation that dominated it. It was a fixed dogma that there could be no more in the effect than there was in the cause; hence creativeness and real progress became impossible (Smuts, 1936, p.1).

But the really significant thing about evolution, Smuts points out, is that it *disproves* conclusively that there can be no more in the effect than there is in the cause.

> 'If evolution is right, if life and mind have arisen in and from matter [not from supernatural causes] then the universe ceases to be a purely physical mechanism … We are in effect endeavouring to go forward with two inconsistent sets of ideas, that is to say, with the idea of Evolution (not yet adequately realised) and the pre-Evolution physical ideas (not yet quite abandoned)' (Smuts, 1936, p.10).

Smuts would have been amazed no doubt to find that the upshot of this seventy-six years on is the continuation of 'pre-Evolution physical ideas' not yet at all abandoned – indeed reinforced!

Smuts' contemporary, Eugene Marais, was also passionately interested in evolution, and after four years studying a whole range of species in the wild, from the level of ants up to the intelligent social adaptations of chacma baboons, he came to a parallel conclusion. The really significant evolutionary development, Marais believed, was *the onset of consciousness itself* – a development he saw as necessarily neither organic nor material but rather a development of the pre-conscious, instinctive, psyche. He was led to his conclusion by considering the limitations that are inherent in most evolutionary adaptations. A bodily adaptation developed to fit a species to one environment could lead to its extinction if this environment changed. But 'no bodily specialisation ever so surely confines an animal to a limited environment as the attendant instinct … An instinct is in this respect tyrannous!' (Marais, 1973, p.85). For instance an amphibious lizard, whose predators were all aquatic, had over millennia developed a reaction to any danger by making for land. When men arrived in its environment it instinctively continued to react to this new danger by going inland where it was now most at risk. Therefore, Marais suggests, 'would it not be conducive to preservation if … a species could suddenly change its habitat to meet any new natural conditions thrust upon it by means of immediate adaptation?' That is, the most valuable adaptation would entail that an animal could think its own way out of trouble. It was only when instinctual behaviour was *superceded* by conscious thought ('through a modification of the brain and its functions … the attributes selected had necessarily to be psychic' (Marais, pp.87-88)) that sentient creatures were in a position to take conscious decisions about their own habitat. And an adaptation designed to overcome the limitations of pre-programming cannot itself, we assume, be subject to pre-programming, however complex[4]. This reinforces Smuts's notion that physical materiality was followed by life and life was followed by mind, each evolving from the other and all being present together in sentient beings. Life is therefore not to be understood as *the same* as the inert substances that produced it, and nor is consciousness *the same* as pre-consciousness. To approach the, as yet unthreorised, nature of life and mind as if they are no

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[4]   The idea of immateriality is viewed with the deepest suspicion by contemporary naturalisers – and yet it has the most acceptable scientific credentials including endorsement by Newton (gravity) and Einstein (the dispelling of the need to posit an 'ether' through which light travels).

different from their physical and mechanical progenitors is potentially very dangerous. In genetic modification we sense this danger without being able precisely to quantify it.

Clearly the phenomenal nature of consciousness is that it does something different and a lot cleverer than merely unlocking parts of genetic programmes. It would be useless if did only that. Consciousness does not merely 'compute' – it discriminates, and so becomes the programm*er*. It allows us to take into account and assess a range of contingent facts and circumstances – logical, ethical, political, economic – to weigh and balance them and then to come up with an appropriate response, or a range of potentially appropriate responses, in any context. Logical computation is clearly an integral part of this process, but the different elements in decision-making cannot be prised apart. The logic is not separable from the context that gives it meaning.

Therefore it would seem plausible to argue against the naturalisers (a) that the immaterial must be acknowledged to exist (b) that human responses cannot be seen simply as the result of genetic preprogramming and (c) that consciousness is an independent faculty or capacity that has evolved from, but beyond, pre-consciousness. These two approaches to epistemology entail important differences in our understanding. The mind as an organ of computation (as 'naturalisable') assumes the existence of sets of correct answers, but the mind as an organ of conscious discrimination allows for infinite possibilities. Sets of answers algorithmically determined exclude fuzzy answers, answers that will change according to circumstance, and the fact that there may exist a whole range of answers, all potentially valid. They therefore exclude (or ought to exclude) answers determined on the nuanced and context-specific grounds of ethics and politics. The materialist understanding of mind as a computer of determinable truth, would therefore appear to be very problematic for an appropriate handling of social policy.

Game theory/ decision theory: rationally determined societies

Society, seen as the simple aggregation of these potentially computable components, becomes, of course, just a larger mathematical problem. For instance Robert Nozick argues in his book *The Nature of Rationality* that 'rationality provides us with the (potential) power to investigate and discover

anything and everything' (Nozick, 1993, p.i). However, he fails to point out that to calculate why a plane stays in the air in normal circumstances (a natural scientific truth) and why it stays in the air when there is a shoe-bomber on board (a social one), will require quite different kinds of rational assessment. His claim about the power of reason would therefore appear to need further elaboration. Does he mean rationality as logical computation or as social reasoning? When he goes on to discuss 'the sleek theory of rational action – decision theory' as 'providing the framework of rational strategic interaction … the formal theory of social choice and welfare economics, the theory of microeconomic phenomena and elaborate theories of the political realm' (p.xiii) this suggests that he in effect fails to make any such distinction. A 'formal theory of social choice' in welfare, in politics or even in economics, assumes that the logic involved can be separated out and applied independently from its context.

A discussion of the 'Prisoners' Dilemma' is instructive here as it provides an exception to the decontextualisation that Nozick (and others who adopt this understanding of reason) generally adhere to so strictly. The dilemma concerns a puzzle as to whether confessing to a crime is the rational thing to do for a pair of prisoners who are not in communication with each other but who know that particular lengths of prison sentence depend on their joint decisions to confess or not. The outsider's reaction might be to ask: 'Well, were the prisoners guilty? – which one was guilty? – did the law provide an appropriate sentence? what was their crime after all?' – and finally: 'Shouldn't the one who did it be the one to have owned up?' But we know of course that the scenario is only constructed the better to examine the logic involved. It concerns itself (ostensibly) exclusively with rationality as logic, but actually of course with logic as self-interest – and as profit-maximisation, exclusive of ethics or legality. What the 'Prisoners' dilemma' in effect proves is that any attempt to consider what would be purely rational in policy terms necessarily reduces itself to this minimalist point – it indicates that decontextualised social logic is meaningless. Worse, that it is potentially illegal and unethical. And this makes one very uneasy to think that the advice of philosophers, statisticians and economists who employ this kind of thinking are, as Nozick says, relied upon so widely by policy makers.

Nozick admits that decision theories in particular and the decision theoretical approach in general, have proven of little use in practical applications.

> An elaborate theory of rational decision has been developed by economists and statisticians, and put to widespread use in theoretical and policy studies. This is a powerful,

mathematically precise, and tractable theory. *Although its adequacy as a description of actual behavior has been widely questioned*, it stands as the dominant view of the conditions that a rational decision should satisfy: it is the dominant normative view' (emphasis added) (Nozick, 1993, p.41).

Here, although social policy in general is seen as the potential (and often actual) province of this rational theory, the emphasis is on its use in statistics and economics. Failing applicability in other contexts, it has found its niche in these apparently computable fields. But just how appropriate is it that economics should be seen in the same light as statistics – that is, as computable in the first place[5] ? Given the huge power of economics over our lives, this question becomes particularly pertinent.

Common sense suggests that economics, being a behavioural science, must be contextualised and open to feed-back situations, that it must be just as unpredictable and just as vulnerable to outside forces of innumerable kinds as any other human activity. The decisions that people make about their spending and saving and investing patterns, let alone their working lives, are inextricably linked to contingent circumstance and history. They are bound to emotion and steeped in imperfect knowledge. It is even more implausible that it will be possible to aggregate economic behaviour in order to derive facts from this aggregation, and then assume these to be applicable to *future* situations. Of course, neo-classical economists are fully aware of contingent circumstances and their various models are designed to take these into account as far as possible. But the core understanding is based upon a determinist conception of economic theory that ignores many of the kinds of predictability to which human beings *can* be subjected. It ignores, for instance, sensitivity to justice and community and an ability to take contingent circumstances intelligently into account – and opts rather for fear, greed and profit maximisation as the staple human predictors. Recent international research by Samuel Bowles (a progressive economist well known to educators) confirms for instance that altruism and justice may be at least as significant as profit maximisation in influencing human economic behaviour (Bowles *et al*, 2000). Current forms of economic analysis are an extreme example of the problem that Smuts sees in all analysis and generalisation that 'in the original analysis something may have escaped, so that in the reconstruction we have no longer all of the original elements present but something less'(Smuts, 1936, p.14). In

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[5]   Note that the great value of statistics for enriching our understanding of social phenomena is not in dispute.

economic modelling whole continents escape! This is the problem with inappropriate epistemologies.

Here it may be interesting to note that the mathematician John Nash, the hero of the film 'A Beautiful Mind', was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics for his contribution to decision theory. Those who saw the film will remember his wilder states of mind when he was trying to discover complex patterns of rationality across whole walls plastered with newspaper clippings. This should, I believe, excite our concern not so much for that single confused state of mind – but rather for a whole society's. All of us these days tend to go mad looking for logical codes where none exist! In this regard it might be useful to remember those other winners of the Nobel Prize for economics, Robert C. Merton and Myron Scholes whose idea of 'option pricing', was based on similar 'rationalist' premises. They were later to put this into practice when they created a company called Long-Term Capital Management (LTCM). But because the theory on which it was based was unable to take into account the contingent possibilities of both a banking crisis in South East Asia and the Russian default on international payments happening together in 1998, its 'long-term' calculations succumbed to contingency that the theory cannot allow for. Ignoring this, the company kept going until it went bankrupt and had to be bailed out by the Federal Reserve to the tune of $130 billion. Just think of that figure for a moment. It translates into some twenty South African arms procurement deals – that is, enough to make a significant difference to addressing poverty sustainably in twenty smaller countries. That the collapse of LTCM nearly brought down the whole current financial system, based on this kind of rationalist market thinking, was largely overlooked by an American public more concerned at that moment with Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky! (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 2000, pp. 66-67). Enron's and Worldcom's business, also based the logic of 'market forces' and unwarranted faith in the predictability of future events[6], added false accounting to assumptions of decontextualised rationality.

The political upshot of all of this is serious. The present attempt to see consciousness as algorithmic and thus designed to achieve rational analysis is, as we have seen, unconvincing – but it should not be seen as politically innocent. If people are (even only potentially) predictable, it makes sense to give over policy concerning their actions to the experts. If not, policy options

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[6]   Worldcom believed that the demand for increased bandwidth would keep increasing at a determinable (fast) pace against the social logic implied by wider contingent issues (and based on inaccurate research in the first instance).

can logically only be thrashed out in the political arena. Most significantly, when a particular understanding of economics is accepted very widely as a natural science, then this not only assumes that people are in the last instance predictable, but it also entails that all social policy will be materially constrained by economic dictates. In the current era, economics, as science, dictates that we practice 'fiscal discipline' and 'inflation targeting' and *this* in turn entails that unemployment will rise, and that there will be less money for social spending. But if we refuse to see people as predictable, or economics as a 'hard' science, we will be free to believe that other economic policies would lead to other, more socially acceptable, outcomes. It will then appear that economists *of this particular persuasion* may be holding both society and governments to ransom.[7]

Relativist thinking: recovering the middle ground

It is interesting in this regard that probably the greatest economist (and one of the greatest thinkers) of the twentieth century, John Maynard Keynes, saw economics as a moral and not a natural science. All of his theories took contingent reality and the immediate welfare of the population into account in the first instance. Economics involved for Keynes a weighing of contingent issues in the light of the needs of society and a thorough knowledge of the ramifications of how economic phenomena *tend* to operate in various social contexts, closely observed. Hence his recommended economic responses varied with the historical circumstances, so that he was often seen as inconsistent. Wherever he could persuade bankers, treasury officials and governments to accept his ideas (a formidable task even in his day) the results were extraordinarily successful.

It may be interesting for South Africans to see Keynes speaking on behalf of the Macmillan Committee on Finance and Industry at the height of the Great Depression in Britain in 1930 (Harrod, 1951, p.422). Keep in mind here Tito Mboweni's orthodox approach to 'inflation targeting' during our somewhat comparable current period of chronic unemployment and threatening global

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[7]   This is explored in the context of Tony Blair's government in Britain, by G Monbiot in his book *Captive State: the Corporate Takeover of Britain*. The situation of a 'Labour' government becoming captive to narrowly-defined business interests underpinned by 'Washington consensus' economics is a parallel situation to the current ANC government in South Africa accepting similar constraints – both must be seen to undermine the interests of the majority who elected them to power.

depression. Here Keynes is in contention with the Governor of the Bank of England (Britain's Reserve Bank), Mr Montagu Norman, and a representative of the British Treasury, Sir Richard Hopkins. *Keynes* : 'So it is of the essence of the case that the bank rate should have an important effect; that when it is raised it should have an effect in the direction of unemployment. That is what you want. Am I right?' *Mr Norman*: 'Yes, I should think it was'. Again, as in our case, existing facilities for capital issues by banks were inadequate to meet the needs of small businesses and new businesses. Mr Norman was not concerned. The Committee also suggested that rationalisation schemes would lead to problems with labour. Mr Norman replied that that was not their business: 'they looked to private enterprise to deal with that'. Hopkins for the Treasury then came into contention with Keynes over the issue of government funded capital works schemes. Hopkins was opposed to the kind of large scheme that Keynes had in mind. 'If these works were not to divert capital from private employment, where was the extra capital to come from?' This is exactly the argument for 'crowding out' of private enterprise that weighed so heavily with the constructors of GEAR in 1996. Keynes had convincing answers as to why the idea of direct government spending on public works would in fact lead to a 'crowding in' or the stimulation of private enterprise. This proved itself in the case of the New Deal in America on which Keynes had some influence – and the falsity of 'crowding out' was starkly demonstrated in the case of GEAR. Real private sector investment growth had been targeted at 11.7 percent but only achieved 1.2 percent. And 'annual change in … employment was projected to achieve 270 000 new jobs per year, while in fact 125 200 jobs were being lost per year by 1999'(Padayachee and Valodia, 2001). Despite his feeling that in a perfect world protectionism was a bad thing, in conditions of severe unemployment, Keynes recommended it. When spending was needed to stimulate growth, inflation could take a back seat, when employment was full, as in wartime, he advocated saving. For Keynes, context should always inform economic theory, and be taken into account when determining policy.

Keynes in philosophical mode – it should be remembered that he numbered Ludwig Wittgenstein and Bertrand Russell amongst his close friends at Cambridge – wrote a *Treatise on Probability* which adopts a theoretical position endorsing indeterminacy and rejecting any 'excluded middle', a

philosophy broadly in accord with his economic perspective[8]. In response to a book (*Prices and Production*) by the economist Freidrich von Hayek, much of whose work would be endorsed by contemporary economists[9], Keynes said: 'The book as it stands, seems to me one of the most frightful muddles I have read … and yet it remains a book of some interest, which is likely to leave its mark on the mind of the reader. It is an extraordinary example of how, starting with a mistake, a remorseless logician can end up in Bedlam'(Harrod, 1951, p.435)!

Education policy between rationalist restrictions and democratic rights

The ANC was persuaded to buy into orthodox contemporary economic thought even before it came to power, with consequent restrictions on all its social programmes. The issue of budgetary constraints on policy is dealt with at some length in all the new Government's early education policy documents, and in no instance is an understanding of economics suggested, other than orthodox approaches compatible with an IMF or World Bank vision. This would seem to have a significant bearing on Jonathan Jansen's contention that (education) policy should be seen as largely symbolic. It is surely the case that only when economic constraints can be seen as impinging *in an unavoidable way* upon government that an administration elected on a mandate of social justice could have this convenient excuse for non-delivery. Before the current era political parties whose policies proved to be purely 'symbolic' generally found themselves out of office at the next general election!

A framework of fiscal discipline combined with provincial ineptitude put a severe strain on educational provision in the new South Africa from the beginning, as we are all aware. But there are clearly other factors at work beyond this that are needed to explain the extent of non-delivery. The figure of

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[8]   The contemporary philosopher Joseph Margolis's ideas of a 'robust relativism' are compatible with this short thesis of Keynes. Margolis explores these ideas particularly in his 1991 publication *The Truth About Relativism* 1991 (Oxford: Blackwell). [Margolis's philosophical thinking on relativism underpins the ideas in this paper].

[9]   Even von Hayek's enthusiastic biographer admits that this particular book was not one of Hayek's greatest contributions to economic knowledge, but the remorseless logic of the market, precluding our conscious intervention remains Hayek's legacy to contemporary economic orthodoxy.

over twenty percent of the budget earmarked for education is higher than in the majority of countries (1995 White Paper, p.23), and there was therefore no likelihood of an increased general allocation. However, unlike other governments that have followed this 'disciplined' fiscal stance, the South Africa has not generally reduced its allocations to social projects (Skinner and Valodia, 2001, pp.79-80). That there has been no significant economic growth clearly indicates the failure of the 'structural adjustment' macro-economic model for developing countries. But, in the absence of 'real economic growth and increased revenues' envisaged by the legislation, the Government in fact disburses conditional grants and special project funding over specific periods on top of normal allocations. The limitation of funds would not therefore seem to be so severe as to impede *any* success in policy implementation. The goodwill on the ground amongst educators and their capacity for, and interest in, democratic change are also fairly well established[10].

The problem seems to have involved, beyond simply finance, a more general instrumental understanding of the kind of policy options available to government, and their restriction within a fairly narrow range of rational orthodoxies uninformed by considerations of contingent reality. The prevalence of rationalist epistemologies tends, it would seem, towards an acceptance of expert 'truths' more generally. Private-public partnerships are understood to bring the efficiencies of a competitive market approach to inefficient and inexperienced public sector initiatives. But this is to ignore the additional fact that the private sector will not want to get involved in such partnerships *at all* unless there is money is to be made. In the case of South African transformative educational projects this was likely to be significant. Local government is understood to be 'better' (more democratic, more in touch) than central government, but this will not be the case if your pool of good personnel has been taken by central government and if local administration is inexperienced, obstructive, or both. And providing (sometimes quite generous) additional allocations in the belief that these will allow for the expected efficiencies in the system to take effect when the systems themselves are faulty[11] cannot be expected to deliver. These are all

10   Enthusiastic and well considered responses from educators across the country were received in 2000 by the Review Committee of 'Curriculum 2005', replicating the kind of response achieved by NEPI in 1993 and the ongoing social and educational engagement demonstrated at successive Kenton Conferences since 1972, suggest that there is no dearth of policy research.

11   This was pointed out by Bobby Soobrayan in an article quoted in the *Quarterly Review of Education and Training in South Africa* (Vol. 8, No.1, pp. 14-15).

examples of the 'universal, abstract instrumentalism' (Castells, 1996, p.508) which Manuel Castells points to as so central to our current global experience, indicating more significantly I believe, our current general abandonment of critical thought.

Policy decisions, deriving from nameless 'experts' and dominant theories (both generally from overseas) bypass conscious thought. The consequences are particularly disastrous in a situation such as South Africa's, where each of the factors to be addressed is extraordinarily complex, bears little resemblance to other 'models' to be found in other parts of the world, and where the magnitude of the social problems to be addressed is particularly great. For instance, a nineteenth-century Protestant work-ethic approach dominates the argument of labour economist Haroon Bhorat of UCT's Development Studies Policy Unit against a Basic Incomes Grant – that giving people R100 per month will discourage them from working! Again the idea that 'you only value what you pay for' underpins the current orthodoxy that the rural poor should pay for services, and for school fees. This ignores that the proportion of families with no income at all runs at more than fifteen percent in South Africa; and is blind to the fact that the numbers attending rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal have dropped by more than fifty percent in some cases (Vumase, 2002). Again the costs of coping with the recent cholera outbreak in KwaZulu Natal disproves the theory of 'cost recovery' for services, even on its own economic grounds (McDonald and Page, 2002).

The educationalist Salim Vally is conducting significant research at the moment into the failure of the current system of policy making to allow for access to basic education as required by the South African constitution and by international conventions to which South Africa is a signatory. Through four issue papers dealing respectively with: the constitutionality of school fees, infrastructural provision, transforming farm schools, and sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools, Vally and his co-researchers are systematically building up this evidence. This will allow civil society legally to confront a government whose prioritising of fiscal discipline over social spending has already put it in breach of the constitution in a test case over the provision of basic services to the impoverished community of Wallacedene. In such confrontations, the linear logic of a version of economic and social thinking understood as science meets, head on, the messy reality of society as a community of communities, battling with the *artificially imposed reality* of ever-diminishing resources. But all the big guns, literally and figuratively, are presently on the side of economic orthodoxy and linear thinking.

Conclusion

In 1949 in the wake of the defeat of one totalitarian regime and as a warning against the still looming threat of others, George Orwell published a novel which he called *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Perhaps only now can we understand how interesting was this choice of date. In the Western World this was the high point of the power of Reagan and Thatcher – champions of free market capitalism against an 'Evil Empire'. But the crux of Orwell's message in the novel was the danger to democracy stemming from tyranny over thought itself: 'Stones are hard, water is wet … Freedom is the freedom to say that two and two equal four. If that is granted, all else follows' (Orwell, 1990, p.84). And Soviet officials visiting America in the 1980s were amazed not so much at the freedom they experienced as at the evidence that repression was simply not necessary. People everywhere believed what they were told (Chomsky, 1989). It might therefore be interesting to consider just how well we are doing now in respect to Orwell's test of freedom of thought, in a world dominated by ideas first prevalent in the West around 1984. In light of the evidence of this study, the tally appears to be:

1   We don't have the power to think independently.
2   Money-making machines and rational social systems can be calculated and made to operate long-term.
3   We should give up our democratic rights to those who have persuaded us of the truth of these marvels.

If we South Africans, as the nation responsible for the only real advance in democracy achieved this last quarter of a century, can't think our way out of this one, then probably nobody can!

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Schooled inequalities - a comparison of the language syllabuses for English, Afrikaans and Bantu languages of the 1970s

Jeanne Prinsloo

Abstract

This paper investigates the literacy practices inscribed in the matriculation syllabuses for Afrikaans, Bantu Languages and English as primary or first language that informed learning and teaching in the 1970s and 1980s. It critically analyses the syllabuses in relation to the underlying literacy paradigms that inform them and in terms of the validated subject positions inscribed for learners and teachers. It argues that for each language the sets of literacy practices must be conceived of as working discursively and effecting relations of power while producing different subjects. It suggests that the validated learners were variously constituted, whether as the globally elite subject, the nationalist subject, or as the deficient learner. Attempts at educational transformation need to be mindful of how these discursive practices were effected, of the kinds of subjects and practices that were normalised, and of their extraordinary resilience.

Introduction

Different literacy practices have developed within particular locations in South African education. They are not simply, however, as apartheid apologists proposed, different but equal. They do very different things and have their roots in their pasts. In order to recognise the implications of current educational practices it is necessary to acknowledge that the discursive practices of the past continue to inform those of the present and to make visible the ideological implications that inhere within them. This form of investigative analysis has been described as attempting a 'history of the present' (Dean, 1994, p.20). In this spirit, this paper investigates the syllabuses which informed literacy practices at matriculation level for primary or first language from the 1970s until the mid 1980s. The central question this analysis responds to is: 'How, why, and in what forms were literacy practices

constituted in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) in the 1970s matriculation syllabuses?[1]
If literacy practices are understood as situated social practices (Barton and
Hamilton, 2000), this analysis accordingly considers how these syllabuses
propose specific literacy techniques or practices. Crucially though, it looks to
the different kinds of subjects these sets of literacy practices propose and
validate.

To this end, in introducing the paper, two anecdotes are narrated to illustrate
the kinds of 'lessons' learnt and to motivate the significance of this curricular
history. After identifying the Foucauldian framework and the broader context
of literacy paradigms, an analysis of the English syllabus is conducted
confining the analysis here to the aims of the syllabuses. It is followed by a
contrastive analysis of the Afrikaans and Bantu Languages syllabus. This
investigation makes it possible to identify the informing approaches to literacy
practices inscribed in the three syllabus documents in order to reveal their
political and social implications by considering the human subjects they
variously constitute and validate.

For educators who are concerned with the possibilities of a transformative
education and possibilities for the future, it might seem unnecessary to delve
into the past. However, in the course of my research, many conversations and
interviews I had with teachers and academics in the broad area of literacy
studies have reaffirmed my sense of the importance of a curricular history of
literacy practices. Frequently, the opinions expressed related the pedagogies
and ideologies of past and (some would think) outdated curricula. It seems
they had learnt their lessons well. Consider the following scenarios.

Scenario 1: a discussion with a research assistant. In response to my probing
his attitude to the overly complex linguistic items in the Zulu examination that
he had translated, I was offered, as though in justification, 'But Zulu is not like
English'. It is noteworthy that the syllabus for Bantu Languages (First
Language) in the 1970s presents the same idea.

> Because the Bantu languages differ so much from the European languages, it is necessary
> that the Bantu child should not view his mother-tongue as if it were a European language
> (JMB, 1973, p.144).

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[1]   While my focus here might be KZN, the findings have a much wider relevance as these
syllabuses informed language education throughout South Africa.

Scenario 2: a discussion about a course on Communication (notably not English or literature) for teacher education structured by an English mother tongue speaker. I questioned the nature of texts that would be included. These, I was informed, would be literary. The rationale for this decision was based on 'common sense': literary texts were valuable and would better foster communication skills - this in spite of the significance of information and media culture in contemporary social life. Once again I heard the echo of a 'well' learnt lesson, this time its refrain extending beyond South African borders to England. It repeats the frequently quoted position articulated in the *Bullock Report* (1975) in England and included in the South African English core syllabuses of 1986 and 1993.

> Literature brings the child into an encounter with language in its most complex and varied forms. Through these complexities are presented the thoughts, experiences and feelings of people who exist outside and beyond the reader's daily awareness (Bullock Report, quoted in NED, 1986, p.8).

These interactions were two among many in which teachers or academics have assumed that the version of literacy practice to which they ascribe is rational and self-evident – assumptions, I would argue, that cannot simply be dismissed as anomalies. What is striking about them is the persistence of such lessons learnt about literacy practices within the classroom both as learner and teacher.

For this reason any attempt at educational transformation needs to be cognisant of such resilience and to recognise that the present holds within it the past. Recent curriculum theorising and understandings of literacy practices propose knowledge not as neutral, but situated. These 'well learnt' lessons that have been constituted as the normal course of literacy practices, and thus become second nature, need to be conceived of as 'restricted and specific rather than being a general and all-inclusive category'. Similarly, the curriculum needs be understood 'within the terms of cultural transmission and ideological communication' (Green, 1993, p.203). Accordingly, literacy practices need to be conceived of as working discursively and effecting relations of power while constituting subjects of the discourse. The scenarios above provide illustrations of how certain teachers have been constituted as subjects in relation to different processes or literacy practices - processes both invisible and pervasive - that have impelled their responses to texts. It is these kinds of processes that Foucault termed 'modern disciplinary power' or 'bio-power' (1976, p.143). He described power in terms of its

> … capillary form of existence, the point where power reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their action and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives (1980, p. 39).

Consequently, Foucault proposed a theory of power that was productive rather than repressive. Power thus conceived works through the production of subjects, not by overt domination but by incorporating them, by disciplining them to be 'docile bodies'. This idea that the basic role of disciplinary power was/is to produce human beings who could be treated as docile bodies is a central premise of Foucault's work. He also posited that these docile bodies subjected to discipline imagine themselves to be autonomous individuals exercising free will. In his writings, discourse is discussed as constitutive of social subjects, of the objects of knowledge (or 'truths') and the rules of discursive behaviours (Foucault, 1972).

The discursive practices and sets of techniques that form the focus of this paper are delineated in the Matriculation syllabus documents for English, Afrikaans and Bantu Languages as primary or first language. The literacy practices inscribed within them bear the traces of a broad curricular history and the syllabuses are variously informed by different paradigms or versions of language education.

The paradigms or versions of literacy practices that have emerged historically include Grammar/Skills, Cultural Heritage, Personal Growth and Critical Approaches. Very crudely, the Grammar/skills approach is characterised by a strong focus on grammatical elements and a pedagogy of drill and repetition. The purpose of reading focuses on a familiarity with surface knowledge, in particular narratival detail, authorial information and perhaps the imperative to quote and to identify rhetorical devices. A Cultural Heritage approach proposes a different engagement with literature, one informed by the Leavisite notion of sensibility. Leavis proposed literature as offering a spiritual essence, as a moral and civilising pursuit (see Eagleton, 1983). Here, the focus is on 'close reading' and an interpretive engagement with a canon of literary texts. The Personal Growth version proposes a particular set of techniques that relate explicitly, as the term suggests, to personal development effected within the discursive framework of the universal and rational Enlightenment subject. This version of English literacy practices was simultaneously significant for its progressivism and child-centredness, concerns made manifest in the attention to learners' expression, both spoken and written. Finally, Critical Literacy, not a version of significance in this analysis, refers to those sets of literacy practices that are concerned with the cultural and ideological

assumptions that underpin texts, and with the politics of representation. (See, for example, Christie, 1991, and Morgan, 1997, for more detailed accounts.)

The literacy practices are not simply about approach nor merely about subject content and subject pedagogy. They propose different roles and capacities and thereby validate different moral subjects. Because of length constraints, the present analysis confines its attention to the aims or goals of the syllabus in order to locate the syllabus in relation to the literacy paradigm and the attendant subjectivities. A fuller analysis of the course outlines would provide the detail of how the aims are played out (see Prinsloo, 2002). The analysis of the syllabuses attends to the wording or lexical selections, and to how they constitute the literacy practices and their subjects. The form of analysis draws to some extent on insights derived from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) in order to consider the verbal processes (or Transitivity analysis) that indicates the proposed subject roles[2]. For example, at the crudest level, a learning programme that advocated material processes as the outcome of its aims would inscribe practical skills, whereas on the other side of the continuum, if the processes were exclusively mental, it suggests the ideal subject as operating within an intellectual and cognitive realm. Also significant to this analysis are behavioural processes which are classified as being between mental and material processes.

1970s English Higher syllabus

In spite of national syllabus change in 1977, the English (Higher Grade) syllabus (NED, 1973) remained virtually unchanged from the early nineteen-seventies until the mid nineteen-eighties and informed literacy practices for English for both the Indian and white population groups in the province of Natal[3]. The syllabus consists of three sections, namely the aims, both general and specific, then an outline of the course presented under the headings

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[2]   A Transitivity analysis of verbal groups or 'goings-on' enables a differentiation between material, mental, relational, behavioural and verbal processes. Constraints in relation to length preclude more detailed explanation, but this is contained in Halliday (1985); Thompson (1996) provides an accessible interpretation of this approach; Janks (1997) provides an example of its application as critical discourse analysis.

[3]   The syllabus, obtained from the NED files of the seventies in the State archive in Pietermaritzburg is undated. Consequently, it is referenced as 1973 somewhat arbitrarily, but using the year of the official national core syllabus which informed this provincial syllabus.

Spoken English, Written English and Literature, and finally the examination, both oral and written, the latter consisting of three papers.

It will become clear that this syllabus is informed and responds to the debates and literacy practices in the United Kingdom in the late sixties and inscribes a Personal Growth approach. An interesting tension between freedom and control runs through this syllabus, one identified as inhering in the Personal Growth version of literacy practices. Hunter (1988) noted this paradox of techniques that encouraged self-expression while acting as a mechanism of ethical self-surveillance. While this version is celebratory of the individual and his experience and displays a reluctance to appear explicitly didactic, it is equally clear about what constitutes appropriate practices – the 'well-regulated liberty' described by Donald (1992, p.1).

General Aim

In its opening words, where the role of the teacher is identified as to 'promote… development', the syllabus declares its concern with the development of the learner, not with any subject or discipline knowledge or skills. This approach foregrounds the pastoral intention subsumed within the literacy practices (see Hunter, 1988; Green, 1993, etc.) and unashamedly proposes it as a moral technology: 'General Aim: to promote the pupil's intellectual, emotional and social development' (1973, p. 1).

That the syllabus both responds and defers to developments and debates in the UK is explicitly signalled in the quotation from Frank Whitehead that is deployed to validate the principle of the aim. Whitehead is deferred to as an authority, an influential and published English 'English' educator.

> We need to have brought to clear focus in our minds the way in which a child's acquisition of his native language is inseparably intertwined with his developing consciousness of the world in which he is growing up, with his control of his inner phantasies and the feelings they give rise to, and with his possession of the values by which he will live his life in the civilization he forms part of. (Frank Whitehead, 1966, *The Disappearing Dais* (Chatto & Windus - 1966).   (1973, p. 1)[4]

What is significant both in the quotation and the position it validates is the emphasis of the affective realm. While Whitehead draws attention to the 'child's' acquisition of his 'native' language, he stresses that the acquisition of

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[4]   The use of the masculine pronoun is employed throughout these syllabus documents and is therefore deliberately retained in discussing them.

language is interlinked with a person's subjectivity. The 'control' that is identified, of feelings and fantasies, proposes the techniques of self, the self-disciplining, in relation to a particular set of moral values. These relate to the 'civilisation he forms part of'. The references to 'native' language and to 'civilisation' are significant: Whitehead was writing in England for teachers. That this 'Englishness' is transposed to the Natal context unself-consciously indicates the extent to which the Enlightenment discourse and subjectivities were normalised as a universalising subject position for English speakers/learners. The moral discursive framework of Personal Growth is inscribed as 'truth'.

Specific Aims

The ethical stance proposed is further announced in the four specific aims. Below is a list of the specific aims (omitting the elaborating comments that suggest how to effect the aim):

(a)   To increase the pupil's capacity to observe, to discriminate, to see relationships, and to order his thoughts coherently: …

(b)   To help the pupil to understand himself and his own emotional and moral responses, so that he may live more fully and consciously and responsibly: …

(c)   To extend, through increasing his capacity to communicate with others, the pupil's mental and emotional world: …

(d)   To extend the pupil's mental, emotional and cultural experience: … (NED 1973, pp.1-2).

There is logic inherent in the ordering of these Specific Aims that work to the fulfilment of the General Aim above, of intellectual, emotional and social development. In the first place (Aim a) the learner needs particular cognitive capacities to 'observe', 'discriminate', 'see' (relationships), and 'order' (thoughts). These cognitive abilities then underpin the second specific aim of helping the learner to intelligently ponder or consider his or her own emotional and moral responses (Aim b). In turn, to communicate these understandings, it is necessary to have and to develop communication skills (Aim c) which in turn make it possible to extend her or his mental, emotional and cultural experience (Aim d). Interestingly, the aims present no reference to subject or discipline knowledge or skills, but rather they assert the pastoral

intention and the moral imperative for living self-perfecting and responsible lives.

Moving to how this should be achieved enables a consideration of the subject positioning of teacher and learner, as well as the strategies to effect such discursive work.

The role of wise and generous patron can be identified in the choice of verbs used in the specific aims that define this role: 'increase', 'help', 'extend'. The pedagogy invoked is evident in the explanatory gerundive phrases: 'providing opportunity and motivation' (twice), 'offering help … and constructive criticism', 'encouraging' (four times), 'stimulating', 'giving insight', 'fostering', 'making him aware', and one exception, 'training' for sensitive and intelligent reading (NED, 1973, pp.1-2)[5]. The teacher's role is a supportive and nurturing one that assumes a learner capable of particular behaviours. The syllabus identifies what would be poor pedagogic practice, the drill and repetitive tasks of the skills-based paradigm: 'The teacher's task is not to be thought of in terms of providing a series of classroom exercises, but of creating opportunities for the extension and enrichment of experience' (NED, 1973, p.1). What the teacher wishes to impact on are 'capacity', 'responses', 'states of mind', his 'world' and 'experience', connoting intellectual, emotional and cultural realms. These are further signalled through the adjectives 'emotional' (four times), 'moral' (twice), 'mental' (twice) and 'cultural'.

The syllabus and its accompanying pedagogy accordingly anticipate behaviours of the learner that are identified by the verbs. By listing them, it becomes strikingly evident that these are primarily mental processes as is noted in the table below.

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[5]   The processes are material ones synonymous with 'teaching'.

Table 1: Processes for learners in Specific Aims (1973 English syllabus)

Aims	Verbs	Process
Aim a	observe	mental
	discriminate	mental
	see (relationships)	mental
	order (thoughts coherently),	mental
Aim b	understand (himself and his … responses)	mental/verbal
	live (fully, consciously, responsibly)	mental (taking adverbs into account)
	observe and discuss (states of mind, emotional reaction, moral values)	mental/verbal
	explore (own feelings and states of mind)	mental (metaphorically)
Aim c	achieve (communication)	verbal
	read (attentively)	behavioural
Aim d	read (sensitively, intelligently)	mental or behavioural

If the validated learner subject of this syllabus engages in mental process (many of them would be classified as higher order thinking skills) these mental behaviours are invoked in relation to the emotional and moral world of the learners, in line with the injunction to self-govern, to subject the self to a particular moral scrutiny. Interestingly, this focus relegates questions of content knowledge or tangible outcomes of learning to the margins. In line with the Personal Growth paradigm, the touchstones are experience, enrichment and individual development in order to live according to the explicit normative moral imperative, 'fully and consciously and responsibly'. The emphasis is on the 'whole child', on nurturing the 'child's' personal growth. Literacy practices become the vehicles for their achievement effected through the modes mentioned, almost incidentally, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing.

A significant discursive strand inheres in the final clause of the fourth aim, one that speaks to the perception of the value and role of English:

> by making him aware of the various roles of English as a world language in science, technology, literature, diplomacy, etc. – (cf. the Changing English Language: b. Forster, pub. Macmillan) (NED, 1973, p.2).

Here, the imagined identity of Englishness proposes a global subject, but one who is explicitly an elite one. English enables access to those avenues that connote progress within the free-market economy (science and technology), refined taste (literature) and leadership in international domains (diplomacy). Englishness proposes social and global mobility.

English syllabus in summary

The 1973 English syllabus inscribes a Personal Growth version of literacy practices. It is notable for its emphasis in relation to the productive aspects of literacy practice, namely speaking and writing, while simultaneously downplaying formal language teaching, and leaving literature remarkably unchanged. Its pedagogical strategies attempt to engage the learners willingly, to propose a discipline by means of which they become self-governing subjects. This is framed within an acceptance of a particular notion of civilisation, of an English cultural heritage and a canon of literature to fit. The form of responsibility proposed is that of the well-regulated and normative subject of the Enlightenment. This subject is positioned as outside class, while contradictorily and simultaneously aware of the cultural capital afforded by English. There is sense of the subject as constituted with the assumed entitlements of the global elite, 'aware of the various roles of English as a world language in science, technology, literature, diplomacy, etc.' (1973, p.2). This syllabus would not have been out of place in England, Canada, Australia or other globally advantaged ('civilised') countries.

Analysis of 1970s Afrikaans and Bantu Languages syllabuses

A contrastive analysis of the two core syllabuses for Afrikaans (JMB, 1977, pp.1-9) and Bantu Languages (JMB, 1973, pp.144-153)[6] which informed Bantu language literacy practices during this period enables certain critical insights. The decision to treat them as separate (as in the case of the English syllabus) was driven by the documents themselves. In the process of analysing them as discrete sets of syllabuses, it became clear that this particular pair of syllabuses revealed exceptional similarities in content and phrasing.

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[6]   The JMB core syllabus (1977) has been used to analyse Afrikaans literacy practices which were informed by the same syllabus from 1969 until 1987 with slight amendments. This national syllabus informed and constrained the provincial version. At this time, there was a single aggregated syllabus for all Bantu Languages.

Originally, an analysis of the Bantu Language syllabus (in English) had been conducted before addressing the Afrikaans syllabus. A sense of something uncannily familiar about the Afrikaans syllabus led me to acquire an Afrikaans version of the Bantu Languages syllabus. A comparison of the Afrikaans version of the Afrikaans and Bantu Languages syllabus revealed exceptional similarities, something that was not immediately evident in translation and which is a significant realisation.

That significant sections of the two syllabuses are similar not only in content, but are actually identically phrased in the Afrikaans version, demands explanation. That this could be the result of a collaboratively produced syllabus is not in accord with the spirit and practice of education and curriculum practices that related to black education in this period of history. Curriculum change was handled at Joint Matriculation Board (JMB) and the Department of Education and Training (DET) level, neither noted for participatory practices along racial lines (see Trumpelman (undated) for an account of the composition of the JMB, etc). Rather, one needs to be mindful of the stated role of the Afrikaner in the CNE document of 1948 (in Behr 1988). Clearly the perceived role of the 'Boer nation' as 'the senior white trustees of the native' as yet in their 'cultural infancy' (the terms used in the CNE document) influenced syllabus construction. These syllabuses indicate that such influence extended to the very phrasing. The approach to literacy practices for Afrikaners and black South Africans was devised in relation to a declared political agenda of Afrikaner nationalism. The approach, as will be evident in the analysis, posits itself as 'scientific', in line with the scientism of Fundamental Pedagogics (Morrow 1989, Enslin 1984). Because English literacy practices were directed by the white English speakers, English escaped such immediate control.

Both papers are similarly structured and, like the English syllabus, consist of three sections, first, an introductory section or commentary, then a course outline, and finally the requirements of the three-paper examination. In spite of the similarities, the two syllabuses in question contain significant differences as a result of the omission or inclusion of words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs. This combination of similarities and differences begs the question of the discursive work intended and its implications in relation to the constitution of learning subjects and the range of intellectual competences proposed.

This discussion focuses on central themes that emerge, namely, the identification of the approach as scientific and as academic, and then on the aims of the two different syllabuses and their implications. It concludes by considering the nationalistic thrust of the Afrikaans syllabus.

A 'scientific' and academic approach

Both syllabuses share an insistence on a 'scientific' approach to literacy practices, which therefore assumes that language operates as a system of rules that are completely knowable. The field of study, whether Afrikaans or Bantu Languages, is accordingly composed of the two fields of linguistics and literature. This scientific approach is reiterated in the quotes (with my emphases) taken from both the syllabus documents.

> This syllabus also assumes that a beginning has already been made in the lower standards in secondary school with a <u>scientific</u> approach to the two chief fields of [M]other-tongue as a subject: namely linguistics and literature (JMB, 1977, p.1; 1973, p.144).

It is striking that 'Mother tongue' is capitalised in the Afrikaans syllabus, but not in that for Bantu Languages.

> Primarily, however, it has its own academic and <u>scientific</u> aim: drawing attention to problems connected with language and literature, stimulating probing thinking, resulting in intelligent interest and insight into language and literature (JMB, 1977, p.1; 1973, p.144).

The emphasis on 'knowledge' and 'facts', and 'control' imply an instrumental approach to language and literacy education. It proposes a mechanical and structural approach that stresses mastery of rules - an approach in line with Fundamental Pedagogics with its insistence on a 'scientific' approach to 'didactics'.

This 'scientific' approach is considered as important in its role to ensure appropriate entrance standards for university. The goals to which mother tongue literacy practices conspire include an emphasis on the role of the syllabus in terms of university entrance and academic study is assumed to be in line with this scientific approach.

Syllabus aims

If there is a consistency in the 'scientific' and 'academic' thrust of the syllabuses, it is in the implicit and explicit aims of the syllabus that the differences inhere.

In both syllabuses it is stated that :

> Under normal circumstances, scholars who have attained the matriculation level should not have difficulty with the pronunciation and writing of regular Afrikaans words/the mother tongue (JMB 1977, p.1; 1973, p.144).

However, in the Afrikaans syllabus, this is included following the statement that language usage 'is not the main objective of the mother-tongue as a subject in the secondary school' and that 'correct attitude towards usage habits' will have been already established in the primary school. In contrast, in the Bantu Languages syllabus no reference is made to suggest usage as something that should already be established prior to this paragraph. Rather, it is differently anchored by its preceding paragraph (discussed later), that constitutes, it will be argued, Bantu languages as 'other', and the learner as deficient. Thus framed, the quotation reads as the attainment goals for matriculation, namely to have no difficulty with 'the pronunciation and writing of the mother tongue', rather than that which learners already possess. For Bantu language, usage is proposed as a central goal.

Two other sets of difference need to be teased out, firstly the explicit aims of the Afrikaans syllabus, and second, the account of the nature of Bantu languages and its implications.

The aims of Afrikaans

Where the 1970s Bantu Languages syllabus has been identified as extremely vague in terms of goals and subject matter and lacking detailed specification (Snyman, 1986, p.128), three explicit aims preface the Afrikaans syllabus commentary. In the table that follows, the (implied) roles of the learner are listed. The role of the learner is expressed as to 'know and understand', both mental processes. The goal or object of such 'knowing' is consistent with the 'scientific' approach and consists of bodies of factual knowledge and content: 'language study of Afrikaans', etc. The behavioral processes of read and write, and verbal processes of speak, qualified by the adverb 'correctly', imply here

processes that lean to the material rather than to the mental. Such word choice contrasts with that of the English syllabus insistence on observing, discussing and exploring.

Table 2:   Learner processes identified in the 'Aims' for Afrikaans (JMB, 1977, p.1)

Learner process	Goals/phenomena
know and understand (*mental*)	language study of Afrikaans, the structure of the language, functional tools
	Afrikaans literature, genres, historical development, tools used in literature
use (*material*) speak (*verbal*) read, write correctly (*behavioural*)	language

All three aims locate this syllabus as a Grammar/Skills version of literacy practice. Language study is foregrounded by identifying it as the first aim, and the articulation of a structural approach and its attention to grammatical minutiae signals its consistency with the Grammar/Skills approach. The second aim identifies knowledge and understanding of Afrikaans literature as a goal. Literature here is knowable in relation to genres, its historical development, and literary devices. The aim to ensure knowledge differentiates it from the interpretive 'enrichment' focus of Leavisite Cultural Heritage. Furthermore, the emphasis on correct speaking, reading and writing of standardised Afrikaans locates it similarly as Grammar/Skills version of literacy practices.

Interestingly, there is little contradiction between the approach identified in the aims and the comments in the remainder of the syllabus. This syllabus remains one strongly grounded in a transmission paradigm, that proposes knowledge as fixed. It also alludes to a nationalistic cultural heritage strand ('historical development'). The ideological intent of this heritage is directly nationalistic rather than proposing liberal humanism or personal growth. That it is related to a defensive approach to the language and culture will become more explicit in subsequent discussion of Afrikaner nationalism.

Bantu languages as (m)other tongue

What the Bantu Languages syllabus lacks in clarity of definite aims is compensated for by explicit announcement of the perceived nature of Bantu languages, constructed here, it is argued, as 'other' rather than mother tongue.

It is widely acknowledged that mother tongue speakers enter school with a wide knowledge of and proficiency in their language, as expressed in the following quote :

> Pupils bring to the class-room a native speaker's knowledge of, and intuitions about, language and its place in society. In this sense the task of the [mother tongue] teacher is not to impart a body of knowledge, but to work upon, develop, refine and clarify knowledge and tuitions that his pupils already possess. … He is unlikely to find the central concerns of the specialist in Linguistics, the explicit, formal and analytical description of the patterns of a language, immediately relevant to his needs (Doughty et al, 1971, p.11).

As the mother tongue is the model of language that is internalised, it is only when attempting to acquire an additional language that a learner needs to identify ways in which the additional language differs from the internalised model of the mother tongue. Thus, in order for an English mother tongue speaker to acquire Bantu Languages, it would be necessary for her or him to view this language as different to English, and that it would have a 'peculiar' character different to that which is already known. However, in the Bantu Languages syllabus the reverse assumption is made. Consider the statement:

> [T]he Bantu child must not view his mother tongue as if it were a European language.

Leaving to one side the implied infantilisation of the learner implicit in the reference to the 'child', it begs the question: what possible reasons should he have for doing this?

> '[H]e must be taught that his mother tongue has its perculiar (sic) character' (1973, p.144).

Yet, a mother tongue is always normalised for native speakers, and additional languages are 'peculiar' to those acquiring it. The table that follows lists the imperatives for the 'Bantu' learner on the left-hand side. That which s/he must learn is listed on the right-hand side to correspond with the imperatives. The use of passive forms and/or the imperative mood inscribe this position as an unassailable truth, while not disguising its autocratic tone.

Table 3: Constitution of Bantu Languages as 'other'

the 'Bantu child' …

should not view	his mother tongue as a European language
should be taught	that his mother tongue has perculiar (sic) qualities
is to be taught	his mother tongue is much more bound up with form in its system of writing it does not follow the European languages it has its own sound system its literature reflects both the traditional culture and the modern way of life
(it is imperative to) be taught from the outset	grammatical concepts which pertain to his language
must be fully versed in	the official orthography
above all … must be taught	to respect his mother tongue

If Bantu Languages are constituted in their peculiar otherness, the learners are similarly constituted as deficient. They view their mother tongue as a European language, they are not versed in the official orthography, and do not 'respect' their mother tongue, for they have to be taught these matters. The goals that these deficient learners should aspire to are also not pitched very high. They are required to develop 'an adequate ability to control the language by thinking and reasoning it' - all of this in spite of the fact that it would be not unreasonable to assume that formal education is not a prerequisite for any group to pronounce their mother tongue.

The syllabus effectively frames language practices for Bantu Languages from the position of non-mother tongue speakers. This extraordinary reversal and discursive construction of Bantu Languages as 'other', and subsequently referred to as 'the vernacular' in the 'Composition' section, has its roots in the broader processes whereby Bantu Languages were transliterated to written languages. That they were approached by colonial settlers, and frequently missionaries, as foreign languages and transliterated by Europeans has insinuated itself into the literacy practices so that for first language speakers,

the methodologies and approaches continue to derive from foreign language teaching (Nokaneng, 1986).

The instrumentality and functionality of approach is in strong contrast to the approach of English (NED, 1973) in the seventies. It is uninformed by concerns for personal growth or communicative competence, or social critique. Like the Afrikaans syllabus, it remains tied to the transmission and teacher-centred approach that informed the approach to literacy education from the turn of the century and proposes a lower set of competences than the equally conservative Afrikaans syllabus.

Afrikaner nationalism

That teachers are enjoined to instil and nurture a sense of nationalistic Afrikaner loyalty and identity is explicitly flagged at several moments in the syllabus. This occurs in the aims that precede the commentary, with the focus on historical literary movements. Subsequently, the section dealing with vocabulary insists on dealing with two elements of its etymology, relating to Dutch and English. It asserts that :

> the mother-tongue should not just be dealt with synchronously, that language is not just something of the here and now. The Dutch context from which Afrikaans originates and in which it is written must emphasise and deal with important similarities and differences between Afrikaans and Dutch (JMB, 1977, p.2).

This Dutch heritage is validated for the cultural heritage it provides. A Nederlands literary work is also included in the literature section. In contrast, a more wary note informs the dealings with English, bringing to mind the language struggles that occurred to defy the Anglicisation policies historically.

> Under borrowed things, not all borrowed things ought to be dealt with. Of current interest in our bilingual country, however, is the influence of English on Afrikaans (phonetic system, vocabulary and syntax), and attention should be devoted to the desirable and undesirable influences (JMB, 1973, p.3).

While the vocabulary focus is on the European roots, no mention is made of those languages which significantly contributed to the formation of Afrikaans as a language of Southern Africa, namely, 'the indigenous Khoekhoe, and enslaved people of African and Asian provenance' (Roberge, 1995, p.68). The omission of linguistic indebtedness to other races is consonant with the racial ideologies of the government of the day.

That teachers should foster a chauvinistic delight in Afrikaans is suggested in the slightly cautiously worded injunctions to use these as topics of scrutiny and written exploration.

> There is nothing that prevents this creative writing from dealing with the content of Afrikaans as a subject, and it is advised that compositions are written on that. (JMB, 1973, p.3)

> There is again nothing that prevents the text of the comprehension test from dealing with material from the study of the subject of Afrikaans, and the use of such material ought to be encouraged. (JMB, 1973, p.4)

That this linguistic chauvinism was enacted is evident in the examination papers referred to in conclusion.

Afrikaans and Bantu languages in summary

This contrastive analysis has identified a strong linkage between the Afrikaans and Bantu Language syllabuses for a period of about a decade and a half (1970s to mid 1980s). This move has been linked back to Fundamental Pedagogics and its fixation on science to justify knowledge and education. In both syllabuses, authority lies with the teacher, with science, and in the selected texts. The authoritarian approach gives no space to personal growth and the insistence on a fact-based, non-interpretive approach privileges doctrinaire thinking. However, the differences are more salient and these relate to the politics of identity of the day.

Conclusion

This contrastive analysis of three language syllabuses of the 1970s, those that inscribed the literacy practices in Natal at that time, indicates the very different discursive work inscribed in each. The discussion in this paper has been confined to the syllabuses while alluding to practice. That these discourses do play out as entrenched literacy practices can only be gestured to here. I offer three essay topics (in translation) taken from the Matriculation papers of this period to gesture to how different kinds of imaginary repertoires and subject positions are proposed. While it must be acknowledged that no single essay topic could be representative of a set of literacy practices over an extended period, these topics are interesting precisely because of the

implausibility of one being set to examine either of the other languages and this points to the discursive work effected.

Essay topics

Afrikaans 1: Natal Education Department, 1983
> South Africa, the powerhouse in Africa.
> (In your answer you can refer to the mineral wealth, economic prosperity, military might, scientific and cultural achievements, among others, of the RSA.)

Zulu 1: Joint Matriculation Board, 1983
> A dialogue about a burglar who has failed to get well-paid work and a Christian who works for little money - about their ways of survival.

English 1: Natal Education Department, 1983
> 'Fashion: a despot that the wise ridicule and obey'.

The Afrikaans syllabus is constituted in its discursive role to promote and ensure Afrikaner Nationalism, informed by the Afrikaner sense of the God-ordained, superior *volk*, conveniently bolstered by the policy of 'own affairs'. Such validated racial superiority enables such subjects to imagine themselves in roles of economic and social leadership, bolstered by the doctrinaire forms of thinking practised.

In contrast, 'Bantu' learners and their mother-tongue are constituted as deficient. It is paradoxical that in spite of such assumed inadequacy, they are not encouraged to look outwards, but in line with own affairs to look to their own ethnic group. The syllabus is in accord with a separate development position, anxious that the Bantu learner 'learn to respect his mother tongue', an admonition not delivered to the Afrikaans learner. The limiting set of literacy practices similarly encourage doctrinaire thinking and a parochial imagination.

If these differences are then teased out, they are simultaneously inscribing differences in the cognitive capacities or levels of achievement anticipated of these differently constituted learners. If the literacy programmes for Bantu subjects should focus on their ability to speak and write in their own language and to recall factual detail in the prescribed texts for literature, the Afrikaans programme assumes the learners' abilities to use their language and proposes the development of higher cognitive skills. This is also flagged in the literature syllabus which calls for appreciation and a greater range of understandings, including literary movements.

The English syllabus of the period, with its Personal Growth thrust, again proposes a different moral and desiring subject. Central to this approach is the ordering of significant personal experiences through language in the interests of the development of the fuller person. It might encourage engagement with social and political issues, but this is effected in such a way that action is confined to personal expression. It simultaneously effects a moral surveillance in its focus on sensibility and personal development, proposing a global subject of emotional and moral maturity within an Enlightenment framework. At the same time it proposes a worldly subject, not a South African one, with an assumption of entitlement and equipped for social, economic and global mobility.

While these are the validated subject positions inscribed in the 1970s syllabuses, and while these inscriptions become more obscured in the 1980s and subsequent syllabuses, they provide an extraordinary source of the discursive work relating to the politics of South African identities. They offer very different 'imagined communities' (Andersen, 1983). That this was the case then would be interesting. It is necessary to bear in mind how literacy practices engage values and attitudes and in Barton's words 'are more usefully understood as existing in the relations between people … rather than as a set of properties residing in individuals' (2000, p.8). What is of import now relates to the productive nature of such discourses that have proposed and validated particular literate subjects many of whom form the teaching corps in the twenty-first century. While the state might hand out different syllabus documents to teachers, their specific repertoires of thoughts, understandings, attitudes, values and practices are yet rooted in their own literacy histories.

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Between covenant and contract : the negotiation of academic pedagogic identities

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The de-centred market [position] oriented identities towards satisfying external competitive demands, whereas the segmental, serial ordering of the subjects of the curriculum oriented the identities towards the intrinsic value of the discourse. This tension between the intrinsic and the extrinsic is not, of course, new. What is new is the official institutionalizing of the [de-centred market position] and the legitimizing of the identity it projects. We have a new pathological position at work in education: the pedagogic schizoid position (Bernstein, 1999, p.252).

Abstract

Pedagogic identity, as Bernstein has observed, emerges as reflection of differing discursive bids 'to construct in teachers and students a particular moral disposition, motivation and aspiration, embedded in particular performances and practices' (Bernstein, 1999, p.246). In particular, attempts at curriculum reform aim to incline pedagogic dispositions one way or another. Importantly though – and policy proposals tend to ignore this – identity is as much a social as an individual achievement, and Bernstein reminds us that pedagogic identity 'is the result of embedding a career in a collective social base'. But what is not clear is how policy-driven shifts in identity – and the curricula that are supposed to produce these identities – are to be supported by appropriate social bases, or in other words the forms of social organization that legitimate and sustain particular values and patterns of practice (Moore and Young, 2001). This paper explores one such policy-driven attempt at curriculum reform in South African higher education, and offers a case study of one response to the policy reform, observed through the framework of Bernstein's notion of pedagogic identity, exploring also the forms of social organization which sustain pedagogic practices. The paper is divided into three sections: the first will briefly sketch the policy context; the second will offer a brief synopsis of Bernstein's view of pedagogic identity, and how I propose to use it, and the third section presents the case study.

The policy context

Since the transition to democracy in 1994, higher education in South Africa – like other sectors – has been subject to a series of policy papers and bills which seek to reconstruct the field in various ways. These policy moves reflect two broad imperatives: firstly a response to global developments and the changing role of higher education internationally, and secondly a local concern for economic development, social reconstruction and equity. Higher education is seen as a means of helping to integrate South Africa into the global economy on the one hand, and as a vehicle for correcting the social and economic imbalances inherited from apartheid on the other. A central ambition of the policies has thus been to enhance levels of state control over the higher education system so as to steer the system more effectively towards these goals. A key measure by which the state plans to exert this enhanced control is the academic 'programme'. The Draft White Paper on Higher Education notes that 'the most significant conceptual change is that the single co-ordinated system will be premised on a programme-based definition of higher education' (Department of Education [DoE] 1997, paragraph 2.4). Programmes would thus become the unit by which the system would be planned, governed and funded, enabling a greater responsiveness of the system 'to present and future social and economic needs, including labour market trends and opportunities, the new relations between education and work, and in particular, the curricular and methodological changes that flow from the information revolution' (DoE 1997, paragraph 2.6). Programmes are thus not only a structural device to enable better steerage of the system; they are intended to be a vehicle for a qualitatively different form of curriculum.

Evident in the policy texts are signals that curricula should shift away from discipline-based degrees towards more vocationally purposive 'programmes' - 'It would also break the grip of the traditional pattern of qualification based on sequential, year-long courses in single disciplines.' (DoE, 1997, para 2.6) - a shift of particular significance for the natural sciences and humanities, and a trend roundly critiqued in, for example, Muller (2000). A further justification for the shift towards programmes is the argument that curricula need to be *responsive* to the needs of society. For example, the report of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) makes a connection made between a particular notion of educational design and the goal of greater responsiveness to economic and social needs. Programmes, we are told,

> are almost always invariably trans-, inter- or multidisciplinary…. The demands of the future of South Africa as a developing country require that programmes, while necessarily diverse,

should be educationally transformative. Thus they should be planned, coherent and integrated; ... they should be learner-centred, experiential and outcomes-oriented; they should develop attitudes of critical enquiry and powers of analysis; and they should prepare students for continued learning in a world of technological and cultural change (NCHE in SAUVCA, 1999, p.7).

The subsequent regulations governing academic programmes issued by SAQA blend the discourses of outcomes-based approaches and accountability. The regulations require a qualification to (amongst other things) have a 'defined purpose', consist of 'planned combinations', produce in learners an 'applied competence' which is made visible in 'integrated assessment ... to ensure that the purpose of the qualification is achieved'. The body representing university top executives (the South African Universities' Vice Chancellors' Association – SAUVCA) sees the advantages of programmatization lying in its potential for increasing levels of accountability and (by implication) centralisation of control.

SAUVCA has published a Facilitatory Handbook (SAUVCA, 1999) intended to guide the implementation of the policy in South Africa's universities. The handbook is explicit about the implications of the policy: what is required is nothing less than

> a new model of Higher Education practice. For example, academics will now have to make explicit their learning outcomes and assessment criteria and offer these for public scrutiny. When designing curricula, they will be required to work in programme teams rather than as single individuals.... The demand for summative integrated assessment, across specific course outcomes and across modules within a programme will be particularly demanding in relation to design and implementation, given traditional territorial and individualistic approaches to teaching.... (SAUVCA, 1999, pp.27-8).

The policy of programmatization[1] was thus anticipating significant shifts in the nature of academic practices, in the professional identities of academics, and in the forms of authority that are invoked to regulate curriculum decisions. In particular, it anticipates a weakening of the insulations between disciplines, and that academics will participate in collectives which cross disciplinary boundaries, and which are predicated on serving external accountabilities. This accountability has at least two dimensions: firstly a responsiveness to

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[1]   Whilst the account I have given here of the policy draws from national level policy discourses, and while the study referred to in this paper looks at how institutions have responded to the policy environment, it is clear that there is no one-way linear pattern of 'policy-response' at work here (Muller, 2001). South Africa's policies are themselves responses to wider global discourses, and (as I have shown in a prior paper) at least one of the institutions under study had embarked on a process of programmatization *before* the national policy was published (Moore, 2002).

broader social and economic goals, and secondly an accountability for achieving the cross-cutting learning goals stipulated for academic programmes as a whole (rather than simply discipline-specific ones). Both of these dimensions ask for a weakening of prior insulations between departments or disciplines as academics meet to agree on graduate identities deemed suitable for the contemporary workplace, translate these into overarching outcomes that curricula should achieve, and then (at least) modify disciplinary curricula or (preferably) collaborate in interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary curricula to achieve these outcomes.

What is not discussed in any way are the organizational implications of sustaining such curricula over the longer term. Clearly some organizational means will be needed to hold together a changing group of academics across disciplinary boundaries, a means robust enough to provide a platform to contain, and adjudicate between, competing interests and views in order to arrive at a validation of the knowledge and skills prioritized for any given programme. In other words the policy is silent on the new organizational form that will need to constitute the epistemic community for a multi- or interdisciplinary programme.

We have come to learn, however, that the good intentions of policy are seldom if ever translated straightforwardly into practice (Ball, 1993). Confirming the lack of linearity in policy processes, Ensor's study of curriculum restructuring across South Africa's universities shows that despite the policy pressure towards interdisciplinary curricula, there is little evidence of interdisciplinarity:

> The credit exchange discourse has pressured faculties of science and humanities to provide a professional or vocational face to their academic provision. ... Overall, though, it would seem that curricula have been re-packaged and redesigned ... but remain recognisable in terms of their disciplinary origins. (Ensor, 2002, pp.15–17).

And confirming the centrality of 'people and practices', Ensor's earlier (1998) study of one attempt at interdisciplinarity suggested that the high levels of conflict noted in her study were the consequence of difficulties in reconciling opposing principles for the construction of curriculum, and that these were 'interwoven with equally potent issues of disciplinarity and identity' (Ensor, 1998, p.103). The opposing principles of curriculum construction are closely bound up with differing identity positions, and the vindication of one principle above another has consequences for the respective identities. Although new forms of curriculum were being demanded, no new mechanisms were in place

to manage the competing claims, with the consequence that 'the debate polarized very rapidly and resolution became impossible' (Ensor, 1998, p.103). The study reported below is thus an effort to explore in closer detail one of the relatively rare cases where academics seemed to participate willingly in what was billed as an interdisciplinary programme. The interest here is to see whether a changing form of academic community (predicated on changing values) is emerging to support a changing form of curriculum.

Pedagogic Identity

In this section, I draw on the sociology of education of Basil Bernstein to sketch a definition of identity, and to suggest some of the identity types currently at work in the field of academia. I also draw on the work of other authors who have explored issues of identity and change in higher education curriculum.

As we noted at the outset, Bernstein has suggested that initiatives of curriculum reform are concerned to change the 'bias and focus of official knowledge', and that these competing initiatives attempt to construct different pedagogoic identities. Bernstein emphasizes, however, that the construction of identity is not a purely solitary and inward psychological construction, but that it is formed through social processes. Identity, he says, 'is the dynamic interface between individual careers and the social or collective base. … [I]dentity arises out of a particular social order, through relations which the identity enters into with other identities of reciprocal recognition, support, mutual legitimization and finally through a negotiated collective purpose' (1996, p.73). This is consistent with Mary Henkel's (2000) 'communitarian' view which sees identity as shaped by the communities it is embedded within, and which provide the normative space for individual choices. From this view, the various institutional communities (and their respective values and practices) in which academics locate themselves thus play a major role in shaping their professional identities. Our interest is thus in any attempts that have been made to change the social form of these communities (as is suggested in the policy), and how this is (or is not) reflected in the identity projections of individual academics.

Bernstein distinguishes between two identities, which can be generated within reasonably autonomous institutions: the therapeutic and market positions. With the *market* identity, the institution shapes its pedagogy and management

to produce products which have an exchange value in a market. Management tends to be explicitly hierarchical, and acts to monitor the effectiveness of the components of the institution in satisfying and creating local markets, and to reward and punish accordingly.

> We have here a culture and context to facilitate the survival of the fittest as judged by market demands. The focus is on the short term rather than the long term, on the extrinsic rather than the intrinsic, upon the exploration of vocational applications rather than upon exploration of knowledge. The transmission here views knowledge as money. And like money it should flow easily to where demand calls…. [This] position constructs an outwardly responsive identity rather than one driven by inner dedication. Contract replaces covenant…. The [market] position projects contingent, differentiated competitive identities (Bernstein, 1999, pp.250-251).

By contrast, the *therapeutic* position emphasizes 'an integrated modality of knowing and a participating co-operative modality of social relation'. Compared to the competitive identities of the market position, this position projects (ideally) stable, integrated identities with adaptable, co-operative practices: 'the management style is soft, hierarchies are veiled, power is disguised by communication networks and interpersonal relations' (1999, p.251). Bernstein notes that the pedagogy of this position (because of its collaborative and student-centred approaches) is relatively costly, and that this identity position is sponsored by a social group with relatively little power.

How can we apply Bernstein's categories to the contemporary arena of South African higher education? It seems that the policies aim to shift the orientation of higher education from an emphasis on inward-looking disciplines, to a position where disciplines and curricula are oriented towards meeting the needs of the economy and social change. However it has to be noted at this point that the policy texts are equivocal in that they seem, in some places, to support a shift towards interdisciplinarity and vocationally-oriented curricula whilst, in other places, they appear to continue to affirm the importance of disciplinarity.

Ensor, for example, suggests that the curriculum policy texts have featured the opposing influences of a inward-looking disciplinary discourse and an outward-looking credit-accumulation-and-transfer discourse (Ensor, 2002). She also notes two further discourses, in her view somewhat weaker in influence, which are respectively a professional discourse (which faces outwards towards the physical, natural and social world) and a therapeutic discourse (which is also of an inward orientation, but which focuses on the fulfillment of the inner competence of the individual). In her schema, Ensor

links the disciplinary and professional discourses with a performance model of pedagogy, and the therapeutic and exchange discourses with a competence model of pedagogy (see Bernstein, 1996 and Muller, 2000 for a discussion of these models of pedagogy). It is here that I would like to propose an alternative schema to Ensor's, one that retains the introjected/projected distinction, but which substitutes an emphasis on the mode of pedagogy with an emphasis on the nature of the social relations between academics, essentially the shift from traditional high levels of individual autonomy and performances to the policy-driven pressure for more collective forms of practice, which I noted in my account of the policy texts earlier.

To illustrate this, I'll provisionally represent these four theoretically-derived positions diagrammatically. For the axes of the diagram below, I use the two key pressures for change embedded in the policy: the shift from an insular *introjected* orientation towards a more outwardly integrated and responsive *projected* orientation, and the shift from high levels of personal autonomy within disciplinary groupings (*insular* relations) to patterns of teamwork across traditional boundaries (*connective* relations).

Diagram 1: Identity positions in contemporary academic discourse

	Introjected	**Projected**
Insular	Disciplinary (old collegium)	Professional
Connective	Therapeutic (new collegialism)	Market (entrepreneurial)

The policy thus attempts to exert pressure for (especially) academics in the formative disciplines (the 'disciplinary/old collegium' section) to move towards the bottom two quadrants. Although Bernstein argues that the therapeutic position is a relatively weak one, it is one that is nevertheless articulated in the advocacy literature on higher education (see for example Harvey and Knight's (1996) account of 'new collegialism' as the social form

to replace what they call the 'cloisterism' of the past). Diagram 2 below summarizes the features of the respective identity positions:

Diagram 2: Characteristics of Identity Positions

Identity	Disciplinary	Therapeutic	Market	Professional
Discursive orientation	Introjected	Introjected	Projected	Projected
Curriculum organization	Collection	Collection/ Integration	Collection/ Integration	(New) collection
Social relations	Insular	Connective (internal)	Connective (external)	Insular

This diagram distinguishes these respective discursive positions as ideal-types, and it is important to make two points at this stage. Firstly, these positions are *in practice* very varyingly realized, with the disciplinary and professional positions being very strongly institutionalized, whilst the market and therapeutic positions are very weakly represented in the two institutions under study. Secondly, I want to suggest that the market and therapeutic positions are necessary but *transitional* positions in the movement of some introjected disciplinary singulars towards projected professional or vocational regions (see Diagram 3 below). In order for singulars to collaborate across disciplinary boundaries in an interdisciplinary project, which eventually becomes codified and institutionalized as a newly-emerging region, it is necessary for discipline-based academics to abandon insularity in pursuit of the 'vocational applications' of the market position, and/or the 'integrated modality of knowing and a participating co-operative modality of social relation' of the therapeutic position. Once the new region has coalesced and found stable organizational forms, then the social relations of academics within that form begin to take on the features of a professional or regionalizing position, with increasing forms of specialization within an established field with an identity in its own right. But such a transition has as its primary engine the processes of knowledge production, rather than transmission. Interdisciplinary curriculum which does not ride on the coat-tails of a regionalizing field of knowledge production and/or a field of practice would seem to have a flimsy

base for the achievement of cross-border consensus, and may be consequently quite unstable in the absence of authoritative criteria for recontextualisation (see Muller, 2001).

Diagram 3: Potential transitions of identity

Therapeutic

Disciplinary (singulars)→   → Professional (regions)

Market
(transitional positions)

As we noted earlier, there is a critical relationship between the production and reproduction of knowledge, identity, and the social forms which sustain both knowledge and identity. Bernstein (and others, e.g. Henkel, 2000) have made clear the social basis of identity formation. Moore and Young also remind us that knowledge is essentially social in character, and derives from particular sets of codes and values pursued systematically within specialist communities and networks. These codes and practices historically found organizational form in university subject departments and specialist professional and academic organizations concerned with knowledge production. Moore and Young argue that claims for shifting forms of knowledge in the curriculum should not be considered apart from 'the role of specialist communities, networks and codes of practice' that are needed to sustain these (2001, p.16). In other words, attempts to change curriculum towards more integrated forms of knowledge has implications for the forms of social organization that underpin curriculum delivery, and thus for the social relations which sustain particular identities.

At this point it is important to identify two key characteristics of forms of social organization that contribute to their cohesion and sustainability. The first characteristic is the *degree of institutionalization* of the community, or the extent to which the organization of the community is (or is not) formalized in a bureaucratic structure which distributes resources or which has an institutional life beyond the vicissitudes of its constituent members. To illustrate this, the diagram below maps out some of the organizational forms characteristic of the academic context, using as the horizontal axis the earlier distinction between insular and connective forms of association, and having as

the vertical axis the distinction between institutionalised or bureaucratic organizational structures and more informal structures:

Diagram 4: Organizational forms in universities

Organizational Forms	Insular	Connective
Bureaucratic/Formal	Departments	Institutes
Informal	Epistemic networks	Project networks

In the diagram above, epistemic networks are the (often) international networks of academics formed through commitments to particular specialisations within disciplines; such networks seldom coincide with the formal structures of subject departments which typically bring together a range of specialists with differing epistemic priorities within a disciplinary field. Project networks, however, bring together different specialisms in the interests of an overarching project; the formal institutionalization of such a grouping typically takes the form of an institute.

The second key characteristicis that of *ideological consensus*, or the degree to which members of a community share similar frames of reference about issues central to the focus of that community. In the university sector, these issues may be to do with disciplinary knowledge, with pedagogy, with the purposes and methods of interdisciplinary projects, etc. Thus each of these organizational forms (noted above) may be more or less ideologically coherent in terms of the degree to which crucial frames of reference are shared by its members.

In the case of subject departments, a weak consensus may be compensated for by the strength of the disciplinary identities, the institutionalised organizational form and the role it plays in distributing resources. The generally weak institutionalization of epistemic communities is counter-balanced by a strong primary disciplinary identity and the ideological coherence manifested in the common literature and methodology of the episteme. But a project network that is informally organized and which fails to achieve or sustain the ideological consensus needed for the connective project

may thus provide a weak reciprocal social base for the values and practices needed to sustain the identities of its participants.

The case study which follows considers one rare example of an attempt to construct an informal interdisciplinary organizational form. The study explores the identity projections articulated by the academics during the course of curriculum restructuring, considers the organizational and ideological coherence of the grouping, and assesses the extent to which a sustainable social form is emerging.

Case Study

This case study is drawn from a larger comparative study of the implementation of curriculum restructuring policy in the science and humanities faculties of two South African universities with a particular interest in the responses of academic staff. This study aims to explore the programmes implementation process, seeking to understand some of the motivations and conditions that have driven the responses to the policy. Compared to the other universities in the country, the two chosen for this study are relatively well-established institutions with strongly entrenched traditions of discipline-based departments, and with good research track-records. These institutions were chosen for the study in the knowledge that the assumptions of the policy about weakening of disciplinary identities would be particularly challenging for universities with strong departmental cultures. In 2000, the year of principal data gathering, the two institutions (UniA and UniB) were respectively in their first year and second year of programme implementation, although effectively both were implementing the changes at second-year undergraduate level. Data for the broader study included in-depth interviews with academic staff at all levels associated with the programmatisation process, as well as institutional documentation of various kinds, where this was available.

The broader study reviewed the programmatization of curricula in the two faculties and found - like Ensor (2002) above - that, institutional rhetoric notwithstanding, responses tended to preserve discipline-based collection modes of curriculum, slightly re-packaged to suggest compliance with the policy. The study then focused particularly on the rare contexts where claims were made for significant shifts either in the structure of curriculum or in the social relations between staff. In this case, the programme in question was

enthusiastically endorsed as an interdisciplinary departure from the norm of other programmes in the UniA science faculty, involving a unique manifestation of teamwork across departmental and faculty boundaries. The data for this case study comes principally from interviews with four members of staff (including the programme convenor), and from some programme documentation.

The case study concerns a new programme developed in the science faculty of UniA, called a B.Sc. in Physical and Mathematical Analysis (PMA), a three-year degree. The programme is offered by academics from four departments (Mathematics, Applied Mathematics, Physics and Computer Science) across two faculties (Science and Engineering). The claim is made that the PMA programme is 'interdisciplinary'. The evidence suggests, however, that the programme is mostly multidisciplinary, consisting of various discipline-based modules offered by participating departments (modules which are also offered to other students in other programmes), with the possible exception of a project-based course (Projects in Computational Physics) which is run by the programme convenor (a physicist) and which focuses on 'interdisciplinary' approaches to problem-solving. The interest in the case study nevertheless continues to focus on the social grouping, and the extent to which it represent a new orientation amongst academics.

This analysis will proceed firstly to establish the various identity projections which are articulated, before moving on to a consideration of the social form(s) that appear to be operating in this context. The data under consideration include (briefly) the claims made for the case study programme in the public discourses of the institution, and (at greater length) the more private perspectives offered in interviews with academic staff. The analysis concludes with a consideration of the possible variants a 'therapeutic' identity might take, as well as a discussion of the organizational forms needed to sustain these.

Identity Projections

As we've noted in diagram 2 above, the key criteria distinguishing market from therapeutic identities are firstly whether the principles for curriculum construction are derived internally from within the disciplines (introjection) or externally from a field of practice or a policy field (projection), and secondly whether the social relations are primarily connective externally (with the market) or internally (with other colleagues across disciplinary boundaries).

In terms of the first of these criteria (the recontextualisation principles), it emerges from interviews that reference to market-related signifiers in promotional material is more rhetorical than substantive. This is borne out by testimony from all four interviewees that consultations with industry about the graduate outputs of the programme had not in fact been a significant factor in the design of the programme.

> Now the committee thinks that people like that will be useful. I think the flaw in the whole argument might be that the committee didn't widely test industry to see whether there was indeed such a need. They *assumed* that there was such a need (AS12, p.2).

Indeed one interviewee (who himself projects a strong instrumental identity – see below) launches a critique of the PMA curriculum development process, putting the view that there was no clear (market-based or other) recontextualising principle with which to adjudicate the competing disciplinary claims for curricular space, resulting in an overloaded curriculum:

> You see the PMA has quite a different philosophy, a different approach. What happened there was that they said 'Well it may be a good idea to develop a programme. We don't really know what we want to do with it, but let us start talking.' What they did … is got them together and then they sat down and they started to talk. And then one person would say 'Well, I think *this* is really important!' And another person would say '*This* is really important!' Important for what? … It still doesn't have any focus whatsoever. If I want to convince a student to take that, I don't know what to tell them, except that this is really going to be a hard course, because you are going to do a lot more than is standard for B.Sc. students. …But I can't tell them 'This is what you'll be able to do with it' (AS16, p.8).

It is clear that the process of curriculum construction is not driven by a strong and coherent external or projective principle from outside the academy. Instead the choice of disciplines drawn into the collaboration are based on an awareness of how contemporary knowledge production in these related fields depended on other disciplinary contributions. The actual content of the discipline-based constituent courses is determined by the internal priorities of the respective departments, and the courses often predate the programmes policy, serve more than one programme, and (with one exception) are not purpose-designed for the PMA programme. Any external or instrumental purpose is thus only weakly conceived or actualised.

In the absence of the market as a central motive for the emergence of the programme, what in fact were the impulses driving the PMA programme? All respondents agree that the PMA initiative was led by one individual (the programme convenor), a relatively junior member of staff at the time (at senior lecturer level), and it "came not from within the power structures, but

from outside" (AS9, p.1). The initiative is not strictly a response to the programmes policy – it was mooted before the programmes policy, but gained impetus from the policy, which in the view of the convenor opens a space for relatively marginal interests to be asserted. He sees himself as following the theoretical leading-edge of the discipline, a cognitive project which requires connective relations across disciplinary boundaries.

> That is probably the one thing where the [programmes policy] gave us a break. Because I read the … [policy] paper … and thought 'Well, gee, this is our chance to put into practice what has never been possible, even overseas, and that is to go inter-disciplinary with the backing of the authorities!' … I've been involved in complexity and chaos for a while, so I have a tendency to look at things more inter-disciplinarily (AS9, p.3).

Although the convenor makes much of the 'interdisciplinary' nature of the programme, there is nevertheless clear support for the value of basic disciplinary training as the core building blocks of students' competence. It is clearly understood that disciplinarity precedes interdisciplinarity. In the course of a long interview, the convenor's *cognitive* interests (in the production of knowledge) are repeatedly foregrounded, while there is little or no mention of the market, or industry, as a conditioning factor.

Other respondents similarly are at pains to emphasize the cognitive motivation behind their involvement in the PMA programme:

> One thing that was a very interesting outcome of this PMA has nothing directly to do with students, but with projects that we have all been involved in. We have projects in seismic monitoring – for the mines specifically. … For me, personally, that has been the most exciting part, in that I get to work with people from Maths, a little bit from Physics and we all try and tackle the same problem from different angles and talk about it. … So that part of it is very exciting for me because we all bring our strengths, our perceptions to this problem and for me that is the most exciting part (AS15, p.2).

Having established the cognitive motives, the question is whether the intellectual interest in interdisciplinarity provided a platform for revised approaches to pedagogy. But throughout the interviews (which followed a semi-structured, open-ended format to encourage interviewees to elaborate their own priorities), it is clear that pedagogy is not a primary motivating factor drawing the colleagues into the collective. Indeed the structure of the programme (made up almost entirely of pre-existing courses serving a range of programmes) has ensured that no purpose-designed modules (with one exception) were possible, and thus little space was available for alternative modes of pedagogy, and no interviewee has asserted a pedagogic reform project as the motivation for their involvement in the PMA programme.

Further, it is clear that in the rest of PMA courses it is pedagogic business-as-usual, in the normal performance mode characteristic of most of higher education.

In summary, then, there is clear evidence of a strong *cognitive* project drawing these colleagues into collaborative relationship, a project which emphasises the possibilities of interdisciplinary work for the purposes of research. There is little or no evidence that the programme is driven by market-related identities, nor is there any evidence that the collaboration is motivated primarily by a project of pedagogic reform.

Social Organization

The next step of the analysis considers the form of social organisation associated with the PMA programme. The PMA website makes much of the relationship between the various academics comprising the PMA team:

> The team is the heart and soul of the PMA programme. It has grown organically over the last two years to encompass a diverse, stimulating, sometimes chaotic crowd. The team meets monthly with the express aim of exchanging ideas and learning from each others' expertise. … Membership is defined operationally by active participation in PMA affairs and of course agreement with its evolved premises and goals (PMA website, p.8).

The grouping met regularly over a period of 18 months to develop the PMA curriculum. During the first interview in April 2000, the convenor spoke passionately about the cohesion that had been achieved:

> The team was assembled with me as a nucleus, with very little active opposition. … Some people drifted away and didn't come back. Others stayed and others were re-appointed, and so on. Some went on sabbatical. So it shook itself down to the point where the people who came knew they wanted to come and we actually got to know each other as a group and as people. So it wasn't just the programme, it was the people. The programme [administration] … was more and more replaced in these meetings by a colloquium situation, where you want to make sure that what we call interdisciplinarity is not something that just consists of a bunch of course codes, but is actually something where people who have the knowledge are talking to the other disciplines, and that has worked extremely well, to the point that now I could probably abandon the PMA [curriculum] and still have what we really need. (AS9, p.6).

This is acknowledged by other members:

> I think the direct benefit of all this was that it brought colleagues from different departments, from different faculties, together to talk about what they were doing and what they could do together. … And this was very useful for us, because one of the nice side

benefits of the whole process has been the construction of a collegial atmosphere (AS12, p.2).

Although the establishment of the curriculum, the informal monthly colloquia and the ongoing contacts between individuals across departmental boundaries were a significant sign of group cohesion, the crucial dimension of collaborative knowledge production seems curiously individualized. All interviewees spoke very positively about their involvement in the seismic monitoring project conducted in collaboration with an industry-based initiative. But rather than the PMA grouping working as a cohesive team on this project, it seems that the external private-sector organization instead established separate contracts with individual UniA academics, and it was thus possible for such work to be conducted independent of the auspices of the PMA grouping. Communication within the grouping about the seismic monitoring project was thus voluntarist rather than an intrinsic feature of collective organizational learning. It seems that this voluntarist communication around knowledge production weakened what perhaps could have been the key site for the growth of consensus and a consolidation of a project identity, and thus for a collective (rather than an individualist) fulfilment of the intellectual impulses which clearly motivate these academics.

Whilst the activity of knowledge production failed to provide a basis for growing social coherence amongst the group, the curriculum also failed to provide such a basis. All the constituent courses of the programme, with one exception, are pre-existing courses provided by the contributing departments. All these courses serve other programmes (with larger enrolments than PMA), and thus none are custom-designed for PMA purposes. The one course which is custom-designed for PMA is designed and delivered by the convenor himself, again providing no platform for cross-border collaboration. And, as we have seen above, at least one member of the team (AS16) had serious doubts about the logic of the PMA curriculum, and in the course of the interview he quickly makes it plain that he is much more committed instead to a rival programme in another faculty, which has been constructed following a strong market-instrumentalist logic. There is thus no curricular or pedagogic project which commands the ongoing commitment of these academics, and the work of sustaining the identity of the programme is left to the convenor.

Whilst senior figures in the administration endorsed the PMA project with enthusiasm in interviews, the new grouping remained unformalised through any allocation of resources or administrative support. The programme also failed to attract significant student numbers. Interviewees account for the latter

in various ways: usually a lack of institutional investment to enable appropriate marketing, or an overloaded and demanding curriculum. By early 2002, the PMA initiative is showing signs of collapse. In follow-up interviews conducted in January, it emerges the monthly colloquium series collapsed in 2001 when the responsibility for driving the colloquium was delegated by the convenor to another colleague who failed to convene it at all. Further, the convenor resigns as PMA co-ordinator, chiefly, he says, in order to provoke clarity about whether or not the initiative has support from other members of the team, and from management.

Conclusion

This case study has set out to explore a possible example of a changed division of academic labour to see whether significantly modified social relations between academics (underpinned by changing values) are emerging in the context of contemporary policy pressures. I have drawn on Bernstein's notions of therapeutic and market identity to distinguish these patterns from traditional academic patterns of practice, and the motivations which condition them. It is clear, however, that in both institutions under study in the larger project from which this case study is drawn the primary forms of curriculum structure (disciplinary singulars) and social organization (discipline-based departments) remain the overwhelmingly dominant patterns. Against this strongly drawn landscape, cross-boundary initiatives like that sketched above are faint (and sometimes fading) outlines. However, the distinction between various identity positions remains a useful analytic for interpreting the discursive projections of academics at a time when academic roles are under considerable stress from various directions.

I conclude with two observations. Firstly, I want to suggest that the therapeutic identity proposed by Bernstein has two possible sub-forms: a *cognitive* sub-form and a *pedagogic* sub-form, variants that are predicated on the nature of the primary project that provides the occasion for collaborative association. Ensor (2002), for example, has suggested that a therapeutic identity is characterized by competence modes of pedagogy, and this is a perfectly possible eventuality, although still relatively rare in higher education. Competence mode therapeutic projects may indeed be possible, but this mode of pedagogy is not *required* for the realization of the identity. Other documented examples of therapeutic associations based on a pedagogic project include Ensor (1998) and Moore (2000), each of which aimed to

weaken both organizational and epistemological boundaries in the production of generic competencies. By contrast, I have shown that the case study above (and those illustrated in Moore, 2002 and forthcoming) provide instances of therapeutic identities predicated on cognitive projects, driven by intellectual interests, which have found expression in embryonic (and often unstable) social forms.

Secondly, I want to suggest that this particular instance of therapeutic-style association seems headed towards failure for a number of key reasons. In the first instance, the key role of collaboration in knowledge production has failed to fulfil its potential as a socially-binding project (by providing, for example, opportunities for new epistemic common ground), and thus also as a potential arena from which to generate more effective principles for recontextualization. Secondly, the delivery of the curriculum itself provides little ongoing pretext for advancing a common cognitive or pedagogic project. Thirdly, the absence of the institutionalization of the project in some formal form has required that the social cohesion for the project be provided in the form of charismatic leadership from the convenor. This is not sustainable in the medium- to long-term, especially against an organizational landscape which remains traditionally structured. Individuals involving themselves in the new PMA structure must face Janus-like towards both old and new structures, but inevitably when competing demands arise, it is the old structures which command priority because of their role in resource distribution, and perhaps because of the enduring base they provide for academic identity. The question is whether or not more formal institutional investment in the new initiative would have produced a more sustainable organizational base for the nascent intellectual and curricular interests.

To conclude, we return to the issue identified at the outset: the policy of programmatization argued for an alternative curricular and organizational form, but it is clear that insufficient attention has been given to how such organizational forms are to be sustained. In the professional faculties, vocational programmes (Engineering, Medicine, Law, etc.) are usually supported by formal organizational structures in the shape of faculties, departments and professional bodies, and these act to distribute resources, sustain identities, and to ensure the epistemic integrity of their associated curricula. In the case of the humanities and the natural sciences in the institutions under study, however, the process of programmatization enjoyed no similar organizational support and we see the consequences of this, even for instances where the cross-boundary initiative emerged organically from the motivations of academics themselves, supported by developments in the

broader field of knowledge production. This has implications for how the programmes-based approach to system steerage will find effect in these faculties in the longer term, and for how the quality assurance of such programmes is to be achieved.

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Knowledge and the limits to institutional restructuring: the case of South African higher education

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Introduction

This paper is about the social institutions of higher education in South Africa, and their complex relation to the problematic of 'restructuring'. Even with so bald a statement, possibilities of confusion and misrepresentation arise. Global policy terms travel through various iterations of policy borrowing and become translated, recontextualised and transformed. As Latour (1999, p.298) has said: '…transfers of *information* never occur except through subtle and multiple *trans*formations' (see also Callon, 1995). 'Restructuring' is just such a term. In South African higher education policy discourse, 'restructuring' refers specifically to the policy of institutional mergers, gazetted on 24 June 2002 (see The South African Universities Vice-Chancellors' Association or SAUVCA, 2002), which aims in the interests of quality and efficiency to reduce the number of higher education institutions in the country from 35 to 21. In contemporary South African policy-speak, 'restructuring' and 'mergers' are synonymous.

If, however, we ask what it is that discursive clusters like 'restructuring' are *doing*, it is soon clear that they form part of the macro-cluster of what Lindblad and Popkewitz (2002) call the problematic of the 'new governance'. The master term for this in South Africa is 'transformation', and it is being pursued at a central policy level at a hectic pace. The SAUVCA calculates that there are at present 30 'change initiatives' which in 2002 demanded higher education management time and resources (see Appendix A). Diverse as these 'transformation' policies are, they all face in one of two directions: they are directed towards equity and access (social inclusion/exclusion) on the one hand; or innovation and economic development on the other. To put that in different terms, the redemptive longings driving higher education transformation in South Africa are salvation from the dead hand of apartheid on the one hand, and progress towards global economic competitiveness on the other. These two longings anchor the political theology of restructuring in

South Africa. The logics of these two redemptive longings are, unfortunately, contradictory – the logic of equalisation (Lindblad and Popkewitz' 'problematic of equity') is in strict contradiction to the logic of differentiation (their 'problematic of knowledge') – but this contradiction rarely if ever becomes visible in the policy discourse itself, and the contradictory ensemble constructs a discursive alibi for the overall transformation agenda that placates but can never resolve the salvation anxiety driving the 'new governance' (Linblad and Popkewitz, 2002).

The focus of this paper is not to analyse the lineaments of the 'new governance' but rather to examine the response of higher education institutions to this double-edged exhortation, which come exogenously from either the policy prescriptions of the national government, or from the multiform facets of global markets, or often from both together. In governance terms, this exhortation generates a complex generic pressure on higher education institutions to be more 'responsive' or more 'relevant'. But to what or to whom should they be responsive and relevant? The answer recapitulates the contradictory couplet: to society (the logic of equalisation) and to the market (the logic of differentiation). This contradictory imperative forces institutions to make strategic choices. This paper is about how they arrive at their choice. In particular, it is about the constraints placed on choice or responsiveness by their sedimented histories, by their inherited institutional forms, which project particular dispositions for action. For the purposes of this paper, I shall discuss two dimensions of institutionality, the institution of organisation and management on the one hand, and the institution of knowledge on the other. Because the policy exhortations I shall be concentrating on here are targeted at the knowledge core business of higher education – academic programmes and forms of research – I shall concentrate mainly but not exclusively on the institution of knowledge. The specific question I wish to investigate is: how does the knowledge structure of a programme and the strength of its historical presence in a particular university affect the way it responds to the political theology of restructuring? Consequently, I want to investigate if and how knowledge structure strength and capacity construct social limits to the possibility of restructuring and transformation.

The paper proceeds by looking at recent research in South Africa which assesses the degree to which the universities have changed their curricula from discipline-based programmes to interdisciplinary–based programmes in response to national policy imperatives: and the degree to which they have changed their research profiles from basic to applied research in response to

market imperatives. In each case, the response is neither direct nor simple. The paper will argue that universities make largely rhetorical accommodations to interdisciplinary curricula, especially where the discipline and the disciplinary tradition is strong, except where universities are in search of students or a market niche. It will also suggest that universities respond to the new market demand for 'relevant' academic research neither by changing their cognitive or epistemic structures, but more often than is recognised by shoring up their basic research programmes within research contracts awarded for 'relevant' research, that is, by clothing their usual research practice in the lineaments of the new relevance.

The paper will conclude by suggesting that universities respond to exogenous pressures for restructuring – from government policy, society or the market – in large part on the basis of features internal to the science system (the structure of disciplines, their state of innovation) and internal to university institutions (their intellectual and managerial capacity or capital). The post-modern froth about the end of universities, of disciplines and of epistemology as we know it notwithstanding, the paper will attempt to make the case that science as an innovation system, and universities as its primary carrier, are far more durable and resistant to external pressures to change than either policy analysts or market pessimists usually give them credit for. They respond, or not, in ways that have far more to do with their internal organisation as institutions than is normally recognised. Changing science and universities can thus best be done via steering, rather than by plans or money. Both may be important, but the institution of science also keeps its own council, a fact the social engineers of central policy are all too prone to forget.

Internal and external explanations of changes in knowledge

The generic discourse of higher education restructuring embeds the assumption that universities in general, including their knowledge activities of academic programmes and research, are amenable to exogenous propulsion, that is, that they can be pushed by policy and pulled by the market. In traditional academic accounts of knowledge change, by contrast, far more attention is paid to internal dimensions of knowledge and its environment than it is in the policy literature concerning restructuring. In science studies, for example, there are currently two main approaches to explaining change in the science system endogenously. First, there is the *institutionalist* (or neo-

institutionalist) approach, which deals with changes in the institutional settings of research, including science policy (e.g. Mayntz and Schimank, 1998; Weingart, 1998). This approach focuses on the structural conditions and mechanisms created to direct science, and on the institutional responses of science. Secondly, there is the *cognitivist* approach, which deals with changes internal to the knowledge structure of science as the driver of change, focussing on changes in the mode of knowledge production. The two main contending theories here have been the Starnberg group's finalisation theory, and the mode 1/2 account of Gibbons, Scott, Nowotny and others (Gibbons et al, 1994). There are other contenders, like the triple helix approach of Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff (1995) and Rip's socio-cognitive approach (Rip, 1997), which I will return to later[1].

Accounts of change in the South Africa science system generally speaking, employ neither a cognitivist nor an institutionalist approach. Rather, the standard form of account is heavily policy-based. Such accounts start with invoking a change in policy, and then enquire as to whether university change has followed in accordance with the policy (Cloete and Bunting, 2000). The explanatory line for curriculum and research restructuring thus leads from policy suggestion (the National Commission on Higher Education, 1996), to policy proper (the White Paper, Department of Education, 1997), to funding levers, thereby to changes in research or curriculum patterns. To put it another way, most of the literature on restructuring in South African higher education locates itself in a typical rationalist policy paradigm, in accord with global restructuring policy literature, a position that typically underestimates the effect of endogenous factors on knowledge configuration and change.

I begin by suggesting then that basic research disciplinary traditions respond to 'responsiveness' pressure – that is, exogenous pressure towards applications and 'relevance' - in different ways. Some disciplines or disciplinary fields show a marked convergence between basic and applied research (e.g. molecular biology, biomedicine), while in others, the two are as far apart as ever (most of the humanities, cosmology; Glaser 2001). In those knowledge fields where basic and applications driven research is drawing closer together, basic research can either lead to successful applications or it can pass itself off as relevant. But here lies a potential danger, since to accede to relevance may require not following the knowledge-driven path of growth, hence running the

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[1]   None of these approaches ignores the social dimension, but they understand it in a more analytical sense than the policy literature generally does, and they are always concerned to understand how the social dimension interacts with the cognitive dimension.

risk of curbing the growth of knowledge in the interests of demonstrating its 'utility'. This need not be life threatening to this kind of discipline. Imagine though the costs of this strategy of piggybacking basic on applied research in knowledge fields where basic and applied are much further apart in the developmental cycle of the discipline, where it is consequently far more difficult to pass normal innovation off as strategically 'relevant'. The result must be the 'crowding-out' of basic research. Policy-driven or market pressure for applied research – under apartheid, in the state socialist societies, and now with the new political correctness of 'responsiveness'- runs the risk of creating the opposite effect it intends to: 'Thus, in most cases, science policy does not redirect research on the micro-level. Instead, old research trails are cut off and new ones started' (Glaser, 2000, p.462). This is if we are lucky. Whole trains of promising research may die out simply 'because new lines of basic inquiry do not emerge, and the old ones face a constant fall in resources' (p.463). From this it is plausible to presume that the dynamism of science can be *leveraged* from without, but must be *propelled* from within. Without good research scientists, good graduate programmes, or cutting edge research programmes - some of the institutional preconditions for the internal propulsion of knowledge growth - all the external propulsion and good intentions in the world may produce but a withered vine.

There are then basically two strategies for explaining changes in knowledge: endogenous and exogenous. The argument so far has been that exogenous strategies (market or policy-driven), and hence explanations based solely on them, are limited by the state of play of the endogenous factors. What then are these endogenous factors? There are two kinds of explanation. The first accounts for knowledge change by looking at changes in the internal dynamics of knowledge-based activity and knowledge growth in the system. The conclusion suggested above is that unilateral change to the funding regime from basic to applied could have exactly the opposite result intended, because the roots of the vine may become inadvertently starved by this strategy, or the strategy may only be productively accommodated by some disciplines in the system, and not by others.

The second explanation, neo-institutionalism, has so far received less attention in this paper. The institutionalist strategy for accounting for science change begins by looking at institutions as adaptive systems, and at the university system as a series of institutions that can be placed on a graded continuum of stability and adaptability (see Bunting, 2002; Gournitska and Maassen, 2000). However, unlike the exogenous view of change, which in its policy restructuring manifestation imagines that change is produced by articulating

politically desirable good intentions, the institutionalist approach takes change, or transformation, as the exception rather than the norm:

> The chief problems an organisation encounters in developing a new structural pose are, 1) recursiveness, and 2) the capacity for learning. These factors are inter-connected, they appreciate that an organisation possesses a repertoire which is durable and robust over time. The corollary is that organisational transformation is more difficult than is generally supposed; … (Clark and Carter, 1999, p.7).

Before globalisation sped up the transformation agenda of higher education, higher education institutions were able to get away with endogenously-paced change. This has become much more difficult globally. The pressure is compounded in South Africa's political climate. Lack of transformation in a time of virtuous social change, such as that which South Africa has recently passed and is still passing through, is a heresy, and usually attributed to political recalcitrance. The institutionalist position sketched below would suggest, on the contrary, that some institutions may not change, not because of bad faith, but rather because the supposedly desirable change cuts across their niche strength and would undermine it; others simply do not have the capacity to adapt. On the other hand, some institutions may change in the desired direction not for reasons of policy adherence but rather as part of their niche or market-searching strategy, from weakness so to speak. The truth of the matter is, university systems *as systems,* when they have relatively stable systemic capacity, change slowly; the USA 'big four' (Harvard, Yale, Princeton and Stanford) and the British top rank have hardly changed place over the last century. It is not hard to see why: they possess the physical and social capital, and therefore the cultural capital to steer their own path - the top academics, who will naturally nurture the basic intellectual roots and who will then also naturally attract good colleagues from elsewhere, and last but by no means least, they therefore tend to attract the best students. This Bourdieuian reproductive dictum is well-nigh universally observed, superficial signs of turbulence sometimes notwithstanding (Bourdieu, 1988).

Institutions are, at any given point, quite differently disposed regarding intellectual and administrative capacity, and therefore responsive capacity, usually for clear historical reasons. To step back briefly in time for a moment, it is useful to recall the three distinct phases of development of the university system in South Africa (see Muller, 1991). The first saw the evolution of the small handful of elite institutions that, up until 1948 at least, pursued a classical, basic disciplinary agenda. The then Prime Minister Field-Marshall Jan Christian Smuts could himself still write the annual report of national scientific progress for the London-based Royal Society each year. Next, a

group of Afrikaans institutions were established to train the upper reaches of the civil service and private sector, including the teachers and lawyers. It was in this phase that the new Nationalist government began the drive to applied research, spearheaded by the national research councils, and later the other research parastatals, a move tailor-made for the niche-seeking Afrikaner universities as we shall see below. The final phase was the establishment of the black institutions in the so-called 'homelands' to train personnel for the civil service for the homelands. The correlative research expectation for the three sets of institutions, underwritten by resourcing, was: the elite universities would do basic research, the second phase Afrikaans institutions would do applied research, and the black institutions were not expected to do research at all, at least initially. This is now imprinted into the institutional histories of these institutions. We may of course expect individual institutions to break their mould, as has of course happened, but it would be unusual indeed for an entire category to jump over its historical shadow. If this is so, the question that then arises is: what kind of responsiveness capacity predisposes institutions to change, and how?

On attributing impact to policy

Policy impact is a difficult concept to nail down once one has abandoned any hope that policy proceeds in a linear way through to practice (Ball, 1993). It simply never does. This difficulty is compounded by new indirect forms of governance that seek to precipitate beneficial effects rather than to bring them into being by decree (see Lindblad & Popkewitz, 2002). The most effective policies, it can be surmised, leverage a balance of forces that bring into virtuous structural alignment various aspects of the demand/supply environment with the institutionalised strengths of an institution. This of course makes it much more difficult to design an investigation to filter out the contending variables so as to assess what contribution the policy itself makes to determinate empirical outcomes. Nevertheless, to forsake linearity in policy analysis does not spare us from the task of assessing policy impact; quite the contrary.

Research on higher education is sometimes considered an under-developed stepchild of theoretically and empirically more sophisticated school-based research. Supporting this view, we sometimes find in higher education policy research the kinds of misattributions that are usually criticised and avoided in school-based research. One such misattribution is that of the effects of policy

on practice. The error consists in generalising from policy intent (what school-based studies call the *intended* policy) to practice effects (the *learnt* policy) without taking into account the crucial intervening variable, the mediating context that *translates* the policy into practice (namely, the *enacted* policy).

Recent studies on university curriculum change in South Africa are instructive in this regard (see Ensor, 2001, 2002). Both the White Paper (1997) and the Higher Education Act (1997) exhort universities to 'programmatise' their curricula, a measure seen by policy planners as necessary to break the grip of disciplinary majors on curricula and to promote greater interdisciplinarity and thereby greater 'relevance'. Instead of uniform compliance, the result was a spectrum of institutional accommodations to programme policy, from high accommodation to low, from enthusiastic to reluctant. Insofar as the institutions had to make at least a token response to programmatisation because their statutory funding depended upon it, we could have expected some change in each institution. But the range and unevenness of change is noteworthy. More importantly, it is unclear whether the changes that were made were because of the policy, or because the universities were reading the need for change off some other market-based script. Indeed, the very varieties of change, and in one case, change in advance of the policy, makes it plausible that the proximate cause was something else over and above the policy (see Muller and Ogude, 2002).

So what can we conclude about institutional responses to the policy of curriculum programme restructuring? First of all, we cannot conclude, on the evidence, that the policy caused the change: and secondly, we don't know whether the national policy as represented by the policy documents influenced the new programmes of the various institutions (the *enacted* curriculum proper, i.e. whether it was actually taught like that in the lecture rooms), let alone whether the students actually learnt anything significantly different because of the policy. What we can conclude from the evidence (see Ensor, 2002) is that changing the curriculum *in that particular way* (towards interdisciplinary programmes) was resisted by the institutions, such that attempts to break down disciplinary boundaries, especially with subjects that have robust disciplinary identities, from physics to history, resulted in internal disciplinary enclaves within the programmes, rather than in integrated programmes. In other words, the *form* of accommodation was observed, but not its substance.

Whereas curriculum restructuring towards 'relevance' was mandated by national policy documents, though relatively weakly policed, university

research towards greater 'relevance', though advocated in the White Paper of 1997, was more indirectly steered by changing the allocatory conditions for research awards to favour 'relevance' and applied research. The results are ostensibly more positive. There is a dramatic shift away from 'basic' to 'applied' research, a shift from 75% to 50% denoting a 25% shift over a five year period (Bawa & Mouton, 2002, p.315). The question is how we interpret this shift. Bawa & Mouton are inclined to see this as a response to both urgings on the part of government as well as a response to 'global pressures' for more applied research (Gibbons, et al, 1994). The intended policy is read as having an effect on research, here conceived not as research practice (*enacted*) but as published research (*learnt*). They infer that a global research shift towards applications-driven research is translated into policy (the White Paper, 1997) which is then read by researchers and acted upon effectively, yielding the change in the desired research direction in completed/published research. The evidence is simply not there to make this conclusion with confidence, as the authors admit. The intervening variable of changed research practice has only begun to be studied, and since this has not been the focus of study here, the researchers could not assess whether the changed research practice (if indeed it has changed, which is debatable) has changed because of the policy, or because of something else: say, lucrative consultancies with government, or the private sector, or bilateral and multilateral donor funding, a global shift that is increasingly evident. What we can say is that there is more published applied research in South Africa than there used to be, relative to published basic research, and that this is consonant with the policy. But *why* the two are consonant, or even if there is any relationship between them, is unclear. In fact, this may well be an artefact of something else altogether – like Internet publishing of basic research, a form of research not counted by the research referred to earlier.

To summarise so far: the research on curriculum restructuring concludes that the knowledge structure of a discipline shapes the form of accommodation to market and policy fashions; the research on research type restructuring concludes that knowledge production may very well follow policy. What are we to make of this?

It may be useful to reflect briefly on knowledge morphology and morphological change. First of all, the forms (that is, the formal units) of knowledge are, like the desert, always in motion, in response to innovation and knowledge growth at the apex of the discipline. The traditional knowledge form is the discipline (both for research as well as for teaching purposes), and

disciplines often grow towards each other in response to converging research programmes. At a given point, although not yet fixed together, disciplinary 'singulars' form a loose 'regional' association, they become regionalised. When the regionalising amalgamation process is sufficiently advanced, the region morphs, or integrates, into a new stable singular again at a higher level of conceptual integration and abstraction (Bernstein, 2000).

A plausible explanation for the policy of programmatisation then is that the programme-policy advocates read the signs that we are, globally, in a period of rapid knowledge growth, hence of generalised regionalisation (growing together of disciplines). Since the traditional disciplines naturally hold onto their turf, a way must be found to circumvent this reaction in order to teach the new transitional regions to a new cadre of students; hence the need for interdisciplinary programme.

There are two arguments against this explanation for programmatisation. The first is that, in the Humanities, where the drive to programmes has been the most avid, we are unlikely to get a successful transition from singulars, through a process of growing together or regionalisation, to a new higher-order singular, because the Humanities, nearly all having a relatively horizontal knowledge structure with a weak internal grammar, simply proliferate new languages of description. That is, horizontal knowledge structures exhibit movement laterally, into the formation of sub disciplines with low explanatory power, like cultural studies, or critical legal studies for example, rather than vertically into a higher order regional integration. They don't easily morph into higher-order singulars (there are exceptions – usually in response to changes in a knowledge field adjacent to science i.e. to a more vertical knowledge structure, like archaeology and urban studies). Under such circumstances, programmatisation looks suspiciously like trying to force regionalisation on the terrain of production (research) from the terrain of reproduction (curriculum), which can't easily be done. Knowledge forms can only stably be changed at the sharp end of innovation and genuine knowledge growth, not by trying to teach a premature integration of disciplines.

The second argument against the plausible explanation is that it assumes that in order to acquire applied or interdisciplinary skills (or whatever else in the programmes it is assumed is lacking in the traditional disciplinary curriculum) it is necessary to teach them directly, often *in place of* the disciplines. Here the old debate about *learning transfer* rears its head. A broad church of curricularists, including the social Darwinist Herbert Spencer (of the original

'useful knowledge' argument), the behaviourist Thorndike, vocationalists of every stripe, and the protagonists of outcomes based education (by no means an exhaustive list) believed and believe that knowledge cannot be generalised across contexts, and that each knowledge or skill for each context must be explicitly taught, (see Supovitz, 2001). This is the *low-transfer* school of curriculum thought, intellectually compatible with the 'mode 2' research form change theorists Gibbons and Scott mentioned above. The *high-transfer* school, on the other hand, including an equally broad church of congregants that would include certain curriculum traditionalists (after all, Latin was retained for so long in both the university and the school curriculum because it was assumed that Latin conveyed a 'mental discipline' that was transferable to all other contexts), but also Durkheim, Gramsci and the 'situative cognitivists' who hold that learning is a combination of context-specific knowledge and general problem-solving abilities. Here, generalisable conceptual tools are learnt only in the course of acquiring a domain-specific knowledge base. But not all domain-specific knowledge bases have generalisable conceptual tools (or, as I said in cognate terms above, they do not all have a vertical knowledge structure with a strong internal grammar). Many low-transferists, ignoring such relative differences in knowledge structure, imagine that any subject is equivalent to any other in teaching higher-order thinking. John Dewey once notoriously said in a public lecture that children would learn as much from laundry as they might from zoology (Ravitch, 1999, p.59), a misconception widely-held amongst curriculum engineers seeking to promote 'equivalence' via schemes like 'programmes', 'unit standards', and other forms essaying to replace the continually-evolving morphological structure of the conventional discipline.

In the South African higher education policy debate, I have advanced a form of the high-transfer view against that of Gibbons and Scott, and against current government programme policy (see Ensor, 2002), who favour teaching an integrated interdisciplinary curriculum to undergraduates the more quickly to induct them into useful, applied, and interdisciplinary creative work. My argument (Muller, 2000) was that integrated interdisciplinary cognitive skills could only be acquired once one had already acquired a base of disciplinary skills, (that is, domain-specific knowledge with vertical extension and generalisable conceptual tools). Teaching interdisciplinary knowledge (that is applied skills), before giving students the conceptual tools with which to 'situate' that knowledge in its larger coherent pattern, I argued, was to leave the students in a procedural 'how to' mode, without tools of extension and

innovation, precisely the skills that the interdisciplinary advocates wish the students to learn.

At the beginning of this section on assessing policy impact, I asked what weight could be attached to the conclusion that programme policy was confuted by the dialectic between knowledge forms and academic identities, or that policy had changed the social formats of knowledge production and the habitual practices of an entire research community. Unfortunately the answer must be – not very much. The evidence simply does not demonstrate policy impact, conventionally understood. Without the evidence, there is not a lot we can say about the impact of policy on either university curricula restructuring or on the domain of academic research practice.

Responsiveness versus innovation

In *The Constant Gardener*, his recent novel, John le Carré all but accuses the pharmaceutical companies of insidious, methodical corruption of scientific opinion, by buying favours, targeting grants to universities, to centres and to favoured researchers on a scale that makes normal governmental corruption look almost quaint. So saturated is medical research by doing company *quid pro quos,* insinuates le Carré*,* that the suppression of inconvenient conclusions is commonplace, of inconvenient researchers too. The impartial medical journals, that premier indicator of research excellence, become mouthpieces of corporate propaganda under professorial imprimatur. Why does the press not expose this? Well, reporters are even more easily bought than professors: and besides, the issues are complex, and the companies can, with laughable ease, buy politically correct public opinion. This is the general substance of le Carré's charge.

In a world where academic merit is measured in part by the amount of research funding garnered, and in a world where, by the end of the 1990s, the statutory funding bodies of central government couldn't begin to compete with private money, then defining 'responsiveness' as 'responsive to societal needs' was less a faded dream than a bad joke. As Jansen (2001, p.6) says:

> The single most important mistake made by the former CSD (Centre for Science Development) and the former FRD (Foundation for Research Development; the names of the state run statutory funding councils) was to think that a small amount of money could be spread so thinly within research–weak institutions and make any difference at all.

Researchers like Subotzky (1999) like to draw a distinction between 'noble' private money (usually from global donors) for noble 'social ends', and other private money for other more market-related ends. But what really is the difference? Organisations, once committed to an externally funded project of whatever kind, become socially locked in for financial rather than intellectual reasons. The truth is, once you're in the market, once you're chasing money for the sake of it, or rather, once private money pushes out public money, then these things blur, and market logic blots out social responsibility niceties. Countries, South Africa included, that pursue 'third-way' centre-left political policies that attempt to steer a path between rampant free market ideology and state collectivism, are thus likely to have higher education restructuring strategy statements that attempt to 'reflect both the "marketisation" as well as the "equity" strands of the "third way" political frameworks' (Naidoo, 2000, p. 26)[2] as we saw in the Introduction. Does this mean that 'third way' policies manage the balancing act? Unfortunately, no. Because the trade-off is not forthrightly faced, they end up managing to widen stratification and widen exclusion.

The reason though is not because the market trumps policy. Rather, the unintended consequences arise directly from the exogenous pressures (the market or policy) trying to direct endogenous intellectual activity, (the growth of science and the kind of research the universities, and other institutions, do). In a classic paper, Michael Polanyi (1962) points out the similarities between market dynamics and science dynamics. The dynamics of both are created by the accretion of multiple independent initiatives mutually adjusting themselves at every successive stage stepwise towards a joint achievement. Such self-coordination – by means of an invisible hand – is what is common (see also Lindblom and Cohen, 1979). But the differences are also important. Mutual adjustment in the market is on the basis of prices motivating agents to exercise economy in terms of money. Scientists, by contrast, are motivated by professional standards – plausibility, accuracy, importance, intrinsic interest, and above all, originality (see Polanyi, 1962, pp. 56-59). The net result is coordinated action in general, but also subversion in particulars. Scientific growth depends on principled subversion, on the precise enunciation of the unknown. This is what the economists call innovation.

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[2] A cruel contemporary jest: what is the difference between Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair? Answer: Thatcher believed in privatisation; Blair just likes rich people. What the joke insinuates is that entrepreneurialism has become a New Age aesthetic.

Polanyi goes on to explore attempts to direct science either for ethical (serving 'social' needs) or practical ('relevant') ends, and concludes that it is only possible to stop scientific trends, not create or direct them: 'You can kill or mutilate the advance of science, you cannot shape it. For it can advance only by essentially unpredictable steps, pursuing problems of its own, and the practical benefit of these advances will be…doubly unpredictable' (Polanyi, 1962, p.62). As far as unpredictability goes, Polanyi goes on to give the example of a BBC Brains Trust programme in January 1945 where he and Bertrand Russell had both denied any practical value to Einstein's theory of special relativity: a few months later in August 1945 the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

It has become customary, in these 'postmodern' times, to say that the 'republic of science' turns into the 'entrepreneurial university' (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997) because it has lost the autonomy on which it was built (see Rip and van der Meulen, 1996; Delanty, 2001). While this captures a part of the story, it misses the contemporary relevance of Polanyi's analysis, which aimed to provide a 'political and economic theory' of scientific innovation, and which anticipates central insights of current economics of innovation. In this body of work we find the conundrum, already alluded to above, that normal novelty (first order learning) is relatively easily predictable and directable, but real or 'reconstructive' novelty (learning to learn) is in its essence uncertain: 'it is unpredictable and therefore cannot be selected by rational choice' (Nooteboom, 1999, p.128). In other words, real research novelty - true innovation - cannot be rationally directed by policy on the supply side, or by users on the demand side. This is the classical picture, and it means that, classically, the core conditions for the production of innovation operate optimally at a relative 'necessary distance' both from supply-side control (the state's control model which van Vught (1991) shows is inimical to innovation) and from the demand-side tyranny of short term utility.

We do not live in classical, but globalising, times. The key entailed feature for higher education, technology aside, is the circumscribed role of the state, shifting it inexorably from the role of main provider (predominant source of funding) to that of regulator (Delanty, 2001, p.121). Universities worldwide get less and less of their funding from government. The University of Wisconsin-Madison now receives 23% from the state, down from 33%: the state University of California is similarly down to 30%. In South Africa the average is still a relatively high 60%. For all universities world wide, the balance must come from the private sector, pushing universities inexorably

into 'academic capitalism' (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997) and multiple stakeholder contracts, and away from the singular influence of the state.

The optimal condition for innovation above can therefore be re-stated as: preserving 'necessary distance' especially from the user interface, when reputational advantage, professional standing, even survival, depend on an ever greater dependence on multiple sources of funding. The danger from this interface lies in the possibility of stunted research agendas, in the unintended consequence of 'crowding out' basic research as we saw above (Glaser, 2000), but it lies also in the danger of premature utilisation. All the user interface terms currently used to designate research applicability – 'relevance', 'responsiveness', 'context-of-application' research – embed the idea that the commissioning interface is necessarily the one the research results will be most applicable to. The economics of learning recognises that this is rarely so: 'Its early use may occur where its fit with the prevailing architecture is feasible with a minimum of systemic changes rather than where it is most productive' (Nooteboom, 1999, p.138). Many of science's most dramatic applications occur in a different time and space to that of the original discovery itself. The case of special relativity and nuclear fission is just one example. The peril of premature relevance is that eager commissioners at the user interface, anxious to show spending efficiency to their financial bosses, tend to go off half-cocked. The systemic consequence is a flaccid and malfunctioning innovation system.

The user interface is thus potentially now a greater danger to innovation than during the time of greater autonomy. What is to be done? The IDRC Report (1993) believes that 'the thirty-year old idea of a "republic of science" (that is, scientific autonomy), in its simplest formulation, is still, in fact, a guide to the operation of South Africa's long-term S&T policy' (IDRC, 1993, p.24), but this states the requirement – for greater distance – rather than the means for achieving it. Certainly the clock is not going to be turned back to full state provision, the classical condition for full autonomy. What then is the contemporary condition for 'necessary distance' in research? In some quarters, the answer is seen as lying in the deployment of the idea of 'strategic' research.

The National Commission on Higher Education Report (1996) had mentioned strategic research as one of four research types, the others being 'traditional', 'applications-driven', and 'participation-based' (see Mouton, 2001, p.6). Mouton goes on to trace the provenance of the idea of strategic research,

showing that it is sometimes placed closer to applied, sometimes closer to basic research (basic research with a long term perspective). Rip (1997, 2001) extends this idea of what he calls the *emerging regime of strategic science*. In his view, scientists have begun to internalise the global pressure towards relevance and accountability, while holding on to the basic longer term trajectory of knowledge growth. In other words, scientists increasingly attend to global scientific horizons by means of framing them in terms of local issues (think local, act global): 'Strategic research combines relevance (to specific contexts, possibly local) and excellence (the advancement of science as such), and may therefore bridge the eternal tension between the regional and global' (Rip, 2001, p.4). But because this is not directly and narrowly 'applications-driven, '(a) distance is created between the research and its eventual uptake…' (ibid). Strategic research is thus a 'strategic' synthesis of basic research with the new press to relevance specifically to avoid the 'dominance of short-term considerations' (Rip, 2001, p.5) – to tap into the money available for social problem solving while preserving a distance from the user interface. Or as Mouton (2001, p.26) puts it, 'to address the seemingly conflicting demands from internal and external stakeholders'.

There are two questions that arise here. The first one is whether the 'strategic regime' is a genuinely new mode of knowledge production, superseding basic and applied modes, or whether it is merely a 'resource mobilising strategy', a rhetorical device to get to the money while holding on to autonomy and 'necessary distance'. Rip and Mouton both consider that it is a real, rather than just rhetorical, phenomenon. Rip particularly sees it as a natural correlative to the emergence of regional development and innovation centres (see Castells, 2001) in the global economy, where the growth of the economy and the growth of knowledge are equally nurtured. Maybe, but we will have to wait and see: perhaps it is a bit of both. Certainly South African researchers increasingly embrace the term, and it is a distinct organising category in the national data set (see Mouton, 2001). The second question is whether 'strategic' research is not just a beguiling term adopted by newer and less established institutions who are 'systemically marginal', in other words weak, used to bid for a more central position, in money and status terms, in the reputational field. Rip acknowledges the possibility, but denies that it impairs the theory. After all, that is what the Afrikaans universities did in the 1960s, and this facility with 'strategicality', initiated under apartheid and refined over the last decade, probably accounts for the unexpected and uncontested ease with which Pretoria University, once the ideological home of apartheid, has laid claim to the statutory Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (the

most potent of the former statutory research agencies). Strategic research, with a foot in both basic and applied, is tough-minded research, bringing in the money and advancing knowledge growth. The currently marginal institutions will not easily improve their position by embracing participation-based or action research alone, as some have suggested (for example, EPU, 2001).

Conclusion

This paper has been concerned to elucidate two key features of restructuring and the 'new governance' in South African higher education. The first is the 'restructuring of the governing principles that relate the individual (here the individual higher education institution) and the state' (Lindblad and Popkewitz, 2002). We have seen that this complex dynamic has driven universities into a new 'strategicality' in relation to their increasingly diverse environmental network of pacts and partners. One facet of this dynamic is certainly that the state loses a certain influence over universities, but more important still, the university must deploy a multidirectional strategic cunning in order to survive. The second feature is that the 'problematic of knowledge' (ibid), one of the two redemptive longings anchoring restructuring, drives a logic of differentiation, both within the institution between departments and faculties, and between institutions, that makes a 'one size fits all' state-driven policy increasingly unworkable. The 'problematic of equity', the other redemptive longing and one that necessarily looms large in the South African political imaginary, currently blinds policy makers to this insight. The paper has tried to demonstrate these points in relation to the two domains of knowledge work of universities, curriculum programme organisation, and research policy and practice.

 What can we then conclude about the impact of educational restructuring on research and curriculum practices in universities in South Africa? First, we should accept the argument of Delanty (2001) above that the state, under globalisation, recedes as a financial provider and hence too as the most singular source of influence over public higher education. Universities are increasingly embedded in a cross-meshed network of public-private partnerships that include government, industry, and the professions, an environment of 'multiple markets' that cannot easily be reduced to a single source of influence. It comes as no surprise then that we have no hard evidence that state policies in either research or curriculum have had any fundamental influence on what academics actually do. It would be tempting to

conclude that this was so simply because of the weakness of the state, but that too would be inaccurate. Not only are 'multiple markets' more influential, but – and this has been a central argument of the paper - the institutions themselves also contribute powerfully to this effect. Institutional theory shows that organisations are easier to influence from without only when the outside signals correspond to their internal criteria of, and learnt capacities for, relevance. When the external signals go against these, they become highly resistant: they are able to 'ignore control signals, to forego incentives, and to absorb sanctions, without changing their ways in the direction desired by government policy makers' (Scharpf, 1987/8, p.105). Scharpf goes on to say that many institutions will collapse rather than change their internal value system. In similar vein, van Vught (1991), in a wide-ranging discussion of why university curricular reforms invariably fail, concludes, like Scharpf, that fundamental reforms will fail because their complexity cannot be absorbed by the institutions:

> When complexity is defined as the combination of the degree to which an innovation is a departure from existing values and practices with the number of functional areas aimed at by the innovation, the level of complexity of an innovation process in higher education may be expected to be negatively related to the rate of adoption of the innovation. The more complex an innovation, the less successful that innovation will be in getting adopted (van Vught, 1991, p.34).

It is highly likely that the sheer complexity of curriculum programmatic change was entirely underestimated by the state policy makers in South Africa. Programmatic curriculum restructuring thus partly failed because of its ambitiousness, and partly too because policy makers underestimated the diversity of institutional capacity in the system.

The same holds in the realm of research. One may be inclined to conclude that the balance of power has, in the case of research, swung from the state to the 'multiple markets' commissioning and funding a veritable flood of new research, but that would be to underestimate the power of the endogenous features of the higher education institutions. The swing to the user interface, conventional fastidiousness about the instrumentalisation of knowledge aside, does not present the same kind of structural threat to knowledge-based practice as that presented by programmatisation, which after all in its maximal form would have entailed the end of conventional departments as well as conventional disciplines.

If suppositions about strategic research, advanced by Rip and Mouton above, hold up, then it is quite likely that the imperatives of knowledge growth and

relevance will both be served by the new if seemingly contradictory impulsions behind strategic research. But as was said above, not all disciplines can present an equally effective strategic face to the world, and it will take a discerning policy to nurture those disciplines with a great gap between their basic and applied activities, while those with a narrower one prosper by the strategic route.

A main conclusion arises from considering the impact of exogenous factors on universities. First, consider *government policy impact* on universities (alternatively, institutional responsiveness to policy). Here, as in other domains of education, South African commentary dwells over-much on the intended policy, investing it with an importance that is rarely borne out empirically. We tend naturally to expect that the policy can and should have its intended impact, and are invariably surprised when it doesn't. Secondly, the same goes for *multiple market impact*, which, all too often reduced to a singular force, is either wholeheartedly welcomed as the private solution to public inefficiency, or treated as the evil eye. One consequence of this simplification and its consequent distortion, the analysis above suggests, is that we do not take the institutions and *institutional responsive capacity* sufficiently seriously. Were we to do so, we would have different and differentiated expectations about institutional response possibilities. Furthermore, were the policy makers to take institutional responsive capacity more seriously, together with the differential impacts of markets on different kinds of institution, they may very well frame their policy levers in more differentiated ways.

South African universities, like their peers elsewhere, are thus beholden to their exogenous partners, but not fatally so, with the specific exception of a small group of institutions in the country that are historically poor in social and cultural capital. It is only from their perspective that state support in the form of input-based subsidies makes the difference between financial survival and ruin. For all other kinds of institutions, state and markets are both exogenous forces with variable possibilities, to be treated with variable degrees of caution and strategic guile. *Endogenous self-propulsion* is probably still the mode best suited to the long term health of the science and innovation system, as the IDRC Report (1993) affirmed. Under these circumstances, a globally repositioned state like South Africa should adopt a more nuanced, more differentiated, and principally reward-based approach, if it is to get the best from its higher education institutions.

Appendix A

Change initiatives in higher education

Over 30 change initiatives from various government departments currently demand higher education management time and financial resources.

Table 1: Policy Issues Requiring Integration

Restructuring
National Working Group proposals
Minister of Education's proposals for restructuring
Merger discussions, with array of attendant issues
Regional aspects of restructuring
Formation of new types of institutions – e.g. Institutes of Technology, National Institutes of Higher Education, comprehensive institutions

Research
Programmes for capacity building
Emphasis on innovation
Ratings for researchers in Humanities

Academic Planning
Provisions of National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE)
Mission and niche documentation
Programme and Qualification Mix (PQM)
Regional discussions/proposals on identified programmes
Three-year rolling plans
Changing admissions requirements
Implementing National Higher Education Information and Application Service (NHEIAS)

Quality Assurance
Institutional audit framework proposals
Programme accreditation framework proposals
Research framework being prepared
Teaching and Learning support framework in progress
Institutional visits by Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) now under way

National Qualifications Framework: Programmes & Qualifications
New academic policy
Revision of South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) under way
Outcomes-based formats for programmes/qualifications
Procedures for registration/approving funding of new programmes
Regional clearing of new programmes

Governance
Council on Higher Education (CHE) Policy Report: Promoting Good
Governance in South African Higher Education

Equity & Labour Issues
Implementation of labour legislation
Employment Equity Act
Institutions formulating equity policies, plans and reports
Skills Development Act
Transformation processes within institutions

Data Collection & Reporting
Changeover from SAPSE (South African Post-Secondary Education system)
to HEMIS (Higher Education Management Information System)
Production of institutional annual reports
Issues of reporting vis-à-vis governance, with reference to King Report II
Responding to requests for information from government departments

Funding
New funding formula awaited – will impact on academic planning and PQM
Funding for mergers, for redress, for deficits

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Why do education policies in East Africa fail? What's changing?

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Background

In 1990 the World Bank published a series of papers on the implementation of education policy in sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 1990). These papers exposed the gap between policy intention and realisation and attempted to answer the question, "Why have these policies failed?" Over a decade later, we are still facing the same question. There have been significant gains in access to primary education in some countries. However, differences between policy and reality remain, even in countries achieving improved educational development. What are the causes of this? What are the prospects of this situation changing?

This paper addresses these questions from the perspective of international development agencies. It seeks new interpretations of the lack of policy realisation and suggests ways that partnership between international development agencies and national governments might contribute to improved sustainable change.

Our analysis of the failure of educational policy goes beyond the analysis of the policies themselves, to look at the social and political environment in which policies are created. Drawing on examples of recent major reform programmes from Uganda (Universal Primary Education), Tanzania (the emerging education Sectorwide Approach (SWAp) and Kenya, we consider the technical and non-technical dimensions which shape emerging policy. In so doing we draw on the ideas of Chabal and Daloz (1999). Their book, *Africa Works,* provides an unorthodox and interesting perspective on the way governments in sub-Saharan Africa function. Rather than asking why African governments seemingly fail to be effective bureaucracies, they pose the question: What are African governments attempting to achieve? By turning the focus around, they endeavour to show how informalizing politics,

capturing economic failure and ultimately using *disorder as a political instrument,* all serve to profit the vertical links between patrons and clients within the political and social system.

By interpreting the trajectory of educational policies using some of these ideas, we are forced to reconsider the role for development agencies. Currently, international development assistance is delivered using a wide variety of modalities, from project finance to budget support. As a consequence, the relationship between development agencies and partner governments also enjoys great variation. In the final part of the paper we focus briefly on the range of funding modalities currently available and why some are more appropriate than others for East African countries. In this concluding section we turn again to the particular examples of Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya, and use the taxonomy of aid forms developed by Foster (2000) to provide a basis for a discussion on how, in the contexts described in the course of this paper, partnership is affected by the nature of the aid delivery mechanisms. Although it is possible to identify principles, and even some guidelines to inform development agencies' relationships with recipient governments, our conclusion is that 'one size does not fit all'.

Theory and context

In their analysis of sub-Saharan Africa, Chabal and Daloz (1999) offer an original interpretation of the continent's precarious condition. The authors draw on a wide range of disciplines and comparative material to review the major political, social, and cultural trends of present day Africa from a realistic, if unorthodox, perspective. They explore three fundamental issues:

The informalisation of politics: Are African political systems actually institutionalizing, or have the prevailing personal and vertical links between patrons and clients continued, purposely and profitably, to hold sway?

The 're-traditionalisation' of society: Is the resurgence of ethnicity, witchcraft and other 'cultural' traits in Africa an indication of the continent's move backward, or evidence of its multi-faceted path to modernization?

The productivity of economic 'failure': Is Africa's inability to develop the result of dubious policy choices, or external constraints, or is it the logical

outcome of a singular dynamic by which patrimonial networks are enriched at the expense of the continent's economic growth?

The authors develop a new paradigm – *the political instrumentalisation of disorder* – which makes sense of the process outlined above and provides an interesting analysis of Africa's contemporary politics. We argue, using elements of this analysis, that the trends identified in educational development identified in the 1980s continued into the 1990s, and are likely to continue to affect the development and implementation of national education strategies and policies for some time to come, possibly leading to East Africa's failure to achieve the education Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Our account of the East African is presented in three cameos:

Kenya

The Government of Kenya, as with other East African countries, recognises the importance of education, and regularly asserts that education is a basic human right and a powerful tool for human resource and national development. The commitment to education is to be found in a host of sessional papers and government reports into education spanning the entire post-independence era from 1963. Kenya is a signatory to the Dakar protocols.

Public spending on education in Kenya has increased markedly since independence. Under the latter years of the previous government of President Moi which ended in January, 2003, Kenya was spending just on 30% of total government expenditure on education, representing on average nearly 7.3% of GNP. Recurrent expenditure in Kenya has increased by close to 135% over the past decade to US$211mill. Whilst this is amongst the highest in sub-Saharan Africa, the outputs of the sector are less than impressive.

In the last fifteen budgets of the Moi government, inputs which would have improved the quality of education were not to be found. On average, 92% of the education budget was spent on recurrent expenditures (salaries and administration) and in the primary education sub-sector salaries accounted for 98% of recurrent expenditure. The outputs of the system were equally poor; a decline in the primary education Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) from 101.8% to 87.1% over the last decade, primary school completion rates averaged 45%, a decline of the secondary school GER from 29.4% to 21.7%, of which an average of 82% completed, and an estimated 3.5 million eligible children not

accessing primary education. At the same time, higher education continued to benefit the wealthiest members of the population. A recent benefit incidence analysis reveals that the richest 40% of the population benefit more than five times as much from government subsidisation of university education than do the poorest 40%. (Deolaliker, 1999).

There is a growing number of the poor in Kenya (current economic growth is less than 1%, while the population grows at a rate of 2.7%. Fifty two percent of Kenyans live below the international poverty line of US $1 a day). Yet the burden of expenditure on education increasingly falls to families. Until the change of government in January 2003, parents and communities paid: a school development levy, a school amenities fee, examination costs, sports fees, local district education office fees, school textbooks costs, and school uniform costs. Although free basic education was declared in Kenya in January 2003, implementing it is some way off. It has been estimated that the cost of keeping a child at primary school in Kenya, without taking into account opportunity and social costs, averages out at the equivalent of US$120.00 a year. At the same time, the high repetition rate of 13.7% for primary pupils effectively adds an additional year to primary schooling.

Whilst the benefits of public expenditure on primary education are fairly evenly spread across all income groups, as with most sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries, the key challenges in the education sector remain access, equity, quality and relevance.

Thus the question remains: why is there such a gap between the rhetoric espoused in international conferences and national policy documents, and the reality of education in Kenya?

Tanzania

For the last 15 years, education indicators in Tanzania have been falling. In 1985 the Government of Tanzania had achieved a GER of 98%. By 1995, the GER had declined to only 74%. By the year 2000, it was estimated that a total of nearly 3 million children, out of a cohort of nearly 7 million children, were not accessing education. An interesting indicator of the consequences of the decline in the number of children accessing education concerns literacy levels. After rising from 15% in 1961 to 90.4% in 1985, literacy levels have declined to 76% in the late 1990s.

A number of social and economic reasons have contributed to this change. Economic liberalisation policies of the late 80s led to an immediate decline in government revenues, and under pressure from The World Bank and IMF, cost-sharing in education was begun. At the same time, population increases at over 3% per year further added to the costs of education.

However, these reasons alone do not explain the losses witnessed since the mid 80s. The education sector is characterised by gross internal inefficiencies. In 1997, teacher-pupil ratios at primary level averaged 1:37, at secondary level 1:18, and 1:6 at higher education. At the same time, repetition rates were high at around 20%. One possible reason for this is the low level of trained primary teachers. The multiples of education financing across sub-sectors also reveal another reason: unit costs for secondary are 7.4 times primary. University students cost 143.5 times as much as a primary student.

While it is clear that poverty is one of the main reasons for the poor performance of the education sector (it is estimated that between 40% and 50% of the Tanzanian population are in severe poverty; the average per capita income is $US 150.00pa), it must also be recognised that policy failure is also a cause. As an assessment of the present situation in Tanzanian education, the ministry itself has declared that:

> Tanzania has had excellent, progressive education policies, such as community education, education for self-reliance, adult education ,universal primary education, work-orientated practical education. Yet most of these policies have not been fully and satisfactorily implemented (Tanzanian Education Sector Appraisal Document, 1999).

There are, however, reasons to expect change. Before debt relief (announced 24 months ago) 35% of the government's budget was spent on debt servicing. The reduction of the debt burden is expected to enable the government to consider major social sector reforms. It has also increased the stability of the government.

Now the question facing Tanzania, and her donor partners is: can the new opportunities presented by debt relief be turned into policy and implementation action?

Uganda - a qualified exception?

In recent years the experience of Uganda education has attracted attention worldwide. Described as a 'star performer' (Davarajan et al 1999), Uganda has made significant strides towards achieving universal primary education and improving gender equity. Primary enrolments have increased from 2.5m. in 1996 to 7.2m. in 2001. Attracted by a strong poverty focused policy framework (the Poverty Eradication Action Plan or PEAP), a strategic medium term investment programme, and functioning mechanisms for policy dialogue; external funding agencies have flocked to support Uganda's endeavours. The preferred modalities for delivering aid are sector or budget support. Approximately 31% of the Government's recurrent discretionary budget is allocated for education, of which 65% is allocated to the primary sub-sector. The partnership between the Government and funding agencies within Uganda Education's Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) is characterised by good donor co-ordination, joint review processes, and the mobilisation of resources within the Government's planning and budgeting cycles. To all intent and purpose, it would appear that after two decades of failed education policies, Uganda is on the brink of achieving its goals of "equipping citizens with the power of knowledge…correct attitudes and multiple developmental skills for rapid economic advancement of Uganda and the "transformation of society" (White Paper, 1992, p.1).

In line with global trends (Addis Ababa African Minister's of Education Conference, 1961; Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Rights of the Child; Jomtein, 1990) the 1992 Government White Paper calls for free and compulsory primary education, in recognition of the role of primary education in "the alleviation of poverty, disease, disharmony, degradation and ignorance" (p.15).

During the first decade of the National Resistance Movement government, despite the policy statements, and increased contributions to education, primary education remained largely the responsibility of parents, and enrolment figures increased only marginally to about 75% (GER) 60% (NER) by 1996. This changed impressively with the bold presidential announcement of the UPE initiative in 1996, whereby four children in every family, plus orphans, would be given free primary education: at the beginning of the school year in 1997 5.2 million pupils registered in primary school, an increase of 68% in one year. Current figures are estimated at 6.3 million. At the same

time, the Local Government Act of 1997 decentralised the administration of social services.

Increased access to primary schooling has not been matched by improvements in quality and equity: there are significant deficits in classrooms, teachers and textbooks and national averages are marked by regional disparities. Nonetheless, there can be no doubt that after several years of inertia, Uganda has made significant strides towards achieving UPE. The business-as-usual approach of large, centrally managed implementation schemes is gradually being eroded in favour of decentralised service delivery, although much still needs to be done to ensure that critical quality inputs actually reach the schools, and impact upon teaching and learning. Strong partnerships between donors and government, coupled with effective donor co-ordination, have allowed for increasingly transparent policy dialogue, and the monitoring of jointly agreed education targets. However, the quality of primary education remains a serious concern, and the enormous challenges posed at the post-primary level threaten to undermine all the achievements to date. It would appear that Uganda is the country in East Africa most likely to achieve the MDGs, and demonstrate some success in the implementation of its education policies, but it will take sustained long-term commitment and resources on all sides if this is to become a reality.

Assessment of policy implementation

Development agencies have long looked to the countries of East Africa as places where there is a good opportunity for successful education development. There is a popular view, often expressed in the media, that the countries of East Africa are on the threshold of achieving the education MDGs, implying that it is merely a matter of a little more effort before Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania will achieve UPE and the institutionalisation of well managed education systems. It is this view that underlies much of the continued development assistance that pours into the region.

Several decades after the region's independence, and in the face of the decline in school enrolments in Tanzania and Kenya (see above and Bredie and Beeharry, 1998) and the crisis of education quality in Uganda (see Ford Foundation, 2001), it seems reasonable to ask whether development agencies ought to consider other approaches. Is it sufficient only to address the technical weaknesses in education systems, or are there other reasons that the

governments of East Africa are not implementing the education reforms they purport to adhere to? The slow progress over this period suggests a need to question the policy intention of these governments, and to find reasons for the gap between rhetoric and practice.

Psacharopolous (1994) reminds us that educational policy is proclaimed or a school reform is enacted, not for its own sake, but in order to serve a particular purpose. That purpose may be pedagogical, political, economic, or any combination of other good causes according to the judgement of that impersonal entity often referred to as 'the policy maker'.

It is from this perspective that we address questions of why there is such a gap between educational policy objectives and their realisation. We address three possible causes for poor policy implementation:
•   A reluctance to introduce necessary in-depth reforms
•   Weak public administration and institutions
•   An aversion to the institutionalisation of bureaucratic practices.

In our discussion of these three areas we draw further on the ideas of Chabal and Daloz, particularly the themes of the informalisation of government and the concept and role of individuals in political processes in sub-Saharan Africa.

We shall also be arguing the need for funding agencies, especially, to look beyond the most immediate and technical discourses which dominate the verbal and documentary exchanges between themselves and partner governments, and to begin to ask whether the countries of East Africa base their education agenda on very different values, processes and priorities to those understood by their funding agency partners.

A reluctance to introduce necessary in-depth reforms

Developing appropriate national policy responses to low enrolments and poor quality primary education is the main challenge of educational development in the region. Each of the three countries featured in this article have differing histories of the reform process. Both Kenya and Tanzania have long histories of external support geared to strengthening public administrations and the institutionalisation of reform initiatives, and yet neither has achieved the depth of reform expected.

In Kenya, we have witnessed long delays and prevarication over calling a national Education Forum, in spite of the production of volumes of reports and preparatory papers. This can be explained only in political terms. Indeed, Maina and Muliro (2001) make this point with reference to Kenya. Reforms which are made have tended to arrive as directives from the presidential office. Policies have been made in this way on, for example, the recruitment of more teachers, or the need to introduce specific additional subjects into the curriculum or on discipline in schools. These 'grand scheme' announcements, just like the numerous task forces set up regularly, carry with them the weight of political imperative. However, as *ex cathedra* directives they are rarely linked to any real tangible output, nor are they embedded in strategic priorities, indeed they often run counter to existing priorities.[1]

What is the purpose of these announcements, grand schemes and task forces? The cynic may argue that the setting up of task forces is a form of decision-avoidance. Following the announcement of a task force to address issues of school unrest, David Adude in *The Nation* on 15 August, 2001 provided a useful summary of the role of task forces in Kenya's education system. He noted that the Education Minister had "assembled an impressive array of the ministry's cadres to announce the team. And its job? To repeat what umpteen other teams have done before - to investigate the causes of strikes and unrest, and make recommendations."

The editorial went on to list the number of reports compiled in the past decade, and noted the failure to implement any of them, concluding that it was the fear of change, rather than the lack of information that paralysed the education system. Fear of change was attributed to the "the mental rigidity that characterizes the establishment".

However, other reasons were also apparent in the political economy of Kenya. The recent enormous increase in the number of private schools in Kenya has led to a remarkable growth in rent-seeking activities both in the public and private school sectors, with the potential especially in the latter that this growth provides for extracting financial gains through regulatory bodies. The clientistic relationships that have been set up serve to profit the vertical relationships amongst the elite.

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[1]   Recruiting increased numbers of teachers in Kenya, for example, will place additional financial pressure on parents in a context where already 92% of the education is spent on teacher salaries. It will certainly not allow the GoK to decrease the percentage of recurrent expenditure and allow for an increase in development funding.

A lack of strategic rigour also allows opportunities for the presentation of policies by presidential decree. In the same way that President Moi made unprecedented announcements concerning task forces and teacher recruitment, a programme leading to free basic education in Tanzania was announced by presidential decree in Tanzania during the 2001 presidential election campaign. Ironically, it forced the Ministry of Education finally to produce an education sector development plan, after over five years of prevarication and delay. It has also had the effect of mobilising the donor community, and with HIPC (debt relief) funding is now coming on stream too. The prospects for large investment in education in Tanzania now appear most promising. How deep the reform process in Tanzania becomes, and indeed, now in Kenya, remains to be seen, however. If Chabal and Daloz are correct in suggesting that:

> The aim of the political elites is not just to gather power. It is much more fundamentally to use that power, and the resources which it can generate, to purchase, as it were, the 'affection' of their people (1999, p.158)

then the prospects for sustained reform are slim.

Uganda's case is interesting because it is somewhat different. It is clearly an example of deep reform occurring by presidential decree, and it has been followed by a number of in-depth reforms which have supported and developed the process. With the Local Government Act of 1997 and the UPE policy of the same year, the country decentralised the administration of social services and made primary education effectively free. However, as Appleton (2001, p.371) argues, before UPE was declared in 1997:

> ... education had arguably been a low and declining priority for the government. In 1987, when the Museveni government had first come to power, it set up the Education Policy Review Commission to report on the state of education. The commission's most notable recommendation was to attain universal primary education by 2000. However, the government was slow to implement the measures and commit the resources needed to meet this goal.

The apparent about face in 1997 in Uganda has many possible explanations. Given that the announcement was made during a Presidential election year[2], perhaps we can concur with the view that "…redirecting education to serve the

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[2]   During the 2001 Presidential elections in Uganda nearly every candidate, including the successful incumbent, promised to meet the demand for post-primary education. Currently less than 15% of the eligible age group is enrolled in post-primary education. There is a popular expectation that Universal Secondary Education is not far off.

needs of a modern state is fundamentally a political process regardless of whether the strategy is adaptive, evolutionary, or revolutionary" (Nanszozi 2001,p.3). There is little doubt that the announcement served both to capture the popular vote and to endear the Government of Uganda to the international community (De Temmerman, 2001, p.3). The Ugandan reforms are indeed in-depth, and are having far-reaching consequences for the future of the country. Nonetheless, it has been argued that these reforms have not been points of departure after all, merely the playing out of vertical political links and the operational consequences of the NRM's accession of power in 1986 (see Nsibambi, 1998, p.1).This is not to denigrate the UPE policy, or its outcomes, but merely to locate the policy within this wider context.

One way of understanding these acts is to consider changes from the perspective of the individual. The kernel of Chabal and Daloz's analysis of the concept and role of the individual in sub-Saharan Africa is that:

> individual rationality is essentially based on communal logic. What we mean is twofold. First, individuals act on the whole with a preponderant respect for the psychological, social and religious foundations of the local community from which they are issued. Second, and more generally, relations of power are predicated on the shared belief that the political is communal (1999, p.156).

This means that instead of individuals acting as free and intentional agents in politics and society more generally, we must see individuals in East Africa acting as 'nodal points' of larger communal networks. The concept of reciprocity is very important in this, and follows on from the communal nature of the individual, especially as it means that:

> the logic of any action (whether political or not) lies in what it induces by way of expectations of reciprocity between the parties involved. Because of the conception of the individual on the continent, relations between people must also be seen as taking into account the community of which they are a part. This can only be done when there is a clear recognition of the nature of the exchanges involved. Relations, as it were, must be propitiated by reciprocity because they are not seen as distinct from the context within which they take place. Thus, political acts are played out on the market place of the various patrimonial networks concerned (Chabal and Daloz, 1999, p.157).

An interesting example of this is evident in the formal political arena throughout East Africa. It is generally acknowledged that ruling parties have been returned to power in part because they were perceived to be more able to deliver on expected patrimonial promises than their competitors (Kibwana et al, 1996). The ruling elites' priority when in power then becomes the need to direct resources to the feeding of the patrimonial system rather than the long

and arduous investment in development. In Uganda, up to 1997, and in Kenya and Tanzania currently, we see this situation played out not simply in the lack of investment in education, but in the level of patronage given to particular sub-sectors or groups, leading to a grossly inefficient use of resources .

The defining features of patrimonial systems are vertical links within politics.

> What is significant in Africa is the extent to which vertical and/or personalized relations actually drive the very logic of the political system. It is not just that politics are swayed by personal considerations or that the personal is manipulated for political reasons. It is also, and perhaps more importantly, that the overall aim of politics is to affect the nature of such personal relations (Chabal and Daloz, 1999, p.158).

The personalisation of politics in East Africa is played out in the presidential decrees and patrimonial networks within governmental structures. It is informative to consider how weak institutional structures of educational administrations allow these networks to grow and allow the political elite to both benefit and retain control.

Weak public administration and institutions

Although the state in Africa has deep roots, Bayart, Ellis and Hibou have shown the extent to which public administration and institutions in Africa remain weak "as a result of the rhixome-like nature of the state and of the organisation of public power in general" (1999, p.91):

> Administrative procedures and legislative or institutional rules are only one channel among many which the public authorities use to manage the country's affairs. Personal relations and personal networks, whether of an economic, political, religious or regional nature, frequently offer far more effective instruments of public management (ibid.).

The funding agency community consistently point to the existence of governance, institutional and other procedural and administrative shortcomings within government in East Africa. It is argued that these frustrate the development and implementation of effective education policies. Bayart, Ellis and Hibou (1999) highlight how the collapse in public administration in Africa has affected the development and implementation of government policies. In these circumstances poorly paid and poorly prepared East African civil servants frequently negotiate with funding agencies education policy reforms and projects extant of wider policy and strategic frameworks, agreeing to outputs and policies without reference to accurate

statistics on the education sector, and often committing their governments to performance targets beyond the capacity of the executing agencies. These same civil servants are often unable, and generally reluctant, to manage relationships upwards with their political masters. As a result a kind of "double whammy" effect is produced: agreements with funding agencies on unfeasible and impractical education reforms/projects (some of the Education Sector Improvement Programme (ESIP) targets in Uganda); the development of education policy statements which have little grounding in the reality of the sector's capacity, needs or resource constraints (curriculum reforms in Uganda); projects and programmes which have very little overall strategic coherence (Community Polytechnics in Uganda).

While a lack of coherence and functionality of the administrative machinery frustrates donor agencies' attempts to realise projects successfully, it may serve the purposes of those who can profit from disorder. Poorly functioning government machinery effectively insulates the political masters from constraining donor agreements and allows those in government to control the pace and direction of change. Weak administrations are those which can be controlled through the exercise of individual power and authority. They also provide an environment which allows for informal bureaucratic practices.

An aversion to the institutionalisation of bureaucratic practices

At a formal level, the governments of East Africa have structures and procedures governing the management of education. These are often strictly hierarchical and bureaucratic, with many interactions characteristic of rule-bound organisational behaviour. In much funding agency-government interaction, formal protocol is strictly observed. Indeed, form and symbol appear to be all-important. Reports and recommendations are formally received and noted, formal statements are made regarding commitments, and future intentions are inscribed in written exchanges. Beyond this, however, a different reality exists, one which presumably reflects the real working world for most civil servants. Our experience within the education sector reveals the following: an inability or unwillingness to institutionalise more formal and impersonal social relations; a reluctance to engage in meaningful planning and budgeting for the sector, even where there are commitments to that effect; and the subtle use of strategies to maintain the status quo, in spite of repeated expressions of commitment to reform.

In their analysis of African post-colonial culture, Chabal and Daloz (1999) stress three key points:

> The first is that the African post-colonial cultural order....constitutes a distinct universe, the understanding of which helps to account for the events and processes with which we are here concerned. What we observe in Africa is not a resort to 'imagined' or frozen cultural customs, used purposefully to 'assert one's difference'. It is a spontaneous and rational recourse to a deeply rooted cultural environment. Second, this mindset is shared by all layers of the population and it would be deceptive as well as hypocritical to argue that it does not apply to the elites. ... Third, we would maintain that, given the current norms of political rationality throughout the world, this perennial preference for the infra-institutional is best understood from the standpoint of disorder (1999, p.132).

One conclusion of this is that what is occurring in East Africa represents the negation of the funding agencies' Western type of educational development model, and that only those aspects of change which meet 'local perception,' are accommodated and colonised. Chabal and Daloz continue:

> As far as (political) actors are concerned, this type of behaviour may well turn out to be most eminently rational (ibid.).

Turning their analysis to education systems, they suggest it is possible for a country's education system to decline, for educational development to be insignificant, while at the same time for the members of a large number of (informal) networks to continue to benefit from the failures of the system. An East African example of this is the high rates of return obtained by elites from limited access to secondary and higher education, particularly in a context of globalisation. It may even be true that a country's educational failure is, in this respect at least, more 'profitable' for this group, than is 'development' and 'progress'.

From a western, funding agency perspective, this situation is hard to accept, especially when one considers the enormous weight of evidence and opinion supporting the positive role of education in development. The failure of governments to provide education for all, has long been questioned:

> given the apparently strong private and social benefits that accrue from primary schooling, together with the significant range of positive externalities associated with its provision, why have the governments of developing countries been so tardy in ensuring its universal availability, and why has this circumstance been tolerated by their populations? After all, primary schooling was formally accepted as a human right almost 50 years ago (Colclough, 1993, p.47).

Colclough's answer to these questions is multi-faceted, but essentially he concludes that many governments have acted ineffectively or not at all to provide education to all the children and that demand for schooling, particularly for girls' schooling, has remained low, mainly because of poverty. We suggest that these failures extend beyond the issue of capacity or efficiency, or political will, and reflect a deeper understanding on the part of the stakeholders involved of local social and political dynamics. Our analysis suggests a rationality to retaining an informal and capricious institutional structure. As Psacharopolous (1994) pointed out, there is a reason for policy decisions. Our analysis shows there are equally reasons for *avoiding* making policy decisions and retaining a level of disorder and informality. Disorder and the informalisation of government practice presents a space which can be manipulated by those with power to preserve networks of clients. Chabal and Daloz suggest that these structures are required in order for a sense of development. They suggest that:

> in Africa, the measure of achievement has long been, and seemingly continues to be, found in the immediate display of material gain – that is, consumption rather than production. At a most fundamental level, then, the logic of the notion of success is antithetical to the economic 'mentality' underpinning development (1999, p.160).

The notion of this form of success is apparent in education mainly through the importance given to grand schemes, such as new universities and curriculum launches, rather than root and branch reforms of the sector or the priorities of basic education. We conclude that a key feature of the development and implementation of education policy in East Africa is the dominance of the short-term view, and the imperative of the micro- (as opposed to macro-) perspective. On the other hand, in drawing the lesson that the dominance of the short-term view has led to a lack of long term and substantive gains in education, we need to be aware of the risk of losing the insights gained from understanding the reasons for the domination of 'short-termism' and the dynamics which give rise to it. What we are suggesting is that reasons why it is worthwhile for politicians avoid setting up a properly regulated and managed education sector, and to avoid giving a guarantee of quality education for all, when there is so much to gain for so many from a continuous climate of disinvestments, disorder and uncertainty.

Partnerships for improved and sustainable change

Given the foregoing analysis regarding the policy environment in East Africa, should development agencies continue to support educational development in the region? And, if the answer is in the affirmative, what form should this take?

In order to answer this question it is important to consider two related questions: first, in this context: What is the aim of educational aid? Secondly, following on from the first question: What is the most appropriate choice of educational aid instrument?

Since the World Conference on Education For All (WCEFA) in Jomtien in 1990 there has been an international consensus regarding the aim of educational aid: basic education for all. As Samoff has pointed out, this is

> clearly a desirable goal. Nearly everyone is for it. Governments, international institutions, and non-governmental organizations all regularly reiterate their support…Funding agencies provide significant resources, indeed have done so over many years, to assist in reaching that goal (2001, p.1).

The funding agencies supporting education in East Africa are all signatories to the Dakar Framework For Action of April 2000 which collectively commits the international community and country governments to the goals of Education For All (EFA). Given this commitment, the emphasis that Dakar gives to the role of country governments in leading efforts to achieve the EFA goals, the crucial importance of national educational policies and the knowledge that policy formulation is primarily driven by domestic political economy, the most appropriate choice of educational aid instrument should be one that allows the maximum amount of predictable aid flows to education and strengthens and promotes leadership by the country government.

We should also recognise that in Africa:
- countries that have truly severe economic and political crises tend to move to the extremes, either developing coherent reform movements or declining rapidly;
- successful reformers have consultative processes that build consensus for change;
- large amounts of aid to countries with bad policy environments has the effect of sustaining those poor policies, and encourages the delay of reform;

- aid can play a significant role in promoting and sustaining reform; and
- in general, donors have not discriminated effectively among different countries and different phases of reform process. Donors tend to provide the same package of assistance everywhere and at all times (Devarajan, Dollar and Holmgren, 2001, pp.5-6).

Foster (2001) has recently summarised the characteristics of main aid forms in terms of conditionality (policy measures that the partner government agrees to implement as a condition of the aid), earmarking (limitations placed on what the aid must be spent on) and accountability (how the funds will be disbursed, accounted for and audited) and these are incorporated in the table below.

Table 1: Characteristics of Main Aid Forms

Aid Form	Conditionality	Earmarking	Accountability
Structural Adjustment	Macro – donors consider government going in the right direction and judge they achieve more leverage through conditionality than earmarking	None	None
General Budget Support	As above	None	Government systems
Sector Budget Support	Encourages more serious planning and budgeting at sector level	To sector	Government systems
Sector Earmarked	Earmarking to additional spending on priority areas linked to performance indicators	Within sector	Government systems
Government Projects	Earmarking to projects or specific spending within a sector	To projects within sector	Government systems
Donor Project	Government commitments to the project	Total and usually off Government budget	Donor systems

Using this matrix, we consider that it is probably appropriate to use sector level policy conditions to support policy and institutional change within two of our countries' education sectors, Tanzania and Uganda. However, this level of conditionality will only be appropriate if other macro level or cross-cutting issues which are critical to the success of reforms at sector level are being addressed. A key cross-cutting issue concerns the allocation of financial resources to the sector. In the case of Tanzania and Uganda, donor flows represent a significant share of public funding for education (see Devarajan, Dollar and Holmgren, 2001) and the major donors providing the bulk of such funding are able to reach agreement with the governments on the policies, plans and expenditure programmes to be implemented within the sector. It is possible, therefore, that by effectively using sectoral level conditionality, some measure of policy and institutional change may be achieved in Tanzania and Uganda. This is not to say, however, that donors should use their financial leverage to impose policy changes for which there is little domestic support.

Finally, our assessment of the possible success of using various forms of conditionality, is that it can be most effective in creating movement and development. Indeed, we would argue it creates a more balanced partnership between government and funding agency. The big test will come when in these new days of budget support, DFID has yet to test its will to 'turn off the tap'.

Lessons learned or guides to action

Samoff has pointed out that "simplifying findings ('lessons learned') in order to generalize may lead to stating the obvious rather than developing useful guides to action (2001, p.16).

Our concern in this final section of our paper is to suggest understandings drawn from our experiences which can guide funding agencies faced with the problems we have identified. In particular, as practitioners engaged in education policy dialogue in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, what should we be aware of? What's changing?

We suggest that the first thing to be aware of, as Chabal and Daloz have pointed out, is how vital it is

> to avoid falling prey either to the optimistic economic prognosis currently mooted by the World Bank or to an admittedly more common gloom of 'Afro-pessimism'. The future of

the continent may be equivocal but it does not appear to lie in the lessening of informalization. On the contrary, we are likely to witness an increase in informal practices, both domestically and internationally (1999, p.138).

An increase in informalisation demands that funding agencies give greater consideration to the implications of the politics of patronage in East Africa, as these dynamics often shape the gap observed between policy statement and implementation.

> Apart from authoritarianism, a vital, non-coercive form of consolidating power has been to rely on patronage. To secure political incumbency, public benefits have been distributed and opportunities to profit provided along political lines. Thus in their quest for self-preservation, state elites have dispensed government-controlled resources – jobs, licenses, contracts, credit – to select political allies as well as mediating access to economic opportunities in favour of close associates so as to enhance their hold over state power (Tangri, 1999, p.10).

The needs of the patronage network frequently take precedence over development priorities in the Education Sector. From the perspective of those working with development agencies, the key issue is to understand that the processes politicians in East Africa use to engage the population in discussions about the education system may operate at two levels. While there may be talk of educational development and reform, the reality of the exercise of power does not give much evidence of a commitment to the sort of structural and infrastructural reforms that, development agencies would argue, make educational development possible.

This leads to a situation where very different perceptions and agenda are held concerning the role of donors and host governments. Indeed, one can assert that the rationality of the donors differs sometimes quite markedly from the rationality of their partners. One can cite frequent attacks on donors by President Moi, for example, who accused them of meddling in the internal affairs of Kenya. But it is important to stress that these perceptions are not simply related to the provision of aid, but also to how funding agencies perceive their role too. Whilst the likes of President Moi overtly acknowledge the political nature of our work, funding agencies themselves tend not to acknowledge this.

The existence of both overt and covert political agendas lessens the impact of the technical development discourse in which funding agencies frequently engage. The language of SWAps and Project Management frameworks is that of technical rationality. Logframes assume an objective reality. In many senses

they are 'seductive', inferring causality, prediction and hence control of a social dynamic.

Our experience further suggests that for many ministry officials (and politicians too), there is an inordinate faith in proclamation, especially when this is in written form. There is a strange assumption that once a directive or plan or strategy is on paper, and has been affirmed by an authority, action will 'automatically' follow. It doesn't. "Programmes work through their subjects' liabilities" (Pawson and Tilley, 1997, p.36), by people co-operating and choosing to make them work.

Given these different dynamics, how can funding agencies best support the achievement of sustainable educational development? We suggest that the new modalities of aid, namely budget and sector support, can create opportunities for joint working in which policy, strategy and implementation can be addressed holistically. The experience in Uganda, in particular, indicates that political commitment to a poverty agenda, combined with an increasingly open dialogue between partners creates an environment in which shared targets are less likely to be derailed during implementation. We consider that more work is needed on the part of funding agencies to develop their thinking in these areas. In particular, the following questions need to be addressed:

What form of conditionality would best suit strengthening government accountability? (and accountability to whom?)

How realistic is it to expect governments to fully implement conditions when it is well known that donors are under pressure to give?

Recognising that technical discourse is limited, how might stakeholders in education assess whether a country government is serious about achieving the IDTs?

What do we know about good governance that could be applied in the context described in this paper?

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Book Review

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van der Westhuizen, P.C. (Ed.). 2002 (2nd ed.). *Schools as organisations*. Pretoria: van Schaik.

Compared with countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and the United States, relatively few books on education management have been produced in South Africa. This volume is therefore of great value for its contextual relevance, particularly for a country trying to establish and manage an education system related to its changing needs.

The book consists of four sections subdivided into eleven chapters contributed by seven authors, in some cases on the basis of co-authorship. Two authors, Steyn and de Bruin, were not in the original team of contributors to the first edition of the book. Mindful of the book's multi-author collaboration, this review accordingly comments on one section and one chapter at a time.

Contributions by the two new authors consist of two new chapters in the book, the first and the last chapters. These two chapters seem to be the main justification for the second edition.

Schools as organisations is targeted mainly at the South African postgraduate student, either at the level of the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) or the BEd (Hons) courses.

Education Management is a fairly new discipline, with most of its concepts borrowed from disciplines in the Humanities and the Social and Management Sciences. As a result, its disciplinary components are not always as consensual as those of other more established disciplines. This dilemma sees some of its scholars focussing extensively on justifying both the discipline's existence and/or its components. The title, *Schools as organisations,* illustrates the former while various sections of the book, as will be illustrated, provide testimony to the latter. Confusion brought about by these disciplinarity issues can find the reader wrestling not only over what the actual focus of the book

is, but also over its justifications for some of its contents. The dilemma is particularly apparent in the first two sections of the book.

The first part of the book is titled '*The education system as an organisation'.* It consists of one chapter, 'The education system in relation to its environment'. The chapter provides a useful introduction to education management for the book's main target market. The introduction is informative even though both the section's and the chapter's justification in a book claiming the *school* as its major focus is not made entirely clear. What is also not made very clear is why the only chapter in a section claiming to be dealing with 'the education system as an organisation' chose to focus on 'the education system in relation to its environment'. Discussion on the *school*, rather than the education system, in relation to its environment would have included various sections of the education system discussed in the chapter and would probably have been more apt.

'Organisational theory of the school' is the title of the second section of the book. Three chapters make up the section. The first presents a discussion on, and sets out to give 'a qualitative evaluation', on various organisational theories under the title 'Perspectives on the school as an organisation'. Again, the content of the chapter is impressively informative. A disappointing feature of the discussion, however, is the author's decision to commence by naming 'theories' after their pioneers, not on given points of departure or claims made by the theories. This leaves no scope for tracing the theories' developments, if any. This is particularly disappointing taking into account that some of the theories were pioneered as early as early as the 1950s. Griffiths, for example, first put forward his theory in 1959. The author then moves on to a section headed 'The influence of some trends and life views on the development of education management theory'. The heading holds great promise but its contents, namely, 'positivism'; 'post-positivism'; and, 'postmodernism' are puzzling considering that these cannot be said to be organisational theories even though they may frame the study of, and assumptions about, organisations.

'An ontological perspective on the school as an organisation' is the subject of the next chapter which actually deals with the Christian perspective. Whilst Christians will probably not have any qualms with the singling out of this particular ontological perspective as a preferred perspective, the authoritarian prescription may restrict its readership to followers of the religion, and may indeed be offensive to communities subscribing to other religions. A critical

presentation of a range of ontological perspectives may have been more fitting for a society as divergent as South Africa, and also for postgraduate study that the book claims to be aimed for.

Discussion on the next chapter focuses on 'General characteristics of the school as an organisation'. The strength of this chapter also lies in its informative presentation on its stated topic, which makes its deviation from the stated focus of the section justifiable.

Discussion on the third section falls under the title *'The organisational ecology of the school'*. As pointed out on the back page of the book, the rationale for this section is that "modern organizational theories stress the importance of the ecology of the organization". The importance of ecology for organizational effectiveness cannot be challenged and it has consistently been illustrated by various studies on the subject. A chapter entitled '*The organizational culture of the school'* sets the section off. In this chapter the reader is first introduced to the concept of 'organisational culture' and then presented with the relationship between organisational culture and organisational climate; and guidelines on "the establishment of an organizational culture in a multicultural school" are offered. Although the author makes mention, and gives examples, of policies that organisations sometimes adopt for the handling of diversity, it is a pity is that the author makes no effort to describe the policies. Descriptions of policies could have been stimulating and could have provided room for reflection. Reasons for the inclusion of a study on the organisational culture of ten schools in this chapter is not clear given that no description of the schools is provided, except to say that they were Afrikaans speaking at the time of the study. The chapter concludes with useful guidelines on the establishment and maintenance of effective school cultures. Discussion then proceeds in a chapter on 'Organisational climate in schools'. This chapter is not handled very differently from the previous chapter. In conclusion, the section presents a very short chapter on the 'Organisational health of the school', which also has a structure very similar to the previous two chapters and is equally informative.

The last section of the book is devoted to *'Organisational change and development'*. As in the previous section, inclusion of this section in the book is stated as being motivated by literature concession. In this case, the concession is that "the most important aspects of an organisation" are change and renewal (pg. 181). This section comprises four chapters, the first of which

is 'Change in educational organisations'. Most of the chapter lays a foundational conceptual and theoretical framework on educational change. This is done in a very informative manner which leaves one inclined to think that this should have been the only focus of the chapter, and that the last three sections in the chapter should have been accommodated in a subsequent chapter. All of the discussion in the next important chapter, '*Resistance to change in education',* maintains its focal point and cohesion, and should provide a very useful resource not only in preparation for practice in education, but also for current practitioners most of whom are faced not only by an ominous oasis of change but also by an equally overwhelming resistance to change. The third chapter on 'Organisation development and the quality of working life in schools' lays ground for the ensuing chapter in a very detailed and informative manner. The section ends with a chapter on 'Organisational development in schools through quality management'. A reader is initially impressed by the author's attempt to shift certain sections of the country's schooling community from sole reliance on 'scientific management'. Further reading into the chapter, however, reveals a line of thinking that is aligned not merely to qualitative management approaches but specifically to that field of management popularly referred to as 'Total Quality Management' (TQM). In any event, the chapter provides wide information on TQM and suitably applies it to school development.

The content of the book lays a sound foundation for its projected market and does so in a very 'reader friendly' manner. The book's biggest shortcoming is its prescriptive tendencies - which may work with certain communities - but may probably be out of synchrony with the emerging South African post-graduate student who, one would hope, is more inclined to reach decisions in an informed, independent, reflective, critical and analytic manner, particularly in a task as critical as that of education management. The other major shortcoming of the book was the tendency by some of its authors to quote books published more than two decades ago in their attempt to illustrate a point they claim to reflect a present situation. For example, in the second chapter of the book, to illustrate that "only a few studies which focus exclusively on the school as an organization have as yet been conducted", the author lists sources published in the 60s, 70s and early 80s (p. 181). One other example of this practice is gleaned from a statement that starts with: "In recent years …" and goes on to illustrate the assertion by referring to a source published in 1975 (p. 85). Such references are confusing because one would have thought that one of the reasons for issuing a new edition was to update its content.

Nevertheless, the criticisms raised above do not overshadow the book's strengths, most of which relate to its relevance, as illustrated, for example, in the introductory chapter which not only introduces the reader to education systems in general but also to the South African system in particular. The former provides a good introduction to organisational study while the latter provides appropriate contextual illustrations. Discussions on educational change management provide an additional display of relevance. This is particularly so taking into consideration that South African schools are currently overwhelmed by multiple forms of change. What also makes the book a valuable read is that all its chapters have managed to pack in loads of useful and relevant information.

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Book Review

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Adler, J. and Reed, Y. (Eds). (2002) *Challenges of teacher development: an investigation of take-up in South Africa*. Pretoria: van Schaik.

This book tells the story of a three-year research project undertaken by the Wits Education Department between 1996 and 1998. The aim of the project was to ascertain how teachers' practice changed or developed as a result of their studies on a particular teacher development programme, namely the Further Diploma of Education (FDE). In the words of the research team, the project aimed at determining extent of the 'take up' of competences such as learner-centred teaching, code-switching, and reflective practice. The research team was made up of staff members at Wits University, and the chapters in the book are contributed by different team members.

The stated purpose of the book is to inform teacher education research and development in South Africa, and it certainly makes an important contribution to this field. The book operates at two levels. At one level, it offers insight into the tensions and challenges of investigating the impact of a teacher education programme by observing and interviewing teachers over a three year period. At another level, it grapples with the ongoing debates around the issues of multi-lingualism, learner-centredness, the use of resources, the 'reflective practitioner' and the place of teachers' conceptual knowledge.

This book is both timely and challenging. It is timely in that there are currently thousands of South African teachers upgrading their qualifications and developing their professional practice through programmes offered by a number of higher education institutions via distance education. A distance or 'mixed mode' delivery seems to be the only feasible way of reaching the large number of teachers, many of whom live in remote areas. However, there is very little empirical data that show whether these programmes bring about any kind of changed classroom practice, let alone improved learner achievement. The book is challenging in that it *does* provide data - and that data show that there is no easy correlation between a teacher development programme and

improved teaching and learning in the classroom. There are numerous others factors which impact on the extent of a teacher's 'take-up' of a development programme.

The Wits FDE was offered in 1996 to maths, science and English teachers in both primary and secondary schools. The goals of the programme were to broaden and deepen teachers' subject knowledge, pedagogic subject knowledge, and educational knowledge; to extend teachers' reflective capabilities to facilitate professional growth, and to enable access to further education. The programme was offered using a mixed-mode delivery, which meant a combination of distance learning materials and quarterly residential workshops at Wits. It was school-focussed in that the assessed tasks and the programme content were focussed on school and classroom issues and practice.

Chapter One highlights the ongoing challenges of teacher education internationally, as well as teacher education in South Africa which has its own particular challenges. One of these is the tension of development vs. democracy. Development works best on a small scale where it is easy to have intensive school-based support, and yet democracy means that the social good must be spread further. The challenge clearly is to do both, but is this, in fact, possible?

In Chapter Two, Tessa Welch (from the South African Institute of Distance Education) takes an historical overview of teacher education in South Africa before, during and after apartheid. She notes that in the late 1970s and early 1980s there were concerted efforts to improve the qualifications of teachers as a whole. However, there was very little improvement in the black matric pass rates (as one indicator of 'output'). One of the reasons for this may have been that the curricula for upgrading qualifications made little effort to address classroom practice, and in fact took teachers out of their classrooms.

This is a useful history lesson for teacher educators, and we need to ensure that current efforts at upgrading *do* in fact lead to improved quality learning and teaching. This is one of the greatest challenges: how do teacher education programmes develop (and assess) applied competences in authentic contexts?

Chapter Three focuses on the methodology of researching this kind of programme. It establishes that the project is in fact a case study (of the FDE programme) and that the sample of teachers in fact comprises a collection of particular cases. The initial sample was 25 teachers out of the 140 enrolled on

the programme. The final sample comprised 18 teachers. Included in the sample were primary and secondary school teachers from both rural and urban schools in the Northern Province and Gauteng. The researchers argue that qualitative, multifaceted observation was required to do justice to the complexity of teaching as a social activity, and thus the need to work with a limited number of teachers in depth.

The researchers explore the question of how they are able to extend claims about teacher 'take-up' beyond the teachers who were part of the research study, and indeed how can they infer from one particular case-study conclusions relevant to the wider field of in-service teacher education in general. The research team uses the work of Bassey (1999) who argues that it is possible to develop 'fuzzy generalisations' from carefully conducted case studies. Such fuzzy generalisations invite other educationists to enter into the discourse, and this is made easier by the evidence produced by the case study.

This chapter also explores the contested area of learner performance as an indicator of INSET success. Is it possible for researchers to 'prove' that learners' performance changes over time, and that this change is in fact a result of their teacher's development on a particular INSET programme, and not any other variable? The research team did in fact test learners over the three years, and discuss their learning from this activity.

Readers are taken into a very useful 'behind the scenes' look at the complex activity of research. Here is a good resource for researchers-in-training. Research instruments (classroom observation schedules and interview schedules) are included in the appendices.

Chapters Four to Eight describe the findings of the case study. Each chapter reports on the findings of the overall research project and provides a contextual framing of the issue under consideration. Each chapter can stand alone, but collectively the chapters tell the story of the research findings. It is impossible to give full justice to the richness of each chapter in a short book review, so I shall simply highlight a few key ideas from each.

Chapter Four discusses the availability and use of resources. In South Africa there are currently two issues around resources. The first is the apartheid legacy of severely unequally resourced schools, and the second is the level of resourcing required by the new curriculum. The authors focus on two important resources which are widely available in South African classrooms, namely the chalkboard, and textbooks. They make the point that few in-

service courses focus on the value of the chalkboard in teaching. Its use is either taken for granted, or is denigrated as a part of 'chalk and talk' transmission teaching. However, it is often the only resource available in classrooms and, the authors suggest, it should probably have a more positive focus in teacher development courses.

In the study, researchers saw teachers' use of the chalkboard shift over the three years from being 'teacher owned' to being shared with learners. Instead of only displaying correct answers or procedures, it was used to display a diverse range of solutions or responses from learners. These new practices were incorporated into existing routine practices. The authors feel that this reflects teachers' changing resourcefulness which was partial, uneven and contextual.

The authors note that for secondary maths and science teachers, textbooks are indispensable for organising and structuring the content of the curriculum. The primary teachers of these subjects and the English teachers used textbooks, but not to sequence or order learning. The authors raise the question as to whether in-service programmes should not be engaging teachers in a critical analysis of the forms and functions of a textbook, rather than simply taking teachers' use of textbooks for granted.

Chapter Five explores the issue of code-switching and other language practices. It starts with a description of the language infrastructure in South African schools, and makes the distinction between the contextual differences in rural and urban schools. In rural schools, teaching and learning of English occurs in a Foreign Language Learning Environment (FLLE) as English is only experienced in the formal school context. Urban schools can be described as an Additional Language Learning Environment (ALLE), because learners have the opportunity to acquire English informally outside of the classroom. This means that English teachers in an FLLE context are learners' *only* source of the language.

All the courses in the Wits FDE focus on the importance of talk as a social thinking tool. There are two dimensions of 'learning talk'. Firstly, there is exploratory talk (which is more effective in a learners' main language) and, secondly, there is discourse specific talk (which needs to be in the language of learning and teaching). This means that code-switching (switching from one language to another) is an important aspect of multilingual classrooms. The study found that code-switching was already an established practice of the teachers in the study, and in general the extent of switching increased over the

study. Teachers felt that their FDE studies gave them more confidence in using code-switching. However, those teachers in rural schools experienced dilemmas regarding code-switching as they represented the learners' only exposure to English. They felt less certain about allowing learners to speak often in their first language.

Chapter Six looks at the extent to which teachers developed learner-centred practices through the programme. It provides a useful framework for understanding learner-centred teaching. This is a welcome relief in an area which has recently become dominated by rhetoric of 'active learners' and 'teacher facilitators' with little interrogation of what these terms actually mean.

The framework looks at three areas of learner-centred teaching. The first is *interpersonal relations* between the learner and the teacher and the importance of teachers' building a relationship of trust and respect. The second is the area of *curriculum* (what is taught) which should be responsive to learners' needs and negotiated with learners. It should also be integrated in that discipline boundaries are broken down and connections made between knowledge domains. This suggests that teachers should include aspects of learners' everyday knowledge. A learner-centred curriculum is both learner- and subject-centred. The third area is *pedagogy*. Learner-centred pedagogy is informed by Vygotskian and Piagetian theories of learning and development.

The authors use the concepts of form and substance to analyse the data collected. They take it that the *substance* of learner-centred teaching involves the selection and sequencing of tasks in relation to learners' current knowledge and provision of the required conceptual development in a subject area. In order to achieve the substance, certain *forms* of classroom activity and organisation are often suggested and used, such as group work. However, it is pointed out that group work is not necessary to achieve the substance of learner-centredness, nor does it automatically contribute to the substance of learner-centredness. These concepts of 'form and substance' provide useful tools for better understanding and describing teachers' practice in more nuanced ways.

In terms of teachers' take-up of learner-centred practices, the study found that 4 of the 18 teachers had taken up *both* the form and the substance; 11 had taken up the form but not the substance; and 3 had taken up neither form nor substance. This 'take-up' was not related to the context of the teachers' schools, nor to the resourcing of their schools, nor to the grades taught. What

did appear to be significant was school morale and the support of other teachers, as well as the principal.

Chapter Seven explores teachers' 'take-up' of reflective practice. Reflexive competence is required of teachers by the Norms and Standards for Teacher Education (1998), and is a stated goal of the Wits FDE. The researchers grappled with the question of what counts as evidence of the reflective practices of teachers. They decided to use data on what teachers said and did in relation to *group work,* because the most visible change in classrooms over the three years was the increase of group work in almost all classrooms. Group work was an established 'form' in most classrooms visited by the third year, but there were differences between teachers in terms of how they reflected on the process.

The authors use the work of Farrell who, building on the work of Schön, makes a distinction between reflection-in-action (insights teachers gain in the classroom while teaching), reflection-on-action (evaluation after a lesson), and reflection-for-action (teachers use ideas from their reflections in action and on action to plan for future lessons). Teachers in the study were placed in three categories: firstly, those who showed evidence of reflection in, on and for action; secondly, those who showed some evidence of reflection, but contrasts between espoused and enacted practices; and thirdly, those who showed limited reflection. The four teachers placed in the first category were all teachers whose classroom practices were considered the best of those in the research project.

The study suggests that the patterns of reflective or unreflective practice can be explained with reference to teachers' English language proficiency, their subject, pedagogical and educational knowledge, their attitudes (a predisposition towards reflectivity), and their working context. Some of these competences could be addressed by an inservice programme, but it would be difficult to affect a predisposition towards non-reflectivity!

The final chapter explores teachers' 'take-up' of subject knowledge and the relationship of this take-up to changes in their classroom practice. The area of teachers' conceptual knowledge gained prominence through the President's Education Initiative research, where Taylor and Vinjevold (1999) state that the studies strongly suggest that teachers' poor subject knowledge is major reason for poor quality teaching and learning in many South African classrooms. The authors of this chapter do not disagree with the centrality of teachers' subject

knowledge, but disagree with the view that improving teachers' conceptual knowledge *alone* will improve teaching and learning.

The authors observe that this area of the project was the most complex. They had difficulties in elaborating subject knowledge for teaching, the nature of its relationship to classroom practice, and how both can be investigated through research. Their data show that simply upgrading teachers' subject knowledge will not necessarily lead to an increase in learner attainment. A worrying finding was that teachers from the most impoverished rural primary schools benefited least from improved subject knowledge, as well as from all aspects of the FDE. Certainly, this area of teachers' conceptual knowledge-in-practice requires more research.

The book provides both an insight into the complexities of qualitative case study research, as well as useful syntheses of current debates around key areas in teacher education such as learner-centred practice, multi-lingualism, the use of resources, the reflective practitioner, and the link between a teacher's conceptual knowledge and her learners' attainment. It offers many insights into factors which appear to support or hinder teachers' 'take up' of new ideas and practices, and highlights the need for more research in these areas. It provides teacher educators with much food for thought about how we can improve the programmes we are currently offering, with a challenge to research their impact more fully.

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The ***Journal of Education*** is an interdisciplinary publication of original research and writing on education. The journal aims to provide a forum for scholarly understanding of the field of education. A general focus of the journal is on curriculum. Curriculum is understood in a wide and interdisciplinary sense, encompassing curriculum theory, history, policy and development at all levels of the education system (e.g. schooling, adult education and training, higher education). Contributions that span the divide between theory and practice are particularly welcome. Although principally concerned with the social sciences, the journal encourages contributions from a wider field.

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