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Editorial

Wayne Hugo and Sylvan Blignaut

The 2006 Kenton Conference was held in the rustic coastal town of Wilderness in the Southern Cape with the theme 'Education beyond boundaries'. The theme was apposite, with the Kenton Education Association and the Education Association of South Africa combining forces to have a joint conference, kindly hosted by the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. Both organizations have a lot to offer the South African educational community and their diverse approaches and traditions made for an interesting mix. The combination, however, points to the absence of a national research association above and beyond the more particular histories and interests of Kenton, EASA, and other educational research communities such as SACHES. We do need to push beyond old institutional, historical, cultural and intellectual traditions and look to establishing a broader organization on a national level.

'Education beyond boundaries' is a theme so broad as to catch everything. To move beyond a boundary one has to know what is being moved beyond. Everything has a boundary and by implication something beyond it. Each article did specifically move beyond a boundary. Fataar takes us into the township and the particular logics it has in relation to principalship; Hugo, Bertram, Green and Naidoo work from within a Bernsteinian boundary outwards to other languages of description that assist in the study of pedagogy; Holderness, Bold, Henry and Wood break the age barrier and show how school children can become action researchers; Rule and John discuss negative and positive ways communities dealing with HIV/AIDS work the space of the 'other' beyond 'healthy normality'; Blignaut takes us beyond the broad policy/practice dichotomy into the personal lives of teachers and the unique contexts of the schools they operate within; finally Maistry moves beyond the boundary line of an educational community of practice based on Wenger's model by showing how it already assumes the expertise it is supposed to develop.

In the lead article, Fataar, employing an innovative combination of 'spatial' and 'performance' lenses, focuses on the reflexive adaptations of principals in a township in Cape Town. His key argument is that these principals' professional and pedagogical identities must be understood in light of the

relational transactions they make relative to the spatial dynamics of the township. It is their engagement with the sociality of this township – the flows, intersections, and its material surfaces of inscription – that provide the conditioning context for their work as principals. Drawing on feminist-inspired theories on 'gender as performance' and based on ethnographic work, Fataar argues that the township can be regarded as a stage for their enactment of a performative script, on the basis of which they go about establishing their subjectivities as principals.

In our second contribution, Hugo, Bertram, Green and Naidoo discuss some of the instrumental difficulties that arose when researching the reproduction of inequality in South African classrooms. Using the distinction made famous by Marshall McLuhan between the medium and the message they argue that while a Bernsteinian research tradition provides a highly illuminating set of analytic tools to research the 'medium' of pedagogy, it does not provide us with the analytic tools needed to research the quality of the 'message'. In order to find appropriate analytic tools to research the message transmitted in the pedagogic situation they turned to the work of Bloom. The example of a research study done in Grade 10 History classrooms in two KZN schools – one an ex HoA, and the other an ex DET school – is used to discuss how the research group struggled with the research instruments and slowly became aware of how to use different instruments for different tasks. The paper offers a working arrangement between two major research traditions not usually held together and shows how, when each research instrument is used for what it is designed for, a finer and more complete analysis can be achieved.

Holderness, Bold, Henry and Wood explain how young people aged 10–17 can undertake action research into their own practices in collaboration with their teachers who are doing the same. The authors adopt Winter's (2003) metaphor of a patchwork approach, in which the individual case studies of young people in four different locations are 'stitched' together to form a multi-layered narrative of co-operative learning. The key significance of the paper lies in its capacity to theorise the contributions of all participants as involved in a dynamic process of co-creating new knowledge.

In the fourth article, Peter Rule and Vaughn John carefully describe two forms of working with 'others' in relation to HIV/AIDS within the Richmond area. The first is a negative form of othering that ridicules, ostracizes and stigmatizes those infected and associated with HIV/AIDS. This is contrasted to a positive and more inclusive form that transforms an 'othering' process

into a more accepting framework. The question is how we move communities from a negative 'other' to a neutral or positive 'another'. Rule and John point to how traditional forms of pedagogy within these communities (content and teacher heavy) do not engage with the issues of death and desire in a telling way. What is needed is a far more complex understanding of the pedagogic implications of working with HIV/AIDS, one that works with a pedagogy of trust and connectedness, one that draws on the learners and educators as resources, one that creates networks of support and connection with other resources. Underlying this description is the recognition that the Pedagogy of the Oppressed worked out by Paulo Freire over 40 years ago still has a substantial contribution to make in South African education, especially within a developing context.

Sylvan Blignaut tackles the question of how teachers make sense of, and enact, curriculum policy. He hones in on teacher epistemologies using a cognitive sense making framework that allows for a careful description of how teachers respond to policy construction at a school and classroom level. The focus is on how teachers' own personal habits intersect with the institutional culture of the school and then how both speak back to and recontextualize policy imperatives. It looks at curriculum policy reform from inside the place it is supposed to ultimately reach – the practices of teachers within schools – and shows that the collective weight of personal and institutional scripts bends the policy reform project into a personalized orbit and makes it circle individual and school imperatives. Teachers and the schools they are located within conserve their own historical practices and twist the sometimes radical reforms demanded by the post apartheid state into minor variations on existing custom.

In the sixth article, Murthi Maistry sets out to analyse the dynamics of teacher learning of novice Economic and Management Sciences teachers involved in the Teaching Economic and Management Sciences (TEMS) teacher development project. Stuck without much help from the Department of Education and needing to start teaching the new EMS syllabus within Primary schools, these teachers engaged in a 'community of practice' where they worked together with Maistry to improve their understanding and teaching of EMS. Using Wenger, Maistry shows how it is possible to develop indicators to evaluate whether a community has emerged or not. This is useful as human interactive systems are by their very nature malleable and subtle, so providing clear criteria to guide the analysis is a strength of the paper. More interesting, however, is the critique of Wenger that emerges from the attempted

implementation of a community of practice in a South African educational landscape scarred by overwhelming inequalities. At its simplest the issue is what the teachers from the most disadvantaged schools bring to the professional community. Expecting them to enter a participatory structure where knowledge and ideas about teaching and learning EMS are shared and worked on is to operate blindly with a set of expectations that refuse to recognize the impact of active discrimination on teaching expertise and professionalism. It is to embrace a rhetoric of equal, participatory democratic, community practice where what is actually demanded on the ground is a direct intervention that addresses the failure of the educational system in South Africa to induct most of its teachers into a rigorous, specialized, professional set of pedagogic practices. It is not that Wenger's models do not have value in a South African context, it is that they tend to rely on an already existing expertise that mostly only middle class teachers and learners bring to the table. As such the risk is run of reproducing inequalities through a community of practice model rather than interrupting them. Maistry suggests that combining communities of practice with the recognition of the need for explicit expert intervention is a viable model in South African conditions and it is hard to disagree with him.

If all of the above move in someway beyond existing educational boundaries, none of them theorize what the educational boundary qua boundary is. There is a suggestion in the conference theme that education beyond boundaries is somehow a good thing, with the corollary that education within boundaries must be a staid, conservative affair. To put it politely, this is romanticist rot, addressed most simply by focussing precisely on what the nature of an educational boundary is in the first place, but that would be for another conference to fight over.

Mapping the pedagogical performances of school principals in a Cape Town township

Aslam Fataar

Abstract

This article combines the lenses of 'space' and 'performance' to analyse the pedagogical practices of three principals in a South African township. Based on qualitative approaches, it discusses the principals' entry into the township, and their navigation of their schools' surrounding social dynamics. The article suggests that their reflexivity as principals has been established in light of a range of engaged pedagogical performances. These were enacted on the basis of nuanced readings of their discursive environment and strategic practices that gave them an authoritative platform for their principal roles.

Bheki, Edward and Richard (pseudonyms) are principals at primary schools (Grade 1 to 7) in a township twenty-five kilometres from the Cape Town city centre. They are examples of pedagogical adaptation at the crossing points of the township and its schools. The article's analytical spotlight is on the relation between the schools and this township's social dynamics. I set out to explain how the principals have gone about establishing their pedagogical identities as they engage with their schools' surrounding dynamics. I will suggest that they have enacted a number of *spatially-inspired performances*, in reference to the pedagogical practices that they have established in this terrain. This article focuses on the nature of these performances and the impact they have on the subjective identities that the principals have assumed in their daily work. It thus provides a conceptual understanding of their professional identities as they are adjusted in the context of this township.

The article's conceptual starting point derives from Riseborg's view that "teachers have subjectivities which accommodate, appropriate, colonize and resist and which make them co-producing agents in the social production of schooling" (quoted in Maguire, 2005, p.429). By focusing on the interaction between social context and the principals' identities, this article goes beyond the academic fixation in South Africa on the way policy impacts the work of teachers (see Soudien, 2001). Carrim (2000) called attention to the social location of teachers in South Africa when he suggested that "there is a consistent tendency in discursively projecting teachers in homogenized and

generalized ways' which cannot 'speak'" (Carrim, p.45) analytically to the situated realities of teachers.

Extending on this position, I am concerned to understand the principals' subjectivities as arising out of the broader societal processes referred to by Riseborg in the quotation above. Coldron and Smith (1999, p.711) suggest that "identity as a teacher is partly given and partly achieved by active location in social space". Underscoring the impact of environmental dynamics on teachers, they point out that the quality of relations among teachers is conferred partly by inherited social realities and categorizations, while partially also chosen or created by the individual . Court (2004), in turn, discusses how principals adapt to personal disruptions that arise out of their work in schools in different areas, and of how they have to adapt to a range of different material and discursive contexts that structure their work. Another example of a location – sensitive analysis is Maguire's (2005) work on the impact of class on the shifting sense of self as experienced by one teacher in a working class school in England.

The emphasis of this article is thus on the impact of environmental or spatial dynamics on the pedagogical subjectivities of this group of principals. This article combines the conceptual lenses of 'space' and 'performance' to analyze the principals' subjective processes in this township. I want to suggest that the notion of 'space as a social construction' is useful in understanding the compositional relationship between localized dynamics and schooling processes. This refers to the production of material and symbolic practices in localized contexts. Space in this sense does this not simply refer to an empty landscape which architects or builders fill up with built structures. It refers to the relational or human dimensions of space, i.e. lived space, or as Lefebvre (1971/1991) suggests, the relational appreciation of space as actively produced in and through every day human practices. Smith (1991) explains that the social construction of space implies "that social practices and (physical) space are internally related in that each entails the other" (p.70, my parenthesis). Space should thus be understood as the active interaction between the physical environment and people's uses of and practices in it, such as the social practices people such as principals establish in them.

By developing their professional or occupational roles in this spatial context, the principals have been contributing to the texture of this township. They have been fashioning their identities reflexively in response to its social spatial flows. By reading their reflexivity as 'performance', I am attempting to

understand the nature and extent of their pedagogical practices in Rustvale (a fictitious name for the township of the study). Gregson and Rose (2000, p.434) highlight the productive relationship between geography and subjectivity by suggesting that "space needs to be thought of as brought into being through performances and as a performative articulation of power". The notion of performance assumes that pedagogical practices are multiple, radically contingent and open. It draws on Butler's construction of performativity in reference to acts of repetition that are socially validated and discursively established in everyday processes (in Gregson and Rose, p.436). Performance-based reflexivity refers to a situation where human beings "reflect back upon themselves, their relations with others. . . and those sociocultural components which make up their public selves" (Turner, quoted in Gole, 2002, p.181). Their social practices are based on an acute reading of the discursive delimitations in their environment. Their behaviour can be understood as creative adaptation and reflexivity. As Hennessy (1993, p.36) suggests, their practices constitute a critique "enacted in the disruption and re-arrangement of the pre-constituted categories on which the formation of subjects depend".

Conquergood (1989) avers that a performance paradigm prevents the reification of culture into variables to be isolated, measured, and manipulated. Culture is never a given, but rather alive with the unpredictability associated with social actors making decisions such as whether to perform a familiar narrative or to disrupt it. The performances of the principals can be regarded as adapted and repetitive actions plotted within fluid power relationships and social norms in the context of the schools in the township. The neighbour-hood, school and classroom become sites of practice in which diverse beings come together in order to engage and negotiate knowledge systems, systems of understanding and ways of being, seeing, knowing, and doing. Principals, teachers and parents reconstitute the culture of the school as they navigate the unfolding social terrain. Their publicly negotiated social performances can thus be understood as engaged practices of relations and interrelations. By combining performance with space, I am suggesting that the principals' practices, their engagement with the sociality of Rustvale, can be understood as an outflow of the on going social spatial processes in the township. It is thus suggested that the nature and theory of their performances must be accounted for in view of these processes.

Methodologically, the article is based on my ongoing ethnographic research project in Rustvale. The project is founded on an attempt to understand the institutional and pedagogical practices and identifications of schools and

teachers in this urban context. It aims at portraying the ways the township's social dynamics flow into and help shape school practices. The research is based on extensive observations and informal and semi-structured interviews carried out over a five-month period. The observations were accomplished in and around Rustvale's thirteen schools. I had extensive interview sessions with the principals of all the schools and with a number of teachers and parents. I interviewed a range of civic and community actors and public servants such as police persons and health and welfare officers. I also interviewed senior city and educational planners who played a direct role in the design and planning of the township. The interviews and observations provided textured depictions, inductively analysed, of the ways school practices and identities were influenced by broader environmental dynamics, and how educational reform processes in the schools played out in light of these dynamics.

In addition, for this article, I specifically drew on in depth interviews with each of the three principals discussed here. These interviews concentrated on aspects of their professional biographies including their upbringing, teacher education, and teaching and management experiences. I also interrogated them extensively on their managerial perspectives, and their management and pedagogical activities in and around the school. In addition, I had interviews with a number of teachers and parents, which provided a verifying basis for the principals' views. Key to the research for this article was to understand: (1) how, and on what basis the three principals negotiated the township's specific social and educational conditions, and (2) the adaptations and adjustments they had to make to their own professional and managerial identities in this context. The interviews were thus informed by an attempt to understand the intersection between their unfolding professional pedagogical identities on the one hand, and their specific practices in substantiating their management roles in this environment.[1]

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[1] I labelled the principals' spatially engaged practices in this township as 'pedagogical' practices in reference to the need for a contextually located understanding of their work. Pedagogical, on this view, is not meant to denote the narrower focus on pedagogical processes associated with learning and teaching in the classroom. Instead, it refers to the intersecting practices that arise out of the principals engagements with the spaces of their work. Pedagogical thus refers to the ways their professional reflexivities have been constructed in creative intersection with the social dynamics of the township's schools. I would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers of this article for requesting clarification of my use of the concept pedagogical.

The spatially inscribed pedagogical context of Rustvale township

This section focuses on the principals' entry into the township and their initial sense making of its social character. It provides a basis to understand their adaptations to a space where they initially felt, as McConaghy (2006, p.325) suggests, "out of place", in reference to moving into an unfamiliar geography, which induces feelings of professional displacement and discomfort. Cape Town has taken on the features of a typical post colonial city with many diverse and materially uneven spaces. Wilkinson (2000, p.195) describes the city as "located in a spectacular setting at the south west tip of Africa. . . and accommodates a culturally and linguistically diverse population". Spatial planning during the apartheid years was based on hierarchical racial segregation. The best spaces were cleared up and reserved for Whites, while Coloureds, i.e. people of mixed race, and Indians from the subcontinent who settled in the city from the turn of the nineteenth century, were forced to live in harsher environments. Black Africans were regarded as temporary sojourners and lived in the city's poorest parts. The city's lived spaces were marked by rigid racial division. A mix of fluid race and class arrangements currently characterize this post apartheid city. A striking feature is the wide ranging and heterodox material contexts in which its inhabitants live, from opulent first world living along the Atlantic seaboard, to middle class suburban living, and the myriad of townships and informal settlements dotted on its landscape.

Rustvale township acquired its demographic character from its racial origins as a Coloured area established in 1989. Its expansion after the democratic transition in 1994 was based on racially integrated town planning. Black African citizens began to settle in the desegregated northern parts of this township after 1994, and more slowly in its former Coloured parts, providing uneasy dynamics of racial mixing and re-racialization (see Fataar, 2007). While inflected with racialized associations that citizens brought with them from older parts of the city, and elsewhere, I have argued that one of the primary identification markings of this township is the nature of people's livelihoods. In the context of an unemployment and single parent rate of 65 per cent and 70 per cent respectively (Fataar, 2007), it is tactics of adaptation and survival that mark its social make up.

Life in this township is ephemeral and desperate. Here inhabitants daily cultivate tactics of survival by *putting together* different types of social

practices, encounters and experiences which require the use of all available capital, and human and symbolic resources. As Simone suggests, social cohesion and pursuing social and economic opportunities in a complex city space such as townships like these, require "cultivating tactics which maximize a flexible and wide ranging use of its diverse spatial make up and human resources" (2002, p.297).

I have coined the term, a 'township on the move' (see Fataar, 2007), as an attempt to capture a key aspect of its social dynamics. Rustvale is characterized by incessant fluxes and flows. A large percentage of its residents are forced to move around in the township, or in and out of the township in search of living space. Movement is most acute in and out of the myriad of wooden and shack dwellings in the backyards of established homes. Schools are at the processional end of these settlement flows. Coterminous with fluxes in living space, children move continuously between township schools, or to and from schools outside the township. The schools never officially close their doors to these children. This attributes to the schools an incessant enrolment flux throughout the year, which impacts negatively on school and classroom processes. It seems that the schools can never settle into a stable and consequential set of routines, always having to contend with the impact on them of a township and children on the move.

Edward makes the following telling remark about life as he experiences it in his school:

> Things are on the move here all the time, move here all the time. Parents coming for a place for their children kicked out of another school . . . a mommy complaining about the absent father beating the kids, . . . people moving from one backyard to another, or people selling stuff, coming with some or other money making scheme, or looking for work at the school. . . . on the go here all time, sir, never a dull moment, tiring, damn tiring, but never dull.

Edward's view above portrays the link between movement and flux on the one hand and social pathos on the other. Sipho, in turn comments on the impact of the size of the houses: "The houses are extremely small. . . People have endless problems with the housing. And that in itself has an impact on the area". Richard points out the contrast between the spacious brick schools on the one hand, and the uncaring attitude of some of Rustvale's inhabitants thus:

> . . . another thing about the people in Rustvale and its children specifically which struck me was that they were tremendously vandalistic. They vandalized the school, and that was very disturbing. And I just wondered, where does it come from, the fact that they acted like that. It was a developing area, getting beautiful schools, but then the schools are being vandalized. I had a feeling that children just want to be outside on the street because there's no space in the house.

Continuing with the theme of recalcitrant children, the principals expressed an intricate discourse about the deviancy produced in this impoverished and spatially limiting environment. Sipho commented that:

> . . . the other problem was also sometimes when our children were absent and I drove around in the area, I discovered afterwards that they were watching blue movies, for instance. But, you know, size of housing played a big role in the sense that there was no privacy for children.

Similarly Richard explained with exasperation that: "boys have touched boys in the school. . . And that I attribute to the fact that the small space in which people live, rob people of the privacy they deserve. And how do you deal with that?"

The combination of poverty and the largely informal settlement dynamics, of families desperately attempting to survive, has had an effect on the broader social processes in the township. The meaning of citizenship in such a context is under dispute. In this particular environment initial settling took place under generally ephemeral living conditions. Survival here generally depends on making alternative livelihoods in the absence of formal employment. The ability, for example, to evade payment for services, and assume indigent status, determines people's survival, making the township difficult to manage (see Simone, 2004). The various bureaucratic apparatuses of the state have a tenuous hold on social life in this context, making citizenship discourses such as those normally generated by schools difficult to take hold.

As state institutions the schools have been struggling to play their normative role of reproducing the democratic and reflexive conceptual capacities that productive citizenship would entail. My interviewees suggested that the educational function of the schools, of providing the children with a pedagogical context for learning, has been modified purposefully by the teachers. While the schools are committed to providing a climate for the children to learn, they are reconciled to what they regard as the negative impact of the social and domestic environment on their children's learning performance. The schools seem to be impacted by the absence of cultural capital and difficult domestic circumstances. As a primary organiser of their identity the socially responsive approach they adopt to service their children's welfare needs is the result of pressures to respond to the challenges of the environment. In the case of Rustvale the schools are an acute example of how these pressures can define their character. On the one hand, as I have suggested elsewhere, the schools refract "the social pressures of the township,

becoming part of its sociality, while on the other hand, they actively serve to ameliorate the worst consequences of poverty and hardship" (see Fataar, 2007, p.608).

The lineaments of pedagogical space hopping

The principals' movement from relatively settled spaces into a less regulated, settling space, a process that I label *space hopping*, was accomplished on the basis of a number of disjunctural identification processes that left them unprepared for their new principal roles. Giddens's (1991) views on the reconstitution of daily life in late modernity are apposite in understanding the principals' subjective alignment to their work. He alerts us to the reconstitutions of daily life where people are disembedded or lifted out of social relations. When the individual moves from a situation of familiarity with familiar roles and routines she has to confront the taken-for-grantedness of everyday life, which entails the erstwhile "high level of reliability of familiar contexts of day-to-day social interaction, and the ontological security of the self" (Giddens, 1991, p.234). The individual is then forced to reconsider her beliefs, values, roles, and ambitions. Woods and Jeffrey (2002) argue that educational subjects have to confront their 'fragile self' unmoored from their rootedness to a familiar place. When they enter new spaces or qualitatively different professional arenas these subjects are "hard at work trying to manage the contradictions of their own multiple subject positions within these arenas" (Whitehead, 1999, p.201).

Bheki, Richard and Edward entered Rustvale with anxiety and caution as they confronted an entirely different set of social spatial dynamics. They did this on the basis of a relatively narrow pedagogical identity, with very little managerial experience or training, and in the full glare of a community that came to view them expectantly as representatives of the new democratic state. As I show below, hopping into this township space took place on the basis of their "fundamental lack of management capacity to be a successful principal in this God-forsaken place" (Edward), having to "learn on the hoof" (Edward), and having to "justify our appointments . . . while everyone was watching us, . . . waiting for us to make fools of ourselves" (Bheki).

The three principals are first generation educated who grew up in rural areas of South Africa, one in an African Xhosa speaking village, and the other two in Coloured Afrikaans speaking towns. They spent their childhood in

impoverished and racially enclosed surroundings. They chose to become teachers as a result of a lack of other professional options. The availability of government bursaries for precocious young adults to study to become teachers presented a viable route into middle class living. By offering bursaries the apartheid state intended to secure a ready pool of professionals who could work in the various racially-based bureaucracies and institutions that began to mushroom from the 1960s. Their pre-service teacher training took place in Colleges of Education where they were fed a staple of transmission mode pedagogical and subject content knowledge. Driven by the requirement to produce docile, racially inscribed educational subjects, the College system intended to produce teachers who could serve narrow ideological interests.

Bheki, Richard and Edward questioned this educational approach at points throughout their training and early teaching careers. They were able to discern the ideological intent of their teacher training. They spoke in the interviews of the political opposition they developed against the apartheid educational system. Bheki and Richard were, for example, active in anti apartheid youth education groups and Edward belonged to a church that had a critical stance towards the state, viewing apartheid as heresy. To them a resistance-focused educational approach was a "necessary weapon against the apartheid government . . . and its school system" (Edward). This position is similar to the discourse that informed the popular uprisings by students and teachers during the 1970s and 1980s (Lewin, 1991).

They, however, pointed out that their political opposition did not translate into adopting a more open ended and flexible pedagogical approach. Their teacher training and subsequent political activism did not provide them a conceptual platform to construct a more child centred and constructivist approach. This, for example, made it difficult for them to adapt to the current school curriculum which is based on such an approach (see Fataar 2006). What they succeeded in doing very well was to teach in a narrow and circumscribed way, marked by their students' success in year end rote examinations. Bheki, for example, won an award three years in a row for producing students with excellent high school scores in History.

They developed their professional identities in the closed environments of racially based schools, while teaching an ideologically circumscribed curriculum. They explained that they were caught up in schooling processes that reproduced racialized identities. Without implying stasis, I would argue that they made sense of and mapped their schools' social spatial coordinates with comparative ease which made their pedagogical navigations straight-

forward. They conveyed the comfort with which they established their pedagogical identities in these spaces. Their pedagogical personas were thus founded against the backdrop of familiar and relatively 'locked -in' social spatial processes.

Developing their subjectivities as teachers occurred on the basis of performative processes that gave them some entry into the management roles they would play later. As Richard explains, he was very young when he was appointed in a temporary capacity as a middle manager at his school. As with Bheki and Edward, Richard was a hard working and committed teacher who involved himself in most aspects of the school's functioning, coordinating activities such as fundraising, sports management and teacher union work. Richard explained how his commitment to racial equality and justice provided him a moral context to "be the best teacher he could be . . . inside and outside the class". Bheki explained how his "extra classes into the evenings . . . led to the kids improving their marks" and of how he gained respect from his "fellow teachers and parents . . . for my hard work".

Developments in the teacher education market during the mid-1990s propelled them into officially appointed senior management positions for which they had very little formal training. Having to contend with a financially circumscribed environment, the post apartheid government, who came into power in 1994, chose to adopt prudent fiscal policies. The government decided to cut teachers in areas where they were in over supply and redistribute them equitably to schools with high student-teacher ratios (see Soudien, 2001). One debilitating consequence of this plan was the loss of management capacity in schools with high ratios. Many senior teachers and managers opted to leave the profession, enticed by large severance pay outs and employment opportunities elsewhere. This opened a gap for younger teachers to take up senior positions. They explained that they were persuaded to apply for management positions by colleagues who convinced them that their work ethic, moral standing and community support made them suitable for such positions. They all seemed to have applied for these jobs with some reluctance. Edward and Bheki were appointed as senior Department Heads, a jump of two hierarchical categories, and Richard to the lofty position of deputy principal, jumping three categories. Richard was slightly older and had served with considerable success as a temporary stand-in Head of Department for 18 months. Their appointment to management positions was, however, not accompanied by substantial formal management training, except for short two-day courses run by the Department.

They were appointed as principals at schools in the Rustvale township during the late 1990s, after spending a couple of years in management positions at their previous schools. Richard and Edward explained that their appointments were abrupt, rushed and unprocedural. Richard was simply informed by the Department of Education that he was being considered for a principal position elsewhere. He had to present himself for an interview by departmental officials who questioned him about his willingness to take such a position. Their inclination to refuse the principal jobs was countenanced by what they came to view as an opportunity to "contribute to and make a difference . . . in poor communities, only still now rising up from underneath the crushing weight of oppression" (Bheki). Edward, the religious activist, viewed himself in redemptive terms as "the chosen one . . . God must be having a plan for me . . . to do His work".

A combination of youthful appointment, limited management experience, and lack of formal training set them up for their very challenging new roles. It seemed that much would turn on their moral and political commitment to serve and make a difference. It provided them a motivational basis for their new occupational roles. A close reading of their work in Rustvale suggests that they adapted reflexively to the township's spatial attributes, based on transacting a range of pedagogical performances. As explained below, their work in this new space is a compelling account of *active locational engagement* (Coldron and Smith, 1999).

Pedagogical performance and the tentative navigation of space

The previous two sections respectively focused on the social spatial nature of the township and the identification basis on which the principals moved into this space. The next two sections discuss the reflexive basis on which they established their pedagogical identities. Space hopping was characterized by perplexity and anxiety that arose out of a sense of dislocation as they moved from a racially enclosed to a spatially fluid township. I apply the analytical category of 'performance' to describe active engagement, at first tentative, then with greater assertiveness and confidence, as they navigated and domesticated the dynamics of the township. As referred to earlier, it is the radically open and contingent character of their performances against the backdrop of the interactive social dynamics of the township that will provide an understanding of their pedagogical identities. Following Turner (quoted in Gole, 2002), they have neither succumbed to the discursive limitations

operating in the township, nor have they entirely resisted or disavowed their imposed identities. Their successful performances depended on a strategic embrace and active reading of what is possible, of adopting and incorporating certain practices and challenging and modifying others.

A performance-based analysis employs the notion 'citational practices' to refer to those performative acts that reproduce, create or subvert discourse. Citational practices, according to Gregson and Rose (2000, p.434), are "intrinsically connected through the saturation of performances articulated in space". Citational practices can be understood as strategic performances or behaviour that the principals enact in the daily course of their work in this township. This section discusses a number of practices that indicate their initial tentative encounters and engagement, of familiarizing, settling down, and establishing their presence in their schools and the township. This section thus shows how they settled into and established their presence and authority in and around the schools.

It emerged from the interviews that the principals transacted a number of relational connections with individuals and community associations that facilitated their knowledge of and entry into the township. These connections helped familiarize them with the township's fluid and informal character. In turn, it provided the residents an opportunity to assess these new governmentally marked authority figures. It can be said that the principals had entered the performative stage of the township as state actors in the full glare of expectant spectators. They had to endure a low level type of surveillance by community members who tried to figure out how their lives will be affected by these new entrants, while also ascertaining how to appropriate the opportunities the principals bring to the township. Edward commented with a comic touch: "Oh sir; I felt the spotlight on me all the time, all the time, never a private moment, being watched, troubled, . . .` watched to see what their principal will do next".

Richard was somewhat more irritated at this type of surveillance:

> When I pull my car out to go to the department office or somewhere else, the people come out of their houses, stop me, . . . speak about all sorts of problems, opportunities, . . . they come to school actually just make idle conversation. I have to spend time listening, give advice, money, sign an affidavit.

This type of use of principals by the residents was underscored by Bheki and Edward who highlighted the small tasks they have to do daily for the residents such as typing and printing letters, reading and interpreting official

documents, filling in forms, and counselling bereaved families. It seems that much of their credibility among residents has been generated by servicing requests such as these.

Having been drawn by community members into their domestic affairs, the principals swiftly became familiar with the social dynamics in the community. They figured out very quickly that there would be value in striking up strategic alliances with the different networks in the community. They were able to win over the trust of various religious, sport and cultural groupings with relative ease based on making the school premises available for cultural shows, sport, and religious services. As many as ten church congregations hold church services at each of their schools on a Sunday, while the small Muslim community has their religious classes for children at Edward's school three afternoons per week. These relationships allowed the principals to consolidate their acceptance in the area, and provided them a ready network to access community assistance in school fundraising, protecting the school from vandals, and in cultivating loyalty among families to keep on sending their children to their schools in the face of competition over enrolment at newer schools.

Greater shakiness was displayed in their links with their area's political and civic groups who lay claim to determining accessibility and what is possible in the township. Fighting for political turf and patronage spills over into the school. Because the political groups view control over the school as an entry point to voters they constantly target the school to address civic and political concerns that connect to party political interests. They always attempt to use the school, and the principals and teachers to leverage political support among the parents. Edward was requested to campaign among parents for a political party and Richard was branded as racist for banning a party from putting posters up on his school's fence. Bheki had to fend off attempts to use his school as a local party's elections headquarters. He also spoke of having to berate an openly party aligned member of his school governing body for punting his party in governance meetings.

The principals have had to observe an official department position of political neutrality. Bheki and Richard found this very hard at times because of their former anti apartheid activism expressed in their membership to a party associated with black liberation. Their natural inclination for party involvement, however, is balanced against the need to be seen to be neutral and above factional disputes. All three principals, though, have found a political outlet in their participation in the township's development forums, in

areas such as community policing, housing, and sport. Bheki is the chair-person of the soccer association in Rustvale, while Edward is frequently consulted to give advice on housing and settlement issues. Richard does motivational seminars on community safety in the area. These types of involvement project them as caring, responsive and hard-working people willing to sacrifice time after school. Community members whom I spoke to tie the enormous respect these principals command in the community to their visibility and willingness to participate in community processes.

The links they cultivated with both licit and illicit associations and networks point to an acute and strategic reading on their part of their positioning in the social flows of Rustvale. Each of the principals established working relationships with the various social service agencies. They have healthy and beneficial relations with the health clinic, the school nurse, police service, and the social work office. A responsive relationship with them is necessary to deal with the inordinate demand for these services caused by unemployed and single parent families, hungry and under nourished children, high rates of mortality and sickness, and the impact of high criminality in this under-policed township. Links to these licit social services, with their record of slow and uneven service delivery, have to be personalized. A phone call by the principal in an emergency or desperate situation has to leverage a rapid response. The school's image as caring and responsive to the area's social welfare requirements depends on its ability to respond to community needs. An observant governing body member at Bheki's school remarked that Bheki would not have been the successful principal he is if he was unable to provide a caring and rapid response to the social demands of the children at his school. Edward has succeeded in extending his responsiveness beyond being a conduit for social services. He organizes tea afternoons at the school for the parents and unemployed members of the community every three months, where he either gives a short motivational talk on the latest innovations in education, or asks a priest or university lecturer to speak about something topical. I personally observed how the tea afternoon provides flamboyant Edward the ideal stage to rehearse and display his performances

On the other hand, the strategic engagements by the principals with the illicit flows in the neighbourhood – the drug lord, the gang boss, and the shebeen (informal bar in the backyards of residents) owner – have paradoxically provided a mechanism to ensure the school's relative safety in the absence of an effective and visible policing system. A large amount of the money that circulates in Rustvale is either generated by, or come through, these illicit flows. Gang and drug running activity is ubiquitous. My interviews with two

policemen revealed that drugs are always involved in gang turf wars and cause violence and criminality. Unable to address the root causes of crime, an understaffed police service's work is limited to managing the more violent crimes and eruption of gang warfare. Bheki, Edward and Richard understand this. Their concern is the safety of their children on their way to and from school, securing the school during school hours, and preventing vandalism over weekends. This is the principals' most important and difficult priority. They have over the years set up strategic links with the gang bosses, striking up cordial relations with them and giving special attention to their children's school progress. Bheki explained how he pays personal attention to one such child:

> Sir, I made sure the child was in a good teacher's class . . . I tracked her progress, I communicate with the father so that he knew when there are problems. No sir, I made sure he doesn't blame me or the school when the child had problems. . . I've had no problems with that family, and that's so important for my school, sir.

Edward pointed out that the well-being of these children is important because of their fathers' control of the illicit drug-based economy in the areas contiguous to his school, and their impact on the behaviour of the youth gangs in the area. Richard highlights the danger of such cordiality when he described how one powerful gangster with a child at his school continually offers the school enormous donations, which he always refuses because of not wanting to accept illicit money. Richard, though, always sends twenty tickets per fundraising event to this person, who "can afford to buy it. I don't have to worry about taking hot money; . . . he's buying a service . . . and then he sends people from the area to the concerts for free" (Richard). These associations with the illicit networks in the township are experienced by the principals as precarious though necessary to ensure the general safety of the children in the school.

Their relations with the department officials compared to their connections with outside educational agencies such as NGOs and educational researchers indicate their ability to read and adapt to the expectations that different associations present them. What is involved here is an appreciation of the possibilities that inhere in specific associations. In this case their interaction with the department is marked by compliance and constraint, in contrast to the open and accommodating reception of outside educational interests. As citational practices, these contrasted performances are governed as much by the careful management of their selves, as by their willingness to enter into beneficial arrangements when they come along. Their relations with the department are marked by routine-like compliance. They are careful to honour

and comply with the department's requirements with regard to curriculum implementation, requests for statistical details, teacher appointments, and other managerial expectations. They field pressure to improve test scores on system wide Numeracy and Literacy tests. They implement department development initiatives such as reading periods and safety regulations with diligence. However, in reference to departmental officials and contact with district offices, the principals' views can be read as distanced and depersonalized. Richard tells of routine visits and limited conversations with area managers about routine work. He described the two managers whom he worked with as "strange and cold . . . as if they didn't know what to say beyond the normal run of the mill stuff". When I asked Richard to interpret this behaviour he opined that,

> These officials are overworked and exasperated . . . have very little power, look at an area like Rustvale, feel overwhelmed and then decide to cut their losses . . . they rather preserve their energies for other schools in better off places.

Agreeing with this view, Bheki suggests that such disinterest from the officials can be explained by a constricted understanding of their responsibilities, who "have little clue how to be useful at the school . . . struggle to understand our area, and how to process our concerns". Edward, is caustic when he comments that "the officials' view of themselves are shaped by the work of the functional middle class school, not ours". Presumably then, the picture of a 'dysfunctional' school, which schools in a township like Rustvale is discursively projected as, does not inform the bureaucratic culture that marks the work of these officials. Given this view of the department, it seems that the compliant attitudes of the principals in Rustvale are a way of avoiding the intrusive glare of the department, which allows them to operate outside the radar of bureaucratic surveillance; a case of performing beside the stage.

This is contrasted with their open and welcoming attitude to outside education agencies. Regarded by the NGO and academic world as severely impoverished and in need of development interventions, the schools in Rustvale are inundated with requests for access. There are always developmental or research activities in the schools. The principals see these activities as opportunities to access financial and material resources and developmental opportunities for themselves, their teacher and students. These connections also serve as a channel to the outside world. They counter their schools' images as "caught in a hole and left on our own" (Bheki). Bheki, has, for example, set up a real time internet-based teaching link between a school in England and his school. A combination of money from a British NGO and a local ICT company's efforts led to the building of a fully networked and

secured computer room. The constant presence of outsiders is explained by the principals' desire to provide development opportunity for their staff and children and exposure to the outside world.

The principals' strategic performances, their citational practices, have been substantiated in light of the social spatial dynamics of the township. Initially tentative and careful, the principals quickly made pedagogical adaptations based on readings of what is possible in this township. Strategic and nuanced understandings of the pitfalls and opportunities marked their performances, establishing their credibility and authority as engaged community people. They managed to establish their pedagogical performances in the full glare of an expectant community, always observing and respecting community sensibilities. They never hesitated to push beyond these expectations by using the available discursive material in this space to provide productive new pedagogical articulations. The final section discusses two interrelated practical instances wherein the principals could be said to have domesticated the social spatial dynamics in light of these new articulations.

Pedagogical performances in domesticating space

The exposition provided above of the principals' initial citational practices has corroborated the view that the "public sphere is not simply a preestablished arena: it is constituted and negotiated through performance" (Gole, 2002, p.183). Through their micropractices the principals have enacted *ways of being* that co-constitute the public sphere and what is publicly allowable. I have thus far detailed instances of how they have constructed, following Turner (quoted in Gole, p.183), their *performative reflexivity* in initial encounters with the township. This I argue laid the basis for more enduring engagements which established them firmly as leading interlocutors in their schools' social relational processes.

I now go on to discuss how they have engaged at a deeper level with the social spatial make up of this fluid and informalized township. A discussion of their performances in light of two specific policy framed instances – governance and teacher appointments – will show how the principals domesticated space, and how they acted with greater assurance to construct their pedagogical identities. This involved acute understandings on their part of the spatial flows between their schools and the environment. Their strategic comportments in the application of these school policies, I argue, have been based on engaged readings and greater assertiveness. These definitive performances, while

neither uncontested nor unprecarious, established them both as creators of their own performative scripts as well as lead performers in defining their schools' pedagogical subjectivities.

State policy reform enunciations after 1994 were underpinned by an ambitious set of political objectives. School reform was expected to lay a platform for an inclusive schooling system to counteract years of racially-based inequality. An equity-informed approach to resource allocation was a key plank of school reform. Reform initiatives have had a mixed reception in this township. I argued elsewhere that the outcome of policy reforms in Rustvale in areas such as curriculum, governance and language policy can best be understood in light of the complex ways in which the policies have been 'renovated' in their environments. It has been the impact of the environment and the mediation of policy at schools that have been reworking the normative intent of the reforms (Fataar, 2007).

Government policy in the post apartheid period placed high premium on using education as a productive instrument for cultivating democratic citizenship. School governing bodies (SGBs) are meant to be harbingers of deliberative civic processes in which the involvement and leadership of parents are intended as primary. Policy confers what Bush and Heystek label "sovereignty" on parental participation (2003, p.133). Parents enjoy a majority on the SGBs and only they can be elected as chairperson. Policy intent suggests that the interests of parents to secure favourable learning conditions for their children should trump the interests of the other sectors represented on the SGB.

It has, however, turned out in Rustvale schools that the SGBs have become a prime site for the principals to establish a platform for their authoritative performances. As I've argued, "instead of parental sovereignty it is the principals of the schools in this township who reign over the school governance processes" (Fataar, 2007, p.609). All three principals are sure-footed in interaction with their SGBs and governance aspects such as setting school fees, determining spending priorities, and providing regulatory school guidelines. They have a big influence on governance decision making. The agendas of the SGB meetings are routinely set by the principals instead of the SGB chairpersons. Richard confers regularly with the chairperson and other members of his SGBs in order to apprise them of the latest developments at school and the decisions that have to be made by the SGB. Bheki visits parental governors at home, while the SGB chairperson at Edward's school visits the school at least weekly to drink tea and chat about the latest

developments at the school. These informal interactions are used to lay the basis for deliberations in SGB meetings. This approach was described by one teacher, an SGB member, as a key element of the principals' micro-politics of consensus building on which their leadership styles are based.

It is clear that parents participate minimally in the formal deliberations of their SGBs, mostly ratifying the leadership styles and decisions of the principals. Their passivity in the formal processes of governance can be attributed to their discomfort with the discursive registers of governance processes. Parental members on the SGBs generally possess little formal education. The principals are said to introduce agenda items, elaborate extensively on them and generally provide the options for decisions that are made. Parents rarely present topics for discussion, raise controversial questions or criticise the principal's views. The principal's command of the legal aspects of governance and management seems to be experienced by the parents as sufficient in informing the direction of the SGBs deliberations (see Fataar, 2007).

Despite their disgruntlement with the principal's dominance, attempts by the teachers who serve on the SGBs to challenge the principal or provide alternative perspectives are generally ineffectual. It has been the alliance between the principals and the compliant parent members that has determined the functional character of school governance. The principals take time to cultivate these beneficial relationships with the parent governors. The principals invest in respectful and friendly interactions with them. Crucially, they make sure that the parental governors are provided a conduit for symbolic enhancement at the school by according them ceremonial prominence at school assemblies, functions and parent meetings. The relationship between parental governors and their principals are key to the latter's authoritative performativity. With the parent governors on their side, Bheki, Edward and Richard have positioned themselves as the primary discursive constructors in their schools.

Their authoritative positioning, however, has never been without challenge or instability. As the example of teacher appointments in their schools shows, the township's social spatial dynamics require careful engagement. Nothing can be taken for granted. The permanent appointment of teachers at their schools gave Richard, Bheki and Edward their most complex script to date. They had to marshal their authority in shifting social spatial terrain. Teacher appointments had to be made in light of uncertain flux in enrolment numbers at their schools and the government's policy of implementing a standardized student–teacher ratio in all schools. A complex set of developments involving

objecting teachers in collaboration with community elements, parents or SGB members, informed the permanent employ of teachers at each of the three schools. Each of the principals arrived at their schools with a considerable number of temporary teachers who had insecurities about their job prospects in light of a climate of teacher cutbacks (see Soudien, 2001). Fifty per cent of Bheki's teaching staff was temporary appointees. Edward had to address a similar situation for his younger temporarily appointed teachers who made up about 60 per cent of his staff. The younger teachers formed a lobby block at Edward's school with connections to the community and local political interests. Richard's attempts to appoint teachers were complicated by an active union who represented all the temporary teachers at his school.

The principals gave me the impression that having all the teachers permanently appointed would have been one clear way of resolving tensions on the staff and smoothening interactions with their staff. However, they pointed out they are obliged to properly consider the merits of potential appointments and whether preferred candidates would suit their leadership style. Richard and Edward were clear that they would personally not have appointed a couple of the teachers who hold permanent positions at the school. Bheki was more realistic in his view that preference "doesn't come in it. . . . I had to accept the situation and get on with it despite my choices". The actual appointments at the school reveal a more complex story in which each one of the principals displayed different performative articulations intersected by specific relational dynamics at each of their schools.

Richard's performances were governed by actively engaging the dynamics that surrounded the appointment processes. Having been appointed at his school "over the head of our own person who acted as principal here" (teacher), Richard started his job on the back foot. His teaching staff was initially unco-operative and impenetrable. The temporary teachers formed a power block in opposition to him, questioning his leadership authority. His efforts to cut through the block, by for example, engaging them individually and organising teacher cooperation clusters on the basis of grades, were partially successful in establishing a conversation about the school's progress. Scepticism remained and was most pronounced in the demands by the temporary teachers to be appointed to permanent positions. Richard explained how he seized the initiative in trying to get "the whole bang lot appointed". He believed that it would provide him much needed leverage to imbue his leadership with the necessary authority. He explained how he lobbied departmental officials and the Minister of Education in the Western Cape Province to appoint the teachers:

> I camped at the Department's office almost every day. I made a nuisance of myself. . . They must have run out of patience with my pounding, pounding. Sir, I didn't care who saw me. I had to get these guys appointed. . . They had to understand that.

Meanwhile, back at the school the unionized teachers launched their own pressure campaign. Eager not to cede ground to Richard, they too lobbied the department. One teacher explained how they campaigned and lobbied in the school, "made life unpleasant for him, never took to him, to him because of being appointed over the head of Mr X". The pressure by the principal and the teachers, combined with the Department's effort to avoid political embarrassment for the Minister, led to an agreement to appoint all the aggrieved teachers. Richard suggested that this single accomplishment "proved my leadership credentials to all of them", notwithstanding the modicum of scepticism that still remains among some teachers, which has never allowed him to settle comfortably into his principal role. Their appointment by bureaucratic fiat was facilitated by a "hazy appointment process" (Richard) early in the life of the new government when there was no firm appointment procedure.

Edward had to contend with a more complicated set of dynamics which led him to strategically capitulate in the appointment process. The group of temporary teachers struck alliances with civic groups in the area who lobbied for their appointments in public meetings and the community. Influential community groups made it clear to Edward that his legitimacy depended on acceding to the 'will of the community' by appointing these networked teachers. Unlike at Richard's school, their appointments were done on the basis of a new process in which the SGB played the primary role. Two teachers spoke of unproven underhand dealings and bribes that passed between the applicants and parent governors. Edward, who felt isolated at this stage decided to succumb to the dynamics that influenced the process. He calculated that he could not be seen to push too hard for his preferred candidates, instead deciding to use his compliant attitude later as leverage to influence other processes and build relations with the parent governors. Despite his position two of his preferred candidates were appointed without his active lobbying. The main consequence of his acquiescence was the appointment of a block of teachers who did not feel beholden to him as a leader, setting the scene for intermittent confrontations and clashes that have marked his work as a principal.

The appointment process at Bheki's school was more straightforward. He came to the school at a later stage of the school's existence compared to Richard and Edward. By then the governmental process for appointments was

clear and narrowly circumscribed. Bheki replaced a fractious retired principal. He decided to play the process strictly by the rules. Teacher union representatives were part of the process throughout. His teachers competed for the job with outside applicants. Interviews were carried out with short- listed candidates and appointments were made after deliberation in the SGBs. Bheki played the role of facilitator in the meetings, clarifying procedures and reminding the meetings of the requirements of specific positions. While the parent governors found his refusal to favour any candidates perplexing, the teacher governors grew to respect his candour and neutrality. Seventy per cent of those teachers at his school who applied were appointed to permanent positions. Bheki used the scrupulousness of the process to justify why the rest was not appointed. This process established Bheki performative profile on the basis of integrity, fair play and respect.

This section discussed the basis on which the principals established a definitive presence in their schools, based on greater strategic assertiveness. Their governance performances were less contested compared to the engagements in teacher appointment processes. Whilst they had relative free reign in constructing beneficial interaction with parent governors, keeping them close and providing them symbolic status in an impoverished environment, the teacher politicking that they encountered in appointments had to be navigated more carefully. They had to make strategic calculations about how their pedagogical performances would position them in the overall context of their work. These deeper encounters reveal that Bheki, Edward and Richard's subjectivities are based on careful readings of the ways in which their schools' social spatial processes provide the stage for their performative reflexivity.

Conclusion

The focus of this article has been on the subjectivity processes that shape the pedagogical identities of principals in a post apartheid township. The starting assumption is based on the view that educational subjectivity has to be accounted for in light of geographic location. It is the dynamics of lived space or social space that must be accounted for in an analysis of people's adaptive identities. The article combined space with the analytics of performance, based on the view that performance is always articulated in space. A performance lens placed the analytical spotlight on the radically open and contingent character of pedagogical adaptation and creativity. I have suggested that Bheki, Edward and Richard's performances have to be understood as creative

articulations unfolding in the spatially contingent terrain of Rustvale Township. They have had to adjust to a spatially fluid, open and ephemeral context vastly different to what they were accustomed. Adapting to Rustvale required active engagement with their relative enclosed pedagogical selves. What I label as space hopping, turned on adaptation and pedagogical reinvention. They overcame their initial anxiety and tentativeness on the basis of deliberative connections and associations that inserted them as authoritative figures into the township. They were able to articulate a number of strategic performances, based on nuanced understandings of the surrounding social make up and power dynamics. Their reflexivity involved engaged spatially inscribed practices that pushed beyond expectations. They established their pedagogical performances on the basis of nuanced readings, creative adaptations and strategic practices that provided a productive authoritative platform for their work in this township.

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Note

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Bernstein, Bloom and the analysis of pedagogy in South African Schools

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Abstract

Bernstein was interested in understanding not what was relayed in pedagogic encounters but the actual relay itself. He focused on the medium rather than the message of pedagogic communication. This concentration on the medium of pedagogy rather than its message enabled an understanding of how inequality was reproduced in British schools where the message being transmitted was tolerably the same across schools. However, in some of the South African schools in our study, two main issues arose that gave our use of a classification and framing analysis an uncomfortable gloss. Firstly we found consistent evidence for a complete failure in pedagogic relay and secondly, when relay did happen, the content of the message being relayed was often of an abysmal quality. The conceptual and analytical tools offered by Bernstein did not allow us to work in detail with the second of these issues – the quality of the message. In order to do this, we turned to Bloom's Revised Taxonomy. The Bloomian analysis is all about the levels of complexity within the message transmitted and this gave us a seemingly neat analytical combination where Bloom honed in on the complexity of the message and Bernstein on the pedagogic medium the message is carried within. This paper explores how we grappled with the intersection of these two analytical tools when analysing pedagogy and assessment in South African classrooms.

Introduction

As we visited schools in and around Pietermaritzburg to gather data[1] about the implementation of the latest educational reform initiatives the brutal nature of the reproduction of inequality overrode finer questions about the nuances of policy implementation. One left the lessons with a palpable sense of learners being channelled by the quality of their school experience into radically unequal destinies. As we began to analyze the data it did not seem to matter

[1] The study is a four year project funded by the NRF, which aims to track the implementation of the FET curriculum in English, science and history classrooms in four secondary schools in the Pietermaritzburg region of KwaZulu-Natal.

what instrument was used. The rural and 'township' schools used in our study mostly registered a flat line with various pedagogic measures, while ex-House of Assembly schools showed fairly healthy signs of pedagogic activity. To over dramatize the experience, it was like searching for vital signs of life with one patient dead and the other alive. It did not matter whether we checked breathing, pulse or brain waves, the first registered a nil response, the second all sorts of activity. In this paper we want to give an account of two of the instruments we used to analyze the data and discuss what each of them offered, how each was limited, and how the two instruments both resonated and clashed with the other.

The two instruments were taken from Basil Bernstein and Benjamin Bloom, two exemplary pedagogic thinkers who not only theorized the pedagogic field but produced effective tools to work its terrain. For a tool to be effective it must specialize, and to specialize means being designed for a particular set of purposes. So as we give an account of the limited nature of the two instruments under discussion we are not critiquing the instruments but rather getting a handle on how best to use them. We have to attend more closely to what our instruments are in the field of educational research, of what to use, when, where, how and why, and then to get on with the job of using them proficiently.

Choosing Bernstein

We had specifically chosen Bernstein as our initial theoretical guide for the research project because he had interrogated the issue of inequality in education by unpacking the black box of education reproduction theory (Jacklin, 2004). He explained inequalities in scholastic achievement of children of different social classes on the basis of inequalities in 'what knowledge was taught' and 'how it was taught'. In a number of studies over 40 years he clarified what the differences were between middle class and working class learners, ranging from their home life and language modalities to differing forms of pedagogy experienced in different schools. Bernstein provided something that was lacking in other reproduction theories. As he put it:

> Paradoxically, what is missing from theories of cultural reproduction is any internal analysis of the structure of the discourse itself, and it is the structure of the discourse, the logic of the discourse, which provides the means whereby external power relations can be carried by it (Bernstein, 1996, p.19).

One can hear in this quote a frustration with reproduction theorists like Bourdieu and Althusser who were lauded for their analyses of education when most of what they offered had to do with power relations external to schooling. Bernstein offered a richer tool box of concepts directly adapted to the internal working of the pedagogic world.

In using Bernstein in this way we were able to rely on the excellent work of numerous South African academics who had recognized his usefulness. The influential work of Bernsteinians like Muller, Ensor, Davis, Hoadley, Reeves, Breier and Gamble (see chapters in Muller, Davies and Morais, 2004) helped us to see how it was Bernstein could be productively applied to pedagogic analysis. In particular it was the excellent PhD of Hoadley (2005) that revealed the full extent Bernstein could be taken to when working with the issue of the reproduction of inequality in the classroom. Yet from the beginning we found a Bernsteinian analysis unable to deal with the most basic intuitive judgement we felt about the lessons – that they were either educationally worthwhile or worthless. After attending history and science classes at opposite ends of the social class spectrum and observing the respective teachers deliver mainly content driven, teacher directed lessons, our classification and framing analyses often looked fairly similar across the schools even though we intuitively felt that the lessons were of noticeably differing qualities. It was specifically the quality of the message delivered through the pedagogic interaction that Bernstein gave us no purchase on. He allowed all sorts of clear analytical moves that carved the lessons up into categories around the boundary strength between everyday knowledge and school knowledge, the relationship between different school subjects, the way the subject itself was divided up, the control the teacher and learners had over the selection, sequencing, pacing and evaluation practices of the lesson. These are key variables in how a pedagogic message is transmitted and immensely useful in providing clear criteria for both identifying these variables, measuring their strength, and working on underlying combinatorial matrixes that provide differing modalities of pedagogic transmission. It is enlightening, for example, to take a look at pedagogic transmission in terms of:

- how clearly the teacher worked with the subject in its own pure terms or allowed everyday forms of understanding a place within the lesson;

- how clearly the subject discipline is separated off from, or integrated with, other subjects;

- how clearly the specific sections of the subject discipline are separated off from, or integrated with, each other;

- how much influence the teacher allows the learners in terms of selection of knowledge in the classroom;

- how much influence the teacher allows the learners in terms of sequencing the lesson;

- how much influence the teacher allows the learners in terms of pacing the lesson;

- how much influence the teacher allows the learners in terms of assessment strategies in the lesson.

These variables can be clearly separated off, analysed and used to build modalities of pedagogy, but once we had done this analysis we still wanted to know:

- what was the quality of the way the teacher combined or separated everyday knowledge from school knowledge;

- what was the quality of the teachers links to other subjects or her choice to remain within her subject domain;

- what was the quality of her moving between themes within her subject or when staying with one theme;

- what was the quality of her selection of knowledge or the learners' selection of knowledge;

- what was the quality of her sequencing of the lesson or the learners' sequencing of the lesson;

- what was the quality of her pacing of the lesson or the learners' pacing of the lesson;

- what was the quality of the evaluation practices in the lesson.

An extreme example will show up the problem clearly. Two teachers could both give highly classified lessons that exclude everyday knowledge, make no

links to other subjects and stay focussed on the specific section under review. Furthermore, the lessons could both be strongly framed with the teacher in control of the selection of content, its sequencing, pacing and evaluation. But, we would want to say at the end of these lessons that the one lesson was an intense experience of excellence and the other the most boring collection of twaddle. We all know this to be possible. Yet on a Bernsteinian classification and framing matrix these two lessons would come out identical, even though the quality of knowledge transmitted and the pedagogic experience had been of two different orders.

This is not necessarily a weakness of Bernstein or those who have worked hard at turning his theoretical insights into functioning analytical tools that have explicit purchase on educational events. It could be that asking Bernstein's conceptual apparatus to deliver on the qualitative nature of the message being transmitted and learned in the classroom is to expect something it was not designed for. One does not use a dissecting knife to listen to the beat of the heart. Clarity is needed over what a Bernsteinian classification and framing analysis does and does not do, especially for a study of education in South Africa. One way to work towards this is to bring to mind the difference between working class schools in Britain and South Africa.

The South African school context

Although there are serious differences in the quality of schooling across different social classes within Britain, most schools are functioning entities with adequate resources and staffing, unlike equivalent schools in the township and rural areas of South Africa. For Bernstein the difficulty was explaining how inequality was being reproduced when schools in Britain were mostly delivering the content of the curriculum. A major part of his answer was to point to the different ways teaching and learning were relayed – to the modalities of pedagogy. If the *message* was tolerably the same, then the source of inequality lay in the different forms of its *transmission*, and these differences could be tracked to similar formal divisions in social class. It was here that he opened the black box of reproduction theory to the pedagogic logics operating in schools. It stands as one of the most powerful Platonic moves in recent educational theory as it offered a way into seeing the abstract forms of education beyond the endless chatter going on in classrooms. Much like his rather more flamboyant counterpart in media studies, Marshall McLuhan, he can be read as maintaining that "the medium is the message"

(McLuhan, 1964, p.7). It is the form of the message, rather than its content, that formats consciousness.[2] It is an insight of enormous power and simplicity as it enables an ability to get at key underlying forces structuring consciousness beyond the continually shifting messages running through the system. Television, for example, brings with its very way of being a set of foundational experiences that exist before the variety of programmes on display. Rather than getting caught up in an interminable project of tracing ever changing contents, McLuhan cut through to the essence of media and its impact on humankind. Bernstein performed a very similar service for Education Studies– he saw through the cacophony of messages being transmitted through education into the essential forms behind them. By focussing on this dimension Bernstein was able to work with the issue of the reproduction of inequality in education by being able to compare pedagogic forms to social class forms and rigorously study their interaction. He showed us how to work across levels of analysis and still keep track. As powerful and useful as this insight was, it came at a cost, and it is a cost one pays dearly for in a South African context.

The difficulty with concentrating on how the pedagogic message is transmitted is that the poor quality of the message itself gets lost in focusing on the modalities of pedagogy. In South African schools the differences are far more gross than in Britain, revolving not only around whether pedagogy comes in competence or performance modes but whether it comes at all and what is said when it comes. It is not only a question of the forms of relay but whether relay happens at all and what is stated when it does. This is the rupture of pedagogy that Hoadley (2005) and Jacklin (2004) encountered when analyzing their data from underprivileged schools, and it is what we encountered as well. Hoadley's (2006) solution was to add to the Bernsteinian

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[2] There is some overlap between McLuhan's hot and cold media and Bernstein's classification and framing. Strong classification and framing is similar to 'hot' media, and weak classification and framing similar to 'cool' media. Hot media, for example a lecture, are identified by high redundancy where the message has explicit and strong boundaries (strong classification) and low active participation by participants (strong framing). Cool media, for example a seminar, are identified by the demand for high participation in constructing the message (weak framing) and low redundancy (weak classification) that allows for various message forms to be constructed. As Bernstein then extends his analysis from pedagogic modalities to social class modalities, so does McLuhan extend his analysis from media forms to societal structure. For a discussion of the intersection between Bernstein and McLuhan, see Abraham Stahl (Stahl, 1975). He argues that Bernstein's elaborated and restricted code comes from a deeper source than class, it comes from a basic shift from orality to literacy, so well charted by Ong.

analysis of how knowledge was being transmitted a category 'zero' when there was no pedagogy happening.[3] As useful as this move is in terms of the way the message was being carried to the learner it did not help us grapple with noticeably differing qualities in the content of the message itself. Her zero usefully dealt with failure in the relay of the message, its rupture, not the quality of the internal message itself. She points to a situation where there is only static being transmitted. At this point a debate about the respective differences of television and radio as media becomes redundant until some coherent message gets through. This forces a focusing on the message itself, as meaning has to be conveyed for the medium to show its own particular stamp. Hoadley helped us work with the complete failure of message delivery, not with working out the quality of the messages themselves.[4] To work with the message in its own terms we had to use a different set of analytical tools to those Bernstein offered and we turned to Benjamin Bloom and his infamous taxonomy of knowledge for some help. It turned out to be both a productive and problematic move, as we shall see.

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3 Hoadley (2006) locates one centre of the problem in the absence of evaluation. When there is no evaluation rule operative in the classroom, it causes the whole lesson to collapse inwards, as there is no distinguishing between what is and what is not valid knowledge. Her whole analysis points to the centrality of clear and explicit evaluation as the structural pole on which an analysis of the transmission of pedagogy depends. This is of particular importance for working class learners, where explicit evaluation rules (along with weak pacing) gives them some control over their learning and enables a flexible reaching towards clear outcomes.

4 When Hoadley (2005) encountered the same problem of analysing the contents of meaning she turned to Dowling (1998) for help. He provided a theory of knowledge that worked a distinction between localized everyday meanings of the public sphere and esoteric meanings of disciplinary specializations. It is an elegant move. Other researchers using a Bernsteinian framework – like Jill Adler, Diane Parker and Zain Davis in the Quantum project – have encountered a similar problem. At a certain point in the analysis Bernstein's toolbox stops working, and one of the points is when one wants to go into the content of pedagogy. The Quantum project, for example, has enlisted Hegel's *Logic* for guidance on how knowledge is structured. We turned to Bloom as we were not looking for a theory of knowledge but a working analytical tool that had been tried and tested at a technical level across subjects, schools and countries. See Reeves (2005) for another, quite brilliant, Phd that grapples with the issue of how pedagogic content intersects with pedagogic style in relation to the reproduction of inequality.

Looking to Bloom to analyse the quality of the message

The combination of Bernstein and Bloom is not unheard of in the annals of educational research, peculiar as the combination might sound. Bloom's taxonomy of knowledge is associated with a dour setting of lesson plan outcomes and exam papers according to hierarchical levels of knowledge complexity, a far cry from the revolutionary critique Bernstein provided of capitalist educational practices. Yet if one goes back to the 1960s and '70s one finds their work united in the attempt both to unravel the logic of the reproduction of inequality and to address the question of what to do about it.[5] Both Bernstein's and Bloom's work was used to understand how cultural deprivation and poverty impacted on educational achievement with close attention paid to the effects of the home environment (Hunt, 1966; Slaughter and Epps, 1987). It turns out, when reading through the corpus of Bloom's work, that his major concern was the reproduction of inequality in education, and most importantly within this overarching framework, what could be done about it through schooling. In *Human characteristics and school learning* Bloom presents the fullest statement of his position. As it has been back-grounded in the face of his ubiquitous taxonomy, allow us to briefly summarize its major points and point to how it intersects with the work of Bernstein.

The thrust of the book centres around pedagogic interventions that will ensure students from different backgrounds achieve the same outcomes. In the research leading up to this book Bloom and his students had investigated the influence of family background on school achievement, isolating important variables in the interactions between adults and children such as quality and quantity of reading, the nature of conversation around family rituals like meal times, and the quality of educational resources opened out by the family to the child. Disturbed by the massive influence of the home environment on school performance, Bloom worked on what could be done to alter this depressing

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5 There are all sorts of links, old and new. In a book called *Compensatory education for cultural deprivation*, Bloom and others (Bloom, Davis, & Hess, 1965) report on a research conference of the same name. The book summarises what is known about the problem of education and cultural deprivation and suggests critical problems for further research. Bernstein's early work on social class and linguistic development (Bernstein, 1961) is listed in the book's annotated bibliography of research studies relevant to the area. More recently, a Norwegian PhD student is also employing Bloom along with Bernstein as a tool of analysis (Haugen, 2006).

finding and help learners from all backgrounds do well at school. Taking specific and explicit learning tasks as his unit he worked on three major variables that impacted on learner performance: cognitive entry behaviour, affective entry characteristics, and quality of instruction. The first deals with making explicit the basic forms of knowledge and skill required as preconditions to do the task and then ensuring that learners needing help in this regard are taught what is needed to complete the task successfully. It is accepted that different learners will need different amounts of time to successfully complete the task, especially in the initial phases. The second works on the interest, attitude and self conception of the learner to ensure that learners are all motivated to do the task. The third deals with the quality of instruction given by the teacher, focusing in on the explicit nature of the directions given, the involvement of the learner in learning activities, and the explicit nature of the feedback given during and after assessment. When correctly applied, the end result should be something close to 'mastery learning' where almost all the learners are able to do the task, shifting the focus of education from equality of opportunity to equality of outcome and countering the disabling influence of family class background.

Current Bernsteinian studies attempting to address the same issue of what pedagogic interventions interrupt the reproduction of class inequality have, curiously, come up with very similar recommendations around clear evaluation rules and weak pacing, although a focus on the nature of content and how it is hierarchically organized is less apparent (Morais and Neves, 2001). What is disturbing about these Bernsteinian studies is the lack of awareness of the research traditions within education that have already pointed to the same answers with convincing research. Bernsteinians will have to stop reinventing and re-describing the whole educational wheel in Bernsteinian terms and begin building on the work of those before them. As one of Bernstein's best students puts it, it is time to stand on the shoulders of giants, not redraw the silhouette in his image.[6]

Taking a larger view of the intersection between Bernstein and Bloom we can see that two very different educational traditions are being rubbed up against

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[6] When reading Neves and Morais (Neves and Morais, 2001) which partially undertakes an exploration of cognitive and socio affective complexity one cannot but notice the parallels to Bloom's cognitive and affective taxonomies, only his are outlined in far more detail with far more research attached to both its formulation, investigation, trialling and discussion. The 'standing on the shoulders of giants' metaphor is taken from Muller (Muller, 2006)

each other. As a sociologist, Bernstein worked with the forms of pedagogy along with its basic patterns, variations, organizational hierarchies and intersection with social class. Bloom's work is located mostly within the tradition of instructional design with its specialized focus on the systematic development of instructional and content specifications and outcomes. It analyses learning needs and outcomes and develops systems, materials and activities to meet these needs as well as running trials and evaluations of all instruction and learner activities to ensure their *usefulness* and work on *improvements*. This is the world that Bloom's taxonomy flourishes in, and this was the world we turned to for explicit guidance on the complexity of the message rather than the form of transmission.[7]

We recruited a revision of Bloom's taxonomy (Anderson, Krathwohl, Airasian, Cruikshank, Mayer, Pintich, Raths and Wittrock, 2001) which provided a useful analytical tool to identify levels of knowledge complexity and cognitive process complexity within the lessons and the assessment tasks. The original taxonomy had not sufficiently separated the knowledge and cognitive process dimensions. Bloom's taxonomy had conflated these dimensions into a one dimensional representation of six levels of increasing cognitive complexity: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Within the revised model the knowledge dimension is described as consisting of several levels, each level representing a different and increasingly complex form of knowledge. Likewise the process dimension also consists of several levels, each level representing more demanding and complex cognitive processes. This has resulted in the creation of a two-dimensional classificatory tool which can be used to categorise and describe the kinds of knowledge learners work with (knowledge dimension), **together** with the ways in which learners work with the knowledge (cognitive process dimension).

The revised taxonomy is assumed to have a loosely hierarchical nature, in that

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[7] Although Bloom's Taxonomy worked effectively within Instructional Design, it does not in any way encompass the field. His other work on Group Learning (Bloom, 1984), Automaticity (Bloom, 1986) and Mastery Learning (Bloom, 1988) provide excellent examples of his work in the specifics of Instructional Design. It is here, along with classics in the field like Gagne (Gagne, 1985) and Merrill (Merrill, 1992) that we gain insight into goodness of instructional design, of what the principles of designing good instruction are at the most fundamental of levels. It gets us beyond Bloom's Knowledge and Cognitive Complexity model, but this would take us beyond the confines of this paper. It is sad, however, that this rich source of researched pedagogic expertise is notably underemphasized in our English University Educational Curricula (based on our personal experiences of these universities).

a more advanced level subsumes the levels below. For example, it can be assumed that a person operating at the application level has mastered the cognitive demands required for working at the knowledge and comprehension level.

The main levels in the knowledge dimension are:

A. Factual knowledge – The basic elements that students must know to be acquainted with a discipline or solve problems in it.

B. Conceptual knowledge – The interrelationships among the basic elements within a larger structure that enable them to function together.

C. Procedural knowledge – How to do something, methods of enquiry, and criteria for using skills, algorithms, techniques, and methods.

D. Metacognitive knowledge – Knowledge of cognition in general as well as awareness and knowledge of one's own cognition.

The main levels in the cognitive process dimension are:

1. **Remember** – Retrieving relevant knowledge from long-term memory.
2. **Understand** – Determining the meaning of instructional messages, including oral, written and graphic communication.
3. **Apply** – Carrying out or using a procedure in a give situation.
4. **Analyze** – Breaking material into its constituent parts and detecting how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose.
5. **Evaluate** – making judgements based on criteria and standards.
6. **Create** – Putting elements together to form a novel, coherent whole or making an original product.

(Krathwohl, 2002, p.215)

Each main level has a number of sub-levels associated with it, which make for finer distinctions of knowledge and process within the level. Presenting these levels on a table in a grid fashion creates a number of intersecting cells which make up what is known as a taxonomy table. For ease of presentation, only the main levels are shown on the table here.

Table 1: The taxonomy table

The knowledge dimension	The Process dimension						
		1. Remember	2. Understand	3. Apply	4. Analyse	5. Evaluate	6. Create
	A. Factual knowledge						
	B. Conceptual knowledge						
	C. Procedural knowledge						
	D. Metacognitive knowledge						

Unlike Bernstein's classification and framing rubrics that enabled an analysis of the different types and components of pedagogy based on classification and framing relationships, this table provided us with clear criteria for recognizing qualitative levels of cognitive demand and knowledge complexity within the various lessons and assessment tasks. The difference can be seen by comparing the above taxonomy table to a part of a Bernsteinian rubric (Fig. 1) used for analyzing the control teachers and learners have over the evaluative criteria of the lesson (Hoadley, 2006). Here it is the communication of the criteria that is key and not the cognitive complexity of the assessment task.

Figure 1: Excerpt from a classroom analysis rubric used by Hoadley (2006) to analyse the evaluation aspect of framing

DISCURSIVE RULE: EVALUATION CRITERIA (F^{+-})

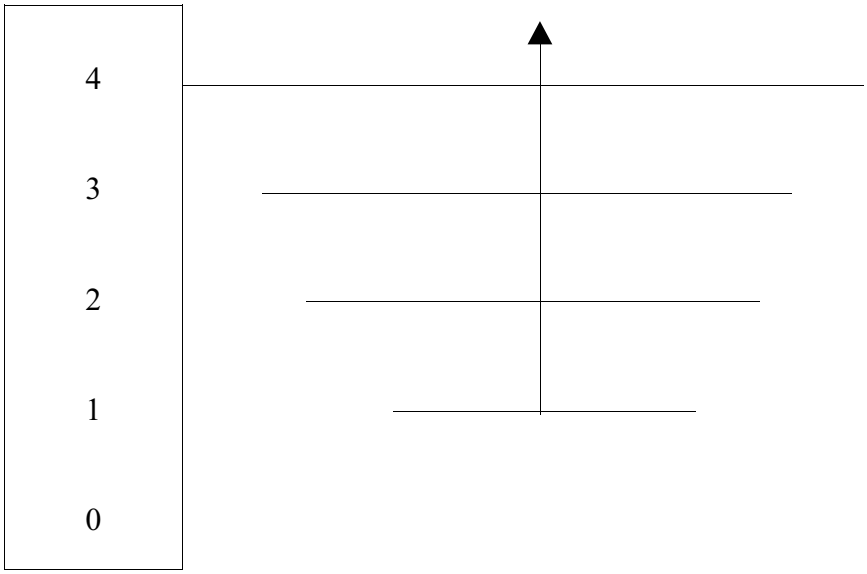
The extent to which teacher and learner have control over the evaluative criteria of the instructional knowledge pertaining to the meaning of concepts and principles and their appropriate realisation.

5. In the course of learners conducting an activity or task	F^{++}	F^{+}	F^{-}	F^{--}	F^{0}
	Evaluative criteria very clear and explicit	Evaluative criteria quite clear and explicit	Evaluative criteria quite unclear and implicit	Evaluative criteria very unclear and implicit	Transmission of evaluative criteria not observable
	The teacher constantly moves around and monitors what learners are doing and makes comments. To the whole class, and to individuals, she repeatedly goes over what constitutes an appropriate performance.	The teacher makes some points, either to the whole class or to individual learners, so as to clarify what is expected of them in the task.	The teacher makes a few comments during the course of the task and looks at some of the learners work or listens to them read. However, this is not sustained and the criteria for a successful production are not made explicit to all.	The teacher looks at a few learners' work when it is brought to her attention. She rarely or never listens to them read. She seldom makes a comment to the learner. Comments are not extended to the whole class.	The teacher engages in other work in her space and is not seen to look at what the learners are doing. She makes no comment on the work as it proceeds. No action is taken to ascertain what the learners are doing.

Hierarchical depth and combinatorial analysis

The taxonomy table (Table 1) works with hierarchical levels of complexity. It starts with the simplest level and builds up to more complex levels. Taking one dimension rather than two, we can illustrate its essentially hierarchical structure in the following figure.

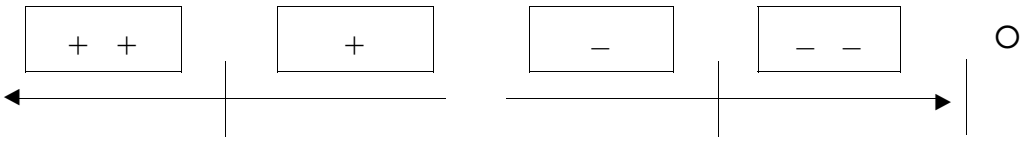
Figure 2: The ordering structure of the Bloom's taxonomy table (Table 1)



Within the hierarchical structure, the higher levels include the lower levels as their conditions of possibility. This gives it depth, the higher carries the lower within itself. Level 1 is included in level 2 which is included in level 3. For example, to show the level of application (3) one has to firstly remember (1) what it is and understand it (2). Although this hierarchical principle is more loosely applied within the Revised Taxonomy, it still provides the guiding operating principle.

The framing example (Fig.1) works with a completely different basic structure which can be illustrated in the following way.

Figure 3: The ordering structure of the classification and framing rubric (Fig.1)



The framing structure breaks a line up into various strengths ranging from weak to strong. It uses an either/or logic. Either weak or strong.[8] Strong does not include weak in the way that level 3 (apply) of Bloom's cognitive dimension includes level 1 (remember) within it. Here lies the basic reason why a Bernsteinian classification and framing analysis will never provide interior depth. This is no crime. As an intellectual tool it offers much of value in a dissecting way that gets us to how a pedagogic message is transmitted, the complex types of relationships between these elements, the patterns they form, the varieties they produce, the modalities they document. The depth produced by a Bernsteinian analysis comes from the combinatorial matrix, of this added to that minus that with this. Here depth comes from how the parts play with

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8 The weakness or strength of classification and framing should not be set out in a judgmental manner that makes the one good and the other bad. The strength of Bernstein is that he offers a neutral analytical device that describes pedagogic transmission in a way that breaks it down into essential parts. Weak is not bad, strong is not good. Weak is weak, strong is strong. It is in the nature of the combination of the elements and the context the elements are working within that judgments can be made. If one reads F++ and F- for evaluation on Hoadley's rubric, it seems as if F++ is good practice and F- bad practice. This is not helped by F° appearing on a continuum that goes from nothing to weak to strong – from zero to hero as it were. Hoadley certainly does not want F° to be thought of as framing that is so weak as to be almost non existent, she points to F° as the rupture of framing. For her the key point is that a classification and framing analysis should stay with how evaluation is transmitted not with the actual content quality of the evaluation itself. This keeps the required sharpness of focus on the modalities of pedagogy. However, the F° did not help us when the evaluation rule was present and strongly framed in our classroom visits, but the particular type of evaluation event was poorly judged. Sometimes the learners could recognize and realize what the teacher required, that was not the problem in some instances, it was specifically the quality of what the teacher demanded.

each other in differing contexts, rather than what the parts contain inside themselves.[9] Combining Bernstein and Bloom was a way of mixing combinatorial analysis with hierarchical depth, of bringing together variations in how the pedagogic message is relayed with the qualitative complexity of the message itself.

Using the different tools of analysis

We now provide an example of how a Bloomian analysis works so that we can see its difference to a Bernsteinian classification and framing analysis. The specific analysis is of pedagogy and assessment in grade 10 history classrooms in two very different kinds of schools. Lincoln High is an ex-House of Assembly school that is well maintained, well resourced, well managed with an array of well qualified, highly motivated teachers, many of them paid by the School Governing Body. The matric pass rate has been 100% for a number of years. Fees are R7 800 per year. Enthabeni High School is a black, ex-Department of Education and Training school located in a rural area. Fees are R150 per annum. No teachers are funded by the School Governing Body. The matric pass rate was 86% in 2003 and 88% in 2004. According to the principal, only 10% of the parents are working with over half the learners living with their grandmothers. It is fairly obvious, given our existing knowledge about the reproduction of inequality through schooling, that the two schools chosen for this analysis are going to throw up very different

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9 We are not maintaining that Bernstein does not work with Hierarchical analysis, only that the Classification and Framing instrument is not the best place to look for it. Bernstein's Pedagogic Device is deeply informed with Hierarchical principles (Hugo, 2004) as is his late theorization of Vertical Discourses (Bernstein, 1999). Indeed, one could summarize Bernstein's whole project as the attempt to understand how specialization of consciousness was differentially distributed on social class lines. However, Bernstein's intricate system did not get into the specifics of the hierarchical complexity going on inside the instructional event, at this point the tool-kit he provides shifts into a combinatorial analysis utilizing relations of Classification and Framing rather than hierarchical analysis. It is almost as if, after working through the whole pedagogic device all the way down from international, national, provincial and local dimensions and finally getting into the classroom and into its instructional discourse, one opens it out and finds a set of variables to explore, not a deeply structured, hierarchical event. Bloom's insight was that instructional discourse is fundamentally hierarchical in structure, not in relation to regulative discourse, but in its own terms. What flattens out at the bottom of a Bernsteinian analysis suddenly opens out in depth when using Bloom. The point is to be able to use both forms of analysis, Bernstein for the transmission of the pedagogic code, Bloom for the hierarchical complexity of the pedagogic message

results, but what we want to demonstrate through the analyses are the different ways that the classification and framing matrix work in comparison to Bloom's taxonomy.

Classroom data were collected by video taping five consecutive Grade 10 history lessons in each school. Starting with pedagogy, a Bernsteinian analysis of pedagogic discourse shows that history teacher in both schools is definitely in control of the sequencing and selection (the framing is strong). At Enthabeni the pacing is strongly framed while at Lincoln learners have a little more control of the pacing of the lesson. It is in the evaluative rule that there is a marked difference between the two classrooms. The Lincoln teacher generally used strong framing, asking the learners to elaborate on answers or comments and signals what is missing from the learner's production. For example, after a learner has explained the philosophy of capitalism, she says:

> You have given the philosophy now, which is good. . .but just to add to that – private ownership of wealth in a nutshell.

At Enthabeni, the evaluative criteria were weakly framed. The teacher looks only for yes/no answers. Incorrect answers are generally ignored or the reasons for them are not sought. Correct answers are accepted and may be praised, but are not elaborated on. Yet the difference in framing of the evaluation criteria still does not adequately describe the qualitative and cognitive differences between assessment in the two classrooms.

Moving onto assessment, Bloom's Revised Taxonomy is a tool most useful for analysing the cognitive complexity of questions asked in the classroom, of classroom tasks and of written tests and assignments. A count and analysis of the instructional questions asked by the teachers' shows that the number of questions asked by the two teachers over five lessons is similar. However, 60% of the questions asked by the teacher in the Lincoln classroom are higher order (that is requiring understanding, analysis, application, evaluation or creation) whereas only 18% of questions in the Enthabeni classroom are higher order.

Three tests written by Grade 10 history learners in each school were analysed. Each test question was analysed using Bloom's Revised taxonomy. The table shows the percentage of marks in a particular category according to the type of knowledge and the cognitive level required by the questions in the test. A comparative analysis of the assessment tasks given in History at Lincoln and Enthabeni shows the following pattern emerging:

Table 2: Knowledge dimensions and cognitive complexity of history tests written at Enthabeni and *Lincoln*

	The cognitive process dimension					
The knowledge dimension	1. Remember	2. Understand.	3. Apply	4. Analyse	5. Evaluate	6. Create
A. Factual knowledge	**(E) Test 1 100%** **(E) Test 2 100%** **(E) Test 3 100%** *(L) Test 1(28%)* *(L) Test 2 (26%)* *(L) Test 3 (20%)*	*(L)Test 1 (24%)* *(L) Test 2(10%)* *(L) Test 3(34%)*		*(L) Test 3 (2%)*	*(L) Test 3 (4%)*	
B. Conceptual knowledge		*(L) Test 2 (14%)* *(L) Test 3 (10%)*		*(L) Test 2 (12%)*		*(L) Test 2 (20%)* *(L) Test 3 (30%)*
C. Procedural knowledge				*(L) Test 1 (28%)* *(L) Test 2 (18%)*	*(L) Test 1 (20%)*	

At Enthabeni all the questions in all three tests focused on remembering factual knowledge, whereas Lincoln's assessment practices ranged in complexity over both cognitive processes and forms of knowledge. There was still a strong element of remembering factual knowledge purely in its own terms, but a substantial number of questions assumed factual recall within it and went on to test procedural knowledge where learners had to analyze or evaluate source material. This analysis points to a very different dimension of evaluation to a Bernsteinian classification and framing analysis where the basic question revolves around the extent to which the teacher made the rules for evaluation of learners' performances explicit, enabling their ability to both recognize what was required of them and realize these requirements in practice. The Bloomian analysis is all about the levels of complexity within the message transmitted, the Bernsteinian analysis all about the medium the message is carried within.

Both of these kinds of analysis are important, although they tell us different things. The first points to the explicit and elaborated way the Lincoln teacher transmitted the criteria of assessment allowing for clear recognition of what was demanded along with a facilitation of the ability to realize these in practice. This contrasts with the implicit and restricted ways of the Enthabeni teacher that made it both difficult for the learners to recognize what it is he required and hence even more difficult to realize it in practice. The second kind of analysis points to the hierarchically rich, diverse and complex nature of assessment practices at Lincoln in contrast to the impoverished reliance on fact and memory at Enthabeni and provides clear and measurable analytical tools to reveal this dichotomy. With Bloom and Bernstein combined, complexity of message combines with an analysis of the way the message is transmitted.

It would be unfair to expect of the Bernsteinian research community an elaborate analysis of the structure of the message itself when this has not been their focus to date (although their current intersection with the Hallidayian research community is changing this, see Christie and Martin, 2007). But when one finds them doing an analysis of cognitive complexity without picking up on its rich history in Educational research and specifically in Instructional Design the results are worrying. In Bernsteinian studies such as Morais and Neves (2001), cognitive complexity finds itself split into only two levels – simple cognitive competence and complex cognitive competence – with elementary elaboration on how to recognize them. Rather than picking up on a ready made instrument that has been carefully trialled and tested, building on what the education community had to offer, they created a minor imitation and condemned themselves to an inferior repetition of the same.

Limitations to the Bloom's analysis

As productive as the intersection of Bernstein and Bloom was in providing us with tools to analyse both the medium of pedagogic transmission and the complexity of the pedagogic message, after completing the Bloomian analysis we were still left with a frustrating sense that we had not got to the heart of the problem in terms of the quality of the message itself. Bloom's taxonomy proved too generic to really get us into an analysis of the message itself. This had something to do with Bloom's initial focus on pedagogic *outcomes*, not the content and process involved in getting to the outcome. The taxonomy was also intentionally kept simple to ensure widespread use. We found Bloom

most useful in identifying the complexity of evaluation, whether these were actual tests, outcomes for a lesson, or questions within a lesson. It was more difficult to use the Taxonomy to work with the actual flow of the lesson itself, of how the message evolved as the lesson developed. A differently specialized tool is needed for such a detailed analysis.[10]

Nor did Bloom give us purchase on how complexity intersected with quality. We found particular examples where the complexity of an assessment task could be identified on a surface level, but a whole range of processes were going on underneath that gave a very different picture. Sometimes an assessment task takes on the form of a higher order task but in reality what it is actually asking for is something that has been rote learnt or can be easily comprehended from a direct reading of the material. This is particularly so in History with the use of source material, which is supposed to give learners the opportunity to analyse and evaluate evidence. However these questions are often simply comprehension questions, or in other cases the source serves a purely decorative function.

An example is a test question that has a picture of the leaders meeting at the Congress of Vienna. However, none of the questions that follow actually require the learners to engage with the source at all. All of the questions simply require learners to recall factual information. The questions are:

1. Why did the great powers meet in Vienna?
2. Name the great powers and the countries from which they came.
3. List three principles followed by the Congress.

The first question appears to be fairly complex requiring understanding of conceptual knowledge. However, looking at the type of answers written by learners, it is clear that this question and its answer has been well rehearsed and should be categorised as Remember factual knowledge.

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10 Sophisticated tools at this level both exist and are being developed. The Hallidayian community is working hard at tracing how pedagogic content is structured, even getting into its subject specific contexts (Christie and Martin, 2006). The Quantum project is currently developing a sophisticated analytical tool based partly on Hegel's *Logic* to explore the quality and development of knowledge within a pedagogic event. But already existing and well developed tools exist in this area, see Moseley, Baumfield, Elliott, Gregson, Higgins, Miller and Newton, 2005 for a good overview.

But even if a question did require the actual performance of a complex set of analytical skills rather than covering up for simple factual recall, the issue arose of whether the complex skill demanded was relevant to the context of the history lesson. Identifying a healthy range of cognitive and knowledge complexity within a lesson does not mean that the lesson was worthwhile. Complexity and quality, although related, are not joined at the hip. Generic analytical skills are very different to Historical analytical skills, and then even good historical analytical skills can be poorly placed in a History lesson. Bloom gave us no ability to judge the actual pedagogical worth of the skill demanded and performed because he gave us no purchase on the intersection of relevant context with cognitive and knowledge complexity. The specificity of the specialized context and the role it plays in judgements about the worth of the lesson was left to haunt us after both the Bloomian and Bernsteinian analysis had been completed. We still need to go deeper into the pedagogic event.

Conclusion

In the silly but entertaining *50 Modern thinkers on education* (Palmer and Cooper, 2004), Bloom comes in at 17 with Bernstein at 30 (just pipping Foucault at 31). How these thinkers actually identify and work the pedagogic field, how their theoretical frameworks and analytical tools can be used to build up a coherent research strategy is not discussed. What we have are fifty little empires that die with the originator, fifty different languages that describe the same terrain in fifty different ways, each reaching a height of vision that one genius can reach in a lifetime of work. But if one looks closely enough under these great white men and their individual projects, a different world comes into view, one where whole communities of researchers work across the world on similar pedagogic problems using similar pedagogic tools of analysis and come to similar conclusions that carry some weight. Under the names of Bernstein and Bloom exist thriving research communities engaged in a far bigger project than carrying the name of their father to new generations, they are engaged in attempting to deepen already existing understandings of how pedagogy works in a complex world. The very real danger exists, however, that these communities fail to build on each other and become isolated islands, each attempting to build their own tower to the sky. In this article we attempt to place two working instruments of pedagogic research from two very different research communities next to each other and try to work out how they intersect and allow a more intricate analysis of the pedagogic world.

These two specialized research instruments are highly effective when used in the correct manner under the guidance of their respective research communities and one quickly becomes adept in their employment. It becomes easy to work with them without questioning how and why they work and what it is they can and cannot do. Heidegger called this 'ready to handedness', where an instrument is being used to do something and where paying attention to what it *is* can militate skilful employment. One does not want to be wondering about what a hammer is while hammering unless your thumb holds no value. But when an instrument breaks, or does not work, or loses its usefulness, one develops a 'present at hand' attitude where the bare facts of the instrument present itself for theorization. It is not the primary mode one wants to be in as a researcher, witness this paper engaged in reflections over these instruments rather than discussing the very interesting results that have been gained through their use. Papers by Bertram (2006) and Green and Naidoo (2006) show how these instruments work to a purpose, as do many others in the Bernsteinian and Bloomian research communities. But so long as the attitude of 'present at hand' does not dominate and cripple use but leads to more effective 'ready to handedness' of both instruments, then this paper will not have been a waste of time.

Postscript

One always has to be careful of seductive narratives that work orders of priority. In this paper Bernstein partly becomes the foil for Bloom, and this can result in it seeming that Bloom has answers to issues that Bernstein did not deal with in any depth. Although partly true, this is not necessarily a fault of Bernstein's, given the need for instruments to specialize. But the order of presentation could have been reversed in this paper, with Bloom's Taxonomy being presented first and Bernstein being presented as one who saw more deeply into the pedagogic medium the message was being transmitted through. This way of writing up the account would have found Bloom enfolded in an ever enlarging conceptual sets of pedagogic categories, starting with instructional discourse and expanding outwards and upwards until the whole pedagogic device had unravelled itself. To end this paper we would like to give some reasons why we chose to present the order the other way around. It has specifically to do with the lack of a sustained tradition of Instructional Design in South African Education Studies within the English Universities. We tended to divide Education Studies into Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy and History of Education, and as useful as such dimensions of

Education Studies were, there was a tendency to lose the internal language of pedagogy itself. It has specifically been Bernstein within Sociology of Education, Piaget and Vygotsky within Psychology of Education, and Dewey/Freire within Philosophy of Education who have provided the language needed to describe educational processes, but mostly ignored within this stellar use was the research tradition of Instructional Design. It is here that one finds a specific focus on the internal mechanisms of pedagogy in their own terms. By ignoring this tradition we have lost the ability to talk intelligently about the actual instructional processes of pedagogy itself, of what its basic variables are as worked out from within the history of our discipline.

But the point behind this lack is not to call for the wholesale reinstatement of Instructional Design. It is a limited tradition only now coming to terms with its own short-sightedness (Reigeluth, 1999), but what it offers is an extended elaboration of the interior world of the smallest of Bernstein's nested Chinese boxes – Instructional Discourse, and that is, after all, why we spend so much time unpacking the bigger boxes in the first place.

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Extending boundaries: young people as action researchers

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Abstract

Action research is generally undertaken by adults as a process of systematic action planning and enquiry which can lead to improvements in aspects of their professional practices. This article challenges and extends conventional understanding of action research to show how young people, between the ages of 10 and 17, can interrogate and improve their own practices – both individually and collectively. Brief accounts of four case studies – three British and one South African – are presented, along the lines of a patchwork narrative. Each 'patch' in turn contributes to the later collation of a theme and ideas that 'stitch' the studies together.

Introduction

Action research, as most of us know it, is practised by adults – academics, researchers and professional practitioners. It generally involves a process of systematic action planning and enquiry which can lead to improvements in aspects of professional practice (see, for example, McNiff and Whitehead, 2005 and 2006). This article, however, explores innovative ways in which children and young people have begun to engage in various forms of action research. These include reflections on practice by individuals and as members of a team.

A patchwork approach (Winter, 2003) is adopted to draw together a range of experiences and ideas from four different research activities and contexts. Towards the end of the case study narratives, emerging issues relating to action research and young people are identified and discussed. It is hoped that readers will add to the patchwork by responding to and debating the issue of involving youngsters as researchers.

The first account describes how a group of Young Researchers, supported by York St John University in England, have developed understanding and skills

for the changing world, as well as creative problem-solving, questioning and analysis. The second describes how learners at a primary school in London researched and analysed the impact of their work in improving the mathematical learning of even younger pupils. The third account, from Liverpool, England describes how young learners became collaborative partners in teaching assistants' action research. The final account, from Port Elizabeth, South Africa, describes how children were able to reflect formatively on their individual and team efforts in delivering community education. From these separate case studies (or patches), we move towards a collective understanding (patchwork) of the phenomenon of young people doing research.

Although each of the research facilitators (Margaret, David, Christine and Bill) has had different research experiences and has adopted rather different styles of narrating, we share a common value. It is that of respecting the voice of the young and of recognising their creative and perceptive potential to shape and enhance learning. At the same time, we also recognise the challenges, difficulties and tensions that accompany attempts to engage young people in research.

Breaking new ground

This article 'breaks new ground' in three significant ways relating to (1) research methodology and *reporting*, (2) research *content* and (3) its assumptions and *assertions*. Through employing the (cross-hemisphere) patchwork narrative approach described above, it departs from the conventional/customary format of academic *reporting* in which a writer presents sequentially the aims, research problems or hypotheses, data-gathering instruments, findings, research results and recommendations. Its 'pioneering' *content* explores ways in which young, school-going children have conducted action research. Furthermore, it *claims* that first-person action research can be applied by young learners – and not limited to adult practitioners.

Discovering our shared concern

Having met at a conference in London in 2006, we four contributors discovered that we shared a common interest in encouraging young people's

voices to be heard. We each had different ideas and experiences to pool and soon the idea was born of combining these to form different threads in a patchwork narrative through which we would build up a picture of some of the different manifestations of this common interest. We all shared a commitment to practitioner enquiry within professional development.

Reflective practice is the cornerstone of practitioner enquiry and what is compiled here are summaries and reflections on our experiences of research, which puts young people at the centre. In a key respect, we are 'crossing boundaries' by challenging what have been normative practices in research into childhood done by adults who inevitably filter young people's experiences and views through the lens of adult experience. We argue that, if we are committed to improving experience for young people in their learning and in other aspects of their lives, then it is important that we listen to their perspectives.

Our approach is rooted in valuing young people's views and issues as young citizens and a desire to learn from their insights as we seek to improve and develop practice. We claim that learners' voices represent something of a challenge to the hegemonic structures and relationships, which assume an epistemological position that can be summarised simply as 'adults know best'.

The manner in which we have compiled and are presenting our findings also goes beyond customary policies and practices in academic reporting. The structure of the article is guided by Winter's (2003) notion of a patchwork text since it includes a series of short sections, each representing a complete account that contributes to a later collation of themes and ideas that 'stitch' them together. The collating of these different accounts, the analysis and the raising of questions allows common themes to emerge and highlights differences. Although Winter (2003) focuses on the use of a patchwork text in this way as a means for students to present course work, his earlier work with others (Winter, Buck and Sobiechowska, 1999) focuses on the creative, imaginative elements, with stories and imaginative writing supporting reflective writing. For us, it is a useful way to draw together a range of ideas from different people in order to create an article for further discussion.

Patch 1: Young people as researchers

In this case study, Margaret describes the initiative and the nature of her involvement:

The plan to develop Young Researchers at York St John University was inspired by the work of Mary Kellett (2005) and the Children's Research Centre based at the Open University. The Young Researchers training enabled young people to develop knowledge of the research process and the skills and capabilities to plan, design and carry out their own small-scale research projects. Some of these were team projects, others conducted in pairs or individually.

The initiative was developed with young people from ten to seventeen years of age, in two principal ways: a Young Researchers training programme, offered through the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY), held at York St John University over six Saturday morning sessions; and research training sessions with teachers in other primary and secondary schools so that they in turn can train their young researchers and so take this work forward. The development of this work in schools has been supported with inputs and guidance at key moments as the young researchers' work has progressed. These have been at points, for example, where help is needed with framing the research questions, analysing data, writing up and presenting findings.

There are different possible models of engagement. For example, Young Researchers' work can form part of a curricular or cross-curricular topic, or it may be offered as an extra-curricular after school 'club'. There have been two dissemination events at the University where the Young Researchers have given PowerPoint presentations of their research to invited adult audiences of University staff, parents, Local Authority partners and teachers.

The second of these was a University Research Conference at which some of the MA students on the practitioner enquiry-based MA in Educational Improvement, Development and Change also presented their research, sharing the same platform as the Young Researchers and the invited keynote speaker. This modelled good practice in terms of schools as learning organisations for, on the same conference programme were teachers presenting their classroom-based, small-scale practitioner enquiries and also young people presenting their research studies.

Margaret explains key achievements and the importance of the initiative:

The learning for the young people has been powerful and we have learnt a great deal ourselves too. The young people have clearly gained in confidence and presented their research to adult audiences with skill and expert ability. As their conference presentations and research reports have demonstrated, they began to use the language and vocabulary of the researcher and this has been underpinned by a knowledge and understanding of the concepts behind the words. They have offered explanations of, and justifications for, their methods of data collection and have learnt the importance of aligning a well-framed research question to their data collection methods. They have learnt how to make sense of data and to make sure conclusions reached are supported by the data. More generally, they have learnt the importance of being well-organised, systematic and methodical in planning their projects and collecting, analysing and interpreting the data. We have been impressed by the disciplined effort and commitment of our Young Researchers. Comments from the conference audience showed that the Young Researchers work had impressed them too.

The Young Researchers work exemplifies the values-driven approach discussed above. These values are centred on a belief in the importance of listening to what young people have to say through their own empirical studies into matters and issues that are significant to them. The work has made an important contribution to learning as the young people have been enabled to research issues (see examples below) through a rigorous process of enquiry. Our motivations and concerns have stemmed from our commitment to student voice. As far as possible, the aim has been to help the students' voices be heard, not through engaging young people in research designed by adults, but through the students speaking for themselves.

The contribution to young people's learning through the Young Researchers training has been impressive. What have these learning gains been? They have developed interpersonal skills as they have worked collaboratively with other young researchers in designing their projects and critiquing one another's ideas. They have learnt a great deal about asking questions. Their projects began from their carefully framed research questions and they learnt about how to ask meaningful questions of their respondents which were not value-laden, biased, assumptive or leading. They have learnt to make sense of the data they have collected and to report what they have found out. They have had an opportunity to develop creative project work, to develop their ICT skills as they presented their data for example in pie charts, spreadsheets, graphs and bar charts. They have applied critical thinking and problem-solving

skills in their investigations. A key point to note is that they have experienced enjoyment from this learning. Student evaluations have identified learning benefits, including:

> . . . to think independently; to criticise my own and others' work; to gain 'valuable skills'. It has made me 'think about research techniques and taught me a lot more about the implications of research'; 'taught me to better manage my time. . .' and developed the skills of 'collecting and analysing data'.

Some of the research projects undertaken by the group of secondary phase young researchers have included:

- School Dinners: a small scale investigation;
- What are the views of 10–12 year olds on local facilities?
- How instrumentalists relate to their instruments;
- Why Young People attend NAGTY Outreach courses and the benefits;
- What are pupils' opinions about the sport offered in school?
- What considerations are taken into account when devising a secondary school menu?
- Is peer pressure different for boys and girls?
- Is there a link between church attendance and age or church attendance and gender?

Finally, Margaret reflects on the experiences thus far:

The Young People as Researchers work is still at an early stage and whilst we have learnt a great deal from our experiences so far, we are also committed to developing our work further. In terms of embedding the knowledge and skills in schools so that this can be sustained in the longer term, we hope that we can work with teachers to give them the confidence and expertise to continue this work and that the young people themselves can become expert 'research consultants' who train other young people to become young researchers.

Some important points have emerged from our reflections on our experiences of working with Young Researchers. Firstly, we have become convinced of the value and benefits of this work for young people's learning. One example would be the opportunities we built into the programme for them to critique aspects of one another's research design through which they learnt to ask questions of one another's thinking, to give feedback, to suggest alternatives and to problem-solve together. We believe from their presentations and reports that this process helped them to become more self-critical and questioning and

able to identify both strengths and weaknesses in many aspects of their own research design. Many valuable and transferable skills have been learnt through this.

We have also reflected on the tremendous energy, 'buzz' and exhilaration that this work generated. The students have engaged well, have been committed to the work and 'on task', and they have had fun. How has this been achieved? The active methodology, the pace of learning, the high levels of 'ownership' of projects they design and carry out themselves may all have contributed to this. Their research has been affirmed through presentations to peers and adults who have been eager to listen and learn.

Throughout our work we have been inspired and sustained by the work of Mary Kellett (2005) and the Children's Research Centre based at the Open University. We have drawn on this work, learnt from it and applied the thinking to the development of our own Young Researchers work. The Children's Research Centre website can be accessed at http://childrens-research-centre.open.ac.uk/

We have reflected on the potential of this work to re-engage some of those who may be disengaged from schooling and so perhaps to contribute in some way to educational inclusion. A possibility for future development, which we have explored briefly with one secondary school, is to make this work accessible and attractive to students who are difficult to engage and motivate and who may benefit from having a constructive outlet for their views and perceptions which would also provide an important learning experience for them. This is a possible future direction for our Young Researchers work and perhaps the next challenge and development.

Patch 2: Young Londoners (10-12yrs) research improving mathematical learning of younger pupils

David introduces the primary school mathematical project, and how he came to be involved:

My school became involved in a Mathematics and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Primary Network with five other schools in the London Borough of Hounslow. The focus of the network was to explore the potential of ICT and the Interactive Whiteboards in order to enhance the teaching and the learning of Mathematics. An interactive whiteboard is touch-

sensitive and allows teachers and children to participate interactively and collaboratively in activities which are projected onto it from a data projector connected to a computer.

The network was funded by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) in England for a period of twelve months. The group from our school that attended the network meetings comprised the principal, ICT co-ordinator and a teacher researcher. In addition to sharing good teaching practice, each school had to investigate ways of improving the teaching of aspects of a subject. Four of the five schools were interested in improving under-achievement in mathematics by using the gifted and talented pupils to assist the underachievers in their learning. Each school used different year groups depending on their own area of improvement.

The funding they received allowed the network group to resource their borough's Gifted and Talented (GT) advisor, a consultant who supports schools with the teaching and learning of gifted and talented pupils, and whose role is to help and support the chosen 'Gifted and Talented' pupils in coaching and mentoring Year 1 pupils. The pupils in our school were selected based on the results of Standard Assessment Tests (SATs), a compulsory government test at age 7, and also on the teacher's end of year assessments. In addition, the advisor's role was to develop pupil researchers to examine whether this project has benefited the learning and enjoyment of the year 1 pupils in mathematics.

I entered the school as a student in the final year of my initial teacher training programme to carry out research in the area of mathematics. I was offered part-time work teaching in the school and soon became aware of this school initiative. As I was interested in carrying out my MA research in the school, it was decided after discussions that I should evaluate the project and investigate ways to improve it in the following year. Currently, therefore, I am a newly qualified teacher (NQT) at the school and part of the team planning the next stage of development for the project.

The school identified a history of underachievement in Year 1 mathematics over a five year period. From the baseline results at the end of Reception, we identified twelve children in Year 1 who needed extra support. A corresponding number of GT children from Years 4/5 were identified using criteria mentioned above to support the Year 1 pupils. A lunchtime club was set up in the school each Wednesday in the ICT suite. The Year 1s and their

'buddies' played mathematical games on the computers. The term 'buddy' used here refers to the GT pupils who support the Year 1s.

Our buddy system allowed underachieving Year 1 pupils to have one-to-one support from the GT pupils. This meant that when problems or misconceptions were encountered, the Year 1 pupils were able to work through these together with their buddy. The GT pupils were supported by the GT advisor on how best to support the Year 1s and how to keep a diary of their involvement with them. The sessions were supervised by a member of staff at all times. Three of the GT pupils were selected to carry out action research to evaluate the learning and enjoyment of the Year 1 pupils. These pupils were referred to as ASPs (Advanced Skills Pupils). Along with pupils from the other schools involved in the network, they were taught how to carry out research by the GT advisor and were supported by the individual school members.

David reflects on the outcomes and lessons learnt:

The research conducted by the ASPs demonstrated that the Year 1 pupils really enjoyed working with their buddies and it showed that not only did they enjoy mathematics, but some even rated it more highly than Physical Education (PE). My evaluation confirmed that pupils have clearly improved in their mathematical development over the past twelve months. There is evidence that the ASPs have "developed creativity, critical thinking and analytical capability" (Kellett, 2005, p.1). They devised a research tool, a questionnaire, piloted it and were able to collect and analyse the data from it. They used Microsoft Excel to record and present their results. They then created a PowerPoint presentation where they disseminated their findings to other schools in the network and others in the borough.

What has been learnt? For me, this has been an illuminating experience. It has been a pleasure to see the enjoyment that all pupils involved have gained from this experience. They have come away from this with a new appreciation of what happens in teaching and learning. The initiative has grown into a fruitful venture and has sparked interest with other colleagues at the school. Furthermore it is in keeping with current UK education policy:

> The 2002 Education Act requires schools to consult with pupils, whilst OfSTED [the Office for Standards in Education] expects inspectors to report on how far a school "seeks, values and acts on pupils' views" (Fielding and Bragg, 2003, p.5).

Similarly, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) urges teachers to:

> recognise children and young people as major stakeholders in society with important contributions to make to the design and delivery of services they receive, including education (Department for Education and Skills, 2004, p.3).

Looking ahead, the next step is to evaluate the process and to develop it into a sustainable project that grows into the culture of our school. By doing this we hope to give expression to Senge's (1990) idea of the 'learning organisation' where schools can identify their own issues and priorities and so become self-evaluating and self-directing.

Patch 3 from Liverpool: young learners (3-16yrs) as collaborative action researchers

Christine sets the scene for inquiring into practice:

Teaching assistants who support children and young people in educational settings undertook action research to improve their practice. I encouraged them to involve the young people in their care as full collaborative partners in their action research, with a specific focus on identifying aspects for professional development and changing their practice. The students expressed concern at focusing on their own practice and in particular, involving their learners in making comment about their performance. We used Somekh's (2006) methodological principles to guide our ethical consideration of the young peoples' roles. The balance between giving children a voice through active participation and that of facilitating the process is complex (Nieuwenhuys, 2004) and such participation might alter future adult-child relationships in unpredictable ways. However, the students' reported positive effects of involving learners, such as improved relationships and behaviour management. The children generally appeared to value the opportunity to offer insights and in one case, the teaching assistant found that the students had perceptive understanding of classroom adult relationships of which she was previously unaware.

Another concern raised by students was the notion of subjectivity. Action research methodologies are often social activities, conducted in a subjective social context. The students and I debated the benefits of using the children's personal thoughts about a teaching assistant's practice. A benefit is that the learners' thoughts, feelings, beliefs and values, inform practice. We acknowledged that much courage is required for an adult to encourage such openness since learners might present a picture of the adult's behaviour that the adult did not expect. It could be an emotional experience.

Christine's learners participate in research for professional improvement:

Ethically, if learners are part of collaborative action research methodology then they should be full consenting participants. They should understand why the research is taking place and understand their part in it (Alderson, 2004; Somekh, 2006). Their parents should give permission and everyone involved in the setting should understand the purpose of the inquiry e.g. to improve behaviour management skills. The learners' voices are important. By seeking their opinions, ideas, understandings and perceptions, we can reflect on our practice more effectively than we can alone or with other adults in the situation. Learners' perspectives provide options that we might never consider. Cathy's story (below) illustrates this when the children's comments inform her change of practice. She valued knowing their side of the 'truth', and seeing the learning interaction from their perspective. Names are fictionalised to protect participants' identities and relevant permissions have been sought to use this material for educational research reporting.

Cathy's story:

> I worked with five boys, aged three, to explore the way I respond to their learning preferences. I identified that the all female staff often curtailed boys' learning activity by setting boundaries on how, where and what they might play. The boys knew the purpose of the research and engaged in taking photographs of things they like and dislike in the nursery as they undertook individual photographic 'tours of action'. I followed Roberts-Holmes' (2005) notion that children are experts in their own world. The children set their own agenda and decided what to photograph. They sought permission from others as they walked around. I made notes in my reflective diary and found that the boys expressed contradictory opinions on their preferences. For example, they took pictures of each other playing in the sand and water room, which they all previously said they did not like, but now made positive comments about it. Peer pressure to enjoy particular male-orientated toys might be one reason for the initial expressions of dislike. Over the two weeks, I recognised the need to take time in observing the boys play before intervening and recognised that I held stereotypical views of boys' preferences and of the boundaries that should be set.

Through the 'tour of action', Cathy learned that her behaviour had to change if she was to meet these boys' needs more effectively. Without their active participation, she might never have reached this understanding of her practice.

However, Christine warns of challenges for practitioners when involving learners:

One might question the extent to which the boys in Cathy's research really understood the purpose. I doubt they viewed themselves as 'researchers' but perhaps enjoyed having an opportunity to express their preferences. Using such a method the learners might produce materials that they think the adult

wants to see. In addition, the adult might re-interpret the situation represented by the photos and the observations, a danger in any research that relies on collection of primary qualitative data. Langston, Abbott, Lewis and Kellett (2004) emphasise the need for developing appropriate research methodologies when working with young children but acknowledge that there are no easy solutions to ensuring we give young learners a voice.

Despite the various ethical and methodological challenges we face in involving children and giving them voice, I remain firmly committed to securing their involvement and encouraging practitioners to learn from what their learners have to say, while continuing to address the challenges.

Patch 4: South African youngsters (12-13yrs) improve their school's community service

This account focuses on a group of young learners at a primary school in Port Elizabeth, in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. Each week the group of about fifteen children met voluntarily to plan and participate in various community outreach activities. This case study recounts how, through engaging in action planning and critical self-reflection, the young learners were able to improve the quality of their individual contributions as well the effectiveness of their whole team's approach to community outreach.

Bill explains the initiative and the nature of his involvement:

During the year, the community service group (c.s. group) undertook a range of activities under the supervision and guidance of two Foundation Phase (Year 2) teachers. Weekly school-based meetings were alternated with weekly site visits to places of need. In this way, the children were able to make/cook/collect or prepare things at school on one afternoon each week, The following week, these home-made 'gifts' would be taken to less fortunate children (sick, vulnerable, abused or orphaned) or to frail, neglected or lonely elderly people living in institutions. The teachers-in-charge believed that the young learners benefited from interacting with less fortunate members of society, including the unemployed, poor and the dying. Furthermore, the children learnt, and put to good use, daily practical skills.

Our case study examines the c.s. group addressing the issue of *animal abuse*, particularly in communities where *human abuse* is often experienced. The probability of a close correlation between human and animal abuse had been

brought to the attention of the group by a visiting speaker, who had referred to various research studies such as Ascione, 1998; Bell, 2001; and Mertz-Perez, Heide and Silverman, 2001. The c.s. group took responsibility for 'researching' the issue of animal care and abuse and to prepare short talks, supported by posters with photographs. These talks were to be recorded for showing in some local institutions where there was a strong likelihood that children had themselves experienced or witnessed abuse. It was at this point that I was requested to make a video-recording of their prepared presentations, with a view to screening this during the fortnightly site visits to places of Shelter. The title given to their combined presentations was 'Dare to Care'.

He reflects on the event as follows:

The video-recording of 12 researched talks demonstrated that the children had taken much trouble over collecting material. However, I had concerns about the quality of their individual performances and reservations about the general approach of the group. I also felt uncomfortable that my filming of the talks was proving to be traumatic for the children – an impression that was confirmed in subsequent feedback.

Improving individual practice as presenters:

The young learners' indicated orally (and later in writing) strong negative reactions to this first-ever experience of being filmed making a presentation. The following week, the group visited the S.O.S. Children's Village to learn about life there, and to present the 'Dare to Care' video-recording. After seeing themselves in the recorded presentations, the young learners expressed highly critical self-evaluations of their individual performances. It was decided that, before the next scheduled visits to an institution for abused and neglected children, time would be spent improving their presentations through re-filming.

At the next school-based meeting, the children considered what makes for effective communication, then re-viewed and evaluated the video-recordings, concentrating on the positive aspects of individual performances. This had to be handled sensitively as the need to establish trust and respect amongst critical friends is crucial when working collaboratively (Koshy, 2005). Thereafter, each small team of presenters re-recorded their individual performances in front of the posters. The learners were generally more relaxed and positive in this recording session and, when the time came for viewing and evaluating the presentations made during subsequent visits, the self-

evaluations proved to be more balanced, appropriate and insightful. In the opinion of both teachers and an accompanying visiting student, an overall marked improvement in communication was noted. This was attributed more to the reflective process of self- and peer-evaluation than to the passage of time and growth in individual confidence.

Evidence for making such judgements was triangulated from a variety of sources (McNiff and Whitehead, 2005). It included ratings and comments recorded in writing by the teachers who monitored the first and second performances of the presenting children. More detailed evidence was obtained later when juxtaposed videotaped recordings of individual children were evaluated and compared by two 'outside observers'. This experience helped me realise why the use of video recordings for such evaluative purposes is increasingly popular amongst professional practitioners (Koshy, 2005) and that it can readily be employed by young children with a view to improving their own practices.

And what of the overall approach adopted by the team? To what extent was this also influenced by the action research and participation of the young learners?

Improving the team's approach:

Clearly there was some dissatisfaction amongst the young learners and me regarding the effectiveness of the site visits. One-way 'delivery' of community service was neither educationally healthy nor mutually beneficial. In the course of the group's critical self-reflection, the need to have enjoyable, two-way interaction with the various 'beneficiaries' was identified and emphasised. However, it was acknowledged that time constraints during the afternoon visits generally prevented this kind of interaction.

In the review and reflection process, and inspired by recent reading of McNiff and Whitehead (2006), I posed the question 'How can we improve our approach as a team?' This question served to "involve the learners in the research process as full participants" (Moustakim, 2007, p.218). It elicited a range of creative ideas and innovative approaches that were debated and agreed upon by the group as a whole. As such, it proved to be a fruitful exercise in which the adult educator's concerns connected with the learners' efforts in interrogating and improving practice.

It was decided jointly that a modified approach would be adopted during

future site visits. For example, immediately after the one-way video-presentation, the young learners would go outside with small groups of children and rehearse singing a specially-composed Animal Rap, which contained the essential messages of the presentation. Immediately thereafter, the children from the Homes would perform the Rap for the c.s. group – which would be filmed and played back for viewing!

This was carried out during subsequent site visits, resulting in enjoyment and laughter, as well as enhanced interaction with the children from the various Homes and Shelters. The c.s. group recorded more positive reflections on their experiences, and the adult educators agreed there had been improved learning, particularly in that the key messages had been heard with enjoyment numerous times – and would probably live on in the rap-song that took on a life of its own in the children's homes.

Bill reflects on the significance of the work:

In a modest way, and within limited contact time, we saw the potential of young learners to become action researchers. Arising out of their initial unsatisfactory experiences as 'presenters', the young learners were motivated to discover what makes for effective communication – and then applied these new insights in improving their own 'practice'. Through facilitated self- and peer-evaluation of the video-recordings, the young learners quickly identified communication strategies that made their re-recordings more effective and enjoyable.

Prompted by an initial adult probing question (How can we improve our site visits?) the young learners became central in adjusting the way subsequent institutional visits were conducted. The resultant enhanced interaction with children at the centres, and the consolidation of key messages through children learning the Animal Rap, were indicators that the quality of community service had indeed benefited from the active participation of the young learners.

From patches to patchwork

The four case studies described in this article have demonstrated a variety of ways in which groups of young learners, in the UK and South Africa, have engaged in research. Each patch above has emphasised a different aspect of action research:

- Children researching their own interests (Margaret's Patch 1);
- Children reflecting on and evaluating their performance in supporting younger learners (David's Patch 2);
- Children as collaborators in teaching assistants' action research projects. (Christine's Patch 3);
- Children becoming action researchers to improve their performance (Bill's Patch 4)

The motivation for the involvement of young people in research has traditionally tended to emanate from adults with a common belief in listening to what young people have to say and in equipping young people with the broad range of skills needed in society. However, in framing the research questions there are clear differences, with some young researchers encouraged to follow their own interests after being equipped with the necessary research skills while others are collaborators with an adult taking the greater responsibility for the project. In both approaches young learners have an opportunity to express their thoughts but we might question which extreme is better, complete self-motivated inquiry or adult-led collaboration. In which situation do we hear their voices more effectively and for what purpose? Jones (2004) suggests that in all situations where young people become involved in research, they are subordinate in some way to the adults who guide them and questions whether democratisation is possible. He suggests that adults must reflect on their behaviour, values and role before involving children and as the research unfolds. We agree that we must reflect on the best interests of the young people in order to avoid exploitation or coercion.

Those involved should recognise that there are 'real' and 'perceived' boundaries within which people are operating. For example, the researching children may perceive their role as being 'real work taking place in a positive environment'. Jones (2004) warns that children can become over-involved in the research and in their particular way of viewing it – just as adults can do – and this can prevent them from separating out the issues. Jones appears to favour an approach in which the children are involved in all aspects of the research from design through to dissemination – and this is where our **Patches 1 and 2** fit together. Both the Young Researchers in York and at the London primary school engaged in all stages of the research process. The experience of working with the Young Researchers in York (**Patch 1**) has demonstrated the potentially significant contribution that can be made to student learning. This learning is transferable across the curriculum and is valuable too as

learning for adulthood. For example, Abbott (1994, p.25) has argued that education for the changing world of the future needs to develop learner confidence and a capacity to think for oneself:

> To be able to write and do sums; to turn up on time; to do as one is told; and to accept that someone else is planning the process and one's own part within it, may have been an adequate definition of education for a manufacturing economy, but it no longer holds as a basis for a changing economy. It certainly gives individuals no confidence. . .
>
> It is those individuals and societies who have 'learnt to think things out for themselves', and who are able to perceive new patterns of emerging connections and whose thinking is not tied to a previous narrow perspective, who can feel most positive about the future. Such people 'think about thinking'; they are reflective and critical of what they see around them, which others merely take for granted. Simply, they are questioning people.

In becoming researchers, young people are often empowered to become more self-critical. They learn to ask questions of their own work with a view to strengthening and improving it and not being satisfied with their first ideas or attempts.

Kellett (2005, p.2) suggests that:

> Learning is about acquiring, understanding and applying knowledge but it is also about using those skills to create knowledge. Pupils rarely get an opportunity to *create* their own original knowledge in schools.

She points out that through the research process, young people become the creators of original knowledge. The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE) (1999) has suggested that features of the creative endeavour are *action* and *purpose.* By way of demonstration, our Young Researchers have been actively involved in the purposeful design of their research projects which have been the means by which they have 'created their own original knowledge'.

The London primary school in **Patch 2** successfully introduced three pupils to action research techniques. The pupils have used these skills to evaluate the quality of the educational programme they were providing for underachieving Year 1 pupils in mathematics. The three ASPs found that what they had provided did help to improve the enjoyment and learning of the pupils involved. Furthermore, their investigation begged further questions of them about the ways in which this programme could be improved. This has opened their eyes to teaching, learning and action research. Likewise our own eyes have been opened to their individual ways of thinking on the praxis of action-reflection-action. It is the hope within the school to create a snowball effect

that will develop each year as the number of pupils involved in this and other projects increases.

What do we learn from the two other case studies: **Patches 3 and 4**? The former described how teaching assistants sought to improve their professional practice through involving learners as active explorers of that practice; the latter examined how young presenters, unhappy with their own performances as individuals and a team, worked with the guidance of an adult to improve their performance.

In **Patch 3**, the teaching assistants tried to actively involve learners as collaborators in exploring and improving their own professional practice. What issues arise? In the reported case, the learners had not chosen the focus, but were drawn into it by the adult sharing her identified focus. Perhaps we should build opportunity for learners to help us identify areas for professional development? This might lead to adults feeling vulnerable particularly when they are used to being in a position of authority and power. It might challenge the whole ethos of the setting in which the research takes place and a teaching assistant is not often in the position of being able to do this without some form of redress. In addition, the learners were minimally involved in exploring all the data and reflecting on possible solutions. None was involved in dissemination, except that some teaching assistants did check with the learners that their interpretations were as the learners viewed situations and they shared a modified version of their final report orally or written at the learners' level. Further work remains to support democratising of the process.

In **Patch 4**, the young South African learners played an important part in developing their own presentations and enhancing peer learning. Furthermore, the group community service activities in which they were collectively engaged were modified and improved through the young people evaluating their own practices. Adults had a role to play but essentially the improvement strategies came from the young people themselves, through review and reflection on their teamwork and outcomes.

Further challenges remain in establishing how effectively, if at all, schools can introduce children to action research, without the catalytic presence of an outsider. Moreover, how realistic is it to expect teachers and learners to engage in action planning and enquiry in the face of mounting curriculum and continuous assessment demands? Certainly, appropriate training, material and moral support needs to be provided by relevant bodies and personnel if there are ever to be sustained action research initiatives.

Conclusion

Insights from the above case studies have encouraged us to explore further ways of engaging young learners in various forms of action research. In sharing our experiences through a patchwork narrative we have become increasingly convinced of the considerable potential for learning gains. All four studies went beyond the boundaries of many action research projects by involving and supporting groups of young learners through the required processes.

On the other hand, and at the same time, the studies have alerted us to fundamental tensions inherent in conducting work of this nature. For example, there is clearly a tension between giving the pupils autonomy while at the same time supporting them and arguably improving the outcomes. There is also a temptation for adults to take control of a project, to direct and be in charge. However, we agree that ways should be found to ensure that the drive to research should as far as possible emanate from the 'youthful' end of the continuum. Children and young people should be given as much control as possible – depending on age and maturity of course. By so doing the discourse and activities become empowering and provide opportunities for development that is truly learner-centred.

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Unbinding the other in the context of HIV/AIDS and education

Peter Rule and Vaughn John

Abstract

Theorists in fields such as philosophy, psychology, sociology and education provide both positive and negative conceptions of 'the other'. In relation to the social pathology of HIV/AIDS, 'the other' and 'othering' are themes that have particular pertinence. Data from an education research project in the Richmond area of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, provide evidence that the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS manifests itself in a radical 'othering' of those infected or otherwise directly affected by the disease, and that this is acutely perceived and reflected by children. Silence, secrecy, denial and distancing are strategies that people use to avoid HIV/AIDS stigmatization. One consequence is that discourses of communal trust and solidarity are undermined. However, a positive and inclusive conception of the other is evident in the discursive practices of HIV/AIDS support groups, and this opens up possibilities for a pedagogy of trust and connectedness that transgresses the stark boundary of 'us' and 'them' in the struggle against the disease and its associated stigma. A holistic approach to HIV/AIDS education acknowledges the complex ways in which the disease articulates with other barriers to learning in 'othering' those infected and affected; and affirms the key role that people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS have to play in educating their communities, thus rehabilitating 'the other'.

Introduction

HIV/AIDS is the quintessential 'other' and this otherness is manifest at a variety of levels. At a biological level the virus disguises itself as a retrovirus and infects the body through its own defences. At a sociological level, it was initially associated with 'the other' in the form of homosexual men and drug users, and later more generally with marginalized groups such as sex workers, migrant workers and the poor. In Africa, AIDS is often associated with the otherness of bewitchment. Politically, AIDS is the other in relation to South Africa's fledgling democracy, threatening to roll back the socio-political and economic gains of the post-apartheid era by sapping government resources and destabilizing social structures. Drawing on data from a research project in the Richmond area of KwaZulu-Natal, which studied HIV/AIDS as a barrier to basic education (Muthukrishna, 2006; John and Rule, 2006), this article explores HIV/AIDS in relation to 'the other' and the processes of 'othering'. It

identifies both positive and negative conceptions of 'the other' in the data and outlines the possibilities for a pedagogy of trust and connectedness in response to HIV/AIDS.

In reviewing studies of HIV/AIDS, Baxen and Breidlid (2004, p.9) have noted that "trends in research over the last ten years neglect the situated context in which messages, knowledge, experience and practice are produced, reproduced and expressed". As a response to this hiatus, this paper explores the concepts of 'the other' and 'othering' in the discourse of groups involved in education (learners, teachers, parents, caregivers, school governors, and other respondents) in Richmond. We believe that the conception of social others and the process of 'othering' by people in Richmond reveal important aspects of the situated context in which knowledge about HIV and AIDS is constructed and exchanged. We further believe that intervention strategies aimed at addressing barriers to learning in Richmond and elsewhere would be served by an understanding of various 'othering' processes taking place in the context of HIV and AIDS. Hoosen and Collins (2004, p.487) note that "Behaviour cannot simply be changed by providing information, since human behaviour is not independent of culture and social history, and is contextualized within social relations." We argue that 'othering' offers an important perspective on social relations in the context of HIV and AIDS. In the next section, we examine various conceptions of 'the other' and 'othering' by way of providing a conceptual framework for the paper.

Conceptions of the other

One sense of the word 'other' is that of difference or distinctness: *the hill is always greener on the other side*. Another sense is that of an addition: *he and one other person.* A related sense is that of complementarity, as in the second of a set of two: *on the other hand*; *my other half*. The verb 'othering' picks up on the sense of difference and takes it further to mean a process of making alien, of separating and denigrating in some way.

Following from these distinctions, 'the other' is constructed in positive and negative ways by various theorists. On the one hand, 'the other' has derogatory connotations that add to the word's sense of *difference* notions of *strangeness* and *threat*. Western modernity, and its associated processes of colonization and exploitation, figured an 'other' that was the opposite of the

rational, civilized, hegemonic white male. Jervis (1999, p.1) argues that these 'others', associated with

> the carnivalesque, the 'primitive', madness, nature, sexuality, aspects of the feminine – are shown to hold a powerful fascination for the modern imagination, and to provide powerful resources for transgression, conflict and nostalgia.

This conception of 'the other' is shaped by a series of binary oppositions: modernity/tradition; civilization/savagery; us/them; centre/margin; humanity/barbarity; progress/degeneration; advanced/backward (Hinton, 2002). As a noun used in these contexts, 'the other' thus carries connotations of both difference and threat, and is viewed (Jervis, 1999, p.1) as "a carrier of pollution, irrationality and danger". As an associated verb, 'othering' entails processes of differentiation, subordination and exclusion. The processes of 'othering' are related to the literature on alterity (Said, 1995), scapegoating (Kearney, 1999; Petersson, 2003), stigma (see Goffman's seminal contribution, 1968; Alonzo and Reynolds, 1995), mental illness (Maccallum, 2002) and discrimination in the provision of services (Johnson, Bottorff and Browne, 2004) – concepts used in post-colonial studies, sociology, psychology and health sciences – to capture the processes of social marking, distancing and disowning. In its most extreme form, 'othering' can result in the stigmatization, targeting and extermination of a particular social group, manifest in genocide (Hinton, 2002).

Conversely, the other has positive connotations associated with co-operation, mutuality and sharing. The African concept of ubuntu entails a notion of the other that is central to the development of the self: I am because of others – *umntu ngumntu ngabanye abantu* in isiXhosa; *umuntu ungumuntu ngabanye abantu* in isiZulu (see Devenish, 2005). This broad concept embraces values such as solidarity, communality and compassion, dignity, respect and personhood, and stands in tension with a Cartesian view of the atomized individual pursuing his or her own personal goals in isolation from community. While the notion of ubuntu arguably arises from a romanticized version of the African past and of the African village as a communal utopia, it informs and is informed by the ways that Africans survive in community by helping each other. It is manifest in structures such as *stokvels* (savings clubs), burial societies and women's groups, and in practices such as good neighbourliness, *ilima* (reciprocal farming assistance), taking in of orphans and support of bereaved families.

Along the same lines, the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1992) argues that the self and the other are mutually constitutive, and that the dynamic of 'the self as another' and 'another as self' can create what he terms 'solicitude' – attitudes and practices of empathy that build personal ethics and communal solidarity.

Positive conceptions of the other are also apparent in the adult education literature (Freire, 1970, 1998; Mezirow, 1991). In the context of HIV and AIDS, learning takes place through interaction with others, our identity is shaped by significant others and we build solidarity through interaction with people. These social processes highlight the importance of relationships, reflection and dialogue with people, concepts which are well-established in the literature on emancipatory and transformative learning (Freire, 1970; Mezirow, 1991). This literature establishes reflection, dialogue and solidarity as pedagogical relationships of trust and unity, which are fundamental to learning and change. Such learning could help to shatter silences, stigma and denial, conditions nurtured by 'othering', and contribute to the unbinding of the other.

Freire (1970, pp.114 and 136) provides extensive discussion on the role and importance of the collective (social others) for dialogue and reflection leading to conscientization, humanization and action.

> Unity and organization can enable them [the oppressed] to change their weakness into a transforming force with which they can re-create the world, making it more human.
>
> Cooperation, as a characteristic of dialogical action – which occurs only among Subjects – can only be achieved through communication.

Freire (1970, 1998) draws attention to the importance of the teacher-student relationship and proposes that teachers become teacher-students and students become student-teachers in the process of dialogue. We return to these notions in our recommendations below.

Transformative learning theory articulated by Jack Mezirow (1975, 1991) has benefited from over three decades of development and scholarship in adult education. No other theory in the field of adult education has been subjected to as much research and debate (Taylor, 2007). According to transformative learning theory, *meaning perspectives,* which constitute one's worldview constructed from a lifetime of prior experiences, frame how one interprets new experiences. When one's meaning perspective has been transformed, during a process involving reflection and dialogue, transformative learning is said to

have occurred. Mezirow saw transformative learning as a goal of adult education, allowing for the ongoing development and learning of adults and as a guide to future action. The theory of transformative learning discusses the role of others in establishing awareness that one's dilemma is shared and is a basis for rational discourse which can lead to a perspective transformation. Recent research (Taylor, 1997, 2007) has found relationships to be a central element in transformative learning. Taylor (1997, p.42), in his first extensive review of transformative learning, notes that,

> More studies referred to the significance of relationships in a perspective transformation than any other finding in the review. These findings. . . reveal a learning process that is dependent upon collaboration and creation of support, trust, and friendship with others. Transformative learning is not about promoting and striving for individual autonomy, but about building connections and community. It is through relationships that learners develop the necessary openness and confidence to deal with learning on an affective level, which is essential for managing the threatening and emotionally charged nature of a transformative learning experience.

A valuable contribution to the literature on transformative learning theory is found in a three-part longitudinal study of HIV-positive adults (Courtenay, Merriam and Reeves, 1998; Courtenay, Merriam, Reeves and Baumgartner, 2000; Baumgartner, 2002). The study explores meaning-making and perspective transformation in a group of HIV-positive adults over a four-year period. Its longitudinal design provided an opportunity to track the durability of perspective transformation and changes in meaning schemes over a period of living and learning with HIV/AIDS.

The initial phase of the study identified a perspective transformation amongst most participants that was characterized by an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution, a heightened sensitivity to life and people, and the desire to be of service to others. The second phase of the study confirmed the stability of the perspective transformation and identified the adoption of three meaning schemes related to participants revealing more future-oriented perspectives, taking more care of themselves and having integrated their HIV-positive status into their self-identities. The third phase of the study again confirmed the durability of the original perspective transformation and furthermore found that participants had acted on their meaning schemes. This phase of the study also highlighted the centrality of social interaction to the learning process and provided some evidence of personal transformations which had led to social transformations. When participants joined groups that fought for causes such as money for HIV/AIDS drugs, they acted on their new perspective of needing to be of service to others, and their collective actions helped others in the local HIV/AIDS community.

The socio-economic status of participants in this study was very different to that of participants in our study (discussed below). However, the study does point to a powerful set of life-affirming changes to identity and learning which can counter 'othering' and which also serves as a referent of hope. Later, we discuss evidence of some life-affirming changes with a group of HIV+ volunteers in our study.

HIV/AIDS and 'othering'

As a disease, HIV and AIDS has been the focus of 'othering' from its very early history. It should be recalled that the first name given to what is now known as HIV and AIDS, was GRID, Gay-related Immune Deficiency (Flowers, 2001). In this form of 'othering', mainstream sectors of society were able to attribute the disease to a small, marginal and stigmatized community. With the arrival of tests, a new form of 'othering' became possible, namely HIV-positive people could be separated from the larger part of society who considered themselves HIV-negative. In this regard, Flowers (2001, p.60) comments that "While the general population continued to 'other' gay men, within the gay community, for those who chose to test and tested positive, they themselves risked being 'othered'."

The literature on HIV-related stigma (Webb, 1997; Aggledon, 2000; UNICEF, 2001; Francis, 2004; Petros, Airhihenbuwa, Simbayi, Ramlagan and Brown, 2006) reveals that oppression of those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS happens at multiple levels: within the home and family; in the wider community; in institutions such as schools and clinics; in the media; and within those infected themselves as a form of internalized oppression. It takes a variety of forms including overt violence, isolation, discriminatory practices and labelling. Francis (2004, p.66) uses the term "HIVism" to refer to the "pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion that oppresses people who are living with HIV/AIDS". We argue that 'othering', as a strategy of identifying, differentiating, subordinating and discriminating against the HIV infected or affected 'other', is a cornerstone of HIVism.

A national study of 'othering' in relation to HIV/AIDS in South Africa (Petros *et al.*, 2006), used focus groups to explore the perceptions of the disease in all nine provinces. It found that a discourse of blame was prevalent around the disease. A variety of social groups, including women, homosexuals, foreigners and blacks, were identified as being infected and blamed for spreading the

disease. These strategies of blaming went hand-in-hand with strategies of 'othering' and distancing. Campbell (2003, p.192) argues that "this process of 'othering' often serves as a mechanism whereby groups distance themselves from taking any responsibility for seemingly overwhelming problems".

If HIV and AIDS is the quintessential 'other' then South Africa can be regarded as exemplary ground for 'othering'. In South Africa's recent history of Apartheid, racial 'othering' was legally enforced in forms such as territorial separation, job reservation and educational segregation. This history provides the backdrop to a different form of 'othering' where HIV/AIDS is not only the problem of deviant groups such as sex workers and promiscuous people, but in South Africa it has also been viewed as the problem of African people or poor people. The sample in the UKZN study did not allow for the latter race- and class-types of 'othering' to be explored but it does allow us to examine the 'othering' strategies of people in the broader Richmond area.

The Richmond project

The UKZN research project entitled 'Mapping HIV and AIDS as a barrier to basic education for children and adult learners in the Richmond District, KwaZulu-Natal', was carried out by staff and students from three university schools, namely, education, psychology and adult education. The research process was designed to include two phases of data collection spanning 2004 and 2005. The National Research Foundation (NRF) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal provided funding for both years (see also Van der Riet, Hough and Killian, 2005; Muthukrishna, 2006).

Over both phases the project entailed working in the areas of Indaleni, Patheni, Richmond village, Magoda, Esimozomeni, and Inhlazuka, an even split between rural and urban areas of the Richmond Municipality. In terms of institutions across these areas, the project targeted three high schools, five primary schools, two adult centres (offering Adult Basic Education), a School for the Deaf and two Early Childhood Development centres. Through community meetings, focus group discussions and interviews, the research drew on the views of school and adult learners, educators, school governing bodies, caregivers and parents, NGOs working in district, health officials, People Living with Aids, HIV/AIDS support groups and volunteers, youth who had dropped out of school and interested community members.

With regard to methodology (see Muthukrishna, 2006), the project positioned itself strongly within a qualitative approach with a clear preference for participatory methods of data collection. In addition to focus group discussions and interviews, a range of context relevant, participatory techniques were developed and used, including various ranking exercises, a vulnerability matrix, social mapping, photo-voice and transect walks. Participants in the study were selected largely through purposive sampling. Following due protocols for research at UKZN, participation was voluntary and informed consent was gained from all participants or from their parents in the case of minors. The study began with meetings with the various communities involved in the study to explain the purpose, build relationships with stakeholders and invite participation. The study concluded with a series of feedback meetings in these communities. Although not part of the initial plans, the study formed the basis for fundraising for a development intervention in the Richmond which is currently being planned.

The massive amount of data generated by the research project was managed using the qualitative software NVivo. Regarding the analysis of the data, a common set of thematic codes was generated by the research team and applied to data sets across the project. Recurrent patterns were identified using the software. The common patterns identified and discussed in this paper arise from different data sets within the study.

The project can thus be described as a qualitative, localised study, which drew on a wide range of stakeholders, using participatory methods to understand how HIV/AIDS and other related barriers may affect various types of learning in Richmond. The project was also keen to explore the epistemological value of participatory methodology. In a move away from large-scale surveys across a range of locations, the design for the UKZN project was intended to capture both depth of experience and a range of perspectives in understanding the intersections between HIV/AIDS and learning within a limited geographic space (John and Rule, 2006).

The other and 'othering' in relation to the Richmond data

The Richmond data reveals that AIDS has played a devastating role in fracturing communities and undermining the spirit and values of ubuntu. Even more than apartheid, which deliberately set out to divide people but often had

the effect of uniting people at a local level against a common enemy, AIDS has undermined ordinary people's experience of communal solidarity and support, particularly those who are infected or affected by the disease.

As will be illustrated below, negative constructions of the other in the Richmond data are pervasive. The person identified as HIV positive is discriminated against in a variety of ways. These include being the target of gossip; ridicule and laughter; moral disapprobation; ostracization and discrimination against family members. All of these are linked to processes of 'othering' and dehumanization. At this level, the data confirms findings elsewhere in the literature (Webb, 1997; Aggledon, 2000; UNICEF, 2001; Francis, 2004; Petros *et al.*, 2006) regarding the oppression of people infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.

In the Richmond study, some of the most alarming data comes from the school learners. They reveal a keen awareness of the stigma attached to AIDS and how this is manifested socially. They attribute very strong negative reactions among community members to persons living with HIV and AIDS and use the words 'hate' and 'hatred' to describe this reaction. If one is known to be HIV positive:

- *They will go and tell other people and they point fingers at me*
- *Others laugh at him, others say unesidina* [he is despised /loathed/ contemptible
- *Maybe you tell someone that you are positive and they are going to gossip and laugh at you.* (Peri-urban Grade 3 learners)

The discrimination extends beyond the infected individual to his or her family:

- *They dislike everybody from that family*
- *They witchcraft all of you to die because you have this disease*
- *She is afraid to go to school because other learners are going to laugh at her because there is someone who is HIV positive at home.* (Peri-urban Grade 3 learners)

The stigma can lead to social ostracization of the infected person or those associated with him or her:

- *His friends don't like him because they hear that there is someone in his home that has got HIV/AIDS and they assume that he is also infected with HIV/AIDS so they run away from him and talk about him.* (Urban Grade 6 learner)

The stigma associated with the disease is linked to a sense of moral disapprobation. The infected person is seen as being guilty of sexual and moral misconduct that has resulted in their illness:

- *When the people in the community see a person who is sick and very thin, then they all know that this person has HIV and that this person was naughty.*
- *The people will hate you.*
- *They will talk about what you did before. That your behaviour was bad and that is why you have HIV.*
- *They will tell you that you were a bad person and that you were smoking and drinking and taking drugs and maybe you have TB.*
- *They will tell you that you are sick because you had many, many boyfriends. They will tell you that you must stop smoking and being a bad person.* (Peri-urban Grade 9 learners)

While there were no indications of actual physical violence perpetrated against infected persons, there is clear evidence of emotional and psychological violence through labelling, ridicule, and moral condemnation.

The consequences of the powerful stigma associated with HIV/AIDS include a variety of strategies of dissociation from the disease by community members. These include silence in the form of an avoidance of the topic or a refusal to speak about it. As one educator from a rural school put it:

> . . .it is not easy to know how big the problem (HIV) is because people don't say.
> (Rural educator)

A related strategy is that of concealment from both self and others. People who suspect that they are HIV positive would rather not know and decline the option of testing. This is because of fear of the disease itself or because of fear of public exposure and the community's responses:

> Me, I cannot go for a test. . . because I know that there is no cure for HIV.
> (Rural Grade 6 learner)

> The thing that I fear about HIV/AIDS is death and being laughed at by other people.
> (Rural Grade 9 learner)

Those with family members with AIDS sometimes hide them away from the community. As a high school learner from a peri-urban school said:

> They leave them alone in the house, even if they can't help themselves. They lock them in the house if they go for extended period away from home. You may find that the person has already messed on the bed and is wet.
>
> (Peri-urban Grade 9 learner)

Closely associated with strategies of silence and concealment is outright denial. This might take the form of a denial that AIDS exists at all and an ascription of AIDS symptoms to supernatural causes. A voluntary HIV/AIDS worker, drawing on her experience of visiting infected and affected households, gave the following example of this kind of 'supernatural 'othering':

> They feel that their loved ones are not sick because of the HIV virus but are getting sick because of other bad things. They go to the police station and report that the neighbour was bewitching his/her child and now the child is sick. So I don't know. We have been doing all these awareness days programmes. We tell and talk to them about the disease but still this is the way they are thinking.

It might also take the form of denial that AIDS exists in a particular community or area, and thus a form of 'spatial othering':

> Researcher: *How is AIDS affecting your community?*
>
> Rural parent: *I don't know because HIV does not exist in this community.*

Similarly, in a form of 'generational othering', some respondents acknowledged the existence of the disease but not in their age group, characterizing it as a problem of the youth:

> Yes, HIV is a terrible disease that kills. It exists. Even to us it exists but I am not counting myself, I am talking about children.
>
> (Peri-urban parent)

> Yes, there is a need (to test) because you don't know, you can't guarantee. Because I am old, the youth is supposed to check all the time, yes.
>
> (Peri-urban parent)

Positive constructions of the other in the Richmond data

Notwithstanding the negative connotations attached to people living with HIV and AIDS by various groups within the Richmond community, a quite different picture emerges from those HIV positive people who are living more

or less openly with the disease, regarding both their own self-image and their perceptions of how the community views them. A female member of the HIV/AIDS support group in Richmond demonstrates a very different construction of the HIV positive 'other' in speaking about a drawing that she made:

> I am drawing a heart, which represents love. In this heart of love, I say to black people, people with the virus should love one another, and they should not separate. They should tell themselves that they are a family and they should not say so-and-so is not from my family, I will not love him. S/he is also your family member, love him/her and put them in the love that is in your heart and be free with him/her. Know that s/he is a person and you should love her as s/he is a person and should live the way you live, thanks.
>
> (Buthelezi and Francis, 2006, p.183)

This construction of the other indicates the possibility of creating an inclusive and caring space in which the HIV-infected 'other' becomes 'another' and is valued and affirmed as a 'member of the family'. Here the values of ubuntu – community, solidarity, caring – are clearly evident.

Although there is evidence of stigma and 'othering' from many other respondents in the study, support group members choose not to construct themselves as victims of stigma and discrimination. As one female member of the group said, in a comment echoed by others:

> Nobody has a problem about my status but I have not informed my family yet. Therefore, I cannot comment about them. The community where I live knows about my status. They do not discriminate against me, we sometimes eat with neighbours from the same plate, and share drinks from one container. We are living happily.
>
> (Buthelezi and Francis, 2006, p.188)

A number of respondents from the HIV/AIDS Support Group had disclosed their status to community members but not to their families. An interesting aspect of the way that they construct their responses is to describe the support group itself as a 'family' in which they are accepted and affirmed. This gives them the strength to live openly and positively in their communities. Their non-disclosure within their families, however, suggests a level of tension in sharing their status with those closest to them, and possibly indicates a level of non-acceptance within the family which they choose not to emphasize. Their responses regarding stigmas suggest that it is not so much the stigma itself that is debilitating, but the fear of stigma. Once they have disclosed their status, these HIV positive support group members find ways of engaging positively with their communities and becoming resources for them.

'Othering' and the 'lifeworld', with specific reference to the 'healthworld'

A number of studies have indicated that HIV/AIDS education programmes that focus only on the transmission of information about prevention and treatment are not effective (Campbell, 2003; Pattman, 2006). Such approaches do not take sufficient cognisance of the socio-economic and cultural contexts in which the disease is embedded. Given the importance of context, theorizations of the social worlds of communities are important in creating potential spaces for educational interventions.

In this regard, the concepts of 'lifeworld' and 'healthworld' are useful. The German philosopher, Jurgen Habermas (1987, p.124), defines the lifeworld as "a culturally transmitted and linguistically organized stock of interpretive patterns".

This lifeworld is

> a reservoir of taken-for-granteds, of unshaken convictions that participants in communication draw upon in cooperative processes of interpretation. Single elements, specific taken-for-granteds, are, however, mobilized in the form of consensual and yet problematizable knowledge only when they become relevant to a situation.

The notion of 'healthworld' is seen as a particular region of the lifeworld (see Cochrane, 2006). The healthworld is intended to express in English what is meant by *bophelo* or *impilo* and their equivalents in African languages. As such, it is a much more holistic notion of health than that denoted by a narrowly medical approach; it includes the life of the family and community as inseparable from the well-being of the individual. The Richmond data, particularly the children's perceptions of how their communities regard HIV/AIDS, reveal that the 'taken-for-granteds' of their communities' healthworld about the 'situation' of HIV/AIDS include the following:

- AIDS is a curse associated with witchcraft and bewitchment
- People living with HIV and AIDS are morally suspect
- Such people should be shunned, ostracized, avoided

On the other hand, the lifeworld of the community includes attitudes and values of solidarity, co-operation and acceptance. The HIV/AIDS support group members draw on this reservoir of convictions regarding 'the other' in

their constructions of the support group as a family. Flowers (2001, p.51) notes that

> the social construction of boundaries between 'self' and 'other' . . . and their relationship to boundaries of 'safety' and 'danger' are particularly relevant to understanding notions of health and disease.

Education programmes, both formal and non-formal, face the challenge of engaging with the existing life world of the community, and drawing on those cultural assets, such as solidarity and empathy, which can contribute to countering stigma, silence and discrimination. In the next section, we explore the implications of a positive conception of 'the other' for education.

Towards a pedagogy of trust and connectedness

From 'the other' to 'another'

The cornerstone of a pedagogy of trust and connectedness is the rehabilitation of the 'other', particularly the other who is infected or affected by HIV/AIDS. Whereas the negative notion of 'the other' can lead to exclusion, stigmatization and discrimination, a positive notion views the other as 'another' – one who, although different, shares my humanity, complements my being, engages in dialogue with me, challenges me and learns with and from me. I am in community with the other as 'another' who contributes to my own personhood and self-realization as a social and ethical human being. This is central to the African notion of ubuntu. It constitutes the kind of 'other' that is constructed in HIV/AIDS support groups and that can lead to a new kind of empowering solidarity. We look at what applications this understanding of 'the other' as 'another' might have in relation to teachers and learners, and to teaching and learning in community contexts, and at the contextual limitations that might constrain such applications.

Teachers and learners as resources

Pattman (2006) argues for the notion of both teachers and learners as *resources* regarding HIV/AIDS education. In contrast to "the didactic and authoritarian pedagogic relations" which characterize the delivery of much HIV/Aids education, he proffers a pupil-centred approach that explores the social and cultural worlds of pupils, the significance that pupils attach to

gender and sexuality. Teachers, "as significant men and women in the lives of young people who convey powerful messages about gender in their everyday interactions", have a crucial role to play in promoting gender equality among learners (Pattman, 2006, p.109).

Such an approach would also address the ways that boys and girls construct themselves "with little in common and in opposition to each other" (Pattman, 2006, p.112), with boys as subjects and girls as objects of sexual desire. The consequences of such stereotypes include sexual harassment of girls, rape and high rates of teenage pregnancy. Instead, a pedagogy which promotes possibilities of cross-gender friendships, communication and negotiation should be developed.

A more learner-centred pedagogy could embrace participatory methodologies such as drama, poetry, use of choral music and folklore, peer support groups and peer counselling. Juma's (2001) case studies of HIV/AIDS education in Kenya and Tanzania indicate that such programmes have greater likelihood of success than transmission-based teacher-centred strategies. However, this shift in teacher-learner relations would require a reorientation in the ways that teachers characteristically understand the roles of learners: from understanding the learner as the passive, ignorant and possibly hostile 'other' to an active and co-constructing 'another'. This would require that the teacher understand his own role as including that of a learner, of becoming 'the other'. Paulo Freire (1998, p.58) clarifies this teacher-as-learner role:

> our relationship with the learners demands that we respect them and demands equally that we be aware of the concrete conditions of their world, the conditions that shape them. To try to know the reality that our students live is the task that educational practice imposes on us: Without this, we have no access to the way they think, so only with great difficulty can we perceive what and how they know.

This does not imply that the teacher relinquishes her authority and adopts a laissez-faire attitude. That teacher retains her authority but, in addition to 'talking to' learners – giving instructions and establishing limits – begins to 'talk to and with' them (Freire, 1998). By entering into dialogue with learners and their concrete life conditions, the teacher begins to generate a knowledge of and with learners that can help both to transform their worlds. This dialogic relation between teacher and learner requires, however, a supporting environment within the school and community, and it is to this context that we now turn.

The other, community and connectedness

Schools on their own struggle to address the issue of HIV/AIDS in a meaningful way and can contribute to the further alienation of people infected and affected by the disease. In this regard, schools reflect the attitudes and practices of the wider community. The reasons for this are complex. The Richmond data shows that most teachers do not identify strongly with the local community because they commute to school from other, often urban areas. They often construct learners and community members as 'other' and employ a discourse of 'us' and 'them' when referring to the local community, and to HIV/AIDS within the community. As Ramsuran, Naidoo, Pennefather, Muthukrishna, Ramiah and Jugmohan (2006, p.105) show, teachers also find it difficult to teach children about HIV/AIDS and sexuality:

> Social and cultural constraints in discussing HIV/AIDS, sexual relations and power inequalities are impeding teachers' efforts to discuss HIV/AIDS and manifest in the practice of 'selective teaching' as follows: entire lessons on HIV/AIDS and sexuality not being taught from the syllabus, no direct reference to sex in HIV/AIDS lessons, and messages on abstinence as the sole means of communicating about HIV and sexual relations. Many teachers are themselves directly affected and/or infected by HIV. A survey of educators (Human Sciences Research Council, 2005) found that KwaZulu-Natal had the highest rate of infection among educators, 21.8 per cent compared with a national average of 12.7 per cent.

In addition, the 'othering' associated with HIV/AIDS stigmatization is often reinforced by a combination of additional 'othering' dimensions, including poverty, violence, crime, substance abuse, and fractured and displaced family situations. Poverty, for example, increases the vulnerability of people, especially girls and young women, to HIV infection through sex work with, and economic dependency upon, men who have multiple sexual partners. HIV/AIDS, on the other hand, accentuates poverty through the death of bread winners and the burden of medical and funeral costs (United Nations Secretary General's Task Force, 2004; Ramjee, 2005; John and Rule, 2006; Muthukrishna, 2006).

Given the social and cultural constraints around addressing HIV/AIDS issues openly in schools, and given teachers own affliction by the disease, it is clear that schools need support if they are to become centres of care and support regarding HIV/AIDS. Networks of support that link schools to local resources are critical. Such resources could include HIV/AIDS support groups, churches, community-based development organisations and the non-government organisations that provide services to them, as well as the local clinic and municipal resources. Provincial and national resources can also play

a role, but if there is not a local network to bolster HIV/AIDS care and support in the schools, it is unlikely that provincial and national resources and interventions, by their nature more distant and intermittent, will have much impact. Local people acting together thus hold the key to rehabilitating 'the other' in the devastating context of HIV/AIDS. The Richmond research data indicates that it is those directly afflicted by HIV/AIDS, people living with the disease themselves, who potentially hold out a vision of community and wholeness for society.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that the prevalence of negative forms of 'othering' in the Richmond area, manifested in ridicule, stigma and ostracization, undermines communal solidarity and drives HIV/AIDS underground, where it is more lethal. Responses to 'othering' include silence, denial, concealment and distancing strategies. The attitudes and practices of members of an HIV/AIDS support group indicate a positive and inclusive conception of people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS that transforms 'the other' into 'another'. Formal and non-formal education programmes should work towards affirming and including people living with HIV and AIDS through a pedagogy of trust and connectedness. Keys to such a pedagogy are rehabilitating 'the other' as 'another', drawing on learners and educators as resources in the programme, and creating networks with other resources within the community.

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Teachers' sense-making and enactment of curriculum policy

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Abstract

The South African educational landscape has undergone dramatic educational changes in the previous decade, impacting heavily on the roles of teachers in the classroom. This article explores the complex sense-making frameworks of three teachers working in three diverse South African educational contexts. Using the construct cognitive sense-making, the article suggests that teachers adapt a curriculum rather than adopt it as is, and that their prior understandings and beliefs about knowledge, assessment and what constitutes effective teaching, combined with the contexts in which they work, frame their classroom practices to a large extent, explaining the disjunction between policy and practice.

Introduction

One of the most controversial issues in education in the recent past has been the process of development and implementation of Curriculum 2005 (C2005). C2005 is significant both because of the immense practical and symbolic legacy that it attempts to address as well as the weight that is attached to what it aspires to achieve. Not only is it expected to overcome centuries old educational practices, social inequalities linked to educational difference, and Apartheid-based social values, it is also expected to place South Africa on the path to competitive participation in a global economy. For many, curriculum carries the burden of transformation in education (Chisholm, 2003).

The new curriculum was put forward by the National Department of Education as a radical move away from the school curricula of the Apartheid dispensation. In official documents, the so-called 'old' curriculum and the 'new' curriculum are contrasted in a language of binaries: for example, one is teacher-centred, the other learner-centred; one is content-based, the other skills-based. In addition, there are frequent references to a 'paradigm shift'. I agree with Meerkotter (1998) when he asserts that paradigm shifts occur gradually as more and more practitioners come to see their practice in a different light. He explains this concept by saying that a new 'paradigm' grows out of a previous 'paradigm' and that it builds on previous practices and understandings.

In the light of the far-reaching changes that South African teachers are expected to implement as well as my broader interest in why it is so difficult to translate curriculum policy into classroom practice, the following question was posed: **Why are teachers' sense-making of curriculum policy critical to the translation of policy into practice?**

Constructing a cognitive sense-making framework

Scholars have increasingly applied a cognitive framework in studying the policy process (Sabatier, 1998; Surel, 2000). Cognitive frames have also been used in studies of policy implementation in education (Ball, 1994; Spillane, 2000), public policy (Yanow, 1996), political science (Hill, 1999; Lin, 1998; 2000), sociology (Marris, 1975), and social psychology (Kunda, 1999; Weick, 1995). Under rubrics that include 'interpretation', 'cognition', 'learning', 'sense-making' and 'reading', these scholars argue that how implementing agents understand or interpret policy is a largely neglected area of the implementation process.

In this article, this work is built on by drawing on cognitive sense-making as advanced by Spillane, Reiser and Reimer (2002). The integrative framework that they outline consists of three core elements: the individual implementing agent, the situation in which sense-making occurs, and the policy signals. Although the framework was useful there were occasions that it was difficult to apply a framework for policy analysis that had its genesis predominantly in policy frameworks grounded in the Western liberal democratic tradition. This paradigm takes for granted a well-established educational infrastructure and an educated teacher supply base. It does not take account of the different levels of chaos in which new policies emerge in postcolonial societies. It also does not adequately account for the unequal educational contexts that South Africa inherited from Apartheid. What was particularly limiting is the way 'situation' is understood in this framework as only referring to the nature and quality of relations in institutions. It does not take account of the differing contexts in which the three teachers worked and thereby providing a more complete picture of context. They argue that what a policy means for implementing agents is constituted in the interaction of their existing cognitive 'scripts' (including knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes), their situation (the context), and the policy signals. How the implementing agents understand a policy's message(s) about local behaviour is defined in the interaction of these three dimensions (Spillane *et al.*, 2002).

Building on the work of Spillane *et al*. (2002), the article focused on how teachers noticed and interpreted policy and how prior knowledge, beliefs and experiences influenced the construction of new understandings. In the context of this article, these constructs were combined and subsumed by a broader collective term, namely teacher epistemologies. Secondly, I considered how aspects of the situation influenced what teachers noticed and how they interpreted what they noticed about a specific policy, namely, C2005. And, thirdly, the policy messages inherent in C2005 were unpacked. I will begin by giving an exposition of the cognitive sense-making framework.

The elements of the cognitive sense-making framework

The implementing agent as sense-maker

Individuals assimilate new experiences and information through their existing knowledge structures (Schank and Abelson, 1977). Viewed from this perspective, what a policy comes to mean for teachers depends to a great extent on their repertoire of existing knowledge and experience. According to Spillane (2006), teachers' prior beliefs and practices can pose challenges not only because teachers are unwilling to adapt to new policies, but also because their existing subjective knowledge may interfere with their ability to interpret and implement a reform in ways consistent with policymakers' intent. The fundamental nature of cognition is that new information is always interpreted in the light of what is already understood. An individual's prior knowledge and experience, including tacitly held expectations and beliefs about how the world works, serve as a lens influencing what the individual notices and how the stimuli that are noticed are processed and subsequently interpreted (Spillane *et al*., 2002). What is new is always seen in terms of the past or as Spillane *et al*. (2002, p.395) put it, "what we see is influenced by what we expect to see". Similarly, one could argue that practices advocated in policy may be at odds with teachers' tacit knowledge[1] about teaching or simply what they know about teaching derived from their socialisation into it. The approaches a teacher deems 'suitable' will depend largely on her own understandings and beliefs of what good teaching is. If, for example, a teacher believes that appropriate strategies are structured lecturing and individual work, this may be contrary to a policy expectation. To implement such a

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[1] There is a considerable body of literature acknowledging the potency of teachers' tacit knowledge. It is frequently invoked as the reason for the failure of educational change.

policy will then be difficult if teachers perceive it to be alien to their ways of knowing teaching, or their tacit knowledge.

A sense-making framework acknowledges the concomitant difficulty of major restructuring as part of learning. Piaget (1972) emphasised the significance of what he termed 'accommodation', or restructuring of existing knowledge. On the other hand, 'assimilation', or programming stimuli into existing knowledge frames, is often the central part of perception and action. According to Flavell (1963, p.50), assimilation is a conserving process, as it strives to "make the unfamiliar familiar, to reduce the new to the old". A sense-making framework implies that learning new ideas such as instructional approaches may require restructuring a complex of existing schemes, as new ideas are often subject to being seen as minor variations of what is already understood rather than as different in critically important ways (Spillane, 2006). Therefore, new ideas either are understood as familiar ones, without sufficient attention to aspects that deviate from the familiar, or are integrated without restructuring of existing knowledge and beliefs, resulting in piecemeal changes in existing practice. This emphasises the primacy of the teacher in educational change and how her epistemology mediates curriculum implementation.

The teacher as sense-maker clearly underscores the idea that teachers' ways of knowing and thinking are vital dimensions of their practice.

Context

There is a considerable body of literature that emphasises the importance of context as school teaching does not take place in a vacuum, but is part of a unique context (Lortie, 1975; Bryk, Lee and Holland, 1993; Louis and Kruse, 1995). Each school operates in a different context that will impact differently on the teachers working in those diverse contexts. In this article, careful attention was given to the school contexts in which teachers were working as teachers' classroom practices are shaped by, amongst others, the school contexts in which they work.

That teaching practices cannot be judged in isolation but rather as taking place in particular contexts, is vividly captured by the following words of Morrow, ". . . no practices can be maintained for any length of time unsustained by institutions; without institutions the practices would gradually dissipate,

institutions are the bearers of practices" (1988, p.254). Teaching is enacted in classrooms, which are the ultimate focus of the schooling system, the terrain where the purpose of schooling – teaching and learning – reaches fruition. But classrooms are situated in a web of institutions and systems: the school itself, the culture of which is critical to the quality of classroom work; district offices which supply and support schools; teacher appraisal systems; and curriculum processes and products which are constructed, delivered and closely watched by interested parties and institutions throughout society. Teachers' work is thus constrained and enabled by a myriad of influences, which emanate from all directions in the web of public schooling. The focus of this article, however, was limited to the institutional contexts in which teaching and learning take place and will, therefore, not investigate the broader education system.

A focus on context is further informed by my contention that public constructions of expected teacher roles are contested, and recontextualised at the level of the school and classroom. Understandings and beliefs about instruction and subject matter are worked out in the context of instructional practice. As a result, McLaughlin's (1990) adage that 'belief can follow action' takes on greater significance. For this reason, a cognitive approach is combined with context to provide a richer account of how teachers approach teaching.

In the next section, the third leg of a cognitive sense-making framework is outlined, namely, the policy messages contained in C2005.

Policy messages of curriculum 2005 and their implications for classroom enactment

To achieve the education shift envisaged by C2005 requires not only changes in policy, organisation and practices of education, but also significant changes in the philosophy, principles, beliefs and underlying assumptions about people and knowledge. Assumptions about knowledge as objective, value-free unchangeable facts need to be replaced with a recognition of knowledge as being developed and promulgated by people in particular socio-political contexts with particular value assumptions. Based on these assumptions, different ways of teaching and learning need to be acquired. Because a curriculum is primarily concerned with knowledge, understanding how teachers view knowledge has a significant influence on curriculum practices.

If knowledge is presented to teachers or organised in a way that does not conform to their particular framework of how knowledge is constructed, it may lead to internal cognitive conflict.

The next section focuses on the envisaged curriculum changes in terms of the three critical curriculum dimensions that constitute the focus of this inquiry vis-à-vis content, pedagogy and assessment.

Content and pedagogy

A careful study of policy documents highlights the importance attached to concepts such as 'active learning', 'understanding', 'group work', 'learner-centredness' that are contrasted with concepts such as 'passive learners', 'rote learning' and 'teacher-centredness' (DoE, 1997a; DoE, 1997b).

However, when it comes to content, there is very little by way of specific guidance for teachers. The lack of guidance is exemplified in the following excerpt:

> Teaching will become a far more creative and innovative career. No longer will teachers and trainers just implement curricula designed by an education department. They will be able to implement many of their own programmes as long as they produce the necessary outcomes (DoE, 1997a, p.29).

Although C2005 is highly prescriptive in terms of policy and pedagogy, it is extremely vague in the area of content. The shift from a curriculum framework based on the traditional disciplines of knowledge and selected content, to one which is based on pre-determined outcomes to be achieved through eight learning areas with no specified content, is a fundamental and far reaching change.

What complicates the issue of content are the new roles that the teacher is expected to play in implementing the new curriculum policy. Because content is not prescribed, teachers are required to develop their own learning programmes. In the previous dispensation, the responsibility of developing material to support classroom teaching rested mostly on publishers of textbooks.

However, the core of C2005 is the integration of content which should take place across all eight learning areas instead of the insulated teaching that was characteristic of the traditional subject approach.

C2005 also requires a change towards more complex and demanding teaching methodologies, in contrast to the traditional, transmission-orientated teaching based on content-laden textbooks aligned to a fixed curriculum. Rather, C2005 emphasises teaching that is "learner-centred, with emphasis on group work and developing the ability of people to think critically and research and analyse things for themselves" (DoE, 1997a, p.9).

Assessment

Assessment in C2005 is considerably different to what teachers were accustomed too in the previous curriculum. Teachers are expected to indicate in advance the outcomes to be achieved. Outcome statements indicate what learners must be able to do when they have successfully completed a specific learning programme. From the learners' perspective what has to be learned is made explicit, spelt out in clear segments that are embedded, as far as is possible, in their everyday life-worlds. Formative assessment is fore-grounded in policy documents and summative assessment is de-emphasised. Teachers are required continuously to gather information about how learners are learning. The information gathered should be used to provide feedback to learners on their strengths and on areas that need development and support (DoE, 1998). The assessment policy introduces a shift from a system that was dominated by public examinations, which were 'high stakes' and whose main function was to rank, grade, select and certificate learners, to a new system whose aim is to improve the curriculum and assessment practices of educators.

What are the implications for teaching of this curriculum reform at a practical level? Put differently, how will teachers make sense of these complex reforms at the precarious confluence of policy and practice? These questions suggest that teachers may not be equipped to meet curriculum reform challenges. The international literature indicates clearly (see Blignaut, 2005) that curriculum policy is often not congruent with the classroom practices of teachers for a myriad of reasons. On the basis of this evidence, it is likely that South African teachers will experience the same problems as their international counterparts in the implementation of the new curriculum policy.

Research methodology

The research methodology employed a qualitative research approach and drew on the interpretive research tradition. The research was explorative in nature and represented an attempt to access teacher thinking with regard to

knowledge, content, learning, teaching and assessment and how these understandings mediated their interpretation of C2005 and how this act of interpretation was practiced in their classrooms. This study was not an evaluation of C2005 or its impact on teachers, nor was it focused on cause and effect in terms of some predefined set of expected outcomes. Instead, it explored why teachers' sense-making of curriculum policy is critical to the translation of policy into practice. Such a process is not easily or usefully quantified and quantification at the expense of a rich understanding of these factors would be problematic.

Research design

The research design could be described as a triple-sited case study that focused on three Grade nine teachers working in three secondary schools in the Port Elizabeth Metropolitan area of the Eastern-Cape Province in South Africa. To access teacher thinking on aspects such as their views on content, learning, teaching and assessment, semi-structured interviews were held. To ascertain how these understandings were used to make sense of C2005 at the classroom level, observation sessions were also conducted. These observation sessions were followed up with post-lesson interviews to clarify meanings.

Data collection

Each teacher and class was observed for four weeks (a total of twelve weeks). Observations were limited to Human and Social Sciences learning area in Grade nine. Over the entire research period fifteen lessons from each teacher were observed (a total of 45 lessons).

Data analysis

Data were sorted and classified according to categories or themes. Naming the categories came from myself as the researcher, the respondents and the literature. Categories were analysed in terms of their 'properties' such as frequency, extent, intensity, and duration.

Many themes emerged from the dialectical processes of induction and deduction with the data, which were strongly influenced by the conceptual lens through which I was looking. The theoretical constructs of teacher

'scripts', context, and policy messages focused the data collection process and played a central role in making sense of the data. We give meaning to what someone says by first anticipating what they will say. We see with a theory or as Bruner (1986, p.110) puts it: "Looking and listening are shaped by expectancy, stance, and intention." Thus, there was a measure of tension between the conceptual framework and a grounded theory approach. Theoretical frameworks always structure and guide research, therefore one can legitimately ask the question: 'can research ever be truly grounded?' Adler (2001) concludes this debate unambiguously when she proclaims that, "the analysis is neither one of unspoilt or unframed grounded theory. Nor is it an attempt to fit data into pre-existing categories. It is rather a dialectical process that involves both induction and deduction, theoretically informed theory generation" (p.108).

Comparing and contrasting cases

All three teachers[2] in the case studies exhibited a predominantly teacher-centred pedagogy, hardly made use of integration, and own learning programmes were not designed. In addition, their assessment practices largely did not reflect the intent of curriculum policy; instead they favoured summative assessment at the expense of the more developmental function of formative and diagnostic assessment.

Views of knowledge

Jonathan[3] and Sipho's[4] views of knowledge could be characterised as leaning more to an objectivist view of knowledge or in Habermas's (1972) terms, knowledge constituted by a technical interest. Jonathan viewed knowledge as ideally having the potential to lead to a 'better world'. Through this characterisation the utility value of knowledge was accentuated. Sheila's[5]

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2 The names of all three teachers have been changed and pseudonyms are used.

3 Jonathan teaches in a school that has the basic infrastructure but library facilities are absent and other resources are not always available.

4 Sipho teaches in a school with only the bare minimum of facilities available.

5 Sheila is an English-speaking, white female teacher that teaches in a modern, well-resourced school.

views of knowledge, was more difficult to characterise, as she was aware of the social construction of knowledge but also emphasised the utility or pragmatic value of knowledge. She described knowledge as 'something that you can argue about over and over again'. Her comments revealed an awareness of the social constructedness of knowledge and scepticism of whether one could ever arrive at an accurate and final knowledge of reality. Although it is difficult to categorise her views of knowledge definitively, it can be concluded that in terms of Habermas's three cognitive interests, she exhibited an interest that reflected a practical interest. In exploring respondent's views on knowledge, I realised that it was difficult to pigeon-hole teachers either as having an objectivist view of knowledge or a more interpretist view of knowledge as their responses were varied and much more nuanced in practice.

Pedagogy

Although Sheila's classroom practice could be characterised as predominantly teacher-centred, it was not as pronounced as that of Jonathan and Sipho. This difference could be explained in terms of her view of knowledge, which was more nuanced and leaned more to the interpretive paradigm.

All three teachers practised a teacher-centred mode of teaching, initiating most of the talk and orchestrating most of the interaction in the classroom. They seldom made use of the learners' prior knowledge and use of learner-centred teaching, especially group work, appeared to be non-existent. After observing another lesson by Jonathan where no group work was evident I asked him if he ever did group work. He answered thus:

> The problem is your groups are too big. That is your first big problem. Secondly, you do not have material. There are no textbooks. You cannot leave the pupils on their own. The third problem is that pupils cannot read and write so he/she will hide in the group and the stronger candidates will speak. . .

Many other South African studies came to similar conclusions (See Jansen 1999; Harley and Wedekind 2004; Stoffels 2004). In the contextual factors and main findings I develop further explanations for these practices.

Content

For all three teachers, knowledge was regarded and treated as discrete bits of

information and learning as the acquisition of this information through processes of repetition, memorisation, and regular testing of recall. During revision of lessons Jonathan made sure that learners comprehended the facts by asking mostly factual questions. Examples of these included the following: 'To which country was the Saar given to exploit the coal mines for 15 years?' 'What was the name of the harbour city that was given to Poland?' When asked if memorisation has a place in learning Jonathan answered with almost irritation: 'You have to memorise. That is what learning is all about, you understand?' There is clear evidence that Jonathan favoured the accumulation and memorisation of facts. This was also clearly visible in his teaching and assessment. The teachers' presentation of subject matter also appeared to be mediated by his/her understanding and stance towards knowledge. One might hypothesise that teacher-oriented conceptions of teaching originated from the presence of corresponding conceptions of learning and knowledge. Jonathan though, emphasised the mastery of facts more and most of his 'tests' were an attempt to achieve the standards expected at Grade 12 level.

Assessment

None of the teachers ever referred to outcomes in their teaching, which implies that their assessment possibly continued to rely on static, decontextualised, unidimensional standardised tests, not linking assessment and instruction. Learning was thus represented as the mastery of discrete skills, which can be measured in a comparative fashion through formal, teacher-directed standardised tests and procedures. The opposing view of assessment as more of an informal, long-term monitoring process that provides an indication of learner competence on various types of authentic activities and is used to guide instruction, was not adhered to. During one lesson that dealt with the discovery of gold Sheila gave a revision test to ascertain whether learners had comprehended the work. There were approximately six girls who either had nought, one or two out of five questions right but Sheila did not concentrate on them but continued and taught the whole class. Learners' needs were thus not accommodated through individualised teaching and learning strategies and assessment tools.
In the sections that follow, explanations are suggested as to why teachers taught the way they did.

Contextual factors

A number of contextual factors were identified based on the analysis of the data collected in the three case studies. These factors, when read in conjunction with teacher epistemologies provide a partial explanation of why teachers' classroom practices do not conform to policy prescriptions. I do not suggest that they are exclusive, nor do I suggest that they are generalisable to all teachers in all contexts. I believe, however, that they represent an analysis of the context that many teachers will recognise as compelling. In developing descriptions of and explanations for the importance of these factors, I draw on examples of teachers' practice and discourse found in the three case studies. These contextual factors function as limitations or constraints on teaching and thus on curriculum implementation.

Competence of learners

The teachers perceived the competence of their learners to be the most important constraint on their classroom practice and the reason for the difficulty of translating curriculum policy into practice. This is illustrated by responses such as that more and more learners 'could hardly read or write'; that learners have to master 'the basics first,' namely, the facts, and that then methods such as group work that are required by an outcomes-based approach could be included; and that weak learners needed more teacher assistance whilst the more 'gifted child' could be given projects and would benefit from discovery methods.

Sheila felt that learners who come from the primary school were very weak and compared badly with previous years learners. This was supported by a comment that she would not do an OBE lesson that specific day as the learners were badly in need of 'solid' teaching. This observation resonates with a similar finding by Harley and Wedekind (2004) on how a well-known independent school runs an Outcomes-based Education (OBE) programme alongside traditional subject lessons where the 'OBE' programme has a time allocation of only three periods a week. In another case cited by Harley and Wedekind (2004, p.202), a teacher in a rural KwaZulu-Natal secondary school summed up the position of his school vis-à-vis C2005 by stating: 'OBE is a good policy – but it's not for us'.

The three teachers' views on knowledge, teaching and learning and their views about their learners' competence as illustrated by the data are not congruent

with and do not share the romantic naturalist view of the child and learning (Burnett, 1991) where children are assumed to be innately curious, spontaneously self-active, and driven to learn by their 'inner organic powers' (DoE, 1997c). McLaughlin's (1990) assertion that students are the workplace context of greatest consequence for teachers when they talk about their classrooms and their commitment to teaching is corroborated by the findings of this study.

Resources

In two cases, lack of resources was advanced as a reason for using a formal and traditional approach to teaching. This included the unavailability of textbooks and materials, and the lack of adequate library facilities, which hampered efforts to implement group work meaningfully.

Lack of resources, however, appears to be an enduring and obvious difficulty that historically disadvantaged schools have to contend with. In addition, inherited disadvantage is compounded by large classes that inhibit a learner-centred approach. Whilst Sipho had 47 learners in his class, Jonathan had 37 learners. Two of the schools do not have enough funds to employ additional teachers to the same degree as the third school where 22 additional teachers were appointed by the governing body to reduce the number of learners in each class. For example, Sipho's school had 1140 learners and 37 teachers and Jonathan's school had 900 learners and 29 teachers compared with Sheila's school who had 715 learners and 40 teachers. Big classes and heavy workloads may also explain why all three teachers de-emphasised diagnostic and formative assessment. In one case, an abundance of resources gave the teacher latitude to assign innovative and creative projects that learners could easily execute in their state-of the-art IT centre and up-to-date library. However, the availability of resources appeared to make no real difference to this teacher's largely traditional pedagogical style of teaching.

Resources, however, may not be the only stumbling block in implementing more learner-centred teaching, like group work. The lack of discipline appears to be a contributory factor.

The need to maintain control/discipline

One respondent described the need to maintain control when learners got

carried away and made the task of controlling them difficult. This concern was raised especially with regard to the execution of group work. Discipline problems appear to be exacerbated by group work, which may militate against its practice. Sheila verbalised this difficulty as follows: "I do group work, but I don't do a lot of it because the lack of discipline sometimes worries me". Policy edicts often ignore these realities of school and classroom life. There is a persuasive body of literature that argues that teachers often revert to 'lecturing' or teacher-centred teaching to prevent discipline problems in their classrooms. In his research in British schools, Woods (1990) attributes various teacher strategies to the crucial need simply to establish and maintain control which he calls 'survival strategies'.

The data supports the view that a traditional, predominantly teacher-centred pedagogy may be explained inter alia in terms of the need to maintain discipline.

Time constraints

The issue of time pressure arose in connection with content coverage, group work, the designing of learning programmes and assessment. Group work was viewed as 'time-consuming' and anxiety seemed to arise as to how the teacher would cope with coverage of subject matter in Grades 10, 11 and 12. The designing of learning programmes likewise led to a time problem, 'In actual fact, our lives are getting to the stage now, where you don't have time'. The time factor seemed to be exacerbated by all the marking teachers had to do. Sheila expressed this difficulty as follows:

> I got two sets of work in from my matrics, I have promised it to them for tomorrow morning which is quite a lot of marking, because the two sets come to 50 marks… I've got to mark my Grade 9 tests that they wrote yesterday. And then, on top of that, you have still got to prepare lessons and you've still got to go to meetings.

The new curriculum does not take temporal constraints into account that teachers are faced with on a daily basis in their classrooms. Time constraints, compounded by large classes and heavy marking loads may lead teachers to strike a balance between the requirements of curriculum policy and their daily realities.

The role of tradition in the socialisation of teachers

All three teachers' personal histories and backgrounds as learners and their experiences during their teacher education years appeared to be important influences on their thinking and classroom practices. Sheila said her teaching style was influenced by the way that she was taught. Sipho also admitted that his years at school influenced him and he proudly referred to a certain teacher who was his mentor.

All three case studies were reminiscent of Lortie's (1975) 'apprenticeship of observation' that attests to the view that teachers learn more about teaching from the thousands of hours spent as learners in classrooms. This portrayal suggests that tradition plays a pivotal role in the socialisation of teachers and that often it is not a question of getting new ideas into teachers' heads, but rather of getting old ones out.

The preceding contextual factors are conceptually aligned to the construct, teacher epistemologies, discussed in the conceptual framework and appear to exert a strong influence on teachers' classroom practice and how they make sense of curriculum policy.

Main findings

The section below reflects critically on the most salient themes and patterns that emerged and on the basis of this reflection, I extract three key findings into how and why the three teachers' sense-making of curriculum policy is critical to their translation of policy into practice.

The influence of teacher epistemologies

On the basis of the research evidence presented thus far, it seems probable that the teachers' 'scripts' or epistemologies exert a controlling effect on how they made sense of curriculum policy. Teachers' prior views (about teaching and learning) and beliefs, namely, their extant understandings interfere with their ability to interpret and implement the new curriculum policy in ways consistent with the policymakers' intent. All three teachers' views, experiences, and knowledge structures played a critical role in their construction of meaning from C2005 policy. The new curriculum policy messages were often interpreted in light of what they already understood or

the knowledge base they already had. As the teachers had definite views about what constituted good teaching and learning, these views influenced them and were clearly visible in their classroom practices. One teacher was adamant that 'lecturing' was the core of what teaching was all about and that memorisation constituted an important part of learning. These views were thus incorporated into his classroom teaching irrespective of the policy requirement that foregrounds learner-centred teaching.

Two of the teachers' views on group work also contradicted the intent of curriculum policy and one of them stated openly that she did group work only twice a term. Consequently, group work was often not incorporated into classroom teaching. Clearly, the new practices suggested by curriculum policy were in conflict with teachers' epistemologies and influenced the construction of new understandings. It is my contention that the majority of South African teachers' epistemologies were shaped by a markedly different education system and that those influences act as powerful mediators (filters) of why teachers make sense of C2005 as they do. These teachers are products of a system very different to the one in which teacher roles are now prescribed. Majone and Wildawsky's (1978) argument that what is in policies is dependent on what is in the readers (teachers) of such policies, is significant and instructive and corroborated by this study as teachers assimilated new experiences and information through their existing knowledge structures. From this perspective, what a policy comes to mean in terms of the three dimensions of curriculum for implementing agents depends to a great extent on the teachers' repertoire of existing knowledge and experience. Baxen (2001) makes a similar point when she warns that in the implementation of curriculum policies in South Africa, greater care should be taken with 'what teachers bring to the table'.

On the basis of the data analysis, it can be concluded that the practices required from teachers in curriculum policy often challenge their epistemologies of teaching practices. The three cases provide evidence that teachers have strongly held views about key aspects of teaching and learning as well as the content and structure of knowledge that exert an authoritative influence on their classroom practices and how they make sense of curriculum policy. When teachers' epistemologies interact with other factors such as their own socialisation as teachers and how they were taught as learners, an even bigger obstacle is presented for the successful translation of policy into practice. Educational innovations often focus on changing the visible structures within schools and tend to ignore the prior knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, experiences, norms and values of teachers within schools. Fullan

(2001) concurs and states that changing formal structures is not the same as changing norms, habits, skills and beliefs as 'restructuring is not the same as reculturing'.

The discrepancy between policy aims and school practice should cause little surprise: policy aims can be taken as just that – goals and intentions to aim for, rather than expressions of the *de facto* situation. We can rely on McLaughlin's (2000) well-grounded proposition that 'policy can't mandate what matters', because 'what matters' requires local capacity, will, expertise, resources, support, and discretionary judgement. The concept that the user is simply engaged in obedient execution of the instructions for a canned product is dated and should be rejected. It might have been appropriate in more stable times. Rather, the person, in a school, brings coherence to a new idea, during the process of recasting it and connecting it to the immediate working context. As McLaughlin (2000) so aptly reminds us, what happens as a result of a policy depends on how policy is interpreted and transformed at each point in the process, and finally on the response of the individual at the end of the line.

The reforms presented by C2005 propose dramatic changes to teachers' classroom practices, which appear to be resilient to change. A possible reason is suggested by Spillane (1999) who points out that changing the core dimensions of teaching, such as the knowledge represented in classroom tasks, classroom discourse patterns, roles and responsibilities in the classroom, is arduous and complex. The findings of this inquiry are also in line with Cohen and Ball's (1990) and Cuban's (1993) research, namely, that teachers' beliefs, dispositions, and knowledge about students, subject matter and teaching, as well as their prior practice, influence their willingness to change their practice in response to reform and their ability to practice in ways suggested by reformers. They also resonate with Spillane and Zeuli's (1999) findings that during curriculum change teachers often practise only the superficial, behavioural regularities of innovations, but hold on to the epistemological regularities of the old. A key finding of this inquiry is that there is a general discrepancy between the participating teachers' epistemologies and the more constructivist and socioculturally-based principles underlying C2005. Whilst curriculum policy reflects a more experiential, meaning-oriented direction, the classroom practice of teachers continues to reflect a more reductionist orientation.

The role of context

A second finding of this study is that teachers' contexts or 'zones of enactment' determine to a great extent how they will implement instructional reform and revise their practice.

In the three classrooms observed there was evidence of reformed practice but it did not represent extensive change required by the curriculum policy regarding pedagogy. Two of the teachers in this study referred to contextual constraints as reasons for not teaching in a more learner-centred way, whilst the third teacher's context allowed for richer learning opportunities to be included but her practice was not learner-centred. Lack of materials, large classes and poor library facilities were factors that plagued schools and contributed to a more traditional, teacher-centred way of teaching. When teachers' epistemologies meet the world of practice, contextual constraints are used as justification for classroom practices and given as reasons for the teachers' traditional approach to assessment, application of content and a teacher-centred pedagogy. Contextual constraints appear to reinforce prior held cognitive 'scripts'which become a justification for classroom practices. Therefore, a powerful interplay exists between the teachers' contexts and their classroom practices or, teachers' epistemologies are mediated by their contexts and influence how they make sense of curriculum policy and how it is ultimately enacted in classrooms. This suggests strong relationships between views of knowledge, situational constraints and interpretations of curriculum policy.

The lack of resources and materials in the 'zone of enactment' may thus be a reason for teachers'practices. Johnson, Monk and Hodges (2000) come to a similar conclusion in their study that found that the choice of strategies that are used by teachers tend to be constrained by the resources available. Therefore, context often exerts a constraining effect on teachers' actions. However, when teacher epistemologies are fused with their context, it becomes a pungent raison d'être for why teachers do what they do and how policy is made sense of. In other words, what a policy means for teachers is constituted in the interaction of their existing cognitive structures, their context, and the policy signals. Teachers' epistemologies and contexts thus, play a key role in take-up. New practices stand a much better chance of surviving if there is a fit with teachers' epistemologies and their contexts. Based on my observations in at least two of the schools, it is clear that the conditions and context for effective implementation of C2005 were not in place. The context in which these teachers had to work is characterised by

difficult educational and social circumstances that did not support the kind of practices suggested by C2005.

There is a view that teachers in disadvantaged schools have to be creative in mustering additional resources and inventing alternatives, but without sufficient resources to sustain their efforts, this is akin to providing teachers merely with a 'lamp and three wishes' (Vally, 2003).

With policy focusing so intensively on the desired effects of curriculum proposals, constraining realities with respect to curriculum implementation are easily overlooked. A commitment to a vision of *what should be* has undermined the ability of policy to consider seriously *what is*. In short, the harsh inequalities and contextual realities of South African schools appear to have been overlooked.

This study, therefore, suggests that context serves a powerful mediating function between reform initiatives and practice. Context though is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for change to occur. The case of Sheila seems to lend credence to this argument as she taught in very favourable circumstances, yet taught in a very teacher-centred way.

The natural tendency to view new policy as minor variations to what is known and practiced

When teachers are faced with new policy ideas, assimilation of these ideas into existing knowledge frames is required. Data from this study suggests that the teachers understood the policy (C2005) as not being radically different to what they already knew. This is supported in Sheila's assertion that she found very little change implied in C2005 for her classroom practice as she always tried to get learners to think for themselves. However, she predominantly taught in a teacher-centred way and derided group work. In addition, as Sheila viewed planning under C2005 as *slightly* different, she did not plan according to the requirements of curriculum policy. This phenomenon of former model C-teachers, viewing C2005 as being not much different from what they had practiced in the past, is well documented in South African studies (Jansen, 1999; Baxen, 2001; Stoffels, 2004).

Jonathan, also felt that as outcomes are not significantly different from the aims and objectives of the previous curriculum, he did not spell out any outcomes in his lessons. This could explain his emphasis on content and the

mastery of facts at the cost of outcomes. As long as teachers consider coverage of a prescribed curriculum and the mastery of discrete skills as being of paramount importance, implementing a 'mindful' (Bredekamp and Rosegrant, 1992) and 'thinking' (Darling-Hammond, 1994) curriculum will remain problematic. Teachers striving to implement such a curriculum will often struggle to meet the requirements of two incompatible systems, based on widely differing philosophies of education and feel caught between content coverage and making sense of a new policy.

There is enough evidence to suggest that teachers conserve existing frames, rather than radically transforming them. New ideas are either understood as familiar ones, without sufficient attention to aspects that deviate from the familiar, or are integrated without restructuring existing knowledge and beliefs, resulting in piecemeal changes in existing practice. The primacy of the teacher in educational change and how her epistemology mediates curriculum implementation was often supported and demonstrated in this study.

In summary

This article suggests that policy needs to consider adequately, either at a conceptual level or at the level of policy implementation, the process by which teachers make sense of a curriculum. Teachers respond to policy constructions in complex ways, adopting some practices contained in policy and contesting other meanings and practices. Given teachers' epistemologies, public constructions of teacher practices are contested and recontextualised at the level of the school and classroom. This observation resonates with Hoadley's (2002) assertion that institutional constraints and the cultures established in the school make possible certain definitions of 'doing' teaching and 'being' a teacher. The study on which this article is based supports the assertion that teachers often bring their own personal habits, thoughts, sentiments and predispositions to the act of teaching, while at the same time being constrained by institutional arrangements. The school often also structures teachers' work and strategies through the limited resources available to them, such as materials, time, class size, and learner competence. Hoadley (2002) concurs and cites Denscombe who argues that teachers' work is essentially constituted as a practical response to perceived exigencies of the situation. Essentially, teachers deploy strategies to deal with difficulties encountered in the school based on their interpretation of the situation and their interaction with learners. This article demonstrates that teachers' 'scripts' or epistemologies, in conjunction with workplace factors, account to a great extent why they do

what they do. As teachers' epistemologies are rooted in, strongly related to and formulated through practice, they together with the teaching context, inform what teachers do in the classroom and determine to a great extent how they make sense of the policy message or 'external accountability' system. Teachers' epistemologies thus determine the way in which they act selectively on policy messages and work off a personalised set of internalised standards. Therefore, what it means to be a teacher and to teach is defined at the confluence of teachers' epistemologies, the context and the policy message.

Finally, this article also demonstrates how teachers conserve their existing frames rather than radically transforming them, with the result that new ideas are seen as minor variations of what is already understood rather than as different in critically important ways.

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Transcending traditional boundaries for teacher professional development: exploring a community of practice approach to CPD

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Abstract

INSET teacher development models in South Africa have been largely ineffective in their efforts to facilitate professional development of teachers. Many teachers are poorly equipped to handle 'new' curriculum implementation. The introduction of Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) in the primary school has created a demand for EMS INSET in South Africa. This paper analyses the nature of teacher learning of novice Economic and Management Sciences teachers involved in the Teaching Economic and Management Sciences (TEMS) teacher development project. While teacher communities of practice present interesting challenges for teacher development, they do in fact have much potential as vehicles for teacher professional development. By drawing on the work of Wenger (1998) and Graven (2002) this paper argues that a community of practice framework provides a useful means of analysing teacher learning. It also examines the tensions in using a community of practice framework for analysing teacher learning.

Introduction

> . . . we cannot expect teachers to create a vigorous community of learners among students if they have no parallel community to nourish themselves.
>
> (Grossman, Wineberg and Woolworth, 2001, p.958)

South African education is currently undergoing unprecedented reform that is posing immense challenges for teacher development. The stark absence of substantive teacher development programmes to address teachers' needs has manifested itself in teachers employing alternative mechanisms for learning, namely, teacher learning communities. At the University of Natal, Faculty of Education annual 'Principals' Day' workshop in mid-2002, there was an overwhelming request from school principals for workshops to assist Economic and Management Sciences (EMS) teachers in primary schools. At this workshop there was an exchange of exploratory ideas for teacher development in the field of EMS. Thus was the first seed of the TEMS teacher development project sown.

The background to the principals' request was the new Revised National Curriculum Statement for grades R-9 (Schools) policy that made provision for the inclusion of EMS in the senior phase in the General Education and Training (GET) band. The previous primary school curriculum had not included any commerce-related subjects. The result was that teachers in the senior phase now found themselves in the position of being required to 're-skill' themselves and to develop the EMS curriculum for implementation. The introduction of EMS in the primary school had thus created a demand for EMS INSET in South Africa. As the local subject specialist lecturer in this field, I decided to meet this need, and the (TEMS) teacher development project was officially born and baptised towards the end of 2002. The research arm of TEMS was conceived currently with the development project. In September 2002, the Commerce Education Curriculum Development team of the University of Natal held a daylong Economic and Management Sciences workshop for teachers of EMS. This workshop was successfully conducted on a Saturday, with twenty-two teachers attending. The programme for the day included a slot that outlined the initial ideas of the TEMS project. During this session, participating teachers informed me of an EMS support group that they had started in Shallcross-Mariannhill area. The group needed assistance with understanding EMS content knowledge and the development of teaching resources. A significant feature of this developing community of practice was that it was a structure that was conceived and initiated by a dedicated group of teachers eager to support each other in the absence of support from the Department of Education. This presented an excellent research opportunity to study the nature of teacher learning in this context at the same time as being able to make a professional contribution to the work of this group.

In deciding on a model for teacher development, I drew on Wenger's community of practice framework (Wenger, 1998) and Graven's empirical work with mathematics teachers in the PLESME study (Graven, 2002). One of the primary assumptions that informed Graven's INSET model was that ". . .teacher learning would be enhanced by stimulating participation within a community of practice where members of the community of practice would provide support for teacher learning" (Graven, 2004, p.181). This was an important assumption that I also attempted to apply to the TEMS study. I was careful to accord teachers an active role in their own learning. Teachers as learners would be actively involved in conversations about teaching and identifying learners' needs. I envisioned that in the group processes, learning would focus not only on understanding new EMS content ideas but also on

translating these ideas into practice and figuring out how to manage the practical challenges that may emerge in the process.

I saw the curriculum for teacher learning as involving an array of 'artefacts' that included the new Revised National Curriculum Statement, materials that teachers used and developed, teachers' practice, materials that I had developed and provided, as well as the teacher development workshop sessions. The curriculum for teacher learning was designed to support teachers' learning about Economic and Management Sciences and their learning about how these ideas could be translated into practice. This situative perspective implied that the curriculum for teacher learning would support ongoing inquiry about ideas presented in the new Revised National Curriculum Statement and their implications for their EMS practice. It included not only subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, but also practical knowledge to translate EMS ideas into practice. By adopting this (situative) perspective on teacher learning, my implicit assumption was that the curriculum for teacher learning would be stretched over an array of artefacts and events, a position supported by Rogoff (1990). It was envisioned that a combination of these artefacts and events would form an integrated curriculum for teacher learning. The curriculum for teacher learning would then be situated across the new Revised National Curriculum Statement with special reference to EMS, classroom curricula materials, and teachers' attempts to implement EMS practice. It was important to for me to develop a 'critical mass' (Spillane, 2000) of EMS teacher leaders who would be able to convince other EMS teachers about the new EMS curriculum, its place in the school curriculum, and the importance of EMS knowledge for their pupils.

I also hoped that teachers, trying out new ideas in their classrooms, with the support of their colleagues (addressing implementation difficulties) and observing the response of their own pupils would be another really important motivating factor and an incentive for teacher learning, an idea supported by McLaughlin and Talbert (2001). In becoming a part of the TEMS project, teachers would learn in a supportive community of practice and that it would translate into teachers creating supportive learning communities within their classrooms, and that they would be motivated by their own pupils' learning of the EMS learning area.

Teacher learning communities and teacher professional development

There have been significant developments in continuing professional development of teachers in recent years. Although there exists little evidence of the impact of continuing professional development on policy and practice, teacher development programmes continue to be introduced throughout the world (Bolam and McMahon, 2004). Teacher development through participation in teacher learning communities is a relatively new phenomenon in South African teacher education. In South Africa, Graven's study of a community of Mathematics teachers represents the only significant work on teacher learning communities, noting that literature analysing teacher learning in learning communities is relatively new and needs further development (Graven, 2002). However, international research into teacher learning communities, particularly in the United States, has highlighted the potential that teacher learning communities have for teacher development (see Wesley and Buysse, 2001; Cobb, McClain, de Silva Lamberg and Dean, 2003; Avery and Carlsen, 2001; McLaughlin and Talbert, 2001).

Learning in general, and teacher learning in particular, can mean different things depending on one's conceptual perspective (Spillane, 2000). In recent years their has been a proliferation of research into schools as learning communities in which learning by teachers is connected to school improvement (see Reyes, Scribner and Paredes-Scribner, 1999; Thiessen and Anderson, 1999; DuFour and Eaker, 1998; Smylie and Hart, 1999; Grossman, Wineberg and Woolworth, 2001). 'New' ideas about the nature of cognition and learning abound in education and research communities. Concepts like 'situated cognition', 'distributed cognition' and 'communities of practice' have taken centre stage in educational research (Putman and Borko, 2000). This is particularly evident in the work of Greeno (1997) and Anderson, Reder and Simon (1996, 1997).

Spillane (2000, p.3) provides the following description of the situative perspective on learning:

> The **situative** perspective regards individuals as inseparable from their communities and environments. This perspective views knowledge as distributed in the social, material, and cultural artefacts of the environment. Knowing is the ability of individuals to participate in the practices of the community. Learning involves developing practices and abilities valued in specific communities and situations…Learning opportunities need to be organised so that they encourage participation in practices of inquiry and learning, support the learner's

> identity as skilled inquirer, and enable the learner to develop the disciplinary practices of discourse and argumentation…

Situative perspectives focus on interactive systems that include individuals as participants, interacting with each other and materials as opposed to traditional cognitive perspectives that focused on the individual as the basic unit of analysis (Greeno, 1997, Wenger, 1998). It is important to recognise that the situative perspective entails a fundamental redefinition of learning and knowing (Putman and Borko, 2000; Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002). This perspective attempts to recast the relationship between what people know and the settings in which they know. The contexts in which people learn, and in which they are assessed, are inextricable parts of their knowledge which implies that learning and knowing are situated.

"From the teacher's perspective, one of the peculiarities of the workplace is that learning aimed at deepening knowledge of the subject matters of instruction must be done outside of the school, during so-called free time. . ." (Grossman *et al.*, 2001, p.947). In South Africa, a similar phenomenon occurs where school principals are content to allow teachers to attend workshops 'after school hours'. This has given rise to a situation where communities for teacher learning are formed 'outside' of the school. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) note that a powerful form of teacher learning comes from membership in professional communities that extend beyond the classrooms and school campuses. Engaging in learning experiences away from the school setting may be necessary to help teachers 'break set' – to experience things in new ways. Learning communities have the ability to transcend organisational and geographic boundaries. Members may represent different backgrounds and organisations but will have a common set of core issues that binds the members together in a single community (Wesley and Buysse, 2001). The purposes of a community of practice are for expanding and exchanging knowledge and the development of individual capabilities. People participate through dialogue and sharing of knowledge about their common practices. It is through this participation that members develop deeper understandings (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002).

Extensive research regarding the relationship between teacher learning and teacher collaboration has been carried out by researchers that include Rosenholtz (1989), Johnson (1990) and Hargreaves (1994). Westheimer (1998) in his review of theories of community concluded that empirical research was needed to build a stronger conceptualisation of communities.

While the research suggests that collaborative cultures create beneficial conditions for teacher learning, the nature of these professional groupings and their connection to teacher learning is still unclear (Galluci, 2003). There are however many theoretical formulations on how 'community' is supposed to function in educational settings and research has not yet been able to explore the aspects that constitute teacher professional community to discover how these aspects work to support or hinder teaching (Grossman *et al*, 2001).

A brief note on the research methodology

In this study I needed to take into account a wide range of contextual factors that influenced teachers and teacher learning. The focus of the study was on the nature of teacher learning in a community of practice. I adopted a qualitative approach that engaged the tenets of interactionist ethnography to develop a rich understanding of the research context since contextual factors have a particularly compelling diversity and power in South African schools. Throughout the research process, I maintained a scrupulous reflective journal of critical incidents that influenced teacher learning in the TEMS community. Three in-depth teacher interviews with each of the seven core members of the TEMS community were conducted; one at the commencement of the project, an interim interview that captured a mid-term perspective and a final interview. Research participants were observed teaching EMS in the early and latter stages of the project. I also kept detailed observation reports of the monthly contact sessions of this community of teachers over the duration of the project. Wenger's community of practice framework (Wenger 1998) was used to analyse the nature of teacher learning in the TEMS community of practice.

Wenger's theory of learning in a community of practice

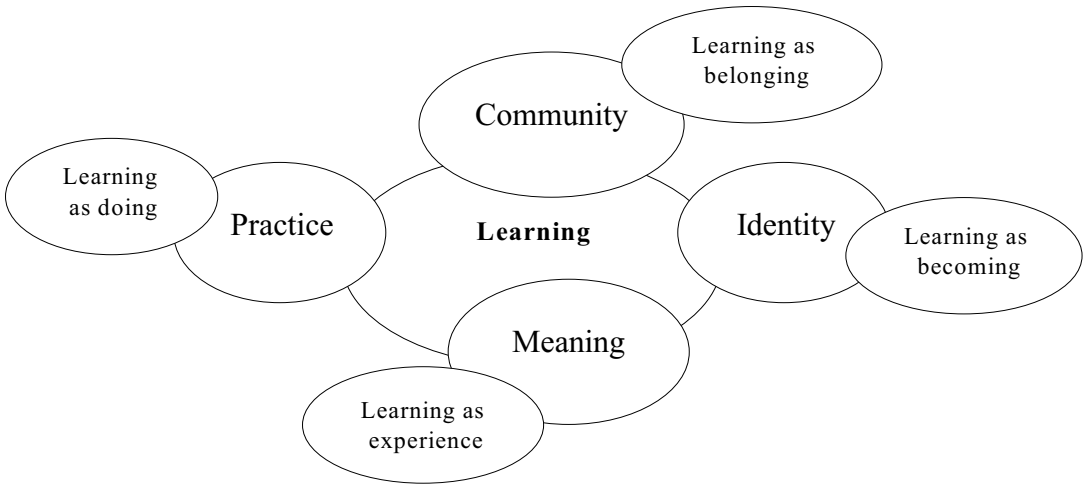
Wenger (1998) argues that we should adopt a perspective that places learning in the context of our lived experience of participation in the world. Learning is a "fundamentally social phenomenon". The focus of his theory is on "learning as participation", that is, of learners being active participants in the *practices* of social communities and constructing *identities* in relation to these communities. *Meaning, practice, identity and community* are the four elements that comprise Wenger's social theory of learning. These elements are "deeply

interconnected and mutually defining" and even if one were to displace any of the four peripheral components with learning and position the displaced component in the centre, the model will still make good sense (Wenger 1998, p.5). (See Figure 1below).

The focus on participation implies that for individuals, *learning* is an issue of engaging in and contributing to the practices of their communities. For communities, it entails refining their practice and ensuring new generations of members (Wenger, 1998). Our conception of learning has a profound effect on interventions and models that we prescribe for learning. "(A) key implication of our attempts to organise learning is that we must become reflective with regard to our own discourses of learning and to their effects on the way we design for learning" (Wenger, 1998, p.9).

"(K)nowing involves primarily active participation in social communities" (Wenger, 1998, p.10); it is about valuing the 'work of community building' and ensuring that "participants have access to the resources necessary to learn what they need to learn in order to make decisions that fully engage their own knowledgeability" (*ibid*.).

Figure 1: The elements of Wenger's social theory of learning



Sustained collective learning results in practices that become the 'property' of a kind of community created over time, by the "sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise" (Wenger, 1998, p. 45). These kinds of communities are called communities of practice. The concept practice entails *doing* in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning to what is done. Practice is essentially a *social* practice. It includes both the explicit and the tacit. It is

about meaning as an experience of daily life. Meaning is located in a process called the *negotiation of meaning*. The negotiation of meaning may involve language but is not limited to it. Negotiation entails a continuous interaction, of gradual achievement, and of give and take. Meaning is a product of its negotiation and therefore exists in the process of negotiation.

To associate practice and community, Wenger (1998) describes three dimensions of the relation by which practice is the source of coherence of a community. These dimensions are what he terms 'mutual engagement', 'a joint enterprise' and 'a shared experience'. Membership of a community is a matter of mutual engagement, and it is this mutual engagement that defines the community. Wenger warns that a community of practice is not just an aggregate of people and is not a synonym for an arbitrary group, team or network (Wenger, 1998). Defining a joint enterprise is a process that produces relations of accountability that are manifested not as conformity but as the ability to negotiate actions as accountable to the enterprise (Wenger, 1998). The elements of a shared repertoire of a community of practice can be very heterogeneous and could include "routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols" that the community has developed over time and which have become part of its practice (Wenger, 1998, p.83). A participant, in building an identity, has to negotiate the meanings of her experience of membership in social community. There is a deep connection between identity and practice. In developing a practice, members engage with one another and acknowledge each other as participants. Practice therefore entails the negotiation of ways of being a person in that context. In a community of practice, participants learn certain ways of engagement with each other. They develop certain expectations of how to interact and how to work together. Participants become whom they are by being able to play a part in the relations of engagement that constitute the community. Identity emerges as a form of individuality defined in respect to a community.

Applying Wenger's theory of learning to the TEMS community

In teacher development research, the limits on language constrain researchers in describing teachers' practice (Graven, 2002). Using a discourse of teacher improvement suggests that teachers have a deficit with regard to expected levels of competence. Furthermore, the adverse constraints within which teachers work certainly stifle change. However, this is often interpreted as

inadequate change. In Africa particularly, continuing professional development models cast teachers into the role of technicians and are rooted in images of teacher deficit (Christie, Harley and Penny, 2004). The focus on *teacher learning* rather than teacher change allows for descriptions of what is learned, and how it is learned, instead of whether or not teachers have changed in the 'right' directions. This focus on teacher learning has the potential to contribute to a conceptual reorientation to the discourse on teacher development.

An important feature of Wenger's social practice theory is that it allows us to view action and structure as mutually constitutive of each other. It provides a vehicle for analysing structural conditions, such as policy, and their connections with individual actions such as teaching. It provides a particularly useful and important framework for the study of the connections between education policy and classroom practice, since teachers' work takes place in uniquely complex social and organisational contexts (schools).

As mentioned above, Wenger's social theory of learning was used to inform the model for the TEMS teacher professional development initiative. Of particular importance, is the ability of the model to provide a conceptual framework for analysing teacher learning. Rather than conceiving of and attempting to measure learning in the traditional sense, Wenger's conception of learning offers a broader social perspective of learning and a useful alternate lens with which to observe learning as relations of participation. In the discussion that follows, I use Wenger's framework to make sense of teacher learning in the TEMS community by referring to specific extracts and utterances of research participants as they engaged in the enterprise of the TEMS community.

Wenger's first component, 'meaning', enables us to see 'learning as experience'. The changing understandings and meanings (changing ability) of the TEMS participants with regard to EMS and EMS teaching as a result of participation in the TEMS community of practice is evident in the contrasting attitudes and dispositions of teachers towards the new curriculum as a result of engaging in the activities of the TEMS community. In the table below we see teachers' shifting attitudes towards the new curriculum as a result of their involvement in the TEMS community of practice.

Table 1: Teachers' changing attitudes towards the new curriculum

	Teachers' attitudes towards the new curriculum									
	Before TEMS					*After TEMS*				
	Negative	Mildly negative	Neutral	Guardedly positive	Very positive	Negative	Mildly negative	Neutral	Guardedly positive	Very positive
John					X					X
Mary	X								X	
Ben	X								X	
Kim	X								X	
Shirley	X							X		
Beth				X						X
Debbie	X								X	

It must be noted that at the outset, teachers had markedly negative sentiments about the new curriculum. Initial negative comments about the new curriculum included:

> It should be thrown in the bin.
>
> We've been here for twenty years. This (meaning the new curriculum) is not going anywhere.

After involvement in the TEMS community, an example of a common positive comment is reflected below:

> You know, I used to be very negative about OBE and the learning areas. . . after joining the group and listening to how other people are adapting to it I feel a lot better. Its not so bad. . . at least I know more about EMS now.
>
> . . .Before I didn't know what the economic problem was but now I know. I know about the scarcity problem and the economic cycle. You see, I've done it with my children.

The following table presents an aggregate picture of teachers' changing understandings of the EMS learning area. While learning had occurred for all teachers, the extent of teachers' changing understandings of the EMS learning area varied. All teachers expressed changing attitudes towards the new

curriculum, and changing ways of talking about it. Teachers had shifted in varying degrees from being overtly 'negative' towards developing 'guardedly positive' and 'very positive' attitudes towards the new curriculum. Teachers were able to describe the new EMS curriculum in more practical ways and could articulate benefits they had identified. With regard to teachers' understandings of the EMS learning area, it was evident that teachers had experienced definite albeit varying shifts in their understandings, ranging from 'very weak' understandings to 'developing understandings' and 'substantially developed understandings'.

Table 2: Teachers' changing conceptions/understanding of the EMS learning area

	Teachers' changing conceptions/understanding of the EMS learning area									
	Early understandings					***Later understandings***				
	Very weak understanding	**Lay/everyday understanding**	**Partial understanding**	**Developing understanding**	**Substantially developed understanding**	**Very weak understanding**	**Lay/everyday understanding**	**Partial understanding**	**Developing understanding**	**Substantially developed understanding**
John		X								X
Mary	X								X	
Ben	X							X		
Kim	X								X	
Shirley	X								X	
Beth	X								X	
Debbie	X									X

Wenger's framework allowed us to discern that teacher learning *had* in fact taken place. Teachers had begun to experience the new EMS curriculum as meaningful. With regard to teachers' understandings of EMS, it was evident that teachers had experienced definite shifts in their content knowledge and pedagogic content knowledge base.

With regard to 'practice' namely, 'learning as doing', the study illuminated teachers' changing practices in relation to EMS teaching. As mentioned above, the concept practice entails *doing* in a historical and social context. It includes both the explicit and the tacit. It is about meaning as an experience of daily

life. For participants in the TEMS community, Wenger's framework offered the flexibility to observe teachers' evolving practice in terms of the enterprise of the TEMS project, namely the development of EMS content knowledge, pedagogic content knowledge, and teaching resources. Semi-structured classroom observation schedules were used to gather data on teachers' changing practices. An aggregate picture of the TEMS research participants' changing practice is presented in the following table.

Table 3: A composite picture of teachers' learning in terms of teachers' evolving practice

	Teachers' changing practice									
	Early observations					*Later observations*				
	Content knowledge	**Pedagogic content knowledge**	**Questioning and rapport**	**Pupil involvement**	**Teaching resources**	**Content knowledge**	**Pedagogic content knowledge**	**Questioning and rapport**	**Pupil involvement**	**Teaching resources**
John	C	C	C	C	B	A	A	A	A	B
Mary	C	D	C	C	B	B	B	B	A	A
Ben	D	D	D	D	D	C	D	C	C	D
Kim	D	D	C	D	C	B	B	C	B	B
Shirley	D	D	D	C	C	B	B	B	B	B
Beth	D	D	B	B	C	B	B	B	A	B
Debbie	C	C	C	C	C	A	A	B	A	A

Key to the table

A = Good/substantially present
B = Developing/adequate
C = Partial/scant/inadequate
D = Weak/poor/non-existent

Wenger's third component of learning, namely, 'identity' provides a way of discerning 'learning as becoming'. In the TEMS community this was signalled by the fact that teachers experienced their learning in terms of changed perspectives about who they were and what they were becoming. Teachers identified themselves as EMS teachers and envisaged a future for themselves

as EMS teachers at their respective schools. This is reflected in comments below:

> . . .I feel like I'll volunteer to do more EMS next year, (laughs) because I enjoy it.
>
> Next year, we are thinking of having a market day. We wanted to have it this year, but the time factor was against us. Next year, definitely, I want to go for that and get them involved in making articles. To let them have the feeling of it, you know. It's very important.
>
> I'd like to take my children to new heights with EMS next year.
>
> I want to do more EMS next year. I would like to focus on EMS next year, instead of doing a whole lot of different subjects that I don't enjoy.

It became clear that teachers' participation in the TEMS community of practice had resulted in their repositioning themselves within their own school communities. Learning in terms of changing identities as suggested by Wenger was easily discernable.

The table below presents a composite picture of teachers' learning in terms of the three components of Wenger's theory.

Table 4: A composite table of teachers' learning in terms of meaning, practice and identity

	Evolving *Meaning* (Extent of change)					**Evolving *Practice* (Extent of change)**					**Evolving *Identities* (Extent of change)**				
	Not discernable	**Limited/marginal**	**Moderate/modest/fair**	**Substantially notable**	**Significant/profound**	**Not discernable**	**Limited/marginal**	**Moderate/modest/fair**	**Substantially notable**	**Significant/profound**	**Not discernable**	**Limited/marginal**	**Moderate/modest/fair**	**Substantially notable**	**Significant/profound**
John					X					X					X
Mary				X					X					X	
Ben		X					X							X	
Kim				X					X			X			
Shirley				X					X				X		
Beth				X					X						X
Debbie					X					X			X		

Finally, in terms of 'community' namely, 'learning as belonging' (participation), Wenger's conception allows us to observe learning as changing participation in the tems community. The following extract taken from an independent observer's report reflects the kind of participation that occurred in the TEMS community:

> The community of practice appeared to be functioning well – indicators were punctuality, collegiality and robust participation. The fact that members themselves were presenting the lessons contributed to the impression of a single community rather than a community being led by the outside facilitator. Despite some light-hearted early disclaimers about not being qualified in EMS, the members who led sessions did so with confidence and enjoyment. Report backs were confident and well informed. My overriding impression was of teachers who felt they were benefiting from the activities, who were comfortable to play their roles as learners, and who were comfortable with each other.

Wenger (1998) suggests that for the three dimensions of a community of practice; namely, a community of mutual engagement, a negotiated enterprise, and a repertoire of negotiable resources, the characteristics listed in the table below have to be present to a substantial degree. An analysis of the TEMS community in terms of Wenger's three dimensions revealed that Wenger's guiding criteria were substantively present for nine of the fourteen categories.

Table 5: Criteria for the emergence of a community

(P = Substantially present; D = Developing; A = Absent)

Criteria	P	D	A
Sustained mutual relationships – harmonious or conflictual	X		
Shared ways of engaging in doing things together	X		
The rapid flow of information and the propagation of innovation	X		
Absence of introductory preambles, as if conversations and interactions were merely the continuation of an ongoing process		X	
Very quick set-up of a problem to be involved	X		
Substantial overlap in participants' descriptions of who belongs		X	
Knowing what others know, what they can d, and how they can contribute to an enterprise	X		
Mutually defining identities		X	
The ability to assess the appropriateness of actions and products		X	
Specific tools, representations and artefacts	X		
Local lore, shared stories, inside jokes, knowing laughter	X		
Jargon and shortcuts to communication as well as ease of producing new ones	X		
Certain styles recognised as displaying membership	X		
A shared discourse reflecting a certain perspective on the world		X	

Although Wenger disaggregates learning into four components, he also reminds us that each of the components of learning is connected and mutually reinforcing. In summary, the strength of Wenger's framework is that it allows for the simultaneous study of the teacher development policy environment, the contexts of teachers' work, as well as teachers' efforts to make meaning of the multiple dimensions of their teaching practice. More importantly, compared to current 'deficit' conceptions of professional development, it offers a useful, broader alternative conception of teacher learning.

Challenges in applying Wenger's framework

Perhaps the most poignant critique of the model is its failure to develop an instructional pedagogy as it neglects to acknowledge the role of a formal

learning facilitator, teacher or instructor (Graven, 2002). Graven and Lerman (2003, p.189) remind us that "even the most didactic forms of teaching have led to successful learning". For Wenger, instruction plays a secondary role; the role of the community as a whole in offering learners opportunities for participation is regarded as being more important. This presents as a serious challenge in applying his framework, since he deliberately marginalises the role of teaching as a fundamental process that produces learning. The model suggests that teaching is not a precondition for learning and may not be particularly useful for learning. His focus is on the concept 'learning' at the expense of any substantial discussion of teaching and advances the notion of 'participation' as being more useful and effective than particular tools and techniques for learning. Relations of participation are foregrounded at the expense of the conventional teacher/learner dyad. Engaging in collaborative activities of a community of practice could become a superficial and pointless exercise if the enterprise lacks purpose and direction and is disconnected from the teaching and learning process. Simply becoming a member of a community of teacher learners for the sake of joining is a futile exercise (Hargreaves, 1995). The TEMS community certainly needed the input of an outside expert to signal the knowledge that counted and to help participating members develop new content knowledge. This was evident from my first encounter with the co-ordinator.

Extract from journal dated September 15, 2002

> . . . I learnt that teachers in the Mariannhill-Shallcross area had in fact already organised a structure (which they referred to as a cell group) that was a forum where teachers in a learning area met regularly to discuss curriculum issues and to share ideas and resources. A cell group for the EMS learning area had just recently been formed. The coordinator highlighted some of the difficulties that the group was experiencing: EMS teachers needed help EMS content knowledge, as they were uncertain of the expectations of the new learning area.

Wenger's work needs refinement if it is to be applied to formal education contexts where the role of a teacher (or facilitator) is crucial in order to enable successful learning (Graven and Lerman, 2003). Graven and Lerman (2003) suggest that teaching in most pre- and in-service teacher education programmes takes place within a community of practice. They proceed to challenge the notion of not foregrounding the role of a 'teacher' *and* key knowledge, skills and identities that need to be developed in teacher communities of practice.

Wenger's model does not give sufficient attention to wider social and economic inequalities within which participants in a community of practice are embedded. As such it does not offer sufficient insights into understanding inequalities and disadvantage that may be peculiar to individuals within a community. These phenomena are particularly overt in a context like South Africa where issues of ethnicity, social class and gender are likely to influence the structuring of learning opportunities in learning a community. The challenge that the Wenger framework presents is to incorporate the broader issues of social and economic inequalities that may exist beyond the actual site of learning, fully into the analysis of learning. This is particularly significant in a South African context characterised by widespread social and economic inequalities. The work of Bourdieu (1986) is useful as it offers an extended analysis using the concepts 'economic capital', 'social capital' and 'cultural capital'. Wenger's model does not acknowledge that the development of the individual needs to be viewed as a negotiated process that is subjected to both facilitative and oppressive forces that may exist within and beyond the community of practice as will be seen in the analysis that follows.

The following narrative vignettes offer interesting contrasts in terms of two teachers who appeared to progress differently on the learning continuum.

A narrative vignette of Debbie

Debbie was an Indian teacher in her late thirties. She had completed her formal teaching degree at a local university and had proceeded to complete an honours degree in education. She was seriously contemplating enrolling for a masters degree at the local university. Having been teaching at her school for 15 years, she felt that she had a good relationship with her colleagues and with members of management, and generally looked forward to going to school. Debbie had confidence in her school management team. . . a well-organised and well functioning library operated at this school. . . the principal and the management team had a tight rein on the functioning of the school. Teachers were expected to submit their record books (preparation files, assessment files, daily planners and pupils' books) to management for scrutiny on a weekly basis. Curriculum planning took place well in advance.

A narrative vignette of Ben

Ben was an isiZulu speaking African teacher in his mid-forties. (His school) was the poorest and least resourced (of all the participating schools). Ben had a disrupted academic career. . . without having finished matric (grade twelve), he was admitted to a teachers' college, where he spent two years.[1] Ben then joined the teaching profession and studied

[1] Welch (2002) reminds us that under apartheid, secondary education for Black students was in fact teacher education.

privately to obtain a matric certificate. He proceeded to study towards a senior teaching certificate, but this was interrupted because he had suffered from a severe stroke. His status at his school was that of a temporary teacher. He was always seen to be keen to please his principal and always addressed him with elaborate respect and humbleness. . . he was one of the many teachers who had not been receiving regular monthly salary payments from the state. His tenure at the school was not secure and depended on how strongly the principal motivated for him to remain there. . . Of significance at (this school) was the absence of greenery. The school had a telephone and although it had a fax machine, it seldom functioned properly. It had two computers that were located in the principal's and deputy principal's office. The school could not afford to be linked to the Internet. Sports facilities at this school were non-existent. This school serviced a very poor community. Almost all the pupils came from homes that were impoverished.

The nature and extent of the learning was markedly different for both teachers. Wenger's model does not adequately capture why this was so. Debbie's career trajectory and history of ongoing reading and study allowed her to embrace the new EMS learning area with well-developed skills. Debbie's 'superior' cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), that is her disposition and way of thinking, knowledge, skills, attitudes (high expectations) and post graduate education augured well for her to 'succeed' and benefit in profound ways in the TEMS community. She had developed an intrinsic desire to read and broaden her knowledge and regularly used the TEMS forum to engage with other teachers on issues that were important to her. Ben on the other hand had not been involved in formal study for more than twenty years. He had been a product of a repressive education system both as a school pupil and as a training teacher. He rarely prepared any of his lessons and did not see the need for any kind of record thereof. Accountability structures were virtually non-existent in Ben's school.

Debbie's financial position was stable. Her economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986) was not a cause for concern and did not dictate in any significant way the kinds of life choices she had to make. Ben on the other hand had experienced much instability and uncertainty with regard to his financial status. During most of his adult life, his main concern was economic survival. As far as Debbie's personal and professional life was concerned, she appeared relatively settled and secure in her current position. She was an established languages teacher and belonged to the languages committee. The school conditions under which she worked were significantly better than Ben's. Her school appeared to

have structure and quality assurance mechanisms in place that made Debbie accountable to school management for all aspects of her professional work. Debbie accepted this as part of what was required of her. This social capital (*ibid*.) as represented by her access to resources based on group membership, relationships, networks of influence and support enhanced her potential to move from peripheral to full membership of the TEMS community.

This was in sharp contrast to Ben who was at the mercy of his principal. Ben's tenure at his school was uncertain and depended on his principal's perception of him. Ben had returned to the teaching profession after a failed business venture. He had not secured a place for himself at the school and had weak affiliations to established networks of teachers. He was in an unenviable position in that in order to retain a post at his school, he had to accept any teaching subject that was thrust upon him. He tried to project an image of commitment and dedication to the school by involving himself in numerous school activities that would enhance his reputation at the school. Ben however, received little real support from his principal who appeared not to take a personal interest in Ben's development. Ben's motivation for learning and membership of the TEMS community stemmed from his need to make himself valuable as an EMS teacher in his school. It becomes clear that differences in economic, social and cultural capital have a profound influence on learning within a community of practice. Wenger's framework does not provide an adequate conceptual framework to capture how these differences play themselves out in a community of practice.

Wenger's model of a community of practice presents an account of learning based on the formation of a group-referenced identity. For Wenger, the group represents the primary unit of analysis, where learning becomes inseparable from forms of social engagement. Exploring an individual member's learning trajectory is difficult using Wenger's model, as the model does not provide adequate tools for such analysis. This is significant, as a key barrier to learning is in fact discontinuity in the learning trajectory. In a teacher learning community, assessing the learning of an individual teacher presents a challenge, as Wenger's model is silent on this issue. Wenger fails to deal adequately with participants as individuals despite the explicit focus on identity. Understanding individual dispositions and personalities and how they play themselves out in a community of practice are overlooked in the model. The social approach to learning presented by Wenger is at the expense of an analysis of the way individual members of a community of practice learn. While Wenger acknowledges the reflexive transformation of individuals in a

community of practice, he does not offer a compelling framework to explore how this occurs. The challenge then is to theorise a model that integrates individual members learning in a community of practice.
Wenger does not explore the barriers to learning posed by tensions originating from structural unevenness of power in communities of practice and how such unevenness can contribute to exclusion. He does not offer a detailed framework to explain ways in which communities could disempower members and how community tensions can be understood. The model does not offer insights for explaining discontinuities in learning that stem from unequal access to learning. Learning opportunities may depend on an individual's status within a community. In learning communities more powerful members are able to gain greater access to learning opportunities. From the following independent observers' reports, we note the tensions that prevailed in the TEMS community.

Extract of independent observer report: Hugh

I also was very alerted to the race dynamics that existed. . . the Indian educators were in clusters in the front of the class. Two African participants who came in late sat right at the back, next to me. I felt that the facilitators spoke primarily to the Indian participants in the front and excluded the African participants. . . While I have been critical, I was pleased that educators within a subject area could come together, share and offer support to each other.

Extract from independent observer: Gary

The group (Indian lady only) spoke about teamwork. . . the African man was tasked to write this down while the African lady remained passive. . . the African man and the Indian lady argued about who should present. The African lady was excluded from this. . .

In the above two extracts, observers commented on their perceptions of racial dynamics in the TEMS programme that undermined the community of practice. In attempting to understand the issue of 'African exclusion' that these observers raised, the work of Wolpe (1988) on explaining social difference has reference. Wolpe argues that in trying to understand social difference, issues of politics, class *and* race must be considered, as they produce differentiations within groups. Simply

> (P)rivileging race. . . as a category of analysis underplays the ways in which a whole range of conditions and processes influence the sense of cohesiveness and fragmentation within groups. . . the racial discourse of apartheid has been carried into the new South Africa. . .(and) . . . (t)he new reform agenda has remained firmly within the discourse of race.
>
> (Soudien, 2004, p.91)

Soudien, a leading South African academic and researcher, goes on to present a challenge to South African researchers, namely, "(h)ow do we write in ways that will subvert the power that comes with the language of race?" (*ibid*.). In his review of research in the field of school integration, he asserts that the 'race scape' is still a dominant category of analysis in South Africa and notes that "(r)ace. . . becomes the almost unchallenged lens through which South African difference is understood" (*ibid*., p.110). It is therefore not unreasonable to expect that in South Africa, some researchers may still focus on race as their default mode. However, the views of the independent observers are important as they suggest the extent of participation within the community may have been uneven along racial lines. Wenger's theory is somewhat limited in helping us understand issues of race as they apply to a South African teacher community of practice that may comprise teachers from diverse race and language backgrounds. Wenger does, however, offer the concept of 'peripheral participation' as an analytical tool. In a South African teacher education context characterised by the historically marginalized African teachers, the phenomenon of African teachers enacting/adopting peripheral positions in a teacher learning community should not be viewed as an unusual phenomenon. Rather, facilitators of communities of practice should be sensitive to it.

It must be noted that teachers in the TEMS community came from schools that were homogenous in terms of race, that is, all participating schools had teaching staff compositions that were either all Black African, or all Indian. Deep divisions and segregation are still features of South African education. In her analysis of the challenges of teacher education in South Africa, Adler (2002) notes that apartheid had produced a grossly unequal society and damaged the essential fabric of society. The issue of race and its barriers to engagement is a complex one. 'Inadequate' English language proficiency is certainly a barrier. A more compelling factor is an issue that Adler (*ibid*.) reminds us about and that is that apartheid education and apartheid teacher education in particular produced Black African teachers with a knowledge base that "was inadequate. . . from which to proceed and grow in post-apartheid South Africa" (*ibid.* p.8). There is some evidence to suggest that 'deficit' identities still prevail amongst some Black African teachers and manifest themselves in 'guarded' participation. The rationale for guarded levels of participation appear to be a combination of the legacy of racial separation, and in particular the understandable difficulty of second language speakers who have to engage in a new academic discourse, and the associated challenge of not being able to respond 'immediately' to issues being discussed

in the TEMS programme. The language issue compounds the serious challenge to teacher development in South Africa posed by the poor conceptual knowledge base of many teachers, particularly those who had been subjected to poor quality education under apartheid (Taylor and Vinjevold, 1999).

In the diverse South African context, while teacher learning communities may comprise teachers who hail from vastly different teaching contexts, dominant teachers in learning communities may well be from middle class schools and as such may dictate the agenda by focusing on curriculum issues pertinent to middle class schools and children at the expense of the challenges facing teachers working in socio-economically deprived schools. Soudien (2004) in his analysis of the 'class scape' in South African education reminds us that while dominant classes have had to make space for new constituencies, they had done so on their own terms. If middle class teachers formed middle class teacher learning communities and engaged in issues that were peculiar to their contexts, and if working class teachers did the same, this kind of situation is likely to perpetuate imbalances and inequities that exist in our society. Some teachers working in socio-economically and academically advantaged contexts may exercise self interest by electing to form learning communities with likeminded individuals who may for example include on their agenda the need to 'maintain standards' and achieve high and quality pass rates as a way of entrenching their own status within their schools. This particular type of community formation is exclusionary as it may discriminate against certain groups and may be in contravention of the principles of a democratic society.

In establishing a community of practice as a vehicle for teacher learning, the assumption in terms of Wenger's framework is that the group of individuals, who come together to learn by participation in the activities of the community, do have substantial existing knowledge, if not background knowledge of the discipline they wish to master. TEMS teachers, however, joined the programme because they had virtually no formal content knowledge of commerce apart from their lay knowledge that they had acquired from personal experience. This then raises the issue as to whether such a community of practice has the potential to develop content knowledge without the input of an outside 'expert'. Without an 'expert' input, the community's resources would be limited to pedagogic knowledge and pedagogic content knowledge based on weak understandings of discipline issues. There is a distinct danger in using communities of practice, as a model for learning as learning communities can be very effective in *poor* practice. The implicit

assumption in Wenger's work is that learning in a community of practice is generally good. If little attention is paid to what is learnt, poor teaching practices and faulty understandings of key subject matter could be learned very effectively, become entrenched and be continuously reinforced. In an early analysis of a lesson by one of the research participants, there was a distinct inaccuracy in the way the economic concept 'work' was explained. Economically inactive people such as pensioners may seek to keep themselves busy by doing odd chores around the house, but in an economic sense, this cannot be considered 'economic work'. The extract below depicts this misconception.

John: Okay, I think you get the picture. These are the dreams, a salary can satisfy your dreams.
Number 5. . . what is unemployment? . . . Yes (points)

Pupil: When you do not have work.

John: When you do not have. . . work. Okay number six. Let me explain that. . . can anybody say I have no work? (pause and silence). Yes. . . I've just mentioned my father and my father-in-law, they are retired and they say every day we have to do some work. Can you say I do not have work? There's always something to do whether you earn a living or not.

There is also a 'dangerous' assumption that members of a community of practice are sufficiently alert and receptive and have already figured out what they need to know. This may not always be the case. On the basis of the TEMS experience, this appears to be a somewhat limited judgement as it offers little or no insight into the role of an outside expert, particularly in a community like TEMS, where the development of disciplinary expertise was a crucial enterprise of the project.

Conclusion

This paper set out to analyse the nature of teacher learning of novice economic and management sciences teachers involved in the teaching economic and management sciences (TEMS) teacher development project. It argued that Wenger's theory (Wenger, 1998) provided a useful framework to analyse teacher learning in a community of practice. It drew attention to the challenges in applying a community of practice framework for analysing teacher learning and argued that while teacher communities of practice presented interesting challenges for teacher development, they do in fact have much potential as

vehicles for teacher professional development in a South African context characterised by the marked absence of formal or 'official' teacher development programmes in areas of need.

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Journal of Education

Periodical of the Kenton Education Association
School of Education and Development
School of Adult and Higher Education
University of KwaZulu-Natal

The ***Journal of Education*** is an interdisciplinary publication of original research and writing on education. The Journal aims to provide a forum for the 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.

While it is intended that the journal will remain academic in nature, the readers are considered to be educational generalists and articles which are of interest to such readers will receive preference. Potential contributors are asked to ensure that submissions conform to the guidelines outlined at the back of the journal.

The Journal of Education is intended to serve as a resource for scholars of education, and such readers are free to make a limited number of copies of articles for non-profit research and teaching purposes. In cases where multiple copies are required for teaching purposes, we trust that South African institutions affiliated to the Dramatic, Artistic and Literary Rights Organisation (Pty) Limited (DALRO) will follow normal procedures with respect to the reproduction of publications.

The journal is freely available in Adobe Acrobat format on the World Wide Web at http://www.ukzn.ac.za/joe. Members of the Kenton Education Association receive copies of the journal as part of their membership benefits. Institutional subscribers should contact the editors.

Editorial Committee

Editorial Board

Notes for Contributors

Journal of Education will appear at least twice per year.

Submissions

Unsolicited papers are welcome for consideration and should be addressed to the Editor of the ***Journal of Education***. Submitting authors should note that a per page fee of R100 will be levied on published submissions. Institutional Research Offices of higher education institutions usually pay this type of fee. Authors whose affiliated organisation may not have instituted this practice are asked to contact the Editor, as the levy is a means of sustaining the journal, and is not intended as a deterrent to aspiring authors!

Articles and review essays are reviewed by anonymous external referees. Appropriate papers will be refereed for significance and soundness. Papers are accepted on the understanding that they have not been published or accepted for publication elsewhere.

Articles and essay reviews (maximum 6 000 words); debate, discussion and research notes (2 500 words); book reviews (2 000 words); and book notes (200 words) will be considered.

Contributors should submit three clear, page numbered copies of the manuscript, and bearing the title of the paper. Manuscripts will not be returned. The name(s) and full address(es) of the author should appear on a separate sheet. Each paper should be accompanied by a 100 – 150 word abstract. Hard copies should either be accompanied by a 3½ inch diskette bearing the article, or followed by the file sent as an email attachment to the Editor at JoE@ukzn.ac.za. Articles sent by e-mail only are not accepted except in cases where this might be the only reasonable means of communication.

The electronic version of the article should not be formatted, and should preferably not use a variety of fonts and font sizes or use paragraph styles. Where necessary, however authors may wish to indicate levels of subheadings (i.e. first level, second level). Footnotes should be kept to a minimum, and authors are asked to keep tables and diagrams to the most feasible level of size and simplicity. Tables and diagrams should also be sent in separate files.

Each author will receive a copy of the journal in which the paper appears.

Referencing style

Journal of Education style of referencing is a requirement. References in the text should appear as follows:

> No country in the world can afford the schooling its people want (Reimer, 1971) and it has been argued that "of all 'false utilities', school is the most insidious" (Illich, 1971, p.60).

The references should be listed in full at the end of the paper in an acceptable standard format, preferably the following:

Books

> Surname(s), Initial(s). Year of publication. *Title: additional title information*. Edition (if other than the first). Place of publication: Publisher.

Chapters in edited or compiled books

> Surname(s), Initial(s). Year of publication. Title of chapter or article. In Surname(s), Initial(s) of editor(s) or compiler(s). (Eds). or (Comps). *Title of book*. Edition (if other than first). Place of publication: Publisher. Inclusive page numbers of the chapter.

Journal articles

> Surname(s), Initial(s). Year of publication. Title of article. *Name of journal* volume number (part number (if there is not continuous pagination)): inclusive page numbers.

Articles and reports in magazines and newspapers

Surname(s), Initial(s). Year of publication. Title of article. *Name of magazine or newspaper* day and month: inclusive (and additional) page numbers.

Book reviews

Surname of reviewer, Initial(s). Year of publication. Title of review (if there is one). [Review of] *Title of book reviewed* by Name of author in its most familiar form. *Name of periodical* volume number (part number) or date (if applicable): inclusive page numbers.

Theses and dissertations

Surname, Initial(s). Year. Title: additional title information. Description of work. Location of university: name of university.

Seminar papers

Surname, Initial(s). Year. Title: additional title information. Unpublished seminar paper. Location of university: name of university, name of department, programme or unit.

Conference papers (unpublished)

Surname(s), Initial(s). Year. Title: additional title information. Description of occasion (including the nature and subject of the conference or meeting, name of the society or group, the place at which it was held and the date(s) on which it was held).

Duplicated materials

Surname(s), Initial(s). Year. Title: additional title information. Description of material. Location of issuing body: name of issuing body.

Interviews

Surname of person interviewed, Initial(s). Year. Interviewed by initial(s) and surname of interviewer. Place where interview occurred, further details of date (day and month). Details of location of transcript, if available.

Personal communications

Surname of person with whom communicated, Initial(s). Year. Description of communication, further details of date (day, month).

Microforms, audio-visual material, CD-ROMs etc.

As for works above but with the addition of the format in square brackets at the end of the reference, e.g. [Microfilm] or [Videotape] or [CD-ROM], etc.

Online sources of information (published or unpublished)

Surname(s), Initial(s). Year of publication. *Title.* Version (if any). Place of publication: Publisher.
<Address of web page between> Day, month (and year if different to publication year) of visit to site.

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Frequently asked questions

Is the Journal of Education SAPSE accredited?
Yes

How many issues per year?
In terms of a recent policy decision, we aim to produce at least two 'normal' editions of the journal each year in addition to at least two special issues (one of which will be the Kenton Special Edition).

Most journals now have a per page fee which contributors are required to meet should their articles be accepted. Does the Journal of Education levy such charges?
Yes. This step was necessary to cover the costs of the increased number of issues each year. A levy of R75 per page will be applied to successful articles submitted to our office. The central research offices in most institutions of higher education routinely arrange for such payments to be made. We encourage individual authors who do not have such cover to contact us.

Are articles peer reviewed?
Yes. Our goal is for articles to be refereed by three experts in the field.

What is the waiting period after submission?
Referees provide their crucially important service for no reward, and are sometimes unable to oblige on time but we endeavour to respond within three months.

Can I send my submission by e-mail?
Only if you live in a place where submission of three hard copies is inordinately difficult or expensive, please. The norm is three hard copies sent to our office. The electronic version of the article may be sent as an email attachment, or on a disk included with the hard copies.

To what extent should an article being submitted be presented in 'the style' of the journal?
Citation and referencing should be in the style of the journal (see the previous section 'Notes for Contributors'). Authors are not expected to reproduce the particular fonts and font sizes used in the journal, but the levels of headings and subheading should be clear on the hard copies submitted. With regard to the electronic version of the article, we prefer as little formatting as possible.

Does the journal have a policy to encourage and support budding novice researchers?
Unfortunately not – this is simply beyond our capacity. While we welcome extended comment that referees may be able to offer, we cannot impose on their good services beyond the expectation of an overall judgement on the article, together with brief justification of that judgement.

What is the rate of acceptance/ rejection?
The following statistics for 2002 and 2003 provide an indication of the pattern of acceptance/ non acceptance:

Year	Accepted with no or minor revisions	Accepted after revisions	Not accepted
2002	9	7	41
2003	15	9	47

Even an increase in the number of issues each year will not keep pace with the ever-increasing number of submissions. We can do little to mitigate the competition engendered by state funding policy and the kinds of incentive schemes that have become a feature of the higher education landscape.

Is there an appeal mechanism should my article not be accepted?
Beyond summarizing reasons for rejection – where applicable - we regret that we are unable to enter into detailed discussion on decisions reached by the Editorial Committee on the basis of referee reports.

The journal describes itself as providing "a forum for scholarly understanding of the field of education". What does this really mean?
We understand this as implying that articles should represent a rigorous enquiry (conducted through argumentation or empirically) into the understanding of educational issues. Such inquiry originates in a problem rather than a solution, and it is rare for such enquiry to have no reference to, or engagement with, a broader literature and theory. Advocacy in the form of prescriptions or 'how to do it' recipe knowledge for practitioners seldom finds favour with referees. The question of audience is key. The assumed audience is the collective body of researchers rather than those more narrowly concerned with the effective implementation of specific policies.

Recent non-acceptances include a high proportion of undeveloped research reports, summaries of dissertations, and even sound but small-scale case studies that are purely context specific and unconnected with broader issues, literature or theory. Similarly, even a successful conference paper is usually in need of further development before it merits publication.

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