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Editorial

Wayne Hugo

Abstract

Utilitarianism has a proud intellectual history but has become a current swear word in educational circles critical of neo-liberal managerialism. It started with Liebniz's dream of a 'characteristica universalis' where rational men, faced with a moral problem, could get around a table and say 'let us calculate'. It is a dream that has refused to die, and, although often mocked, it is becoming a modern reality. Bentham initially chased it by trying to calculate what would make the most people happy most of the time, but got pleasure and happiness confused, Mill corrected him but forever afterwards, pleasure and utilitarianism went their different ways and now we face utilitarianism in our universities with no pleasure at all, or so Ntshoe would have it in the third article of this edition. I, for one, remain unconvinced with the use of Utilitarianism as a catch all bogey name for all that is wrong with modern forms that calculate and quantify productive living, and would prefer that we use utilitarian measures built over three centuries of debate, critique and defense as a robust tool to critique current formulations. On a broader level, when one is dealing with the messy question of what it means to provide a quality education for as many people as possible, Utilitarianism has a range of tools that help avoid already worked through pitfalls and dead-ends. We need to understand how Utilitarianism and Education intersect, rather than using it as an imaginary monster.

Underpinning the intersection of Education and Utilitarianism is a universal language of education, a project that currently has a number of curious forms. One of the strangest is the universal design of 'learning objects' producing teachable education content units with descriptors attached, making possible an 'ars combinatoria' where teachers and students can chart their way through the teachable universe, picking and choosing what they need from the web. Another is a universal analytical language that can recognise, delineate and operationalise educational structures in whatever space/time/content world they appear. Bernstein is the harbinger of this universal educational language, still in its infancy. Some are currently trying to work through Bernstein's combinatorial matrix and its elaborations and additions. A good example of this project is found in the first paper written by Whitty Green and Devika

Naidoo and can be most clearly seen in table 6 on p.26 where the pedagogic code of three schools are captured using universal codes drawn from Bernstein and Bloom. An experienced diagnostic eye will immediately pick up on the issues – only the school with ample resources has weak pacing in learning knowledge and weak framing of regulative relations between teacher and learner that emphasise a personal touch. The school with adequate resources and the school lacking resources both have more strongly framed pacing and more positional authority relations between teacher and learner. As revealing is the poorest school showing very weak framing of evaluation, with almost no clarity and explicit feedback given to the learners, with the other two schools showing strong framing of evaluation indicating that the teacher is explicitly providing both the criteria and feedback that make clear what it is learners should know and when they are successful in the endeavor. Absent from the poorest school is any attempt to work with processes of understanding and evaluation, rather the emphasis is on rote learning with a mimicking of application. It provides a DPA rather than a DNA code of schools, DPA standing for Diagnostic Pedagogic Analysis. With a universal analytical language of education we can begin to approach the question of what the best education for the most learners would look like, otherwise we continue to scrabble in contextual dark lands.

Bentham plays an interesting role in this project with his credo that the common end of every person's education is happiness. He was the original mind tasked with opening out the possibilities of an embryonic Utilitarianism to the world. He was also intimately involved in its attempted actualization. Part of this project involved the precise negative of bringing the most happiness to the most people. He also asked how to bring about the most discipline for the most people in need of it, developing plans for a panopticon prison he then spent most of his fortune trying to build. Here the issue was of obtaining power over the mind through mind as cheaply as possible. Foucault famously brought this out for us in his best seller text currently taught in French High Schools, *Discipline and punish,* and it is used by Dixon and Dornbrack to analyse school discipline in an ex model C post apartheid school. Most of the kids landing up in detention at this school were black boys, and this was not considered in anyway remarkable by the school. Dixon and Dornbrack open out for us the racialised and gendered workings of the disciplinary matrix in a post apartheid school.

As useful as Foucault is for analysing discipline, Kai Horsthemke certainly believes Foucault is not of much use when talking about 'truth', especially when the overused mantra 'truth is power' bleats itself in thousands of under-

graduated heads. Under Foucault's charming acolytes 'Indigenous Knowledge' springs forth equal to 'Scientific Knowledge' for the supposed reason that both are implicated in power relations. Horsthemke spends much of his paper disabusing us of the legitimacy of this move and its unfortunate consequences in education where constructivism and the social construction of knowledge degrade 'a fundamental education task – that of the transmission of knowledge' p.84. He points out that 'as a pedagogy and as a learning theory, constructivism is likely to be disturbingly disempowering' p.84. If any statement throws down the gauntlet to Ian Moll to write his book defending constructivism in South Africa, then this is it. Horsthemke plumps for Realism as a more viable epistemology for teaching and learning. The result is educative discourse that 'should consist only of statements of sincere belief that are true and suitably justified – other things being equal' p.92. This reminds me of the attempt of the logical positivists to stay true to their principles in the Vienna Circle meetings and only say things that were either logical or empirically justifiable. Carnap was appointed as the person to point out whenever a logical positivist stepped out of these confines of truth. When almost every statement got a raised hand of disqualification they eventually decided that Carnap should do the opposite and raise his hand whenever a statement complied with the rigours of truth (and his arm got lots of rest). If the best philosophers of logical positivism could not get it right one has to wonder about our teachers in the post apartheid classroom.

'Quality' education has taken over from 'good' education as a dominant descriptor working with development and reform, to the point where even our radicals use it without hesitation, witness the 'quality education for all' campaign. It's such an empty quantifier in current use. Is quality education somehow one tangible, graspable thing that we can spread around, stripped of actual qualities in the process? 'What are good *qualities* of education?' we might ask to shake the frame a little, as George Lakoff does. Heystek does not have such issues with the term, but he is interested in how the new powers of governing bodies impact on the quality of education delivered in schools. His paper boils down to the following insight – the less principled and professional the management and teaching staff of a school, the more impact governing bodies can have by directly intervening in school affairs to improve quality. Principals and teachers are understandably uncomfortable with this kind of intervention in their professional lives, but as Heystek acidly points out, if they are not behaving professionally then they lose out on the claim for non-interference. We do need governing bodies to play a strong role in dysfunctional schools, to understand what basic education standards are, and to insist that schools deliver on them, but we also need to bear in mind that

rural primary schools (where many of our dysfunctional schools are found) work strongly on traditional forms of patronage, and that patronage bedevils professional growth. Strengthening governing bodies could mean an insistence on local undereducated youths being preferred as teachers to well educated 'foreigners' based on all sorts of local demands and calculations we have not fully understood yet. More research on SGBs and the complex, often counter-intuitive, roles they play in post apartheid South African schools is needed.

Another zone recently identified in South Africa as playing a key role in improving the quality of education for all is early childhood care, most notably through the ramping up of Grade R classes throughout the country. It is crucial to ensure that all our children arrive in Grade One already familiar with school routine and its demands both on the body and mind. The move to ensure all our children are properly prepared for school stands in stark contrast with the beginnings of apartheid where almost any kind of state involvement in early childhood care was written off to the family. Ebrahim traces how apartheid twisted early childhood care into its own image and the various responses of NGOs and government over the last half a century to the changing social and political landscape captured in the neologism educare and the acronym ECD. The raced and classed nature of early childhood care is clearly brought out by Ebrahim, as are its various phases, making it a good introductory text to academics and students interested in this area.

Going back even further is Muthivhi's paper on education in Venda from the late nineteenth to middle twentieth century. It tracks the split in early Venda education between missionary and community schools and the evisceration of community schools by apartheid policies. Muthivhi is partisan in her account, the community schools in Venda are granted tragic-heroic status and we read of a grassroots education, filled with potential, corrupted and destroyed by missionaries and apartheid officials. I suspect the lines are not that clear, but what we can see in the account is the stifling of early hybrids. Charles Taylor, in his magisterial account of the rise of secularism in the West, shows how traditional Christian understandings slowly started to crossbreed and incorporate elements of secularism, allowing for a rich and multifaceted in-between world holding both traditional and modern in its fecund grasp. Specific educational openings and hybrids of traditional and modern were closed down both in Venda and South Africa and we are poorer today because of it.

Hlengwa focuses on the current debates around service learning in higher education and uses Bernstein's theoretical corpus to explore the issues.

Service learning seems to offer a direct link between students and the complex socio political world they are destined to work in, breaking the ivory tower mentality of university learning. Hlengwa notes that some disciplines have service learning as an intimate part of what they do, other disciplines totally ignore service learning. Rather than attempt a one sided support or dismissal of service learning Hlengwa points to the structural conditions within organised knowledge and pedagogic forms that either promote or discourage service learning. She does not give specific detailed examples but does point out some of the possible issues and logics that need to be considered when researching Service Learning within Higher Education.

Msila provides an account of how rural school principals are dealing with the enormous challenges facing schools in poverty stricken conditions. Although the article is substantively around an ACE programme in School Management and Leadership, its interest for the Journal revolved around the interviews with ten principals from rural schools in the Eastern Cape and KZN along with sustained periods of observation at the schools. A picture emerges of the conditions these principals face along with how they set about solving them.

Finally Carol Thomson has reviewed Jonathan Jansen's *Knowledge in the blood*. It is a text that is as seductive, troubling, insightful and humbly arrogant as the man himself and the review attempts a critical unpacking of one of the most striking publications in South African education over the last couple of years.

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Differentiated pedagogy in diverse physical science classrooms

Devika Naidoo and Whitty Green

Abstract

This study, located within Bernstein's sociology of pedagogy and the notion of 'opportunities to learn', commenced with the key question: what opportunities to learn physical science are made available in previously advantaged and disadvantaged South African classroom contexts? Data were collected through classroom observations and video recording of consecutive lessons on the same topic in the three schools. Data analysis showed that opportunities to learn the epistemology of science ranged from technical to specialised meaning realised by differentiated pedagogic modalities based within differentiated school contexts. Key influencing factors included differences in objective aspects like resource availability and class size with concomitant differences in discursive practices such as: pacing of knowledge; explicit evaluative judgement; social relations; and levels of knowledge and cognitive process taught. Different combinations contributed to differentiated opportunities to learn and understand science. The varying impact of class size on discursive practices is described and explained. We conclude that notwithstanding curriculum policy goals of equity in quality of learning experiences, actual opportunities to learn physical science are profoundly unequal. How the state intervenes to regulate these contextually specific inequalities in ways that gives fair chances to those trapped in lower socio-economic groups must be addressed as a matter of social justice.

Introduction

During apartheid, science education, like education generally, was stratified along both race and class lines. The education provided was racially separate and unequal. The apartheid state managed a centralised curriculum policy that was "racist, eurocentred, sexist, authoritarian, prescriptive, unchanging, context blind and discriminatory" (Jansen, 1999, p.4). Resources were very unequally distributed with ten times more spent per White child than per African child. By the 1970s, teachers were trained in racially separate colleges and universities (Sayed, 2004). Each type of college and university trained teachers of different races for schools of different races. The quality of teacher education for Africans was deliberately inferior to that for Whites. These structural inequalities made sure that high quality science education was not provided for the majority of Black, Coloured and Indian learners (Kahn,

2006). Describing science education more than forty years ago under Bantu Education, Horrel noted that children "gain little or no conception of basic principles" and "as few practical experiments are undertaken . . .the pupils fail to develop the ability to reason, to solve problems, and to draw correct conclusions from their own observations" (1968, p.72).

Democratic change in 1994 provided the basis for curriculum transformation and development. The new constitution (1996) and the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (2001) stipulate the principles of human rights, democracy, social justice, equity, non-racism, non-sexism, redress, and ubuntu (DoE, 2003) establishes basic education, and equal access to educational institutions as the right of all citizens. A priority in new curriculum policy is equity or the provision of *"essentially the same quality of learning opportunities for all citizens"* (NDOE, 1997, p.21).

Based on the new constitutional goals, national curriculum policy advocates a high knowledge, high skills curriculum as the means for promoting social justice, equity and development. The generic seven critical cross-field outcomes that underpin all curricula (NDOE, 2003) require learners to go beyond recall, recognition and reproduction of information and to critically evaluate, analyse, synthesize, produce and apply knowledge.

The South African National Curriculum Statement (NCS) for Physical Science (2003) emphasises 'high knowledge and high skills', and 'progression' as core principles underpinning the curriculum. The Statement defines progression as a "process of developing increasingly advanced and complex knowledge and skills" (p.3). In keeping with the outcomes-based approach adopted for South African education, the NCS for Physical Science advocates the development of three outcomes. Each of these outcomes and progression within them is outlined below:

> Learning outcome (LO) one focuses on the development of practical scientific enquiry and problem-solving skills. "Progression in this outcome is reflected in the differentiation of the problem situation, as it moves from routine problem-solving skills to high-order problem solving skills."
>
> Learning outcome two requires that learners are able to construct and apply scientific knowledge. "Progression in this outcome is reflected by the increase in the quantity and depth of understanding of concepts used, together with an increasing understanding of the connections between different concepts in order to develop a well-organised knowledge base."

> Learning outcome three requires that learners are able to understand the nature of science and its relationships to technology, society and the environment. "Progression in this learning outcome entails the relationship between knowledge systems and claims, and the increasing ability to analyse and evaluate their impact on socio-economic development in the wider world." (NCS Physical Science, 2003, p.28).

In alignment with the generic critical outcomes the learning outcomes for physical science require learners to be provided opportunities to learn factual, conceptual, (LO2) procedural (LO1) and metacognitive knowledge (LO3). The cognitive processes advocated include progress from routine problem-solving skills to high-order problem solving skills. Learning outcome two requires that learners understand more concepts in depth as well as the connections between different concepts in order to develop a well-organised knowledge base.

But, policy is not practice, and from the perspective of curriculum as a contextualised social practice (Cornbleth, 1990), the aim of this investigation was to analyse the opportunities to learn (OTL) physical science in previously advantaged and disadvantaged schools and classrooms. The notion of OTL is underpinned by the assumption that a major cause of inequalities in student academic performance is inequalities in content taught, in quality of instruction, in time allocated to subject areas, in adequate institutional resources and in assessment practices. More important, however, is that these inequalities in OTL are not random nor neutral, but related to race, class and gender power relations.

SA writers on curriculum practices have argued that school contexts differ markedly, that the social class of the school (Hoadley, 2007) and that the status of the school as previously advantaged and disadvantaged (Harley and Wedekind, 2005) is a key determinant in the reproduction of social inequalities. Reddy (2005) argues that schools are not serving the majority of learners in the country equitably. She makes two pertinent points. Firstly, that "presently access . . . to better learning opportunities is determined by access to economic resources", that "individuals who have the financial resources to access schools from other ex-racial departments have a better chance for improved learning opportunities, improved performance and hence life prospects". Secondly that "the learners who live in poorer areas and receive fewer educational experiences from other sources, and who are particularly dependent on the school, are not receiving sufficient inputs from these institutions to improve their life chances" .

In this study we analyse the variations in opportunities to learn physical science in diverging classrooms in schools which are representative of the contexts that Reddy describes, with a view to establishing new insights about how the teaching of science differs in the schools in the post-apartheid dispensation.

Theoretical framework

This research based fundamentally on Bernstein's (1996, 2000) theory of pedagogic discourse also employs the notion of opportunities to learn (OTL). According to Bernstein, what is missing from cultural reproduction theories "is a conceptualization of the structural conditions and the discursive rules of pedagogy that generate practices of inclusion and exclusion" (Singh and Luke, 1996, p.1). In the class stratified British context the key differentiating structural conditions refer to different social class schools. The impact of the type of school attended on learners' performance in SA has been highlighted by Christie (2008) who cites the Teese and Posselwel (2003) study in Australia. The salient point being that children, who attend 'fortified schools', are better placed to meet the demands of the curriculum than children who attend 'exposed schools'. Fortified schools are schools serving rich communities that have concentrations of material and symbolic advantage, such as learners from higher economic status backgrounds, well-trained teachers, particularly in mathematics and physics, well-stocked libraries, extensive electronic data resources, smaller classes, remedial teachers and counsellors whereas exposed schools are schools that serve poor communities and are characterised by multiple disadvantages such as fragmented family lives, poverty, low levels of parental education, and lack of facilities in facing the demands of the curriculum.

With regard to 'discursive rules of pedagogy' Bernstein argued that one important cause of poor performance of working class children lies in the differences in the recontextualisation of knowledge into pedagogic communication in different social class schools – recontextualizaion being the transformation of knowledge into pedagogic communication in the classroom. Hence, "it is the structure of pedagogic discourse, the logic of this discourse, which provides the means whereby external power relations can be carried by it" (Bernstein, 1996, p.19). One could expect significant variations in pedagogic communication in fortified and exposed schools.

Amongst the conceptual tools provided for analysis of pedagogic discourse are the concepts of classification and framing. The concept classification refers to the boundary distinguishing forms of knowledge.

> Classification refers to the strength of the boundary between knowledge contents. Where classification is strong, contents are well insulated from each other by strong boundaries. Where classification is weak there is reduced insulation between contents for the boundaries between contents are weak or blurred (Bernstein, 1996, p.56).

Bernstein developed the concept framing to analyse the control relations demonstrated in the pedagogical relationship. Frame refers to the form of the context in which knowledge is transmitted or received. There are two systems of rules regulated by framing – rules of the social order and rules of the discursive order. The rules of the social order are referred to as regulative discourse and the rules of the discursive order as instructional discourse. With reference to the instructional discourse framing does not refer to the content of knowledge that is framed but to who controls the framing. According to Bernstein:

> Frame refers to the strength of the boundary between what may be transmitted and what may not be transmitted. Where framing is strong there is a sharp boundary, where it is weak a blurred boundary between what may and may not be transmitted (Bernstein, 1971, p.55).

Framing of the instructional discourse refers to the nature of control over the selection of knowledge (who decides what is valid knowledge and what isn't?); the sequencing of knowledge (who decides what is taught first, second, etc.); the pacing of knowledge (who decides the rate of transmission or how time is used?); and the criteria of assessment (who decides on valid acquisition of knowledge?). In the pedagogic relationship strong framing refers to explicit control by the teacher and weak framing refers to the arrangement where learners are given some control over knowledge. Thus, Bernstein clarifies:

> . . .where framing is strong, the transmitter has explicit control over selection, sequence, pacing, criteria and the social base. Where framing is weak, the acquirer has more *apparent* control (1996, p.27).

Furthermore, the elements of framing may vary independently, i.e. one could identify strong sequencing and weak pacing in the same classroom or other combinations.

The regulative discourse is a discourse of order in the classroom that regulates how knowledge is transmitted. The regulative discourse maybe positional or hierarchical where order is maintained by the teacher only and sourced from the teachers position as a teacher or personalised where order is maintained by

both teacher and learners and achieved through mutual respect between teacher and learners (Bernstein, 1996).

In addition to analysing the classification and framing of knowledge we analyse variations in the complexity of knowledge and cognitive processes being taught. Hence, Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of educational objectives for the cognitive domain, and more particularly a contemporary revision of the taxonomy proposed by Anderson, Krathwohl, Airasian, Cruikshank, Mayer, Pintrich, Raths and Wittrock (2001) was recruited. The four levels of knowledge are factual, conceptual, procedural and metacognitive knowledge. Factual knowledge refers to the basic elements that learners must know to be acquainted with a discipline or solve problems in it. Conceptual knowledge refers to the interrelationships among the basic elements within a larger structure that enable them to function together. Procedural knowledge refers to how to do something, methods of enquiry, and criteria for using skills, algorithms, techniques, and methods. Metacognitive knowledge refers to knowledge of cognition in general as well as awareness and knowledge of one's own cognition. The six levels of cognitive processes are remember, understand, apply, analyse, evaluate and create. Remember refers to retrieving relevant knowledge from memory. Understand refers to determining the meaning of instructional messages, including oral, written and graphic communication. Apply refers to carrying out or using a procedure in a give situation. Analyze refers to breaking material into its constituent parts and detecting how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose. Evaluate refers to making judgements based on criteria and standards and create refers to putting elements together to form a novel, coherent whole or making an original product (Anderson *et al.,* 2002).

Like the original taxonomy, the revised taxonomy is assumed to have a hierarchical nature, in that a more advanced level subsumes the levels below it. For example, it can be assumed that a person operating at the application level has mastered the cognitive demands required for working at the remember and understand level.[1]

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[1] Recognition that Bloom's original taxonomy did not sufficiently recognise the two-dimensional nature of knowledge led to its revision. The major change in the revised version has been to separate the knowledge dimension from the cognitive process dimension. The knowledge dimension is described as consisting of four levels, each level representing a different form of knowledge. Likewise, the process dimension consists of six levels, each level representing more demanding and complex cognitive processes.

The next section deals with the operationalisation of these concepts for data collection and analysis.

Operationalization of theory

Three public schools that were previously advantaged or disadvantaged were purposively selected as research sites so that the impact of their 'structural conditions' on pedagogic discourse could be analysed.

Description of research sites

School A[2], an ex-HOA school, is located in a well-established middle-class suburb in the city. During the apartheid era it catered exclusively for white learners, but was one of the first schools in the city to begin admitting learners of colour when changes in the political landscape were anticipated. Its learner population was racially and sexually diverse. It is well-maintained, well-resourced, well-managed and staffed by well qualified teachers. The school draws its learners mostly from the middle SES population from across the city. The majority of learners are transported to school by private transport. The higher school fee of R7 800 per learner per year ensures that more affluent learners are enrolled. The learner population was 40 per cent White, 25 per cent African, 25 per cent Indian and 10 per cent Coloured. The teaching staff was 70 per cent White and 30 per cent non-white. The language of instruction was English and competency in English was a requirement for admission to the school. In 2006 (the year this data was collected), the matriculation (Grade 12 school-leaving) examination pass rate was 100 per cent. There were 1 200 learners in the school, and 28 learners in the Grade 10 physical science class that was observed. The physical science teacher studied for a secondary teacher's diploma majoring in physics and chemistry at a teacher training college. He has taught physical science at Grade 10, 11 and 12 level for thirteen years, the last eleven at this school. The classroom was a science laboratory supplied with the necessary fittings with the laboratory tables serviced by a gas supply, a water supply, and an electrical supply. There was a fume cupboard, extensive storage cupboards and a preparation room. Teaching aids included an overhead projector, television and video sets, and various

[2] Fictitious names have been used to protect the identity of schools and teachers who participated in the study.

posters on the walls, including a large, highly visible periodic table. Each learner had his/her own science textbook. The teacher had a wide variety of textbooks and other resource books stacked on his table and in one corner of the classroom. The teacher was supported by a laboratory technician. This school resembled a fortified school closely.

School B, an ex-HOD school, was located in what was classified during the apartheid dispensation a residential area for the Indian population. It is about 10km from the centre of town. The area now has a mixed population of Indians and Africans, with African learners in the majority. The school is located in a very poor part of the area, and is surrounded by informal settlements as well as houses originally built by the town council for lower income Indian families. The school drew some of its learners from the surrounding communities, and many from township areas some distance away from the school. The learner population was 60 per cent African and 40 per cent Indian. The teaching staff was 90 per cent Indian, and 10 per cent African. The language of instruction was English. Learners had varying abilities to communicate competently in English. African learners who lived further away in other townships, travel to school using public transport like buses and mini-bus taxis, often having to take one trip to the centre of town, and then another from there to the school, incurring substantial transport costs. The parents of these learners chose to send their children to this school because they perceive it to offer better opportunities for learning than the schools in their own areas. School fees at the school are set at R900.00 per year. The matriculation pass rate in the year of data collection was 100 per cent. There were 1 125 learners in the school, and 38 learners in the Grade 10 class observed. The school had the basic infrastructure, was relatively well maintained and had basic resources to support teaching and learning. The physical science teacher completed a Bachelor's degree with chemistry and physics as major subjects and then a Higher Diploma in Education. He had taught the subject for more than fifteen years. The classroom was a science laboratory supplied with water, gas and electricity. It was resourced with an overhead projector and has laboratory equipment to support practical work. The walls had a variety of science related posters on them, with a large periodic table on one side of the classroom. There was a set of textbooks for the learners to use, as well as reference books for the teacher. We described this school as a less fortified school.

School C, an ex-DET school, is located in a Black township (residential areas designated for Blacks during the apartheid era) close to the city centre. During

those years it catered exclusively for African learners who lived in the township. Although the racial desegregation of schools has been effected, all learners were African. The teaching staff was 90 per cent African, 5 per cent Indian and 5 per cent white. While isiZulu was the mother tongue of most of the learners in the school, the language of instruction was English. Learners had varying English communication skills. The teacher sometimes used code-switching during teaching. The school drew its learners from the surrounding township, which mostly consisted of either unemployed or working class families. There was a high degree of unemployment in the area with many homes relying on state grants for survival. Parents were required to contribute school fees of R200.00 per learner per year. The school was poorly resourced and was impacted on by adverse social conditions which existed in the surrounding community. Its matriculation pass rate was 44 per cent. There were over 1 000 learners in the school and 24 learners in the class that was observed. The physical science teacher is well qualified to teach the subject, having completed a Bachelor of Science degree and Higher Diploma in Education. These subject qualifications are further supplemented by Bachelor of Education (Honours) and Master of Education degrees. He had taught the subject for more than fifteen years. The classroom was a science laboratory which was in a poor state of repair. It had minimal laboratory equipment to support practical work. There was a storage room attached to the classroom. The gas and water supply were not functional, sinks were broken, and many of the cupboard doors were missing. There was a small periodic table on the wall at the back of the classroom, but no other posters or charts. This school resembled an exposed school.

In order to analyse the 'internal structure of pedagogic discourse' Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing have been employed. The classification of physical science knowledge in each lesson was analysed according to the following analytical framework:

Table 1: Classification of physical science

Element	Classification strength	Variation
C^{+}	Only science content knowledge was taught.	Strong classification ↓ Weak classification
$C^{+/-}$	Science content knowledge as well as other forms of knowledge was taught.	
C^{-}	Science content knowledge was not taught Other forms of knowledge were taught.	

The framing of physical science or the instructional discourse communicated was analysed according to the following analytical framework:

Table 2: Framing of physical science

Element	Framing strength		Variation
Selection of knowledge	F^+	During the learning activity, the teacher selects knowledge.	Strong framing ↓ Weak framing
	$F^{+/-}$	During the learning activity, both teacher and learner select knowledge	
	F^-	During the learning activity, the learner selects knowledge.	
Sequencing of knowledge	F^+	During the learning activity, the teacher sequences knowledge.	Strong framing ↓ Weak framing
	$F^{+/-}$	During the learning activity, both teacher and learner sequence knowledge	
	F^-	During the learning activity, the learner sequences knowledge.	
Pacing of knowledge	F^+	During the learning activity, the teacher paces knowledge.	Strong framing ↓ Weak framing
	$F^{+/-}$	During the learning activity, both teacher and learner pace knowledge	
	F^-	During the learning activity, the learner paces knowledge.	
Evaluation of knowledge	F^+	During the learning activity, the teacher evaluates knowledge.	Strong framing ↓ Weak framing
	$F^{+/-}$	During the learning activity, both teacher and learner evaluate knowledge	
	F^-	During the learning activity, the learner evaluates knowledge.	

The framing of the regulative discourse was analysed according to the following analytical framework.

Table 3: Framing of regulative discourse

F^{+}	During the learning activity, positional authority relations prevail.	Strong framing ↓ Weak framing
$F^{+/-}$	During the learning activity, both positional and personal authority relations prevail	
F^{-}	During the learning activity, personal authority relations prevail.	

The revised taxonomy (Anderson *et al*.) was employed to classify the level of knowledge taught and the level of cognitive process taught.

Collecting the data

Data were collected through consecutive lesson observations and video recording of four lessons per teacher. Lesson observations were arranged so that teachers would be observed teaching the *same topic* of the curriculum, i.e. naming compounds, writing formula, and balancing chemical equations. The video records were then transcribed. The transcripts of video-taped lessons were then divided into tasks. Only tasks where science knowledge formed the basis of the interaction were analysed. These tasks formed the 'unit of analysis' for this study. Forty-six tasks in 12 lessons were analysed. Table 5 shows the number of tasks that were coded for the four lessons that were analysed in each classroom.

Table 4: Number of tasks coded in each classroom

	School A	**School B**	**School C**	**Totals**
Number of lessons coded	4	4	4	12
Number of tasks	17	16	13	46

Analysis of data

For each task four kinds of analyses were done. Firstly, we identified how strongly or weakly the subject was classified. Secondly, we identified how strongly or weakly the teacher framed the instructional and regulative discourse. Thirdly, we classified the knowledge being taught into factual, conceptual, procedural and metacognitive knowledge, and fourthly, we

classified the cognitive process expected of learners. What follows is an example of a task and the coding of the task according to the analytical criteria just described.

School A: Activity 14

Teacher: Right. Now we'll look at the first four. Right, pay attention. Right, who's prepared to give your answer for the first one? Number thirty? Chris? (*who had his hand raised*)

Learner: 1. . . 2. . . 1. . . 1. . .

Teacher: Right. Basically, we've got to put a two in front (puts a two in front of NaOH to balance the equation on the chalkboard.) Okay, you put a two in front of NaOH. Any comments about that one? All happy?

Teacher: Any questions about that one? Question. . .Yes?

Learner: I don't understand how you balanced number 31. *(referring to the equation on the c/b)*
$3NO_2 + H_2O \rightarrow 2HNO_3 + NO$

Teacher: Right, I've got. . . how many oxygens have I got here? *(pointing to $3NO_2$)*

Learner: Six

Teacher: *(points to H_2O)*

Learner: And that's five

Teacher: No, no, no, no. . .

Learner: It's seven, yah

Teacher: Six plus one is seven, yah. Here I've got *(pointing to $2HNO_3$)*

Learner: There's six

Teacher: Plus one *(pointing to NO)*

Learner: Gives seven

Teacher: Seven. Hydrogens? *(pointing to the H_2O)*

Learner: There's two

Teacher: Two there and. . . *(pointing to the $2HNO_3$)*

Learner: Two there

Teacher: Okay

Teacher: Right. Thirty-three? Lloyd?

Learner: 3. . . 1. . . 2. . . 1. . .

Teacher: 3. . . 1. . . 2. . . 1. . . *(writes the numbers in the appropriate places in the equation)*. Okay; 3. . . 1. . . 2. . . 1. . ., any comments about that one? All happy? Right. Thirty-four?

Learner: Thirty-three

Teacher: Oh. Thirty-three. Sorry

Learner: 2. . . 3. . . 1. . . 3. . .

Teacher: 2. . . 3. . . 1. . . 3. . . *(as he says it out he writes the numbers in the appropriate places in the equation).* 2. . . 3. . . 1. . . 3. . . All happy with that? Okay, right.

Only science content is dealt with in this activity so it was coded as strongly classified or C^+. The teacher selected and sequenced knowledge – this was coded as F+. The teacher allowed learners to influence the pacing of knowledge, by allowing them to raise questions about the difficulties they experienced, and working with them through these difficulties this was coded as F-. The teacher provided explicit evaluation of learners' responses thus providing learners with opportunities to learn the legitimate text – this was coded as F+. Personalised authority relations prevailed – this enabled individual learners to ask questions and clarify their understanding – this was coded as F-. In the activity learners are expected to apply procedural knowledge. We have thus coded this activity as C/3 and recorded it as such on Table 6. (C meant that the activity dealt with knowledge at the procedural level, and three meant that learners and teacher in combination were involved in application of this knowledge to balance the equation.)

Results

The categories according to which each task was coded and analysed were collated and are presented in the table below.

Table 5: Results per school

Analytical criteria	School A (No. of tasks analysed =17)	School B (No. of tasks analysed =16)	School C (No. of tasks analysed =13)
Classification	C + (17)	C + (15)	C + (12)
Selection of knowledge	F + (17)	F + (16)	F + (13)
Sequencing of knowledge	F + (17)	F + (16)	F + (13)
Pacing of knowledge	F – (15)	F + (14)	F + (13)
Evaluation of knowledge	F + (17)	F + (16)	F – (12)
Regulative relations	F – (17)	F + (16)	F + (13)
Dominant knowledge	Factual (2), conceptual (3), procedural (12)	Factual (2), conceptual (7), procedural (7)	Factual (1), conceptual (2), procedural (10)
Dominant process	Remember (3), understand (11), apply (1), evaluate (2)	Remember (8), understand (4), apply (4)	Remember (10), apply (3)
Regulative relations	Personal (17)	Positional (16)	Positional (13)

Similarities across schools

All three teachers strongly classified science knowledge from other forms of knowledge. Of the seventeen tasks analysed in school A, 16 were strongly classified as references to everyday knowledge or other subject areas were minimal. In fifteen of the 16 tasks in school B, science knowledge was strongly classified. In one activity there was a sustained attempt by the teacher to show the relevance and use of the science knowledge in everyday life. Part of the discourse is presented below:

Teacher: Now nothing new. . . chemical reactions abound in our lives. Every time when you bake, it's a chemical reaction when you take the ingredients in their raw form transform it into something we call. . . and now it's in a more edible form. But you wouldn't go and empty a packet of baking powder into your mouth I need some cake flour later on and pour some vanilla essence into your mouth then shake your stomach (teacher shakes his body, class laughs) as you go on and see what happens. But you will need the ingredients, the cooking process will take place and something edible that tastes very nice and you eat lots of it. So those are examples of chemical reactions taking place. Chemical reactions abound, Every time you light a match, you got a chemical reaction going on there. Like now outside there the sun is shining and

> photosynthesis is taking place. Radiant energy is coming into plants' chemical reaction transforming uhh raw materials . . .(inaudible), now chemical reactions. In the science classroom now we later on focus very specific chemical reactions to start with.

In school C, science was once again strongly classified in 12 out of 13 tasks. There was just one activity where the teacher drew on knowledge related to mathematics to support science learning.

They also strongly framed what counted as valid knowledge and the sequence of concepts. In all three classrooms the distinctive concepts of physical science were being taught.

Differences across schools

(a) Pacing

At school A the pacing was weaker than in school B and C. Whole class, teacher led teacher-pupil interaction formed the largest proportion of classroom activity, followed by significant amounts of independent learner activity. The weaker pacing allowed learners to learn by discussion with their peers, by doing experiments, by observing results, explaining differences, asking questions, and constructing knowledge through interacting with the teacher and with their peers in their small groups. There was greater individual learner-teacher interaction on a one-to-one basis on the whole. This is illustrated by the excerpt below:

Teacher: And we said we gonna place those metals in solutions of their metal salts. So what were the solutions we had?

Learner: Iron chloride

Teacher: Iron Chloride (writes $FeCl_3$ on the table.)

Learner: Zinc Nitrate. . .

Learner: Magnesium Sulphate. . .

Teacher: Remember we changed. . .

Learner: Nitrate. . . and copper chloride

Teacher: Right, so what you started yesterday. You took. . . each of those metals and you placed them in different test tubes and then you chose one solution and you poured a little bit of that solution on top of each of those metals to see if there was a reaction. Now how did we discuss. . . what did we say how you will see if there is a chemical reaction or not?

Learner: The temperature.

The science inquiry process was simulated in the experiment done by learners in which learners were expected to discover the 'reaction on their own'. This is illustrated in the excerpt below:

Learner: It can vary.

Teacher: Yes, it does. It can be two or three.

Learner: So what if you say iron three chloride?

Teacher: Yes, what you trying to say?

Learner: Everybody keeps on saying iron chloride, sir.

Teacher: Oh, okay, it's preferable to say iron three chloride. You'll see of you look on the bottle it's labelled iron in brackets three chloride, okay?

Learner: Will it be the same reaction?

Teacher: You tell me. . .

The pacing was much stronger in schools B and C than in school A. In school B learners were required to check their conceptions with their peers with the teacher being in overall control. Learners did not check their understanding individually by asking questions or for clarifications.

The framing of knowledge was strong most of the time, but there were also opportunities for active learner participation. However, these were often limited to memorisation of formulas and to complete factual one-word answers to questions. Even though the teacher allowed learners some degree of participation, he remained firmly in control of the activity, and spent a substantial amount of time to ensure that organisational arrangements were firmly in place and clearly understood by the learners.

The even stronger pacing observed in school C resulted from the teacher transmitting information without opportunities for teacher-learner interaction or for learners to question, or to participate in activities so that they would be able to understand the meaning of the instructional messages.

(b) Evaluative judgment

The second difference is stronger evaluative judgment in schools A and B and weaker evaluative judgment in school C. In school A learners were given immediate feedback as the teacher responded to individual queries from learners, wrote solutions on the board or referred learners to the 'results they got in the textbook'.

Teacher: Okay. If there's a change. . . If we felt the temperature and it got increasingly hot, or maybe drastically quite cold, maybe that's an indication to us that there may be a chemical reaction.

Learner: There's a colour change.

Teacher: Maybe there's a colour change.

Learner: Bubbles rising. . .

Teacher: Maybe there's bubbles. There might be air bubbles indicating that a gas is being liberated.

Learner: Flames

Teacher: Flames? *(In a questioning tone eliciting laughter from class)*

Teacher: Okay, so what I asked you yesterday was to indicate with a cross if there was no reaction or with a tick if there is a reaction. Once you have done that, then turn to page 175 in your text books and then just compare your results to the results they got in the text book, okay?

Similarly in school B, the teacher provided evaluative judgment but of a different nature. The teacher devolved this role to learners themselves through the use of quizzes in pairs that was followed by the teacher calling out the correct answers. Teaching for examination purposes was illustrated with much of the teachers pedagogy aimed at memorising facts necessary for success in the high-stakes matric examination. In the teacher's words:

Teacher: The second one is the. . . your table of anions, your negative anions. You've done two tests already, and generally speaking, in a short time, you have internalised it. How well you've internalised it again is determined by how well you can report. That's the main thing. . . how well it's structured in your mind, okay. . . in your memory, will determine how well you can cough it out. So that at anytime we ask for a formula, you either refer to a table or reproduce it from what I call 'bloodstream knowledge'. It's there in your bloodstream, flowing. You want it; you take it out, okay?

In school C the lack of ongoing pedagogic judgment during the lesson did not enable learners to monitor their understanding as the lesson progressed. The following excerpt illustrates the long, explanations given by the teacher. In the activity the teacher is correcting a task that was set for the learners:

Teacher: Right let's try to mark this. Right, let's look at number one, this is actually called ammonium ion, note that it is coming from ammonia. That is ammonia and when it receives an ion negative, then it becomes ammonium ion with a plus, right? $NH_3 + H^+ \rightarrow NH4^+$. Not important but you need to know that. And what is the procedure here, how do we solve this, even if you can do two. How do we solve this if you are given the formula and you are required to write the names? I said you can use the Periodic Table; you can use the table of ions. Let's look at number one, if you can look at this formula, even though it is not that easy, you can see that this can be divided into that, into a positive and a negative ion, right? Because you need to identify those two, and you try to

name the first ion, usually it tries to retain its name, its name is not completed, so this one (a) is ammonium, some are saying it is an oxide or whatever, but this is just a carbonate. By now you note that this two was actually coming from there. You see that? So if you check the ion here you must be sure of the chart. Which chart is that? It's not going to be a guess work, you need to know what you are actually looking for. Right next we had problem with this, assess the Co a small letter o there, meaning that this is a one element. And another thing, pay attention, The main element is copper, and I was trying to emphasize that why we telling that it is an element, it is the symbols, Capital letter and a small letter, one element not two. (b) Cobalt Chloride, what is the charge of the Cobalt? It's positive off course, but what is the magnitude?

Learner: Positive two.

Teacher: Positive two. How do you know? Actually what I am saying is these two actually goes there. You got that positive two there, and that will be Cobalt 2^{+}. We can't continue the period is over, but what you can do is try to complete this. This one you split it there and not there, how do we know where to split it, we don't have any rule. How do we know? I think we must have some guidelines, how do we know we are going to split it from the first not the second. Take a quick look at this ions, you note that the positive ions they are actually symbols, it is one so far that got positive and negative completed, ammonia, but the rest, in most cases they are metals, so all these metals are elements, they are the symbol elements, right? So you know that they are going to be broken here, and there is this ammonium. So far we (inaudible L makes a funny sound). Note that it is also not a metal. So it's a mystery in the true sense. And even hydrogen is not a metal, but the rest are metals. You just check them there, you know the names.

The weaker framing of evaluative criteria meant that learners were not provided with explicit evaluative judgment of their understanding through the lesson. The teacher would ask questions, provide the answer and then proceed to explain further.

(c) Dominant knowledge and process taught

In all three schools factual, conceptual and procedural knowledge was taught. What differed was the emphasis on teaching that facilitated understanding and the learning of specialised meanings. In school A much of the pedagogy aimed at facilitating understanding the meaning of the instructional messages and on acquiring the specialised meaning of what science is and how to do it; this was reduced in school B and non-existent in school C. In school B the emphasis was on remembering the technical terms with reduced attention to the cognitive processes of understand the meaning and apply. In school C the

emphasis was on remembering the technical terms with complete lack of attention to learners understanding. The scaffolding was such that learners were taught to remember and recall factual and conceptual knowledge and apply procedural knowledge without understanding the meaning of the concepts taught.

(d) Regulative relations

The third difference observed was the regulative relations used by the teacher. In school A the pedagogic context was characterised by ease and friendliness. The personal regulative relations employed by the teacher enabled learners to feel comfortable about asking questions and checking their own cognitions. For a significant proportion of the teaching time, learners were able to participate actively in the construction of knowledge. This is illustrated by the excerpt below:

Learner:	Sir, so what happens if something like hydrogen is given off, but we've got no matches for the test?
Teacher:	Hold on. Don't worry about testing what specific gas is being given off, just see if there is a chemical reaction, okay?
Learner:	Sir, you know that the. . . iron chloride. . .
Teacher:	Yes?
Learner:	Chloride has got a valency of one?
Teacher:	Yes.
Learner:	So wouldn't it be iron two. . . uh. . . iron three chloride? Because isn't. . . doesn't iron have a valency of . . . of three?

In school B the social relations were positional and authoritarian. Both the instructional and regulative discourse was strongly framed by the teacher. The teacher strongly framed the selection, sequencing, pacing and evaluation of knowledge. During the learning activity, positional authority relations prevailed.

In school C the pedagogic context was also characterised by authoritarian positional relations between learners and the teacher. Then the strong framing of regulative relations further negated possibilities of learners questioning or making their understanding known.

Interpretation/discussion

The first inference is that the 'discursive rules of pedagogy' are strongly influenced by the 'structural conditions' of each school. In other words the pedagogic discourse and relations observed and described above occur within specific structural conditions within specific school contexts. In this section the concepts of fortified and exposed school contexts are used to reinterpret the patterns identified. The key analytical criteria are tabulated in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Structural and discursive practice per school

Analytical criteria	**School A (N of tasks analysed =17)**	**School B (N of tasks analysed =16)**	**School C (N of tasks analysed =13)**
Class size	28	38	24
Resources	Ample	Adequate	Lacking
Teacher qualification	Sec teacher's diploma	BSc, HDE	BSc, MEd
Classification	C + (17)	C + (15)	C + (12)
Selection of knowledge	F + (17)	F + (16)	F + (13)
Sequencing of knowledge	F + (17)	F + (16)	F + (13)
Pacing of knowledge	F – (15)	F + (14)	F + (13)
Evaluation of knowledge	F + (17)	F + (16)	F – (12)
Regulative relations	F – (17)	F + (16)	F + (13)
Dominant knowledge	Factual (2), conceptual (3), procedural (12)	Factual (2), conceptual (7), procedural (7)	Factual (1), conceptual (2), procedural (10)
Dominant process	Remember (3), understand (11), apply (1), evaluate (2)	Remember (8), understand (4), apply (4)	Remember (10), apply (3)
Regulative relations	Personal (17)	Positional (16)	Positional (13)

School A: A fortified school enabling inclusion in specialised science discourse

The advantaged material conditions in the school included a wealth of material resources to support good teaching including a well-stocked laboratory and teaching aids such as an overhead projector, a television and video projector. Each learner had their own science textbooks and study aids. The majority of the children came from higher socio-economic status homes; the physical science teacher had the necessary qualifications to teach science. The smaller class size was another advantage. Then, to facilitate the teaching a laboratory assistant was on hand to assist during practical lessons.

Within this advantaged material context pedagogy for optimal learning of science knowledge and process was observed characterised by intellectual rigour and supportive and personalised social relations. The discursive practices characterised by strong classification of science; the strong framing of selection, sequencing and evaluative criteria provided learners with opportunities to learn the specialised epistemology of science, its epistemic processes, its technical language, its concepts in meaningful ways. The weaker and differentiated pacing and personalised regulative relations contributed to a supportive classroom where learners felt sufficiently empowered to ask the teacher questions whenever they did not understand something. These findings are consistent with Wallace, Tsoi, Calkin, Darley (2003) who hold that teaching for understanding science include the strategies of 'a supportive environment, questioning in the discipline, opportunities for talk and negotiation of meaning and interactive problem-solving. Rigorous teacher questioning of learners, individual and group activities, allowed for progression beyond the *remember factual knowledge* level to understand science knowledge. These findings are consistent with Schroeder, Scott, Tolson, Huang and Lee (2007) that alternative teaching strategies such as questioning, manipulation, enhanced materials, enhanced context and collaborative learning enable effective teaching. Opportunities to enable understanding related to the nature of the activity. In fact, it appeared that opportunities to work with/engage in the higher levels of cognitive process were dependant on the pedagogical choices made by the teacher. The learning activities allowed for a greater degree of learner engagement in higher level processes. A change in the teacher's role from instructor to facilitator that allowed students to look to each other for support (Krystyniak and Heikkinen, 2007); and helping students to seek evidence and reasons for knowledge claims may "help shift their view of science away from science as a static set

of facts to science as a social process where knowledge is constructed" (McNeil and Krajcik, 2008, p.54).

In school A, weaker pacing in tune with learners acquisition of the concept ensured that there was synergy between the teachers aim and the learners progress in acquiring the concept. The combination of learners from middle SES backgrounds, better resources, small class size, and pedagogy characterised by: strong classification of science; the strong framing of selection, sequencing and evaluative criteria; weak framing of pacing and regulative relations; the higher knowledge levels introduced and higher cognitive processes expected provided learners with more optimal opportunities to learn and understand specialised science.

Learners were provided with learning opportunities to achieve progression in the quantity and depth of understanding of key concepts, together with an increasing understanding of the connections between different concepts in order to develop a well-organised knowledge base. As such they were given learning opportunities for achieving the official curriculum outcomes (Learning Outcome 1 and Learning Outcome 2) to a greater extent. In addition to factual and procedural knowledge learners were expected to know and understand conceptual knowledge as well. In addition to remembering and understanding knowledge, learners were given opportunities to apply science in experiments and discuss conjectures about the outcomes. This included claims, argumentation and evaluation. Thus, learners were given access to specialised science knowledge and processes of inquiry in science.

School B : A less fortified school enabling inclusion in technical science

This school exemplified characteristics of both 'fortified' and 'exposed' schools' but had more in common with fortified schools. The physical science teacher had completed a BSc degree with chemistry and physics as major subjects. The classroom was a science laboratory supplied with water, gas and electricity. It was resourced with an overhead projector and had laboratory equipment to support practical work. The walls had a variety of science related posters on them, with a large periodic table featuring predominantly on one side of the classroom. A set of textbooks was provided for learners to use during the lesson and give back for use by other classes. Clearly evident, in the classroom was a set of reference books for the teacher's personal use. The

school differed from fortified schools in two ways. The children come from lower socio-economic backgrounds and it had a much larger class size. The first experience on walking into the classroom was one of being overwhelmed by a large number of individuals seated close to each other. The last row of students was more than ten metres away from the teacher when he was at the chalkboard.

The larger class size altered the nature of instructional and regulative discourses significantly. The teacher did not relax his control over both the instructional and regulative discourse. Firstly, with reference to the instructional, there was stronger and undifferentiated pacing. All learners were expected to learn at the same pace set by the teacher and check their responses with what the teacher called out for all. Learners did not check their understanding individually by asking questions or asking for clarifications as in the previous classroom as the lessons progressed.

Secondly, the larger class size made greater pedagogic demands on the teacher. The excerpt below is used to illustrate the greater demands made on the teacher in comparison to the previous teacher in the fortified school:

Teacher: Okay, Right. Let's start. A. . . *(points to learner in front)* A. . . say it. . . *(then points to the next learner and gets her to say B and so on until E).* Wait, you remembering what you said. Today I'm calling all As, all Bs, all Cs as yesterday, okay? Sorry, we've gone A, B, C, D, E *(points to learners in the front row who have already called out letters, then on to the next row).* Let's go. . . *(learners call out up to H, and then he gets them to start again from A up till H, repeats this pattern until all the learners have been assigned a letter except for one learner remaining)* Okay, looks like I'll be testing you. I'll be taking you separately. Right, very **quickly**, all As hands up please. 1, 2, . . .4, 5. Right, As step out please this side. Bs on this side. Take one each please, **quickly** *(hands groups a set of cards, one for each person).* As this way to my right. Bs this way. . .take one each. Cs? Those who have their hands raised. Give them one please *(hands to learner in front to give cards to group C members).* Ds? *(another learner takes and hands out to the D group members – continues like this until all the groups have a set of cards)* Right, these are for your eyes only, okay. Not to show others. Okay, do not reveal, especially to the person whom you might be testing? Everybody has a test? Check please. Everybody has a test now? *(sorts out some learners who did not have)*. As and Bs. . . Okay, let's go Cs and Ds? Cs there. . . Ds there *(points to places in the class where they should group*). I want four Cs, four Ds. **Don't sleep.** Cs and Ds. Please work with a pen or a pencil in your hand, it makes it easier. **Let's go quickly**. Where's number 4? Four, is that you? **Quick** my girl, come on. E and F *(points to other spots in the classroom).* E. . . F. . . let's go people. *(claps his hands)* Right, the rest of you, just hold it okay. Very **quickly**, where's your Gs

> *(puts a G together with an H)* You will test. Who doesn't have a partner? There should be one. We had an odd number. Right I will test you. Right, let's go, one A and one B. As you are standing. . . next two. . . You can sit or stand anywhere, okay. Just don't reveal the answer to your friends. Right, make sure it's A and B. Not the same. Let's go Cs and Ds. Just find two stools and sit down. Es and Fs. . . as you stand. Right, the test commences now…

- greater advanced planning was required by the teacher to prepare the speed tests on cards so that some measure of success was achieved in the classroom.

- more time was used during the lesson to arrange the activity and then to execute it.

- the teacher distinctly showed signs of distress relating to being able to manage the learners and the activity and time successfully – in the above excerpt, the teacher used the word 'quickly' four times and quick once and even went so far as to tell learners 'don't sleep'.

Thirdly, the larger class size impacted on the nature of the evaluative judgment given – in school A learners were given immediate feedback as the teacher responded to learners, whereas in school B there was less frequent evaluative feedback and the teacher devolved this role to learners themselves through the use of quizzes in pairs that was followed by the teacher calling out the correct answers for all. Fourthly, the positional authority relations observed were also due to the larger class size. Keeping greater distance from the learners discouraged individualised and personal social relations from developing.

The discursive practice observed enabled restricted access to the specialised epistemology of science. The emphasis was not on understanding and acquiring its unique epistemic processes but on remembering factual and conceptual knowledge for examination purposes and on applying procedural knowledge in the examination. While these students would probably do well in the examination the opportunities for understanding science was limited or non-existent. Lessons were strongly controlled by the teacher, and there were reduced opportunities for dialogical interaction and independent learner activity. The discursive practices required that learners *'remember conceptual knowledge',* and '*apply procedural knowledge'*.

At school B the main factor impacting negatively on pedagogy was the larger class size. The range of factors that would enable productive pedagogy; a highly qualified and professionally disposed teacher; adequate resources, strong classification of science and the strong framing of selection, sequencing, evaluative criteria; were undercut by the larger class size with concomitant strong and undifferentiated pacing, and distant and authoritarian regulative relations between the teacher and learners from lower SES backgrounds.

School C : An exposed site excluding learners from science

This school also had characteristics common to both fortified and exposed school types. Characteristic of exposed schools, the children come from severely impoverished socio-economic backgrounds and the resources and facilities available for teaching and learning were either non-existent or in a state of disrepair. Characteristic of fortified schools, the physical science teacher is well qualified to teach the subject and the much smaller class size is characteristic of fortified schools. But, discursive practices observed were far from enabling access to the epistemology of science. The stronger, undifferentiated pacing and the positional and authoritarian regulative relations denied learners opportunities to ask questions and to clarify their conceptions. Lessons were dominated by a large amount of content-based teacher talk, with little learner participation and learner activity. Then the lack of ongoing evaluative feedback during the lesson did not enable learners to check the validity of their cognition. Teacher-talk characterised most of the activities, with little opportunity for interaction and learner activity. The pedagogy illustrated what McNeil and Krajcik (2008, p.54) refer to "science as a static set of facts rather than science as a social process where knowledge is constructed".

While the teacher had moved to teaching strongly classified science the emphasis was on remember factual knowledge. It is unlikely that students would master sophisticated forms of knowing and thinking scientifically. As such learning opportunities to achieve Learning Outcome 1 (the development of practical scientific enquiry and problem-solving skills) and Learning Outcome 2 (that learners are able to construct and apply scientific knowledge) were not made available to learners. Conceptual progression, deep understanding of concepts as well as the connection between concepts to develop a well-organised knowledge base was not enabled. Similarly, the

teacher emphasised low level cognitive processes of recall and recognition of science knowledge and paid little attention to higher level cognitive processes. There was an emphasis on *'remembering procedural knowledge'*. Pedagogical choices resulted in learners working at low levels of knowledge and process. These findings confirm Fleisch (2002, p.118) who noted that in historically disadvantaged schools ". . .teaching . . . seldom translated into the mastery of sophisticated forms of knowing and thinking or school knowledge".

At school C the combination of learners from poor backgrounds, lack of resources, strong classification of science and the strong framing of selection, sequencing, pacing and regulative relations; weak framing of evaluative criteria and the lower knowledge levels taught and lower cognitive processes expected provided learners with restricted opportunities to understand science.

The stronger pacing in spite of the smaller class size could be explained by the dominant practices within the school. Education, knowledge and time were not highly valued in the school. The school allowed learners to go home during the lunch break. Many did not return for the lessons in the afternoon. A range of other activities disrupted teaching regularly: choir practice, cleaning the school floors, picking up litter, participating in sporting activities with other schools in the area, raids to recover school property from the surrounding homes. It must be added that due to lack of funds for cleaning the school it had no option but to get students to clean the classrooms themselves. That this happened every Friday from 1 to 2.30 meant that instruction time was depleted. During instruction time many students would be wandering around outside. Many teachers would not be in their classrooms. Much school property such as chairs, tables, desks were stolen and it had become common practice for the school staff and students to carry out regular 'raids' and searches of homes surrounding the school to recover school property. This happened on one of the days of data collection. Although the science teacher is highly regarded as one of two teachers in the school who is committed to his profession, the expectations of students formed by the dominant practices in the school prevented them from engaging actively with physical science.

Conclusion

We set out to investigate the impact of school type on opportunities to learn science in diverse school contexts. Consistent with Bernstein's premise the findings show that the structural conditions of a school and the discursive

rules of pedagogy generate practices of inclusion and exclusion. Specifically, it shows that class size and resource provision and the dominant pedagogic practices in a school are key elements impacting on pedagogy in the classroom.

The discursive practices of teachers are subject to a range of objective conditions prevailing in the school. It was clear that learners had unequal opportunities to learn the same 'topic' in the three classrooms. These variations emanated from: objective conditions such as class size, availability of resources and the social class context of the school; and discursive practices such as pacing and evaluation of learners' on-going understanding within enabling or disabling authority relations in the classroom. In all three schools there was strong classification of science, and strong framing of selection and sequencing. The differences in pacing, evaluative judgement, time taken to arrange activities and regulative relations account for differences in opportunities to understand and learn specialised science.

These case studies of pedagogy analysed are consistent with other South African writers such as Hoadley (2007), Reeves and Muller (2005), Harley and Wedekind (2005) and Reddy (2005) that learning opportunities differ significantly in South African classrooms. The opportunities to learn at the upper working class school seems to support Reddy's (2005) assertion that access to higher levels of knowledge and process is dependent on the social class of learners. The students from the different race groups at the middle class school had one thing in common – they were able to afford the higher school fees charged and thus able to access the 'improved learning opportunities, improved performance and improved life prospects'. Well-to-do Black students have accessed the better learning opportunities at the ex-White model C school. At the previously disadvantaged ex-HOD school the larger class size reduced opportunities for learner directed pedagogy. Hoadley (2003) pointed out that teacher-learner interaction in the working class school that she studied with 57 learners was three times less than schools with 30 learners. An intervention in school B that would immediately create more conducive conditions for more productive pedagogy would be to provide the school with a lab assistant to assist the teacher.

The deep-seated inequalities in access to knowledge that appear to have been institutionalised in the classrooms imply different values, power and life chances for learners. Black learners at the exposed school did not equally enjoy their democratic pedagogic rights to intellectual enhancement, inclusion

and participation (Bernstein, 1996) in socially valued levels of science knowledge and processes. More than forty years ago, writing about science education under Bantu Education, Horrel (1968, p.72), noted that children "gain little or no conception of basic principles" and "as few practical experiments are undertaken . . .the pupils fail to develop the ability to reason, to solve problems, and to draw correct conclusions from their own observations". This holds true today in this school. At this school more teachers who are qualified to teach the subject they are teaching and who have a professional disposition are necessary to contribute to the formation of an ethos conducive to robust teaching and learning.

With reference to curriculum policy goals of equity in quality of learning experiences, actual opportunities to learn science at both extremes of the socio-economic spectrum are reminiscent of apartheid structured inequalities. For the school in the middle, a site of much change in learner enrolment, the larger class size has produced its own set of challenges for the teacher with concomitant effects on frequency and type of evaluative feedback, on pacing of knowledge, on the amount of time used to arrange and complete activities, and on the quality of regulative relations in the pedagogic context resulting in significantly reduced opportunities to understand science and to learn its specialised meaning. In the three cases researched here, opportunities to learn appear to be strongly conditioned by the type of the school. This points to the determining effect of school type on learners' experience of the physical science curriculum. Based on these case studies of science pedagogy, we conclude that because opportunities to learn science are stratified, student performance in science will continue to reflect race and class stratification.

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‘They said we were the Impossibles’: how a detention system in an ex Model C school works to create racial and gender divides

Kerryn Dixon and Jacqui Dornbrack

Abstract

School discipline is necessary for creating an environment in which learning and teaching happen. Disciplinary regularity needs to exist through the establishment of daily systemic routines and practices (Christie, 1998; Morrow, 2007). But disciplinary systems are shaped by the ideological positions, beliefs and culture of their implementers. Using a case study approach, this paper demonstrates how detention in one ex-Model C high school is undermined by existent institutional and personal ideologies that work against it, thereby encouraging resistance rather than compliance. Foucault’s (1977) notion of disciplinary power and the techniques it operates through: hierarchical observation, normalising judgment and examination, are applied to the data. The ways in which students are kept under surveillance, records are kept about them, and they are discursively named, indicate how their identities are essentialised along race and gender lines. We argue that these practices marginalise students making them resistant and can have long term consequences for their identities and schooling.

Introduction

School discipline is important for creating an environment in which learning and teaching can happen. Schools are also important spaces for socialising individuals who can participate productively and responsibly in society. In order for this to happen a disciplinary regularity needs to exist through the establishment of daily systemic routines and practices (Christie, 1998; Morrow, 2007).

The provision of poor education and resistance to this education in many township schools during apartheid resulted in a breakdown of these routines which have not been fully re-established. This has led to a desire on the part of many parents to send their children to ex-Model C schools where such systems are perceived to be in place (Sekete, Shilubane and Moila, 2001). Attending functioning schools is a means through which children can acquire the cultural capital necessary to be socially and economically mobile. The

perception is that ex-Model C schools are the means through which this will happen.

However, these disciplinary systems are implemented by individuals who carry with them cultural values, ideologies, and disciplinary histories. It is these that shape the ways disciplinary systems are implemented. This implementation is not always productive. Entrenched institutional and personal ideologies can work to undermine systems that are put in place with the aim of improving practices and producing disciplined self-regulating individuals in desegregated multicultural schools.

An example of such a system is school detention. It has long been implemented in schools nationally and internationally and viewed as an effective, humane way of disciplining students. It is condoned by the Department of Education as a viable alternative to the now banned practice of corporal punishment (DoE, 2000). Nevertheless, we argue that however effective or efficient a system may be, its optimal functioning is dependent on a number of contextual factors. In this paper we show how a system in one high school, which we call Model C Ordinary, is undermined because of existent institutional ideologies that work against the intentions of the detention system which are to produce regulated subjects. The apparent unevenness in the implementation of the system is a result of school management's racialised and gendered view of students. This results in students who take on resistant subject positions, which further perpetuate stereotypes of unruly black students. By discussing what happens within this one detention system we attempt to address a gap in research indicated by Philo and Muller, 1997 in Hammond, 1999 who argue that:

> What is seen to be lacking is an empirical account of how people actually construct their sense of self in real social relationships in the context of competing forces and interests.

We understand discipline from a Foucaultian perspective which argues that it is the art of training. The intention of such training is not solely about punishment rather it aims to maximize space, time, skills, practices and procedures. Foucault says "the educational space function[s] like a learning machine but also a machine for supervising, hierarchising, rewarding" (1977, p.147). It is these concepts that we will explore in the following section in order to apply them to the functioning of the detention system at Model C Ordinary.

Disciplinary power: observe, judge, examine

Foucault's work is such that it forces us to challenge many of our everyday assumptions and practices. In his detailed examinations of institutions he reveals the functioning of disciplinary power which he describes as "modest and suspicious" with "minor procedures" rather than overt and repressive (Foucault, 1977, p.170).The chief function of disciplinary power is to train individuals who are both its object and its instrument. To be caught in the mesh of disciplinary power means that individuals are known, have a place in the system, and are required to meet expectations, thus becoming objects. But individuals are also instruments through which discipline works. For example the school prefect is made so because individuals have become the objects of knowledge and are deemed capable of taking on a leadership role. Individuals who take on the role of prefects become the instrument of discipline helping to implement and reinforce certain practices at the school.

Disciplinary power is comprised of three forms: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment and examination. If the prime function of discipline is to train individuals, then spaces need to be created to in order to manage this training. It was the military camp that first laid down a "network of gazes that supervise one another" (Foucault, 1977, p.171). The design of these camps influenced the construction of schools through their architecture and the appointment of individuals to observe each other. Surveillance is at the centre of teaching as a mechanism to increase its efficiency.

Hierarchised observation functions in a network of relations that work top-down (e.g. principal to students), and less frequently, bottom-up (e.g. students to teachers) and laterally (e.g. peer to peer), so that the effects of power are constantly reinforced by those supervising and those supervised. Individuals are distributed in this mesh of power. Since an omnipresent gaze surveying all is not possible, the disciplinary gaze operates externally on, and then should be internalised by individuals who will, in time self-regulate.

Along with surveillance, normalising judgement is an essential instrument in the exercise of power. Foucault indicates that this "small penal mechanism" (1977, p.177) has its own laws, offences and forms of judgment that work to regulate behaviour. A broad spectrum of penalties exists for a range of behaviours:

> The workshop, the school, the army were all subject to a whole micro-penalty of time (lateness, absences, interruptions of tasks), of activity (inattention, negligence, lack of zeal),

> of behaviour (impoliteness, disobedience), of speech (idle chatter, insolence), of the body ('incorrect' attitudes, irregular gestures, lack of cleanliness), of sexuality (impurity, indecency) (Foucault, 1977, p.138).

Failure to observe these leads to punishment. Punishment draws on a range of actions that make individuals recognise their offences, for example, physical punishment, deprivation, or humiliation. Detention is a form of punishment that can be humiliating and deprives students of their time. Disciplinary punishment operates with an artificial order where a law or set of regulations are laid down. These particular laws and rules are imposed and are not the same in all schools. It also operates through observable processes, for example the time needed to complete class exercises. The level of regularity of such operations also function as rules. Punishment is not the only aspect of discipline, its other half is gratification. The teacher, Demia notes,

> must avoid, as far as possible, the use of punishment; on the contrary, he (sic) must endeavour to make rewards more frequent than penalties, the lazy being more encouraged by the desire to be rewarded in the same way as the diligent than by the fear of punishment (in Foucault, 1977, p.180).

Thus within disciplinary penality a continuum operates, that straddles a range of positive and negative behaviours. Foucault argues that disciplinary power is not repressive, rather it allows individual actions to be compared and differentiated within the operation of a rule. Disciplinary power operates in quantitative terms, ranking ability, level, and the nature of individuals – through this value it requires conformity. It has a limit "that will define difference in relation to all other differences, the external frontier of the abnormal" (1977, p.183). 'Normal' and 'abnormal' are by their nature value judgments. It is what constitutes normal and abnormal that the examination of Model C Ordinary's detention system reveals.

The third form of disciplinary power is the examination which combines both hierarchical observation and normalising judgement to create a 'normalising gaze' that judges, classifies and punishes individuals (Foucault, 1977; Smart, 2002). Power and knowledge are linked by the disciplinary power of the examination. Examinations allow for a constant exchange of knowledge, knowledge from teacher to students, as well as knowledge of the students by the teacher.

There are three elements to the examination. The first element is visibility. Disciplinary power is invisible but its gaze illuminates subjects. Thus "it is the fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen that maintains

the disciplined individual in his subjection. And the examination is the technique by which power… holds [subjects] in a mechanism of objectification" (Foucault, 1977, p.187). Secondly, the individual is entered into a field of documentation. Writing is fundamental – individuals are placed in a field of surveillance and simultaneously positioned in a "network of writing" that creates an archive of documents that captures and fixes them (1977, p.189). Disciplinary writing allows then for classification, category formation, a determination of averages and the fixing of norms. It draws on the small but ubiquitous techniques of notation, registration, the constitution of files and arranging of facts in columns and tables. This form of writing allows individuals to become described, analysable objects. This in turn leads to a comparative system of measurement describing groups, collecting facts, and calculating gaps between individuals. Through these documentary techniques the examination thus renders each individual into a 'case'. Something to be "described, judged, measured, compared with others, in his very individuality; and it is also the individual who has to be trained or corrected, classified, normalised, excluded" (1977, p.191). Individuals become the effect and object of power and knowledge.

It is the operation of these three forms of disciplinary power that operate in Model C Ordinary leading to time in detention and functioning to regulate the weekly detention sessions.

The discursive construction of the other

Ball (1990) believes that educational sites are generators of historically specific discourses which are characterised by inclusions and exclusions. He claims that while educational institutions have restricted discourses available to them (and they are restricted by policy in terms of which discourses they publicly use); they are also involved in the propagation and selective dissemination of certain discourses. A discourse commonly generated in multicultural settings is that of a shared notion of universally accepted values including neatness, punctuality, and politeness. These values are normalising judgments and in the school system violation of such norms can result in disciplinary practices like detention. However this discourse of neutrality and "charade of universalism" ignores the historical and cultural situatedness and cultural specificity of these values (May, 1999, p.31).

We argue that the relationship between discourses and their contextual values is key. The importance of examining the cultural specificity of values is exemplified in Said's canonical work, *Orientalism* (2003, original 1978). In the South African context colonial discourses permeate the schooling system and representation of the Other. Said agues that educational structures are key institutions through which colonial hegemony is produced and reproduced. Educational institutions provide the structures of unequal power relations which involve a "cultural politics through which the colonial subjects were both named and represented" (Rizvi and Lingard, 2006, p.304). Rizvi and Lingard (2006) posit that it is within and through these colonial institutions that students come to accept as natural, the links between colonial power and knowledge. These representations construct distinct binaries between cultures and essentialise those already marginalized thus shaping future cultural exchanges.

If discourse is viewed as socially constructed and reproduced then we can begin to understand how discourses can continue to exist and proliferate in institutions. Notions of white superiority and the valorizing of western norms and values become entrenched and embodied in the thinking and being of many South Africans and therefore it is hardly surprising that research among desegregated ex-Model C schools in South Africa reveals an overwhelming tendency towards assimilation (Dornbrack, 2008; McKinney, 2007; Soudien, 2004). Hall (1992) reminds us that identities are constituted within and not outside of discourses, therefore assimilationist discourses constitute particular subject identities which are either taken up or contested within the discourse itself. These play themselves out in Model C Ordinary's detention system.

Researching Model C ordinary

A case study was employed to research an ex-Model C high school in a previously 'white suburb' which we refer to as Model C Ordinary. Permission was obtained by the National Education Department as well as by the principal of the school. Consent forms were signed by the participating teachers and anonymity was assured by the use of pseudonyms for the school, district and participants. The school has been desegregated since 1984. It has approximately 1000 students, 60 per cent of the students are white and 40 per cent black.[1] There are 50 staff members, 45 are white, 2 are Indian, 2 are Coloured and one is black.

[1] When the term black is referred to here it includes Coloured and Indian students.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 8 teachers (1 black male, 1 white male, 6 white females) who volunteered to work on a larger research project looking at the construction and management of difference in schooling. They attended 13 focus groups over a period of 18 months and the focus groups were audio-taped and transcribed. Teachers were given copies of the transcriptions and the final interpretations to validate their accuracy. The researcher attended school events such as the Xhosa evening, the Speech day, the prize giving and numerous classroom observations were conducted at the request of the participating teachers.

The concern with the disproportionate number of black students placed in detention was raised in initial teacher interviews and as well during various focus group meetings by the teachers. The disproportionality was validated by an examination and analysis of the detention records of the school. In order to hear the voices of those detained, 17 students who had been on record as having attended detention frequently (with more than 10 detentions a year) were identified. Information sheets, interview questions and consent forms were sent to the 17 parents and students detailing the purpose of the interviews and requesting their permission to interview the students. 15 students and their parents agreed to the interview. In order to facilitate interviews in mother tongue as well as to allow for gender issues to be freely discussed, a male isiXhosa speaker interviewed the Xhosa male students and a female isiXhosa speaker interviewed the Xhosa female students. The one English speaking male was interviewed by an English speaker. An informal discussion was also held with Ben (pseudonym), the teacher in charge of detention. A discussion was held with the eight teachers and school management (3 white males) which explored possibilities of making the detention system more equitable. Furthermore documents pertaining to detention, such as the detention records on file were examined, as were the handouts given to staff and students on the system.

Thematic content analysis was applied to the data. From this, several themes emerged that were related to disciplinary practices like surveillance, record keeping, naming and public individualising. These themes were read from a Foucaultian perspective as a means through which to understand the operation of disciplinary power at Model C Ordinary. Additionally a discourse analysis of the student interview data and the focus group meetings where detention was discussed was applied in an attempt to identify the discursive representations of those students attending detention regularly.

Establishing norms and detaining the unruly

The detention system consists of three hierarchical levels of intervention. Punishable offences at the school were divided into 'academic misdemeanors' or 'general misbehaviour'. Failure to comply with a long list of rules (which were displayed in the classroom), resulted firstly in action by the teacher, seen as the first level of intervention.

At first level intervention, teachers were expected to follow-up on the above misdemeanors by giving a date and taking disciplinary/corrective measures such as:

- Giving writing-out
- Giving break DT (detention)
- Contacting parents
- Letting pupils do community service

Despite these recorded procedures not all teachers followed them and chose instead to hand out Friday afternoon detention. At Friday afternoon detention students had to sit in an allocated classroom after the rest of the school had been dismissed. Foucault (1977) says punishment may take the form of physical labour – this had been applied in the previous year where students were expected to do manual tasks at the school such as mowing the lawn, weeding, picking up litter and sanding graffiti off desks. The year the research was conducted the rule changed, and students reported that they were expected to sit quietly in a classroom and copy out the school rules repeatedly, thus depriving them of their time. If students did not attend their allocated detention time on Fridays, or if they were given three detention dates, the third level of intervention, the Saturday detention came into effect.

During the sixth focus meeting held with the teachers, the disproportionate number of black students in detention arose as a serious point of discussion. Many of the teachers believed that the primary reason for the disproportion was that most students were in detention for arriving at school late. Since this was construed as an incontrovertible offence, it was seen not to have any racialised connotations. This notion needed interrogation. Public transport is notoriously unreliable and the view that this was the only reason for the disproportion was incorrect. Thus a count was done that excluded latecomers in Grades 8–10. The count yielded a disproportionate number of offenders along clear racial and gendered lines:

- Black boys: 352
- White boys: 248
- Black girls: 146
- White girls: 99

According to the records the students had been placed in detention for the following reasons:

- Being late for school
- Being late for class
- Talking during a test
- Misbehaviour
- Homework not being done
- Disruptive behaviour
- Bunking (being absent from school without a written reason from a parent or guardian)
- Being disrespectful
- Not having books in class
- Missing match practice.

Considering that black students constitute between 40–50 per cent of the total students in the school and black males constitute about 50 per cent of this total, it is clear that a disproportionate number of black males were placed in detention for reasons other than late coming. This racialised and gendered disparity should have been cause for serious concern. White boys were also subjected to gendered practices in the school because their numbers were significantly higher than that of either the black or the white girls placed in detention.

Surveillance

Surveillance is a key aspect in any detention system. Individuals need to be watched and punished for offences. In terms of norms, being late for school was considered a serious punishable offence. It is around breaking this rule that student tension and frustration arose. In this case hierarchised observation worked laterally where students observed and reported on other students. A latecomers committee was set up to stand at the school gates and take down

the names of latecomers. But this committee comprised a group of white students who had not made the prefect list. The racial composition of the latecomers committee impacted on the accuracy of these records as noted in focus group meetings with teachers and interviews with the students. Students commented that:

> Sometimes at the gate, most people don't know you; so one can easily write someone else's name or someone write your name on the detention list. (*Student interview*)

> And then when I arrive at school, just because he (Ben) is used to me being late he just writes my name on the list. I know the date for example on the 20th I wasn't late but he would just tell me that I was late on the 20th or the 5th and I would say I wasn't late. He would say my name is marked on the list and there are people at the gate who know this, then it would be my word against his word. (*Student interview*)

These extracts reveal how several assumptions work to divide groups. In requiring white students to police their black peers the apartheid system of racial segregation continues, perpetuating a system of unequal power relations. This system of policing is flawed and results in injustices. The white students' lack of knowledge about their peers' names points to a general lack of integration in the school. This lack of racial integration was identified by the teachers as a concern and by the researcher during attendance at school events and classroom observations which revealed distinct spatial boundaries between the various racial groups. In order to mark themselves as compliant for Ben, white students write down names they *think* are correct. They are caught in top-down surveillance too, watched by Ben, required to meet their task of reporting on others. Their reluctance to ask for names is a way of maintaining power. This means that they strategically draw on their knowledge of regular offenders. In doing so the black students' individuality is lost as one name becomes just as good as another and the punishment punitive. This lack of knowledge may be underpinned by racist white notions that 'all blacks look the same'. It points to a lack of awareness of the individual Other who is not nameless and faceless. The power of the white students is reinforced by Ben when black students contest the records because 'it is marked on the list and there are people at the gate who know this'. Thus the production and reproduction of a white colonial hegemony is reinforced.

Students also experienced individualised surveillance:

> If you look at our school, I mean the guy who's controlling the detention is always out there to capture, not to rectify mistakes but to capture people out, so I wouldn't say it's fair.

> I was told, 'I am going to watch your every move' . . .he (Ben) nails you for the first thing you do. He waits for you, it's almost like he's ambushing you.

The references to being watched, captured, nailed and ambushed suggest that surveillance is framed within a strongly combative militaristic discourse. The black students are set up as the enemy waiting to be 'pounced' on. There is a sense that the students are powerless to stop these 'attacks'. When one considers that the point of detention is to prevent individuals from repeating an offence, this over-zealous desire to catch students out is inappropriate and punitive. The teachers commented during the focus group meetings that Ben had been relieved of teaching duties in order to have more time to implement detention and provide visible policing. They were concerned about the eagerness with which he had taken on this position.

According to students, the individualising was strongly racialised:

> Yes, it's my colour, because I'm black makes me, a white person has an advantage because he is white and the schoolteacher is also white therefore that person's chances of going to detention are not the same as mine. Mine are very high.
>
> But you go for little things. Blacks and white alike but I'm not trying to be prejudiced but it's worse for the black kids. A white kid can for example smoke dagga in school and a black kid can also do it. You'll find that a white kid will be given a second chance but a black kid will be expelled the first time. And they would say that they were making an example.

The incident to which this comment refers was validated by the teachers who indicated that white students had been caught smoking dagga and nothing had happened to them. Likewise they discussed a particular white male student who had made sexual comments to a female teacher as well as calling her 'a bitch'. Despite the teacher involved reporting this to management, the boy had not been called in for questioning or disciplined. The incident had happened months previously and nothing had been done about it.

Two sets of norms are then set up which are enforced differently. The close surveillance under which students are placed makes them visible but the closer scrutiny under which black students are placed, means that the chances of being sent to detention are higher. The racial Other is marked – the white gaze of the teacher passes over the racial sameness of the white students but is drawn to the blackness of the Other, who is different. This fact is not surprising when one considers the segregated nature of the staff's own educational histories. The surveillance under which these students are placed results in their being 'captured' in a "field of documentation" (Foucault, 1977, p.189) where they can be examined and made into objects of knowledge.

Record keeping

Careful and meticulous records were kept of all students who were given detention. Ben explained that the primary aim of his system was to 'pick up patterns' which once identified and recorded could be used in a disciplinary hearing against the student. In other words, the records of misconduct made the individual "knowable, calculable and administrable, to the extent that he or she may be differentiated from others and evaluated in relation to them" (Rose, 1989, p.143). These records of behaviour are fixed with no possibility for adjustments. Even if individuals improve it is unlikely that records will be adjusted accordingly.

This is evident in the case of Sally, a teacher in the research group, and Thabo, her student:

> I taught Thabo last year and a form was being sent around by Ben. His thing was to get rid of this child because he's such a problem and I couldn't write a negative thing about him because in my class he was fine. I'd given him two (detention) dates but that was in the beginning of the year. He sat right under my nose. He got merits and Ben actually questioned me. He actually said, "Are you sure? Have you got the right person? Why does he behave in your classroom like that?" And I said I don't know.

Sally's knowledge of this student, whom she interacted with daily, is challenged on the basis of a record assembled by Ben who 'knows' from his record that Thabo is a troublemaker. Thabo's name has become part of the archives of Ben's disciplinary writing. In turning Thabo into a 'case' this knowledge becomes fixed and cannot be challenged. The 'truth' of the record carries more power than the 'truth' of an experienced female teacher and disallows Thabo's improved behaviour to be acknowledged. Older more established patriarchal power relations emerge here. These can be seen in Sally's repetition and use of the word 'actually': "Ben *actually* questioned me. He *actually* said, 'Are you sure?'". Sally sounds surprised that her judgment would be questioned and found wanting. But Ben's view of Thabo will not shift and Sally's alternative view of him is an aberration to the norm. This fixing of Thabo essentialises his identity – he cannot be both a troublemaker and a well behaved student. It is ironic too that Ben questions Sally about having the right person, but does not question his latecomers committee on the accuracy of their reporting practices. This silencing of the female voice is unsurprising when read against the lack of action in relation to the sexual harassment of the female teacher by her student mentioned above.

Labelling and discursive naming

Hall (1997) argues that stereotypes use a strategy of 'splitting' that divides the 'normal' from the 'abnormal' and in doing so, sets up a division between those things that are seen to belong and not to belong. As the discourse analysis of phrases from the transcripts regularly indicated, students are divided into 'normal' well behaved subjects who need little governance and the 'abnormal' over whom greater control needs to be exercised.

During the teacher interviews and focus groups, many stereotypes that were commonly referred to by teachers were discussed. What emerged was strong racial stereotyping. Common descriptors included: 'blacks are noisy', 'blacks are loud'; 'blacks behave badly', 'black children tend to be disruptive' and 'blacks don't know how to behave'. Additionally labels of 'hooligans' and 'scabengas'[2] positioned black students as disruptive and ill-disciplined. Similarly, gendered stereotypes such as 'boys are slack' and 'boys take more attention' and 'white males are noisy' also surfaced. Van Heerden's (2000) research conducted in two ex-model C schools in Gauteng found similar stereotypes, including references by white students of their black fellow students as being 'noisy and boisterous'. They also commented that black students behave "inappropriately when they sing exuberantly and make physical movements" (2000, p.278). Prevalence and patterns of similar stereotypes across South Africa and across generations reinforce the worryingly stubborn nature of such divisive and powerful discourses.

Male students are constructed as deviating from the norm of docility because of their boisterous, demanding behaviour. In addition, the use of the terms 'hooligans' and 'scabengas' for black males suggest a more dangerous subject – one who is wild, uncontrollable, and is incapable of self-regulation. These references resonate with the construction of the rioting, 'dangerous' black Other that key into apartheid discourses about the 'dangerous masses' in the townships. In a country where the levels of violent crime are prevalent, it is probably not surprising that fear of a lack of control leads to tighter, more punitive measures taken by fearful white subjects. There is also a noticeable absence of stereotypes pertaining to white, Coloured and Indian girls. This absence suggests that they were constituted, for many teachers, as 'ideal' students: quiet, well behaved, hard working and docile as opposed to the (unruly) male students.

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2 Xhosa word for petty criminals.

These divisive and essentialised ways of talking about students were also present in the use of labelling practices. Some students explained that they had been labelled and identified as troublemakers and that this increased their chances of being given detention. The regular labelling and naming of students discursively positioned them as the 'usual customers' (informal discussion with Ben). The discursive labelling of students as 'usual customers' positions them as habitual wrong-doers. This naming becomes so naturalised that the students and teachers come to expect and accept this as a natural state of affairs. Since identity is an active process of representation or discursive construction (Hall, 1992), students' identities are constituted within these discourses. As Hall explains,

> identities are the "meeting point or 'suture' between the discourses which attempt to 'interpellate', speak to us or hail us into places as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivies which construct us as subjects which can be 'spoken'" (Hall and Du Gay, 1996, pp.1–17).

In one instance, a 'black' female student accepts and subverts the hail. She explained that she and her friends were named 'The Impossibles':

> We were *given the name here* in the school together with other kids I was with in another class. They said we were the Impossibles. Once you have *given me a stigma* that I am impossible *then I will be impossible*. The year will end and I would just say, 'I am impossible', so what if I don't do it, it doesn't matter. So here in this school students are *given names*. This is so and so, and so and so did this. The name Impossible *was given to us* by the principal and he just said, "You are the Impossibles" (our italics).

The frequent reference she makes to being *given* a name suggests that this student is clearly aware of the discursive power of labelling. She chooses to take up the position of an 'Impossible', reappropriating the term. While she is obviously critical of the name she has been given, she uses it to subvert the system. Having chosen to 'be impossible' she has limited the power the teachers have over her, 'so what if I don't do it, it doesn't matter'. The term 'impossible' allows her to take on a subject identity that governs her behaviour in a way that is opposite to school expectations. The 'self-fulfilling' (Merton 1968) nature of being impossible gives her freedom in how she chooses to behave despite the fact she may spend a large amount of time in detention.

Resistance to public individualising

Humiliation is one of the ways in which individuals can be punished for not meeting norms. The students placed in detention were publicly named during assembly and lists of detention candidates for the week were placed on a public notice board. But, students who had been given detention would have already signed a detention slip as part of the system of disciplinary writing, acknowledging their offence. Some of the teachers felt that the public naming of offenders was part of the punishment whilst other realized that it worked against the intention of a detention system. Instead of being marked for their deviance, students were made into heroes in an unfair system:

Alison: We used to read out the DT pupils as part of the assembly and this year they changed it, they're doing it after the staff have left

Jacqui: Why are the names read out?

Suzie: Just so they know. Or they'll just say they didn't know or something

Jacqui: But don't they sign anything

Suzie: Yes, but still you still have to, its part of the punishment.

Jacqui: It's like a public humiliation, shame,

Zander. It's not shame, sorry it's not shame.

Emily: I think it has a counter effect though, it makes them into heroes.

The announcing of names for detention again reveals the racial nature of the system and as one teacher, Alison argued, it became 'very embarrassing':

> But I must be honest and say at the beginning of the year when we were there, each grade head would read out their names because they represent management. I was incredibly aware that they were reading 'black' name after 'black' name. Quite honestly, I'll be honest with you, I felt quite relieved when there was an odd 'white' name. Something has distinctly focussed this year on the fact that the DT list became extremely 'black' and we got more and more reaction to it.

The reaction refers to a loud response during assembly from the floor by other black students who recognised ethnically marked names when they were read out. Students would boo and cheer and the school management decided to announce the names only after the staff had left. Alison wondered about the reasons for this change:

> Something that has changed over the past few weeks that Ben said, check your name on the board to see if you're in Detention. I don't know the reason why they stopped calling it out. I don't know if it was too problematic, or if the list was too long or the reactions were too much. The staff had already left the hall.

These incidents reveal the presence of resistant subjects. The recognition by black students of an unfair detention system creates 'heroes' and sets up the offenders as martyrs. The racialising of detention students creates a sense of solidarity. Male students' behaviour positions them as deviant rather than compliant. The construction of the black male student as deviant and a troublemaker plays itself out in racialised identity constructions. This results in a large number of black students in assemblies resisting the detention practices by positioning themselves in terms of race during the assemblies. Taking on such a position means that identities become essentialised, overshadowing the possibilities for taking on different subject positions. This is worrying in the South African context where racially essentialised identities work against integration as well as what the detention system should achieve.

Conclusion

The school's attempt to create an environment where learning happens is affected by established discourses and ways of managing behaviour that do not take diversity into account in inclusive ways. This paper reveals through an examination of one disciplinary system the working of racialised and gendered discourses. These discourses and their associated practices undermine the detention system because of the operation of double standards and unfair reporting. It could be argued that the presence of disciplinary power should be enough to indicate that there is effective discipline. The operation of such techniques as surveillance and reporting are present in the school. But Foucault argues quite clearly that where there is power there is resistance. And, in a system in which disciplinary power is used unfairly, it is not surprising that there will be varying levels of resistance.

What our analysis of the detention system reveals is disturbing if one considers that these divisive discourses operate throughout the school and possibly other schools. It means that the schooling experience for many students is one of potential alienation and marginalisation. This could lead to tensions and outbursts where staff and students' safety is compromised. Or, the decision to adopt dominant values that work to construct students as 'the Other', in order to stay out of trouble, has far-reaching consequences for identity formation and re-formation. This is not what inclusive education is about.

It is not the intention of this paper to blame teachers but rather to highlight the insidiousness of entrenched discourses and to point out the need for alternative

discourses to be made available to teachers. There is a need for spaces to be created for teachers to acknowledge and identify how they have been positioned by discourses, as well as how they use discourses to position others. It is imperative that discriminatory discourses that create both disaffected and resistant subjects be ruptured; otherwise attempts to educate students in ways in which everyone benefits will be impossible.

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The nature of knowledge and organisation: the case of four institutional types in South Africa

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Abstract

The article contributes to the continuing debate on changing roles, functions and goals of higher education in the twenty-first century in general and in South Africa, and how the changes are impacting on the knowledge production and the organisation, planning of learning programmes and the role of academics in the current global economy. I argue that there has been a significant shift from critical inquiry encapsulated in disciplines, towards utilitarianism driven by performativity in higher education. This shift, it is argued, has triggered new thinking about the nature of knowledge and its production in the current global and market economy and in South Africa. I further claim that the shift has shaped the nature of knowledge, the role and goals of higher education, how learning programmes are organised, and the role of academics. The discourses I argue tend to underplay the social responsibility of higher education, the development of disciplines that are central to development and encroach upon the unique role of academics in universities.

Introduction

The socio-economic changes of the second half of the twenty-first century continue to impact on the higher education sector, shaping its roles, functions, goals and the nature of the knowledge produced and its organisation. This article seeks to make a contribution the extent to which the current socio-economic conditions are directly or indirectly driving the current changes in the higher education sector. It is argued that the elevation of a utilitarian aspect of higher education has been buttressed by the discourses of perfomativity, mercantilisation, commercialisation and commodification of knowledge. Similarly, the article also examines the extent to which the discourses identified above have shaped debates about the place of distinctive disciplines on the one hand, and the apparent support for an interdisciplinary approach to curriculum contrition and knowledge organisation on the other.

The question I am responding to is: ‘How have the socio-economic changes of the second half of the twenty-first century impacted on the roles and goals of

higher education and how have these changes impacted on policy and practice?' Issues discussed are shifts that have occurred in the role and goals of higher education in the current socio-economic conditions, and changes in the nature of knowledge and its production, curriculum construction and the organisation of knowledge in learning programmes.

The discussions in this article draw from works of, inter alia, Lyotard (1984); Castells (1997; 2000) and Bernstein (2000). Lyotard's thesis is used because, even though his work appeared 25 years ago, this work resonates with the current technological, network and informational society postulated by Castells as well the conditions of global competition predicted in the second half of the twenty-first century.

Thus Lyotardian post-modernist condition discussed in this article refers to a period typified by a paradigm that questions the grand narratives of the Enlightenment ideal, which in turn claims neutrality and stands aloof from the contamination or influence of power relations (Zembylas, 2000). The post-modernist paradigm therefore recognises the diversity and heterogeneity that characterise twenty-first century societies (Zembylas, 2000). In this sense, post-modernism resounds with the values of multi-cultural and multi-ethnic societies and the promotion of the politics of differences that symbolise the democracies of twenty-first century (Kumar, 1997). Mercantilisation, however, is a metaphor that portrays knowledge as a marketable and saleable commodity.

According to Crook, Pakulski and Waters (1992, p.31 in Bloland, 1995, p.536) performativity is the "capacity to deliver outputs at the lowest cost and replaces truth as the yardstick of knowledge" where the technical usefulness of knowledge is determined by its efficiency and its transmutability into information (computer) knowledge. In this environment, therefore, effectiveness and efficiency have become exclusive criteria for judging knowledge and its worth in colleges and universities.

Embedded in the input/output model, performativity has engendered a new genre of epistemological questions about the nature of knowledge and the notion of responsiveness of higher education. Consequently, the question: "Is it true?" is replaced by: "Of what use is it?", and in the context of the mercantilisation of knowledge, the question becomes: "Is it saleable?" (Bennington and Massumi 1984, pp.4–5, p.51). Similarly, "Is it just?" and "Is

it morally important?" are reduced to "Is it efficient?", "Is it marketable?", and "Is it translatable into quantities of information?" (Bloland, 1995, p.536).

Methodology and approaches

The data for this article was obtained from a case study comprising twelve academics at two historically advantaged and two historically disadvantaged higher learning institutions in South Africa. The sample comprised: three senior male managers in three institutions and one female at the fourth institution; five male senior and junior academics, and three senior and junior female academics. Purposeful sampling was the preferred means to select a small number of participants who, because of their daily involvement with the issues that are the focus of this paper and also their experience, would be able to provide the required information. Thus it should be noted that their responses do not represent the views of other academics across the entire higher education sector but rather underline the idiosyncratic characteristics of the chosen institutional types. A literature review theoretical, philosophical sources and South African policy documents are also sources used in the data gathering process.

The participants were academic planners, senior and junior academic staff members, and staff managing the various learning programmes at these institutions. They were initially requested to respond to ten semi-structured questions on the changes in higher education in South Africa, the changing discourse in the sector, the place of disciplines and the organisation of learning programmes, discipline-based as opposed to interdisciplinary-based planning including the effects of rationalisation and influence of markets and professional bodies on the organisation of learning programmes. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with eight informants while four interviews were conducted telephonically.

Theoretical-conceptual frameworks and related literature

Knowledge in computerised societies

Lyotard (1984) postulates that the status of knowledge has changed as economies enter the post-industrial age and culture enters the post-modern era. Through the computerisation of society therefore, knowledge has become the principal force of production while simultaneously being itself transformed into a commodity. According to Cowen (1996), Lyotard's thesis pioneers a unique philosophy on the ways in which knowledge is linked to technology, but also on the way in which it becomes a technology subject to performativity rather than the test of truth.

In terms of Lyotard's thesis, knowledge was legitimated by metanarratives at the close of the modern era, but is legitimated by the performativity-based technological criterion of the technological model within the postmodern context. Based on the technological model, performativity advocates measurement of the input/output ratio of performance and has shaped, and continues to shape, the nature of knowledge and its production (Woodward, 2006; Zembylas, 2000).

Hutton (1995, p.21) asserts that, in this environment of performativity, institutions of higher learning have been turned into "factories" that produce degree holders, and their teaching staff are being "controlled" by the ranking of their publications in specialised journals in a competitive system of performance tests upon which funding, and even job prospects, depend.

In the industry-driven research therefore:

> knowledge is, and will be produced in order to be sold and will be consumed in order to be valorised in a new production. . . knowledge ceases to be an end in itself, it loses its 'user-value' . . .knowledge has become the principal force of production over the last few decades (Bennington and Massumi, 1984, pp.4–5).

Subotzky (1997) agrees with the above perspective that the discourse of global economy and technological advancement has given rise to a new discourse in higher education. This discourse is captured in the notion of a 'market university', and means that knowledge may now be manufactured and sold, with students becoming commodities essential to the survival of universities.

Similarly, Castells argues for the acknowledgement of the interrelatedness of the new economy, informationalism and informational technology, globalisation and networking in the twenty-first century (1997, 2000). According to Castells, the twenty-first century society can reasonably be typified as knowledge-based, informational and network-based, global-driven and technology-driven (Castells, 1997, 2000).

The competing perspectives on the nature of knowledge and how it is legitimated conjures up the notion of a university in different historical epochs. For instance, the Humboldtian University of the German tradition, which is the prototype for the classical notion of a university in the European context was founded on the classical humanistic concept of *bildung*, which distinguishes general education from usefulness and target-oriented education (Hartwig, 2007). *Bildung* can be translated as the formation of the person (ality) and refers to the cultivation of the inner life of the human soul, mind and human person (Biesta, 2002). *Allgemeinbildung* that characterised the Humboldtian university advocates the acquisition of competence to achieve self-determination, constructive participation in society, and solidarity towards persons, limited in the competence to participate in the process of deepening democracy(Elmore and Roth, 2005; Bauer, 2003; Prance 2004; Elmore and Roth, 2005).

The notion of the Humboldtian university has engendered two diverse and competing approaches to the roles and functions of a university. In terms of the first, higher education should impart skills for careers and professions, and in terms of the second, higher education has a formative role necessary to develop critical thinking and reflective inquiry.

Another key feature of the Humboldtian university is the value it places on unrestricted academic freedom that allows academics to determine the topics they wish to research and teach (Doepke, 2008).

However, Hartwig (2007) reminds us that the traditional Humboldtian university was never designed to equip a mass of people to fill specific occupations but rather focused on a minority of students who were to take a deep interest in the science and research that were the basis for its success.

The discussions so far have highlighted diverse and competing perspectives and approaches on what the roles and goals of higher education should be in different contexts and historical epochs. A phenomenon that is clearly

emerging is the over-exaggerated distinction between the utilitarian and the critical inquiry dimensions of higher education.

The decline of distinctive disciplines and the rise of interdisciplinary in curriculum planning

In defence of distinctive disciplines, the Humboldtian university tradition asserts that each science has its own place in the system and any encroachment by one science into another's field of study creates confusion, or 'noise', in the system (Bennington and Massumi, 1984).

Under the banner of interdisciplinary studies, higher education must provide skills, transmit knowledge, and offer training in all procedures capable of connecting fields jealously kept separate by the traditional organisation of knowledge (Bennington and Massumi, 1984). Thus, interdisciplinary curriculum planning has become a widely accepted approach to organising knowledge in higher education in the areas of teaching, research and the planning of learning programmes in order to make the sector responsive to the conditions of the twenty-first century. In this paper, interdisciplinary planning epitomises curriculum planning involving a close collaboration across disciplines or faculties or schools or units. Transdisciplinary curriculum planning is typified by greater horizontal rather than vertical articulation, by reduced but not completely eliminated insularity between disciplines, and sometimes by fragmented disciplinary offerings in modules that are more or less strongly insulated, vertically organised subject areas (Ensor, 2001). Transdisciplinary planning on the other hand refers to collaboration across faculties, fields or areas of studies, courses and programmes while multidisciplinary planning refers to a curriculum constructed around a variety of disciplines (Ensor, 2001).

Interdisciplinary planning stems, first, from the assertion that intellectual problems lie at the conjunction of different forms of thought and, second and separately, from the assertion that the problems of the contemporary world do not present themselves neatly according to the disciplinary formations of the academic world, but instead call for an integration of intellectual forces (Barnett, 2000).

Despite the nuanced difference between multidisciplinary, transdisicplinary and interdisciplinary planning, in practice the three are often conflated.

Accordingly, the term interdisciplinary planning is often used to cover everything including teaching and the design of curriculum by a group of academics in the same discipline with little consideration of epistemologies underpinning the horizontal and/or vertical articulation that may be at play in the process.

Advocates of the Humboldtian university would therefore take issue with the interdisciplinary approach to knowledge production and research that seems to have permeated curricula in higher education in the second half of the twenty-first century.

Lyotard (Bennington and Massumi, 1984), however, takes issue with epistemology underpinning interdisciplinary planning for the following reasons:

1. In terms of the interdisciplinary approach, knowledge is not articulated in terms of the realisation of the spirit or the emancipation of humanity, but in terms of conceptual and material machinery and those who benefit from its performance capabilities.

2. The motive behind teamwork in the interdisciplinary approach suggests the predominance of the criterion of performativity in knowledge production.

3. Teamwork improves performance only if carried out under certain conditions described long ago by social scientists, and is successful in improving performativity within a given model's framework for the implementation of a task.

4. The advantage of interdisciplinary planning is less certain when there is a need to 'imagine' new models on the level of their conception.

It is also instructive to draw from Basil Bernstein's (2000) analytical framework comprising three elements of curriculum construction. His framework comprises (i) The singular which cover traditional subjects including sociology, psychology and mathematics. This mode according to Bernstein encourages the formation of identities centred on 'inwardness'. (ii) Regionalisation encompasses marketing studies, nursing, educational evaluation studies, and educational studies that has assumed qualitatively different significance in recent decades. Bernstein argues that regionalisation

is a discursive procedure that "threatens pedagogic cultures dominated by singulars and raises issues of legitimacy for such cultures". (iii) The generic pedagogic form characterised by "key skills", "thinking", "team work", "learning skills" (2000, p.189).

Bernstein's framework is useful in understanding the ongoing-discussions on disciplined-based, interdisciplinary and programme-based planning and organisation of learning programmes within the context of curriculum restructuring in higher education in post-apartheid environment (Moore, 2000) and Ensor (1998; 2001). Moore distinguishes between "the macro-level of broad disciplinary knowledge structures and the micro-level of curriculum structures within a particular institution" (2000, p.186). It is necessary to differentiate between curriculum construction comprising of collection-type and the integrated-type curriculum (Ensor, 1998, 2001; Moore 2000). Collection-type curriculum refers to an arrangement where content/disciplines remain insulated from each other and contents stand in a closed relation to each other. On the other hand, an integrated type curriculum is where classificatory boundaries are weak and "where the contents stand in an open relation to each other" (Bernstein, 1975, p.88).

The South African case

Programme-based, qualification-based and discipline-based design

Policy documents developed after the first democratic elections of 1994 acknowledge that the South African society is increasingly becoming knowledge, information and network-based, global, and technologically driven and that the restructuring of curricula in higher education should reflect these changes. In particular, the synthesis report of the Department of Arts, Culture, Sciences and Technology (DACST) highlights the need to advance information technology, biotechnology and new materials technology, and to integrate science and technology as a means of supporting emerging knowledge (DACST, 1996, pp.6, 199). This position is both directly and implicitly supported in the Education White Paper 3 (1997) and The National Plan for Higher Education in South Africa (the Plan) (Department of Education, 2001).

Conceding to the pressures brought about by changing socio-economic conditions, the National Committee on Higher Education Report Curriculum

recommended that learning programmes in higher education should be based on programme-based planning, as opposed to being based on qualifications-based planning in order to diversify access, promote acceleration, as well as vertical and horizontal mobility (Human Sciences Research Council, 1996). Embedded in the recommended changes is the assumption that programme-based planning will encourage the required shift from collection-based what? to integrated-type planning (transdisciplinarity) currently considered to be reflective of the current conditions permeating higher education.

> The programme-based approach differs from the conventional qualification-based approach in that the former recognises that higher education takes place in a multiplicity of institutions and sites of learning, using a variety of methods, and attracting an increasingly diverse body of (Department of Education, 1997a, p.17).

A programme is a purposeful and structured set of learning experiences that leads to a qualification and all programmes have broad areas of specialisation (Department of Education, 1997a). A programme may be interdisciplinary, discipline-based, professional, career-focused, or trans-, inter- or multi-disciplinary in nature, and therefore offsets narrow conventional discipline-based planning (Department of Education 2007a).

However, a qualification is the formal recognition and certification of learning achievement awarded by an accredited institution. A qualification should include critical cross-field or generic skills to promote lifelong learning as well as discipline, domain-specific or specialised knowledge, skills and reflexibility.

Prior to the abolition of the binary policy, learning programmes in the South African technikon sector were governed by the general policy for technikons and formal technikon instructional programmes and therefore designed in terms of a programme-based approach (Department of Education, 2007b). The term ‘binary’ refers to a policy that differentiates universities from other institutions of higher learning (technikons, polytechnics) in terms of mission, roles and goals, governance, etc.

Conversely, prior to the process of reconfiguring higher education, learning programmes in the university sector were governed by a qualification structure for universities in South Africa, the Revised Qualifications Framework for educators and norms and standards for educators in school education (Department of Education, 2007b). However, in practice, the nuanced differences between qualification and programme have been less clear in

higher education in South Africa. It is hoped that the Higher Education Qualifications Framework of 2007 that currently governs qualification higher qualifications framework will shed light on this issue when it states that learning programmes should be disciplined (Department of Education, 2007).

Two studies conducted at the University of Cape Town provide useful insights into the continuing debate on curricula construction in the context of the transformation of higher education in South Africa since the 1994 democratic elections.

Moore (2000) examined a case study based on the foundation course in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Cape Town (UCT) using collection-type and integrated-type curriculum construction. The findings from this research highlight issues on curriculum construction and therefore are germane to this paper. First, the disciplinary framework of the original course in History that was constructed to enable the deconstruction process of contemporary political symbols (black and white) was not recontexualised into the foundation course. This was partially because of local socio-politics, and somewhat because of the pressure towards to produce generic form of knowledge. Second, the "process of trying to derive generic competences in the academic context runs the risk of silencing the necessary disciplinary basis for the achievement of such performance" (Moore, 2000, p.192). In defence of a disciplinary foundation, Moore makes an interesting comment that "although we may be able to describe skilled performances in generic terms, these skills may be the result of detailed training in specific disciplinary methods" (p.192).

In another study, Ensor (1998) argued that the implementation of programmes at UCT created a pressure to shift, and in some cases a weakening of classificatory relations, in order to achieve a greater openness of subject areas in relation to each other and a weakening of framing relations so as to promote greater responsiveness to the needs of students. Furthermore, the shift from the previous degree structure to academic programmes remains controversial as it raises questions about the university and its modes of academic and administrative organisation.

Results and discussions of the four institutional types

The participants all endorsed the view that South African society in the twenty-first century resonates with many characteristics of Lyotardian and

Castellian society. Accordingly, they affirmed claims in the literature that in the same ways as the Lyotardian and Castellian societies shaped higher education, so do the socio-economic conditions of the second half of the twenty-first century. According to the participants, these social-economic conditions have clearly led to performativity becoming a criterion to judge the nature of knowledge.

The participants expressed misgivings about the current changes arguing that these have triggered the discourses of mercantilisation and commodification of knowledge, and have reduced universities to businesses and turned academics into managers of higher education in South Africa. A senior academic had this to say about this issue: "Academics have become functionaries and administrators and not academics any longer and this reduces true academics to production machines in a production process."

There was a general consensus among participants that with the technological model of education planning dominating higher education, the utilitarian role of higher education has been implicitly elevated above its developmental and critical inquiry role. In the literature, a senior academic articulated the competing perspectives of utilitarianism and critical inquiry thus:

> I am not sure whether truth is still a common denominator for all programmes in the faculty and what works seems to be pragmatism. For me when individual learners learn better they become successful in the examination (a measurable) of life. These contrasts with the views of my colleagues who argue that education should promote social justice.

The view articulated above underscores the ongoing contest between the utilitarian justification, and the developmental and critical inquiry role traditionally played by universities through the ages. Also consistent with reservations in the literature on the utilitarian role of higher education, participants all argued that the proposed notion of a 'market university' de-professionalises academics and researchers, turning them into administrators and managers instead of confirming their status as scholars and co-creators of knowledge.

Another feature of the current changes mentioned by the participants was the increasing use of performance appraisals as a tool to confirm tenure and promotion of academics in many South African universities. The participants all expressed strong reservations about performance appraisals arguing that this system that was clearly borrowed from industry was incompatible with the academic profession. One of the participants pointed out that at her institution,

matters of academic concern were largely determined by administrators and managers whose interests were cost-effectiveness and efficiency.

Performativity driven programme rationalisation

Participants endorsed fears in the literature that performativity has not only shaped discussions about the roles and functions of higher education, but also the organisation of knowledge and learning in faculties, departments or schools. One participant echoed these apprehensions about the effects of performativity as follows:

> . . .as part of their cost saving and efficiency, institutions have cut down the number of programmes, collapsed divisions between originally distinct faculties and created colleges, schools and departments to reduce duplication in newly merged institution or in institutions that have survived the merger elsewhere and in South Africa.

Accordingly, programmes are retained only if they are considered viable, that is, if they appear to promote efficiency, effectiveness and financial sustainability within an institution. In this regard, the participants expressed disappointment at the continuous pruning of 'unviable' programmes such as African languages in universities. They contended that African languages should be retained and not downgraded as is currently the case because these programmes add value to the government's social development agenda (including upholding equity and social justice).

Influence of professional bodies

The participants raised the alarm at the extent to which the various professions and employers disproportionately influence the construction of curricula at universities. One academic had this to say: "We feel we have no option but to follow a programme-based approach because that is, in our view, what the National Department of Education is demanding." In the area of teacher education programmes, participants expressed some discomfort about the increasing tendency to underrate the significance of philosophy and pedagogy in teacher training programmes and the corresponding prominence given to the acquisition of technical teaching skills needed to implement the moribund Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) and its modified, National Curriculum Statement (NCS). Hence, when responding to the question about forces driving curriculum in teacher education, one of the participants complained that: "Curriculum of teacher education is driven by primary and secondary

education school curricula and problems and external factors including social justice and global influences."

The general agreement among the participants was therefore that, while the 'how' is undoubtedly important, the what (content) and especially the underlying pedagogy and philosophy are indispensable if the system is to produce transformative teachers capable of deepening democracy and human rights values. An academic from the Law Department was even more explicit than that, explaining how the Law Society, for example, often tries to persuade universities to produce students who can function in very specific aspects of law instead of teaching general principles of law to enable students to deal with general problems of law.

Accordingly, the participants argued that while universities have to be responsive to the communities in which they are located; this should not lead to a situation where universities blindly follow the wishes of employers and professions.

Decline of distinctive disciplines and the rise of interdisciplinary

Interviews with participants revealed different interpretations about the nuanced distinction between interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and discipline curriculum construction, and the confusion between the implications of programme-based and qualifications-based planning. One participant responded as follows about the criteria for grouping learning programmes:

> Programmes are grouped according to whether they fall in one of the following areas: natural sciences, health sciences (medicine), law, management and commercial sciences, languages and communication, social sciences and agriculture.

Based on the responses of the participants it is clear that 'interdisciplinary' means different things to different people. For some, 'interdisciplinary means all staff members are involved in designing the programme'. For others, 'interdisciplinary refers to the design of academic programmes by teams'. The above suggests that programmes qualify as interdisciplinary if they are conceptualised and designed by a team or group of academics or people. Clearly lacking from the discussions with the participants were epistemological (vertical and horizontal) articulations that are at play when talking about interdisciplinary programmes.

Other participants were more concerned about what they perceived to be a decline of discipline-based departments recommended by the Department of Education. This concern was expressed thus by one of the participants:

> We are now expected to adopt interdisciplinary approach to teaching and research that we were not implementing a year ago. However, despite this world trend, I still strongly believe in academic excellence, a strong discipline based approach is paramount. A good example is the training of FET teachers – in no way must we allow non-discipline based departments to provide the academic content for our teachers.

In support for the retention of sub-disciplines in university programmes, including in teacher education programmes, participants raised the concern that sub-disciplines such as philosophy and history of education have been ditched in favour of technical teaching skills. The participants attributed this worrying trend to the proposed programmatic approach as part of the curriculum restructuring process recommended by the Department of Education since 1994. One of the participants in teacher education explained the pressure from the Department of Education thus: "Since 1994, we have moved away from a discipline-based to programme-based approach and this is clearly a managerial response to forces outside the university." From the responses of participants, there seems to be potential conflict between producing teachers well-grounded in pedagogy and philosophy, and teachers who can function efficiently to implement the new school policy. Furthermore, the UCT case study on collection and integrated types of curriculum constructions reveals the gap between policy intentions on curriculum construction and practice not only at UCT, but at other institutions in South Africa, including the four institutional types that form the sample in my study.

Conclusion

In this paper I examined ways in which economic changes of the twenty-first century are shaping the direction of higher education policy and practice and how the sector has been responding to these changes using four institutional types in South Africa.

I argue that policy and practice in higher education are shaped by the requirements of performativity and thereby compromise the development of self-determination, self-reflection and constructive participation in society. The issue seems to be the tendency to overdichomise the distinction between

utilitarian and critical inquiry dimensions of higher education. This over-dichotomisation is simplistic and misleading in that it underplays the synergy between public and private good, and the indivisibility of the social and private rates of return of higher education.

Firstly, higher education needs to equip students with the necessary knowledge and skills for various careers and professions in our technological and information-based society. Secondly, higher education should contribute to the development of the *Allgemeinbildung and Bildung* to cultivate the inner life of the human soul, mind and person thereby *equipping* students with the necessary self-determination and self-reflection to participate constructively in society. It is therefore necessary even in the current economic situation to retain and preserve elements of the Humboldtian university while, at the same time, ensuring that the higher education sector is responsive to the changing economic conditions of the twenty-first century. Hence, the position espoused in this paper is that the two roles are mutually inclusive. Accordingly, it is necessary to ensure that the optimisation of performance and the associated emphasis on low-cost efficiency are not overzealously pursued to the extent of undermining the formative and critical inquiry dimension of higher education. This can be achieved by developing and designing curricula to provide broad generic, transferable skills and competences to empower students to contribute not only to economic growth, but to also contribute to the improvement of society as a whole.

Similarly, it is imperative for academics to deconstruct the discourse of performativity, including its underpinning epistemologies on the nature of knowledge in the current context of global economy. The deconstruction implies that, in validating knowledge, academics need to revert back to questions such as: 'Is it true?''Is it just?, and 'Is it morally important?', and not on whether knowledge promotes efficiency, marketability or whether it has specific utilitarian value. The proposed rephrasing of questions enables academics, researchers and students to function better in the current environment characterised by diversity, heterogeneity, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic societies, and the promotion of the politics of difference.

This deconstruction process will also hopefully create space for academics to reclaim their academic freedom and the pursuit of the truth in the current environment where academics are pressurised by university management to produce tangible and quantifiable research output. It is therefore necessary for academics to examine the epistemological and philosophical implications

underpinning the input/output model embedded in perfomativity and generally embraced by university managements.

Perfomativity-driven rationalisation of programmes

The author endorses the belief of the participants that the common practice of reorganising curriculum construction in post-apartheid society is clearly motivated exclusively by imperatives of efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Thus, the common practice of rationalising the so-called non-viable programmes such as African languages ironically makes a mockery of the rhetoric of developing parity between indigenous languages and English and Afrikaans. The lesson from this is that policies that at face value appear to promote efficiency do not necessarily advance equity and social justice.

Furthermore, relying too much on the advice of employers and the professions, especially those that relate to specific professions such as law, teacher education and engineering, when deciding what student should learn is counterproductive. While the needs of employers and professional bodies are an important consideration when determining curriculum, these needs are often based on narrow approaches that seek to predict the supply and demand for skills but clearly undervalue the effects of pervasive fluctuations between oversupply and acute shortage of person power. Conversely, higher learning institutions should seek to achieve a balance between the development of critical inquiry, broad general principles and generic skills suited for the various forms of employment and professions.

One also understands the anxiety of participants regarding the practice of performance appraisals at many universities in South Africa. This appraisal system is just another example of how performativity is impacting negatively on the academic profession. The encroachment of the language of industry is evident when higher education institutions are regarded as service providers, students as clients or customers, and heads of Department, who ideally should provide both management and academic leadership, as line managers. It must further be added that in filling posts for head of department in many universities, management skills are taking precedence over academic leadership and scholarship.

Laurillard has a point that universities are not businesses, and neither students, nor the other stakeholders in our society, are customers (2000). We therefore

cannot reduce academic work to measurable products in pursuit of cost-effectiveness and efficiency.

In defence of distinctive disciplines

Laurillard raises an interesting point that while universities have to respond to changing economic conditions, they should also sometimes respond to the demands of the disciplines (2000). This is necessary because the development of an independent understanding of our modern society and its world can only be guaranteed through the continued development of disciplines and this will be difficult to achieve when the process is driven exclusively by the requirements of markets (2000). However, in defence of disciplines, it is difficult to go to the extent of supporting Humboldtian disciplines that characterised the classical European university by devaluing interdisciplinary approach in curriculum planning. What is advocated is a quandragulation of disciplines, interdisciplinary integration and transdisciplinary competencies rather than embracing interdisciplinary approach as is the case in some institutions in South Africa.

Framework to examine curriculum construction

The analytical frameworks that distinguish the singular, regionalisation the generic pedagogic form, and collection-type and the integrated-type curriculum construction offer a strong pedestal to defend the chosen theory and practice in the current debate on curriculum restructuring and change in South Africa. Specifically, these frameworks can assist to improve practice by revealing firstly that the proposed shift from qualification-based to programme-planning and the promotion of interdisciplinary curriculum is complex. Secondly, frameworks used in the UCT study suggest that the anticipated shift from the previous degree structure to academic programmes as part of the discourse of a university and its modes of academic and administrative organisation has not occurred as was intended. This revelation helps us to reflect more carefully at our own practices on academic structures that we are advocating. Further, the frameworks reveal diverse interpretations of curriculum construction and also semantic confusion about disciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches in various higher learning institutions in South Africa. More importantly, this phenomenon is not unique to the four institutional types but can safely be generalised across the system.

By highlighting the issue of a generic form of knowledge in curriculum construction, these works show the continuing challenge of translating theory into practice. The work also underscores epistemological questions about what constitutes generic modules and the justification for grouping modules that make up a course or qualification. To this end, the grouping is, more often than not, arbitrary and adopted for convenience. Furthermore, the UCT experience sensitises academic planners to an epistemological issue that curriculum construction and the grouping of disciplines around generic competences may undermine the necessary disciplinary basis when trying to achieve such performance.

Two epistemological concerns inherent in the proposed shift from qualifications-based to programme-based planning, and from courses and departments to programmes need to be highlighted. First, while programme-based design facilitates student mobility and credit transfer, it tends to reduce learning and knowledge to products that can be pre-packaged into discrete pieces of knowledge in the form of modules and credits that students can accumulate at different times and different places to make up a qualification. Second, in practice, the proposed shift towards programme-based planning dilutes and trivialises disciplines which, in turn, fundamentally influences the nature of knowledge.

Lastly, it is hoped that the new policy of the Higher Education Qualifications Framework that directs qualifications in higher education should go a long way to rekindle the debate about the place of disciplines and interdisciplinary approach in organising learning programmes in higher education.

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‘Knowledge diversity’, truth and schooling: in (cautious) defence of realism

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Abstract

One of the chief aims of schooling is learners’ general (cognitive, moral and emotional) development, in order to prepare them ‘to live in the world’. Cognitive or mental development is characteristically achieved through the acquisition and elicitation of knowledge. In this regard, recent trends have focused on ‘knowledge diversity’ and ‘different ways of knowing’, by emphasising understanding and the social and cultural nature of knowledge. In response to these trends, I wish to tighten in this paper the link between knowledge and truth. The educational significance of truth, and of related concepts like facts, reality and objectivity, will assume a central role here. I argue that, ultimately, the only coherent and consistent position is a realist view of the pertinent issues and ideas – indeed, also as an approach to teaching and learning.

Social justice and epistemology: the case of South Africa

What happened elsewhere in the world after the 1960s, as an outgrowth of the civil rights movement in the US, was that predominantly material issues and concerns were increasingly replaced by a focus on culture, diversity and identity matters, especially in politics and education. Understandably, the pertinent debates began flourishing in South Africa only after 1994. While these trends were, and are, clearly to be welcomed, there has been some collateral damage – in South Africa as elsewhere –, the rise of relativism, post-modernism, and constructivism being readily available examples in this regard. With regard to education in particular, epistemology became a prime target, and truth (and related ideas like objectivity, reality and facts) rapidly fell out of favour in educational discourse. The aim of the present paper is to restore these concepts, and to gesture towards realism both as a learning theory (i.e. a theory about how knowledge is acquired) and as a pedagogy (i.e.

a theory of teaching or instruction; Greek: *paidagōgia*).[1] I will suggest, cautiously, that realism has distinct epistemological and ontological benefits and certain educational advantages over competing theories.

"We, the people of South Africa," begins the Preamble to the new Constitution, "[r]ecognise the injustices of our past [and b]elieve that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity" (Republic of South Africa, 1996). Given that everyone has a right to (a basic and to further) education, ensuring effective access to and implementation of this right means "taking into account" not only "equity" but also "the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices" (p.29). Carol Geary Schneider refers to "diversity" as "shorthand for the different ways that human variety [including human knowledge] is socially constructed and also as. . . shorthand for the many forms of assault, and resistance to assault, against stigmatised human difference" (Schneider, 1997, p.113; on the inclusion of knowledge in 'human variety', see pp.126–127).

Responding to Schneider's article, Malegapuru Makgoba emphasises "diversity-focused, diversity-driven curriculum transformation" (Makgoba, 1997, p.138). He writes:

> Educational processes and knowledge in pluralistic democracies are not neutral as they are embedded in values of a society in time and space. . . Knowledge is a human construct that by definition has a human purpose. Knowledge cannot be sterile or neutral in its conception, formulation, interpretation and development. Humans are not generally renowned for their neutrality or sterility in their thoughts. The generation and development of knowledge is thus universal in nature even as its application is contextual (Makgoba, pp.142–143).

'Knowledge diversity' and truth: the postmodernist and indigenous-knowledge turns

The emphasis on 'knowledge diversity' and 'different ways of knowing' (see Green, 2008 and Murphy and McCormick, 2008, respectively) is fairly easy to explain, in South African education as elsewhere, especially when one considers the denigration, suppression and exploitation of so-called traditional

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[1] It is apposite to mention the work done in this regard by Johan Muller, Wally Morrow, Michael Young and Heila Lotz-Sisitka (see Muller, 2000 and 2005; Morrow, 2007 and 2009; Young 2007 and 2008; Lotz-Sisitka, 2009; see also Hugo, 2005). By contributing ideas not covered in these texts, the present article will hopefully add momentum to the push towards realism in South African educational thought.

knowledge systems during and even after colonialism. The reclamation project that underlies this renewed focus is not only epistemological but also concerned with legislation and social justice. As Mogobe Ramose has put it:

> The history of epistemicide in South Africa raises fundamental questions of justice such as the question of epistemological equality of all the existing paradigms of the peoples of South Africa. Epistemological equality is a vital ingredient in the construction of a truly representative South African identity expressed, among others, in the new South African philosophy of education (Ramose, 2004, p.156).

Lesley Green focuses on "knowledge diversity" (which refers both to "knowledge practices" and to "knowledge traditions"; Green, 2008, p.149), in a critical response to realist and "universalist" conceptions of knowledge and truth:

> While recognising the flaws in universalism and the need to value knowledge diversity, there is a need to reject the idea of knowledges as mutually exclusive. . . In recognising a wider range of cognitive practices and diverse moral economies of knowledge, scholarship on the commensurability of the sciences and [indigenous peoples'] knowledges [IK] . . . can and will impact on far more than village schoolrooms. . . . The focus on epistemically acceptable practices, rather than universal truths (which can never be satisfactorily demonstrated) suggests that the division of IK and the Sciences is spurious, without resorting to a universalism in Science (Green, 2009, pp.51–52).

She argues that

> diverse epistemologies ought to be evaluated not on their capacity to express a strict realism but on their ability to advance understanding. Such an approach allows for the evaluation of the advancement of understanding without necessarily requiring the expression of the literal truths that divide 'belief' from 'knowledge' (Green, 2008, p.144).

Apart from how – in the absence of such truths – one could make sense of "understanding",[2] a question that remains largely unaddressed is whether the ideas of "diverse moral economies of knowledge", "epistemological equality of all the existing paradigms" and of "diverse epistemologies", and "different ways of knowing", make any sense. The case *against* "indigenous knowledge", and related ideas, is in essence the following: "indigenous knowledge" is conceptually flawed, so it is best to abandon this idea, or at least to reserve it for a considerably more circumscribed application – *especially* in educational contexts (see Horsthemke, 2004, p.43; Horsthemke, 2008, p.305). A central problem appears to be the lack of clarity about the meaning or understanding of 'knowledge', and what it is to 'know' something.

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[2] I return to this point later in the paper.

Defenders of these ideas distinguish between 'skills' and 'knowledge' – which suggests, in the absence of any definition, that at least part of the understanding concerns propositional (or theoretical, or factual) knowledge. Insofar as 'knowledge' in this sense includes reference to 'truth', this invites the perception of the latter also being 'diverse'. Bluntly asserting, on more than one occasion during the 2007 ISAPS conference,[3] that "truth is belief", Kwasi Wiredu has asserted that reference to "infallible" truth is not only a bar to dialogue but that "such a claim to knowledge is also a bar to education" (Wiredu, 2004, p.24). Or take Michel Foucault's account:

> Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it includes regular effects of power. Each society has its own regime of truth, its 'general politics of truth': that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true . . . (Foucault, 1987, pp.73–74).

This is also the view that Green seems to favour (see Green, 2008, p.154, where she repeats Foucault's dictum that "truth is . . . power"). Arguing that knowledge "is constituted by what is 'true enough'[4] for the task at hand. . ., rather than by access to an absolute truth" (p.147), she notes that "[o]ne cannot simply discard the idea of IK without recognising the issues of power and knowledge that undergird it" (Green, 2008). Elaborating on this last point, Green states:

> The power/knowledge debate applies as much to the sciences as it does to claims to IK . . . Knowledge has always been and will always be instrumentalised . . .[, for example] by powerful lobbies within industry and government. (p.146)

The reference to 'power and knowledge' as a necessary tandem is a postmodernist red herring: it involves a category mistake. The epistemic is *not* the political. When one account is true and another false, or one is adequately justified and another only insufficiently so, it is fairly clear which one ought to be favoured, on epistemic grounds, even though there may be grounds for 'going soft' on the other – like pedagogical reasons, reasons having to do with

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3 In April 2007, the ISAPS (International Society of African Philosophy and Studies) 15th Annual Conference was hosted by the Rhodes University Philosophy Department in Grahamstown, South Africa.

4 This quantitative or gradational understanding of truth is borrowed from Catherine Elgin (Elgin, 2004). There is a 'threshold' at which belief is strong enough and justification becomes adequate, to qualify as conditions of knowledge. With the notion of 'true enough', Elgin (and, following her, Green) wants to build a similar threshold into the truth condition (p.115). I will discuss this idea later in the paper.

social justice, (former) disenfranchisement, or simply with personal respect, etc. On the view I am defending here, which is in essence a thoroughgoing realism, it is possible *at once* morally to support, to empathise and sympathise with the plight of, indigenous people (and to condemn and lobby against 'Western' denigration, suppression and exploitation) *and* to reject some of the epistemological, metaphysical and ontological foundations of their worldviews.[5]

The following example is a case in point. 'In Palikur astronomy', Green writes,

> . . . the annual movements of specific constellations are related to seasonal rains in a way that describes those constellations as the boats of shamans who bring the rains. The constellations, in other words, are given material form, and cause is attributed to them. If one were to reject as unscientific any explanatory model of the world that does not operate within a strict realism, one could not accept this narrative as knowledge. Yet there is certainly a correlation between the appearance of specific constellations in the hour before dawn, and specific seasons. . . Is this narrative that attributes causal agency to inanimate objects really that different to the immunologist's metaphors of attack and defence that attributes agency to cellular processes as if they are soldiers in a war? In other words, science does not operate within a framework of strict realism in using its own models. Why judge a different knowledge as false where it uses narrative models?' (p.154; see also Green, 2009, pp.47 and 50)

The difference is that an immunologist is fully aware of the function of the 'narrative model', the metaphorical nature of the language employed, whereas the Palikur astronomer actually fully believes that what happen to be inanimate and fictional objects have not only *causal agency* but also a *purposive role* in natural events.[6] Unlike the immunologist's account, the Palikur theory is indifferent to evidence, is not "factually defeasible" (to use Catherine Elgin's words; Elgin, 2004, p.129), and therefore neither scientifically tenable nor epistemically desirable. A theory is factually defeasible if "there is some reasonably determinate, epistemically accessible factual arrangement which, if found to obtain, would discredit the theory"

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5 Clearly, the practical ('skill') and familiarity senses of 'indigenous knowledge' should be acknowledged (and I have made this point before; see Horsthemke, 2004). But *what else* is there in *propositional* knowledge, apart from content? To speak, as Green does, of (Palikur astronomy as) "demonstrably valid knowledge" and (as communicating) "verifiable knowledge" (Green, 2009, pp. 43, 46) is to employ tautologies. There could be no knowledge that is *anything but* valid and verifiable.

6 Elgin may be right when she says that "a theory may be composed of both factual and fictional sentences" (Elgin, 2004, p.128). A scientist, however, can usually tell fact and fiction apart.

(Elgin, 2004, p.129). Attempting to make the case for the scientific and epistemological equivalence of Palikur astronomy (representing indigenous knowledge systems, generally), Green contends that "no scientist believes that Scorpius and Orion are literally an arachnid and a human, but the constellations remain known by those names" (Green, 2008, p.156). This is correct. The importance, however, is not constituted by the *naming*, but by the accompanying beliefs, and the extent to which they reflect *what is actually the case*.

"If 'true enough' is valid for the purposes of communicating understanding in the laws of physics", Green suggests,

> the model of the relationship between the stars and the rains is adequate to the task of communicating understanding of the complex movements of stars in relation to the seasons. It is 'true enough' in its context. One might believe in the shamanic guiding of the star boats, or one might accept that these sentences of the model are metaphorical: either way, they do not need to be eliminated in order for the model of the sky to be valid, which is to say that *such models can be taught in school curricula*, and included in the corpus of knowledge promoted by the state in the task of extending citizenship to people who explain the ecosystem with reference to the rains that come at the same time as certain stars. (Green, 2008, p155; emphasis mine)

Again, this analysis misses the point – namely, that some 'models' are false (i.e. they do not even come close to 'true enough') and should not be taught. The star boat narrative should not be taught in astronomy, although it might be taught in cultural studies or classes on the history and function of myth. Similarly, there is no place for creationism or intelligent design in biology classes, although they arguably have a place in dedicated religious instruction.

Even more damagingly, perhaps, I do not think that the quantitative or gradational conception of truth is plausible. Most obviously, unlike the other conditions of knowledge (belief and justification; see Green, 2004; Green, 2008), truth is not a matter of degree. It is not a matter of *more-or-less*, but rather of *either-or*. It is, indeed, the truth criterion so conceptualised that serves as a kind of gate-keeping mechanism for realism. It enables us to say that something is false, and at least to guard against all kinds of superstition and "postmodernist claptrap" (to use Elgin's apt phrase; Elgin, 2004, p.128) being elevated to the status of knowledge. Green, in her concern for the epistemological priority of understanding and of context, requires a 'relaxed' truth criterion for her account. This explains why she wants to substitute 'true enough' for the truth condition of knowledge. Interestingly, this is a step that not even Elgin, the originator of this notion, appears to be wholly willing to take. The dilemma is made manifest in the following telling passage:

> *I am not saying that truth itself is a threshold concept*. . . My point is rather that epistemic acceptability turns not on whether a sentence is true but on whether it is *true enough* – that is, on whether it is close enough to the truth. 'True enough' obviously has threshold. (Elgin, p.115; emphasis added)

On this account, the process of approximating truth is one of justification and/or reliable production of reasons (both of which are, indeed, 'threshold concepts'): 'true enough' would amount to little more than 'adequately justified', or 'as reliable as can be reasonably expected'. Furthermore, if truth is not a threshold concept but 'true enough' is, then the latter cannot do the work of the former. If this is correct, the notion of 'true enough' has been rendered redundant.

Understanding, context-dependence, and the problem of constructivism in education

By the time students have completed their undergraduate teacher training, certainly in South Africa, they have been thoroughly indoctrinated with constructivism. (On the purported significance and relevance of constructivist theory in today's classrooms, see – for example – Delanty, 1997; Duffy and Cunningham, 1996; Potter, 1996; Richardson, 2003; Von Glasersfeld, 2000; Windschitl, 1999 and 2002.) It is generally assumed that it is only constructivism that provides a compelling account of active, student centered teaching and learning, and that rival pedagogies and learning theories err in significant respects. According to Duffy and Cunningham, and also Windschitl (Duffy and Cunningham, 1996, Windschitl, 1999 and 2002), one of the most difficult underpinnings of constructivism for educators to embrace is that *there are no universal truths* and that constructivism by its very nature is *not compatible with more objective forms of knowing*. No wonder, one might respond – since this can only be apprehended as a 'universal truth' itself, or in terms of an 'objective form of knowing', respectively. It would appear then that in an important respect constructivism is self-undermining: either there are universal truths (or objective forms of knowing), except this particular one; or the statement in question does not itself constitute a universal truth, or objective form of knowing.

There is clearly a grain of truth in constructivism. Some facts are socially constructed, the results of human description and designation – like pass grades in tests or exams, codes of ethics, laws, speed limits, standards of etiquette, culinary recipes, etc.: contingent facts that emanate from our social

practices. Constructivism errs, however, in saying that all facts, including historical and scientific facts, are human constructs. As a pedagogy, I suggest, constructivism has two major, related shortcomings. It degrades a fundamental educational task – that of transmission of knowledge. Furthermore, like postmodernism, constructivism is not only misleading but also potentially dangerous, in that it gives people (educators as well as learners) a false sense of empowerment and authority. In fact, neither approach is emancipatory, as their advocates have contended (on this point, see Muller 2000, p.156). On the contrary, both as a pedagogy and as a learning theory, constructivism is likely to be disturbingly disempowering. The failure of outcomes-based education in South Africa, with its devaluation of subject-based knowledge, knowledge developed in the past and of knowledge for its own sake, is testimony to the plausibility of this judgement.[7]

Yet, does constructivism not find its natural home in 'understanding'? After all, the conceptual ambit of the latter includes people's perception of a situation, etc., and agreement among people – which appears to suggest that such perception and agreement involve individuals' construction of facts.

Understanding

What exactly *is* 'understanding', and what is its relation to truth? The short answer would be that understanding is a mental process that is directed towards truth, or aims at the way things are/the way the world is. (Note: 'understanding' does not necessarily mean actually 'grasping the truth'. Our perception of a situation may be incomplete, insufficiently informed, indeed mistaken, as may agreement among people.) This becomes even clearer when understanding is discussed in relation to 'misunderstanding', and when we reflect on the meaning of the latter. Misunderstanding consists in "getting

[7] This is not the place for a detailed critique of these approaches. My sketchy remarks here are unlikely to persuade anyone that constructivism, for example, should be rejected. They merely serve to underline my misgivings about bestowing special status in education on a theoretical orientation that is deeply problematic. (See also Benson and Stangroom, 2006; Boghossian, 2006a and Boghossian, 2006b, for comprehensive and elegantly argued critiques.) As Lotz-Sisitka claims, "education has a critical role to play in preparing children *to live in the world*" (Lotz-Sisitka, 2009, p.71; emphasis added). This arguably requires that those who so prepare children live there, too. Frankly, I cannot see constructivism making a substantial contribution to this preparation process.

things wrong", in perceiving[8] things/the world as they are not. However, this does not mean (as Elgin suggests it does; Elgin, 2004, p.120) that "divergences from truth, even if unavoidable, are always cognitive defects". There is a distinct cognitive value that attaches to imagination, musings, and fantasies. Nor does this mean that whenever things or the world are perceived as they are not, they are misunderstood. The point is, plainly, that it is important to be able to distinguish between fact and fiction, not to mistake one's imaginings for the way the world is (see also footnote 11 below). Yet, even making mistakes – getting things wrong – is not necessarily a 'cognitive defect', other things being equal. It is a natural part of the process of learning. Learning to recognise one's mistakes and to avoid error is a vital component of understanding and, indeed, of getting closer to what the truth happens to be. It underlies all scientific progress. However, I disagree with Elgin over whether such approximation is a substitute for the truth criterion as such.

Realism, unlike postmodernism and constructivism, emphasises a reality or "objectivity outside the discourse in which it is articulated" (Delanty, 1997, p.130). The question that remains to be answered is whether all learning processes are identical, whether we all operate under identical epistemic conditions. The answer is an emphatic 'no' – and this is an answer that is also available to realism, as I will argue below.

The importance of context

Can a non-constructivist, non-relativist account be given of the pedagogical and educational significance of context? When the terms 'knowledge' and 'knowing' are employed in everyday language a distinction is generally made between three different kinds of knowledge: acquaintance- or familiarity-type knowledge (knowledge of a person, place, or thing), practical or skill-type knowledge (knowledge *how*), and propositional (also called factual or declarative) knowledge (knowledge *that*). When I say *I know Mary Metcalfe*, this involves a different kind of knowledge-claim from that involved in saying that *I know how to bake bread*. Asserting *I know that the Taliban is not a rap*

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[8] The German word for perception, *Wahrnehmung*, is even more appropriate. *Wahrnehmen* (*wahr/nehmen*), to perceive, literally means 'to take to be true'.

group[9] in turn involves a kind of knowledge-claim different from the first two. There may often be an overlap between the different kinds of knowledge. Nevertheless, the distinction is generally thought to be useful.

Whereas the first two types are fairly uncontroversial, it is the third type of knowledge that is more complex. Belief is the subjective component of (propositional/theoretical/factual) knowledge, while truth constitutes its objective anchor. While beliefs may vary from individual to individual, society to society, culture to culture – and indeed in terms of strength and duration –, truth does not so vary. Truth refers to what is the case, independently of what individuals believe, think or feel may be the case – independently of their interests and preferences, and even of public and general consensus.

The third component, justification, has a kind of bridging role between the subjective and the objective, between belief and truth. Thus, what counts as *suitable* justification is determined by degree, kind and context of justification. As far as the requisite *degree* of justification is concerned, minimal justification is clearly not enough, while conclusive justification is usually not available. Normally (other than in mathematics and in deductive logic) we accept justification that is less than conclusive, i.e. reasons that are nonetheless compelling. Different *kinds* of justification include observation, sense experience, introspection, memory, oral and written testimony, and different (deductive and non-deductive) kinds of reasoning.

Considerations of *context* bear on the attribution of knowledge insofar as it concerns not only self- but also (and especially) other-ascription, the framing question being: 'Under what circumstances can I/others be said to know?' Attribution of knowledge is context-sensitive – which exemplifies what might be called the 'social component' of knowledge. What does this mean? What is considered *suitable* justification in the case of a small child may not be what is deemed suitable in the case of an older person or adult. The notion of

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9 This example is inspired by a favourite Bush-ism. When he was asked, during his 2000 presidential election campaign, about his take on the Taliban, George W. Bush is reported to have responded, 'Oh, I don't follow rap music'.

suitability'[10] Israel Scheffler argues, "involves standards, which are normally applied more strictly in some cases, more approximately in others, thus giving rise to multiple interpretations of *knowing*" (Scheffler, 1965, p.96; it should be noted that he refers to "multiple *interpretations* of knowing" – *not* to "multiple *ways* of knowing" or to "multiple *knowledges*"). He suggests a subtle shift from examining beliefs to examining the *contexts* in which beliefs are advanced as knowledge-claims. In other words, he suggests that we distinguish the question concerning justificational suitability (of a belief) from the "question of *appraisal of the believer*" (Scheffler, p.102). "To speak of the right to be sure is, in the present context, to appraise the *credentials* of belief from the vantage point of our own standards; it is to spell out the attitude of these standards toward specific *credentials* offered for a belief", Scheffler contends (p.102).

It is plausible to maintain that someone (e.g. a six-year-old) has good reasons if, given her reasoning ability, it is (epistemically) permissible for her to believe that something is the case. In other words, it makes excellent (epistemic as well as educational) sense to apply standards of suitability (of justification) more leniently in the case of the six-year-old and more strictly in the case of the sixteen-year-old. The important point for educators is that what counts, for example, as a good reason depends on who is giving the reason and in what context. One of the responsibilities of an educator is to assess learners' knowledge in a way that is sensitive both to their level of understanding and to the context of assessment.

When is an educator entitled to say that a learner knows something (in the sense of *knowing that*) or has adequate justification for making a knowledge-claim? To put the question more formally: Under what conditions may an educator attribute knowledge to a learner? When we judge that someone has suitable justification, we are judging that he has a rational/justificational case that he can understand, according to Scheffler: "In saying he knows, we are not merely ascribing true belief but asserting that he has proper credentials for such belief, the *force* of which he himself *appreciates*" (Scheffler, p.112).

Scheffler's arguments imply that even if a learner has subjectively good

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10 Scheffler initially employs the notion of '(evidential) adequacy', only to substitute it later with the more general notion of 'good reasons'. I take 'suitable justification' to encompass both 'adequate evidence' and 'good reasons' and, therefore, to cover a wider range of applications than each of these two notions on their own. To possess suitable justification is (in a phrase Scheffler borrowed from A.J. Ayer) to have "the right to be sure".

reasons for believing something to be true, she does not have knowledge unless she also has *intersubjectively good reasons* (and, of course, unless her belief is true). One of the tasks of an educator will be to assist learners in acquiring the relevant concepts and intersubjective standards of justification. I am not talking about *perfect* reasons; I am (with Scheffler) talking about *good* (or *compelling*) reasons. An important feature of what constitutes *good* reasons is that they are *reliably produced*. If reasons are unreliably produced, they cannot function as justification for one's belief/s. What does 'reliably produced' mean? For one thing, one's sense experiences must be reliably connected with the world, one's sense organs must be intact, etc. For another, one's reasoning must be of a requisite standard[11] – sufficiently critical, rigorous, adequately and appropriately informed, and so on.

This analysis of good reasons indicates why reference to them is context-sensitive. Neither our reasoning nor our sense-experiences are infallible. Nonetheless, if they are generally reliable sources of justification, the reasons they produce might be called *intersubjectively certain*. If reference to good reasons is context-sensitive, does this mean that the criteria for knowledge-ascription change with the respective social group? Is knowledge itself relative? In Plato's cave parable, whatever the enlightened person knows about 'reality' stands in stark contrast to the (majority) view that what the prisoners in the cave claim to know is reality. Does this indicate that *knowledge* is ambiguous between various concepts, each based on a different standard? Is this knowledge context-dependent? Scheffler's arguments suggest that it may be better to say that attributions of knowledge are *context-sensitive*. This is because the term 'context-sensitive' does not offer an open invitation to epistemological relativism – indeed, not even to 'knowledge diversity'. The 'diversity' in question pertains to reasons and to justification.

Regarding the different knowledge claims one is likely to encounter in one's own teaching practice, these usually include moral, scientific, and emotional knowledge claims, amongst many others. Thus, one might encounter different claims about the goodness or badness of certain practices; different levels of

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[11] This is where the notion of 'true enough' may seem to gain a foothold. While it certainly makes sense to speak of *correct* deductive reasoning, I would suggest that this descriptor even applies to non-deductive reasoning. The latter can be *correct*, given the parameters of these (inductive, analogical and abductive) kinds of reasoning, without being *conclusive*. (It should also be noted that deductive reasoning may be correct, i.e. display correct logical form, without yielding a true conclusion. In fact, all component propositions may be false.) Just as there are different levels of reasoning, and reasoning ability, there will be different standards of correctness.

mathematical reasoning, different (more and less sophisticated) claims about, e.g., pollution; and examples of introspection – 'This poem makes me feel sad' – and literary analysis – 'This poem is meant to evoke feelings of sadness in the reader, by means of the following. . .'. It is important to note that a small child's claims are accepted as 'knowledge' only if they are true, and the same – obviously – goes for the claims of older persons. Truth does not vary according to particular individuals, social groups or societies. This serves to indicate why, as educators, we are more lenient in some cases than in others – but also why our leniency does not extend to condoning untruths or falsehoods.

Reality, facts, truth, knowledge - and education: the realist rejoinder

The present section considers the relationship between some of the key cognitive and educational concepts from a broadly realist perspective. Realism is the view that there are facts, a reality, a world that exists independently of me, the researcher, the subject of inquiry – i.e. independently of the discourses in which these facts etc. are articulated.

Realism, reality and objectivity refer to what is the case independently of the individual's personal or social constructs and designations, and the procedures for understanding that reality (see Pring, 2004; Willaschek, 2005). Different cultural descriptions come up against the hard facts of reality, of what actually is the case. The viability of these differences depends on features of reality/the world that makes them possible. The present government usually offers a clear example of social construction, and many people are employed to construct that reality to suit the purposes of the politicians. 'Inclusive education', 'investment in education' and 'expansion of provision', like the former US government's slogan 'No child left behind', are constantly being 'reconstructed'. But every so often a hard-nosed realist will ask, "What about the over-crowded classrooms?" or "Where is the teacher?", and point out that children have *really* not had anything to eat or have been violated (see Pring, 2004, p.212). Realism in this sense enables the distinction between subjective and objective accounts: the latter involve examination of the evidence, logical inquiry and the like. Of course, to be objective or to proceed objectively is not the same as being right. Objectivity (like subjectivity) refers to the way I go about my inquiry.

Truth refers to what 'is' the case; what is in agreement with fact or reality. Consider the following claims:

'There is no such thing as (universal) truth.'
'What is true for you is not necessarily what is true for me.'

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As I have indicated earlier, *contra* constructivism, it makes good sense to take issue with these statements. It makes sense to deny what is said here – and to do this is to concede that what has been said might be wrong, and that its negation would be correct. Otherwise, what is the point of disagreeing or arguing? Or what is the point of asserting a point of view? This leads to the unavoidable position that statements (insofar as they are meaningful) are either true or false.

Without being able to elaborate on the matter, and to critique rival conceptions of truth (coherence, consensus, pragmatism, redundancy, etc.), I am suggesting here that the commonsense account of truth assumes that there is *at least some* correspondence between the statements I utter and the world as it exists, i.e. independently of me. (Pring, p.213; but see also Delanty, who states: "Constructivists and realists are both united in the rejection of correspondence theories of truth", yet fails to defend this claim; Delanty, 1997, p.132.) The central element of correspondence theories of truth is that, other things being equal, the truth/falsity of what is said has something to do with a reality that is *independent* of the statements made about it. I might legitimately for different purposes describe the world in many different ways. But for those descriptions and distinctions to stick, there must be features of the world that enable them to be made. One cannot get away from reality – and from the truth/falsity of statements that give an account of it.[12]

My contention is that realism offers a more coherent account than rival theories of the relationship, including the differences, between cognitive and educational concepts. How, then, are the cognitive notions of *knowing* and *believing* related to the educational notions of *learning* and *teaching* (Scheffler, 1965, p.7)? *Learning that* seems to imply *believing that*, but not *knowing that*. Successful teaching involves the learner coming to believe

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[12] It is important to distinguish between what actually took place and the subjective feel of one's experiences, memories, reflections, etc. (Take the Truth & Reconciliation Commission hearings, for example, and the misleading accounts of 'different truths' that have been produced. Reconciliation is a social construct; truth is not. Truth necessarily precedes reconciliation: there can, strictly speaking, be no reconciliation without truth.)

something. The converse does not apply: one may come to learn something without having been taught. What makes teaching 'successful' is not merely that the learner believes what the educator takes to be true, but that the subject matter is true. As I have indicated earlier (and previously: Horsthemke, 2004), *knowing* has not only a propositional/factual but also a practical/skill sense (*knowing that*, *knowing how*). *Believing*, on the other hand, is only propositional (*believing that*). According to Scheffler, *knowing* thus has a larger range than *believing*, and "*learning* and *teaching* are at least as large in range as *knowing*" (Scheffler 1965, p.17). Both also have practical/skill sense (teaching *how*, learning *how*), in addition to being used propositionally (teaching *that*, learning *that*), unlike believing. (As the following table indicates, the acquaintance/familiarity sense of *knowing* is neither shared by *believing* nor by the educational concepts in question – which accounts for its educational irrelevance.)

	knowing	believing	teaching	learning
acquaintance/ familiarity	√	x	x	x
practical/skill	√	x	√	√
propositional/factual/ theoretical	√	√	√	√

Yet, the range of education also goes beyond that of knowledge: we also employ these concepts in terms of *learning to* and *teaching to*, unlike knowing. The same goes for learning and teaching, but not knowing, with regard to appreciation of music and/or development of understanding. It is important to note that *teaching/learning how* arguably involve *knowing how* – whereas *teaching/learning that* do not necessarily involve *knowing that*. *Teaching that* does not even imply *believing that*, although *learning that* seems to. This serves to explain, *inter alia*, how indoctrination takes place.

Unlike indoctrination, and arguably also unlike constructivism, realism as a pedagogy involves a special type of rational persuasion the aim of which is to

convince or persuade others of a truth. Teaching in this sense engages both the guidelines for the validity and soundness of arguments (the conclusion should follow from the premises; arguments should consist entirely of true propositions) as well as the understanding of propositional knowledge characterised above. In other words, educative discourse should consist only of statements of sincere belief that are true and suitably justified – other things being equal.[13] Whether an educator's audience comprises learners, their parents or her own colleagues, the aim is to get them to accept what is true rather than to achieve consensus. If *consensus* were the sole aim of successful teaching, then it would be permissible "to suppress evidence in the interest of consensus" (Goldman, 1992, p.189). Think of a creationist biology teacher, in this regard, and historical, anthropological and paleontological evidence for the evolution of humankind. It would be undesirable, further, to introduce evidence that would threaten to undermine (pre-existing) consensus (Goldman, 1992). Again, in a strongly religious school context, scientific evidence for the origin and development of humankind is unlikely to be covered. Finally, it would be legitimate to secure consensus through artificial means, even by (latent threat of) force (Goldman, 1992). This, of course, characterises any totalitarian society or system whose continued existence crucially depends on suppression of dissent/dissensus and critical interrogation of the status quo. Not only may what everyone (or the majority) agrees on be false (think of a flat-earth society in this regard), but the above implications also render the sole focus on consensus both epistemically and pedagogically undesirable.

Following Alvin Goldman, in terms of good epistemic practice in teaching, like rational persuasion, an educator (the 'epistemic exemplar') should

- assert a conclusion only if she believes it;
- assert a premise only if she believes it;
- assert a premise only if she thinks she has suitable justification for believing it; and

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13 The *ceteris paribus* clause is significant here: as I have indicated above, there is a distinct cognitive value that attaches to imagination, musings, and fantasies. Far from advocating a Platonic curriculum that permits only certain kinds of art, music and poetry (and only in the early stages of the curriculum) and assigns to these at best instrumental value, I am suggesting here merely that (for example) creativity and aesthetic appreciation ought to be guided by the ability to distinguish between fiction and fact, between fantasy and the way the world is.

- affirm a conclusion on the basis of stated premises only if (a) those premises, together with unstated premises justifiably believed by the person, strongly support the conclusion, (b) she believes that they strongly support it, and (c) she is justified in believing that they strongly support it (Goldman, 1994, pp.33, 34, 36).

Of course, there ought to be room for trying on an argument for size, or for playing devil's advocate (Goldman, 1994, p.33). For pedagogical reasons, however, the practitioner's intentions should arguably be transparent. For such argumentation to have any educational value, the educator's strategy should be clearly discernible to the intended audience. A related instance of exemplifying good epistemic practice is provided by W.V. Quine and J.S. Ullian, in their discussion of rational persuasion:

> What may occasionally happen is that our challenge [of another person's beliefs] is met by so able a defense that we find ourselves persuaded. In this event we are led to give up the very belief that we originally sought to propagate. This is the best outcome of all, if we like surprises and are bent on learning things (Quine and Ullian, 1978, p.132).

Epistemology, education and the 'real world'

A *context-sensitive* realist account acknowledges that people do not have the same cognitive resources, skills and opportunities. They do not all act or operate in the absence of time constraints. Their situations are characterised by different levels of expertise, by different opportunities to access and gather information, by different levels of cognitive maturity and training and by considerable differences in time constraints. As Goldman has cautioned, a "social epistemology for the real world needs to take these constraints into account" (Goldman, 1992, p.223).

What I propose in the present paper, then, is that we revisit realism both as a pedagogy (in that it is able to delve into specific delivery mechanisms – in terms of non-indoctrinative instruction in critical and creative thinking and correct reasoning) and as a learning theory (in that its ontological and epistemological presuppositions are less problematic than those of competing learning theories). Obviously, more work needs to be done, especially in terms of the psychology of teaching and learning – which explains the present, 'cautious' defence of realism.

Postscript

The following is a pertinent excerpt from a play by Bertolt Brecht:

> *Der Lehrer: Si Fu, nenne uns die Hauptfragen der Philosophie!*
> *Si Fu: Sind die Dinge außer uns, für sich, auch ohne uns, oder sind die Dinge in uns, für uns, nicht ohne uns?*
> *Der Lehrer: Welche Meinung ist die richtige?*
> *Si Fu: Es ist keine Entscheidung gefallen.*
> *Der Lehrer: Zu welcher Meinung neigte zuletzt die Mehrheit unserer Philosophen?*
> *Si Fu: Die Dinge sind außer uns, für sich, auch ohne uns.*
> *Der Lehrer: Warum blieb die Frage ungelöst?*
> *Si Fu: Der Kongress, der die Entscheidung bringen sollte, fand, wie seit zweihundert Jahren, im Kloster Mi Sang statt, welches am Ufer des Gelben Flusses liegt. Die Frage hieß: Ist der Gelbe Fluss wirklich, oder existiert er nur in den Köpfen? Während des Kongresses aber gab es eine Schneeschmelze im Gebirge, und der Gelbe Fluss stieg über seine Ufer und schwemmte das Kloster Mi Sang mit allen Kongressteilnehmern weg. So ist der Beweis, dass die Dinge außer uns, für sich, auch ohne uns sind, noch nicht erbracht worden.*[14]
>
> (Bertolt Brecht, *Turandot oder Der Kongress der Weißwäscher*, Stücke, Band 14, p.36)

[14] 'The teacher: Si Fu, name the central questions of philosophy!
Si Fu: Are things outside of us, for themselves, also without us, or are the things within us, for ourselves, not without us?
The teacher: Which opinion is the correct one?
Si Fu: No verdict has been reached yet.
The teacher: What was the latest tendency among the majority of our philosophers?
Si Fu: The things are outside of us, for themselves, also without us.
The teacher: Why did the question remain unsolved?
Si Fu: The congress that was supposed to yield the final verdict took place, as it has done for the past two hundred years, in the monastery Mi Sang, on the banks of the Yellow River. The question was: Is the Yellow River real, or does it exist only in people's heads? During the congress, however, there was a melting of snow in the mountains, and the Yellow River rose above its banks and swept away the monastery Mi Sang and all congress participants. The proof that the things are outside of us, for themselves, also without us, therefore, has not been furnished.' (Bertolt Brecht, *Turandot or The Congress of Whitewashers*; my translation)

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Governing body's responsibility and power for quality education

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Abstract

Governing bodies are expected to play an important role in promoting quality education in schools. According to Section 20 of the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996, they have to support the principal and teachers and promote the best interests of the school; and according to SASA Section 16, they are responsible for the governance of the school but may not be involved in the professional management by the principal and teachers. Section 9 of The Education Laws Amendment Act of 2007 opens the possibility of more direct involvement of governing bodies in professional activities because principals must table the school improvement plans, and provide feedback on the implementation of this plan and present a report on professional management to the governing body. This view is supported by Section 58B of the Act because the Provincial Heads of Departments (HoDs) may suspend the functioning of the governing body if it prejudices quality education. The implication here is that the governing body has some power in professional matters related to ensuring quality education.

Governing bodies must have sufficient power to hold not only principals who cannot or do not want to implement their own improvement plans accountable for quality education, for example, but also the provincial officials supposed to support the principal.

Teachers are expected to be important role players in the delivery of quality education. Teachers have specific professional rights because of their training and specialised knowledge. However, these rights are attendant on professional performance which leads to high quality education. Teachers cannot claim professional rights if they are guilty of gross negligence such as being frequently absent or late for class or being not well prepared to teach or waiting for the Department of Education to provide professional development.

The new powers given to governing bodies allowing them to be more responsive to professional matters in schools may affect the professional rights of teachers since unprofessional or lay educational people (the parents) can now be involved in professional activities. The intention, however, is not that parental representatives be involved in professional matters for which they are not trained, but that they should be in a position to act in cases of gross negligence. They should focus on the positive aspects and promote quality via support and good relationships, building up a positive climate and encouraging ownership rather than using the negative approach of threatening people.

Although teachers claim to be professionals, the quality of education delivered does not reflect professionalism. The low literacy and mathematics levels and the high failure rate as

well as the high learner repetition rate weaken teachers' right to claim their rights as professionals and prohibit the involvement of governing bodies in professional matters in schools.

This article assesses the possible implications of a deeper level of involvement of parents in professional matters. This new 'power' must be read with SASA Section 20 which already provides governing bodies with powers in that they are expected to support principals and teachers in their professional activities. The article also explores the ambiguities in the Education Laws Amendment Act of 2007. Although, it provides governing bodies with more power to improve quality education, it also allows HODs to curtail the powers and functions of the governing body without providing detailed reasons for doing so. This could result in court cases and negatively affect quality education.

Introduction

The preamble of the South African Schools Act 1996 indicates that the purpose of the Act is to correct past injustices, to instil democratic principles in schools and, therefore, also in broader society, but also to provide quality education for all. The importance of democracy, redress and equality as part of the aims of school governance has been firmly established by many authors, for example Christie (2006), Grant Lewis and Naidoo (2006), Sayed and Soudien (2005) and Woolman and Fleisch (2008). This article will contemplate that the governing body has an important role in school improvement (see Caldwell and Spinks, 1998; Bush and Heystek, 2003; Ranson, 2008) but not at the cost of neglecting the other aims of SASA. It is not a case of either quality education or redress and equity, but rather a case of both. Against the background of the low academic achievement in the grade 3, 6 and 12 results, this article suggests that governing bodies take greater responsibility for the quality of education as implied by the Education Laws Amendment Act of 2007. This could lead to school improvement on a large scale instead of its being confined to a few schools.

The Education Laws Amendment Act (ELAA) of 2007 (Department of Education 2007) highlights the importance of governing bodies especially in underperforming schools. It also suggests that governing bodies could become more accountable for the quality of education in a school irrespective of the diverse abilities and availabilities of governing bodies (Ministerial Review Committee, 2003). If the government intends to make governing bodies more accountable for the quality of education in a school, then governing bodies may need more power to act and be involved in professional activities in schools. Legislation before the ELAA and common practice (Lewis and

Naidoo, 2006) exclude them at present from any active involvement in professional management of the school. However, according to the South African Schools Act (SASA), Act 84 of 1996, Section 20.(1), the governing body of a public school must:

(a) promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school;

(e) support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions.

These functions must be read with SASA Section 16 which indicates that the governing body must be in a relationship of trust with the school. This position of trust must take account of the ambiguities in Section 16 arising from governance as responsibility of the governing body (of which the principal is a member) where the professional management is vested in the principal. This article will explore the supportive functions of the governing bodies and the appointment of educators to illustrate their importance in ensuring quality education as well as the possible infringement of teachers' rights.

The Education Laws Amendment Act 2007, Clause 9, added the following after SASA Section 20e:

(eA) the governing body of a public school must adhere to any actions taken by the Head of Department in terms of Section 16 of the Employment of Educators Act, 1998 (Act No. 76 of 1998), to address the incapacity of a principal or educator to carry out his or her duties effectively;

Section 56B (1–5) of ELAA 2007 indicates that a provincial HoD may take actions against principals, educators and governing bodies if the quality of the education is not acceptable. These actions specifically refer to underperforming schools as mentioned in section 58B and C. However, they are directly linked with Section 16 because Section 16A refers to Section 58 which stipulates that principals from underperforming schools must provide the provincial HoD as well as the governing body with the report and plans for the school improvement (Section 16A (1)(ii and iii).

In the past the incapacity of principals or educators was a professional issue. Even if it was not the intention of the government, an unintended consequence of ELAA may be to grant the governing bodies greater responsibility for quality education in schools. The implication of Section 58B is that governing bodies may be required to be involved in supporting principals and schools even before the judgment of incapacity is made by the HoD. This change in the legislation may be similar in approach and in implementation as suggested by Grant Lewis and Naidoo (2006) and which Sayed and Soudien (2005) already indicated. They contend that several of the legislative amendments are double-edged, bringing to light conflicts between the goals of promoting democratic participation of role player involvement through governing bodies and equity of opportunity supporting quality education for all. In this case, the intention of the policy may be to strengthen principals' power. I would like to underline that expecting governing bodies to be concerned with improving sustainable quality education, opens the door to more involvement of governing bodies in the professional management of schools.

In exploring the support governing bodies may offer in the interests of quality education, my argument is that the non-involvement of governing bodies (mainly the parental component) in the professional management of schools is a limited interpretation of Section 20 a and e. The governing body, and especially parents will find it difficult to perform these functions (and especially Section eA) if they are totally excluded or prevented from involvement in the professional activities of schools. I have no wish to argue that parents, especially parents who have limited education experience, academic training or low literacy levels, must interfere in professional teaching activities. The possibility of such interference, however, be recognised as a direct implication of the initial intention of SASA which emphasises the importance of parents as the majority stakeholders and highlights their role in ensuring that high quality education should be in place and be sustained. The parental role in sustainable quality education begins with the appointment of motivated, sufficiently trained and most suitable educators for the local school. Although the governing body only recommends appointments, the HOD has to provide valid written reasons to the governing body if it does not accept the recommendation of the governing body, given that it followed the process and complied with the policies and legislation with regard to redress ad equity as stipulated in the Education Laws Amendment Act of 2005. In line with organisational management principles (Stirling, 2008), the appointment also implies possible actions in the spirit of the Employment of Educators Act 1998 against non-conforming educators by the

employer. Education is unique in this organisational process because the parents as majority in the governing body are not employed by the government to do this work. However, since they play an important role in the recommendation of the teacher to be appointed, they may therefore claim to have some role in actions against non-performing teachers. Consequently, I would argue that the 2007 Amendment Act confirms the involvement of governing bodies in more professional activities of schools to comply with their function to promote quality education (SASA 20(1a)).

More involvement of the governing body in the professional management of the school could infringe on teachers' rights. This will therefore be discussed as a possible consequence of the change in ELAA 2007, which may open the way to the infringement of teachers' professional rights by parents. I should like to underline that arguments for greater involvement of the governing body in this article are related to observable misconduct, which will be discussed later. They specifically preclude professional matters such as selection of textbooks or teaching methodology or the quality and standards and frequency of assessment, which are the preserve of the principal and teaching staff.

Governing body support and teachers rights

SASA section 20(1e) states that the governing body must "support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions". The interpretation and application of support can be in many forms and stem from different attitudes. There is a fine line or just a grey area between support from the governing body, especially parents, and intrusion on the professional domain of teachers. Support could be moral support, e.g. the governing body (parents in the GB and also the rest of the community) may support the new initiative from teachers to improve reading skills, but they do not provide material, financial or any other support. Another form of support may be assistance with invigilation so that teachers have some time free to do more important educational work or support with fund raising. These forms of support would generally be seen as positive support. Other actions which parents may view as valid support may be experienced by teachers as an intrusion on their rights as professional teachers. An example of this form of support may be when a teacher is frequently absent; the governing body may ask the principal why the teacher is always late, which actions have been taken and why there seems to be limited improvement and then support the principal to initiate disciplinary actions against a teacher according to the

Educator Employment Act 1998. Although this request may be experienced as 'negative motivation or just the stick without the carrot motivation' by the teachers and as an intrusion on a professional matter, this may be what is expected in SASA section 20 from governing bodies and they have a legitimate right to support schools. In under performing schools this may be an especially important supportive function. From a parental perspective, this may also be accepted as complying with Section 20 of SASA because it promotes the best interest of the school (SASA section 20(1a) although it may infringe on individual teachers' rights. A question emerging from this is whether teachers who do not teach in compliance with the expectations and rules may claim that this parental involvement and support are an infringement of their rights.

An example of this difference in perspective is explained by Van Wyk whose research was conducted in township and urban former white schools. According to Van Wyk (2004) a teacher from the township said: 'They (the SGB) always tell us that we cannot survive without them or they threaten us with redeployment' while the teachers in the urban schools do not experience this kind of 'involvement' in their schools. The threat to redeploy teachers is not what I have in mind but this point illustrates that teachers do not see it kindly that parents must be involved. If governing bodies receive the power to insist on an investigation about teachers' misconduct, it may motivate teachers to improve their work performance. Teachers who are not meeting expectations may feel threatened if governing bodies exercise the power provided by SASA and the ELAA 2007.

A possible problem with involvement in improving education quality at under performing schools is that the governing bodies concerned do not know what is expected from teachers and what they can and may do to effect quality education. This is not only because they have no or limited skills and knowledge about schools or education, but also that they have no or limited exposure to the quality education to be found in schools that are performing well, for example many of the former white schools. If parents do not have wider experience, they will not be able to raise their expectations or hold teachers to a higher level of performance (Mncube, 2009; Tsotetsi, Van Wyk and Lemmer, 2008).It is therefore important that the training of governing bodies emphasise this potentially important role of governing bodies.

Teachers' rights and quality education

According to Squelch (1999) in Rossouw (2004), a right is something you are entitled to but is associated with corresponding duties that you can realistically be expected to perform. The Constitution and the Bill of Rights give teachers similar rights to any other employee. As employees, teachers also have specific rights, for example remuneration as agreed upon, protection against unfair labour practices and protection of health and safety. In terms of the South African Constitution teacher rights include equality before the law (article 9), freedom of association (article 18), fair labour practice (article 22) and the right to just administrative action (article 33). But these teachers also have a duty to render the service agreed upon and perform these tasks with competence and efficiency (Rossouw, 2004). It is important for governing bodies to have a good understanding of these rights and duties when they wish to exercise their power in the professional management of schools in accordance with ELAA (2007), but the parents right to demand quality education for their children cannot be gainsaid.

It must be emphasised that teachers as a group have specific rights that are stipulated in legislation and policy documents. It is individual teacher's rights that may be at stake when the governing body becomes more involved in the professional management of schools. This will most probably not influence group rights, for example that the right to participate in strikes is withdrawn.

Misconduct versus incapacity

If the intention of the ELAA 2007 is indeed greater involvement of governing bodies, it will be very important for them to be able to distinguish between misconduct and incapacity. This article thus focuses on the role of the governing body with regard to observable professional misconduct rather than the incapacity of teachers.

The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 indicates serious offences as activities involving drugs and assault. For the period of 2005 to June 2006 there were 255 cases before the South African Council for Educators (Sace) (2006). According to the report by the Legal Affairs and Ethics division of Sace, only 25 teachers were found guilty of serious misconduct during this period. In a sense, 255 accused of serious misconduct are too many, but this is a relatively small proportion of the total number of teachers. But the essential

point is that responsibility for the lack of quality education reflected in the reports on the reading and mathematics abilities of learners in grade 6 (Republic of South Africa, 2005) goes far beyond this group. According to Taylor, Fleisch and Shindler (2008), 72 per cent of teachers spend fewer than three hours per week on active teaching activities and teacher absenteeism is at its worst in rural schools with the low performances. It follows, therefore, that it is the less serious misconduct which is deleteriously affecting quality education. To achieve quality education, we need professional teachers who are well prepared and in time for class, set examples of hard and dedicated work and have realistic aims for learners. Those who do not meet these criteria can therefore be regarded as being guilty of misconduct. The report on learner absenteeism (Community Agency for Social Enquiry and Joint Education Trust, 2007) indicates that poor relationships between teachers and learners, corporal punishment (which is prohibited) and poor teacher examples regarding time and preparedness strongly influence learner absenteeism. These factors would also be reasons for poor education quality, and so governing bodies may have to give special attention to them in their effort to support schools for quality education.

For the purpose of this article, misconduct will be regarded as issues that children are aware of in the school and parents may observe through their children's experience or see evidence of or hear about in the community. This is in line with what Rossouw (2004) identifies as less serious misconduct, which can normally be dealt with by the principal in the school. Examples of these kinds of misconduct are listed in Section 18 of the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 and include conduct such as continual late coming, not being in class when required to be there, lack of appropriate lesson preparation, drunkenness, abuse of authority, unacceptable disciplinary actions towards children, parents or the broader community. These can all be addressed by the governing body as part of their function to support the principal and teachers in meeting their professional teaching responsibilities.

Many researchers have reported on the poor conduct of educators, particularly in township schools (Chisholm and Vally, 1996; Van Wyk, 2004). Van Wyk (2004), for instance, found that 73 per cent of educators from the township schools felt that the SGB should be involved in disciplining educators who have misbehaved. As one educator explained: 'They (the SGB) should address such issues before teacher misbehaviour becomes an embarrassment for the school'. Another argued that the SGB should be involved in disciplining staff as a natural consequence of being involved in their appointment. In addition,

educators said that involving the SGB was particularly relevant '. . . if the principal has tried all other means of calling the teacher to task and has failed'. This lends support for granting SGBs the authority to be involved in disciplining educators. However, as mentioned previously, SGBs must be aware of the problems in the school and have the required training to fulfil this task to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The Department of Education acknowledged in 2003 in the Ministerial Review Committee for School Governance that parents through governing bodies, even illiterate parents, can be and must be more involved and take responsibility for the quality of education in their respective schools. Even semi-literate parents or parents with limited education would be able to determine that teachers are guilty of the transgressions listed above and therefore possibly guilty of misconduct. Most of these transgressions seem to be unprofessional actions rather than serious misconduct. However, in an underperforming school, actions like frequent late coming can be construed as serious misconduct. In those circumstances, governing bodies should support principals when teachers act in an unprofessional manner. Furthermore, teachers and teacher unions must be willing to accept and support governing bodies when they act against teachers who are guilty of this kind of misconduct.

Governing body competence and quality education

In order to understand the possible influence of the ELAA 2007 on teachers and their work, certain aspects of the South African education system need to be considered. Taylor, Fleisch and Shindler (2008) underline the significant diversity between schools and then specifically between the former white and black schools with regard to teachers' ability, motivational level and professional ethics, their academic qualifications, the expectations of teachers from the community, the pressure to provide quality education and the exposure and experience of communities (especially governing bodies) to high quality education (Botha 2005). This influences the ability of governing bodies to ensure quality education. Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009) indicate that although the governing body has no original power to act on its own outside the provisions in SASA, it has original power to perform its functions in terms of SASA. The power of a school governing body refers to its legal capacity to perform its functions and obligations in terms of Section 16 of the South African Schools Act (SASA). The power of a governing body is not

delegated power but original power, in terms of the Schools Act (SASA), to act as the duly appointed agent of a public school. For the purpose of this article the implication is that the governing body's right to offer support to the school has some legal status and power. Consequently, it may claim, as the ELAA 2007 seems to suggest, that it may be more involved in the professional management of schools, albeit in a limited role.

The governing bodies in former white schools generally have more human and social capital – more specifically, high levels of literacy and professional competencies, and motivation (Woolman and Fleisch, 2008; Mncube 2009). Usually they also have more financial capital in the form of the income they can generate or access to funding than schools in rural and financially deprived areas. This makes it possible for the governing bodies in these former white schools to be actively involved in supporting schools and promoting the best interest of the school. A possible negative consequence, from the teachers' perspective, may be intrusions on the rights of professional teachers. These governing bodies are likely to demand high quality education and they can and may be able to put pressure on principals and teachers to produce better results.

Governing bodies in former disadvantaged schools may have less knowledge, experience and skills to perform the expected governance functions (Botha, 2006) because they have limited academic skills and experience as a result of the literacy levels of parents. This may therefore influence their ability to support or demand that teachers provide quality education. But it does not deny parents the right to demand quality education for their children. However, as pointed out earlier, Van Wyk (2004) makes the point that implementing and using these powers without proper training can be experienced as threatening to teachers.

Both the Western Cape as well as the Gauteng Department of Education categorise low performing schools according to a matriculation pass rate. The schools declared to be underperforming schools are generally in lower socio-economic areas and in rural areas (Gauteng Department of Education, 2007; Western Cape Department of Education 2007). As has already been established, it is generally accepted that the less able governing bodies are predominantly in schools with lower levels of education quality than the former white schools. In such cases, governing bodies are unlikely to be able to support the principal and teachers to improve the quality or to take the

principals and teachers to task where necessary (Mncube, 2009; Ngidi, 2004; Sayed and Soudien, 2005; Woolman and Fleisch, 2008).

Governance and management for quality education

In spite of the stipulated functions as indicated above, these supposedly separate governance and management functions remain poorly delineated (see Dieltens and Enslin, 2002; Bush and Heystek, 2003; Heystek, 2006). SASA section 20 (a) and (e) are examples of the possible ambiguities in the interpretation of governing body functions. Promoting the best interests of the school and supporting the principal can be interpreted in a wide or narrow sense depending on who is doing the interpretation. According to Van Wyk (2004), principals in former white urban schools interpret support in a narrow sense and reject any questions about classroom activities and teaching methodology or pass rates on the basis that these relate to professional activities (*which I believe is the correct interpretation – author addition*). However, they appreciate support in the form of extra funding to appoint more teachers. The governing body and especially the parent governors, on the other hand, may interpret these same questions in a wider sense as support for the principal and school in the interest of quality education. There is vagueness about what constitutes support and when it becomes intrusion on professional matters or teachers' rights but the evident low quality of education makes the possible involvement of governing bodies a viable and maybe even a necessary option.

Before the promulgation of ELAA (2007), the two functions mentioned in Section 20 (a and e) did not seem to include much parental involvement in professional activities in schools. However, with the specification in ELAA that parents become more accountable for quality of education because principals must table their improvement plans to the governing body and this could imply that governing bodies (and for that matter the parent majority) may claim more involvement in the professional activities of schools. This is especially the case when schools do not perform according to expected academic standards. It can be expected that the report and plans from the principal to the governing body and provincial HOD must detail why a school is not performing well, for example, under-qualified teachers or teachers not preparing well or not in class. If this detail is not in the principal's reports and plans, the governing body and also the HoD must request that any improvement plans have a clear rationale.

Section 16Ac states that principals must table their plan for school improvement at governing body meetings after their schools have been declared as an underperforming school by the provincial Head of Department as stipulated in Section 58B. Reading Section 20 a and e with Section 16Ac, it can be argued that there is the possibility of recognising governing bodies' power in the endeavour for sustained quality education. Section 16Ac makes the governing body, and therefore specifically the parents as the majority in the governing body, more involved and responsible for the academic quality of the school. Tabling improvement plans at a governing body meeting implies that the governing body can or rather must discuss them, make suggestions, and hold the principal and the educators to their plans. Hence the governing body becomes more involved in the professional management of schools, which may be experienced by some teachers as an intrusion on their professional work. But do teachers, not performing according to the expectations and demands, have the right to claim that this form of involvement is intrusion or is it just part of governing body support towards quality education for all?

A possible problem with the intended and actual implementation of this legislation is that most schools declared as underperforming schools are located in communities where parents have low levels of literacy and knowledge about professional school management. It is in these schools where teacher absenteeism is rife and teachers are on average less qualified, tend to arrive late and do not prepare for class teaching; they are therefore less able to provide quality education. Teacher motivation in these schools also seems to be lower (Taylor, Fleisch and Shindler, 2008; Western Cape Department of Education, 2006). It may therefore be more important that governing bodies perform their expected duties to support principals to achieve quality education with the required training.

The involvement of the governing body in the improvement of quality education at schools and thus professional activities suggests that additional powers maybe necessary. If they accept these responsibilities, governing bodies need actual power to support the principal and the school to implement these plans, but, more importantly, to hold principals to their own plans. When and if principals are not able or willing to implement their own plans, the governing bodies must be empowered to initiate action against them. ELAA (section 58B 5), read with section 16eA makes provision for the provincial HoD to take actions against principals, educators and governing bodies if the quality of the education is not acceptable. This seems to imply that the

governing body is an active partner in sustaining quality education and thus it should be granted sufficient powers to play this role.

The suggested power must be limited but strong enough so that the governing body support can improve the education quality. Suggestions of these activities may be that governing bodies may request principals and teachers to explain (orally and/or in written format) why the work is not according to acceptable standards. Or governing bodies may have a supportive discussion with a teacher or principal to determine why the teacher is not well prepared or frequently absent. Teachers and principals may find this intrusive or threatening. However, our current level of education may need radical actions to get teachers to be in their classes and doing the teaching expected of them. All these supportive activities must be in a spirit of trust between teachers and parents (Section 16 of SASA) as well as collaborative ownership of the school as valued community asset as indicated in the Tirisano document from the Department of Education.

Staff selection as an example of power and quality education

Staff selection and appointment will be used to elucidate the relationship between decision-making power, responsibility and accountability of governing bodies for quality education and the possible infringement of teachers' rights. Taylor (2009) concurs with Van Wyk (2004) in her research that the teachers from the townships as well as the principals from the former white schools are in favour of the governing body being involved in the selection of the teachers.

Selecting and appointing the best qualified person for the specific post is one of the important starting points of quality education. The effective and productive functioning of any person in a specific post is not just a match of the person with ability and the number of a specific post. If it were as uncomplicated as that, allocating people to posts and schools could be a matter of a computer linking a person and a post number (Oldroyd, 2005). *However, a more centralised decision-making structure was introduced by the Education Laws Amendment Act of 2005 (Department of Education 2005). This may limit the decision-making power of governing bodies and principals to appoint the most suitable candidate for the specific post, but only if they do not follow the policy and rules as determined by the legislation. An important question

arises when the 2005 and 2007 ELAA are read together: If the power to recommend the appointment of educators is taken out of the hands of the governing body, and therefore also out of the hands of the principal as a member of the governing body, is it then fair to hold the principal and governing body accountable for not achieving and maintaining quality education? People can be held accountable for performances if they are in control of the circumstances which influence their performance. When people do not feel in control of their environment or when they feel that the locus of control is outside their ambit, they tend to lose motivation. This directly influences the quality of their performance (Pintrich and Schunk, 2002).

Strongly associated with the appointment of teachers is the disciplinary process to act against a person who does not conform to the accepted rules and professional conduct for teachers. Although the South African Schools Act does not provide governing bodies at this stage with the right to be directly involved in the disciplinary process of teachers (ELAA, 2007, Section 16(2d and e)) as they can in the case of learners, it may be possible under the ELAA of 2007, for a governing body or a subcommittee to deal with teacher misconduct. This committee may be seen as working in collaboration with the Minister of Education's plan to establish a National Education Evaluation and Development Unit to act as 'inspectors' (Pandor, 2008). A governing body taking ownership of the school and willing to support the school to achieve quality education may have more positive effects on quality than an inspector coming in from outside. It is envisaged that a disciplinary committee for teachers would work in a supportive and caring role. It can, for instance, have a consultation with non-performing teachers before any official actions are taken against them, according to the Educators Employment Act. This disciplinary committee must function within the principles of the right to fair administrative processes and fair labour practice. The envisaged meeting with the teacher is therefore more of an intimation to the teacher or principal that the parents, as trusted co-owners of the school, are worried about the performance of a teacher or the school.

Conclusions

Teachers not providing quality education must not expect to be treated as professionals or according to professional ethical codes or to be protected by unions while education standards are unacceptably low in South Africa. Sustainable quality education for all is essential. This underpins the argument

presented in this article for greater involvement of governing bodies to ensure quality education in all schools. Governing bodies have been allocated more involvement and responsibility for quality education in terms of the ELAA Section 16 which was previously exclusively the terrain of the principal. The involvement of parents is important for education success as indicated by Pashiardis and Heystek (2007) where the parents in very poor and disadvantaged schools were positively involved as well as Singh, Mbokodi and Msila (2004), who studied parents in the former black schools with parents in low socio-economic living conditions.

More involvement of parents in professional activities must be based on a relationship of trust (Heystek, 2006; Woolman and Fleisch, 2008) and concomitant training for governing bodies. If the purpose of the Amendment is to empower governing bodies to support schools and enhance quality education, governing bodies must be allowed to act on these expectations. An example would be taking some form of action against teachers in cases of minor misconduct related to unprofessional performance.

It is understandable that teachers and principals are not positive about more parental involvement in professional matters. It is predominantly in the schools with lower achievement levels (Lewis and Naidoo, 2006) that teachers are likely to be afraid that parents may notice the inadequate academic work being done in the classrooms because of lack of preparation, time on task activity or limited knowledge about the curriculum and methodology. At the same time this may be the very reason for giving parents more power to be involved in the professional activities described in the article. It is important, however, that the support be in the form of a discussion with a teacher and be in the spirit of support: 'we see something is wrong, where can we help or support you to improve the situation'.

In the past, governing bodies in the former disadvantaged schools generally had a limited ability to offer support to schools. It is ironic that the attempt by ELAA to improve quality education is unlikely to result in governing bodies in schools with low quality education being able to support schools to improve their quality. Proper training for these new responsibilities, though imperative, is insufficient to bring sustainable change. What is needed in addition is a culture change resulting in a strong sense of ownership, a high level involvement and expectations and positive support – that needs time and sufficient commitment from all the role players.

The actual reading and interpretation of ELLA (2007) will only become clearer if and when a court is asked to rule because particular governing bodies are stripped of their power in underperforming schools or have actually intruded on professional matters like selecting text books or commenting on teaching methodology. In the meantime, governing body training must make all parents aware of their responsibility to ensure quality education. Even parents with limited education or literacy skills can gain the ability to ask the necessary and appropriate questions about why a school is not performing well. If trainers do not include this in training programmes for governing bodies, most members of governing bodies will never know that they could exercise more power, especially in schools that may be labelled as failing, underperforming or disadvantaged schools. Activism and agency for quality education are what may be demanded from the communities and governing body as indicated by President Zuma in his address at the principals' meeting on 7 August 2009.

The implication of the argument presented in this article is that large scale empirical research must be conducted to determine the actual influence and role of the SGB in the underperforming schools where it was possible to turn the tide and begin to implement sustainable improvement.

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Tracing historical shifts in early care and education in South Africa

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Abstract

This article presents an overview of the history of early care and education through asking the critical question, 'What do the historical shifts in South Africa suggest about early care and education?' Three themes are discussed, namely, engineering unequal early care and education, reforming through educare and transforming to early childhood development (ECD). In each of these themes the broad societal changes form the backdrop for the discussion on early care and education. This historical investigation suggests that there is a complex relationship between provisioning for the early years and the political, economic, social and cultural features of South African society. It is evident that over time early care and education have moved from the periphery of government attention to closer recognition as public service. However, there continues to be little change for young children who are at risk. The article concludes with a call for a pro-child focus enabled through service development which engages with the environments critical for sound ECD.

Introduction

The history of care and education in South Africa tells many stories. It is the story about the construction of young children's lives along racial lines, the role of women and power in society. In the days of apartheid (mid 1900s) early care and education for all children were seen as the responsibility of parents. Limited support was aimed at a facilitative growth environment for poor white children (National Education Policy Investigation – NEPI, 1992). A distinct division between physical care and stimulating education was evident for children between 0 to 6 years from different race groups. The reformation attempts from the 1980s led to greater government support for bridging year programmes for children aged 5 from disadvantaged groups. The concept of educare gained more prominence through non governmental organisations (NGOs) lobbying for practices which bridged the divide between care and education. The turn to democracy showed strong political will to support the early years. Porteus (2004, p.339) contends that the 1994 moment was defined by the "unambiguous affirmation" of rights of the child. The concept of ECD shifted the focus from educare to the developmental

processes of children from birth to 9 years (Department of Education, 1995). This article aims to explore the historical shifts in greater depth in order to understand early care and education in a contextual way.

Engineering unequal early care and education

In South Africa the lives of young children were intimately linked to the broader ideological and political struggle to engineer a racially unequal society (Department of Education, 2001a). To understand this context in apartheid South Africa a brief discussion on the key legislations which affected the intimate environment of young children is presented. This is followed by a focus on the development of centre-based provisioning for early care and education.

Legislation and effects on young children's lives

The preventing of racial mixing was achieved through the Population Registration Act of 1950. From birth children were identified and registered as members of particular race groups. Posel (2001) noted that people had to endure humiliating procedures when biological determinist notions of race were used in the classification process. Physical features like skin colour and texture of hair were commonly used to classify people. The Mixed Marriages Act (1949) and the Immorality Amendment Act (1950) also promoted racial separateness. Both these Acts prevented marriages and extramarital relations between black South Africans (Indians, Africans, coloureds) and whites. In cases where this occurred, families experienced extreme difficulty in negotiating the bi-racial identities of their children. Mattera (2005), a founding member of the Black Consciousness Movement, recalled how brothers in the coloured community were classified differently because of skin colour. He noted that, according to the law, the boys could never be seen in the same home.

Another powerful legalisation that physically zoned the life spaces of black South Africans was the Group Areas Act of 1950. The Act could be understood as a desire for white control for lucrative space and land (Fiske and Ladd, 2004). The Act had three distinctive moves – forced removals, rigorous township and homeland development. Black South Africans who occupied the areas zoned for whites were forced to move. This was a time of great pain and

anger as families felt the loss of land occupied by previous generations. For example, Kuzwayo (2005), also known as *The Mother of Soweto,* recalled childhood memories on how her family was uprooted from ancestral land and left homeless.

The Group Areas Act also resulted in greater development of black locations as townships (Fiske and Ladd, 2004). For security purposes, major railway lines, rivers and roads separated townships. There was a shortage of housing in the townships. Overcrowding, lack of facilities and high crime rates characterised life in the townships. Young children bore the brunt of a poor quality of life in the townships. These are recalled in memories of childhood in the apartheid era (see, Hadland 2005, for more details). There were also fears that parents/caregivers may not return from their place of employment. This was partly due to the pass laws. On entering designated areas for whites and other race groups, identification documents (passes) had to be produced. Failure to do so meant imprisonment (Terreblanche, 2002).

In the homelands life for young children was also difficult. Not only did black African mothers move to the urban areas for employment, fathers were also affected by the Migrant Labour System. In 1952 a comprehensive system of migrant labour for white entrepreneurs with strict influx control to urban areas was put in place (Terreblanche, 2002). The wages paid to a migrant worker were equivalent to his own personal needs. No provision was made for the family who was expected to survive on subsistence agriculture (Ngwane, 2002). This impacted on young children's lives.

Development of early care and education as centre-based provisioning

The continuing economic and concomitant social changes in apartheid South Africa created the need for alternate childcare arrangements for all race groups. Increasing employment of women, changing family structures, lifestyles of white South Africans, and urbanisation were key factors in shaping early care and education outside the home. Welfare organisations, communities, faith-based organisations and some municipalities were responsible for the creation of centre-based care and education (Webber, 1978; NEPI, 1992).

The engineering of unequal early care and education was visible in the government's provisioning of early childhood services. The broader discriminatory policies based on race affected the resourcing of centre-based early care and education. In the main, the government viewed early care and education as the domain of parents. The *Manifesto on Education* in 1948 made it clear that the government was not prepared to support services for young children before school entry. Part 11 Article 10 of the *Manifesto* stated that, "The parents must not shuffle off on to others the duty of bringing up their own children" (quoted in Webber, 1978, p.94). Limited support was provided for poor white children through education and welfare subsidies based on parental income (NEPI, 1992). The apartheid system of racial resourcing affected the types of subsidies given to children from other race groups. For example, African children could only access welfare and not education subsidies. Since this was not at full cost there was heavy reliance on parent fees (NEPI, 1992).

Centre-based provisioning was limited. Biersteker (1980) in an analysis of young children accessing centres noted the following: only 13.5 per cent whites, 0.5 per cent Africans, 4.1 per cent coloureds and 2.1 per cent of Indians accessed this type of provisioning. Children from farms and rural areas were not generally in this type of provisioning (Short and Biersteker, 1979). Young children outside centres resided with mothers and extended family members.

There were different types of pre-school arrangements for children from 0 to 6 years. Short (1976) and later Short and Biersteker (1979) provided clarity on these arrangements. Crèches or day care centres were set up for children from 0 to 6 years. There were few children under 2 in the crèches. They provided full day care for 8 to 12 hours. Play centres/playgroups catered for children from 3 to 6 years. They operated for 3 to 4 hours in the morning to cater for mothers working part time. The nursery school catered for children from 3 to 6-year-olds in a school like set up for 6 hours. Play centres and nursery schools often performed day care functions. They were known as crèche-cum-nursery schools.

Of importance in centre-based provisioning is the polarisation of care and education. In 1940 the Committee of Heads of Education Departments made recommendations for nursery schools to be recognised as part of the national system of education (Department of Education, 2001a). They differentiated between nursery schools and crèches. The former was viewed as serving an educational function, whilst the latter was associated with custodial care. The

separation between the care and education sectors impacted on young children's experiences.

Nursery schools for whites were viewed as an extension of the home (Webber, 1978). The approach and programme were influenced by the needs of urban children from high income backgrounds. Short (1984a) argued that this scenario developed because of the purchasing power of parents, the middle class background of teachers and theoretical developments from the North. These contexts shaped nursery schools as privileged white middle class institutions. There were, however, tensions. Webber (1978) explained that the content of nursery programmes was a source of tension for whites. There were conflicts around the state's preoccupation with Christian Nationalism and the development of free thinking promoted by Froebelian and Montessorian ideas on early childhood education.

The crèches and day care centres were seen as a welfare responsibility. Short (1984a) noted that these were viewed only in terms of providing physical care for young children whose mothers sought employment to supplement the family income. In a survey on pre-school facilities for coloured and African children in the Western Cape in 1976, Short conducted a class analysis. She found that the majority of children in care facilities were disadvantaged. The crèches/day care centres were ill equipped in terms of physical structures, resources and trained practitioners to deal with children that were already at risk educationally (Short, 1984a). Rickards (1991, p.50) had the following to say about crèches:

> Almost always they (crèches) fall short on supplying an adequate answer to children's full need. Their bodies are kept safe, clean and fed, but their minds receive little developmental nourishment. And so you get a pattern perpetuated – the rich get more and the poor get less.

The Nursery School Movement took an activist stance to the inequities in early care and education. Webber (1978, p.94) explained that the field rallied around "the promoting of the all-round growth and development of each individual child, regardless of class, creed or race". The struggle for quality centre-based provisioning for all children, however, was overpowered by the government's move to consolidate an apartheid system.

The National Education Policy Act (1967) was responsible for considerable growth in early years provisioning for white children. Nursery education became known as pre-primary education for children from 3 to 5 turning 6 years. It was supported by white provincial departments of education. Training colleges were established to ensure pre-primary teachers were qualified. The

government paid white teachers' salaries. Pre-primary education was provided by private nursery schools which received subsidies and classes in some primary schools (NEPI, 1992).

In contrast support for nursery/pre-primary schools for other race groups was weak. The subsidies for coloured and Indian children in nursery schools remained low (NEPI, 1992). For African children early childhood services remained minimal and tended to be confined to the welfare sector. There was limited training set up by the provincial departments of education. This was at a lower level than courses for white teachers (Department of Education, 2001a). The lack of political will for early care and education for black South African children led to the NGOs playing a critical part in the training of practitioners and the establishment of early childhood provisioning through donor funding.

Reforming through educare

The crumbling of apartheid began to surface in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Fiske and Ladd, 2004). Resistance movements, national and international economic pressures led to increasing pressure for reform. Underground activities of the armed wing of the African National Congress, activities of faith-based organisations and black educational institutions continued to spread ideas that were oppositional to apartheid (Terreblanche, 2002) A greater consciousness about ethnic pride and injustice emerged.

It is within these turbulent times that the national government began facing increased economic pressures. The growing sophistication of the South African economy created a greater need for skilled labour from black South Africans (Hartshorne, 1999). The business sector argued that apartheid education resulted in an inadequately prepared work force.

These concerns were key to a façade of reform efforts through political restructuring in 1983 (Hartshorne, 1999). The House of Representatives for coloureds and the House of Delegates for Indians were established. Both these houses were subservient to the House of Assembly for whites. Africans were excluded from this political arrangement.

Interventions for early education and care (educare)

Early schooling was characterised by a high failure and drop out rates. This was affecting the development of future manpower needs. Between 1980 and 1981 the De Lange Commission was contracted to make recommendations for reforming basic education (Human Science Research Council, 1981). The Commission noted the importance of pre-school education for children from disadvantaged background. The existing three-year pre-primary education which was already in place for privileged children was considered to be expensive for expansion to other race groups. The commission recommended a one or two year bridging programme for preparing children for primary school (NEPI, 1992).

The bridging year for school readiness for children at risk was accepted and financed by the government. The education departments for the different race groups interpreted the bridging year in different ways. For example, whilst the House of Representatives and House of Delegates instituted pre-primary classes for five-year-olds, the Department of Education and Training for Africans used the first year of schooling as the bridging period (NEPI, 1992).

Early care and education below the bridging year continued to be viewed as the responsibility of the family, private welfare organisations and communities. In the absence of widespread government support a more vibrant NGO sector emerged. In their activist stance the NGOs were able to draw attention to the need for a new concept to guide the field of early care and education. Rickards (1991) noted the following:

> It is to overcome this absurd traditional pattern (care and education) that Grassroots introduced to Southern Africa the term 'educare'. All young children need education. With increasing urbanisation and more women in the workforce, an increasing number of young children needing care in addition to education. We believe that educare is proving to be a widely acceptable umbrella term for what all young children should enjoy. . . an appropriate education, health, nutrition and protection.

Whilst theoretically the concept of educare received support, the segregation of early care and education as matter of government policy affected the realities on the ground (Van den Berg and Vergnani, 1986). The NGOs, however, continued to look at innovative ways for providing educare. Some focused on training of educare staff, training of communities through committees and offering support and advice to communities (Plaatjies, 1991). Others explored possibilities for parental involvement in centre-based provisioning, home-based care and parent oriented education especially where centres were not running to capacity because of parent fees (Short, 1984a).

Problems in the reform period

The efforts by NGOs continued to be challenged by discriminatory provisioning and resource allocation. The donor funding was inadequate to meet the needs for quality educare. NGOs continued to raise awareness of the problems in educare. The following excerpt illustrates this:

> In South Africa there is a severe lack of pre-school facilities available for young children in the communities where poverty is most serious. Relatively few of these facilities are able to provide the kind of educational programme, which disadvantaged children, really need: centres are overcrowded; there are few trained teachers; the adult-child ratios are poor. . . Where babies are accommodated, there tends to be little or no awareness of their developmental needs, with the result that only custodial care is provided. Therefore infants, who are already at risk, spend most of their waking hours in unstimulating environments (Short, 1984b, p.7).

There were also problems with educare provided by numerous private providers in pre-school centres, crèches, and by informal group care in the home. These services were rendered for gain. Reilley and Hofmeyr (1983) raised concern about profit-making centres being more occupied with providing a service for convenience of parents in the interests of financial gain rather than promoting the development of young children. They further noted that overcrowding, inappropriate curriculum and concerning adult-child ratios characterised these services.

Overall, the training of teachers was problematic. Tertiary education opportunities for training specialist pre-primary teachers were reduced, as preparation for formal schooling became the focus (NEPI, 1992). There was limited training by technical colleges for black pre-school assistants who had secondary schooling until standard seven. Due to limited access, the bulk were trained by NGOs as practitioners. Since these organisations were not accredited and monitored on a regular basis, the quality of the training was difficult to ascertain.

Another area of concern was the curriculum. The educational approaches used to develop curriculum differed among the education departments and NGOs (NEPI, 1992). The formal approach by the education departments was in tension with the child-centred, process-oriented, play-based methods of learning favoured by the NGOs. There were some attempts to arrive at a locally relevant curriculum although without critical examination of framing ideas for cultural diversity.

Transforming educare to ECD

The Constitution of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996), together with other international frameworks, provided the basis for transforming educare since 1994. The activism for increased public investment in the early years during the reform period and before created adequate build up for it to be placed on the agenda for transformation. On 24 May 1994, President Nelson Mandela committed the efforts of the Government of National Unity to a reconstruction and development programme (Chisholm, 2003).

The reconstruction of educare began with political will to address past imbalances and provide equal opportunities. New conversations about the lives of young children began through the adoption of international frameworks and policy development (Department of Education, 2001a). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified in 1995, paved the way for making young children's needs a central concern. The premises of survival, development, protection, and participatory rights of children began to inform the transformatory landscape for the early years. This was largely visible through the National Programme of Action coordinated by the Office on the Rights of the Child in the Presidency. In addition, the ratification of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children in 2000 created a platform for state actions to be more relevant to children in the African context.

The democratic shift led to greater acknowledgement of the complexity of young children's development and the fundamental inequities in the developmental environment of the past (Department of Education, 2001a). For holistic development of young children an integrated strategy began to emerge. In this context the concept educare was viewed as inadequate. It was noted that educare focused largely on educational interventions, which was "only one component of caring for young children" (Department of Education, 2001b, p.13). The target age cohort of 0 to 6 was also seen as problematic.

The term early childhood development was accepted as more appropriate. ECD is defined as "an umbrella term, which applies to the processes by which children from birth to 9 years grow and thrive, physically, mentally, emotionally, morally and socially" (Department of Education, 1995, p.33). Porteus (2004) stated that within the South African policy frameworks ECD referred to strategies to meet the needs of young children from birth to 9 years. The conceptual definition found in the policies took into account the

integrated nature of service provisioning within the government (health, social welfare and education) and between the government and civil societies (families, communities, NGOs, private sector).

The national ECD pilot project and the nation-wide audit of ECD provisioning informed the development of White Paper 5 in 2001. This policy prioritised the establishment of a national system of Grade R provisioning for children aged 5, to be phased in gradually. The policy also focused on children aged 4 who were at risk – poor children in rural and urban families, HIV and AIDs infected children and those with special needs. This vulnerable group was to receive subsidies for early learning programmes. For pre-reception year the policy proposed a strategic plan for intersectoral collaboration.

The focus on young children outside early education also became more prominent. The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) presents a critical focus of children in families. The recent Children's Act 38 of 2005 (Department of Social Development, 2005) promotes the best interest of the child as a starting point for intervention in children's lives. It addresses the care and protection of young children. The Children's Amendment Act 41 of 2007 (Department of Social Development, 2007) regulates centre-based provisioning and early intervention programmes. In health, free maternal and child health care is provided for children younger than 6 years (Department of Education, 2001b).

For children from birth to 4 years The National Integrated Plan (NIP) for ECD (UNICEF, 2005) articulates the government's intention to develop an integrated system of service delivery. There is recognition that all children cannot access centre-based provisioning. The model of provisioning for ECD in the NIP accommodates a number of interventions outside ECD centres. On a primary level families are targeted. Within households the focus for intervention includes early stimulation, quality care, health, nutrition, hygiene and parent education. On a secondary level the community is targeted. There is strengthening of access to clinics, grants, playgroups, parents support programmes, self-help groups and information dissemination.

Transformation challenges

The first challenge relates to funding. Porteus (2004) argues that there is a mismatch between the policy vision for ECD and the funding strategies which makes quality provisioning possible. The national audit in ECD indicated that 75 per cent of funding for ECD comes from private sources (Department of

Education, 2001a). The lack of government subsidies to cover the significant costs in the delivery of centre-based programmes is impacting on the survival of these centres. Carter (2008) in his analysis of the costs of inputs into ECD care and practices at 21 centres in the Western Cape suggested that the current subsidy levels were inadequate to cover the operational costs of an ECD centre. Taking an economic perspective in ECD he described the funding scenario as follows:

> The majority of centres would only fundraise to cover the cost of a specific event, but very few managed to raise significant funds this way and it is definitely not a reliable form of income for centres. Most of the poorest centres had given up fund raising because of past failures. This economic reality must not be romanticised away under an illusion that people will gladly do things for free because it involves young children. (Carter 2008, p3)

The study also revealed the lack of donor funding for ECD from the corporate sector:

> Based on the sample, it appears that South African corporates do not make any significant financial donations to this sector. The business case is weak as the returns to ECD are very difficult for corporates to appropriate. . . (Carter 2008, p.4)

Biersteker, Streak and Gwele (2008) reaffirm the importance of subsidies as being the only stable source of income especially in the case of ECD centres operating in poor communities where there isn't a steady income from parent fees. Subsidies have to take into account unemployed parents and low income households in order to promote sustainable services.

The funding for integrated ECD programmes for children from birth to 4 years is complicated by the fact that these programmes have multiple components that need a different funding formula from centre-based provisioning (Ebrahim, Killian and Rule, 2009). These programmes are still offered by NGO organisations through donor funding. To be effective in developing positive child outcomes for children at risk there needs to be funding for ECD programmes which takes into consideration the scale of poverty, age groups, cost per unit service including multiple processes involved in implementation.

The second challenge relates to the responsibility for overseeing ECD as the formative years for quality child outcomes. The holistic approach to ECD requires *joined up thinking* for *joined up services* to meet the basic need of children from birth to nine years. The integrated conceptual definition embraced in ECD policies is difficult to operationalise. At present there are three distinct age borders that divide 0 to 9 years, namely, 0 to 4 in ECD family/community based programmes and centres, 5-year-olds in reception

classes and six to nine-year-olds in the foundation phase. In this set up the cross dialogue and collaborative actions necessary for integrated ECD is difficult to achieve.

This is partly due to the way in which government structures are organised. For example, the NIP names the social cluster of health, education and social welfare as key for overseeing the implementation of ECD programmes for 0 to 4 years at all levels of government. In a recent study on innovative ECD programmes as resources for birth to 4 years it was found that the social cluster at local levels was inactive for integrated service delivery. The key departments continued to work in silos (see Ebrahim *et al*., 2009). This type of practice undermines the need for overall responsibility for quality ECD.

The third challenge is the mainstreaming of non-centre-based provisioning as family support and community development, as indicated in the NIP. A rapid analysis of these programmes indicated that ECD services at community and household level are NGO driven (ELRU, Department of Education, Department of Social Development, 2007). There is a need for recognition, funding and regulation through the Children's Act to mainstream ECD programmes. The new ECD workers who deliver these programmes are not formally recognised (Ebrahim, Killian and Rule, 2008). They are volunteers who receive training from the NGOs. In most instances they are given stipends made available through donor funding or NGO service level agreements with the provincial Department of Social Development and the Expanded Public Works Programme.

The fourth challenge is practitioner training in centre-based provisioning. The national audit in 2001 revealed that 43 per cent of practitioners in the ECD phase had NGO training, 23 per cent had no training, 15 per cent were considered under qualified, 12 per cent were adequately qualified, and 7 per cent had non ECD qualifications. A considerable number of practitioners still have modules based on unit standards but not the full qualification. They are considered to be unqualified by the Department of Education. Additionally, the Level 4 qualification that practitioners hold is not regarded by the Department of Education as equivalent to a Level 4 matric in schooling. They are therefore not eligible for entry into higher education. There is a need to articulate a clear career path for ECD practitioners.

Concluding remarks

This article explored what the historical shifts in South Africa suggested about early care and education. In presenting the engineering of unequal care and education, the reforming and transforming efforts it was evident that early care and education was socially constructed to meet the demands of society at a particular point in history. The conceptual shifts and realities shaping young children's lives over time, suggest that the early years provisioning are intricately woven with the political, economic, social and cultural features of South African society. Over time early care and education has received greater attention as public service to change the lives of young children.

Despite the progress and gains in ECD, young children especially those under 5 are still at risk. There are 5.15 million children between 0 to 4 years (Statistics South Africa, 2006). In the General Household Survey 2005 it was evident that 66 per cent of children (0–18) lived below the poverty line with an income of R1 200 or less per month (Leatt, 2006). An indicator report on the demographic impact of HIV/AIDS in 2006 showed that the prevalence of HIV in the 0–5 age group was 1.8 times more than the overall rate for all children (0–17 years) (Draper, 2008). An analysis of HIV prevalence in pregnant women indicated that about 30 per cent were already at risk (Department of Health, 2007).

The context above, points to the need to fully embrace early childhood as a critical phase of development to change young children lives. In a society that is ravaged by poor socio-economic conditions these children require nurturant conditions to survive and thrive. Their development (physical, social, emotional, cognitive) is best facilitated through the interactions between their individual characteristics (their health, nutrition, genes) and their physical, social and economic environments (Siddiqi, Irwin and Hertzman, 2007). Their exposure to enriched environments has the potential to affect their basic learning, school success, economic participation, social citizenry and health.

A pro-child social development approach which fully takes into consideration the nurturant conditions for quality child outcomes is needed. This approach is best operationalised through engaged service development. In this type of development the government in partnership with civil society, strongly uses the right-based discourse to adequately resource, support and engage with the realities of young children in the intimate environment of the family and community as well as the remote socio-economic environment. Such an

approach aims not only at developing future citizenry for self sufficiency but more importantly seeks to strengthen the care environments of young children's present lives so that they can reach their full potential.

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Ploughing new fields of knowledge: culture and the rise of community schooling in Venda

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Abstract

This article examines the history of community schooling in Venda and explores the historical conditions and cultural traditions of late nineteenth- and early- to mid twentieth century Venda and their consequences on the development of formal schooling, specifically on the rise of the community school system. The article presents a history of community schooling in Venda as emerging from the changing socio-political context of this period, characterised by the contradictory relations between missionary and colonial traditions on the one hand and the traditions of indigenous culture on the other hand.

Introduction

The history of schooling and society in Venda,[1] let alone the history of community schooling, remains largely under-researched in present South African scholarly circles and as a result, little is known about this crucial aspect of South African society. Meanwhile, there are specific challenges pertaining to historical investigation in traditional societies[2] as little, in terms

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1 The use of the name denotes a geographical and linguistic region in and around the present-day Zoutpansberg area in the northern part of South Africa. The name refers to a pre-colonial geo-political and cultural-historical region and is therefore not limited to its *apartheid* usage and Bantustan connotation (see for example Blacking, 2001, 1964b; Nemudzivhadi, 1998; Kirkaldy, 2002; Hammond-Tooke, 1993; De Vaal, 1986).

2 I have used the term society interchangeably with community. By society I refer generally to a larger social group, as in references to Venda society or South African society and sometimes a larger socio-political entity such as a collection of smaller communities forming a relatively larger socio-political unit, in the sense of, for example Mphaphuli territory which encompassed the rest of eastern Venda and several semi-autonomous chieftaincies under the Mphaphuli paramountcy. The same could be said of Tshivhase and Mphephu (Wessman, 1908; Van Warmelo, 1940; Nemudzivhadi, 1998). The term community often refers to a relatively smaller social group such as a village, or a smaller collection of these.

of records, tend to be available. Existing historical accounts in Venda, in particular, comprise mainly of missionary reports and oral narratives. Missionary accounts themselves, especially on pre-colonial Venda, were based on oral tradition.

As a result, the process of putting together an account about specific events to demonstrate their historical significance may be limited by the lack of reliable records and the limitations of oral accounts. However, notwithstanding these limitations, these accounts provide an important basis for understanding the events and contradictions of the past.

The aim of the paper is to provide an analysis of the historical conditions that gave rise to, and shaped the development of community school system in Venda at the beginning of the twentieth century. The analysis explores the historical encounter of missionary and colonial traditions *vis a vis* the traditions of Venda socio-political and cultural institutions as constituting a rapidly changing socio-cultural context within which the emergence of community schooling and its unique institutional successes could be understood. A particular interpretation of Vygotsky's (1978) notion of 'history' underpins the analysis of the interplay between the contradictory histories of missionary and colonial institutional practices on the one hand and the institutional practices of Venda society on the other hand.

The paper begins by providing an account of a rapidly changing socio-political context of nineteenth and early twentieth century Venda, as constituting contradictory interpenetration of institutional histories and traditions that gave rise to the specific system of schooling the paper examines.

Socio-political instabilities of late nineteenth and early twentieth century

The period spanning the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century was the most unstable historical period in Venda society. The Mfeqane and its aftermath of inter- and intra-tribal conflicts, the widespread social and political instability across southern Africa, the advent of Boer migrants and Portuguese adventurers, and the activities of the Berlin Missionary Society, and other missionary organisations, shaped much of the social experiences and events of the time. Meanwhile, the invading Portuguese

adventurers to the east led by Albasini, the establishment of the Voortrekker-Boer[3] settlement in the area and the Boer interference in local politics, contributed to the anxieties and discontent of the period (Shillington, 1989; Nemudzivhadi, 1998; Wessman, 1908; Van Warmelo, 1940).

The nineteenth century was, in particular, a period of unprecedented social upheaval across the entire southern African subcontinent. Specifically, the Mfeqane – triggered around 1816 by 'intra-tribal'[4] conflicts within the Nguni-Zulu clans of the south-eastern seaboard (Shillington, 1989), forced vast population migrations, fragmenting tribes, destroying older chieftaincies and creating new ones. Even in relatively inaccessible Venda, where the difficult terrain helped to restrict foreign infiltration (Van Warmelo, 1940), communities were vulnerable to attacks and plunder of their livestock and grain reserves, both from outside and internally, since at the same time the Venda ruling clans were consolidating their sovereignty over the area through their own wars and offers of patronage (Wessman 1908; Dzivhani, 1940; Mudau, 1940; Van Warmelo, 1940; Nemudzivhadi, 1998).

The social and political tensions and dislocations caused by the Mfeqane coincided with conflicts over land with Portuguese explorers and traders from the east and later, during the 1830s, with the arrival of Boer migrants, or Voortrekkers, from the south. The arrival in 1836 of a group of Boer migrants under Louis Trichardt sharpened internal rivalries between the rival sons of Venda paramount ruler Mpofu. Ramabulana, the elder of the two brothers and rightful heir, had been defeated in battle by his younger brother, Ramavhoya, but with Louis Trichardt's military assistance Ramabulana was restored to the throne, and this in turn led to the establishment of a white settlement at Oudedorp in 1849. This set a precedent for Venda chiefs to seek assistance from white settlers as well as from other neighbouring tribes in order to settle succession rivalries. It also increased social instability, exacerbated by inroads from the Swazi polity under Ngwane, to the east, and the consolidation of the Pedi and Tlokwa polities to the south. Relations with the Boer settlers soured with the introduction of taxation and the appointment of Albasini as tax

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3 The term refers to the migrating Dutch settlers from the Cape colony (Hartshorne, 1992; Shillington, 1989; Bher, 1988).

4 The term, 'tribe' has a negative colonial connotation. The term is used here, pragmatically, to refer to the various socio-political identities which were forming during this period and is therefore not based on its *apartheid* usages.

collector (De Vaal, 1986; Wessman, 1908; Van Warmelo, 1940; Delius, 1983).

Makhado, Ramabulana's son, rejected the South African Republic's insistence that its political authority incorporated Venda, and in 1867 mounted a successful attack which destroyed the Boer settlement of Schoemansdal and ended white occupation of Venda for a while. In 1869 Albasini led an army against Makhado, but was defeated at the Nzhelele river valley (De Vaal, 1986; Nemudzivhadi, n.d.b.; Wessman, 1908). In 1883, at the time of the first British colonial administration of the Transvaal, Sir Theophilus Shepstone met several Venda chiefs at Commandoboom and at Palmaryville and extracted a promise from them to pay tax. Makhado had defiantly refused to attend the meeting (De Vaal, 1986).

However, in 1884 and 1889, once the South African Republic had been restored, General Joubert visited Venda with a similar aim of forging cooperation for taxation purposes, at the same time seeking to win the allegiance of as many chiefs as possible against Makhado. In 1885, legislation was passed allowing the president of the South African Republic to appoint chiefs, and also prohibiting black people from carrying firearms. These events prepared for the victory of the South African Republic in the 1898 'Mphephu war' (Nemudzivhadi, 1998, n.d.b; Wessman, 1908).

The growing influence of the South African Republic and its success in winning the allegiance of some of the Venda chiefs weakened Venda socio-political hegemony and pacified the political influence and military power of the Venda king. Without this strategy, it would have been difficult to wage a successful war against Makhado, and indeed against any paramount ruler in the mountainous and difficult landscape that comprise much of Vendaland (Kirkaldy, 2002; Nemudzivhadi, 1998; Wessman, 1908; Van Warmelo, 1940). Making it even more difficult was the unique political organisation which allowed for relative independence of individual chiefs from each other, to the effect that wining a war against one chief did not necessarily translate to victory over the next one (Wessman, 1908; De Vaal, 1986; Nemudzivhadi, 1998).

Mphephu, Makhado's son who succeeded his father after his death in 1895, also took a hard-line stance against the South African Republic. By 1898, the South African Republic had the support of most of the Swazi and the Tsonga communities, and had won over several Venda chiefs, including Sinthumule and Davhana, Mphephu's cousins. Thus prepared, the Republic declared war

and Mphephu was defeated on 16 November 1898. His capital in the Zoutpansberg mountains at Luatame was bombarded and set on fire. The defeat of Mphephu brought to an end the last resistance to colonial control in South Africa (Wessman, 1908; Van Warmelo, 1940; Nemudzivhadi, 1998). However, it would be naïve to think that this was the end of resistance to colonial domination. The events that characterised missionary activities in Venda, especially regarding their attempts at providing formal schooling, reveal deep feelings of antagonism and resistance on the part of the communities among whom the missionaries worked.

The reason for the difficult relationship between the missionaries and the communities and their chiefs related to the perception of missionary collusion with the colonial administration, the later resisted for imposing itself politically. Military might for example, did not guarantee complete political authority for the Singo ruling clan after they conquered Venda in the fourteenth century. A system of patronage and special, culturally-rooted forms of diplomatic processes became necessary to assume real political authority, which even after it had been accepted remained fluid and continued to be renegotiated (see Blacking, 1964b for an instance of cultural renegotiation of political authority). Some of the culturally rooted means of entrenching political authority involved acceptance of the cultural traditions and practices of the people and forging familial relationships through intermarriages. None of these culturally rooted processes were conceivable to missionary and, indeed, colonial religious and political organisations (Blacking, 1964b; Kirkaldy, 2002; Hammond-Tooke, 1993; Van Warmelo, 1940; Wessman, 1908).

The defeat on Mphephu marked the end of sovereign nationhood for the Venda, ushering in a phase of systematic dispossession and exploitation. After the end of the South African War between the British and the Boer Republics in 1902, Mphephu was recalled from exile by the British colonial administration of the Transvaal and given a humble location in the arid Nzhelele river valley, a far cry from his once imposing kraal on the Zoutpansberg mountains. At the same time, a village town of Sibasa was established in east-central Venda for tax collection and general administrative purposes. A police station, post office and tax station were established as some of the first colonial services points. With these services points also emerged the need for local clerical assistants and formal schooling was well positioned to play a role in these changing socio-economic conditions.

The post-1902 dispensation ushered in a period of systematic dispossession of land and other possessions such as weapons. Resistance to the colonial authority or its administration was countered through the use of state force comprising the police and the law courts. Traditional courts were systematically abolished or their powers considerably diminished. Communal duties in the royal fields, as was participation in cultural activities such as initiation ceremonies, spiritual rites, traditional dance and musical activities, as well as other aesthetic forms were discouraged by the missionaries and, as a result also omitted deliberately from the school curriculum (Blacking, 1964a and b, 1980; Kirkaldy, 2002).

As the political power of the colonial administration increased, the authority of traditional leaders diminished. This caused immense tensions and anxieties in the communities. In these communities, the authority of traditional leaders was perceived as inextricably connected to the natural order of being and therefore intricately interwoven with personal as well as communal well-being. The cosmology of being was constituted by the natural order involving the creator god, the ancestors, the elders, the traditional leaders and traditional doctors, etc., all of whom were appointed to fulfill their role in harmony with nature. That is, if rain fails, a traditional doctor may be called upon to perform rituals and give offerings to the gods while an offence to the gods through behaving contrary to cultural norms such as not attending the initiation rites may offend the gods and bring misfortune, in the form of natural calamities like drought (Wessman, 1908; Motenda, 1940; Dzivhani, 1940; Mudau, 1940; Van Warmelo, 1940; Kirkaldy, 2002; Blacking, 1964a and b, 2001).

Therefore, the demise of traditional political authority and the abandonment of cultural practices and traditions would not be a small matter because of the belief in the interconnectedness of traditional institutions and practices of culture (Blacking, 1964b). This ‘cosmic wholism’ could have made the idea of missionary schooling even more difficult because of the perceived negative effects it would have on oneself and society’s fortunes.

Traditional institutions of culture, such as traditional leadership, as missionaries Kuhn and Beuster, respectively (in Kirkaldy, 2002) have noted, possibly held the key for the ‘conversion’ of an entire nation. Accordingly, the community school system would probably not have achieved the success that it did, had these institutions not played a leading role in their formation, as

exemplified by the roles paramount chief Makwarela and the *Domba*[5] women played.

The establishment of community schools

The first community school in Venda was built at Sibasa in 1920 by *Domba* initiates, on the site of their initiation activities. Mathivha (1992) reported that these girls decided that to make mud bricks for the construction of a school which they would attend after the Domba rites had been concluded. Missionary doctrine discouraged converts and those attending school from participating in cultural activities such as the initiation ceremonies. It was therefore not surprising that this initiative came from the Domba initiates (Blacking, 1964a and b; Kirkaldy, 2002; Mathivha, 1992; M.E.R. Mathivha, personal communication, 14 November, 2001).

There was widespread dissatisfaction with missionary work in general, and their schooling system in particular. Missionaries, in particular, attacked Venda culture as 'heathen' and encouraged people to denounce their culture and traditional ways of living. Traditional initiation schools[6] for girls were also denounced as 'heathen'. This limited the opportunities for Venda youth to participate in missionary schooling. Attendance of missionary schooling required conversion into missionary faith (Nemudzivhadi, 1991, 1987, 1969, n.d.a and b; Mathivha, 1992. This approach in missionary provision of formal schooling has resonance with that reported by Holmquist (1984) and Natsoulas (1998) regarding missionary activities among the Gikuyu of Kenya in the 1930s. The colonial government's reluctance to permit Gikuyu independent schools is reported to have been motivated primarily by the fear of control of these schools by the nationalist political opposition parties.

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5 This is the most important and most elaborate initiation ceremony for Venda girls, connected with the traditions of Lake Fundudzi, believed to be the political and cultural base of ancient Venda. However, the ceremony also involves all other members of society, according to their different social roles and could last for up to two years to conclude (Blacking, 1964b, 2001).

6 The term, 'school' here is after Blacking's (1964b) usage and is primarily aimed at emphasising the formal school-like progression stages of the rites of passage that Domba involved. Domba was attended in separate but sequential stages that involved graduating from less demanding to more demanding and socially more valuable phases (Blacking, 1964b, 2001).

Meanwhile, there was a growing realisation, in early twentieth-century Venda, of the pressures that missionary institutions and colonial political authority had exerted on traditional socio-political and economic organisation. There was also a growing tension in society on how to participate in missionary schooling, with its strict requirement for conversion and abandonment of traditional ways of the ancestors without unsettling 'the order of being' of traditional society's life-world. This tension is nowhere better illustrated than in the reported wishes of chief Makwarela to be baptised and the missionary, Klaas Kuhn's objection on the ground that he must first stop practicing polygamy, which missionary doctrine condemned in strictest terms. Unfortunately, these were terms Makwarela could not agree to, as he was obliged to lead by example through adhering to the cultural values of his society (Kirkaldy, 2002).

Meanwhile, Makwarela had learnt the workings of the colonial political system through his long association with the missionaries, his self-taught abilities to read missionary texts and the scriptures as well as his exposure through his extensive travels to places as far as Zimbabwe and Kimberley (Kirkaldy, 2002; Mathivha, 1992). Consequently, Makwarela was probably better positioned, after taking over as paramount chief upon the death of his father in 1901, to introduce formal schooling as a means of countering the effects of the colonial and missionary activities on traditional social organisation.

The *Domba* initiates were better positioned for the role that they took upon themselves; making the mud bricks[7] to be used for the construction of what became the first community controlled school in Venda. In this school, the initiates would freely learn with pride – the pride of their culture which binds them to the rites of passage of the *Domba* that they could not freely choose to abandon without unsettling their traditional life-world (see Blacking, 1964 for a detailed discussion of the central role *Domba* played as a symbol of chiefs' political authority and the central role of women in it).

After that the school was built, the chief acquired the services of a qualified teacher, S.M. Dzivhani – known to be the first Venda qualified teacher

7 Blacking observes that the Domba also functioned as a source of labour for construction of royal residences. In Venda tradition, the school was historically associated with the construction of the kingdom's famous stone ruins of Dzata, perhaps an indication of the high regard traditionally accorded to the Domba as a crucial source of collective labour for important royal projects (Blacking, 1964b).

(Mathivha, 1992). Dzivhani had resigned from his erstwhile position in the missionary schooling system. The new community school named 'Camp School', after an unofficial name for the town of Sibasa which was established as a military camp by the post 1902 colonial administration. More teachers were appointed and were paid in kind by the chief for their services to the community, while their appointments were being processed by the Union government (Mathivha, 1992; Nemudzivhadi, 1969, n.d.a and b).

The new school attracted learners from all over Venda,[8] with the chiefs actively encouraging their communities to send their children to school. Aware of the changing socio-political circumstances and the decline in subsistence economy due to the loss of land, many parents began to encourage their children to go to school. There was less fear of formal schooling detracting children's participation in traditional life and cultural activities as formal schooling and the practices of culture were no longer considered as necessarily mutually exclusive. As a result, formal schooling began to be appropriated into traditional cultural practices, and vice versa. For example, participating in *Domba* rites of passage did not – in itself, necessarily exclude one from continuing with formal school learning after the *Domba* concludes and the duration of *Domba* began to take account of the time during which the girls would have to be in school (Blacking, 1964a and b). Formal schooling therefore began to be accepted as an integral part of society's institutional configuration, with chiefs and communities playing a crucial role in the governance of the schools.

From its humble beginning, the school grew into a system of schools that comprised a junior primary, a senior primary and a senior secondary school. The school's primary section, which remained in the original location of the first building, comprised sub-standard A to standard six while a post-primary section – Mphaphuli African High School, comprised form I and form II by 1953 and incorporated form III to form V by 1955. The inclusion of a matriculation class was a milestone achievement for the school, and comprised the first matriculation to be offered in the rest of Venda. There were three schools: junior primary, senior primary and senior secondary or high school.

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8 Notwithstanding this development, many parents continued to doubt if it was culturally appropriate to send their children to school, especially girls, of whom it was believed that school will make them 'mad', teach them to write letters to boys, sleep around and even end up falling pregnant before they get married (Blacking, 1964).

These schools were named after the different Mphaphuli chiefs,[9] namely, Makwarela Junior Primary, Phaswana Senior Primary and Mphaphuli Memorial High School.

The Mphaphuli community schools were the only schools in Venda during this period to offer a science-based curriculum, which included mathematics. The curriculum comprised of General Science, Biology and Agricultural Science, TshiVenda, English, Afrikaans, Mathematics, History, Bookkeeping and Religious Education. Although missionary schools at Maungani's Beuster mission, Khanani and William Eadie missions had also begun to offer Form I classes during the early 1950s, these were not as popular as the classes at Mphaphuli and they did not last long as they were later discontinued (Mathivha, 1992; Nemudzivhadi, 1991, 1969).

Growing demand for secondary education prompted the Mphaphuli community to expand Mphaphuli High School and provide additional classrooms and buildings, despite the lack of state funding. The South African government in Pretoria objected to the requests for subsidy on the grounds that Mphaphuli High School did not have the capacity to offer matriculation education. In 1955, a community meeting called by chief Raluswielo decided that an amount of one pound per taxpayer would be levied over a period of three years. In the meantime, teachers and pupils had already begun contributing labour by making the bricks for the construction of the new school buildings. The ten-roomed school buildings were completed in 1958 and bore the cultural murals[10] characteristic of Venda traditional residences, with the main entrance carrying the royal emblem of an elephant head.[11] (Mathivha, 1992; M.E.R. Mathivha, personal communication, 14 November, 2001).

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9 Schools in Venda are usually named after chiefs in whose land they are built. This practice resonances with that pertaining to *Tshikona* royal reed-pipe music which includes abstract dance movements named after past chiefs; or the sacred spears tradition which served as register of past chiefs (Blacking, 1964b)

10 Professor M.E.R. Mathivha, who taught at Mphaphuli High School and was its founding principal reported, during personal communication with the present researcher, that he referred to the Venda murals that were common in traditional Venda residences in a way of motivating his students and in response to the view held by many of his former missionary colleagues that Venda children had no capacity to understand mathematics.

11 This is also a totem of the ruling Singo dynasty to which Mphaphuli ruling family is also believed to belong (Blacking, 1964b; Nemudzivhadi, 1998; Kirkaldy, 2002; Hammond-Tooke, 1993).

The South African Minister of Education, H.W. Maree, opened the school in 1959. Chief Raluswielo Mphaphuli, accompanied by his *Tshikona* – Venda royal music,[12] imprinted his foot below the foundation[13] stone, uttering the words: "This fulfils the work of education that was long begun by the Mphaphuli community. Now this is the new communal royal fields for all people at Mphaphuli territory" (author translation – AEM – of the original Tshivenda, quoted in Mathivha, 1992)

The metaphor of a communal royal field has important symbolic meaning. In Venda traditional society, all members of the community were duty-bound to perform labour at the communal or royal fields before they began preparing their own fields for planting. This applied as well to all other cultural activities such as the offering of the *marula* wine to the chief in honour of the gods and the ancestors before the community can make theirs for their own enjoyment (Blacking, 1964a and b). Communal fields and the associated collective labour offerings which were required of all community members point to the centrality of the community and the collective in Venda productive activity. Hence, it was not surprising that the Venda Bantustan leaders chose the words 'shumela Venda' – [work for Venda] as their motto (Blacking, 2001). Labour offering may also symbolise political power and authority a traditional leader has over his people, as people would turn out in large numbers when they are happy with the leadership provided (Blacking, 1964; Kirkaldy, 2002). The success that characterised the collective action of the communities responding to their changing historical circumstances was however curtailed by the introduction of new legislation governing the provision of schooling.

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12 *Tshikona*, is aptly described as "communal music par excellence. . .an orderly movement of people who are united and voluntarily overwhelmed . . .by a force greater than themselves. . .deeply conscious of the brotherhood of man and the oneness of creation" (Blacking 1964a, p.99).

13 Imprinting a foot on the foundation of a building has important symbolism in Venda tradition, cementing the patronage of the chief and thereby setting formal schooling at the centre of Venda traditional institutional culture. The pre-historic footprints at Kokwane in western Venda's Nzhelele region and at Mulenzhe outside Thohoyandou have historically been appropriated into sacred groves and places of the ancestors under guardianship of the local chiefs (Blacking, 1964b; Kirkaldy, 2002).

Resistance to the apartheid government's interference

The Bantu Education Act, Act no. 47 of 1953 brought all education for Africans under the apartheid government's control, instituted a national curriculum and restricted all black post-primary educational expansion to the various 'homelands' or Bantustans. The apartheid period was the most difficult period in the history of schooling in Venda, and especially so for the community school system. The apartheid authorities were comparatively lenient in dealing with missionary schools, while community schools were treated inequitably. The community schools operated with insufficient classrooms for the rapidly growing population of learners seeking admission every year, and many classes were conducted under trees, at least until 1959 (Mathivha, 1992; Mathivha, personal communication, 14 November, 2001).

There was an acute shortage of qualified teachers for the subjects that the secondary school had introduced, especially teachers for science and mathematics. Because of this shortage, appointments were usually made on the basis of perceived capabilities to teach specific subjects and not necessarily on the basis of qualifications. Most teachers enrolled for the junior certificate and matriculation examinations together with the learners they taught (Mathivha, 1992; M.E.R. Mathivha, personal communication, 14 November, 2001; V.N. Ralushai, personal communication, 6 September, 2000).

In 1954 the government issued a letter ordering the withdrawal of all secondary school classes at Mphaphuli. Its intention was to have only one school – the missionary controlled Vendaland Institute of Higher Education at Tshakhuma, which was also the sole centre for teacher training in Venda – providing matriculation education for the rest of Venda. Infuriated by this treatment, the community resisted the order. The chief decreed that the order be ignored while representations were made to government. Faced with this resistance, Pretoria withdrew the order. However, in the following year another act of government interference badly affected the school's morale. Authorities, acting on behalf of Pretoria, issued an order declaring the oral examinations that had been conducted by black officers invalid and instructed that this be re-done by white officers (Mathivha, 1992; M.E.R. Mathivha, personal communication, 14 November).

The apartheid government did not take kindly to the community schools in spite of their unquestionable successes in improving access to schooling for

the majority of children in Venda and for promoting active involvement of parents in their children's schooling. The apartheid government wanted to control, especially, what happens in the classrooms – the curriculum. This seems to have been an overriding attitude of colonial administrations apparently born out of the perception that these communities could not manage their own affairs effectively. Holmquist (1984) reports a similar attitude – that the British colonial government appeared to be willing to support missionary schools and not the Gikuyu independent schools, in spite of the low enrolment numbers in missionary schools compared to the independent schools.

Therefore, for different ideological reasons, the apartheid government, as did the missionaries, failed to provide a science-based curriculum to Venda children. The government for example, argued that the community schools did not have the capacity, such as qualified teachers and teaching resources such as the laboratories to offer such a curriculum effectively. Government, however, made no attempt to subsidise the provision of such capacity and the basic educational recourses to support the communities' efforts, as would normally be expected.

On the contrary, the failure of missionary education to provide a science-based curriculum to Venda children, although also aimed at social control, was however not so much motivated by an explicit political ideology of racial supremacy – although this might as well been the case when considered from other levels of analysis. The overriding motivation for not offering a science-based curriculum, for the missionaries, appears to be based on the desire for 'control through omission'. That is, to ensure the success of the missionary agenda an avoidance of a science curriculum, with its then prevailing emphasis on Darwinian theory of evolution, would have been reasonable (Blacking, 1964b; Kirkaldy, 2002). It would have been difficult for the missionary to introduce science, on account of the possibility of such a subject potentially contradicting missionary doctrine, specifically regarding the scriptural account of creation.

As many of the missionaries had no training in mathematics and science and, since they mostly acted as teachers as well, they further perpetuated the status quo regarding a religious orientation of a missionary school curriculum. However, in the later years – that is the 1950s, when the state began to offer more funding, especially to missionary schooling (Hartshorne, 1992), the missionaries' failure to introduce a science-based curriculum at Tshakhuma,

their educational headquarters in Venda, may well suggest complacency, or collusion with the apartheid ideology and educational policies.

The period after 1955, saw the gradual take over of community schools by the apartheid government, finally bringing all the activities of schooling under state control. Funding procedures and legislative requirements where used to appropriate these schools and place them under state control. Curriculum decisions were subordinated to government policy, and representatives of the state dominated school governing boards (Hartshorne, 1992). Community participation and control of their children's schooling were almost entirely curtailed, while government control increased.

The takeover of community schools was followed by a period of state patronage in the form of construction of new schools in several parts of Venda (Nemudzivhadi, 1987, 1969). Community participation on matters of education was considerably curtailed while the patronage of chiefs through naming the new schools after them ensured their cooperation. Those chiefs who objected to the apartheid system where dethroned while others were exiled (Shillington, 1989; Nemudzivhadi, 1998). The post-1955 period therefore marked the end of community ownership and active participation in the education of their children and ushered in a new period of political patronage and active exclusion of communities from meaningful participation in schooling matters.

Conclusion

Community schooling in Venda illustrates a specific historical trajectory in the development of schooling in South Africa. This paper has examined this history, as a consequence of complex forces of social and political changes of late nineteenth and early to mid twentieth century Venda. The analysis of the history of society and the emergence of community schooling reveals that the Mphaphuli community in eastern Venda employed the institutions of their culture effectively as a resource for creating the future they envisaged for themselves in the context of the early- to mid-nineteenth century rapid social transformation. Unfortunately, this possible future life-world was untimely terminated by the apartheid take-over of community schools in 1955.

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Infusing service-learning in curricula: a theoretical exploration of infusion possibilities

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Abstract

In South Africa one result of the appeal for greater social responsiveness from Higher Education institutions has been for service-learning, a component of Community Engagement, to be infused into curricula in higher education. This paper suggests that infusion of service-learning into curricula is based on broad assumptions which need to be researched further. There are complexities which need to be considered regarding the potential of service-learning to bridge the gap between the university and society, and the extent to which it is the most appropriate pedagogic tool for this purpose. This paper argues that Basil Bernstein's theory of classification and framing as well as his work on vertical and horizontal discourses is potentially useful for understanding the factors that could impact on infusing service-learning into curricula. Thus, the potential of Bernstein's work to provide insights into the possibilities and constraints of infusing service-learning into the curricula is explored.

Introduction

The literature (Butin, 2005; Bringle and Hatcher, 1995; CHE, 2006; Furco, 1996; Stanton and Cruz, 1999) frames service-learning as having the potential to create a balance between *service*, which occurs in the community, and *learning*, which is thought to be the domain of the university, thus allowing students to move between the everyday discourses of the community into the elevated discourses of the university.

The focused attention that higher education bestows on service-learning can be traced to two themes that impact on higher education internationally: transformation and social responsiveness of higher education systems. According to policy statements from the Council on Higher Education (CHE), service-learning is ideal in addressing these themes because "…[service-learning] is entrenched in a discourse that proposes the development and transformation of higher education in relation to community needs" (CHE, 2006).

South African universities experience pressure from bodies such as the CHE, recommending that service-learning (which is within the Community Engagement continuum) be seen as part of a new social contract between the university and society. One way in which to measure response to the CHE's recommendation is to examine service-learning activity within universities. The literature available indicates a focused attention on the benefits of service-learning to theorise and inform curriculum decisions. Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning and Learning Styles Inventory is frequently cited to legitimise service-learning activities (Roos, Temane, Davis, Prinsloo, Kritzinger, Naude and Wessels, 2005; CHE, 2006; Ash and Clayton, 2004; Marchel, 2004; Oates and Leavitt, 2003; Pribbenow, 2005). Kolb's work accounts largely for the student experience and therefore inadequately guides where, how, when and why service-learning can be infused into the curriculum. A theoretical account of the structural possibilities for infusing service-learning in higher education curricula is therefore needed.

I propose that Basil Bernstein's (2000) theory of vertical and horizontal discourses as well as his work on classification and framing have the potential to provide insights into the possibilities and constraints of infusing service-learning in the curriculum.

This paper argues for research to be done that can offer a theoretical framing at a systemic level for service-learning in higher education. Two broad assumptions related to service-learning need to be investigated. The first assumption concerns the extent to which service-learning can bridge the gap between higher education and society in order to fulfil the new social contract. This assumption needs to be problematised given that universities and society function with different knowledge forms. Traversing these different forms may be complex, both for students and the community.

The second area in which research needs to be conducted is related to providing theoretical bases on which decisions are made regarding where, how, when and why service-learning is infused in curricula. An important factor that can be considered regarding how decisions regarding infusion of service-learning in curricula are made would be to take into consideration how disciplines are structured. In this paper, I argue that Bernstein's (1971, 1977) classification and framing theory has the potential to illuminate how discipline structures impact on whether a discipline enables or constrains infusion.

The first part of the paper contextualises the policy argument made for service-learning in South Africa focusing on the themes of transformation and social responsiveness. The paper then clarifies service-learning and suggests a theoretical framework for examining the conditions for interplay between service-learning and disciplines. At this point the paper illustrates how borrowing from Bernstein's work (2000) potentially provides a theoretical framework for service-learning.

Context

Post-apartheid, South Africa not only had to confront processes of democratisation but also the processes of globalisation which had been shown to be the main drivers of the reconfiguration of Higher Education at an international level (Kraak, 2000). It is not difficult to understand why developments derived from a global agenda were accepted with little or no opposition from South African stakeholders, seeing that they seemed aligned with the national agenda of redressing the effects of apartheid in all sectors of South African society. In the education arena, the national agenda translated into a need to construct new social relationships between government, communities and educational institutions.

In the foreword of the 1997 White Paper on Education (RSA, 1997, p.3), the then Minster of Education, Professor Sibusiso Bengu, noted that "The transformation of the higher education system needs to reflect the changes that are taking place in our society and to strengthen the values and practices of our new democracy. . .The higher education system must be transformed to redress past inequalities, to serve a new social order, to meet pressing national needs and to respond to new realities and opportunities." This statement conveyed the seriousness with which the democratically elected government of South Africa took issues of transformation particularly in the higher education sector.

The White Paper (RSA, 1997, p.7) alludes to the many purposes of higher education and then outlines four purposes contextualised in the current status of the country. The purpose that specifically speaks to the closer relationship between higher education and society mentioned earlier is "[t]o contribute to the socialisation of enlightened, responsible and constructively critical citizens.

Higher education encourages the development of a reflective capacity and a willingness to review and renew prevailing ideas, policies and practices based on a commitment to the common good" (RSA, 1997, p.7).

The tradition of polarising *the* university and *the* society creates an impression that each has a stereotypical homogenised form. Policy statements argue against this polarisation, because the continued bifurcating of higher education and society can no longer exist without an adverse effect on South Africa's ability to compete in the international arena (Kraak, 2000). It is in this context that the CHE frames service-learning as part of a new social contract between the university and society.

Transformation and social responsiveness

In both developed and developing countries, institutions of higher education grapple with the challenges of transformation and social responsiveness. These challenges are driven by the demands of globalisation. The White Paper (RSA, 1997) describes globalisation as referring to ". . .multiple, inter-related changes in social, cultural and economic relations, linked to widespread impact of the information and communications revolution, the growth of trans-national scholarly and scientific networks, the accelerating integration of the world economy and intense competition among nations for markets" (p.9). The impact of globalisation on higher education has meant that the traditional functions and responsibilities of universities are ". . .increasingly being located within the demands of economic productivity and its requirements for particular kinds of knowledge and skills" (Singh, 2001, p.8). Singh argues for a broader understanding and conceptualisation of social responsiveness. She warns against the danger of interpreting social responsiveness as a one-dimensional demand that higher education produce graduates in order to ". . .give a competitive edge to country performance in the global market place"(Singh, 2001, p.9). Singh goes on to argue that, in the South African context, social responsiveness cannot be viewed narrowly in terms of economic and global competitiveness. In the context of South Africa's national agenda of eradicating apartheid and other colonising legacies, the transformation of the higher education sector needs to be conceived as part of the national agenda of reconstructing and democratising the country.

Harvey and Knight in Waghid (2002) add to Singh's broadened notion of social responsiveness when they suggest, as an indicator of transformation in

higher education, that the university should produce graduates whose proficiency is not locked within the discipline: "[h]igher education has a role to prepare people to go beyond the present and be able to respond to a future which cannot be imagined" (Waghid, 2002, p.459).

To achieve the mandate of a broadened transformation agenda, writers such as Singh (2001) and Calhoun (1998, in Singh, 2001) propose the re-insertion of 'public good' as a focus in higher education. Singh understands public good to be the combination of the existence of higher education *as* a public good and higher education playing a role in the *achievement* of public good in its purpose and functions (Singh, 2001). The achievement of the public good requires a deeper inquiry into the ways in which the core activities of higher education (teaching, research and community service) could yield public good benefits.

Following the arguments outlined above it is possible to see how the new social contract between higher education and society as well as the public good debate became the bedrock for the focused attention on community engagement activities such as service-learning. However, the following complexities have not been taken into consideration: the differences within and between higher education and society's differential relation to knowledge; how knowledge is structured, how it is valued as well as how knowledge is used in different contexts by different communities of practice.

Service-learning

The term service-learning is understood in a variety of different ways. It would be helpful at this point to frame the understanding of the term in the context of this paper. Examining the variations, it can be seen that the variants indicate where the emphasis or importance is placed. Examples of this are the terms 'academic service-learning' and 'community service-learning'. In an attempt to avoid a tilted emphasis and to create a balanced focus, the term is hyphenated to illustrate a balance as well as an interrelationship between service and learning (Furco, 1996). Through this interrelationship there is a kind of service and a kind of learning that is generated through service-learning (CHE, 2006).

Bringle and Hatcher's (1995, p.112) frequently cited definition firmly frames service-learning within the curriculum ambit, distinguishing it from the various forms of community-engaged learning:

> Service-Learning is a credit bearing, educational, experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.

It is not difficult to understand why Bringle and Hatcher's definition is frequently used in the South African context as it aligns with the framing of service-learning as having the potential to contribute significantly to the call for higher education to place less emphasis on ivory tower deliberations and engage with societal issues, thereby showing a more visible measure of social responsiveness (Singh, 2001).

The outlined potential of service-learning is congruent with perceptions expressed in the field, "[C]ombining theory with practice, classrooms with communities, the cognitive with the affective, service-learning seemingly breaches the bifurcation of lofty academics with the lived reality of everyday life" (Butin, 2005, p.vii). Thus the argument for service-learning as the ideal pedagogic tool is built. As it stands, this argument does not consider the complexities that exist regarding classification and framing of disciplines which impact on the possibility of infusing service-learning in curricula.

The disciplines and service-learning

American-based authors, Mabry and Parker-Gwin, (1998) list the following disciplines as having successfully incorporated service-learning: Anthropology, Environmental Science, Psychology, Education, Political Science, Economics, Biology, Social Science, Mathematics and Physics. In the South African context, examples feature more prominently in the social sciences and disciplines which have a professional orientation, such as Psychology (Roos, *et al*., 2005), Pharmacy (Karekezi, Wrench, Quinn, Belluigi and Srinivas, 2007) and Information Studies (Bell, 2007). The trend can also been noted in the 2008 CHE publication (*Service-Learning in the disciplines Lessons from the field)* where the majority of the cases come from the professional disciplines (CHE, 2008).

Perusal of the literature suggests an imbalance. In some disciplines, examples of service-learning activity are profuse while in others there is a dearth of examples. Given this observation, the questions that come to mind are 'Where, how, when and why is service-learning possible?' In answering these questions, following Archer, 1995, the research that I argue needs to be done will attempt to identify the structural, cultural and agential factors which enable or constrain the infusion of service-learning in disciplines.

In the next section of the paper I illustrate how Bernstein's theories have the potential to explore and provide insights regarding the two broad assumptions, namely the potential for service-learning to bridge the gap between higher education and society as well as the extent to which it is the appropriate pedagogic tool for this purpose.

Extent to which service-learning can bridge the gap between higher education and society Bernstein distinguishes between two forms of knowledge within two discourses, namely the vertical discourse and the horizontal discourse. Vertical discourse has been described as:

> . . . tak[ing] the form of a coherent, explicit and systematically principled structure, hierarchically organised as in the sciences, or . . . [taking] the form of a series of specialised languages with specialised modes of interrogation and specialised criteria for the production and circulation of texts as in the social sciences and humanities (Bernstein, 2000, p.157).

What Bernstein describes as vertical discourse can be largely categorised as the formal educational knowledge domain. Within vertical discourse he makes a further distinction between scientific (vertical knowledge structure) and humanities (horizontal knowledge structure) disciplines which have their own distinctive knowledge structures.

Bernstein's description of horizontal discourse is that it is typified as 'common sense' knowledge, whose features are ". . . likely to be oral, local, context dependent and specific, tacit, multi-layered … segmentally organised and contradictory across but not within contexts" (Bernstein, 2000, p.157). In short, here Bernstein describes society at large.

Bernstein's definition and characterisation of vertical and horizontal discourses are indicative of the polarised relationship between higher education (namely the university) and society at large (namely the community) which, according to policy statements, service-learning has the potential to

breach. It is evident in Bernstein's definition that knowledge is conceived, privileged and used differently in the two discourses.

Another important factor for infusion possibilities is the relationship between knowledge and its social and cultural contexts. An aspect of this relationship which needs to be explored by research is "the degree to which meaning is dependent on its context" (Maton, 2009, p.46). This relationship between knowledge and its context Maton refers to as semantic gravity. "When semantic gravity is stronger, meaning is more closely related to its context of acquisition or use; when it is weaker, meaning is less dependent on its context" (Maton, 2009, p.46). Strengthening and weakening of semantic gravity is an important aspect to consider for service-learning infusion because semantic gravity can indicate the transferability of knowledge from one context to another. Disciplines seen to have ". . .ideas or skills that are strongly tied to their contexts of acquisition, problematising transfer and knowledge-building remains a pressing concern in educational debates ranging from the humanities (Christie and Macken-Horarik, 2007) to science (Tytler, 2007)" (Maton, 2009, p.43). Therefore it is possible to expect that a discipline which exhibits context dependent knowledge is likely to be more constrained in its ability to infuse service-learning in the curriculum because of the limited scope of transferring its knowledge outside the context of the discipline.

The distinction related to how knowledge is structured in the two discourses raises the need to problematise the assumption that the everyday knowledge of society and that of formalised educational knowledge (the domain of universities) can be bridged. Theoretical exploration is required to examine this assumption by using Bernstein's vertical and horizontal discourse as a frame. There are some foreseeable complexities that need to be considered in order to bridge the two discourses, namely how knowledge is privileged differently within the discourses. Another issue that requires research attention is the question of what can be gained and/or lost by bridging the gap between vertical and horizontal discourse. The research proposed in this article has the potential to reveal other important and complex considerations which may impact on infusion possibilities.

Service-learning, the ideal pedagogic tool

Bernstein's (1971, 1977) work looks at disciplines and gives them a code based on whether they have a weak or strong classification and framing.

Classification and framing are linked by Bernstein to issues of power and control in relation to how knowledge is structured. "I will now proceed to define two concepts, one for the translation of power, of power relations, and the other for the translation of control relations. . ." (Bernstein, 2000, p.5). Power in this instance is demonstrated by how boundaries between different disciplines are created, legitimated and reproduced to have relative strength or relative weakness. The strength and weakness of boundaries between disciplines are dependent on whether disciplines are insular in relation to each other or if they are similar to each other. So therefore disciplines which are insular in relation to each other are 'strongly' bounded and those similar to each other are 'weakly' bounded. Weak boundaries are signified by '-'and strong boundaries by '+'.

In the context of the kind of research which this article argues for, classification (C) would therefore describe the strength along a continuum from -C to +C of the different disciplines within the university. It would be useful for the proposed research to identify the relative strength or weakness of boundaries between the disciplines, and more importantly for service-learning infusion, to identify the relative strength or weakness of discipline boundaries in relation to the world outside of the university.

Control on the other hand focuses on ". . .legitimate forms of communication *within*. . .categories" (Bernstein, 1975). Therefore the relative strength of control within categories such as disciplines is referred to by Bernstein as framing and occurs along a continuum (-F to +F).

In essence, framing refers to the internal operation or ***how*** strongly what counts as legitimate within the discipline is regulated and controlled. The relative strengths of classification (+ -C) and framing (+ -F) are the structuring principles of practices that will be used to help illuminate possibilities of infusing service-learning in curricula.

Using classification and framing as a framework highlights complexities related to service-learning being the ideal pedagogic tool. It is possible to infer that in disciplines where classification and framing are strong, difficulties regarding infusion possibilities may occur. However, further extrapolation may be required. Maton's (2000) Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) has the potential to uncover underlying principles that generate curriculum, knowledge and discourse structures. This theory comprises five dimensions; for the proposed research the two dimensions that are relevant are

Specialisation and Semantics. Maton asserts that these dimensions bring together sociological and epistemological understandings of knowledge. The dimensions have the potential to further reveal the enabling and constraining factors of service-learning infusion in curricula through focused attention paid to the underlying principles structuring the practices within the disciplines. "This approach views the practices and beliefs of actors as embodying competing claims to legitimacy. . ." (Maton, 2009, p. 45).

This may point to certain disciplines being better suited for infusion than others. This may also account for why there seems to be an imbalance in the adoption of service-learning as a pedagogic strategy.

Combining Bernstein and Maton's work presents opportunities to conduct research before more conclusive annotations can be made related to factors which impact on service-learning infusion into curricula. Earlier in this paper an explanation of how Bernstein differentiates between knowledge structures in the vertical and the horizontal discourse was provided. Within the vertical discourse hierarchal and horizontal knowledge structures exist which can be characterised by either weaker (for the former) or stronger (for the latter) semantic gravity. However, deeper examination is required. For example, within the vertical discourse the discipline structures have aspects with quite weak semantic gravity, while some aspects of the same discipline may have stronger semantic gravity. It is plausible to infer that the potential to infuse service-learning into the curriculum of a discipline or an aspect of the discipline with a weaker semantic gravity is increased. On the other hand, the potential of infusing service-learning in a discipline or an aspect of the discipline with a stronger semantic gravity is lessened. This is because meaning in the latter discipline is more tied to the context of its acquisition making it more difficult for knowledge in this context to be transferable into another context.

Research that examines the capacity for knowledge to be transferable between the vertical and the horizontal discourse is needed in order to critique the argument that service-learning is the ideal pedagogic tool to bridge higher education and society.

Conclusion

In this paper I have highlighted the pressures impacting on higher education and therefore requiring "universities to bridge the gap between higher education and society" (Waghid, 2002, p.457). Globally, and within the South African context, there is an increased shift from 'disciplinary' research towards 'problem-solving' or applied research, as a result of the growing demand for universities to be socially responsive and accountable (Muller, 2000). This backdrop helped frame some of the influential recommendations and policies which themselves help frame the assumption of service-learning as the ideal response to these pressures in post apartheid South Africa.

I have argued for research to be conducted into the legitimacy of the assumptions made for the need for and the appropriateness of service-learning as a pedagogic strategy to bridge the gap between higher education and society. What can be gained and what will be at stake when considering a closer relationship between the vertical discourse of the academy and the horizontal discourse of the community?

Secondly I have argued the necessity to consider the enabling and constraining factors which impact on service-learning as an ideal pedagogic tool and finally for the research to possibly provide a theoretical frame on which curriculum decisions of where, how, when and why service learning can be infused in curricula.

I have argued for the use of Bernstein's work as a framework to explore these assumptions further.

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Rural school principals' quest for effectiveness: lessons from the field

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Abstract

Rural schools were always experiencing operational challenges under the apartheid dispensation. In the past there were always concerns that South Africa's rural areas were marginalised and under-resourced (ANC, 1995). These schools were believed to be of low quality and that the majority of them did not have the necessary resources, both human and physical. There are still people who contend that a number of rural schools today witness the remnants of some of the past challenges.

This study was conducted in 10 rural schools that shared similar challenges among these; non-involvement of communities in education, few or no physical resources. The participants (principals) from these schools were registered in the new Advanced Certificate in Education, School Management and Leadership (ACE-SML). Using experience from the ACE-SML programme, the participants claimed to have adopted transformational leadership qualities and were already looking at how they could turn their schools around as they avert some of the daily challenges they face.

Introduction and problem postulation

The South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 stipulates that the school principal has delegated powers to organise and control effective teaching and learning at the school effectively (Potgieter, Visser, Van der Bank, Mothata and Squelch, 1997). Educational changes in South Africa have had an impact on managers and leaders in schools in various ways. Principals have been expected to lead aspects such as curriculum as well as organisational change. However, research shows that many South African principals are in such an unenviable position where they lacked preparation programmes for their leadership and management positions (Bush, 2004; Mestry and Singh, 2007 and Bush, Duku, Glover, Kiggundu, Kola, Msila and Moorosi, 2007). Bush (2004) argues that in South Africa there is no principal qualification and that the lack of criteria for principals' appointments has resulted in the underperformance of principals in their leadership and management roles. Yet, in the recent education changes, the principals have a mammoth task of leading change because as people in the helm, they need to guide their

followers as they minimise the fear and resistance to change. Kotter (1999) points out that among others, leaders need to alleviate the fear of change.

The introduction of educational changes has shown pronounced differences not only between various principals but also between schools. Some schools found the educational changes more challenging than others. Schools that were cited to have been exposed to gross challenges in the implementation and sustenance of change are the rural schools in South Africa. Rural schools for example, are confronted with poor school conditions, high levels of illiteracy, lack of parental participation in school governing bodies (SGBs), poor transportation and non-attendance and shortage of teachers (Human Rights Watch, 2007). According to Jansen (1999) the introduction of the new curriculum exposes the inadequacies of rural schools. Usually with minimal physical resources and minimal professional expertise principals in rural schools have had to deal with more challenges in the face of educational changes.

The main question posed in this study is:

What solutions do rural principals see redeeming their schools from leadership and management incompetency and ineffectiveness?

Sub-questions asked were:

How can formal training programmes assist in the enhancement of the principals management and leadership skills?

Can rural school principals lead successful schools despite certain obstacles?

It is very early days to judge the impact of the ACE-SML and the study wanted to explore whether in the long run the ACE has the likelihood of changing the current school leadership and management scenario All the participants in the study were registered in the ACE-SML programme during the time when the research was conducted. The ACE-SML is a practice-based part-time programme of study that is aimed at providing management and leadership support through a variety of interactive programmes that improve the students' practice, professional growth and ethos of leadership (Mestry and Singh, 2007). Furthermore, Mestry and Singh contend that the ACE programme was conceived as a form of continuing professional development, which has the purpose of equipping principals or enabling teachers to move into an education leadership and management career path.

Rural schools: a brief historical background

This research explores what the rural principals envisage as practical solutions to their plight and workplace challenges. Regarding this though, one needs to be careful, as some writers have proclaimed that there are no panaceas to educational policy (Chubb and Moe, 1990). Yet the premise of this article is what the principals see as changing their current positions for the better. Caputo-Pearl, Al-Alim and Martin (2007) argue that teachers have a specific role within an unequal and unjust educational system. Furthermore, these writers contend that if teachers do not understand the structure of the system, they will help in the reproduction of the structure through the implementation of curricula that deaden rather than enliven working-class learners and the political agency of poor communities. In this section the focus is on the brief history of rural schools and education and displays what needs to be improved in these schools.

The definition of the term rural can be slippery as one moves from one country to another. Criteria to refer to a place as a rural area depend upon a number of aspects. The numbers of inhabitants in a locality distance from the city centre, demographic and geographic factors are some of the factors that could assist in distinguishing rural areas from others (Halsall, 1973). There are however, some common aspects among rural areas across the world. According to Halsall (1973) rural children tend to be at an educational disadvantage almost everywhere and he traces these disadvantages to economic as well as cultural reasons. Fleisch (2008) relates rural teachers testimonies that provide powerful evidence that links poverty to under-achievement. According to Graaf (1995) rural schools are "poor quality schools where the basic necessities were lacking". He also contends that there are no facilities and that these are schools where many teachers are not qualified to teach their subjects and some are not even interested in being qualified teachers. When Outcomes-based Education (OBE) was about to be implemented, some sceptics pointed out that OBE would be a huge challenge to the present rural areas due to the lack of resources that still persisted. Usually rural communities lack the financial capital and have to survive with minimal resources. Graaf (1995) pointed out that rural schools are inferior because they are the products of communities without political power.

Bot, Wilson and Dove (2001) concur with the above by stating that many rural schools make use of water and sanitation that is unhygienic, giving rise to health concerns for both learners and educators. They also argue that the

availability of electricity and telephones at schools have a significant impact on the quality of education. In the late 1990s almost half of all schools in South Africa did not have electricity and the majority of these were in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo (Bot *et al*., 2001).

South Africa has a number of rural schools situated in various provinces around the country. As a general rule, many teachers working in urban areas would not prefer to work in some of these schools because of their inaccessibility. Some writers have argued that even the central education authorities are sometimes not concerned with the quality of education (Brunswic and Valerien, 2004). Brunswic and Valerien also point out that the provision of quality education in poor areas requires not only motivated staff but also administrative management and supervision of teaching practices. They also suggest a number of issues that need to be addressed relating to teachers management in rural areas (2004, p.61):

> Experience shows that the procedures concerned with teacher management should be adapted to education in a rural environment; special recruitment and appointment criteria to avoid giving young inexperienced teachers a first appointment in an overly difficult posting; appointment of couples to two-person postings in order to facilitate their integration into the rural environment and avoid excessive turnover rate; in small schools, appointment of a teacher who speaks the children's mother tongue, etc.

Research methodology

The study was conducted in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape through the use of focus group interviews as well as observations in ten schools. Three secondary schools and two primary schools were selected in the Eastern Cape. In KwaZulu-Natal two high schools and three primary schools were selected. All these schools are historically black and situated in rural areas. Previously, all the Eastern Cape schools in the study were under the Transkei Department of Education and the KwaZulu-Natal schools fell under the Department of Education and Culture (former KwaZulu Government). The researcher visited four centres where ACE candidates attended contact sessions: two in KZN and two in the EC. He then used purposive sampling to obtain a sample of rural principals from a population of 66 candidates. Purposive sampling includes the use of previous knowledge of a population. Investigators use personal judgment to select a sample (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2000). Brink (2000) describes purposive sampling as a method based on the judgment of a researcher regarding participants or objects that are typical or representative of the phenomenon being studied.

All ten participants were candidates in the ACE-SML programme which was being piloted by the National Department of Education. The selected schools shared common features such as poverty, lack of physical resources, absence or non-involvement of parents in school matters and low morale among educators. The research mainly focused on the management of improvement in face of the obstacles. The participants were observed over a period of six months. During this time they were individually interviewed three times, using semi-structured interviews. These individual interviews were spread throughout the duration of the study; the first one at the beginning of the study, the second one at the end of the third month and the last at the end of the sixth month. These individual interviews were preceded by school observations. The researcher was a passive observer who observed the management style of the principals and their typical days of duty. Observations in the study took two forms; observations of ACE-SML classes (three contact sessions) and observations of the participants in the first month after they had started and then in the sixth month when the study was finalised. During observation times the researcher's observations included the following:

In contact sessions

- Forms of delivery and their effectiveness
- Interaction with the material
- Peer learning
- Application of relevant theory

In schools

- Daily operation of the schools
- The ACE-SML impact (effectiveness or absence thereof)
- Leadership styles

In addition to individual participant interviews there were two focus group interviews. The focus group interviews were crucial because this was where the participants shared various 'solutions' as to how they could remedy the ills endemic in their schools. Focus group interviews use the group interaction to generate data. In this regard Struwig and Stead (2004) cite Krueger who points out that focus groups generally comprise four to eight research participants. In each of these interview sessions, there were five participants. Brink (2000) points out that apart from the obvious practical advantages of interviewing

several people simultaneously, it is also useful to allow participants to share their thoughts with one another. However, he also states that the disadvantage is that some participants may be uncomfortable with the idea of sharing their viewpoints in groups. The latter challenge was however, triangulated by the use of the individual interviews. Questions posed proceeded from the general to the specific. The latter is crucial for according to Kingry, Tiedje and Friedman (1990), the participants must feel that their contributions are worthwhile and that they are free to disagree with one another.

The schools

Table 1: The schools in the study

School	Staff numbers	Learner numbers
1. Manzini Secondary School (EC)	<30	<600
2. Orchards Secondary School (EC)	>30	<600
3. Lesedi Secondary School (EC)	>30	>600
4. Mso Primary School (EC)	<30	<600
5. Langa Primary School (EC)	>30	>600
6. Apple Secondary School (KZN)	<30	<600
7. Plum Secondary School (KZN)	<30	<600
8. Litha Secondary School (KZN)	>30	>600
9. Cocoa Secondary School (KZN)	>30	>600
10. Lily Primary School (KZN)	<30	<600

All the schools in Table 1 are situated quite a distance from the city, the nearest being 150 kilometres and the furthest 400 kilometres. Some schools such as Manzini, Lesedi, Mso, Apple, Plum and Lily have dominant traditional authority involvement and the *indunas* or the area chief councillors play significant roles in the schools governance.

The findings

There were many commonalities in the participants responses. Among the most significant was the notion that the participants have learnt to be transformational leaders in their schools. For many, this was a new concept which they explained (among others) as meaning 'to have and sustain a vision', 'being able to lead change', commitment to share leadership with others'. The majority of the participants displayed significant management and leadership practices during the researcher's last visits to their schools. These changes were also evident in the contact sessions as the participants engaged in their case study work. During the third visit in the contact sessions, they were more assertive and better prepared for the challenges they face in their schools. The Langa Primary school participant was a sceptic when it came to delegation of duties because she did not feel that her teachers were ready for shared leadership. However, it was evident in the last visit that there was much delegation in the school. The participants attributed improvement to the ACE-SML programme.

They also stated that the idea of mentors was a new concept to them and while it was not as effective as it should have been, they saw the potential of this aspect of leadership. In fact, many saw their change in being transformational leaders as an aspect that could be enhanced by effective mentors. However, some candidates stated that in future the mentors might be valuable although they discovered that their mentors were sometimes tentative and not sure as to what they were supposed to do. Some mentors even told them that they are learning a model 'that should have been there for many years'. One mentor in one of the contact sessions said that in future, mentors would be more skilled as they would have received more training than the current crop of mentors. The participants maintained that rural teachers face a myriad of challenges and should not work without the mentoring aspect.

Many concurred that the mentorship programme should be the cornerstone of the ACE programme. With no induction of principals apparent, 'mentorship can be the best remedy for the beginning principals in particular'. They said that the rural principal in particular, usually faces problems alone 'with no other people to bounce ideas on'. This need was supported in one contact session observed; where the mentor facilitated a session in which the participants discussed various problems in their schools. To the principals amazement, some of their problems were 'solved' by their peers. The mentor also had one-to-one sessions as the participants shared some unique challenges

in their schools. Three of the participants stated that they did not have effective mentors, however, they pointed out that the idea of having someone to guide one is a good one in itself. The participants reiterated that the rural principals 'operate in seclusion'. Another participant said that they sometimes find that some district officials do not understand the unique nature of rural schools and that mentors could help in this regard.

The mentors, as well as the study material, emphasised the involvement of various stakeholders in school management as well as governance. The participants generally concurred about the non-cooperation of parents and the community. As a result, a number of participants were conducting many programmes alone, without the assistance of other stakeholders. However, from the stories of the peers and through discussions the participants learnt about the importance of involving every stakeholder in the school. One participant in the Eastern Cape explained how the involvement of the *indunas* helped in curbing criminal acts of vandalism in the school. He said that whilst the *indunas* could not engage in activities that demanded literacy, they played a crucial role in saving their school. In KwaZulu-Natal, one principal related a story of how the learners in his school, half of whom are orphans heading families; they were assisted by a local community based organisation that supplied them with victuals daily. Without these meals the learning would have been virtually impossible. Therefore, forging links with various stakeholders was highlighted as an important strategy for struggling rural schools. The participants concurred that irrespective of literacy levels, the community and parents will always have a role to play in salvaging the schools.

The facilitators in the programme agreed that formal networks were not as they should have been. They felt that the principals should have been grouped in networks and each network should have had a leader who was to coordinate the programme of each network. However, what happened was that the participants grouped themselves and 'networking' when they were to submit assignments. The principals learnt from one another when they were discussing these assignments together. The assignments are mainly case based and when trying to solve these cases principals talked about their experiences in their own schools. As a result, there was much peer learning occurring. Therefore, although the participants stated that there were 'no proper networks' they learnt many things from one another. The contact sessions had broken the isolation and they said that they now found it easy to phone a colleague to ask when they were experiencing any managerial challenges in their schools. According to the principals, the latter was one of the strongest

aspects. During the focus group interviews, the participants highlighted how because of their programme involvement, they were able to overcome a number of obstacles in their schools. Linked to this was the useful links that could be forged with universities. The participants pointed out that through the programme they were able to use the expertise of the facilitators from the universities.

The participants also underscored the need for practical solutions when dealing with management issues and challenges in schools. All stated that that their School Governing Bodies (SGBs) are ineffective because 'the parents are hardly present in the school meetings'. In the interviews others praised some of the solutions including one in which one principal explained how he ensures that parents come to meetings. One said that parent meetings are always coupled with something else such as someone who will talk about farming. The other shared that what they normally do in their school is to 'take the meetings to the parents'. The principal explained that they usually go to a central point where the parents live and then they use churches to convene meetings. The parents also need to be genuinely involved, one principal said. He said that they should not be relegated to the background in meetings, because this symbolically informs them that their ideas are also unnecessary. Yet all principals agreed that it was very challenging to lead schools with a strong SGB. The Plum and Manzini principals highlighted how the making of decisions poses problems when the SGB is not entirely in control.

These are problems of both human as well as the physical resources challenges. It is a critical commonplace that many rural schools do not perform well because of the lack of physical resources. Five of the schools in the sample (three of these in the Eastern Cape) are situated in deep rural areas, with adverse conditions such as the absence of running water. Orchard Secondary for example, had a tank to receive rain water. However, these taps attached on these tanks are frequently stolen by vandals each time after they are installed. This meant that the school would not have running water for the learners and teachers. The principal would find himself moving up and down trying to see how the staff and learners would get running water. This took a lot of time and diverted the principal's attention to do chores that she is not supposed to concentrate on, thus finding herself having to neglect some necessary management duties. In Plum the principal has similar problems but also highlights the problem of an old bus that transports the learners. He says that they are frequently late because the bus is old and the roads can be treacherous especially when it rains. Teachers have to sometimes wait until 9 o'clock for learners who are supposed to be in school at eight. The

compounding factor to these problems is the aloofness of district officials. The Manzini principal praises 'some district involvement' although she maintains that they need more physical presence of the district team in the school. She believes that if people such as the subject advisors and Educational Development Officers ('inspectors') were visible, 'many schools can do well even though situated in the rural areas'.

A number of principals discussed the need to curb problems that arise from the resources aspects. The Plum Secondary School principal for example explained how his school partnered with a relatively close former Model C school where his learners are usually bussed and teachers frequently observe classes. The participants also stated how they learnt from the experiences of the ex-Model C school. Litha Secondary School and Lily Primary School are neighbouring schools and the participants from these schools shared how working with business stakeholders and donors help their schools. They assert that the tendency of many principals is not to seek for possible assistance. They have also found that the ACE-course material emphasises the need for this; to work with external stakeholders all the time where possible.

The above was also linked to the lack of induction of principals into their positions. As one secondary school participant (Apple) in KwaZulu-Natal stated:

> I was appointed in this position about two years ago. I was never inducted and yet people expected me to act like a principal, make decisions like a principal and steer my school to success like any seasoned effective principal. It was tough though for rural school present many challenges and many-a-times one has no one to rely for support. In rural areas we need more support from experts than urban schools.

It was also during the course of this study that the participants furnished what they thought were 'solutions' to the challenges they are up against.

The analysis of results

Discussion of the findings

The rural principals from the two provinces shared similar experiences. Primary as well as secondary schools reflected fewer differences in a number of aspects including infrastructure, resources and the general environment. Yet the principals in the ACE-SML programme displayed some optimism and hope. The majority of the participants said that it was the first time they had

seen and used certain terms such as *change management,* differences between a *leader and manager*, the *importance of vision and mission* in a school. They also appeared to agree that it was more crucial to be 'a people's person when heading a school especially one with no resources'. The principals concurred with the need to address the teacher perceptions and attitudes in such schools because, 'when these are negative they can destroy the school effectiveness'. Creighton (2005) refers to this as being able to understand leading from below the surface; looking at the objective and subjective sides involved.

Creighton (2005, p.7) points out:

- We generally overemphasize the objective aspect of leadership: facts, data and test scores. At the same time, leadership is subjective, in that it involves feelings, beliefs, and values of others. The objective components of *on the surface* are, as stated earlier, visible and tangible.

- Leading from *below the surface* requires a principal to address the subjective components of leadership: the more invisible and intangible things such as teacher attitudes and beliefs, community member's feelings and state and country's educators.

The response to change has elicited various responses from participants. They learnt to cope with a number of issues in their schools and they had begun seeking potential 'solutions' to problems. They have also learnt that resources are crucial for effectiveness 'but cannot always be scapegoats for failure'. The participants in the study were 'opening their eyes' and beginning to see and use various strategies to improve their schools. As they begin to be conscientious, the principals take the initiative to change their schools. In his book, *Turnaround Leadership* Fullan (2006) writes how leaders can even transform the worst situations into opportunities to enhance productivity in their schools. Finding solutions for educational and societal problems is not easy especially addressing inequalities that still persist. Fullan (2006) points out that 'we have, then, many reasons for addressing inequalities in schools. The goal is to raise the bar and close the gap. Closing the gap is crucial in the context of overall improvement of the system as a whole'.

Whilst the ACE-SML programme is still in its infancy, it has already brought about opportunities and possibilities for struggling schools as implied by some of the findings above. Brundrett and Crawford (2008) aptly state that the dramatic rise of leadership programmes has presented opportunities for some and challenges for others. Common opportunities and possibilities discovered from observations and interviews are discussed under the following themes:

- The value of peer learning and networking
- Mentoring
- Support from HEIs
- Leading and caring
- The value of peer learning and networking

The value of peer learning and networking

Managers of dysfunctional schools are reticent to acquire 'recipes of success' from colleagues of effective schools. However, this article summarises the findings of investigating peer learning among principals and school managers. One of the important opportunities in the ACE SML programme was the opportunity for school managers to network and learn through the peers from similar or different schools from their own. It was as a result of meeting colleagues in contact sessions that the managers saw the need for peer learning and networking. A number of participants involved in the programme from the Eastern Cape concurred that one of the potential empowering experiences in the programme was the networking and peer learning that emerged during the course of the module facilitation. During discussions, 'the participants listened to people who shared similar experiences and expressed themselves in language they all understood'. Their peers did not trivialise their questions as they understood entirely where they came from. Even principals from schools that were better resourced and better managed were able to learn from their less fortunate counterparts.

While the networks failed to be formalised, the participants continued to network in their own way. When they did assignments they grouped themselves as principals coming from the same district or vicinity and this amounted to some form of network. Kochan and Pascarelli (2003) point out that the farthest extreme in the continuum of mentoring for change leads to the creation of new cultures. One culture that appears to have been learned through the ACE-SML experience is networking for the participants learnt more from one another through the use of networks. The networks, like peer learning, made problems that seemed insurmountable to be trivial. Individual schools, especially rural ones, experience tensions and challenges, more so if acting in isolation. Networks provide a forum where they are shunned and sometimes resolved. Effective principals will, while transforming their own schools, also transform the society around them. Gurr and Drysdale (2007)

identify eight goals that illustrate how a principal could work with and influence the context around the school. They point out that a principal took over under challenging circumstances and not only did he turn his school around, but the local neighbourhood was improved as well.

The majority of the participants in the study maintained that their district officials appeared to be distant instead of helping the schools. All over the world it appears that challenges confront schools and districts and there is usually a myriad of solutions that do not work (Fullan and Miles, 1992). Yet, district offices need to work closely with their schools. Many participants contend that the district office has never really prepared them for the principalship positions that they were holding. Ongoing professional development is necessary to sustain the professionalism of the principals and on the basis of the participants viewpoints in this study, the district officials are hardly assisting the rural schools. District officials could do much to coordinate development programmes for school principals in disadvantaged areas. Craig, Kraft and Du Plessis (1998, p.xii) point out:

> There also needs to be linkages with other teachers and supervisors to help them solve problems and support each other through discussion, modelling and coaching, and involvement with other aspects of school and educational change. Isolation and lack of communication between all players needs to be reduced. **Ministries of education and regional education staff** have a responsibility to provide adequate facilities, and ongoing support for the issues that teachers face.

District officials need to realise the special needs of rural teachers generally and rural principals specifically. Craig *et al*. (1998) aver that teachers in rural areas face special problems that may require more in-service programmes in the in-service programmes dealing with isolation and working within the local community values. District officials have to spearhead ongoing programmes that would enhance the skills of rural principals and their teachers to ensure adequate training and support.

Mentoring

The participants in the study stated that one of the lessons learnt in the programme was the value of mentoring of principals. All 10 participants said that they were never inducted into their positions, yet they now perceive mentoring s a vital part of the programme. Barkol (2008) posits that the complexity of the school principalship makes entry into the position difficult and anxiety-ridden. Furthermore, the principals' isolation makes it even more

difficult for them to adapt to their new roles. The latter is more of a reality for rural principals in their study. Sixty per cent of the participants found very helpful mentors who were able to help them in various situations. The rest had ineffective mentors but they still maintained that there was a need for mentors. The ineffective mentors were due to a lack of capacity. There is a need to train qualified people to serve as mentors. In Israel, experienced principals who are selected by the Minister of Education are well trained and this is considered a further step in their career for they gain recognition and status (Darkel, 2008). There is a need to train more mentors in South Africa.

In schools where mentoring worked, principals provided interesting accounts of their experience. Mentoring supported them, emotionally and helped them to deal with real everyday issues in their schools. The issues of resources, impact of the AIDS pandemic, teacher morale and absenteeism, the absence of district officials in guiding schools are some of the major aspects that the participants said the mentors were frequently needed for. The participants say that they are usually isolated and mentors provide ears and advice to their problems. One participant stated how a mentor changed the climate of his school by talking to teachers. The other explained how the parent numbers in school meetings increased due to suggestions and support from her mentor. Another participant who had been a mentor for two years said that for the first time in two years, she received proper induction into her principalship.

The participants maintained that they are isolated by virtue of being in rural schools and it is sometimes not easy to find people who could provide advice. Zellner and Erlandson (2002) point out that rural principals often feel like isolated links in the chain of command, caught somewhere between the learners, teachers, parents and district officials. They also point out that although they have all the people around them and even overwhelmed, they often feel lonely. According to the principals one is sometimes alone as the communities think that one is responsible for denying children opportunities to develop. The mentors provide that necessary professional support where needed. The mentors who were benefitted the most understood the climate and unique nature of rural schools.

Support from HEIs

Principals benefitted by working with the higher education institutions. The participants agreed that working with people with the expertise of university

lecturers as facilitators in their programme helped them to identify the challenges they are facing in their work environment. The participants said they gained by the on-site visits by the university staff to their schools as apart from their mentors; they received another view as to how to face the challenges in their schools. While all participants agreed that the visits were not adequate, they concurred that they helped immensely. From this experience, it shows that higher education institutions need to work closely with schools to enhance the leadership skills of the principals and their educators.

The recent restructuring of higher education institutions in South Africa appear to augur well for the development of teachers and schools. It is however, a critical commonplace that there is a huge schism between schools and universities. Cross and Sehoole (1997) pointed out that higher education institutions needed to strengthen horizontal links between themselves and other institutions. Furthermore, they conceded that higher education institutions should form vertical links with schools and non-governmental organisations while bridging the vocational academic gap. The vertical and horizontal links would play a major role in minimising wastage and the underutilisation of resources, duplication of programmes and unhealthy competition among institutions (Cross and Sehoole, 1997). All governments need quality education in their schools because this has serious implications for the development of the economy. Bagwandeen (1995) contended that a course of education will only be as good as the quality and calibre of teachers contributing to it. Furthermore, he added that this contribution would in turn be influenced by values of the school in which the school is contextualised. Poor schools need as much support as possible as they strive towards effectiveness and empowerment. The universities could also play a significant role in coordinating networks among schools.

Leading and caring

Whilst one must be wary of self reporting in studies such as this one, through the researcher's observations in the ACE-SML classes change was evident in the participants as many began to talk of alternative leadership styles that would build the school. Among other aspects that participants discussed and experimented with in their school was caring for their staff**.** Clarke (2008) points out that principals of small schools tend to be more immediately important to the running of the schools than their counterparts in larger schools. However, these principals have to face various challenges that make

leadership in the small; rural schools distinctive (Clarke, 2008). These schools are isolated and are also served by conservative communities that compound the difficulties of initiating school improvement (Clarke, 2008). A new principal in a rural area might encounter people who are following rules based on habits and cultures developed over time. The participants in the study identified the need to form teams and to make teamwork more meaningful.

Servais and Sanders (2006) argue that the purpose of teams is to meet the organisational mission, vision and goals. They also posit that teaming is the process by which the organisation can lead and grow. The participants in the study highlighted that if principals do not show any caring for the employees, they might not achieve the required results; that of steering the school to effectiveness. One of the crucial aspects highlighted by the participants in the study was the need to motivate the staff who have to continuously work under appalling conditions. The challenges teachers face in rural schools demand managers and leaders who would be able to constantly boost their morale. All employees would like to work with leaders who care and this is even more so in rural schools. Plum Secondary School's participant achieved fairly good results in grade 12 for the past five years and he attributes this to caring for his teachers. Many principals hardly have solutions to the challenges that plague their schools. This however, does not stop them from being reflective as they work with their colleagues. Pellicer (2008) avers that human experiences in organisations are transitory; it is not the responsibility of the leader to provide the right answers but rather to 'work faithfully with others in the organisation to identify the right questions'. When a leader is able to do this, it means they care for their colleagues. Effective leaders work with teams and they strive to make the teachers work worthwhile.

Pellicer (2008) points out that leaders are responsible for establishing conditions that make organisations great places to work for. As portrayed in the findings above, the conditions in many rural schools are uninviting for both the learners and their teachers. Effective leaders would want to change this around by engaging their staff members and make them feel valued. When leaders fail to make work rewarding and enjoyable for employees, they will try to overcome challenges with as little effort as possible (Pellicer, 2008). Furthermore, Pellicer cites Hogan, Curphy and Hogan who pointed out that leadership involves persuading other people to set aside their individual concerns (for a period of time) and pursue a common goal that is important for the responsibilities and welfare of a group. Building a team to get work done is crucial for the schools and leaders who care would strive to create cultural leadership.

Cultural leadership is the opportunity to guide, develop and sustain the culture of an organisation. If the leader and followers in an organisation are not on the same path, there is little chance that the organisation will achieve its ultimate purpose. Principals of struggling schools would aim to instil this cultural leadership associated with caring. Ramsey (2008) states that caring is infectious and interactive. If the staff believes that the principal cares about what happens in the school and about them, they will care and show it. Nothing feels better than knowing that your leader believes you are a good employee. It is a lifelong spirit booster (Ramsey, 2008). The participants in the study recommend these for struggling schools such as theirs. Their teachers need leaders who are focused and who will be able to help the employees focus through caring and cultural leadership.

Good principals will try to be effective despite the challenges that might appear insurmountable. The participants in the study showed initiatives and they attributed many of these to their involvement in the ACE-SML programme. Principals in today's schools have to be visionaries who will be able to change the schools for the better. It is not adequate to raise concerns about minimal physical resources. The caring conscientious leader can be a missing link between an effective and a failing school. The participants in the study showed signs of being transformational leaders in the face of adversity for effective principals would want to challenge the status quo for the benefit of the learners and the community.

Conclusion

Plank and Boyd (1994) support Chubb and Moe cited earlier when they aver that democratic governance is not a panacea for the problems of an educational system. It is not sufficient to say that aspects such as shared leadership could turn schools around. One of the objectives of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) curriculum in South Africa is to develop teachers who are lifelong learners and educators who are critical. The ACE-SML displays the potential of making educators creative and critical thinkers who can change their schools for the better. Effective teacher education should lead to committed and conscientious practitioners.

The ACE-SML programme enhanced critical thinking in the participants hence they began to perceive alternative strategies that they could employ in running their schools. From the participants' own admission, rural principals

who take initiatives can run successful schools as they minimise the challenges they constantly face.

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Book Review

Jansen, J. Knowledge in the blood: confronting race and the apartheid past. Cape Town: UCT Press.

ISBN 978-1-91989520 8

Carol Thomson

The first draft of this review was begun before the University of Free State's installation of Professor Jonathan Jansen as its Vice-Chancellor. Which also means it was begun before he took the stand he did in relation to the 'Reitz Four', and the national reaction evoked by this stand – in all its diversity. Thus, the initial review demanded something more, for how can one ignore, not only the context in which the 'Reitz Four' could emerge and engage in the actions they did, but Jonathan Jansen's handling of the matter? So while Jansen's inspiration for *'Knowledge in the Blood: Confronting Race and the Apartheid Past'* came largely from his time as Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria (2000–2007), it can now be seen as contributing to his rationale for the stand he took in Bloemfontein. Secure in his sense that he now 'knows' the Afrikaner – as *Knowledge in the Blood* indicates – Jansen's actions at the UOFS can be seen as a continuation of a longstanding pattern of provocative, courageous, often arrogant, often charismatic behaviour, a pattern that frames his rendering of Afrikaner youth in post-apartheid South Africa in *Knowledge in the Blood*, as simultaneously seductive, troubling, and insightful.

In this book, Jansen presents the reader with a very powerful conceptual framework for understanding the reactions and behaviours of the white, Afrikaans speaking students (and staff) he encountered on the University of Pretoria campus as they face the reality of a 'new' South Africa – and 16 years later, I would argue, our democratic dispensation can quite legitimately still be seen as 'historically new'. The notion of 'knowledge in the blood' comes from lines written by the Irish poet, Macdara Woods (2007). Woods says, "When we look back on what we have done, or not done, we realize that it is the knowledge in the blood that has impelled us". Though many will see a close alignment between 'knowledge in the blood' and Bourdieu's 'habitus' (1972, 1991, 1992), the graphic rendering of this metaphor will, I suspect, resonate more powerfully with a non-academic community than 'habitus', thus making it accessible to a wider audience than simply colleagues in various higher education institutions. Which is why Jansen is such a powerful figure in the

contemporary political and education landscape. He can speak (and write) in such a way as to apparently embrace the reality of all 'ordinary' men and women, whilst simultaneously provoking sensibilities and touching raw nerves. And so it is with this book.

Jansen (page 171) describes his understanding of 'knowledge in the blood' in eloquent and thought-provoking ways. It is, for example, knowledge "embedded in the emotional, psychic, spiritual, social, economic, political, and psychological lives of a community". In the context of white, Afrikaner youth, this knowledge sits so deep (the blood imagery invoking a life, or death, issue), that it cannot "simply dissipate[s] like the morning mist under the pressing sunshine of a new regime of truth". It is also 'emphatic' knowledge in that it "does not tolerate ambiguity", and 'defensive' in that it is a knowledge "that reacts against and resists rival knowledge, for this inherited truth was conceived and delivered in the face of enemies" (in this case, "the English imperialists, the barbarous blacks, the atheistic Communists – all of them"). And while conceding that knowledge in the blood is not 'easily changed', it does not mean that "through the transfusion of new knowledge the authority of received knowledge cannot be overcome". Thus, "for this reason, knowledge in the blood is used here both as an assertion and a question. As an assertion, the phrase draws attention to deeply rooted knowledge that is hard to change; as a question, knowledge in the blood is itself subject to alteration". Thus *agency*, is central to his understanding of the nature of 'knowledge in the blood', making the possibility of change inherent to the 'blood' – in much the same way as a real blood transfusion is inherently tasked with 'change'.

The key point Jansen makes in his book is that:

It will never happen again. This is the first and only generation of South Africans that would have lived through one of the most dramatic social transitions of the twentieth century. Nobody else would be able to tell this story with direct experience of having lived on both sides of the 1990s, the decade in which everything changed (2009, p.1).

However, while Jansen is particularly concerned with 'second generation Afrikaner youth' in this book, and how they come to hold the same attitudes and values their parents did in relation to the end of Apartheid, *despite not experiencing it directly*, it is quite obvious that this phenomenon can be applied to all 'second generation youth' in almost any context. In other words, that 'knowledge' which is 'in the blood' flows through us all. The vast

majority of every 'next' generation reflect the beliefs and attitudes of the previous one, so it is critical to think into why Jansen has focused exclusively on white Afrikaner youth, with few and sometimes almost non-existent references to any other racial group.

Perhaps one reason resides in the complexity of his own nature and history. He is a mighty intellectual, an intrepid activist, a habitual attention seeker, and a man with a deep Christian faith. In the Afrikaner, rather than any other racial group I would argue, Jansen sees much of himself, and thus fascination (with 'sameness') rivals with repulsion (of difference) to make sense of the hitherto incomprehensible – hence his preoccupation with this particular group. Chapter 7, for example, is entitled 'Mending Broken Lines', and has a quote from Clendinnin (1999, p.19) below it which reads: "The recognition of 'likeness' in the face of different and dissonant knowledge paralyses rather than liberates imagination". The point of this quote is to frame the contents of the chapter which essentially relate to how "my white students" started to "chip away at the suspicion, the reticence, and the moral certainties that I carry as a black South African in relation to my white compatriots" (p.203). But these 'white compatriots' are of a specific ilk – determined to rule the land they inhabit, governed by patriarchal norms (and so, by implication, sexist), easily given to violence in the defense of what they believe to be theirs, and deeply religious. All familiar and ingrained elements of Jansen's own background, and that of his role in, and support of the Struggle. So one of the discomforts of reading this book is having to be immersed in the gendered and like-minded egoism of two, disconcertingly similar historical narratives to the exclusion of almost all others.

Having said that, the book should be read. From an academic and intellectual perspective, it offers insights and tools of imagining that can be mapped extremely effectively onto other social, education and institutional 'problematics'. In (dis) assembling the concept of 'indirect knowledge', for example, Jansen offers the following characteristics of this form of knowledge, viz. that it is:

1. . . . "*knowledge,* and not about experience or trauma or pathology" [all italics from here on in original].

2. *Indirect* i.e. that this 'knowledge' is "carried so powerfully among the non-present", it is as if it *is* 'direct' knowledge i.e. self-experienced. So where does it come from to hold such power?

3. *Transmitted* i.e. how this 'direct' knowledge becomes 'indirect' knowledge. So he asks the question: "What are the mechanisms for transmission and how do they work intergenerationally?"

4. *Influential*. In other words, how "does this received or inherited knowledge affect children, the second-generation recipients of knowledge of something they were not a part of?"

5. *Relational* i.e. "that there cannot be knowledge about a child without knowledge of an adult".

6. *Mediated* – and 'mediating agents' will vary in number and nature according to context, which is why 'context' must be central to any of this 'searching'.

7. *Paradoxical* in so far as asking how we explain 'owning' knowledge about something that one did not witness (or was integral to creating) oneself. This raises the problematic of 'knowability' and "generates complex philosophical and moral questions about 'not having been there'" (Jansen, p.171).

The book must also be read because it forces one, whatever one's ethnic and/or linguistic and/or cultural grouping, to engage – with the Afrikaner and the black man, with patriarchy, with the reality of institutional transformation, with the gendered nature of our South African society, with the role of education and schooling. Jansen's emotive vigor and many would say, often offensive analyses, leave the reader with little choice but to react – in one way or another. Which is exactly what Jansen would no doubt say, is what he intended.

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Journal of Education

Periodical of the Kenton Education Association

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

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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.

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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).

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Books

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

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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 R100 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?
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Can I send my submission by e-mail?
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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 2007 and 2008 provide an indication of the pattern of acceptance/ non acceptance:

Year	Accepted with no or minor revisions	Accepted after revisions	Not accepted
2007	3	20	28
2008	2	9	26

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?
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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.