

**EXPLORING TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN TEACHING THEME STORY BOOK(S) IN  
SELECTED MULTICULTURAL AND MULTIRACIAL ELEMENTARY (GRADE R)  
CLASSROOMS AT THE NORTH DURBAN AREA IN SOUTH AFRICA**

By

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of

**MASTER OF EDUCATION**

in the

**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**2015**

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# Dedication

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I dedicate this study to the memory of my late father, Michael Shinga who died while I was taking my study career to next level, who taught me meaning for dedication, loyalty and honesty in all circumstances.

# Declaration

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I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. The dissertation is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education, in the School of Education, in the College of Humanities, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Rejoice Gugu Lindiwe Cele

# Acknowledgements

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I gratefully acknowledge the help and support of a number of individuals who contributed to the prosecution and completion of this dissertation.

Thanks for the guidance and erudition of Professor T.M Buthelezi, my supervisor, who with great patience shepherded me through the process of thinking, reading, researching, writing and thinking again.

Special thanks to the Funders of European Union (EU/DHET) project (Language in Foundation Phase Teaching-Mother Tongue instruction). Dr Nontokozo Mashiyana and Professor Reshma Sookraj for my inclusion and other colleagues in the project.

Thanks to my colleagues at work, for their support, encouragements, motivation and school principal for releasing the learner support materials for the data.

Thanks to Professor Ntombifikile Mtshali and Mr. Agbomeji Oladele for their professional support that are useful and important advice.

Thanks to the school management especially the participants where data was collected for the co-operation, understanding, dedication and their valiant efforts.

My husband, Sambulo, endured years of mental and occasionally physical absence, incomprehensible terminology, and an inaccessible death-trap of a study. To him are due the greatest debt for keeping the home fires burning, patiently cooking and cleaning and maintaining our social life. This time owes incalculably to his level-headedness, his encouragement and his love.

My mother, Hilda, long ago inculcated the disciplines of using words carefully and of being truthful and consistent. Her integrity is still an object lesson.

My children, Sifiso and Nothando, for being there for me always especially when good decisions need to be taken about their education issues while I am on campus studying.

Finally, for all those who their names are not mentioned, it is not that you are not important, but it is only that space and time does not allow but you are appreciated and noted for your supports...thank you.

Thanks, be to God, my Father in heaven, for his oversight of this time of learning and growing.

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# Acronyms

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CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
EU	European Union
Grade R	The reception year
LSM	Learner Support Material
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation



# Abstract

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**EXPLORING TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN TEACHING THEME STORY BOOK(S) IN  
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This study explored forty theme stories prescribed for grade R learners in a multicultural and multiracial South African classroom context. The study was mainly concerned with the representation of culture, race, class, and disabilities in grade R theme storybooks. In addition, the study explored the grade R teacher's strategies in teaching theme stories in their elementary classrooms considering such representations in the theme storybooks. The study employed the socio-cultural pedagogical discourse theory of Bernstein as the analytical and explanatory framework. This is a qualitative case study and thus descriptive content analysis methodology was used to analyse selected texts. The unit of analysis was forty theme stories and three grade R teachers who were interviewed.

The key findings of the study show that the context and images of characters in theme storybooks still portray stereotypical passive roles for gender, class, culture, and disabilities of characters in theme story books. Furthermore, the alignment of theme storybooks with CAPS document is still debatable. Some recommendations point to further exploration of grade R teacher content knowledge and the teachers teaching strategies in relation to theme storybooks and social justice issues in multicultural and multiracial classrooms.

# Chapter 1

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## **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY.**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The apartheid system in South Africa, which began when the Nationalist Party took over the government in 1948 and ended in 1994 when the African National Congress took power via the democratic elections, created inequalities through overt race based policies. The apartheid education system was notorious for its role in enforcing social inequalities and white domination (Christie 1985; Nkomo 1990; Mckinney 2003) when schooling was powerfully abused to shape and misrepresent the values, attitudes and identities of all learners. The Bantu Education Act No.47 of (1953) ensured that Africans received education that would limit their educational potential and thereby remain in the working class. According to O'Campo (2004) in terms of this Act, education and schools were differentiated according to race and this differentiation was highlighted by different allocation of resources where Africans received the lowest of the resource allocation. Furthermore, while education was compulsory for Whites, Asians and Coloureds, African learners were allowed to begin school at the age of seven and complete at the age of fourteen. The school content knowledge and amount of education received by learners perpetuated social inequalities within different races.

The pre-school education for African children was not provided in the apartheid dispensation. Despite the significance of elementary education, pre-school education was unheard of for African children. Only children from other race groups enjoyed the right to pre-school education during the apartheid system of education. This means that the new democratic South African government that took over in 1994 inherited a huge backlog in the area of pre-school education, which it has to address.

According to Hertman (2011), in South Africa, the right to pre-school education has been poorly addressed. Over 75 percent of pre-school learners who come from middle class backgrounds are privately funded and children from poor backgrounds are excluded. Due to historical neglect of pre-school education, this part of the education system is currently faced with many challenges including curriculum content and unskilled teachers. This can also be the reason for under emphasis on the development of basic skills of reading, numeracy and life skills at the elementary level. Yet the quality of literacy, numeracy and life skills are essential for the optimal and social educational development in the elementary grades.

In the new democratic South Africa, which is characterised by a single system of education schools are not differentiated according to race. The South African Constitution (1996) through the Bill of Rights makes provision for children's rights to basic education and their protection from abuse and exploitations (Atmore, 2013). Thus, schools accept all learners from various multicultural and multiracial backgrounds; hence the country has the emergence of multiracial and multicultural schools and classrooms. Learners in such schools enjoy the right to pre-school education regardless of their race. The curriculum offered in grade R includes the storybooks that form the major part of the learning programmes; that is, Mathematics, Home Language and Life Skills).

However, multiculturalism and multiracialism are some of the greatest challenges facing most developing African countries, with their diverse populations (in terms of culture, ethnicity, language, race, religion, and social class) and the historically linked social inequality. It is important to mention here that while multicultural and multiracial classrooms currently prevail in South Africa, there is still paucity of research on how the learner support materials used in such classrooms address issues of diversity and

how teachers consider multicultural backgrounds of the learners in their teaching strategies.

Therefore, this study explores the teaching of theme storybooks to grade R learners in multicultural and multiracial classrooms in the North Durban area of KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa. The study analyses the theme storybooks, which teachers use to teach language in multicultural and multiracial grade R classrooms. The study also explores the teacher's strategies in teaching the theme storybooks in such multicultural and multiracial context. The theme storybooks are prescribed by the National Department of Basic Education to all grade R learners in South African schools and they are aimed at improving literacy skills, life skills and emergent Mathematics. Language in this grade is regarded as important in empowering learners with fundamental learning skills, values, and attitudes in order to build a solid foundation upon which all learning is scaffolded.

Therefore, this chapter discusses the background to the study and introduces the dissertation. Firstly, the chapter discusses the storybooks as the integral part of grade R teaching. Secondly, the chapter discusses the motivation for the study, the problem statement, the study objectives and the broad research questions that the study aims to answer. Thirdly, the chapter presents the significance and the limitations of the study. Lastly, the arrangements of chapters and conclusion are presented.

## **1.2 STORYBOOKS AS THE INTEGRAL PART OF GRADE R TEACHING**

Storybooks used in schools play a significant role in educating children; they are sources of information and they create images of the learner's past, present and future. The overt and covert messages contained in storybooks, instil in learners social scripts regarding what is acceptable and not acceptable in society. Sumalatha and

Ramakrishnah (2004) argue that storybooks are the most potential instruments which help in building up the desirable attitudes, feelings and thoughts in learners. According to McKinney (2003, p.13), learners who have access to them, storybooks were one other means of justifying and promoting the South African apartheid ideology that was racist, sexist and classist. Furthermore, McKinney claims that learner support material such as textbooks play a central role in socialising children and legitimising cultural norms. If schooling is to promote democratic values and facilitate inclusion, all learners therefore should be able to find themselves and their social world represented in the storybooks that they learn.

This argument about storybooks makes us understand that since learners are exposed to storybooks daily, the textual and graphical messages presented in such storybooks are likely to affect learner's beliefs, values, norms, and knowledge about certain aspects in life; and with a consequence that learners might behave in ways that are considered appropriate in society. Based on a study conducted in South Africa, Cekiso (2013) points out that learners learn their cultural values and beliefs through pictures presented in storybooks. Altbach, Reisberg and Rumbley (2009) further opines that storybooks are the basic vehicles of socialisation, conveying knowledge, and values; hence, storybooks are viewed as key tools for achieving international goals relating to Education for All, gender equality, and education for human rights and peace.

Therefore, gender, culture, and class representation in children's literature has been raised and discussed in several forums; for example, the European Union's (EU) strategy for sustainable development adopted in 2006, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Binde and Matsuura,2005, Tilot, 2006, Unicef 2007) priorities and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995). Discussions in such forums have resulted in the generation of comprehensive frameworks that lay the foundation for equal treatment and equal opportunities for boys and girls, as well as equity in gender representation in learner's theme storybooks. In

South Africa, for example, there are a number of legislative statutes put in place to promote the rights everyone and the rights of boys and girls, such as the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (2000), the Employment Equity Act (1998), the Domestic Violence Act (1998) and the Constitution of South Africa (1996). Similarly, section C of the South African Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (2011, p. 5) in line with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996) highlights the need for sensitivity regarding issues of diversity; poverty, inequality, race, gender, language, age, disability, and culture in learner support materials (LSM). Furthermore, the Department of Education ([DoE] (May,2000,Lamofsky and Lazarus, 2001, Fleisch, 2002) has claimed the responsibility of promoting diversity by overtly promoting the values of democracy, social justice, equity and equality, including non-racism and non-sexism in learner's literature books. However, learner's storybooks in schools have been the subject of debate and controversy. Numerous studies (Louie, 2012; Rayaprol (2010); Lombardo and Meier, 2008); Kuo. 2005) reveal that gender, culture, and class stereotypes still exist in the storybooks, especially in children's literature. This is a cause for concern as storybooks are used greatly in elementary classrooms; and thus they are supposed to maintain the values of the South African Constitution. As Lazar (1993) points out that children's literature, in addition to being one of the favourite choices for reading among learners as they grow up, they are commonly used in the context of reading practices in multicultural and multiracial classrooms.

In some other few studies, teachers have been saddled with the responsibility of correcting misconceptions. For example, Fox (1993) warns teachers to be sensitive to their learner support materials or they might easily accept everything learner's storybooks present without questioning it. In addition, Kuo (2005) points out that in democratic and anti-bias classrooms, teachers need to be extremely aware of the fact that dominant reading practices will make students accustomed to the images and as a result identify themselves with the characters in many stories. In light of the above,

storybooks are considered as the major sources in schools where children learn how to conduct themselves. Thus, it is important to take into account the ways gender, culture, and class are portrayed in the storybooks used in multicultural and multiracial schools, because that is how children will form their own images as accepted in the society.

### **1.3 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY**

My interest in conducting this study originates from my professional experience as a teacher of Grade R learners in a multiracial and multicultural school in an urban area in North Durban. One day I was teaching a language lesson, I read a story from one of the prescribed theme storybooks provided by the Department of Basic Education. The story is about a little boy, named Kwenza, who lives with his grandmother and her sister in a village in the northern part of KwaZulu-Natal. This family depends on stock and agricultural farming for their living. As a result, everyday Kwenza and his sister help their grandmother with her stock before they go to school. They normally walk bare foot with their friends on a gravel road to school. During the lesson in my class, as a pre-reading activity, I gave learners the opportunity to interpret and predict the story by looking at the pictures provided in the book. The learners' responses were that 'Kwenza is a street kid' because he was an African boy and was going barefoot. They also described the grandmother as a domestic worker because of the type of clothes that she was wearing. I then thought about the way a rural context was portrayed in this story, that it created confusion and elicited stereotypical responses amongst learners who are growing up in an urban context. In addition, this theme story portrayed rural life as equivalent to poverty, at least in the minds of learners. This incident triggered my interest to explore how gender, culture and class are portrayed in the grade R theme storybooks in a school situated at the North of Durban in South Africa where learners come from diverse cultures. This led to my intention to explore strategies that teachers use to teach such theme storybooks in multicultural and multiracial contexts.

A body of knowledge has reported that children's literature has mostly perpetuated gender bias and there is still paucity of knowledge produced on the portrayal of class and culture in children's literature. Research such as that conducted by Butler (2006), Holmes (1995), Taylor (2003), Nahara (1998), Gok (2000) and Nyonhongo (2011), have covered a range of gender stereotypical behaviours in children's literature, for example, social interaction (number of males versus females); stereotypical female characters; (lack of) assertiveness, bravery, submissiveness; weakness, fearfulness, dependence, skewed gender relationships and gendered occupations (male versus woman occupations). Such children's literature has been shown to result in children (particularly girls) having negative feelings about themselves and others in the society. Furthermore, studies conducted by Bullen and Lunt (2012); Robert and Sutherland (1985); and McKinney (2003), have reported on areas such as equal respect (view of unprivileged people, physical challenge and poor people) and also promote inclusive participation within the society in children's books.

South Africa is a diverse country representing different cultures, gender, and class; therefore, it is imperative that school curriculum, teaching and learning materials cater for the diverse learners to promote understanding, awareness, knowledge, respect, and harmony among children coming from different societal groups. Teachers teaching strategies using learner support material such as theme storybooks should lay a solid foundation that is critical in the development of diverse learners for their future success throughout schooling.

#### **1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The important issue to consider in this study is the extent theme storybooks prescribed for grade R classrooms represent reality; (for example; the profile of the South African population in relation to culture, social class, gender, race; tradition, gender roles); and the extent storybooks represent an ideal world; (for example; showing equal numbers



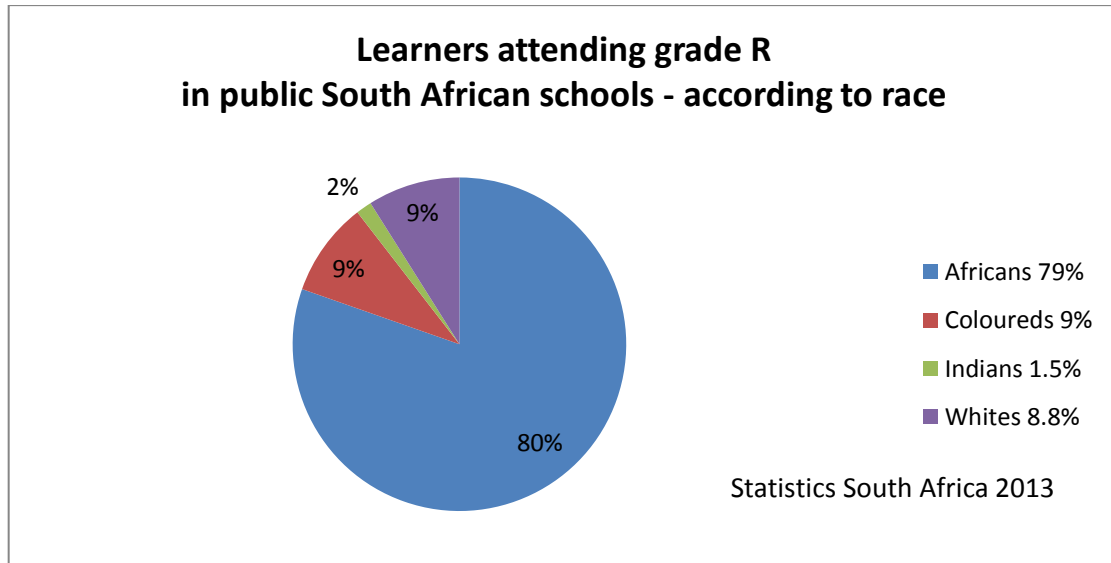
of boys and girls interacting together; children of all races playing and living together). There are arguments to be made on both sides; that is, realism and idealism. However, these arguments depend on what would be represented either realistically or idealistically in learner support material such as theme storybooks.

For example, we may be aware of the fact that undesirable racial practices continue in society by certain individuals, and thus are part of the reality of the social life in South Africa. However, it might not be ideal to have such behaviour or practices of racialism portrayed in theme storybooks unless the purpose is explicitly to expose and deal with the issues educationally. Otherwise, if included in storybooks without effective education about (non) racialism, they might have negative consequences in learner's understanding of (non)racialism.

The assumption in this study is that all learners should be able to find themselves and their life worlds (or social worlds) represented in the theme storybooks from which they learn. This is an argument for the (in) equitable representation of reality: for example, characters in storybooks (children and adults) should reflect the demographic make-up of the South African population in relation to culture, race, gender, social class, rural and urban location and disability. This is an important way of creating an enabling learning environment where “all learners feel valued and welcomed in the classroom, irrespective of [their diverse] backgrounds” (CAPS 2011).

In the South African context a larger percentage of schools are attended by black learners exclusively. The racial profile of learners according to the South Africa General household survey (2013) is as follows: 79% Africans, 9% Coloureds, Indians 1.5% and Whites 8.8% (see pie chart *appendix 1*).

**Figure 1**



These figures are unlikely to change. Given the large number of African learners enrolled in schools, the question is whether it is not appropriate to have storybooks representing African characters. On the other hand, in a context where there are very few schools which enrol learners who are exclusively from other racial groups other than Africans (Sujee 2004), are storybooks that represent an exclusively white or white dominated world appropriate? The argument for storybooks depicting an inclusive population or an inclusive population biased towards the dominance of Africans is much stronger as this is the reality in the majority of schools; to some extent a range of rural and township settings only has black learners.

According to Laying Solid Foundation for Learning Big Storybook (Dept. Basic Education, 2008), language in grade R is regarded as key in empowering learners with fundamental learning skills, values, attitudes and knowledge in order to build a solid foundation upon which all learning is scaffolded. Heller (2007) and Banda (2009) critique monolingual language planning and policies in African classrooms; drawn on

the notion of multilingualism as social practice. Banda (2008) argues for cross-linguistic and cross-border status and corpus planning to take advantage of multilingualism as a linguistic resource for socioeconomic development in African school classrooms.

The problem is that the argument about how to improve and integrate African languages into schools is then overshadowed by arguments about the detrimental effects on African languages and cultures as result of using English as medium of instruction and in other domains of socio-economic development in Africa school classrooms.

Children's literature has been reported as one aspect that promotes gender stereotypical roles that reinforce inequalities in the classroom and in society. There has been a void in the positive representation of class, gender, and culture in children's literature. In a country like South Africa it is interesting to know what strategies teachers use to teach such storybooks in a multiracial and multicultural context where learners come from different backgrounds.

## **1.5 STUDY FOCUS AND PURPOSE**

The study focuses on the teaching of theme storybook(s) to grade R learners in multicultural and multiracial classroom in the North Durban area. The study analyses forty theme stories, which teachers use to teach language and also explores the teacher's strategies in teaching such theme storybooks in multicultural and multiracial classrooms. The theme storybooks are prescribed by the Department of Basic Education for all grade R learners in South African schools to improve literacy skills, life skills, and emergent Mathematics.

Studies show that lack of pedagogical attention to visual images and visual systems of meaning presents serious challenges to teachers at a time when image has begun to dominate the lives of learners (Fleckenstein, Calendrillo and Worley 2002; Kress, 2003). While numerous learner support materials (LSM) are readily available that focus on pedagogical approaches for comprehending visual images, particularly, those included in contemporary storybooks, this has only recently emerged in elementary pedagogical discussions (Anstey & Bull, 2006; Albers, 2008). Children's literature can portray certain stereotypical perspectives of gender, culture and class in particular ways to reinforce inequalities in the society and among learners. Therefore, it is important to explore how characters in theme storybooks portray gender, culture and class and how teachers teach such theme storybooks in a school at the North Durban in South Africa where learners come from diverse backgrounds.

## **1.6 STUDY OBJECTIVES**

1. To explore how gender, class, and culture are portrayed in grade R theme storybook(s) taught in multicultural and multiracial classrooms in a school at the North Durban Area in South Africa.
2. To explore teachers knowledge and understanding of gender, class and culture as they apply to language pedagogy in grade R classrooms, in a school at the North Durban Area in South Africa.
3. To explore teachers strategies in teaching theme storybook(s) to multicultural and multiracial grade R learners in a school at the North Durban Area in South Africa.

## **1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. How are gender, class, and culture portrayed in grade R theme story book(s) taught in multicultural and multiracial classrooms in a school at the North Durban Area in South Africa?
2. What are teacher's knowledge and understanding of gender, class and culture as they apply to language pedagogy in grade R classrooms at the North Durban Area in South Africa?
3. What are teachers strategies in teaching theme storybook(s) to multicultural and multiracial grade R learners, in a school at the North Durban Area in South Africa?

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Most studies looked into culture, gender, and class (monolingual, images, and texts) from a deficit perspectives. Most of these studies have eluded the fact that lack of misconception of pedagogical attention to visual images, and visual meaning attached to culture, gender, and class can present serious challenges for teachers, even learners in their self-conception. This study therefore takes it from this deficit perspective and contributed to the academic disciplines curriculum (teaching and learning), social justice and language to improved ways of presenting culture, gender and class in multicultural and multiracial children's literature.

## **1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The findings of this case study cannot be generalised and transferred into another context because the study focuses on the specific case in South African one grade R classroom school context. Each individual experiences a phenomenon in a different way therefore comparing individuals with those in other contexts might be difficult.

## **1.10 ARRANGEMENT OF CHAPTERS**

In this chapter, I have discussed the background context to the study that highlighted my own personal motivation for the study stemming from my own experiences as a teacher in multicultural and multiracial grade R classroom. I have also given the basis and the need for my study, in relation to studies that already exist and the gap in other related studies. I, finally, gave an illustrated focus of the study, its key objectives, research questions, purpose, and significance that are to be used as artifacts and as a structural layout of the dissertation.

Chapter two discusses review of local and international literature. The literature cited in this chapter is critically to strengthen the literary criticism, theoretical framework, methodology, and conceptual understanding, which permeate from the research purpose to the analysis of the research findings.

Chapter 3 introduces the theoretical framework to understand teacher's strategies in teaching theme story book(s) in a multiracial and multicultural elementary classroom context. I drew on Bernstein theory of socio-cultural pedagogical discourse because it describes classroom structures, learners background language and school curriculum that lens inclusivity in terms multiculturalism. Therefore it provides analytical framework for understanding how teachers interpret and practice learner centered pedagogy in the teaching of theme storybook(s).

Chapter four discusses the research methodology employed in this study. It gives a critical understanding, relevance in use and applicability of qualitative methodology as an approach, interpretive paradigm, as well as qualitative content analysis as the main research methodology the study uses for data collection.

Chapter five presents the results or findings of forty theme stories and three interviews with grade R teachers from multicultural and multiracial selected school.

Chapter six discusses the findings, the analysis of the findings, conclusion and recommendations.

## **1.11 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, I contextualised the study by giving the background context to the study, motivation for the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, study objectives, research questions, research design methodology, significance, arrangement of the chapters and a chapter conclusion.

# Chapter 2

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## **CRITICAL EDUCATIONAL ISSUES ON MULTICULTURALISM AND MULTIRACIALISM IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE: A LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, based on the discussion I foreground the concepts of multiculturalism and multiracialism within the context of children's literature. The ultimate goal of the study was to promote equity in the children's literature as a programme of learning and teaching. The purpose was based on an interest in the way children's literature is conceptualised and written, that it affects the learning of literature storybooks by children. Therefore, for better understanding the themes for the literature review are divided into six; namely, multiculturalism and multiracialism in children's literature, the role of children's literature in multicultural and multiracial context, teaching strategies in multicultural and multiracial context, gender biases in children's literature, cultural representation in children's literature, and social class representation in children's literature.

### **2.2 MULTICULTURALISM AND MULTIRACIALISM IN CHILDREN LITERATURE**

#### **2.2.1 Multiculturalism**

Bishop (2007) defines multiculturalism as the concept that authenticates all socio-cultural experiences because of language, race, gender and ability. It is also defined as the co-existence of diverse cultures that include racial, religious or cultural group as



demonstrated in customary behaviours. Furthermore, Ernst and Banks (2001) confirms this view by describing multiculturalism as the idea whereby a society and its institution, beliefs and values should reflect the composition of its members. Multiculturalism has been used as a contender in an effort to show inclusivity and introduce many words such as multicultural books, multicultural education, and multicultural literature. However, in the context of this study, multiculturalism is used to contest equity, tolerance and also brings awareness in terms of representation in children's literature.

Ching (2005) has highlighted that multicultural children's literature still contain the power of language and stereotypical representation of cultural images in various education media. Landt (2011) confirms this view, stating that it is essential that teachers teach learners using a broad range of literature that includes diverse views so that the learners will get the opportunity to relate what is in the storybook and the reality. This will also help to eliminate barriers because when learners come across images and stories of characters similar to themselves they feel a sense of belonging and they are also able to relate their background knowledge with the story. Furthermore, it is highlighted that the inclusion of literature that depicts diverse viewpoints creates awareness, tolerance and understanding and also creates positive learning environment and this is relevant in elementary grade R where concepts are formed and representations are developed. Hall (2008) supported this view that images represented in storybooks influence the children's view of the world. He believes that the children's self-concept is influenced and developed by what they read and hears when they and this contributes to their attitudes towards the society. In Walker-Dalhouse and Risko (2008) study of six Caucasian pre - service teachers where he aimed to assess their ability to recognise and analyse the presence of racism and discrimination in children's literature and the results indicate that the teachers were unable to identify children's awareness of socio-political issues, and were reluctant to engage in critical reflections about the storybooks they read.

Serafini (2005) conducted a study that explored responses and discussion focussing on the picture book: 'Voices in the park'. The main focus of this study was to explore how children deal with non – linear aspects of the picture book and the interplay between text and illustrations and how children construct symbolic connections to their own world and experiences. This analysis has considered the linear arrangements narratives presented in the book. In Serafini's study narrative theory was used to unpack how learners developed their understanding of the interplay between the visual and textual elements of the book and how learners' constructs symbolic representation offered in the text and illustrations.

### **2.2.2 Multiracialism**

Anast Segium and Ambrosio (2002) describe multiracialism as the system that aims to achieve classroom reform with the view to promote racial equity, social justice, and democracy. Moreover, multiracialism promotes a society composed of various races while accepting different cultural backgrounds. In addition, a relationship exist between multiculturalism and multiracialism because they both restructure classroom settings so that all learners can acquire knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to function in a culturally and racially diverse society as well as to ensure that learners have equal opportunities in the classroom environment. Banks (2002) argues that creating elements such as content integration where the reality and content are included in education programmes in such theme storybooks; teachers will be able to apply their pedagogical knowledge using the contents to teach learners how their cultural and racial backgrounds affect and contribute to the way they understand and create new content knowledge.

Hassel, Barkley and Koehler (2009) confirm this by examining books that support readers to determine the representation of people of colour. The findings indicate that

despite the increasing ethnic and racial diversity in some countries for example; the United States, children of colour and authors are still less represented in children's literature. This indicates that there is still a gap in terms of representation in terms of race in children's literature in the United States. This can be conceived as another form of racism that denies children of colour to relate to the literature they read and thus become motivated readers. According to Lampert (2007), racial identities are constructed within fictional texts within the context of children's literature, which supports the understanding that storybooks like all texts play a role in the production of identities. Young (2006) confirms this by highlighting the current study where the researcher gives a critical review of the picture books in the literary and literacy studies. The findings indicate that visual literacy has certainly become important in literacy and literary curriculum in children's literature because visual literacy integrates background knowledge and what is being learnt in the class, which is reality. A research report by Reese, Bird and Gail (2007), of the studies done in New Zealand by examining association between emotional content and aspects of children's self-concept, show that children's moral self-esteem and language ability were important.

Kellner (2001) writes that different theorists analyse cultural forms in relation to their production, their implications with society and history and this influences their social life. For Engels and Marx (1968) the economic base of society consists of the forces and relations of production in which culture and ideology are constructed to help to secure the dominance of ruling social groups. This superstructure considers economy as the foundation of the society and cultural, legal, political and additional forms of life which grow out and serve the economy. The Marxist's cultural approach serves the interest of the ruling class, by providing ideologies that legitimate class domination in the capitalist system. According to Marx, ideology is a critical term that describes how dominant ideas of a given class promote the interest of that class and help to cover oppression, injustice, and negative aspects of a given society. Marx was viewed as a critique of ideology because in the capitalist society he showed how ruling ideas

reproduce dominant societal interests serving to neutralise, idealise, and legitimatise the existing society and its institution and values. Other theorists like Steier(1991) develop modes of cultural studies that analysed production, interpretation, and reception of cultural artefacts within concrete socio-historical perspectives that have contested political and ideological effects. Wright's (2001) study attempted to analyse class and concepts like mode of production or economic base and attempted to explain a unified framework of a wide range social phenomena. The study by Irene (2000) investigated race, class, gender, and ideologies of assimilation of 32 young adult novels involving the Mexican immigrant experience published in the years 1952-2009. This study draws upon the presentation of Mexican in larger American culture via historical accounts, schools textbooks and entertainment media was reviewed. Content analysis method was used to analyse novels and the findings reveal the following structured categories: issues of story representation of ethnicity, representation of socio- economic status, representation of gender roles. It was found that novels fall in to four ideological categories: assimilation, attainable, conformity, adaptation, and bicultural practice hybridist.

Grossberg (1994) defines diversity multiculturalism as the concept that explores how learners and teachers produce and organise their own learning and teaching aspirations within particular historical and social contexts as forms of identification agency. Hierarchical practises, ideological and practical are the three models that have been identified.

Hierarchical practice assumes that the teacher already understands the truth to be imparted to the learners. Dialogic practice is the practise that gives voice to the learners that have been regarded as voiceless for example due to language of learning and teaching in the classroom and their socio-cultural backgrounds. Lastly, practical pedagogy offers teachers with skills that will enable learners to understand and to intervene into their own situation.

Gallnick and Chinn (2013) narrates that the 21<sup>st</sup> century learners need pedagogical approaches that are culturally responsive that will educate learners' from different cultures, language, abilities and many other factors. In a diverse country like South Africa, Diversity Pedagogy Theory is relevant to create a classroom culture where all learners and teachers, regardless of their cultural background are welcome and supported and provided with opportunities to learn. To increase critical thinking in learners it is also imperative that teachers help learners to bridge discontinuity between home and school through children's literature.

Gay (2001) also conducted a study applying diversity pedagogy theory, in an attempt to improve the school success of ethnically diverse learners and for preparing teachers in preservice education programmes with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Five essential responsive elements were examined: developing a knowledge base on cultural diversity, ethnic and cultural content in the curriculum, demonstrating caring and building learning communities, communicating with ethnically diverse learners and responding to ethnic diversity in the delivery of instruction.

Kristen, Gulluck, Judy, Pearson, Child and Schwal (2005) in a study investigating the frequency of gender and ethnic in position of power represented in photographs in the top ten text books, the photos display multiples of ethnicities. The results indicated that men are depicted more in powerful positions than women.

### **2.3 ROLE OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN MULTICULTURAL AND MULTIRACIAL CONTEXTS**

Mathis (2001) writes that children's literature is a powerful tool that needs to be recognised as the fascinating way to increase multicultural and multiracial understanding in the classroom because it addresses the beliefs of all learners

regardless of their socio-cultural backgrounds. In addition, the learners also acquire a sense of acceptance and appreciation of other people in the society. According to Landt(2013) stories are an important source where learners discover their positions in the world; however, this might be not happen if the learners' backgrounds are excluded or misrepresented in the literature.

Samuels (2006), is of opinion that awareness of similarities in children's literature in terms of gender, class and culture may reduce prejudice, fear of differences and also decrease cultural, multicultural and multiracial ethnocentrism in the classroom. However, in the diverse country like South Africa it is crucial for different learners to recognise the representation of all races, ethnicities, and diverse cultures that are in the society in order to form a true acknowledgement for all and understanding of diversity. Biazzo (2006) highlights that children's literature still contains inaccurate, negative description and stereotypical generalisation of gender, class and culture. For example, Africans still portray as dark a skin people, poor and always work for middle class people. Females are also depicted as timid characters always reassured by males.

Pearson (2011) supports the view by claiming that ideologies of the society are embedded in children's literature, thus learner's exposure to multiracial and multicultural children's literature such as theme storybooks in elementary grades may influence and develop critical thinking. Besides, Louie (2006) confirms this assertion that learners who are exposed to children's literature show an improvement in their self-esteem and cultural identity of diverse background because representation is entrenched in theme stories can help them to define their beliefs and attitudes regarding people of diverse backgrounds.

## **2.4 TEACHING STRATEGIES IN MULTICULTURAL AND MULTIRACIAL CONTEXTS**

Bishop and Bridges (2012) understand multicultural and multiracial teaching strategies as the pedagogy that closely attached to the ideologies of social justice and educational equity because its aim is to help the learners to function in a diverse society and become activist of social justice. Furthermore, it is a pedagogy that creates classroom environments for multiple perspectives and function as the multi voices for those who have been marginalised. According to Moon and Vogel (2008), pedagogy is defined as the discourse because it embraces the performance of teaching together with the theories, beliefs, policies and arguments that inform and shape it. This simply shows that pedagogy is an act of teaching and discourse.

Beubeof-Lafontant (1999) describes cultural responsive pedagogy as the strategy that includes diversity concepts like racism, discrimination, prejudice and also offer grade R learners to engage in meaningful discussion that enhance learning. In addition, it creates space that acknowledges that racism creates distorted and negative images of culture, histories and includes all races. Hence, it provides a space where harmful images can be deconstructed. A positive self and cultural assertions may be portrayed and integrated into lessons or themes where for example, learners can explore a theme story through a teaching approach that best solicit their learning styles while examining their values, beliefs, ideas that shape their experiences. Mills (2005) conducted a study in Australia in a culturally responsive and linguistically diverse classroom where there was interaction between pedagogy and access to multi-literacies among culturally and linguistically diverse learners. This was because teachers have emphasised the awareness of the importance of multiliteracy teaching skills so that learners will be able to compete with diverse text, in numerous visual media such as storybooks in various social and cultural context regardless of their socio-cultural background. Moreover Richards, Brown and Forde (2006) adds that a culturally responsive teaching strategy

facilitates and supports learners effective teaching in a multicultural and multiracial classroom where teaching occurs in the culturally learner-centered, strengthen and promote learners' achievement. Besides, this above teaching strategy consists of three other teaching aspects; that is institutional, personal and instructional. The institutional reflects administration, policies, and values; whereas the personal refers to the cognitive and emotional; and the instructional includes reading materials such as theme storybooks, activities, and strategies that form the basis of instruction. Hence, all these three aspects are important in the teaching and the learning process in multicultural and multiracial contexts. Cope and Kalantzis (2000) support the above claim by incorporating the concept of design in teaching multicultural and multiracial classrooms and workplace where this concept seen as dominant for modern world thus teachers and managers of the modern world are seen as designers of learning process and environments not instructors of change.

Lenox (2000) highlights that teachers in the elementary grade are challenged to present young learners with teaching strategies that will lead them into their future hence story books is viewed as the powerful tool in promoting and understanding of racial and ethnic diversity. Furthermore, learners collect ideas, images, perceptions, and attitudes from stories and words in their own environment; therefore, early exposure to ideas from diverse cultures enables them to broaden their critical thinking.

Landt and College ( 2011) writes that it is vital that teachers provide learners with a broad range of children's literature that includes diverse pictures as a way to offer to all learner concepts of self in what they read and also enable them to integrate the reality and the story. This will facilitate the breaking down of the impediments to learning. Besides, when learners combat with representation and stories of characters similar to themselves, they experience a sense of belonging and they are a sense of belonging. Kowelewski(2008) support the above view that descriptions that teachers set when



imparting knowledge to multicultural and multiracial classroom using theme stories influence them to view the world and themselves.

## **2.5 GENDER BIAS IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

Banks (2010) describes the notion of gender as the concept that consists of two meanings; namely, social and psychological behaviour of both males and females that is legitimate and expected within the society. Gender roles and behaviours for males and females have been understood differently within different cultures. Furthermore, it has been revealed that culture plays an important role in the influence of gender role within the same class and society. Aina and Cameron (2011) posit that despite current approval for gender equality, children seem to be seen as stereotypical gendered in fact some of these stereotypes are negative while others are positive and these stereotypes contribute to a culture of bias that influences both society and young learners. Gender stereotyping has been described as limiting a learner's potential for growth and development because of the learner's internalising the negative stereotypes that impact on his or her self-esteem and learner's performance in the classroom. Taber and Wolshyn (2011) also focus on the distortion of gender representation in Canadian children's literature by making connections to societal discourses of inclusion and gender. Hence, the teachers assist in becoming aware of gendered and abled discourse by discussing their meaning in the story and deconstructing learner's hegemonic ideas. Egbo (2009) supports the above claims that females still experience difficult gendered norms in the classroom situations; for example boys get more privileges than girls in terms of role play during and after the lesson. Kirkpatrick and Davis(1994) also highlights social class such as white middle class boys also dominate in the representation of characters and this promotes the hidden curriculum in storybooks.

In Serafini (2010) gender stereotyping in children's literature relates to a cognitive process because the society has different expectation for male and female behaviour

and roles. The traditional gender roles that help to maintain gender stereotyped characters such as adventurous, assertive, aggressive, independent and task orientated; whereas female characters are still seen as sensitive, gentle, dependant and people orientated. Wei and Hendrix (2009) narrated that when children are exposed early in gender bias experiences that can contribute in shaping their attitudes and beliefs related to their development of interpersonal relationships and access to education equality. Gee (2005) also support the above finding by explaining that young children's gender bias and stereotypes may be influenced by learner support material such as story books and the instruction of teachers. Oyserman and Lee (2008) argues this in a study conducted in United States of America where Korean immigrant girls were perceived that they could not be president of USA because of the classroom poster that was used by teachers as learner support material, which depicted only males as presidents. In other words, the teacher's strategies and knowledge have a great influence to develop ideas of gender and gender significance in learners. According to Jackson (2007), children's literature such as storybooks have great influence on young learners because of the portrayal of the main characters that provide models and definitions of males and females because children are active and critical readers therefore storybooks and their images becomes a cultural resource for children to learn social norms.

Eagly (2009) confirms these views of gender bias in storybooks by depicting gender roles as shared beliefs to individuals based on their sex and thus closely related to gender stereotypes. Jost and Kay (2005) disputes that men are usually generally associated with competent assertive, independent, masterful and achievement orientated actions as opposed to women who are always identified as inferior to men; and as a result the women are thought to be friendly, unselfish, sociable, interdependent, emotionally expressive and relationship orientated. Furthermore, Spence Bucknor (2000) and Rudman and Glick (2001) have explained that gender stereotypes can be seen as courtesy in the sense that each gender is seen as possessing the power of the other group.

Gok (2000) conducted a study in Turkey, where he analysed the role of gender in elementary curriculum. This research discovered that the elementary school is very important in children's lives as they learn about society in Turkey. The rationale for the study was that Turkey has values that put emphasis on world domination that favour male priority. This researcher used content analysis and analysed two books. These books were according to categories of occupations, social roles, and personality traits. The study showed that there is a difference between the two genders in terms of social values; roles and relations both in school atmosphere and family environment where the females were along with female traditional Turkish traits that are hardworking, caring and child minding. Male figures were presented as having traits of self-confidence, decisiveness and adventurous. Women figures were observed as taking place in emotional relation with children more than men did. Women were shown at home settings, with children and in public markets for shopping. They were less represented in professional jobs such as nursing and farming, and were seen as house wives and child minders. The gender dependent relation pattern was observed like mother son and mother- daughter relation, rather than father-son and father-daughter relation. Male teachers were seen more as regulating and controlling figures, whereas learners engaged more in emotional and caring relations with their female teachers. This study of gender and stereotyping in children's literature is relevant to this study as it explores gender issues in textbooks. While the aforementioned study focused only on gender however, my study investigates gender, social class, and culture in the Grade R theme book to unpack how children are represented.

Anderson and Hamilton (2005) conducted a study that focused on the representation of mothers and fathers and examined whether men are stereotyped as relatively absent or inept parents in children's literature. The latent analysis was used to explore gender roles in 200 children's picture books. The findings indicated that the fathers were largely under represented and when they did appear, they were withdrawn and

ineffectual parents. The results strongly shows the in balanced representation and stereotypical portrayals whereby fathers were as unaffectionate and as indolent in terms of feeding, carrying babies and talking with children. Mothers made most contact with children; were doing the most of the feeding and expressing emotion more often than fathers express.

Kereszty (2009) in a study conducted in Hungary that addressed gendered dimension of the children's textbook as part of hidden curriculum in the process of the formation of subject specific skills and identities focussing especially in the elementary level and how the world is represented in the textbooks. Five Hungarian grammar books were analysed in order to address the question of equality and inequality in terms of gender. The boys outnumbered the girls since they appeared in all situations representing problematic cases and interacting with one another. The woman characters were seen usually doing shopping and also usually at home doing housework or looking after the elderly or children. This kind of representation does not offer a variety of identification for girls, which is crucial from the point of identity development.

Crowle and Hole (2003) conducted a study to compare the domestic gender stereotypes in children's picture books published in 1970-2003. Content analysis method was used in this study. The total of 32 books were critically analysed for the portrayal of gender stereotypes. A comparative study was used in addressing literacy levels in main characters and story line although the main focus was domestic and gender stereotypes. The results indicated that picture books have not yet changed immensely over the years. There is still strong presentation of gender stereotypes in modern children's literature for example women working at home, girls wearing dresses and boys playing games. This study shows lack of dominant male figures in a number of books both past and present.

The study of children's literature from Pakistan highlights the disjuncture between public statement on women's rights and the patriarchal reflections of masculinity and feminists. This study emphasises the false division of space into domestic, which is associated with women and the public, which is thought to belong solely to men (Matu & Hussian, 2004). The authors conclude that the message conveyed by the texts is that women's only legitimate role is in performing household tasks and caring for the family. They also point out the way in which many stories portray male as rational, while female characters are portrayed as passive and irrational. Furthermore, they emphasise that such stereotypical representation of masculinity and femininity has negative effects for both boys and girls.

Cekiso (2013) has conducted a study in South Africa to investigate gender stereotypes in children's literature in order to raise awareness of gender in learning and teaching. The discourse analysis was used to analyse and deconstruct the texts concerning how female and male characters were portrayed. The results indicated that both genders were frequently in the stereotypical terms. The females were portrayed as submissive and dependent. The boys were portrayed as having power, bravery, and strength. In line with the above, a study by Thyssen (2013) also in the South African context investigated the ways in which history, stereotypes both perpetuate and challenge gender, culture, and class in children's literature and discourse analysis was used. The findings highlight the changes in the representation and stereotypical stories, which disseminate African culture as rural, always walk barefoot and poor. However they still depict the absence of fathers and African male strong characters hence the repetition of such stereotypes in the absence of strong aspirational images is concerning given the potential of children's literature to influence attitudes.

Weiger, Fonjong and Fonchingong (2006) has conducted a study in Cameron that examined gender roles messages that are portrayed in children's literature that promote women's for their jealousy, enmity and competition. The negative portrayal of women

still depict woman as convincing, evil doers, who sometimes use men as pawns to implement their plots. Oral narratives were used as a data collection method. Women are isolated and prevented from utilising their socialised traits such as compassion and kindness to forge relationships with each other.

In line with the above findings, the study by McKinney (2003) which was conducted in South Africa also showed gender bias in books used in Foundation and Intermediate Phase textbooks. McKinney's (2003) study went a step further and explored race, rural or urban settings, social class family settings, and disability. The study explored the extent the textbooks reinforced the vision of equitable society. This study in particular investigated whether the textbooks used were appropriate, if they challenged diversity and whether they enabled teachers to do the same. The researcher did not only analyse texts but also the covers and illustration in the books.

McKinney (2003) selected grade one and grade seven books representing entry and exit points of primary education. The findings in this study show that racial diversity is being actively tackled on a textbook level, as well as stereotypical views of boys and girls with an emphasis on male class settings and nuclear families. There is very little portrayal of poor or rural life styles and virtually no mention of disability. Since nine years have lapsed following McKinney's study, it will be interesting to establish whether there are any developments in the transformation of children's literature regarding all areas of diversity representation in grade R theme storybooks.

What is noted in the above studies is that most of the researchers focus on gender bias or stereotypes and only few scholars' cover race and class, rural settings and disability, which support the need for further research on diversity. The commonly used research methodologies are content analysis. However, this study uses critical discourse analysis. These studies cover a range of areas on diversity such as social interaction (number of females in the text versus males), stereotyping, that is characteristics such

as assertiveness, bravery, submissiveness, weak, fearful, dependant, relationships, occupations (male versus women occupations) equal respect (view of unprivileged people, physical challenged and poor people) inclusive participation with the society.

## **2.6 CULTURE REPRESENTATION IN CHILDREN’S LITERATURE**

Giroux (2009) understands the concept of culture as constituting a central place in the production and transformation of historical experience and therefore through culture, the ruling class uses power and that is produced through ideology to the society. Furthermore, Banks (2010) comprehend culture as socially constructed and consisting of the criterion for determining the characteristics of a particular race across cultures and racial categories being determined by social and political characteristics of a society.

Bishop (2012) claims that children’s literature published in the 19<sup>th</sup> century still present African characters as objects of mockery and inferior beings and such representation creates negative image to African learners. Sharma (1997) focuses on the changes in the perspectives adopted by contemporary children’s literature concerning the portrayal of Africans that increase awareness in storybooks that includes economic, scientific, and technological developments and wild life. In addition, contemporary text promotes a supportive understanding of racial discrimination, the predicament of native tribes and colonial struggle. However, this highlights the absence of accurate, current information about contemporary settings and socio-economic profile of African nations in children literature. Indeed, it is imperative for teachers to develop a more balanced, sensitive approach that creates understanding of cultural attitude.

Thomas, Tounsend and Belgrave (2003) support this claim by examining the relationship and influence of cultural identity and values of African American children social adjustment. The findings support the usefulness of combining multicultural and

multiracial identities and values in a diverse classroom context to enhance self-esteem amongst learners regardless of their socio- cultural background.

In Hall (2005) study that explores the extent of discourses of culture serve growing itinerant in children's literature and power struggles has been highlighted. These results that representation of culture influence cultural power and class and such messages may cause ambiguity to learners. Besides De Mulder (2008) indicates that images in children literature still highlights South Africa as uncivilised country, polygamous and not urbanised, living in poverty compared Western countries. Nevertheless, South Africa is a diverse country that includes urban and urban cultures, lifestyles and socio economic realities. Furthermore, children are exposed to stereotypical information in storybooks such as 'Madagascar' and 'Lion King' and such misconception of representation is used to justify enslavement and colonisation that contribute to the internalisation of racism in the elementary grades.

Ambidy, Shih, Kim, and Pittinsky (2001) confirm this view by examining the effects of positive and negative stereotypes of culture on the cognitive performance in children. The results suggested that the development stereotypes susceptibility is a crucial domain for understanding the connection between stereotypes and individual behaviour. Rogers and Christian (2007) conducted a study to explore the construction of Whiteness in children's literature. Four children's literature books were selected from a range of genres that covered multiple points in time (contemporary Americans and historical Americans that presented young as radicalised protagonist and that were written for children in the third and fourth grades. Four themes were found and highlighted in each book as follows: White talk, colour-blind theories of race, historicising and privileging whites over the material condition of the people of colour. Patterns of racism were noticed in children's literature and did not occur in isolation. However, they reflect the larger societal themes of privileging effect, colour blind



theories of race and historicising of racism and white talk that does not engage directly with matters of race, racism and anti- racism.

Seeking's study (2008) explains the concept of culture into two different meanings in the South African context during and after the apartheid. According to Seeking's apartheid was a system of racial categorisation preserved in 1950 population Registration Act that classified South Africans into three racial categories that is Whites, Native (Africans) and Coloureds.

A white person is one who in appearance is, or who is generally accepted as, white person, but does not include other races. A native is a person who is generally accepted as any original race or tribe of Africa. A Coloured person is a person who is neither white nor native. The Indians were introduced as the fourth category and the label native that was given to black South African was replaced with the Bantu and the Indians were referred to as black and people were further classified into ethnic or linguistic groups such as Zulu and Xhosa. The racial categorisation was based on descent, language, or culture and appearance. The cultural markers of appearance and general acceptance were most important factors that determine race in the South African context. The appearances including skin colour or hair were used to interpret social class. Seeking's further adds that the racial classification was introduced in South Africa because the apartheid had three primary broad objectives:

Firstly, ideological to maintain racial purity by preventing the mixing or dilution of white blood, interracial marriage between black and white, education and primary health care was abolished.

Secondly was to ensure and to protect the privileged economic position of the white minority. Lastly, was to maintain the political dominance of the white majority, the

economic and industrial policies were designed to reduced dependence workers and boost the income for white skilled workers.

For Seeking's racial characteristics have been characterised by dual legacies that is cultural economic inequality in the post-apartheid apartheid. However, class identities that include (working class, middle class and poor class) and non-racial cultural identities still play a significant role. White South Africans still categorise themselves according to their physical appearance whereas Africans and coloureds do not refer to their physical appearance but they emphasise culture

Rogers and Christian (2007) also confirmed this view by reporting on a study that was conducted in the United States of America that analysed the construction of Whiteness in children's literature. Critical discourse analysis was foregrounded and the reconstructive and destructive aspects of White people. The findings indicate that anti-racism is organised in children's literature around White people and they are still privileged over material, colour-blind theories and historicising.

Thomas, Townsend and Belgrave (2003) carry out a study to examine the relationship and combine influence of identity in children. The child and teacher ratings were used to assess the relationship between racial identities, Afrocentric values child behaviour control and teacher perception of child strengths and problems in the classroom. The findings supported the usefulness of combining racial identities and values into a single model of ethnic identification.

Kelley (2008) writes that ideology, social life and custom highlights values, beliefs and attitudes of Japanese culture as harmony, empathy, loyalty and patience in children's literature. Within the context of this study South Africa is multicultural country therefore it is important for teachers to expose children at an elementary with storybooks that depicts life and customs of other societies.

## **2.7 SOCIAL CLASS REPRESENTATION IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE**

Bullen (2007) has highlighted that the concept of class has become an area of neglect in children's literature. Furthermore, class is not a socio-economic ranking based on national assets and social mobility but it grades the value of individuals and groups according to their characters, lifestyles and creates intolerance for and against certain class cultures.

Reay (2004) confirmed that social class is a capital of different fractions composed of different proportions of the various kinds of capital and he understands social as mainly in relation to the middle and upper classes. Bourdieu (1999) has argued that individuals can be adjacent to each other in social space yet have different ratios of economic to cultural capital. The values attached to different forms of capital are stakes in struggle between different class fractions. Bourdieu uses the analogy of roulette and he writes that:

Those with lots of red tokens and few yellow tokens that is lots of economic capital and little cultural will not play the same way as those who have many yellow tokens and a few red ones the more yellow tokens (cultural capital) they have , the more they will stake on the yellow squares(educational system).

According to Bourdieu (1999) all goods whether material or symbolic have an economic value. He describes the different classes as a process of investing their cultural capital in academic settings for an example the upper and the middle class have the means of investing their cultural capital in education and that is how they make profit. Bourdieu argues that the educational system depends less directly on the demands of the production system than on the demands of reproducing the family

group. In other words, the cultural capital is primarily transmitted through the family. It is the family that children derive from the mode of thinking, types of dispositions, set of meaning and quality styles.

Jones (2008) conducted a study examining the lack of representation of multiple working and poor class in story books as a way of working against marginalisation of both poor and working families. As a researcher he did not only examine these two diversity variables he also included sexism, racism, albinism, heterosexist, ageism, and other forms of oppression that persist in the society. Jones adds that class matters a great deal in society and how it is represented in the children's literature. The findings indicated that there is still a great void that still attaches representation of both working and poor class families in the context of children's literature.

## **2.8 CONCLUSION**

In summary therefore, Chapter 2 located the study within the current understandings of critical thinking as reflected in various studies, locally, internationally and globally. Precisely, the chapter engaged critically with the discussions on historical development of the teaching and learning of children's literature beyond and within South Africa's limitations. How other researchers have theorised and conceptualised thoughtful thinking through empirical studies, the instrumentation they have used, and the effect, where some of the research questions were addressed.

# Chapter 3

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## **CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: BERNSTEIN'S THEORY OF PEDAGOGIC DISCOURSE AND RELAVANT CONCEPTS**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the concepts of culture, ideology, social class, and gender as well as Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse that were used as an analytical framework in this study. Bernstein's theory was selected because it is able to provide the insights into the issues of social justice in relation to children's literature that were explored in the study. The analysis probed and exposed the underlying socio-cultural ideologies in the context of teaching children's literature. The chapter begins by discussing the various concepts of culture, ideology, social class and gender, and later discusses Bernstein's theory showing how all these are relevant to the study.

### **3.2. CONCEPTS CLARIFICATION**

#### **3.2.1. Culture**

Different theorists have understood culture as a set of practices, ideologies, and values from different groups in the society. McLaren (2009) explains culture as particular ways, which a social group lives out and makes sense of its particular circumstances and conditions of life. Giroux (2009) uses the concept of culture within critical theoretical perspective as adapted within transformation where it constitutes a central place in the production and transformation of the historical experience. These two arguments reveal that there is strong relationship between culture and power because culture has been defined as the criteria for evaluating human activities that include

knowledge, morals, and habits acquired by particular society. Through culture, the dominant ruling class uses power and that is produced in the form of ideological hegemony. In other words, culture is something that the child can learn from school, society, and in a story book. While these definitions cover a range of meanings, they do not exhaust many uses of the concept of culture. In the context of South Africa, cultural practices are being embraced such as the way we talk, pray, special activities or items we have for festivals, births and deaths.

Within the context of this study, children's literature has been regarded as the powerful tool in socialising learners and images has been used to reinforce ideologies of dominant culture and inequalities during apartheid in South Africa. The characters in the storybooks almost always present the section of dominant culture. However, this concept is used with an aim of exploring the selected culture that is privileged in learner support materials such as theme storybooks and characteristics of culture in a diverse country like South Africa; hence this is imperative for a socially and culturally diverse country like South Africa.

Related to culture is the concept of **hegemony** that has been understood by different scholars as explaining how different groups or individuals can maintain their power (Macey, 2000). For example, subordinate classes follow, accept or adopt the values and norms of dominant classes. Gramsci (1995) has also explained hegemony as a concept that consists of the socio-political power that flows from enabling unplanned consensus of the population through intellectual and moral leadership. McLauren (2009) uses hegemony to understand the dominant culture of the ruling class whereby they exercise domination over marginalised classes or groups without using force. These arguments reveal that domination is exercised through consensual social practises and class structure. Within the context of the study, this concept assists in providing an understanding about the distribution of power in the classroom settings as shown in the findings.

### **3.2.2 Ideology**

Different scholars explain the concept of ideology differently. Ideology is the concept that supports hegemony according to critical theory because it infuses all social life. McLaren (2009, p. 69) illustrates ideology as ‘the production and representation of ideas, values and beliefs and the manner in which they are expressed and lived out by both individuals and groups.’ In other words, it is how individuals use images to interpret and understand the meaning of the world. For example, the Marxist ideology is generally used to describe the worldview of dominant classes. Within the context of the study this concept is used to explore the extent in which the images are used in the storybooks to indoctrinate learners with past dominant ideologies of the ruling class, the meaning and patterns of beliefs that were shared by a minority and were propagated in children’s literature to promote inequality in the society. However, this concept reflects equality in the storybooks using in the classroom.

### **3.2.3 Social Class**

Social class is another concept discussed in this study. Ogbou (1998) defines social class as a segment of society’s population differentiated by education, income and the interaction that results into a particular life style as a set of power relations that are marked by hierarchical distinction between individual groups in the society or culture. Marx has also viewed social class as the organising principle in modern society and the primary context in which inequality and power relations operate. McLaren (2009) has also used the social class concept to understand the economic, social, and political relationships that dominate life in given social order. Within the context of this study, this concept has been used to highlight the middle, working, and poor class characters in children’s literature. However, in relation to this one cannot ignore the apartheid education where characters in children’s literature such as storybooks were used as a tool to reinforce social class inequalities in the society and schooling was regarded as

sorting agents in the production of class structures. Within the context of this study, this concept is used to explore how social class characters or images portray diversity in Grade R theme storybooks within the context of South Africa where the majority of learners are from the poor working class (McKinney, 2008).

Embedded in social class are **power relations**, which are understood by different scholars as the ability to influence or control the behaviour of people. The term authority is often used for power perceived as appropriate by the social structure. Power can be seen as limiting human actions because it makes conflict possible and it could be used both socially and politically. Foucault (1998) also understands power as the concept that involves both limitations and enablement. The mechanisms of power are produced by different types of knowledge that organise information on people's activities and existence. Foucault (1998) understands power as existing everywhere and he uses the concepts of power and knowledge to indicate that power is constituted through accepted forms of knowledge.

Giddens (1982) views power relations both as transformative capacity (the characteristic view held by those treating power in terms of the conduct of agents), and as domination (the main focus of those concentrating upon power as a structural quality) (Gaventa, 2003). Transformative capacity refers to the power of an individual to intervene causally in a series of events (Baert, 1998); in this sense, all actions depend on exercising power-action depends on the capability of the individual to make a difference to a pre-existing state of affairs or course of events. An agent ceases to be such if he or she loses the capability to make a difference, that is, to exercise some sort of power (Giddens, 1984).

Thus far, the social rules people use to act and the resources that actors draw upon to exercise power are not equal or evenly distributed, and thus enable deeper systems of



domination. Resources (focused via signification and legitimation) are structured properties of social systems, drawn upon and reproduced by knowledgeable agents in the course of interaction. In the context of this study therefore, children's literature has been highlighted as a medium through which power is exercised, as a routine element of the instantaneous of conduct in social reproduction.

#### **3.2.4 Gender**

Gender is the last concept to be discussed in this subsection. Foucault understands the concept of gender as related to power because he comprehends that humans are objects of power which is not a structure; thus power is what determines individual qualities. Society constructs their own set of names such females and this characterises one as woman and signifies one as weak, emotional, irrational and incapable of actions assigned to a man. Then gender is politically and socially structured.

Gender is a concept that is related to the perceptive process of male and female therefore the society has different expectation for male and female behaviour. The traditional gender roles help to sustain gender stereotypes such as males are supposed to be adventurous, assertive, aggressive, independence and task orientated; whereas women are seen as more sensitive, gentle, dependant, emotional and people adapted. Furthermore, Miller (1998) understands that men are dominated by the system and considered disposable while women are given certain advantages and protected in many ways that men do not enjoy.

In other words, men and women have some biological differences but power reinforces those differences. Kuykendal and Sturn (2007) have used this concept of gender in children's literature so that learners will be able to understand themselves and others because characters illustrated as male and female in stories help learners to determine

their gender as it applies to their behaviour, traits within the learners' culture. Within the context of this study, the concept of gender is used to explore the patterns of gender inequality in terms of representation in grade R theme storybooks and assist in vocabulary discussion in the findings. The next section discusses the theoretical framework for the study.

### **3.3 A THEORY OF PEDAGOGICAL DISCOURSE TO UNDERSTAND TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN TEACHING THEME STORYBOOKS IN ELEMENTARY GRADES**

The study draws on Bernstein's theory of pedagogical discourse to understand teachers' strategies in teaching theme storybooks in multicultural and multiracial classrooms in elementary grades. Basil Bernstein was one of the most influential and widely discussed theorists in the sociology of knowledge (Singh, 2002). Some scholars describe his theory as hidden with little application to the everyday world of schooling. Further, some accuse him of producing white, male, middle class grand narratives, which constitute disadvantaged learners as deficit 'other'. It is therefore important to highlight the contextual meaning of pedagogy as related to the study before exploring Bernstein theory of pedagogical devices in a multicultural and multiracial classroom context.

According to Boyle and Charles (2011) teaching in a multicultural environment, with the socio-economic and socio-cultural changes in society, is indeed a complex international educational issue. Thus, these changes are not new and have taken place, probably with less visibility and ambiguity in earlier, less media intrusive times, all through the history of Sub-Saharan Africa and especially education systems within developing African countries. Schools do not exist in a vacuum, but they are the products, and life-opportunities, of their communities, their economic, socio-cultural

(Bourdieu 1990; Lash 1993), ethnic and gender human resource, in short, the sum of those complex individuals labelled as learners.

Alexander (2008) postulates that, pedagogy has become 'one-size-fits-all' with a delivery model based on the learner conforming to the norms of socio-cultural intervention and the metric (Guinier, 2003), not on addressing the complexity of the learner's educational needs. However, schools have to forge a way to step from that position of 'one-size-fits-all' to Banks's (1993) 'equity pedagogy'. To do that they need to have a desire for 'prejudice reduction' or to aim for school reform (Gorski, 2000) through critical analysis of systems of power and privilege Perrenoud (1998). They should understand and advocate systems to enable rather than to label, based on the premise that, learners do not have the same abilities or the same way of learning. (Boyle & Charles, 2009). The best situation for one learner will not be finest for another one learning approach in a diversity context (Perrenoud 1998, 1994).

Banks's (1998) pedagogy of liberation is associated with the authors' theme storybooks beliefs and practices of self-regulation and co-construction in dominant teaching and learning (Boyle & Charles 2010). For example in Archer's (2008) studies, that Black Caribbean boys are portrayed as dangerous learners who are aggressively anti-school as part of a discourse that demonises such learners and hides the intricate inequalities and obstacles that are being experienced.

Though there are exclusive cultural patterns of attainment among and between ethnic groups that term is highly complex and nuanced because the notion of an ethnic group is in itself a complex and contested one since the boundaries of ethnic collectives are absorbent, and shifting. Culturalised patterns of achievement are cut through by gender and social class and shaped by histories. The argument here addresses the multicultural issue through an elaborated definition (Mirza, 2005). The authors acknowledge the basis of truth (stereotypes cut deep, people are complex) (West, 2008) that there is a

complexity of profile in any group of children, just as there are complex systems of thought in those groupings. McCarthy, Crichlow, and Dimitriadis (2005) argue against the homogenizing impulse which assumes that all African, White, and Indians people are alike.

Those complexities relate to every individual and are the learning issues, opportunities, and developments that teachers programmes should be opening the minds of learners to identify, address and support. In conclusion, a multicultural aspect operates in every human interaction and therefore in almost every teaching context.

For Bernstein the fact that schools require an elaborated code for success means that working class children are disadvantaged by the dominant code of schooling, not that their language is deficient. Difference became deficit in the context of macro-power relations (Powell, 2001). There is a danger, in Bernstein's terms, of privileging texts and the possibility of the cultural transmission of contemporary, dominant social principles, through invisible pedagogies (Goouch, 2008). Again Bernstein (1964) stated that children who have access to different speech systems or linguistic codes, by virtue of their position in the class structure, may adopt quite different intellectual and social procedures which may be only tenuously related to their purely psychological abilities. Similar findings were recorded by Siraj-Blatchford and Manni (2008) study into pedagogical practices specifically the level and forms of questioning used across a range of elementary grades settings. Boaler's (2005) research has shown high correlations between social class and settings, with social class working as a subtle shift that results in the stereotypical representation of working class children in low ability groups (p. 126) and concludes that 88% of children placed into sets or streams at age four remain in the same groupings until they leave school (125).

### **3.4 IMPLICATION FOR PEDAGOGY IN A MULTICULTURAL AND MULTIRACIAL CONTEXT**

According to Shor (1992), education can either socialise learners into critical thought or into dependence on power; that is, into passive habits of following power, waiting to be told what to do and what things mean and this often occurs in traditional schooling. Therefore, according to this definition, the teacher's pedagogical positioning is at the centre of the 'how' and the 'what' of teaching and learning. In short, pedagogy can have two sides of the coin; it can encourage and support growth for children, locate and empower children at the centre of learning or it can dampen and reduce the process to following externally prescribed representation (Dunphy 2008; Edwards 2001).

In the responsibility demands of this submissive model there is hardly a place for teachers shifting from control of knowledge to creation of processes whereby students take rights of their learning and take risks to understand and apply their knowledge (Graziano, 2008). Indeed, there is no way that the auto technicians would understand that teachers and learners are partners in teaching and learning transactions. As a result, in education we need to find ways of interacting with children to co-construct shared meanings in ways we cannot do if the learners themselves are not vigorous participants in exploring the situation (Makin & Whiteman 2006). Child-centred teaching includes behaviours that actively involve children in guiding the learning process, such as offering choices, encouraging activity, and suggesting solutions (Hayes, 2008).

Therefore, for the purpose of clarification there are two significant points why Bernstein's theory is relevant to this study. First, Bernstein insists on the importance of making overt the theories used to; define a research problem, produce data, analyse and interpret data, and write up the themes. Second, Bernstein was a passionate supporter of the rights of disadvantaged learners. This is evident in his concerned with understanding the reproduction of social inequality through schooling.

Several theorists in education have attempted to grapple with issues of schooling, knowledge, and inequality. Particularly, the new sociology of education (NSOE) makes its focus the problematic nature of knowledge and the manner of its transmission, acquisition, and evaluation in schools (Bernstein, 1990, p. 116). Maton (2000) and Moore and Muller (1999) clearly argue that NSOE produced a sociology of knowers and knowing rather than sociological analyses of the macro and micro structuring of knowledge.

The new sociology of education, as well as subsequent influence or modifications of this sociological project, such as cultural reproduction, resistance theories, critical pedagogy and post-structural education theories, produced an embarrassment of studies on the relations of disadvantaged groups to official school knowledge. However, this research body did not adequately specify the unique features of the privileging of texts in schooling traditions. In other words, an absence of clear criteria within this research corpus exists, that would enable the generation of descriptions of school knowledge: its construction, representation, presentation, and acquisition (Bernstein, 1990).

Bernstein (1995) remains preoccupied with devices of transmission, relays of the symbolic, modalities of practice, and the construction and change of forms of consciousness. Thus, his theoretical research is of huge significance to an analysis of the production and reproduction of knowledge through official schooling bodies and effective classroom environments in an inclusive knowledge society (Castells, 2000).

One of the ideas in this study is to explore Bernstein's concept of the pedagogic device. Specifically, I explain the scope and intricacy of the pedagogic device as a model for analysing the processes by which specific knowledge is converted or pedagogised to compose school knowledge (classroom curriculum). I intend that such theoretical models are crucial to educational research during a period variously described as the

knowledge society (Leadbeater, 1999) or informational society (Castells, 2000) new times characterised not only by the increasing importance of knowledge to the economy, but also an increase in social inequalities (Leadbeater, 1999). Schooling educations perform an increasingly significant role in the differential distribution of knowledge and in sequence resources. Thus, alternative, familiar and fundamental learning communities play a vital role in the reproduction of the intellectual, moral and social human resources for the knowledge society.

Societies such as those of Sub-Saharan Africa only ever invent a few instruments for the pedagogic socialisation of whole populations in terms of knowledge acquisition (Hunter, 1994). It should not be surprising then that the most outstanding characteristic of educational principles and practices is their awesome and staggering uniformity independent of the dominant ideology of specific nation states (Bernstein, 2000). Through his theory of the pedagogic device, Bernstein attempts to explain the rules or principles generating this stability or uniformity across national education system core of this study. In addition, he models how change may be instigated in the ordering and disordering principles of the pedagogising of knowledge.

### **3.5 APPLICATION OF BERNSTEIN'S THEORY IN PRODUCTION AND REPRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE IN MULTICULTURAL AND MULTIRACIAL CLASSROOMS**

Bernstein suggested that great efforts over the pedagogic device are attempts to control the production and distribution of different pedagogic representations that is, the rules for the relation, selection, sequencing, pacing, and evaluation of valid school knowledge. Moreover, these great efforts over the construction and dissemination of pedagogic representations are between different fractions of the middle class. Consequently, debates over significant approaches to pedagogy (Macken-Horarik,

1998; Martin, 1999), and visible or invisible pedagogies (Cazden, 1995; Delpit, 1997; Rose, 1999) are illustrative of the struggles over the production and dissemination of different pedagogic representations within the pedagogic recontextualising field. Importantly, these are struggles over theories of instruction, that is, models of the pedagogic subject (learners), transmitter (teacher, storybooks, and learners support materials), pedagogic context (classroom and curriculum) and communicative pedagogic competence (representations of teacher and learner interaction). Bernstein (1990, p. 189) suggests that changes in the theory of teaching and learning may have consequences for the ordering of pedagogic discourse and for the ordering of pedagogic practice in the classroom.

However, there are rules that govern the application of Bernstein theory in production and reproduction of knowledge that I discuss. Bernstein (1990, 1996, and 2000) describes the organising and disorganising principles of the pedagogising of knowledge as the pedagogic device. He suggests that this device constitutes the relay or assembly of rules or procedures via which knowledge (academic, practical, expressive, background knowledge) is converted into pedagogic communication. Such pedagogic communication acts on meaning potential, that is, the potential knowledge that is available to be transmitted and acquired. The pedagogic device provides the generative principles of the privileging texts of school knowledge through three interrelated rules: distributive, recontextualising, and evaluative. The decontextualising is derived from the distributive rules and evaluative rules derived from decontextualising rules. These rules are hierarchically related and have power relations amongst them. This knowledge is used to understand how teacher interprets and practise learner centred pedagogy in the classroom situation. Two text transformations occur during shared classroom knowledge by means of storybook. Firstly, in the process of constructing classroom knowledge the teacher may decontextualise discourse from learners' social background to maintain social order and to make learning to be more effective. Secondly, the community can have an influence on the pedagogical practices that need



to be delivered in class and power relations that are always internalised through pedagogic communication or social relations of control between teachers and learners.

Thus, the three set of rules position the study in the following sequences; foremost, the function of the distributive rules is to regulate the power relationships between social groups by distributing different forms of knowledge, and thus constituting different orientations to meaning or pedagogic identities. Subsequent, recontextualising rules regulate the formation of specific pedagogic discourse. These are rules for delocating a discourse, for relocating it, for refocusing it (Bernstein 1996, p. 47). Through recontextualisation a discourse is moved from its original site of production to another site where it is altered as it is related to other discourses. The recontextualised discourse no longer resembles the original because it has been pedagogised or converted into pedagogic discourse. Lastly, evaluative rules constitute specific pedagogic practices. In general terms, evaluative rules are concerned with recognising what counts as valid realisations of teaching (curricular content) and regulative (social conduct, character and manner) texts. This theory is relevant to the study because it provides an analytical framework for understanding how teachers interpret and practice learner-centred pedagogy in the teaching of theme storybooks in multicultural and multiracial classroom situations.

### **3.6. CONCLUSION**

This chapter has discussed conceptual and theoretical frameworks for this study. Concepts relevant have been clarified and it was indicated how they are relevant for the study. Bernstein theory of pedagogical discourse was chosen in order to understand teacher's strategies in teaching theme story books in a multiracial and multicultural elementary classroom context.

# Chapter 4

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## **THE EXPLICATION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study aimed to explore the teachers' strategies in teaching theme story book(s) to grade R learners in multicultural and multiracial classroom in elementary grade R North Durban, South Africa. Guided by Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith (2004); Ulin, Robinson, Tolley and McNeill (2002) and Patton (2002), the researcher aimed to explore how teachers use their teaching methodologies to shape the (mis)conceptions of how stories are presented visually to learners, how learners use this knowledge to perceive the world around them, and the patterns of shared understanding and variation in the context of theme story book(s). This is an exploration study and in this chapter I discuss the design and the methodologies used in this research. I then discuss the research design and paradigm, the research field and the selection of participants, data generation and analysis methods, ethical issues and limitations of the study.

### **4.2 RESEARCH APPROACH, DESIGN AND PARADIGM**

This study is a qualitative case study in which an interpretivist paradigm was adopted. TerreBlanche and Durrheim (1999) state that a research process has three major scopes namely; ontology, epistemology and methodology. They further state that a research paradigm is an all-encompassing arrangement of unified practice and thinking that defines the nature of enquiry along these three dimensions. Within the qualitative frame work, an interpretivist paradigm was the most appropriate in this study.

Gerphart (1999) describes the interpretivist paradigm as a model that searches for patterns of meanings and its main objective is to describe meanings and understandings that participants have regarding definitions of a situation; and to explore how independent realities are produced.’ Reeves and Hedberg (2003) note that the interpretivist paradigm stresses the need to put analysis in context. This paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from the subjective experiences of individuals. The interpretivist researchers use meaning oriented methodologies that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and participants, such as interviewing or observation of participants.

As it aims to explain the subjective reasons and meanings that lie behind social action, the interpretivist research does not predefine dependent and independent variables, but focuses on the full complexity of human sense making as the situation emerges (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994). Interpretivist researchers often moderate or assess, and process interpretive theories. Walsham (1995) presents three different uses of theory in interpretivist case studies; theory guiding the design and collection of data; theory as an iterative process of data collection and analysis; and theory as an outcome of a case study. As discussed in the previous chapter, the selected theoretical framework for this study is Bernstein theory of Pedagogical discourse, which is in line with the interpretivist paradigm.

Interpretivist researchers assume that reality is socially constructed and that the researcher becomes the vehicle by which this reality is revealed (Cavana, Delahaye, and Sekaran, 2001). Guba and Lincoln (in Antrade, 2009) also point out that the interpretivist researcher’s ontological assumption is that cultural and social realities are locally and specifically constructed by humans through their actions and interactions. According to Cantrell (1993) interpretivist researchers are keen to understand the meaning people make of daily occurrences and how they interpret these within the contextual cultural, social and natural setting that they find themselves in. Interpretivist

research regards community as representatives of meaning creation in their settings and these meanings are important and functional for research (Janse van Rensburg, 2001). Such approaches accept that people's construal and communications with their situations create their cultural and social reality. Thus, Erickson (in Gall, 1996) defines interpretivist research as the study of the instantaneous and confined meanings of cultural and social activities for the actors involved in them.

According to Merriam (2002) the interpretivist qualitative approach, is concerned with the researcher's interest in understanding what those meanings and interpretations are for the participants at a particular point in time and in a specific context. Based on this, as a researcher, I intended to explore and understand the fundamental teaching strategies that teachers apply in the classroom in teaching grade R theme storybooks in relation to gender, culture and class and how the teachers manage to teach in classrooms with learners who come from diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, I explored the portrayal of gender, class and culture in the prescribed and recommended theme story books that are used in such multicultural and multiracial classrooms in a school situated at the North of Durban. The interpretivist paradigm is also coherent with the qualitative approach used in this study.

Creswell (2012) defines a case study as an in-depth exploration of phenomenon that is a bounded system because of time, place, and physical boundaries. A case study methodology offers tools for researchers to study multifaceted phenomena within their contexts (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Furthermore, a qualitative case study is an approach to research that aids examination of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. Yins (2003) groups case studies as explanatory, exploratory, or descriptive. An explanatory case study is used when seeking to answer a question that sought to explain the presumed causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies. In evaluation studies of culture, race, language, and gender, the explanations would link program implementation with

program effects (Joia, in Yin (2003). According to Lotzkar & Bottorff in Yin (2003), an exploratory case study is used to explore any situations in which the involvement being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes. While, Tolson, Fleming, & Schartau (in Yin, 2003) define a descriptive case study as an intervention and the real-life context in which it occurred. Therefore, this study is a descriptive case study.

In this study, the case is three grade R teachers and a set of forty prescribed theme story books the teachers use to teach learners in their classrooms. The data collected from this sample provided insight into strategies of teaching grade R theme storybooks in multicultural and multiracial classrooms. The teacher participants form a case because they share the school multicultural aspects, language, and behaviour. This case study aligns itself to a qualitative approach because it intends to explore a small sample and understand how teachers teach theme storybooks that are prescribed the Department of Basic Education. Schwandt (1994) states that the qualitative approach provides a deep insight into the complex world of lived experiences from the point of view of those who live it. In my study, the qualitative approach offered the opportunity to gain insight into the world of participants; that is, their knowledge attitudes, values, cultural and social beliefs, concerns, systems as these relate to their teaching in the classrooms. Put differently, a qualitative approach seemed most appropriate for this study as it enabled me to discover and understand how teachers explore their teaching strategies in teaching theme story books to grade R learners and how their teaching methodologies are informed by their understanding of diverse learners and their underlying knowledge, attitudes and beliefs, they hold towards gender, culture, and social class.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (in Ponterotto, 2005) qualitative research refers to a broad class of empirical procedures designed to describe and interpret the experiences of research participants in a context-specific setting. It is defined by Creswell, Miles, Huberman and Morgan (in Andrade, 2009) as a process that investigates a social human problem where the researcher conducts the study in a natural setting and builds

a whole and complex representation by rich description and explanation as well as a careful examination of informants' words and views. Paton (in Merriam, 2002) explains that qualitative research is an effort to understand situations and interactions in their uniqueness as part of a particular context. The key to understand qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is culturally and socially constructed by individual interaction with their world (Merriam, 2002). A qualitative approach was appropriate for my study as it sought to explore teachers' strategies in teaching theme story book(s) in selected multicultural and multiracial elementary (grade R) classrooms at the north Durban area in South Africa. The qualitative design with the interpretivist paradigm also guided my data collection and analysis methods.

#### **4.3 THE STUDY SAMPLE AND RESEARCH SITE**

According to Silverman (2000), sampling is a method to choose a subset from the population. For this study therefore, purposeful sampling was chosen. Patton (2002), states that purposeful sampling focuses on selecting information-rich participants whose information will illuminate the questions under study. In Maxwell's (2008) views, purposeful sampling can be used to achieve representativeness or typicality of the settings, individuals, or activities selected. He argues that a small sample that has been systematically selected for typicality and relative homogeneity provides far more confidence that the conclusions adequately represent the average members of the population than does a sample of the same size that incorporates substantial random or accidental variation.

Three experienced grade R female teachers from different races were selected purposefully. They teach multiracial and multicultural learners in a primary school in the North Durban area. This sample is comprised two African and one Indian female teachers. The study explored their teaching strategies as they use theme story books. Their participation helped the researcher by providing rich information about the

phenomenon being studied. In addition, the prescribed theme storybook and recommended books also formed part of data that was analysed.

The study was conducted in North Durban area of South Africa. The school was selected because of its multicultural and multiracial nature because the learners come from diverse backgrounds. The participating school follows the South African elementary schooling system. In this system, grade R is an entry grade in the foundation phase.

#### **4.4 DATA GENERATION METHODS**

Since the study was qualitative and interpretive in nature, data collection was primarily through scheduled individual interviews with three teacher participants and forty theme storybooks were collected from the school for content analysis. Qualitative content analysis preceded the scheduled individual interviews.

Semi-structured interviews are data generation methods that were used in this study. Interviews can be used as an instrument to collect both qualitative and quantitative approaches. This study applied qualitative interviews because they allowed participants to give full descriptions of their personal experiences and also allowed the interviewer to have follow-up questions and have better control of the type of information gathered (Creswell, 2012). Patton (2002) suggests that interviews provide researchers an opportunity to know what is in the participants' minds and to capture their perspective about the issue under discussion. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007:349) point out that interviews enable participants whether they were interviewers or interviewees to discuss their interpretations of the context in which they lived and to express how they view situations from their own point of view. Gillham describes an interview as a conversation where the interviewer is seeking responses for a particular purpose from

the interviewee (2000). According to Patton (2002), the purpose of the interview is to allow researchers to enter into another person's perspective.

In this study, the scheduled interviews consisted of two rounds of semi-structured individual (one-on-one) interviews with each teacher participant. Flick (1998) states that semi-structured interviews allow participants to express themselves more openly than in a structured interview, reflecting the respondent's own thinking and feelings. In this study I used semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions that triggered the participants to give full description of their personal experiences. Each interview lasted approximately forty-five minutes. I had a flexible interview schedule with the participants so that I could meet with them at their convenient times.

The first round of semi-structured interviews involved questions about the teachers' understanding of gender, class and culture issues and how in their views these three concepts are represented in theme stories that were taught in the classroom. This interview helped me to have insight into the teachers' knowledge, experience, and understanding of the phenomenon.

The second round of interviews focused on the strategies that teachers used to teach theme storybooks in class and how they deal with issues of gender, class and culture as they appear in theme story books. This interview also helped me to discover the strategies that teachers apply especially, how they use the storybooks to address gender, class and cultural issues with young learners from multicultural and multiracial backgrounds. Thus, I sought for permission from each participant to audio record the two rounds of the interviews to accurately capture their views.

The forty theme storybooks that were collected from the participating school were analysed using content analysis, which is described in the next subsection.



#### 4.5 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

According to Mouton (2005:108) data analysis involves the breaking up of data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships each with the aim to understand the key elements of the data. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport (2002) point out that qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising the data into categories and identifying relationships among the categories. It is a process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data (De Vos,*et. al.*,2002). Anderson (2000) compares data analysis with moving into new apartment, with a bunch of boxes and one must decide what goes where and why. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport (2002) define qualitative data analysis as the means to get a sense of the whole process by first reading through all transcripts and jotting down ideas.

In qualitative research, the researcher studies the selected subjects in depth and attempts to understand the groups of information that appear from the data (TerreBlanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006). Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007), state that when the interview data have been collected, the next stage involves analysing the data by using a form of coding or sorting. In this study, the data sources that were analysed were interview transcripts from teachers and forty theme story books. The interview transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis.

In analysing data, patterns and similarities were identified and these were coded and re-coded using open coding. Later categories were developed from related coded data and then themes emerged. Thematic analysis was appropriate in this study as Ibrahim (2012, p.40) states that it “is considered the most appropriate for any study that seeks to discover using interpretations....it provides a systematic element to data analysis....[and] allows the researcher to associate an analysis of the frequency of a theme with one of the whole content.” As alluded to above, the theme storybooks were analysed using content analysis.

## **Content Analysis**

Schreier (2012) defines qualitative content analysis as a method for systematically, depicting and interpreting meaning that is constructed from qualitative text. This method can be applied in a wide range of verbal and non-verbal qualitative material such as interview transcripts, newspapers, books and story books. Qualitative content analysis was first developed to analyse and interpret texts such as newspaper and scripts from the bible hence the data that is analysed through this method is referred to as text or textual material. Furthermore, Hoffman, Wilson Martinez and Sailors (2006) define content analysis as a method that leads one to discover both meaning behind and patterns used as well as the ambiguity in the meaning of the text. In Myrinng (2000) content analysis is defined as the use of replicable and solid method for making specific model of communication within which defines the aims of analysis. White Marsh (2006) describes content analysis as the method that involves the inspection of patterns in written text often drawing on combination of inductive and deductive analytical technique.

In this study therefore, content analysis was appropriate to analyse theme storybooks as they fall within the category of textual material. Both the written texts and graphical images in isiZulu and English grade R theme storybooks were analysed to determine the representation of gender, class, culture and disability, particularly in characters included in the material and their roles. Patterns were identified and themes emerged; and the results are discussed in chapter five of this dissertation.

### **4.6 DATA VERIFICATION**

Reliability and validity has been raised as a threat in qualitative research; especially how the researcher will prevent bias and his/her effects on the setting or individuals studied. Maxwell (2008, p.243) points out that the main concern is not with eliminating

variance between researchers in the values and expectations that they bring to the study but with understanding how a particular researcher's values influence the conduct and conclusions of the study.

According to Hess (in Maxwell, 2008: 243), validity in qualitative research is the result not of indifference, but of integrity. These threats were dealt with by the researcher during the data collection and analysis by not distorting the data collected and not imposing my own theory, values, or preconceptions. I recognised how my personal perspectives as a grade R teacher could influence the research process. I was also aware of how these may influence my interaction with participants. To minimise bias, I used scenarios to introduce conversations during interview sessions with teachers. This accorded me with some distance and enabled participants to first reflect on perceptions and only thereafter provide examples in their own lives and experiences. I also cross-checked data and included member-checking to verify the accuracy of data with the participants themselves.

#### **4.7 ETHICAL ISSUES**

In line with the good practice in research, I followed all ethical considerations in this study. Firstly, I sought an ethical clearance certificate from the Ethics Committee, in the research office of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, which was granted (please see appendix C) to conduct research on the approved topic. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education also granted me permission to do research in the selected school (see appendix B). Having obtained the permission letter from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, I then approached the school principal who also allowed me to use the theme storybooks for research and conduct interviews with the teacher participants.

Informed consent to participate in the research and to have the interviews audio-recorded was obtained from all participants. All participants were briefed on the objectives, process, and relevance of their participation in the study. I tried as far as possible to enable them to understand what my research is all about and inform them that their participation was voluntary and free without attracting any monetary reward. I ensured they understood that they were free to withdraw from the interview exercises when they felt like doing so and that they could switch off the audio-recording at any stage of the interviews and that will not affect them or their school negatively. Confidentiality was assured in that only the supervisor for the study and myself had access to data. To observe anonymity, the identities of participants and that of a school are not linked to the data that was generated. The identification of participants and school were substituted with fictitious names. The participants and school principal were assured that all the information given would only be used for the research purposes. In line with the University of KwaZulu-Natal's requirement, all data is kept in a locked cupboard and will be disposed of after five years of completion of the degree, during which time the tapes will be erased and all hard copies will be shredded..

#### **4.8 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, sampling techniques and real sample for the study were analysed. I also discussed the research approach, design and paradigm that guided the study. Futhermore I discussed an interview schedule and content analysis research methodology. The methodologies and approaches highlighting the method of analysis were unpacked and they are; explanatory and exploratory. Finally, data verification to researcher bias, favourism and research ethics were all outlined.

# Chapter 5

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## **PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

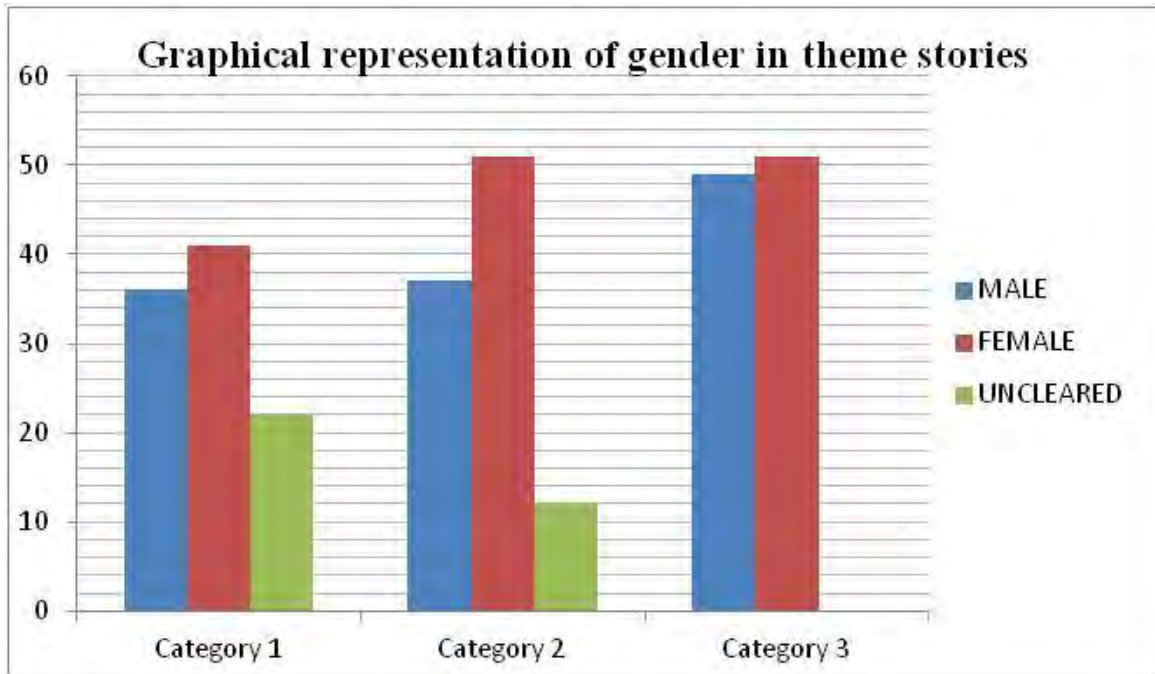
This chapter reports and interprets the findings of the study that explores teacher's strategies in teaching theme storybook(s) in selected multicultural and multiracial elementary grade R classrooms in the Durban area. The data sources that were analysed are transcripts from participating teachers, thirty English, and ten IsiZulu themed texts with visual images from grade R theme storybooks. What follows is the description of the three themes that emerged from all the theme stories and teachers interviews. The three themes are stereotypical representation of different socio-cultural groups in the grade R theme storybooks, teacher's knowledge, and understanding of issues of social class, culture, gender, and disability, and the teachers' strategies of teaching multicultural and multiracial classroom contexts. The forty theme stories were organised into three categories according to the sources on which they appear; (i) theme story books, (ii) isiZulu stories, and (iii) English library books. All these selected theme stories were from the South African National Department of Basic Education prescribed materials for public schools as learners support materials. The themes that emerged from the study are discussed below with evidence from data provided in each theme.

## **5.2 REPRESENTATION OF SOCIO-CULTURAL GROUPS IN THE GRADE R THEME STORYBOOKS**

The different characters portrayed in the stories that were analysed in relation to gender, culture, social class, and disability show a range from non-stereotypical to consistent gender stereotyping portrayal as it is discussed below.

The theme stories show different socio-cultural groups interacting in different stereotypical **gendered** roles. As figure one shows, there is not much difference in terms of inclusion of males and females in theme storybooks. Male and females are almost equally represented in all the three categories of the materials analysed. For example in category three materials, the difference in gender representation is 3%; in category one materials, the difference is 5% and only in category two materials, which are isiZulu material where the percentage is slightly increased as it is 14%. Even so, this is not a huge difference.

**Figure 1**



However, while the frequency of appearance of female and male characters is almost equal in themed stories, the roles in which male and females appear vary in type and frequency. Gender roles played by boys and girls, men and women are often more embedded in the representation of children characters than among adults. There is an evident trend of males and boys being more dominant in their portrayal as characters in the stories as table 1 shows:

**Table 1: Male character roles and actions depicted across categories 1, 2 and 3**

Character	Role
Old man/ Farmer	Head of family / Owner of business
Boy	Doing experiment
Medical doctor	Attending to patients
School principal	Leadership

Engineers	Directing workers on the site
Politician	Occupying leadership position
Fireman	Extinguishing the fire outbreak
Bankers	Operating computers and controlling financial resources
Directors	Sitting on executive chairs (leading and managing)
Postmen	Sorting mail
Librarians	Sitting on issuing desks
Policemen	Reinforcing law in society
Managers	Implementing company policies

In these stories the male is depicted as the main head of family and in another story the grandparents or the children heading the family. This conforms to the stereotypical cultural, societal beliefs, attitudes, and norms that regard the family setting as hierarchical and the man as the head of the family. In most of the stories; for example, the males are depicted as heroes and in leading active roles. The adult males are depicted fulfilling more stereotypical gender roles such as doctor, police officer, fire fighter, lawyer, and farmer. The boys are portrayed playing soccer or helping their fathers. In other words, the world revolves around male characters (adults and boys) and this type of representation plays a most significant role in learners.

The female characters are depicted as inferior human beings, caregivers, always with the baby on the back, serving food and being timid, helpless, inactive, and always rescued by male characters. Activities are stereotyped according to gender where for example, female characters mostly occupy the space inside the home while the male and children are seen playing outside with other children. The boys' social world is always seen filled with play and freedom while the girls are confined to the indoors and they are always given responsibilities regarding house chores; exemplars are provided in table 2 below:



**Table 2: Female character roles and actions depicted across categories 1, 2 and 3**

<b>Character</b>	<b>Role</b>
Old woman	Uneducated, evil and associated with witchcraft
Girl	Occupied space inside house hold, always the beauty for men
Mother	Mother-daughter relationship
Teacher	Caring, caregiver; always involved with learners

The roles in which female characters are portrayed, are not as varying as that of male characters. Adult females are portrayed as mothers, domestic workers, teachers, and nurses. Gender representation revolves around the nuclear family, and the male father is frequently absent; and when present he is usually sitting in the lounge reading a newspaper, and / or busy working outside in the garden with his sons. This form of representation is an evident that gender role stereotypes still play a significant role in children's literature. It also reinforces traditional gender role stereotypes that counter the equity in the diverse classroom context and the society and are contrary to the concept of multiculturalism that promotes gender-free environment regardless of the learners' cultural backgrounds.

The stories depict stereotypical careers for male and females. For example , in the story 'People who help us (category one), male and female are associated with different types of careers but this also shows the intersection of gender, cultural, and social class biases in exemplification.

In the stories, men outnumber the females in careers such police, firemen, librarian medical doctors, engineers, bankers, politics and postmen; whereas females are doing stereotypical jobs such as nurse, teacher, cleaner, and social worker. In addition, the work positions are associated with men. Men characters hold higher, complex positions

like business owners, directors, and successful people. On the other hand, women are seen as second human beings where they are portrayed as deputies, assistants, secretaries, and messengers. These gendered, cultural, and social class representations are contrary to the today's realities in the world because the constitutions of many countries even developing countries stipulate equal opportunities for both women and men in the jobs and human rights relation matters as it are well spelt in the South African Constitution (1996).

In category 3, there is only one story showing a man being emotional towards caring and playing with the baby boy while a woman is seen swimming with her friends in the beach. In addition, in another category, a woman shows more emotions towards playing and caring for a baby girl. In the stories, girls are involved in helping mothers and the boys are helping fathers. This indicates the stereotypical representation of mother daughter and father son relationship.

Across the analysed stories, intelligent women are still depicted with pink colour clothes, and though beautiful, they are however presented as manipulators that also practise witchcraft compared to the male natural hero who is rich, brave, and intelligent, see also table 3 below.

**Table 3: Representation of gender and class in theme stories**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>Male</b>	Rich
	Clever
	Brave
	Educated
	Always in blue clothes

	Always seen in stereotypical sport activities such as soccer, guitar, and monopoly.
	Not well dressed
<b>Female</b>	Pink colour clothes
	Beautiful
	Playing with teddy bears

Furthermore, there is stereotypical representation of men and women in sport activities. For example, boys play soccer, guitar, monopoly game, sitting and interacting with friends outside the house while girls play with teddy bears or toys inside the house where they interact with their mothers.

Across all categories of storybooks, the contexts of stories and the images of characters portray stereotypical segregation in terms of **race**, **class**, and **culture**. In the selected theme stories that were analysed, there is little portrayal of **disabilities** across the stories and other stories characters (for example, ‘Afro ant and my garden in category one’) the character portrayal is unclear.

**Table 4: Representation of context, social class, and disability**

<b>Context and disability</b>	<b>Association with social class and gender</b>
Rural life	Associated with poverty, and marginalised community
Urban life	Associated with privileged life and previously advantaged race
Disabled	Powerless, inactive and supported by a woman

Theme stories privilege a particular culture even as though they are used in multicultural classrooms. For example, in the story, ‘Gogo’s birthday’ (Dept of Basic

Education, 2008), the African girl is planning a surprised birthday for her grandmother. She adopts the western culture because she has prepared a guest list though, all her guests are from one race.

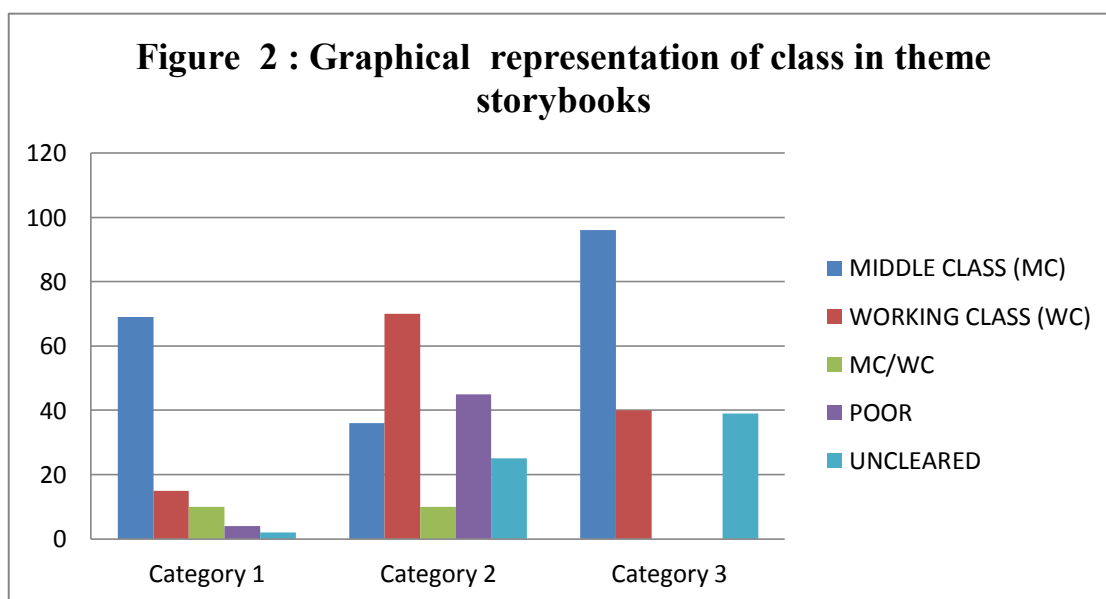
In other words the concepts of multicultural and multiracialism that promote a society composed of various races irrespective of their cultural background are challenged by these stereotypical representations.

The conventional **socio-economic status** representation of grandmothers and grandfathers in categories one and two is another debatable issue. Regarding their outlook appearance most grandmothers are dressed in torn clothes, the story settings are in deep rural arrangements. Grandmothers are not educated; do not know children's rights. For example in category two, a grandmother makes the children climb the tree to fix the house roofing, an act exposing children to danger. These characters are associated with poverty. In contrast, grandfathers are aligned to middle class settings, are well dressed (flamboyant), associated with urban life style, represented as literate because they are shown as reading stories to grandchildren.

In **social class** representation, the categories one and three highlight the abundant representation of urban settings, middle class, and working class. However, the poor class is represented negatively and living in rural areas. Rural life equates to poverty. The cohorts of rural habitants are represented as people who belong to the disadvantage places and they lack basic needs such as electricity and water. The schools are not well developed; there are bad roads, and poor school infrastructure.

For example in the story *Kwenza wase Ngwavuma* (category one) it depicts the feeding scheme for learners who are coming from a disadvantaged rural background. The middle class learners are shown living a privileged life compared to the poor class learners. In other words storybooks still promote classism in learners.

The African are still linked to poverty and rural settings livelihood, whereas in categories two and three stories, Whites represent the middle class irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds. This is a way of depicting particular race based representation that is linked to specific societal settings. What follows next is the chart or diagrammatic presentation of gender, culture, and social-class data.



The representation of disability is a challenge across the theme stories and there is a stereotypical belief that disabled people are powerless and are unable to contribute much in the society—a female teacher character assists them. Thus, only one story in category one represents learners with physical disabilities; however, the disabled learners are not interacting with other able-bodied learners. This promotes learners’ segregation stigmatisation and shows lack of understanding of inclusivity in the classroom settings.

### **5.3 TEACHER'S KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER, CLASS, AND CULTURAL ISSUES**

Like all people in multicultural and multiracial societies, in South Africa, teachers were raised up in different in multiracial and multicultural South African context. As alluded to in earlier chapters of this thesis, the South African apartheid system applied its race based policy where different races grew up, and were educated separately. It is therefore apparent that most teachers who are currently in schools have their own individual perspectives of the world, according to their backgrounds. Therefore, teachers who teach in multicultural and multiracial classrooms have not been formally equipped to teach in such contexts. However, through their experiential knowledge, and understanding some teachers have developed particular ways or strategies to deal with the challenges they face when teaching in the multiracial and multicultural classrooms in order to accommodate all learners regardless of their diverse backgrounds. The question is therefore how do teachers in such contexts deal with their own 'racialised' and gendered backgrounds as they attempt to foster a welcoming classroom environment for all learners. Below is the presentation of the participating grade R teacher's views on gender, class, and culture in relation to theme storybooks that they use in class. As discussed in chapter four, all participating teachers were female because only female teachers were teaching the grade R classes. To observe anonymity the identities of participants are not linked to the data that was collected. The identification of participants were substituted with pseudonyms names.

#### **5.3.1 The grade R teachers' narratives on culture**

The three participating grade R teachers have slightly different but overlapping views on culture as represented in theme storybooks that they use in classes. **Ms Whyte** has a view that the diverse religions are not represented in theme storybooks. Her observation is that in the theme storybooks, only Christianity and Muslim are represented and she

believes this to be a narrow representation of religion as there are many other religious groups among the Africans and among the Indian communities; that is apart from Christianity and Muslim religions. She narrates:

*Let me start with issue of culture in theme storybook; if I look at the three issues that you have asked that is gender, social class and culture. There is quite a bit that I can deduce from the theme stories but if I look at this theme 'Celebrations'. There are...not many or not all the religions that are represented in this theme. If I look back at our constitution that gives each religion freedom of expression and respect that it deserves. In this theme, different religions or religious celebrations are not given the respect as it is outlined by the constitution of South Africa.*

*If I look at how all the religions are represented for example, most African religions like Shembe, Zion, and Hindus are not mentioned or represented in this theme...they are marginalised.*

*Our children need to be taught or be exposed to the different types of religions that are in this country including African religions not only Christianity and Muslim, as it is common in most theme storybooks. They also need to be enlightened on what is taking place in this country that it is a rainbow [multicultural] country.*

*Something else that I need to mention is that the Muslim people that are even mentioned in the theme books, represent a certain group of Asian people; meaning they are not representation of all the Asians in South Africa.*

In Ms Whyte's explanation, it can be deduced that in theme storybooks, the theme stories are not representing all the different types of cultural and religious observations and celebrations in the South African context.

The second teacher participant, **Ms Collins** also expressed that the theme storybooks do not adequately represent different cultures. She has a view that the apartheid ideology that disadvantaged African people is evident in the theme storybooks as poverty is linked to the Africans who are at times portrayed as living in shantytowns. According to Ms Collins, this does not represent reality where all cultural/racial groups do experience poverty. Ms Collins also expressed her views about African people who are portrayed in westernised appearances. She narrates,

*Learners, bring the values of their backgrounds they come from into the school. The apartheid has played a large role in the education system. Although South Africa no longer supports apartheid, it is well known that its effects still linger. This is evident in the theme stories for grade R where the issues of gender, class, and culture are not adequately represented. Although most of these stories include the previously disadvantaged African people co-existing with White people, there is no mention of Indian or Coloured people; and I being an Indian teacher, how do I teach these values to children who have no inclination as to what my culture is all about? One of the most significant barriers to learning is the curriculum, which arises from aspects such as content, language, teaching methods, resources etc.*

*The curriculum is inflexible....Materials used for teaching and learning, which constantly reflect only one culture or life experience, lead to learners from other cultures or life experiences feeling excluded or marginalised. Although we have 20 years as a*



*democratic country, segregation still exists even for those who wrote these theme stories. When planning went into these theme stories I think they did not consider diversity and inclusivity and they probably took their background and values into consideration.*

*Before I even mention the stories let us look at the workbook, the national anthem is on every front cover. This alone shows us that diversity must be included in the curriculum... but when we open the book to page one it is far from reflecting a diverse nation. How many educators actually take the time to teach the learners the national anthem? Most of them don't and it's sad to say that I as an educator am also guilty of that. The national anthem was put on the front cover for a reason and it shows us that it is the first step to teach our learners about diversity in a multicultural classroom.*

*The theme story 'where people live' African people are depicted as the only ones who live in squatter camps or shacks and this equates with poverty and lower class. This stems from the African culture and coming from Group Areas Act and having to relocate their homes because of their race; and having nowhere to go they had no choice but to build shacks where ever a vacant land existed if they were allowed to live there. In today's world low cost-housing have been built for people that previously live in shacks. Although shack settlements do exist, poverty also exist in all cultures; and whether you are White, African, Coloured or Indian, if you are financially disadvantaged. Yes, the ideal of a shack originated in the African culture but what is prevalent today is that if you walk into a shack settlement you are sure to find more than one race.*

*The theme story 'Surprise for Gogo' – it is very evident in the theme story that it is a very conservative African family, still using the*

*word Gogo and belonging to a very cultured African family, but they are influenced by western culture as there is mention of written invitations of which rural black families don't even know that exist. Western culture has infiltrated the traditional black family.*

*The theme story celebrations includes many western cultures, yes it includes Indians, White and African, but in reference to sharing the same culture like Christmas is celebrated by all people, but what about African cultures and their celebrations, it is not included in this theme story.*

*The theme story 'My family' shows the African woman wearing a short skirt with high heel shoes, also prevalent to western culture because in the traditional African culture women are not supposed to be dressed like that. Also only in African culture does a woman tie their babies on their backs, but this is a middle class family and the domestic helper is caring the ladies baby on her back but the domestic helper is wearing a short skirt.*

The issues that Ms Collins is raising are important as they touch on the identity of the people. She points out how the Africans have been westernised, and it is their westernised appearances that are foregrounded in the theme storybooks rather than their African cultural identities. She also highlights the poverty issue that is linked to the African characters, which is a reminder of the past apartheid system where Africans were robbed of their land and they became strangers who had to live in shacks.

The third teacher participant, **Ms Sarah** has a view that the theme storybooks that are currently used in schools are slightly better than the ones that were used during the apartheid times because the socio-cultural backgrounds of the learners were not considered in the material used in the past. However, she still observes that the western

culture is acceptable and dominant even when African characters are involved. She narrates,

*The theme stories still focuses on the stereotypical representation ...of diversity...although there is a little improvement compared to the story books series that were read to us while we still at school. The learner support material that was used in our days was completely different from the material what is being used now because I don't think socio- cultural backgrounds were even taken into consideration and sometimes even the stories that were used were not relevant to the content.*

*Western culture is the culture that acceptable and dominant in all theme stories regardless of the race. This is evident in the theme story 'Surprise for Gogo'. The story is about the African family who made a surprise birthday party for their granny and the setting is the rural areas but there are invitation cards.*

Sarah's opinion is that in the stories some culture, particularly the western culture, is more acceptable and dominant and the other cultures are excluded. Therefore, considering the above narratives, it is apparent that the heritage, cultural, and religious celebrations are misrepresented in the theme storybooks contrary to the principles of CAPS (2011) that are underpinned by the constitution of South Africa (1996).

Giroux (2009) posits that the concept of culture constitutes a central place in the production and transformation of historical experience. Therefore, through culture, the ruling class uses power and that power is produced through ideology send to the society. For example, in one of the selected theme stories for the study, the Christianity and Muslim cohorts are represented as a middle class while African religions and other Asian religions are not represented. This is in line with the findings of Hall (2005) who explored the extent of discourses of culture in growing nomadic children's literature.

The results show that representation of culture influence cultural power and class; and such messages may cause ambiguity to learners.

Comparing views by Giroux (2009) on how culture should be represented compared to the findings of this study about the representation of culture in the theme storybooks, it can be argued that theme storybooks are promoting the historical ideologies that perpetuated the misuse of power. Furthermore, the race and class perspectives to society are used to exclude certain sectors of the society, including their beliefs and the values of their cultural religions. The misrepresentation of culture by class and race structures in the multicultural and multiracial society can also be viewed through the finding by Banks (2010) that capture culture as a socially constructed phenomenon.

In terms cultural self-esteem and values, Thomas, Tounsend and Belgrave (2003) are of the opinion that by examining the relationship and influence of cultural identity and values of diverse learners, social adjustment is promoted. The findings support the usefulness of combining multicultural and multiracial identities and values in diverse classroom contexts to enhance self-esteem among learners regardless of their socio-cultural backgrounds. However, based on a study conducted in Japan, Kelley (2008) proposes that ideology; social life and culture should be embedded in values, beliefs, and attitudes as harmony, empathy, loyalty, and patience in children's literature. Rogers and Christian (2007) also confirm this view based on a study that was conducted in the United States of America where the findings point out that anti-racism is organised in children's literature. The implication here is that Japanese culture, social life, values are in line with the storybooks and in United States of America, and storybooks encourage multiculturalism and multiracialism, which is the opposite in the South African context.

### 5.3.2 Three teacher's perception of gender in theme stories

The participating teachers expressed that the traditional gender roles and gender stereotypes were still prevalent in the theme storybooks. **Ms Sarah** articulated that while the storybooks were appropriate for the grade R level, they were not gender sensitive in terms of stereotyping boys and girls. She further points out to the intersection of gender and race; she states,

*Although these stories are relevant and are at the level of grade R curriculum, the stories still portray some elements of gender stereotypes. For example, in the story 'Vicky builds a dam', the majority of the characters in this story are males of a particular race and because the story talks about constructing a dam, Vicky who is a boy takes the leading role in this story. In storybook titled 'Sunny Days', the story talks about different games that learners can play in order to promote their thinking skills. In this story, boys are still seen playing specific gendered sports such as chess, soccer, and playing cards. This is not a representation of reality in our today's world because there are girls that excel more than boys in the same sports that were mainly for boys. This means that the stereotypical belief of the system still value male than females and these stereotypical attitudes are still promoted through children storybooks.*

**Ms Collins'** view was the same as Sarah's as she expressed about the prevailing gendered jobs including house chores in the theme storybooks. She has a view that while not representing the real world of today, the traditional and stereotypical gender roles prevailing in the theme storybooks nevertheless perpetuate these gender stereotypes among young learners. She states,

*In today's world men and woman are groomed to do the same jobs, yet the way gender is perceived in the story 'Jobs people do' learners have the notion that only men can be policeman and women can be teachers. [Moreover], this is evident when asking learners about what do they want to be when they grow up. More likely than not, boys will say 'policeman' and girls will say teachers. The message that is portrayed is that certain jobs are for men and certain jobs are for woman.*

*The theme story 'What I do at home' sends out the messages to learners that women are seen as caregivers, cleaners, and nurses, while men are seen as drivers. Boys can only kick the ball, clean the garden, and protect their family members. Because of this misinterpretation of the messages, learners delineate occupations, play activities, toys as being distinctively male or female.*

**Ms Whyte** reiterated that the theme storybooks portray not only gendered toys for children but also racialised toys where an African girl plays with a black doll and a White girl plays with a white doll. She states,

*Taking a look at the story that we did in the first term, the theme story talks about 'friends'... Something that has triggered me was that when I have a look at this story is that it is about three little girls, two African and one White. The white girl is playing with the white doll and the two African girls are playing with the black dolls, so I asked myself...what are we saying in this story is that you are only attracted only to what you know? Meaning that if I am an African, I can only play with the black doll and if I am White, I can only play with white doll. So my question is that why is it that they are not swapping the toys if they are friends so that they can learn to appreciate and respect one another?*

From the three participant's views and interpretation it is clear that the theme storybooks display some elements of gender and racial stereotyping in terms of career, sport, and games.

### **5.3.3 Three teacher's perceptions of social class in theme stories**

In the apartheid era, white South Africans were educated in order to take managerial positions in society while Africans in South Africa were educated to take menial unskilled inferior positions. Currently, as we live in a democratic South Africa, segregation still exists especially in the theme stories and the messages it portrays to the learners. Not everyone wants to transform society. Society is still heavily influenced by dominant discourses, which promote social inequalities, whether consciously or unconsciously. The theme stories tell us that many people are not willing to let go of their privileged positions. It does not appear that people in power want to change, even though it privileges the rich over the poor. The participating teachers highlighted this point of differential social class that intersects with race. For example, **Ms Collins** states,

*Let's look at class issues- My home [which is a ] middle class family is evidence of progression, as we are having beds, television, pet dogs; but some people don't have these luxuries and there is no mention of them in the theme stories.*

*In the theme story, 'On the farm', when one talks of the farm, we speak about rural farms where people plant their own crops in order to sustain themselves and they also sell in order get money for their families. It's not a business to them but in this story, it is evident that this is commercial farming, a business to the owner as he has many workers working in different parts of the farm to collect whatever is grown there so that it can be sold for a profit.*

*It's more of an upper class. Even the children come from upper class families as they are seen by the types of clothes they are wearing.*

*Let's look at the theme story, 'Farming' it is represented by working class people. The farm is probably owned by a White male as all the workers are African except for the little White boy watching the milking of the cow. He is probably the owner's son, who does not have work showing the White superiority over African people.*

*The themes story 'My Family' is clearly a middle class African family. However, the domestic helper is an African woman, which shows that even class systems exist even amongst people of their own race. She is sitting while a person who is her equal is at her back and call serving her and even watching her children. This is all about status.*

**Ms Sarah**, also has the view that the working class people is not represented in the stories yet the majority of learners in class come from this class of society. She states,

*Eighty per cent of my learners come from working class but what I have noticed, most of the class setting in these theme stories still represent middle, which is not the majority of my learners background. So in order to bridge this gap that has been caused by poor representation of working class I always give my learners an opportunity to do show and tell where all learners are given an opportunity to share their social class background with their peers and teacher without fear and discrimination. They are also given the opportunity to draw and talk about their own drawings.*



**Ms Whyte**, also stated that the representation of social class in the theme storybooks was hardly reflecting the realities of the majority of the learners in the school. She states,

*In these stories, most of the settings promote middle class regardless of the race and this privileges the rich over poor. In the story 'Sweet dreams', the family has beds, pets, and television yet the majority of the learners are still coming from disadvantaged backgrounds and there is little or no representation of their backgrounds in the stories. The stereotypical representation of the social class characters continues to widen the gap between the rich and the poor and this promotes inequality among learners.*

#### **5.4 TEACHERS STRATEGIES OF TEACHING MULTICULTURAL AND MULTIRACIAL CLASSROOM CONTEXT**

The teachers who participated in the study showed an understanding of gender, culture, and class, as they were able to indicate by way of discussion the disparities and the gaps that exist in theme storybooks. However, there is lack of evidence that the teachers have been capacitated to deal with such issues in the classroom. In other words, they have not acquired formal education to use pedagogical strategies that will give learners opportunities to scaffold the concepts of gender, culture, and social class at the elementary classrooms. Nevertheless, teachers, through experience have learnt to apply different teaching strategies such as reverse method, show and tell, inclusive teaching, and personal knowledge teaching in attempts to deal with the issues of inadequate diversity representation in theme storybooks.

However, what is noted is that these teaching strategies were superficial; in other words, they were not dealing with the real issues of misrepresentation that has been indicated earlier in grade R theme stories. Nevertheless, the teacher's strategies are able to embrace all learners and create harmony in classrooms. The teachers were struggling to deal with diversity from their own understanding of multiracial and multicultural classroom settings. However, the promotion of diversity includes awareness; accommodates learner's individual social cultural background, tolerance, and historical context within the classroom. It was evident that the strategies that were used by the three grade R teachers were not explicitly promoting diversity as it can be deduced from Ms Whyte's following narrative where she says that in dealing with issues of gender,

*I use reverse classroom strategies [regarding] tasks by giving the boys the tasks that girls would normally do and vice versa. For example, the girls can open the windows and the boys can sweep the floors and the carpets.*

*Further, I ensure everyone has a chance to be a group leader showing equal importance to boys and girls and not subjecting learners to favouritism.*

*Secondly, I make the classroom gender friendly in that I have included boy dolls as well as girl dolls; posters on the walls include both genders. Regarding the jobs that people do- I have put up both genders doing a certain job and have put up appropriate labels for it.*

*In terms of social-class, I allow each learner to describe his or her family and the jobs that they do. They do shared writing by drawing a picture for what they spoke about showing that all families are*

*important and equal. Concerning families where there is no income, group discussion will entail that they are important as they look after such learners and help them with their homework, which is part of educating them. I put their drawings on the wall to show them that all their families are important.*

*In terms of culture, I use puppet shows to dramatise the different celebrations but I interchange the racial groups for example if we are talking about celebration Eid, I use African learners in the puppet show that describes the religious festival Eid. I have group discussions about families where there are extended families with other races as a lot of learners come from interracial families.*

*Regarding the teaching aid material, I put up posters, artwork of multi-racial existence. Learners learn through discovery and exploration. This exploration is accomplished by incorporating, mirrors, different colour paints, crayons, dramatic play material, variety of dolls, superheroes that represent different ethnic backgrounds.*

*One of my teaching strategies to develop learner's racial and ethnic identities is through painting, drawing self-portraits or family portraits, and any picture dealing with their heritage. This is pinned on the wall to show equity in the classroom. I have in my classroom artefacts from different cultures, clay lamps, Christmas decorations, Zulu shield and sphere, Muslim hat, etc.*

According to Ms Whyte, her reverse classroom strategy in dealing with issues of gender roles in the classroom can be aligned to that of Banks' (1993) equity pedagogy, with its desire for injustice reduction. Bishop (2012) understands multicultural and

multiracial teaching strategies as the pedagogy that is closely attached to the ideologies of social justice and educational equity because its aim is to help the learners to function in a diverse society and become activists of social justice. Furthermore, this pedagogy creates classroom environment for multiple perspectives and function as the multi voices for those who had been marginalised. Cope and Kalantzis (2000) supports the above claim by incorporating the concept of design in teaching multicultural and multiracial classroom and workplace where this concept is seen as dominant for modern world. Thus, teachers and managers of the modern world are seen as designers of the learning process and environments not instructors of change.

**Ms Collins** highlighted her strategies as follows,

*I use personal knowledge teaching strategies. Firstly I would like to mention that the strategies that I use more especially when I am dealing with the issues of gender, class and culture when I am teaching theme stories because these are not confined to one learning area but they are integrated into all learning areas. Therefore, if I need to highlight anything that concerns the three aspects...I always apply my personal knowledge strategies to address the above aspects.*

*I have been teaching multicultural and multiracial grade Rs for thirteen years and what I have noticed is that it is always a big confusion from what the African learners acquired from home in terms of number symbols and my culture for example number six . In the African culture, one thumb represents the number 6 whereas in my culture that is number 1. Although it always shows, confusion from what the learners know, and what is being taught at school. Based on my experience I always make an example based on these different cultures to enlighten my learners that if a person shows a*

*thumb or six both answers means the same thing but in my class...I always do without discriminating their cultural background and knowledge.*

**Ms Sarah** also explained her teaching strategies that attempt to be inclusive of all learners in the classroom. She states,

*I use inclusive teaching strategies. In my class I usually use various teaching strategies in order to accommodate learners' cultural background and to promote equity and tolerance amongst them. These strategies are in line with, and they are guided by the curriculum. In the multicultural and multiracial classroom, it is important to use a teaching strategy that will include all the learners regardless of their socio-cultural background. As I have mentioned before, there are some gaps that the storybooks have so that creates some challenges for me as a teacher. [I have] to come up with a good strategy that I will use in the diverse classroom without disadvantaging other learners. I think this is because of the teaching knowledge and the type of training that I got from the teacher training college because I was not trained to teach the multiracial class. The strategies that I use to teach learners about gender, social class and culture is that after each and every theme story I give my learners activities such as dramatisation. The characters and leading roles are distributed evenly and each and every learner is given equal opportunities in order to build their self-confidence and to improve their thinking and speaking skills.*

## **5.5 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, I discussed the findings of the study showing the emerging themes. The three themes are stereotypical representation of different socio-cultural groups in the grade R theme storybooks, teacher's knowledge, and understanding of issues of social class, culture, gender, and disability, and the teacher's strategies of teaching multicultural and multiracial classroom contexts. The forty theme stories were organised into three categories according to the sources on which they appear; (i) theme story books, (ii) isiZulu stories, and (iii) English library books. All the selected theme stories were from the South African National Department of Basic Education prescribed materials for public schools as learners support materials.

# Chapter 6

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## ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents critical evaluation by reflecting on the data presentation and interpretation discussed in the previous chapter. This reflection seeks to respond to the objectives that guided this study as shown below:

- To explore how gender, class and culture are portrayed in grade R theme storybook(s) taught in multicultural and multiracial classrooms in a school at the North Durban Area in South Africa
- To explore teachers' knowledge and understanding of gender, class and culture as they apply to language pedagogy in grade R classrooms in a school at the North Durban Area in South Africa
- To explore teachers' strategies in teaching theme story book(s) to multicultural and multiracial grade R learners in a school at the North Durban Area in South Africa

However, to achieve these objectives effectively, an interpretive paradigm, a descriptive qualitative content analysis research design and Bernstein's theory of pedagogical discourse was applied. According to Holloway (2005, p. 293), methodology means a framework of theories and principles on which methods and procedures are based. The emerging themes from the findings that answer the study objectives were through the literature reviews and concepts. The forty theme storybooks and three schedule individual interviews with selected grade R teachers

were guarded with the following parameters: gender, class, culture, and disabilities in learners' theme storybooks. De Vos (2002, p. 360) states that during the interaction between the researcher and the research participants, the participants world is discovered and interpreted by means of qualitative method.

## **6.2.Discussion**

### **(i) Exploration of gender, class and culture as portrayed in grade R theme storybook(s) taught in multicultural and multiracial classrooms**

This study drew on Bernstein's theory of pedagogical discourse because it describes the classroom structures, learner's background language, and school curriculum that serve as a lens for inclusivity in terms of multiculturalism.

The findings in the study depict that context and the images of characters still portray stereotypical roles in terms of gender, class and culture. In addition, there is little portrayal of disability characters as they are illustrated in passive roles.

In a study in the United Kingdom, Hudson and Walmsley (2005) traced the history of teaching English language within the school curriculum from the late Nineteenth Century to the present day, taking into account the influence linguistics as a discipline has had upon that teaching. However, what Hudson and Walmsley did not take account of; the ways in which educational policy has shaped that teaching, nor the role played by the subject 'English', and grammar within it, in maintaining and reproducing notions of national identity, including those of social class (Clark, 2001).

**Gender representation:** In the study, the males are depicted as heroes, leading characters; the world revolves around them while female characters are depicted as inferior, caregivers, always with the babies on their backs, serving food and timid, and



always rescued by males. Female characters mostly occupy the space inside the home while the male and children are seen playing outside with the children. The boys' social world is always seen filled with play and freedom while the girls are confined to the indoors and they are always given responsibilities.

In terms of professional job description, adult males are depicted fulfilling more stereotypical gender roles such as doctor, police officer, fire fighter, lawyer, and farmer. However, adult females are portrayed as mothers, domestic workers, teachers, and nurses.

As a school, the education system plays a key role in transmitting dominant ideologies of society. One of the ways it does this is through the reproduction and maintenance of a standard variety of a language through which, in turn, notions of national and cultural identity are transmitted. However, through written texts and spoken interactions, what learners learn at school may or may not be consistent with what they learn at home or in the community. Consequently, home and school language disjuncture and cultural differences can create conflict and are of much interest for educational focus. Standard English in English language is associated with the middle class, for reasons that are historical and date back to the Eighteenth Century and the processes of standardisation (Clark, 2005).

Further, language is also, in the modern world, a key feature of national identity, and it was this feature of language that figured as a central argument in establishing the teaching of English as central to a school curriculum in the Twenty-first Century.

**Class representation:** In social class representation, the study highlighted over representation of urban settings, middle class, and working class. Additionally, the poor class is represented adversely, they live in rural areas, are identified with rural life that equates to poverty; reside in the disadvantaged places that lack basic needs.

In terms of **classism**, middle class characters are shown leaving privileged life compared to poor class. For example, Africans are still linked to poverty and rural settings livelihood; whereas Whites are classified as middle class characters irrespective of their socio-economic background. The representation of disability, though narrow, but depicts a challenge generally, in the sense that there is stereotypical belief that they are powerless people who are unable to contribute anything in the society in that they are not socialised because they don't interact with other able-bodied members of the community. This further shows that there is still an element of segregation, stigmatisation, and absence of inclusivity in the classroom settings.

In Basil Bernstein's *Class, Codes and Control*, spanning 1971 to 1990, he investigated the relationship between language and education. He was particularly interested in the ways in which this relationship not only reflects but also structures inequality. He insisted that the relationship between language and social class was fundamental, in education context, to accessing educational opportunity. Further, Bernstein argued that the distribution of educational access was clearly tied to class, particularly through the language used in its distribution, and that educational failure was often, in a very general sense, language failure. In his theory of pedagogic discourse, Bernstein turned his attention to the ways in which discourse functions in society and the part it plays in maintaining social order, especially discourse concerned with education (1990, 1996).

**Culture representation:** The findings for the study show that African culture is not well represented because of the stereotypical bias in terms of race. African cultures and people are represented and identify with poverty in the society while Western culture is not only seen as dominant but acceptable to all the races and represented as the privileged group in the society.

Conversely, Tarman and Tarman (2011) suggest that multicultural education is a process of transformative movement that includes curriculum content and classroom

programs in order to build educational equity and social justice but Bishop (2012) defines multiculturalism as an outcome of multicultural education movement which seeks to transform diverse classrooms so that all learners can reach their full potential. While in Banks (1993), Sleeter & Grant (1998) opine that multiculturalism is viewed as the concept that develop models for implementing multicultural education in elementary grades since it encourages the development of positive attitudes amongst learners and considers multicultural education in terms of totality. That is, multiculturalism educates learners about social competence, builds the relationships with the society, and creates the need for learning how to respond to cultural and ethnic differences. This integration helps the learners to respect and understand diverse cultures, class, gender, and disabilities. Thyssen (2012) argue that the concept of multiracialism in the context of South Africa is to explore the way in which historical stereotypes disseminate and challenge racism in children's literature that were published after the apartheid regime. King (2008) supports the above view by alludes that children are often thought of as too young to comprehend the complexes of multiracialism; however they learn that race is linked to power by the time they reach elementary grades. Giddens views power relation both as transformative capacity and as domination (Gaventa, 2003). Foucault (1998) also understands power relations as the concept that involves both confines and enablement. Macey (2000) claims hegemony is the concept that explains how different groups or individuals can maintain their power for example dominant classes to follow subordinate ones to accept or adopt their values and norms. In McLauren's (2009) views, he said that the dominant culture of the dominant class where they exercise domination over marginalised classes or groups without using force is seen as hegemony.

Contrarily, while Bernstein's work or theory is in support of equality classroom structures and context however, according to Singh (2002), his theory has hidden curriculum with little application to the everyday world of schooling.

Therefore, Bernstein pedagogical theory serves this study as explanatory and analytical tools with which to study how gender, class, culture and disabilities operates in theme storybooks are or portrayed.

**(ii) Exploration of teachers' knowledge and understanding of gender, class, and culture as they apply to language pedagogy in elementary grades**

The findings about teacher's knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon in the study suggest that culture, gender, class, and disabilities are not fairly represented in the theme story book(s). They support their argument with the fact that theme storybooks are not addressing issues like diversity well as contained in the CAPS (2011). The participants are of mixed opinions (though saying one thing from different angle), in the sense that one says learners theme storybooks are not in line with CAPS, and there is an interphase. However, the other participant still believes that the problem is rooted in the apartheid system where African culture, class are not considered while the last participants is looking at the gaps of teaching skills or methodology acquired from the higher degree education not addressing diversity the way it ought to be represented. Therefore, this makes the teacher suggests that having seen the gap they therefore resolve to use their own background knowledge of language in teaching culture, gender, class, and disabilities as it is lacking in the learner support materials they are using.

Therefore, the participant's ideals of using their background knowledge language are in line with Bernstein (1990) where his discourse shows the role played by language in education as it structures inequality. He insists that the relationship between language and social voices such as class, gender, culture are fundamental in education context, in accessing educational opportunity. Further, Bernstein argues that the distribution of educational access is very clearly tied to social voices, particularly through the language used in its distribution, and that educational failure is often, in a very general

sense, language failure. However, while Bernstein takes social voices into consideration yet its theory lack the voices of working class.

**(iii) Exploration of teacher's strategies in teaching theme storybook(s) to multicultural and multiracial elementary classroom context**

The findings indicate that teaching strategies adopted by the participants were superficial, in other words they were not dealing with the real issues of misrepresentation as they were indicated in elementary theme stories. Nevertheless, they only create synchronisation in the classroom so that all learners can be included. From the findings, the participants said they were using different teaching strategies such as; reverse classroom teaching strategies, personal knowledge strategies and inclusive teaching strategies. This finding shows that these teachers were superficially struggling to unpack the link between diversity and the understanding of multiracial and multicultural classroom settings.

Bernstein (1990, p. 189) suggests that changes in the theory of teaching and learning may have consequences for the ordering of pedagogical practice in the classroom. However, he suggests that there are rules that govern the application of pedagogic practice in the classroom. Bernstein (1990, 1996, and 2000) describes the organising and disorganising principles of the pedagogising of knowledge as the pedagogic device. He suggests that this device constitutes the relay or assembly of rules or procedures via background knowledge, which is converted into pedagogic communication. Such pedagogic communication acts on meaning potential, that is, the potential knowledge that is available to be transmitted and acquired. The pedagogic device provides the generative principles of the privileging texts of school knowledge through three interrelated rules: distributive, recontextualising, and evaluative. These rules are hierarchically related and have power relations amongst them. This knowledge is used

to understand how the teacher interprets and practices the learner centered pedagogy in the classroom situation.

### **6.3 CONCLUSION**

The findings indicate that the grade R theme storybooks seem challenged in addressing the imbalances of the past in terms of gender, culture, social class and disability. While there are attempts to challenge the stereotypical representation of gender but male characters still play in leading roles.

The stories indicate the division in terms of social class where rural settings are marginalised and seen as excluded and represented by the disadvantaged groups due to apartheid. Although rural settings also constitute the large learner population, middle class is more represented in urban settings and endorsed as acceptable class in the society. Schools should be perceived as sites that facilitate inclusion rather than exclusion. The grade R theme storybooks seem to promote voices of the minority middle class learners who make less population social group in the South African context.

Furthermore, the study reveals that the teachers have not yet begun to engage with the contemporary issues informing inclusive learning. These include the diverse context of learners irrespective of their socio-cultural background, social justice as well as anti-bias education.

The findings also point out to a definite role of South African teacher education in higher education institutions to deepen both theoretical and practical insights in elementary pedagogical knowledge through teacher –focused interventions.

## 6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations based on the findings of the study:

- The Department officials to consider multiracial and multicultural issues when screening and evaluating learner support material such as storybooks for diverse learners.
- Publishers to improve and revise the learner support material for multicultural classrooms context.
- Teachers need on-going support in the form of in-service training and workshops that will assist them in implementing an appropriate multicultural pedagogy.
- Further research is needed into determining the teacher's strategies in teaching multiracial and multicultural classroom context.

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# Appendix A: RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

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## Interview Schedule for the participants

**A.** I will introduce myself to the participant and my purpose.

**B.** 1. Teacher's profile (name, years of experience, age, gender, school).

2. Explain what you understand by language perspective in story books?

3. How gender is represented in the theme stories?

Why do you think gender is represented that way and why?

Positive or negative? Why?

4. How class is portrayed in the theme stories?

Is it positive or negative and why?

5. Tell me how culture is represented in the theme stories?

Is it positive or negative how and why?

What should be done and how?

6. How should gender be taught in a multiracial and multicultural classroom using theme story book?

Why should it be taught that way?

7. How should social class be taught in a multiracial and multicultural classroom and why?

Why should it be taught that way?

9. Discuss how language is taught in a multiracial and multicultural context using theme story books and why? How should it be taught and why?

# Appendix B: GATEKEEPER PERMISSION LETTER



education

Department:  
Education  
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Nomangisi Ngubane

Tel: 033 392 1004

Ref: 2/4/8/283

Ms RGL Cele  
47 Jupiter Road  
WESTVILLE  
3629

Dear Ms Cele

## PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: "EXPLORING TEACHER'S STRATEGIES IN TEACHING THEME STORY BOOK(S) IN SELECTED MULTICULTURAL AND MULTIRACIAL ELEMENTARY (GRADE R) CLASSROOMS AT THE NORTH DURBAN AREA IN SOUTH AFRICA", in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 October 2014 to 31 December 2014.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (Pinetown District).

**Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD**  
Head of Department: Education  
Date: 6 October 2014

### KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa  
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004 beyond the call of duty  
EMAIL ADDRESS: [kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za](mailto:kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za) / [Nomangisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za](mailto:Nomangisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za)  
CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: [www.kzneducation.gov.za](http://www.kzneducation.gov.za)

# Appendix C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



10 October 2014

Mrs Rejoice Gugu Umdlwe Cele 209540834  
School of Education  
Edgewood Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/1297/014M  
Project title: Exploring teacher's strategies in teaching theme story book(s) in selected multicultural and multiracial elementary (Grade R) classrooms at the North Durban Area in South Africa.

Dear Mrs Cele:

In response to your application dated 09 October 2014, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **EXPEDITED APPROVAL**.

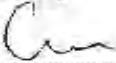
Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



Dr Shonuka Singh (Chair)

/pc

cc Supervisor: Professor TM Buthelez  
cc Academic Leader Research: Dr P Mondjole  
cc School Administrator: Mr T Mbenzua

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Shonuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Gowen Mkhel Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X2401, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0)31 263 3597/33404457 Facsimile: +27 (0)31 269 4609 Email: [hr@ukn.ac.za](mailto:hr@ukn.ac.za) / [hr@ukn.ac.za](mailto:hr@ukn.ac.za) / [hr@ukn.ac.za](mailto:hr@ukn.ac.za)

Website: [www.ukn.ac.za](http://www.ukn.ac.za)

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100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Westville Campus Edgewood Howari College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

## Appendix D: PRINCIPAL PERMISSION LETTER

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Mrs Gugu Cele

47 Jupiter Road

Westville

3629

[ggcele3@gmail.com](mailto:ggcele3@gmail.com)

0826487854

18 August 2014

Mr D.A. D.Mathou

Ferndale Primary School

Private Bag X04

4028

Dear Sir

### **PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL**

I am a Masters student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This letter serves to ask for permission and at the same time inform you that I have selected your school as one of the schools in the Pinetown district area where I intend to conduct my research. The research will be carried between 13/10/2014 to 22/10/2014. My research project is titled: Exploring teacher's strategies in teaching theme story book(s) in selected multicultural and multiracial elementary (grade R) classrooms at the North Durban Area in South Africa.

The research is to be conducted among three grade R teachers. In order not to interrupt the school programme, I will conduct the interviews during the teacher's non-contact time so that it does not interrupt the school programme. As my research does not include classroom observations, I will not also visit the classes.



This study will identify areas of what learners struggling to learn and strategies that teachers use to teach in the multicultural context using theme story book(s). I hope that the finding results if positive will contribute to the new teacher developmental programs and to strengthen better foundation phase teacher education development.

Enclosed here, is a letter from Department of Education authorizing me to conduct the research in schools.

My supervisor for this study at the University of KwaZulu-Natal is Professor Thabisile M. Buthelezi; and she can be contacted at any time. Her contact details are as follows: e-mail: [Buthelezit10@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Buthelezit10@ukzn.ac.za); Telephone: +27 31 2603471. Cell no. +27 76 1412324. You can also contact the University of KwaZulu-Natal Research Office via Ms P. Ximba at the HSSREC Research Office. Her contact details are [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za); Telephone: +27312603587.

Thank you in advance.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Gugu Cele

# Appendix E: INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPANTS

---

**Mrs Gugu Cele**  
**47 Jupiter Road**  
**Westville**  
**3629**  
**Ggcele3@gmail .com**  
**0826487854**  
**17 August 2014**

Grade R teachers  
**Ferndale Primary School**  
Private Bag X04  
Laurien Crest  
4028

Dear Madam

## **REQUEST: PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

I am a Masters student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This letter serves to ask for your permission to participate in my research. The research will be carried out from 13/10/2014 to 22/10/2014. My research is titled: Exploring teacher's strategies in teaching theme story book(s) in selected multicultural and multiracial elementary (grade R) classrooms at the North Durban Area in South Africa.

The research is to be conducted among three female grade R teachers. I have purposely selected these teachers because they teach multicultural and multiracial grade R learners and their participation will provide reach information about the phenomenon being studied.

You have an option not to participate and/or to withdraw your participation at any time during the research and that will not disadvantage you or your school or your family or your community in any way. However, I encourage that you participate in this study, as it will help improve education. During the research, I will be taping, videotaping, and photographing some of the discussions to enable the analysis of information. In this, you also have an option to switch off the tape at any time during the research. You may also not to give permission for videotaping and / or photographing to occur during the session.

This study will identify areas of what learners struggling to learn and strategies that the teachers use to teach in the multiracial and multicultural context using theme story book(s). I hope that the findings result if positive will contribute to teacher developmental programs and to strengthen better foundation phase teacher development education development.

No information that you will provide will be linked to your name, school, community, and family. Similarly, all reports that will be written using the information obtained will also not bear your name or name of your school or family. Only my supervisor and I will have access to the information that you will provide.

Enclosed here, is a letter from Department of Education authorising me to conduct the research in schools.

My supervisor for this study at the University of KwaZulu-Natal is Professor Thabisile M. Buthelezi; and she can be contacted at any time. Her contact details are as follows: e-mail: [Buthelezit10@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:Buthelezit10@ukzn.ac.za); Telephone: +27 31 2603471. Cell no. +27 76 1412324. You can also contact the University of KwaZulu-Natal Research Office via Ms P. Ximba at the HSSREC Research Office. Her contact details are [ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za); Telephone: +27312603587.

Thank you in advance.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Gugu Cele

0826487854

.....

**Letter of Declaration**

**(To be completed by volunteer applicant)**

I.....(full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

.....

**SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT**

.....

**DATE**

-----  
**Additional consent (where applicable)**

**I hereby provide consent to:**

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Video-record my interview / focus group discussion	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Use of my photographs for the research purposes	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>

.....

**SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT**

**DATE**

# Appendix F

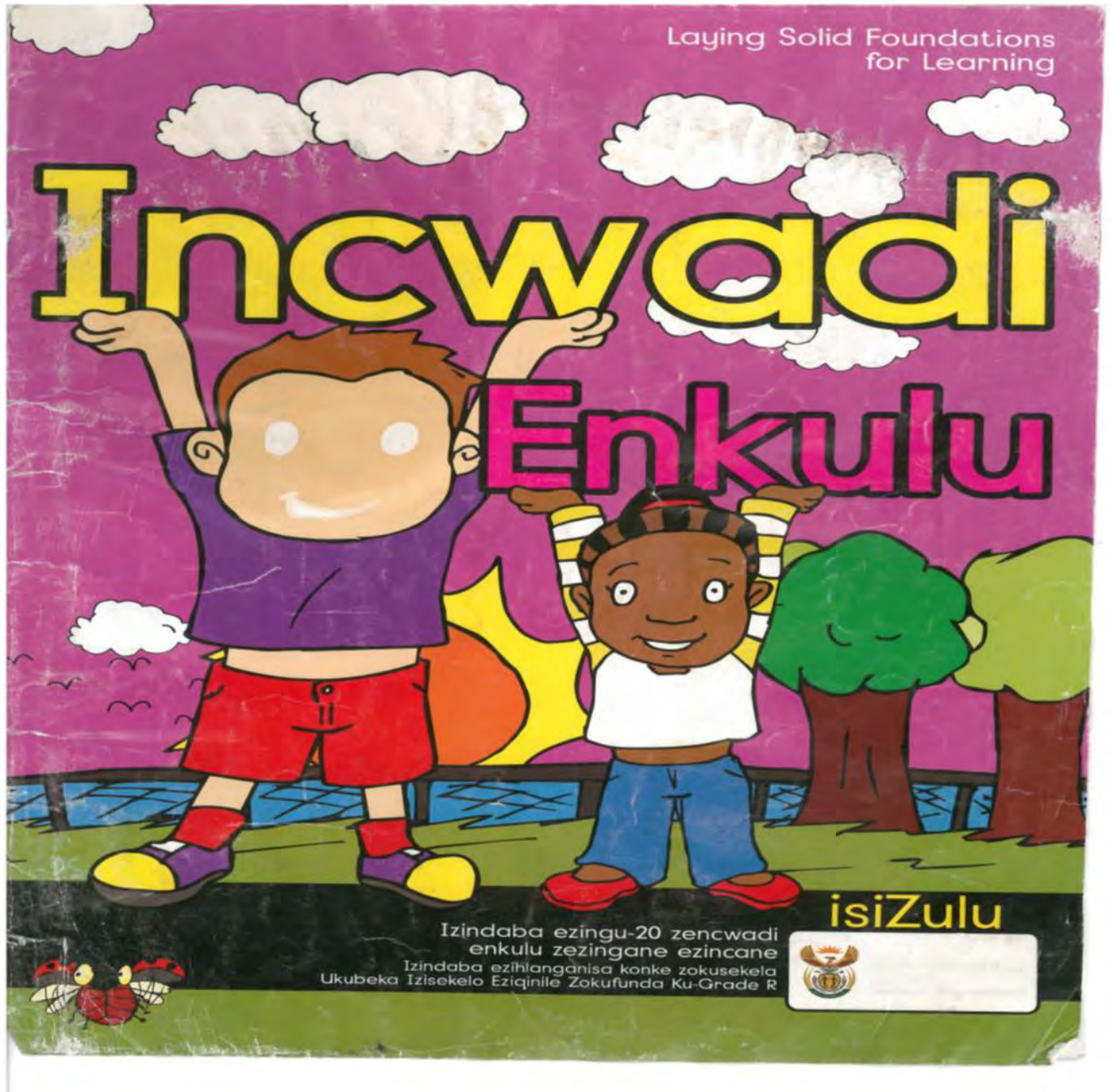
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List of references of the theme story books analysed

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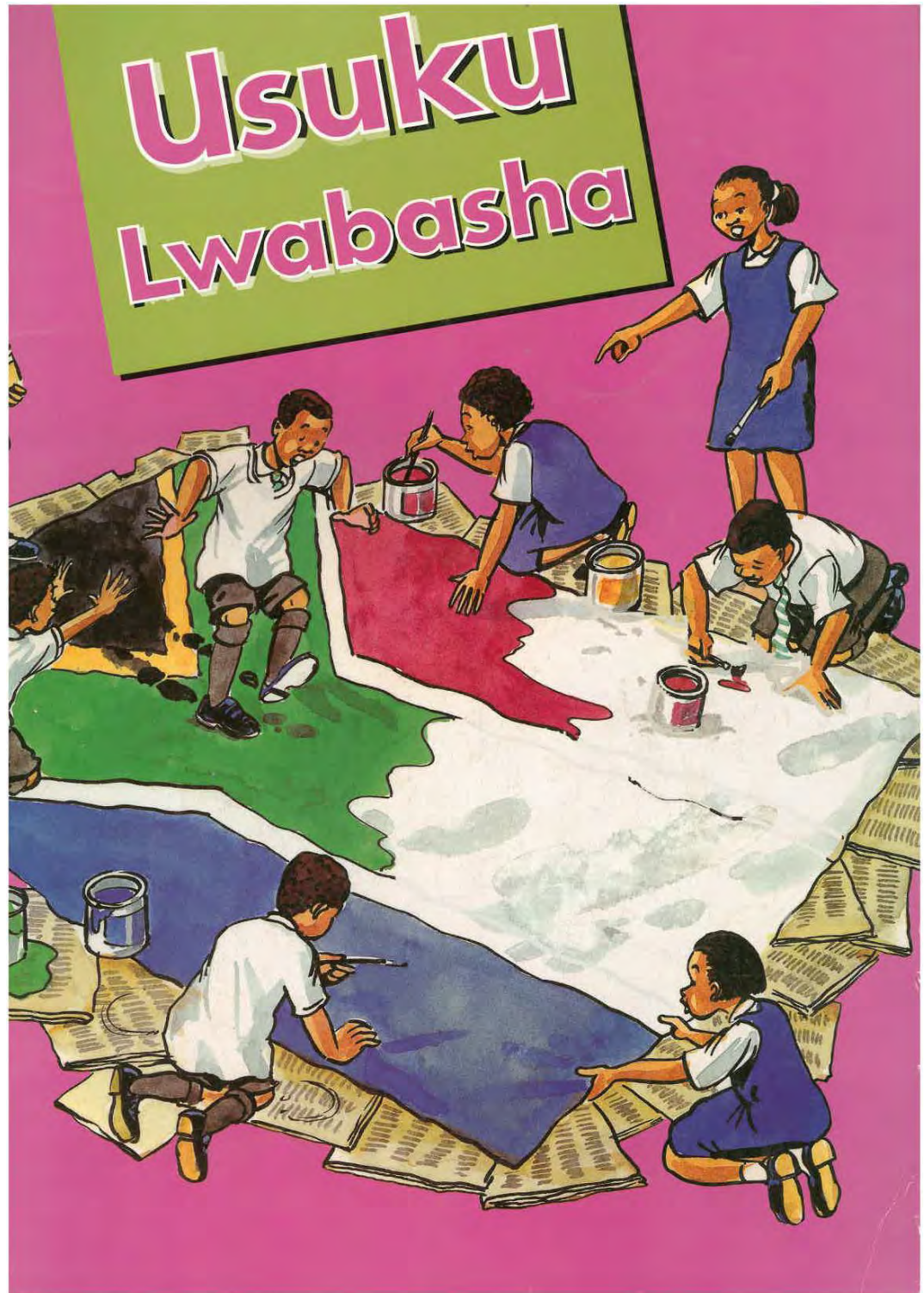
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# Appendix G



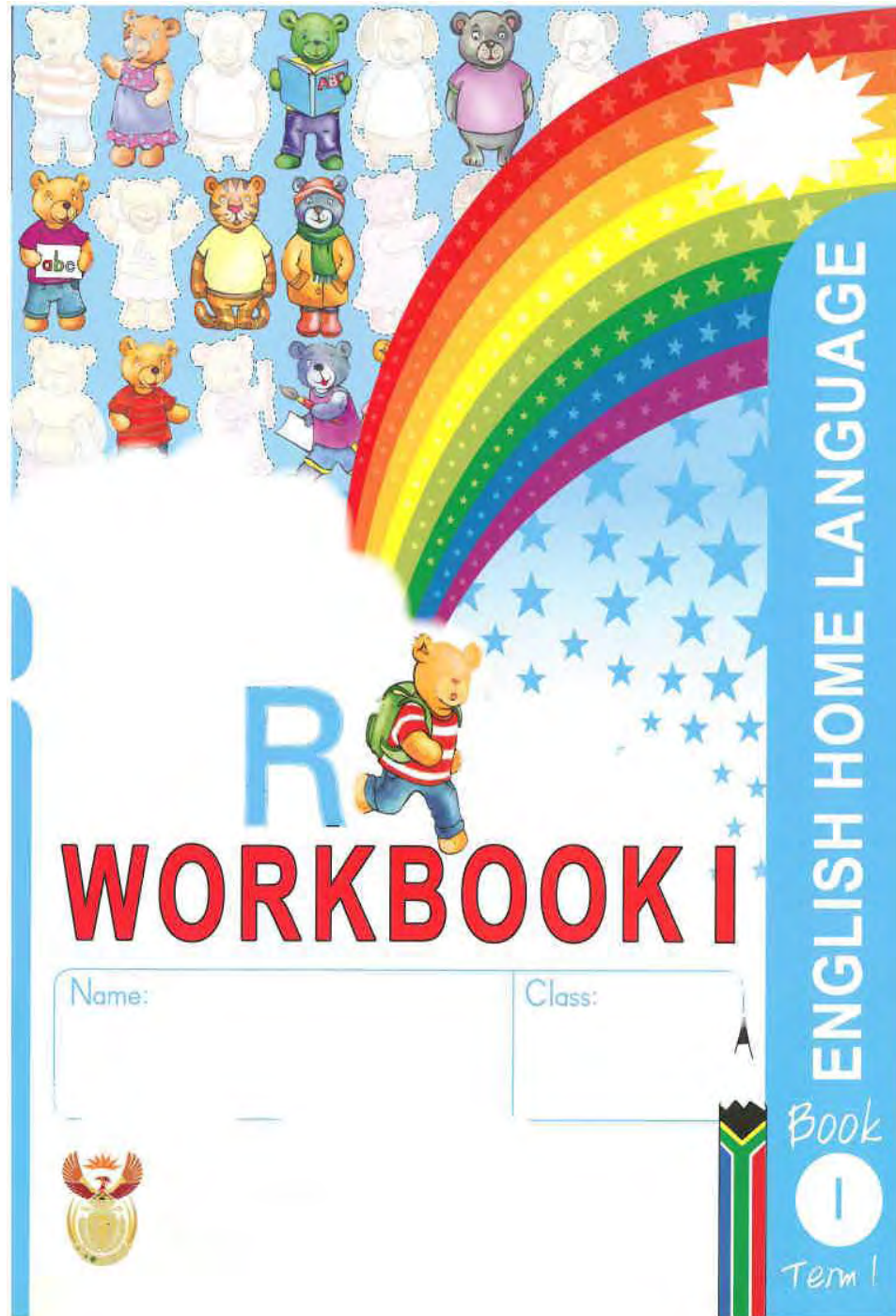


## Appendix H

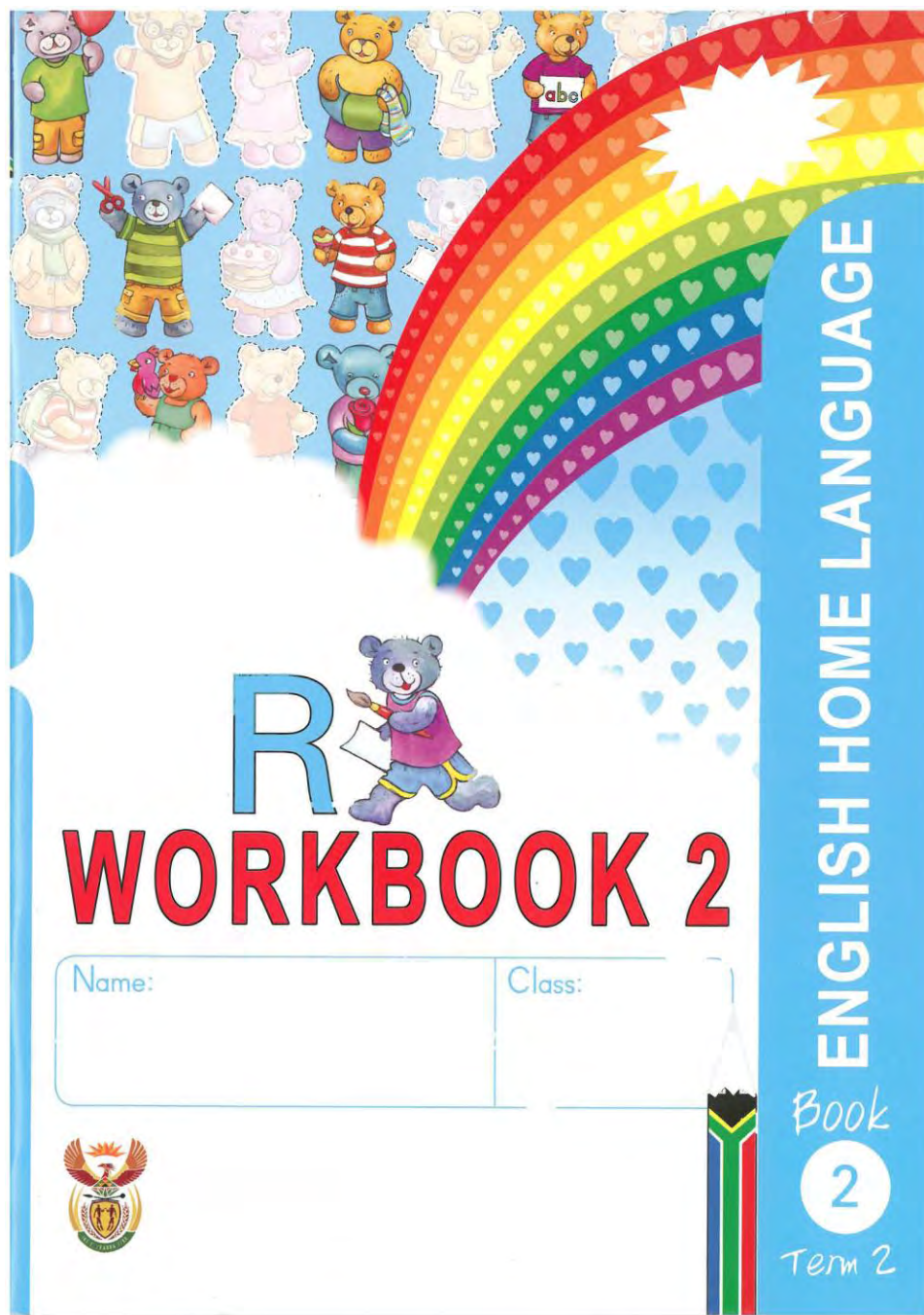




# Appendix I

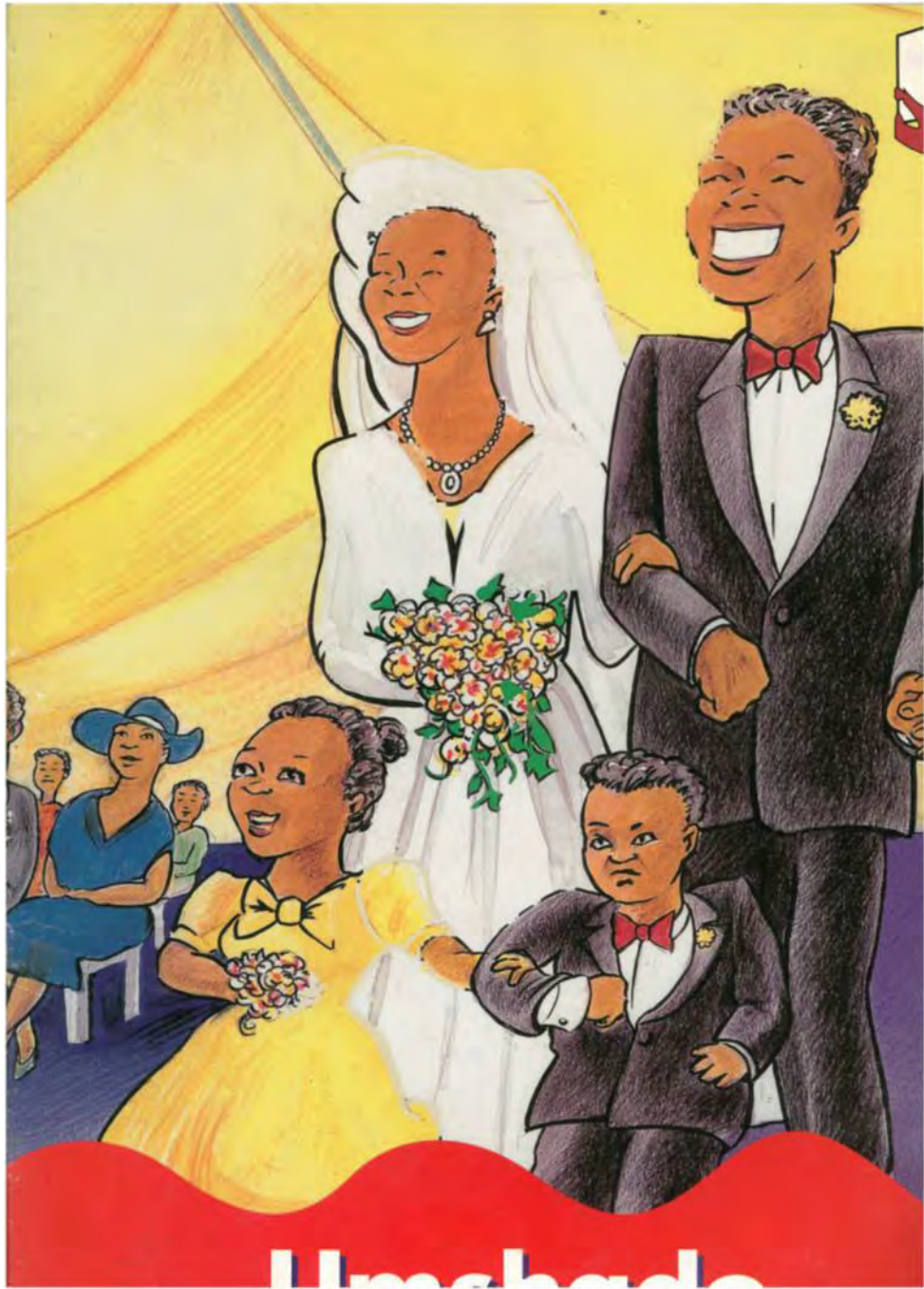


# Appendix J





# Appendix K



# Appendix L

