

**An evaluation of oral feedback as a means of scaffolding
for postgraduate student writing.**

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Abstract

Universities in South Africa as yet do not provide multilingual education. For many students this means they have to use their second or additional language for the Discourse of the academic world. This dissertation investigates one Honours /Masters module offered by a lecturer in the theology department. It describes, in the form of a case study, how the lecturer uses the oracy skills (listening and speaking) to scaffold the students into the appropriate use of Academic Discourse. This lecturer uses the practicality of fieldwork, the intensity of emotional work and the flexibility of the spoken discourse to guide students into the reflexivity and criticality of the Academic Discourse. The data is discussed in terms of discourse analysis, genre theory and academic literacy, together with current understanding of feedback during process writing. My focus is on oral feedback. The results of this study indicate that the lecturer, and the students who took his module, felt satisfied that a greater depth of theological and linguistic criticality and reflexivity had been reached. The focus of this dissertation was on the students' uptake of the oral feedback given by the lecturer. It was the process that was explored rather than the final written product. Further research could investigate how much the students' writing improves as a result of intervention such as this. The lecturer's pedagogy maximised the language skills used in the Preacher (hortatory) Discourse that have something in common with the skills required in Academic (expository) Discourse. This dissertation concludes that these skills should be maintained while also developing the other skills required for Academic Discourse. These skills include the ability to be detached and uninvolved. However, if this detachment is to be achieved, the student needs first to be fully involved in the process so that transformation and appropriation can take place. This comes about through critical reflection - the hallmark of Academic Discourse.

Declaration

I, Jennifer Anne Kerchhoff, declare that this study represents my own work and has not been submitted to any other university. Where use is made of the work of others it has been duly indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



Jennifer Anne Kerchhoff

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List of Abbreviations and acronyms

BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills
CALP	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
MT	Mother Tongue
MOI	Medium of instruction
NMT	Non Mother Tongue

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Chapter One - Introduction

1.1 Overview of the Research

This research explores some of the academic language difficulties facing English Second or English Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) speakers studying in an English environment. The research reports on a case study of one Theology Honours/Masters module run by a lecturer with a class of ten ESL/EFL students. His awareness of the oral tradition from which many of his students originate, meant he made innovative use of the speaking and listening skills in order to develop appropriate writing skills. The aim of this study is to investigate whether greater use of the speaking and listening skills can be beneficial to postgraduate students.

The data was collected over a year. During the first semester questionnaires were developed and administered throughout the postgraduate theology department. Respondents to the questionnaires were the fourteen lecturers of the higher degrees committee and a 'convenience sample-group' of fourteen Theology Honours/Masters students. During the second semester I attended the one module identified in the questionnaire with a methodology making explicit use of speaking and listening skills. This developed into a case study focusing on one lecturer and the ten students taking his module entitled 'Church and AIDS'. The case study included both observations and interviews.

Proficiency in English involves four skills: reading and writing, the literacy skills, and listening and speaking, coined 'oracy' skills by Andrew Wilkinson (MacLure, 1988:ix). He based this "on the analogy of literacy - to stress the importance of the language skills of listening and talking". It took another twenty years before these were taken seriously at the first International Oracy Convention in 1987.

Literacy skills, in particular, have been extensively researched. The focus of this research is on the use of the oracy skills as a scaffold to develop academic literacy. All four skills constantly interact, but the purpose of this research was to ascertain whether greater use of the oracy skills would produce greater academic success.

The language skills are:

Type of Skill	Receptive	Productive
Oracy skills	Listening	Speaking
Literacy skills	Reading	Writing

Fig 1: The four language skills

This research focuses on whether exploiting the oracy skills: listening (receptive) and speaking (productive) could result in a better written end product.

1.2 **Theoretical Framework for the Thesis**

Four theoretical areas are explored in this thesis, which are outlined separately below.

However, they are integrated into one framework.

- Comparisons between written and spoken language
- Theories of secondary discourses, genres and communities of practice
- Requirements for academic communication
- The use of oral feedback to help students

1.2.1 **Theories Comparing the Spoken and Written Modes**

Halliday (1989) proposes various features characteristic of spoken discourse as opposed to written discourse. He compares the permanence of writing with the transcendence of speaking. Different researchers have suggested various binary pairs to describe opposing features instead of the simplistic divide of the spoken and the written discourses. These binary pairs are illustrated in Fig 2 below and are discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

The students in Theology are accustomed to presenting knowledge through the spoken mode as many of them are preachers. Sermons are mostly spoken, yet have several characteristics that are generally associated with written texts. The aim of this research is to investigate whether more use of the familiar oracy skills would scaffold the progress of students to more appropriate academic writing. It would do this by beginning with their existing knowledge of what is required in formal speech.

At the risk of being over-simplistic, I have plotted on a continuum some of the distinctions suggested between the characteristics of writing and speaking:

Halliday (1989)	synoptic	←————→	dynamic
Foley (1997)	integrated	←————→	fragmented
Chafe (1982)	detached	←————→	involved
Biber (1988)	edited texts	←————→	interactive
Ochs (1979)	planned	←————→	unplanned
Tannen (1985)	less focus on involvement	←————→	more
Bateman (1995)	one-way communication	←————→	two-way
Chafe (1982)	context-free	←————→	context-dependent

Fig 2: Characteristics of writing and speaking

1.2.2 The Theories of Discourse (Communities of Practice) and Genre

All final assessment in the discipline of theology requires writing. However the writing demanded is specific to the academic world and to the discipline. Gee (1996) has developed a theory of Secondary Discourses and several researchers have created the idea of Discourse Communities/Communities of Practice (Johns:1997). Eggins and Martins (1997) link the 'Register and Genre Theory' to the understanding of Discourse and Community of Practice because genres are central to these.

Firstly, Gee's Discourse Theory (Gee, 1996) describes how various secondary discourses are possible in different situations. Academic Discourse is one of many secondary discourses and therefore can be learned, either implicitly or explicitly. The secondary discourse with which most theology students are already familiar in their role of priests and pastors is what I have called the Preacher Discourse.

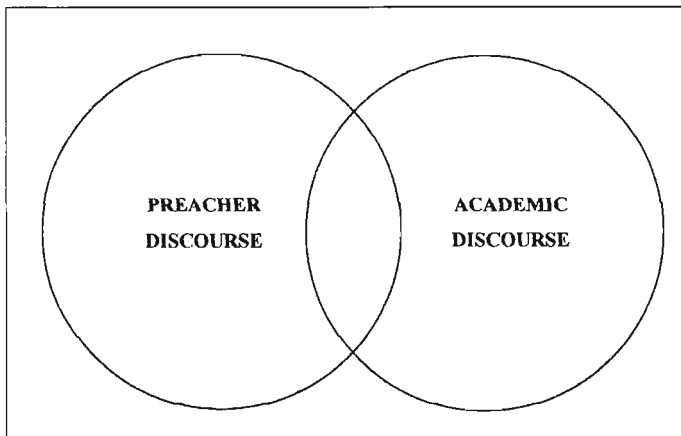


Fig 3: An overlap of two Discourses

There is an overlap between the Discourse that these students commonly use in their practical dealings with theology and the more theoretical Discourse that the university demands. The intersecting area indicates that there are certain commonalities between the two, but there is inevitably a mismatch as well. This creates a situation where, if students use the inappropriate discourse, they achieve disappointing results.

Secondly, by using Eggins and Martin's (1997) 'Register and Genre' Theory, I ascertained the main genres required in these two overlapping discourses. Academic Discourse uses analytical exposition, which is submitted in writing. Preacher Discourse uses hortatory exposition, which is usually delivered orally (Martin: 1989). However, many of the features of Preacher Discourse are also features more commonly found in written discourses, such as being carefully planned, integrated and edited (Fig 2). Students not equipped to recognise the distinguishing features of Academic Discourse tend to transfer the known requirements of oral Preacher Discourse (using hortatory exposition) directly into their writing. They do not take the necessary steps to meet the written Academic Discourse (analytical exposition) requirements.

1.2.3 Requirements for Academic Communication

To succeed academically, students need to be able to reflect critically on their understanding of the discipline. Macken-Horarik (1996) has developed a three-tiered model of developing literacy. She describes Critical literacy as a third level of competency following those of Everyday literacy and Specialist literacy. The

students in my case study were required to become critically reflexive as professionals in theology.

According to Macken-Horarik (1996), speakers begin with competency in everyday literacy. They need to move through a specialised literacy stage before reaching an understanding of reflexive and critical literacy.

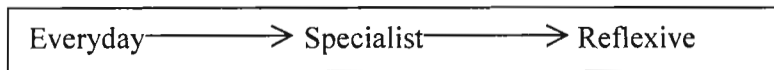


Fig 4: Three levels of literacy (Macken-Horarik: 1996)

At university level, where writing is the dominant assessment mode and reading is critical for it, prior mastery of speaking and listening skills is assumed. However, learning takes place through constructing meanings and using spoken language as a heuristic tool for learning. This learning is generally evaluated through a written product but if the skill of writing is not fine-tuned to be critical and reflexive the student is deemed not to have learned. It is therefore advantageous to learn to write for the Discourse of Academics.

The theories discussed thus far create a context in which to compare critical literacy - the hallmark of the Discourse of Academics - with the features of the discourse of preachers. I do this by using comparisons suggested in the written/spoken dichotomies (Chapter 2, Fig 2).

1.2.4 Research on Uptake of Oral Feedback

Finally, this research investigates theories attempting to understand oral input as a source of feedback to students. There has been some negativity surrounding the issue of feedback, but Hyland and Hyland (2006) believe it can be meaningful and positive, as part of the scaffolding process. This is process-writing (Zamel:1985, Milton: 1989 in Hyland & Hyland: 2006), when scaffolding, through feedback, is offered to the students before they are required to present the final written product. They show that summative feedback has tended to be replaced during the last twenty years by formative feedback. The latter can be written comments, peer feedback, writing workshops, oral conferences, and/or computer-delivered feedback (2006). My focus will be on oral feedback only.

1.3 Research Design and Methodology

This research follows the qualitative mode of inquiry, with a partially ethnographic orientation. It has mainly interpretive purposes as it attempts to document and interpret what happened during one module taught at a South African university.

This, in fact, was not my original intention. I began with an aim that was too broad for this sort of study. I intended to produce a list of criteria required at this university in terms of the listening and speaking skills used by Honours/Masters students in the theology department. To achieve this I would have had to gather a greater amount of data over a longer period of time, which was not feasible. Therefore I selected the one module taught in the department making express use of the oracy skills. It was initiated by the lecturer because he believes students benefit by using their listening and speaking skills. I realised this would be a case study in its own right.

McDonough (1997:203) lists various possible cases that can be studied from a research perspective. In that list he includes the evaluation of an educational innovation, which this module in theology is. Using a single exploratory case study, I attempted to explore whether making greater use of oracy skills could improve a student's understanding of what is required in terms of Academic Discourse.

I make no apology for this change of direction since McDonough also writes: "As data from a case study are interpreted, research questions are 'emergent' rather than fixed *a priori*" (McDonough 1997:205). My questions were now not directed towards establishing a finite list of measurable criteria. Rather they were directed towards an exploratory examination of how the students were helped to meet the criteria of Academic Discourse by this lecturer's scaffolding throughout the programme. The ultimate goal was to produce reflexive, critical, academic writing. There is, of course, the possibility that other aspects, apart from the method used, influenced the students and it is necessary to acknowledge that.

This design is a single, descriptive and exploratory case study (Yin 1994). It is single as it focuses on a single case: what one lecturer did with one class in one module. It is descriptive as it aims to describe the events in the classroom. It is exploratory as it

investigates the method used in this particular module as a possible means of improving student success. The research has an ethnographic slant. It focuses both on the general observations of the researcher and on detailed analysis of audiovisual recordings of interaction (Erickson 1988:286). It triangulates the data gathered from observations with that gathered from various interviews.

1.4 **Research Goals**

In this research I explore the use of the language proficiency skills of listening and speaking to scaffold and ultimately to improve critical academic writing. These skills are as important (though different) as those of reading and writing. I limit myself to assessing how oracy skills can be used to scaffold literacy skills. Neither speaking nor listening should be seen in isolation because both are necessary to create the final product. People actively construct what they do with the skills they have. Brown (1993:172) sums up the best use of the speaking and listening skills: "The good listener is someone who constructs reasonable interpretations on the basis of an under-specified input and recognises when more specific information is required. The active listener asks for the needed information." Listening does not simply depend on the nature of the sounds that are heard but includes the listener's schematic and contextual knowledge in building meaning and being able to speak meaningfully (Skehan 2001). This too indicates an ability to be critical and reflexive (Macken-Horarik 1996).

My research goals were:

- to discover what oral work takes place in the discipline of theology, and for what purpose
- to determine what scaffolding (particularly oral) all the lecturers in theology offer in order to enable students to reach the critical, reflexive domain of literacy demanded at postgraduate level
- to explore the link between written and oral modes within the Secondary Discourses of the Preacher and the Academic
- to investigate the Secondary Discourses as well as the Genres within the Discourses with which theology students are familiar
- to ascertain the students' comprehension of the feedback they receive as scaffolding
- to confirm/triangulate this with the lecturer's intentions in the case study

1.5 Context of this Research

As coordinator of the Language Centre, I am aware of many of the academic difficulties that English Foreign / Second Language (EFL/ ESL) students experience at this university due to their using their second (or additional) language. More students could be more successful, more quickly, if they were aware of the requirements of the Discourse of the Academic.

This research is a part of the response to a request to the Language Centre from the Department of Theology for input on how better to meet the language needs of their non-mother tongue students. I therefore observed theology lectures in order to develop a questionnaire firstly for the lecturers, and secondly for the students. After administering the questionnaires I was able to make a number of recommendations to the department. During the course of my investigation, I realised what an enormous field the study of language proficiency is. I elected to research the method used in one module, which I found innovative. My purpose in carrying out the case study was to ascertain whether this method could be documented so that other lecturers could use it.

In the remainder of the dissertation I discuss systematically a number of aspects that have gone into it. Firstly, in Chapter Two, I describe the literature pertinent to the topic. I chose to develop a theoretical framework around four ideas, namely: the "spoken" and the "written" in language; the concepts of discourse, genre and communities as they relate to language; an understanding of what academic communication is and how to be academically successful; and finally, the need for feedback during, rather than after, producing writing for assessment. Thereafter, in Chapter Three, I describe the research methodology that was used in this case study. I began with questionnaires to two groups of people: lecturers and students; then observed a teaching programme, using video-recordings and their transcriptions, to establish patterns of response. I triangulated this data, grounded in theory, by holding interviews where I showed the video-recordings to stimulate recall and questioned the parties involved. The findings of this research are described and analysed in Chapter Four, mainly by exploring the categories that were repeatedly recognised in the data as criteria for sound theological academic work. Chapter Five concludes with some critique of my research and recommendations for possible action.

Chapter Two - Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Communication skills are both written and oral. Street (1996 in Cohen, 2000:106) suggests that "university should be a prime site for the elaboration of ... and analysis of all communication skills - both written and oral". However, the emphasis is generally on the students' written products. Communication of academic thought could first be developed orally so that students' writing ability is enhanced. I explored the language problems of foreign students until I focused on one case study. I investigated an oral technique used by one of the theology lecturers in scaffolding the written work of his students.

In Western thought there is far more emphasis placed on writing than on speaking. Olsen bemoans the fact that "[written] expository prose [is seen] as a paragon of the exercise of literacy, its verbal skills and associated cognitive processes" (in Foley, 1997:428). The university in which I situated my study mainly follows Western trends, so that here too the written medium is regarded as the highest form of academic communication. I chose to explore oral means of developing the writing skills.

2.2 Theory Underpinning Research

2.2.1 Frameworks Classifying Spoken and Written Modes within any Discourse

Spoken language is as important as written language, though it has a different role. Different ways of learning are involved in each because they reflect different ways of knowing. Halliday (1989:96) confirms: "some learning takes place more effectively through the spoken language and some through the written". He clarifies the need for both written and spoken language:

"Learning is essentially a process of constructing meanings; **linguistic** meanings - semantic systems and semantic structures. These systems of meaning, the ideational and interpersonal realities that we create in and through language, embody, as we have seen, two complementary perspectives: the synoptic and the dynamic. When we learn anything, we construe it simultaneously as a universe of things and as a universe of processes - doing and happening" (1989:98).

He describes writing as synoptic - it exists with far greater permanence - and speaking as dynamic - it happens but is then 'lost'. However, the following discussion shows that it is possible to classify any piece of discourse on a variety of binary systems, and each will cause the classification to differ.

The earliest linguistic research in this area simply distinguished the differences between speaking and writing as binary opposites. However, it became increasingly evident that this was too simplistic a view. Tannen (1985:127) prefers to distinguish discourse types by whether they use *one-way or two-way involvement*. Those that include a two-way process are more focused on involvement while one-way communications are more focused on information. She states that the two opposite ends of the continuum are based on either the strategies of Greek tradition - a more narrative oral tradition; or American - a more literate tradition. It is, however, perfectly possible for one to write in a narrative 'oral' style or to speak in a formal, 'written' style. She therefore chooses to replace the concept of the oral-literate continuum with "*more versus less focus on involvement*" (Fig 1).

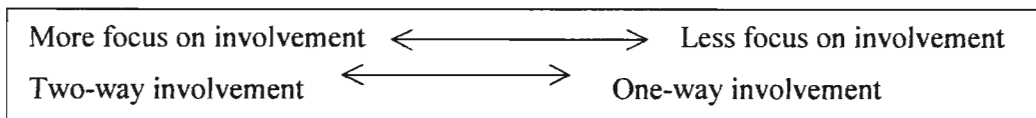


Fig 1: Preacher and Academic Discourse at opposite ends of the continua

The sermon, usually planned with the intention of being spoken, would probably appear at the opposite end from a piece of academic work. It would appear at the *more involvement* end of the continuum. Academic work (written or spoken) demands the least degree of involvement and is therefore at the opposite end. In this case, the sermon is manifesting the features of speech rather than writing.

Sermons may be formal one-way messages, but the presentation may be far more involved than most formal academic deliveries. If a preacher is too detached and uninvolved he is unlikely to be accepted by his congregation, whereas an academic would not meet approval unless he is uninvolved. Thus, when sermons are compared to academic writing or speaking using these parameters, they are likely to be placed at the opposite ends of the continuum.

So far it would seem that there is a vast difference between the Discourse of Academic presentation and what I have called the Discourse of Preacher presentation and that they are likely to fall at opposite ends of the continuum. Foley (1997: 425) however, prefers to label the less involvement aspect as *detached* and adds that it is *integrated*: "Writing is claimed to be more detached and more grammatically integrated than speaking, which is more *involved* and structurally *fragmented*". Speaking is, by its nature, fragmented, but a sermon, though spoken, should not be fragmented. In other words, its features are more characteristic of writing.

Similarly, sermons are usually carefully planned and written ahead of time. They are more formal than many other spoken genres, such as casual conversations, debates and discussions. Ochs (1979, in Tannen, 1985: 127) chooses to distinguish *planned* and *unplanned* parameters, in which case both Academic and Preacher Discourse would share the same end of the spectrum (Fig 2). Furthermore, Biber (1988, in Foley 1997: 426) has developed the terms '*edited versus interactive text*' as the two parameters to be distinguished. None of these can be neatly divided into spoken and written extremes since sermons, speeches and interviews, which are all spoken, "score closer to academic prose in this feature than does written fiction" (Foley, 1997:427).

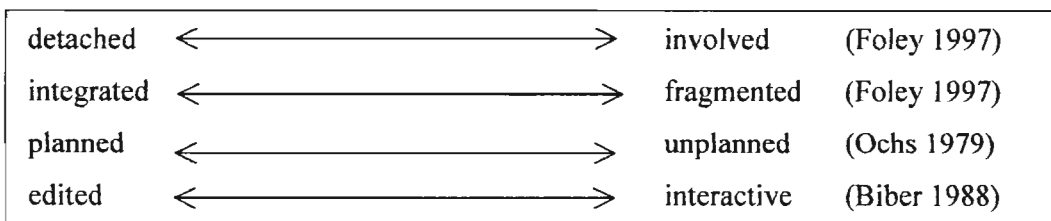


Fig 2: Preacher and Academic Discourse at the same end of the continua

Other research, for example Biber and Finegan (1989, in Martin and Rose 2003), distinguishes features in terms of clusters determined by production, reference and style. Without giving any detail, they define three written versus spoken oppositions:

- informational vs involved (Production)
- elaborated vs situation-dependent (Reference)
- abstract vs non-abstract (Style)

These are not discussed further except to say that although it can be seen that sermons, though spoken, would tend to be classified on the left hand (so-called written) side, the classification might easily move across to the right during delivery.

My premise is that since the oracy skills are often well developed, they should be used more in the academic arena. This will familiarise students with the variations in requirements when attempting to learn and to gain knowledge in any field. According to Macken-Horarik (1996: 239)

"Knowledge is no longer fixed or monolithic and students are forced to come to terms with its socially contingent nature, even if only at a rudimentary level. The 'self' is constructed as mediating varied perspectives on knowledge. And the language through which knowledge is explored reflects these contradictions. Students now need to learn to construct texts that deal with controversial and competing points of view on issues. This demands not only the knowledge of the meanings of the discipline but also *an ability to negotiate a path through competing discourses on these meanings*" (italics mine).

This negotiation would seem to be best learned through talk i.e. speaking and listening. MacLure (1988), quotes Frater 'in the sixties' (which he says is when the importance of the oracy skills was just beginning to be recognised)

"the role of talk in learning, its importance in the shaping of thought, the internalising of concepts, the development of argument, and of its interplay with the other language modes was little understood" (36).

Now, forty years later, the importance of the oracy skills is perhaps better understood but is still very often neglected. Students, especially students studying in a second or foreign language, need to develop both the literacy and the oracy skills. From this they develop the ability to 'negotiate' their way through different discourses and the cognitive concepts involved in them.

The use of 'talk' is invaluable, from an extremely early age. The director of an Early Childhood project, Joan Tough, says that "talk is the basic form in which language is manifested and in fact, written language is derived from talk" (1977:7). She says we

learn to think and communicate by trying to think and communicate. Without looking at childhood development in detail (it is beyond the scope of this research), I note that perhaps talk is a more sociable and more natural way of communicating. It could facilitate student development into the more individual and demanding requirements of writing, particularly at a tertiary institution, through rigorous discussions or seminars.

Fig 3 illustrates how use of the oracy skills could help move students from the Discourse of Preachers, using the elements of the Discourse already known (shown in the intersection), into the Discourse of Academics. In other words, to equip students (particularly those whose most familiar genre is spoken) with the required discourse necessary at university, our pedagogy ought to fully exploit the oracy skills.

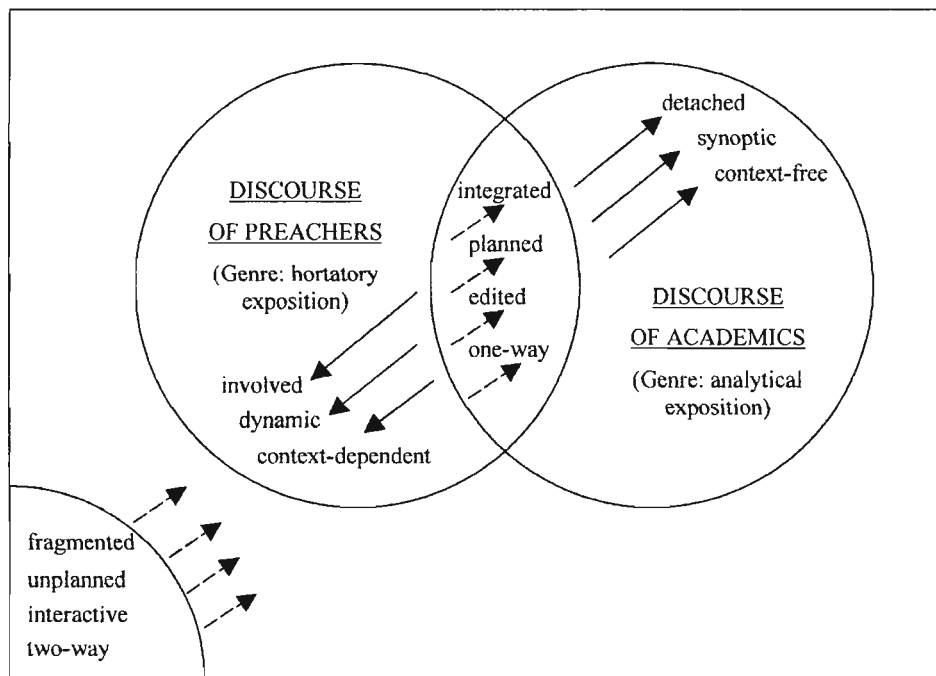


Fig 3: The overlapping Discourses showing the features of the various continua

2.2.2 Theories of Discourse, Genre, Communities of Practice

In Gee's terms (1996), a Discourse is much more than a language. It involves the values, needs, beliefs and practices of the community. Gee's theory is that one chooses a number of *Secondary Discourses* in which to function. Johns (1997)

elaborates on this with the term 'Discourse Community'. Students need to understand and relate to what is required in terms of belonging to the Discourse Community of academics. Firstly, what is required in their thinking and secondly, in their ability to write. One can become affiliated when one understands the rules of membership.

Johns (1997: 52) describes the concept of a *Discourse Community* as an "abstract, complex and contested" term and that a second, related one is *Communities of Practice*. Both these terms refer to the genres and lexis within a certain community. These communities are complex collections of individuals who share common 'ways of being' (Geertz 1983, in Johns, 1997: 51), values and concepts. This research will not describe why these terms are 'contested' since my focus is on how to enable students to participate in a Discourse Community of Practice in order to benefit personally.

Research indicates that Secondary Discourses can be taught by any 'expert' (Gee 1996). This implies that anyone may enter a Secondary Discourse provided they understand enough about it. The values and practices of the Discourse can be learned and taken on board by students. They are more likely to be assessed as successful if they are functioning within the appropriate Discourse or Community of Practice.

However, this process is usually slow. It could take one's entire period of study at university to become a true member of the Discourse of Academics. Acquiring the necessary 'membership' of the Discourse, Boughey (2000) believes, is not something that can be overtly taught to students. She says students learn by "observing and interacting with other members of the Discourse until the ways of speaking, acting, thinking, feeling and valuing common to that Discourse become natural to them" (284).

The majority of the students of theology are very familiar with the Preacher Discourse as opposed to the Discourse of the Academic. They would have acquired the Preacher Discourse mainly through the experience of observation and practice. Of course, it probably happened unconsciously. This research investigates how students of theology function in the Academic Discourse and how it is possible to learn the necessary 'rules of membership'. Academic and Preacher Discourses can be seen as

Professional Discourse Community as opposed to the Academic Discourse
Community of Practice.

In the Academic Discourse many students of theology are faced with difficulty when required to read the Bible from a critical academic standpoint. They have a strong sense of what is appropriate in the Preacher Discourse but do not realise the expectations in Academic Discourse. Meyer (2001) says:

A much more crucial challenge is the spiritual accommodation that must be made between their method of reading the Bible and the critical academic interpretation of the Bible that is required in Biblical Studies (12).

This is one of the areas where a shift is required from the Preacher Discourse and into the Academic Discourse. Sometimes 'rules' of this Discourse are fairly standard, but interpretation of the Bible requires an understanding not only of Academic Discourse but of Theological Academic Discourse. Johns (1997) writes that within the Academic Discourse there is a strong and universal belief that "there is a general academic English as well as a general set of critical thinking skills and strategies" (56). In other words there is agreement about the basic formalities of the Discourse but there are specialisations or sub-sections beyond it. Within these Communities of Practice one finds specialised sub-communities, or further Secondary Discourses. Lave and Wenger (1991) write about students joining the academic community:

"As students begin to engage with the discipline, as they move from exposure to experience, they begin to understand that the different communities on campus are quite distinct and as they work in a particular community, they start to understand both its particularities and what joining takes, how these involve language , practice, culture and a conceptual universe" (13).

Faculty requirements may be so varied that they differ from other academic faculty in terms of the language, values and genre of that community (or specialisation) but as Johns says: "It can be said with some certainty that community affiliations are very real to individual academic faculty ..." (p70).

The Discourse used by preachers is not necessarily academic and its members often use the particular style of speaking known as hortatory exposition. This is an emotive speech style used often by preachers and politicians when they want to convince an audience of something with which they feel a passionate involvement. The students may have knowledge of various Discourses in more than one language. But, to be successful at this university, they need to use their knowledge of what is appropriate, expressing themselves in English. It is not possible to know what is appropriate unless one knows what is entailed in each Discourse.

The term 'Discourse' is broad, encompassing the whole nature of a community or 'culture' and the genres used by that community. The way in which knowledge is expressed varies within Discourses. Martin (1989) describes theories of genre that clearly situate the two Discourses, the Academic and the Preacher, in different 'camps'. The Academic uses the genre of *analytical exposition* whereas the Preacher uses the genre of *hortatory exposition*.

The term 'genre' is used here in terms of Systemic Functional Linguistics. In other words, it has a specific definition. According to Martin and Rose (2003), genre refers to different types of texts that enact various types of social contexts. They define genre as

"a staged, goal-oriented social process. Social because we participate in genres with other people; goal-oriented because we use genres to get things done; staged because it usually takes us a few steps to reach our goals" (p7, 8).

The genres of analytical and hortatory exposition both have the purpose of persuasion. Hortatory exposition persuades the audience, reader or listener, to do something. Analytical exposition persuades the audience to accept the writer's point of view or 'thesis' (Martin and Rose 2003).

Both these genres can be used in spoken and in written language. Analytical exposition is commonly considered as written, and yet lectures and papers can be delivered orally to an audience. Sermons are generally thought to be spoken, but can also be read by a more distant audience. Furthermore, a written newspaper editorial uses the same genre as the sermon - hortatory exposition. However, analytical

exposition is limited to the Discourse of Academics. It is not so much whether the product is written or spoken that matters but whether the genre used is appropriate. The genre used by academics is different from the genre used by preachers.

2.2.3 Requirements for Academic Communication

Proficiency in language can be measured at different levels, depending on one's purposes for requiring or using that proficiency. In terms of a non-mother tongue language a useful distinction has been drawn by Cummins (1980) between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). Foreign students need more than a communicative ability in English if they hope to produce academic work at this university. When they study here at postgraduate level they should have cognitive academic proficiency in their own language, or in the language in which their undergraduate studies were completed. This would enable them to develop academic proficiency in English more easily.

When students move beyond BICS and reach sufficient CALP in English, they will be beyond what Macken-Horarik (1996) describes as Everyday literacy. They will probably be using the 'Specialist' (second) level where they are familiar with the content of their discipline, in the case of this research, theology. They might have reached the 'Critical' level (third) where they begin to theorise (or theologise, in this example). It is at this third level that the Discourse of Academics fits.

Academic Discourse requires a proficiency level of cognitive academic language, as opposed to everyday proficiency levels (BICS), which Macken-Horarik (1996) would classify as the first domain of literacy. She contends that learners work through the Specialist domain of literacy before reaching the Critical domain. To gain 'membership' of the Academic Discourse, one needs to be able to reflect with criticality on content. One needs to be able to theorise in one's area of expertise. Academic practices are reflexive and critical but these criteria are seldom explicitly taught or learned. Slonimsky and Shalem (2006) describe them thus:

"The *raison d'être* of universities is to promote academic practices, by which we mean coherent sets of activities oriented towards the development and

dissemination of *knowledge*. Academic practices are premised on conscious reflection on the ends, objects and means of activity (Anderson, 1993) and involve forms of reasoning, analysis, modes of investigation and self reflection which enable the critical examination of established truths, taken-for-granted assumptions and knowledge handed down by tradition. Thus a truly responsive pedagogy must enable students to grasp the point of the practice and to develop the powers to work towards it" (38).

They suggest that there are four distinguishable strands underpinning academic work at any level, from the novice to the master. These are:

- distanciation - cognitively reflecting on existing knowledge, understanding
- appropriation - allowing for transformation and challenge
- research - being self-conscious about what one is doing
- articulation - communicating findings with a clear, personal voice

The term, *Language Socialisation*, describes the process of moving from the position of novice in a community or culture to a position of mastery or legitimacy in that group (Schieffelin & Ochs 1986). The four skills mentioned above are criteria required for membership of the academic community. In order to master these conventions, one needs social and linguistic interaction with members of the communicative practice. The goal of socialisation, be it into any Academic or Professional Discourse, is to learn to speak, think, write and feel like a master in that Discourse. A Community of Practice is one in which recognisable codes, registers, genres or literacies are given priority over others.

These codes can be described as criteria for mastering the Discourse. In other words, for successful academic writing certain explicit 'rules' exist. However, these rules are not always made sufficiently explicit to 'outsiders'. Johns (1997), drawing on the views of several researchers provides a set of criteria. I summarise them briefly below.

To write academically one should provide:

- explicit texts - showing exactness, accuracy and clarity of description, vocabulary
- immediate introduction of topic and argument - exposing purpose and organisation
- guidelines and links throughout - assisting readers to predict, summarise, understand
- distance or objectivity - disallowing own voice but expressing reflexive and analytical ability with variety of voices
- non-emotive vocabulary - using impersonal and unemotional language
- guarded stance - avoiding dogmatic or definite statements
- display a world reality view of critical thinking - making the goals, values, practices explicit
- sophisticated level of understanding of social roles - showing an ability to interact and understand interactions between roles, contexts, language
- acknowledgement and exploitation of related research - showing assimilation of and transformation by other texts
- appropriate genre - showing a knowledge of what is required

If students can understand and appropriate these criteria they will begin to develop what McCarthy and Carter (1994) have described as Discourse strategies. They describe how these were defined at the International Certificate Conference 1986 as: "how we make use of linguistic and other kinds of competence in order to achieve our communicative aims ... " (177). They say that Discourse strategies are employed in the *process* of writing and speaking (italics theirs). In this sense they say that Discourse strategies: "subsume lexico-grammatical choices and socio-cultural constraints and become the dominant feature in linguistic choice." It is for this reason that my research focuses on teaching students to use language appropriately according to the required Discourse. Hyland (1998: 273) talks about this as providing "feedback practices focusing more on meaning issues and the process of writing". This will give them the language socialisation (Duff 2003) required to become members of the Academic Discourse Community.

2.2.4 Oral Feedback as a Means of Scaffolding Students into a Discourse

Thus far, I have described the reasons for my interest in promoting the use of the oracy skills at tertiary level. I have discussed writing and speaking as two different modes of communication, both useful for different reasons, although the oracy skills are often neglected in tertiary pedagogy. I have compared two Discourses and the genres within them. These Discourses, or Communities of Practice, I have named the Discourse of the Academic and the Discourse of the Preacher. I have shown that although preachers generally use the spoken mode, their communication is often more similar to the written mode. For this reason the oral mode could be used more as a teaching tool.

To complete the British picture of what could be called the oracy 'movement', Baxter (2000:26) wonders: "with literacy now 'hot' on the agenda of most English departments in Britain, what's become of our once passionate interest in oracy?" And my questions for South African education, particularly at tertiary level, are:

- Have tertiary educators ever felt passionately concerned about the development of the skills of speaking and listening in order to improve the process of learning for students?
- Should not the development of oracy, along with all that is being done in the area of understanding literacy (and literacies) be a priority?
- As Africans, our nation already has a bent towards oral traditions. Should this not be exploited to the full?

Cultural assumptions regarding academic writing are often hidden. Yet if the oracy skills were used more in the initial stages, to help students express new insights, perhaps they would more easily "gain control over formalised, condensed uses of written language" (Hewlett 1996:93).

My argument is that lecturers could develop in their students, a stronger, clearer understanding of appropriate Discourse if they explicitly use and exploit the oracy skills more. Hewlett (1996) feels that a central issue is how "teachers from diverse pedagogical traditions can help to make dominant discursive practices explicit, while simultaneously giving students a sense of security, and developing flexible and critical competencies" (97). I believe one solution is to exploit discussion,

presentation and oral response far more in the classroom. For students to be acculturated into a particular discipline, Hewlett suggests that practitioners need to be both willing and able to spell out the discursive practices that are required. This is what the lecturer running the 'Church and AIDS' module was able to do.

Feedback during a process-writing (Zamil 1985; Milton 1989, in Hyland & Hyland 2006) type of module is one possible way of making the discursive practices explicit. Much research has been implemented to investigate written feedback (Hyland & Hyland 2006). However, the focus of this research is deliberately only on oral performance and feedback. Research on written feedback by Sommers (1980, in Hyland 1998) suggests that the less skilled the writers, the less they are able to revise a piece of writing that has received written feedback or suggestions. Similarly, if students are competent they will make greater changes to their subsequent draft, even though they may reject what the teacher says per se. They will have the confidence to focus more on the meaning of their message, rather than the correctness or the formality of the writing (Perl 1979, in Hyland 1998). The lecturer in the case study used oral feedback, which naturally focuses on meaning rather than correctness of writing.

Writing, even for academic purposes, is intensely personal and written feedback can have an adverse effect on a student. This may be an argument in favour of oral feedback since it is less lasting or 'permanent'. However, even oral feedback can be taken negatively and students need to have the freedom to clarify all that they hear. The scope of this research does not include an in-depth investigation of the listening process but it is important to note that comprehension processes involve being able to use contextual information appropriately to determine meaning as well as to make sensible inferences and therefore reasonable interpretations. One of the students in the focus group said that they all felt confident to ask the lecturer for clarifications so that they were able to make meaningful sense of the oral feedback he gave them. Brown concludes her book:

"Perhaps the most important contribution we can make is to help our students listen to the ... language with such a feeling of confidence that they are able to ask questions, just like a competent native listener, when they have failed to

understand something. The good listener is not someone who understands correctly all the time; by such a stringent criterion all of us would fail. The good listener is someone who constructs reasonable interpretations on the basis of an underspecified input and recognises when more specific information is required. The active listener asks for the needed information" (Brown 1993:172).

Use of the oracy skills has often been ignored because of difficulties in assessment. Hart (1994:40) describes performance assessment as designed to develop "what we care about most - the ability of students to use their knowledge and skills in a variety of realistic situations and contexts". Feedback does not necessarily include assessment. Certainly the use of the oracy skills creates a real life environment in which to put ones knowledge and communication abilities to the test. Preachers are familiar with the oral mode and are confident using it. Students can therefore be scaffolded from a position of strength, using the formal aspects of spoken communication they already know (Chapter One, Fig 3). From here they can be led into the aspects of detachment and criticality with which they may not be familiar, and which are required in Academic Discourse.

Students often think they are meeting the stipulated criteria sufficiently. Slonimsky and Shalem (2006) say:

"Constructivist theories of learning hold that we can only make sense of our experiences on the basis of our existing understanding, thus when we initiate action, we act in ways that we believe are appropriate" (43).

Students therefore need to know of what they are not aware in order to be able to assimilate new 'ways of doing'. Lecturer feedback is a vital, although difficult, task. Hyland and Hyland (2006) recommend formative feedback, as part of an ongoing process of drafting and re-drafting one's writing. This type of process-writing approach, if the uptake of the feedback is successful, is highly valuable and helps students to clarify their task. A term more positively used is that of 'scaffolding' new learning. Human interaction is a powerful and fundamental aspect of learning and can be positively used in order to develop new behaviours and understandings.

Scaffolding is described by Williams (2002, in Highland and Highland 2006) as encompassing ways that the feedback delivered through the dialogue of teacher and student can enable student writers to develop both their text and their writing abilities.

Even imitation is a means of gaining knowledge although to be effective it must involve the process of internalisation, or what Slonimsky and Shalem (2006) call appropriation (2006). Rogoff (1995) talks of apprenticeship, which fits the analogy of the novice in training. Developing this further, Lantolfe and Thorne (2006) say that the concept of internalisation creates an understanding that there has to be transformation involved before one becomes a fully-fledged member of the Community of Practice. The lecturer in the case study works hard to encourage and facilitate this kind of transformation.

The term "scaffolding" is originally Vygotskian but Hyland and Hyland (2006: 90) list other terms with similar meanings. They do not however go into any depth about these terms:

assisted performance (Ohta 2001)

negotiated interaction (Long 1996)

guided participation (Lave and Wenger 1991)

These terms all show the picture of apprenticeship as a useful one. However, it must be remembered that layers of other complexities may be present in terms of opportunities for accessibility and for participation. Also, in a lecturer-to-class relationship, there is only one 'expert' and a group of novices, whereas the ideal would be to have a group of experts interacting with the group of novices.

Most of the literature I have researched on feedback (oral or written) seems to be based on giving feedback in terms of improving the written language of the final paper. In other words it has looked at the giving of feedback as a linguistically-based task. However, the lecturer, in the module I observed, was focusing on scaffolding students into becoming better theologians rather than simply better writers or better academics. His scaffolding was given in order to improve their critical and reflexive skills in theology. According to Hyland and Hyland (2006), most documented oral feedback has taken place during writing conferences, where the focus is not on the

content as such but on the writing. Feedback creates an opportunity for meaning and interpretation to be negotiated which is essential if it is to be applied. (Goldstein and Conrad 1990, in Hyland & Hyland 2006). This lecturer in the case study is scaffolding both writing and thinking.

Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) suggest that scaffolded help must be given in a dialogic conversation actively involving both teacher and student. In this case study, feedback took place in a classroom discussion that was more focused on the theology than on the writing. I must therefore stress that the lecturer is aiming to grow his students as theologians and that improving their writing is a secondary aspect of his goal.

Weisberg (2006) illustrates how the tutor creates verbal linkages with the writer and then uses these as springboards to make instructional points. However, he cautions that his data cannot determine the impact of the scaffolding on the student writing. This applies to the data I describe in this research. I am merely attempting to illustrate what the tutor does in order to instruct the students in becoming both professionally and academically critical.

This research compares the parallel development of students required to function both as an academic writer and as a professional practitioner. The lecturer scaffolds them from the professional point of view. He expects them to develop an ability to be critical and reflexive and therefore to become more professional. Johns (1997: 54) says: "Every major profession has its organisations, its practices, its textual conventions, and its genres." However, while developing the professional abilities of the students, the lecturer also expects them to become more critical and reflexive in their writing. In other words, he expects them to develop academically. I differentiate between the two because the scaffolding that he provides is explicitly directed at demanding their professional or theological growth. However, implicitly it should be causing an improvement in the writing production as well.

The next chapter describes the research methodology used to investigate various aspects in the case study. This case study was initiated through the questionnaire to the lecturers on the higher degrees committee. I investigated ways lecturers use the oracy skills in their praxis and found only one module that explicitly used them. A

second questionnaire was given to a group of postgraduate Honours/ Masters students, asking for their opinions on the four language skills: their importance, the students' strengths and weaknesses, and consequently their academic needs. The students taking this module were carefully observed and video-recorded, so that I could make my analyses. Thereafter, I held interviews with the lecturer and a focus group of students, to triangulate my findings concerning the feedback given by lecturer. Finally, I attempted to assess what the lecturer had expected the students to gain from his feedback, as well as what the students understood by it. I was interested in their uptake from an understanding point of view rather than trying to measure it through their written products.

Chapter Three - Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This research is both ethnographic and interpretative (Cumming 1994). It uses a case study to examine an innovation introduced by a lecturer to scaffold his students into the appropriate Discourse required at Honours/Masters level in Theology. It explores the work of a group of students and one lecturer, who hoped his interventions would increase their ability to show criticality. The data obtained from this research with a small group of students during one semester is therefore qualitative and consists of a 'thick description'.

3.2 Research Methods

3.2.1 Ethnography as a Research Method

This research is broadly ethnographic in nature as is much Applied Linguistics research (Chaudron 1988). Ethnographic studies seldom rely on only one source of data but on multiple sources, which are then analysed, interpreted and triangulated by the researcher. According to Wardhaugh (1986:238), an ethnography of a communicative event is a description of all factors that are relevant to understanding how that event achieves its objectives. This study is descriptive because it describes a process of one lecturer. It attempts to describe the criteria that he establishes when giving oral feedback to the students. It is also exploratory because it attempts to understand and triangulate the feedback both from the lecturer's and from the students' points of view (Watson-Gegeo 1988). In other words, it uses mainly observation and interview data and relates these to current literature.

By using an ethnographic theoretical framework, I grounded the theory in the data in order to discover the criteria that the lecturer felt were significant for writing the final academic report. Watson-Gegeo (1998) points out that ethnographic observation and interpretation are not so much determined by theory but are rather guided by it.

Nunan (1992) describes as grounded theory the practice of deriving the theory from the data rather than vice versa.

Initially the focus of my research was on developing a complete set of criteria for the oracy skills (1.3) needed by postgraduate students to succeed at an English medium

university. I subsequently decided to investigate one particular module that was overtly using the oracy skills to scaffold the students into appropriate literacy skills. I analysed what the lecturer of that module demanded. I was able to highlight four main criteria (4.2) that seemed to be required in the Discourse of academic theologians, and then to relate these findings to current theory. As an ethnographic study my plan therefore evolved. I moved from gathering a broad set of oracy criteria required at tertiary academic level to a much narrower investigation of one lecturer's criteria for the Discourse of academic theologians. I investigated his use of more informal and immediate oracy skills to communicate them.

A researcher often uses what is termed the *emic-etic* principle of analysis (Watson-Gegeo 1988). This means understanding data, not only from literature sources but also from the perspective of the participants in that situation. The researcher naturally interprets the data from the perspective of her own reading and impressions. The analysis revolving around her experience is therefore said to have an *etic* framework. However, the members of the group being studied may have different interpretations and perspectives guiding their behaviour. Analyses that build on that framework incorporate what is known as *emic* concepts. Ethnography tends to involve careful *emic* analysis, which precedes and forms the basis for *etic* extensions.

In my research I base my analysis on both frameworks. I use both my own understanding of the literature and my interpretation of my observations of the participants. These were recorded on videotape and at a later stage discussed, both with the lecturer (in elite interviews) and with a focus group of students.

3.2.2 The Case Study as a Research Method

My initial proposal for an investigation of the criteria for oracy skills required of Theology Honours/Masters students changed following the questionnaire responses of the fourteen lecturers on the Higher Degrees Committee. It became evident that only one lecturer in the subsequent semester would be explicitly making use of oracy skills in terms of work that was required of the students. I therefore focused my observations on that Module: 'Church and AIDS'. It became the focus of my case study and considerably narrowed my goal. My emergent questions were therefore no

longer directed towards establishing a finite list of measurable criteria but were directed towards:

- closely examining the feedback provided by the lecturer throughout the module (in terms of the particular criteria required for academic writing)
- exploring the accessibility of this type of oral feedback for use by the students in their final written report through interviews.

Marshall and Rossman (1995) believe it is:

"entirely appropriate, indeed recommended, for the researcher to modify the research proposal if an exciting and significant focus emerges from early data collection ... The primary strength of the qualitative approach is this very flexibility that allows, even encourages, exploration, discovery and creativity" (106).

Modifying my research goals was complex and difficult, but it was necessary to narrow my focus rather than attempt to produce a list of broad or general criteria. The question could possibly be asked whether my focus is too narrow. However, I believe the findings, even from an isolated case study such as this, can be applied and generalised. Case studies have many limitations, and as McDonough (1997) says are "somewhat problematic in both principle and practice, especially from the point of view of the single case and the wider value of such a study" (203). The lecturer who uses this method has done so for several years and for all his modules. He is convinced of the success he has had, so if the method is formally written up others may choose to use it.

The module in Theology is an educational innovation. According to Stake (1995 in McDonough 1997:207) my investigation therefore took the form of an *instrumental* case study as it was selected to help to understand something else. I investigated whether specifically using face-to-face oracy skills helped the student understand what is required in the Discourse of Academics. I did not look at the final scripts following the oral feedback because they were not available. I concentrated on what the students said and had understood about the feedback. In other words, I did not attempt to test whether the oral feedback had produced improved writing skills, which

is a possible area for further research (5.4). I merely assessed, through interviews, how well this feedback had been understood.

Finally, according to McDonough (1997:212), case studies tend to use multiple methodologies in the collection of data: "surveys, interviews, questionnaires, observation, introspective techniques, test instruments, written documents and more". He describes three categories of case study: Evaluation, Needs Analysis and Programme Design. In my case, the lecturer had already analysed the needs of his students and designed this programme to attempt to meet them. Therefore I was able to *evaluate* whether students had found his programme helpful. According to Stake (1995, in McDonough 1997), "all evaluation studies are case studies" (215). My evaluations were however not *summative* (looking at the end products) but *formative*. I investigated the process through which students passed during this module and whether they understood what was said to them and how it would be useful to them.

3.3 **Research Context - Participants and Procedure**

3.3.1 **Participants**

Data was collected in three phases over a period of a year from lecturers and students of the Honours/Masters degree programme in the theology department of a South African university. The department uses a Block Release system, which was developed because many students come from other countries and cannot take extended time off work for their studies. Most are leaders in churches and church organisations. The Block Release system means the students are released from their jobs in their own countries six times a year for a block period of one week at a time. They come to the university in South Africa for an intensive period of coursework in Theology at Honours/Masters level. They then return home to study on a distance-basis.

Forty-five students entered this Theology Honours/Masters programme. Of these, ten selected the Module 'Church and AIDS', the focus of my research. The lecturer who taught this module was interviewed in depth. All fourteen lecturers involved in postgraduate programmes completed a questionnaire. In addition, a convenience sampling-group of fourteen students who were available and willing completed a

similar questionnaire. These questionnaires asked for the views of lecturers and students on the need for proficiency in English skills (Appendices One and Two).

3.3.2 Procedure - Three Phases of Data Collection

The research took place over one year of six block periods, in three phases:

Orientation [Theology Block One (January)]
Research Phase One: * Development of Lecturer and Student <u>Questionnaires</u> through observation of students in both Theology and English classes [Theology Block Two (March) and Block Three (May)] * Administration of Lecturer and Student <u>Questionnaires</u> [Theology Block Four (July)]
Research Phase Two: *Video-recorded and transcribed <u>Observation</u> of input, student presentations and feedback given to the ten students in the module: Church and AIDS [Block Five (Aug) and Block Six (Oct)]
Research Phase Three: *Focused, Elite <u>Interviews</u> using stimulus recall with the lecturer who devised the module used for the case study * Focus group interviews with several of the students [Both types of interview took place after the semester]

Fig 1: Research procedure plan

I shall describe all three phases in the pages that follow, although it will be seen that, ultimately, Phase One merely contextualised the work in Phase Two and Phase Three in which the case study was carried out.

- Phase One** (Lecturer/Student Questionnaires - Appendices One and Two)
These questionnaires were developed during Blocks Two and Three in the first semester and administered during Block Four. They focused on determining what lecturers required from, and offered to, students in terms of academic language proficiency, and what students believed was required of them.

- **Phase Two** (video-taped and transcribed observations - Appendix Three)
This took place during Blocks Five and Six and focused on:
 - a) how the students presented their oral drafts in terms of appropriate Discourse. The students were given a clear outline of what was expected of them (Appendix Four) in terms of content. My interest was in their ability to present this academically (i.e. showing critical, reflexive analysis of their content).
 - b) what feedback they were given by their peers and the lecturer in order to encourage them to develop their presentations as acceptable academic reports.

- **Phase Three** (Elite and Focus Group Interviews - Appendix Five)
This took place after the students' papers had been submitted and marked by the lecturer. The lecturer and a group of four students who were still in South Africa were interviewed more than a year later in order to assess their understanding of:
 - a) the academic requirements of the course
 - b) the value of feedback
 - c) the reasons for giving feedback orally
 - d) what was recommended in the feedback
 - e) uptake of the feedback by the students

The findings from the various interviews were then triangulated with the other data and compared with findings in similar literature studies.

3.4 **Research Instruments: Data Collection Tools**

3.4.1 **Phase One - Lecturer and Student Questionnaires**

3.4.1.1 *Purpose of developing and administering the two questionnaires*

The medium of instruction at this South African university is English, and students therefore require a proficiency level that they do not always have. For this reason, we, at the Language Centre, were asked by the theology department to help look at ways to improve the language skills of non-mother tongue English speakers.

During the first semester, I observed the students in two contexts: firstly in theology lectures, and secondly, in a basic English skills course. My purpose was to compare the level of English language proficiency (in all four skills) required by the theology lecturers offering Honours/Masters modules with the students' actual proficiency levels. Thereafter I was able to develop two detailed questionnaires. The first asked the fourteen lecturers involved in Higher Degrees for their understanding of the language difficulties their students experienced and what they did to help them. (Appendix One). The second asked the fourteen volunteer Honours/Masters students for their perspective on their own language proficiency and whether it met the requirements of the lecturers and of the university (Appendix Two).

These questionnaires were administered in preparation for the intervention requested of the Language Centre by the theology department. Also, as I was interested in exploring the need for English proficiency at this university, the questionnaire was a useful springboard for my own research.

From the questionnaire information I was able to ascertain how best to inform the lecturers of the student needs, and to offer practical solutions to meeting these needs. However, as has been mentioned above, subsequent to administering the questionnaire, my research changed direction. Instead of developing a complex set of criteria required for oral proficiency, I decided to do a case study of the module that explicitly required the use of oracy skills. I chose to describe the criteria that emerged from the feedback and to ascertain how these compared with criteria for academic writing already specified in the literature.

3.4.1.2 *Process of the administering the questionnaires*

I observed the Honours/Masters students during the first semester. Thereafter I designed the questionnaires about the views on English proficiency of all the Theology Honours/Masters lecturers and of a 'convenience sample-group' of students willing to attend an additional voluntary session. The questions in the Lecturer-Questionnaire (3.4.1.3) focused on determining the expectations of the lecturers about what students needed in order to cope in an academic setting. My colleague focused on Writing and Reading (literacy skills) and I focused on Listening and Speaking (oracy skills). The Student Questionnaire had a similar focus (3.4.1.3).

3.4.1.3 *Categories and questions in the questionnaires*

I shall not describe all the questions in the same detail, as, ultimately, only two of the questions rendered information applicable to my change of focus. I learned much from the experience of creating and administering these questionnaires, despite limitations (3.4.1.4).

A Lecturer-Questionnaire

A number of categories were developed in order to investigate the attitude of the theology lecturers towards English proficiency:

- **Category 1:** (Questions 1-4) The lecturers' own language skills and academic experience. From this we hoped to gain insight into their past experience and how it affected their current views and praxis.
- **Category 2:** (Questions 5-6) Personal understanding of what is required in Academic Discourse (Question 5). Unfortunately, this was badly phrased and ambiguous so we had to discard it. The next question (Question 6) required their opinion about the need for expertise in each of the four skills of language - reading, writing, speaking and listening when producing Academic Discourse. This question was too highly detailed using specialised jargon and the respondents were requested to rate numerous aspects of the four skills on a scale of 1-5. It was too detailed for them to respond as 'lay' people.
- **Category 3:** (Question 7) This looked particularly at using the four language skills in a tertiary environment. The lecturers were required to grade the degree of importance of each.

B Student-Questionnaire

Similarly to the lecturer-questionnaire a number of categories were developed in order to investigate the attitude of the postgraduate students of theology towards language proficiency:

- **Category 1:** (Questions 1-2) Students were asked for background information (such as home languages). This was not all necessary but it gave us some rich data. It developed an anonymous personal history.
- **Category 2:** (Questions 3- 5) Students were asked whether they considered themselves to be Second Language or Foreign Language learners of English. A definition of each was given so that we could ascertain how much exposure to English students had had, and whether they felt they needed help with their English.

- **Category 3:** (Questions 6-8) The students' opinion was asked of the importance of assessment, again, in terms of which skills are used.
- **Category 4:** Questions (9-12) The students were asked about their use of English for academic and professional purposes.
- **Category 5:** (Questions 13-16) Students then rated the four skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) in terms of their perceived importance.

3.4.1.4 *Limitations of both questionnaires*

Many lecturers and some students commented on how intimidated they felt by the length and by the specialist language of the questionnaire. As Low (1991:124 in McDonough 1997) reminds us, people do not like to be interrogated by lengthy questions, or implied criticism. I did not receive a very cooperative response from the lecturers answering the questionnaires, and ideally should have redone them. Perhaps it would have been better to have initially done a shorter questionnaire concerning the common information that we both required. Then a separate questionnaire could have investigated the specific areas of enquiry - one in reading and writing needs, by my colleague, and one in listening and speaking needs by me.

However, with the change of the direction of my research, this was not necessary. Many of the questions proved to be irrelevant. I eventually selected only Question One from the lecturers' questionnaire and used the students' questionnaire as background.

3.4.2 **Phase Two - Direct Observation [video-recorded and transcribed]**

3.4.2.1 *Purpose of direct observation*

Observation in research terms is more than simply noticing or reacting to events - it is an intentional activity with specific outcomes (McDonough: 1997). Observation covers a wide spectrum, from highly systematic to very open and naturalistic. Direct observation is one of the four fundamental methods relied on by qualitative researchers, according to Marshall and Rossman (1995).

The type of researcher, too, can be categorised across a wide spectrum, from fully participatory to totally non-participatory. Wolcott uses a useful term (in McDonough 1997:116) - the 'privileged observer'. This describes the researcher who has an

organic part in the institutional environment. She is therefore accepted with friendly recognition as an observer in the classroom, without participating. In my research, I was recognised by the students as part of the institution. Therefore I was fortunate that my presence at their lectures (together with my camera assistant) became accepted as a very natural part of their Block Release experience. No one was intimidated.

The goals for observation range widely and determine the method of observation to be employed. My major goal was to record oral data for later analysis. A valuable reason for collecting data through observation is that it often triggers research questions rather than answering questions already formulated. Nunan (1992:57) clearly maintains "ethnographers often obtain data which do not support their original questions or hypotheses but are suggestive of others." This is how my own research moved from being simply a criterion-gathering task to an observation of a pedagogical 'innovation in action'. This was a scaffolding process through which the lecturer hoped to help students produce a final written product that was academically sound.

For this research I decided not to use any coded system (published or original). I was not looking for pre-identified criteria, but rather investigating how the lecturer responded to the student-presentations. Coded systematic observation implies prior decisions about what to record and what methods to use to do so. A number of coding systems have been developed and published by various researchers such as the COLT system (Allen, Frohlich, & Spada: 1983), but for some purposes these tend to be too limiting. The COLT system allows for the observer, using a pre-designed table listing specific items, to record in minute-by-minute periods the occurrence of these items. For my research, I needed to record all the observations onto video and thereby to be free from the constraints of real time, which in itself is time-consuming. My observations were supplemented by the use of field notes taken at the same time as the recording. This enabled the data to be a rich resource for analysis rather than being reduced to fit a set of pre-determined criteria using a coding system (McDonough 1997:110).

Rather than using a reductionist method of categorising events that happen, the use of field notes in addition to recordings creates a more elaborative description. I could include more nuances, picked up through observing the paralinguistic and non-verbal activities, with the freedom allowed me by making recordings.

3.4.2.2 Process of using direct observation as a research tool

The ten students taking the Church and AIDS module were required, as fieldwork, to spend fifteen hours in an institution of their choice, working with people with AIDS. On completion of their placement they were required to write a report on the experience (4.1.2). During their final week-long Block in October they had to orally present their report on this practical placement. This is what I observed and recorded.

Oral feedback was given to the students immediately after their presentations. This gave them clarity about what to include in their final report and it advised them about what is required at this academic level in a critical, reflexive report. In addition, the lecturer also had a copy of the first draft to inform his feedback. Sometimes valuable discussion ensued. Each student was permitted approximately 20 minutes to speak. The audience (peers) was permitted to ask questions or to make comments, preferably at the end. Afterwards the lecturer gave input, particularly about how the final paper should be written so that it would be critical, reflexive and academic.

The feedback from peers tended to question the theological content and the nature of the reflection of the speaker rather than how the reflections were presented. The lecturer, on the other hand, suggested the skills required to move from an often hortatory style to a more academic one. The students were encouraged to reflect critically, though personally, so that for their final report they used an appropriately academic style. Some examples of these suggestions, categorised into four main themes, are discussed in Chapter Four.

As most tertiary work is assessed in writing, the oral presentations were not allocated marks but were used to stimulate discussion. They played a vital part in the initial stages as part of a process-writing programme (Zamel 1985, Milton 1989 in Hyland and Hyland 2006). The success of the final written report depended on the success of

the student uptake (Allwright 1988) from the audience feedback. I give some examples of this uptake in Chapter Four.

Following my observations, I was able to classify the shortcomings that were most frequently mentioned during the feedback on the presentations. A number of thematic categories emerged, which I shall outline in Chapter Four. I developed these categories by systematically recording the comments made to each student about his/her presentation.

3.4.2.3 Limitations of direct observation as a research tool

The greatest difficulty with using observation as a research tool is that it is always open to misinterpretation and can be subjective. This is perhaps particularly true of non-coded observation. Since everything was recorded, subjectivity was controlled to a degree. Nevertheless, interpretation is open to subjectivity and I therefore held focus group interviews to provide 'confirmation checks' of my interpretations as a form of triangulation.

Secondly, the effect of speaking in front of a camera can reduce the 'naturalness' of the data. The students in this class seemed to suffer very little initial discomfort and learned to ignore, or at least tolerate, the camera very easily.

3.4.3 Phase Three: Elite Interviews and Focus Group Interviews

Interviews can often provide a greater depth of information than other research methods. Wisker (2001) suggests this is because they allow for the insider's point of view. Tuckman (1972 in Cohen and Manion 1989:309) claims that accessing what is "inside a person's head" makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs). This is the 'emic' perspective.

A Elite Interviews

3.4.3.1 Purpose of the elite interviews

In accordance with the ethnographic approach, this research sought to investigate why the lecturer in this case study decided to initiate his innovation. A specialised, in-

depth interview with someone selected on the basis of his expertise in a particular field is described by Marshall and Rossman (1995) as an *elite* interview. I was aware that the lecturer knows his field thoroughly and has extremely strong views. "Elites often contribute insight and meaning to the interview process because they are intelligent and quick-thinking people, at home in the realm of ideas, policies and generalizations" (Marshall and Rossman 1995:84). I believed he would contribute valuable information with depth of understanding.

The initial interview was *non-directive*. Moser and Kalton (1946 in Cohen and Manion 1989:310) recommend this approach when "complex attitudes are involved and when one's knowledge of them is still in a vague and unstructured form." I was aware of the complexity of the issues surrounding writing. As I did not know the lecturer well, I wanted him to be free to choose the direction of the initial interview.

The balance of the elite interviews (by email and with stimulated-recall) I defined as *focused* interviews, which allow for a limiting and narrowing of the topic. According to Cohen and Manion (1989) these are distinct. The researcher has - prior to the interview - already analysed the material that the subject has been involved in (in this case the video-recordings made of the lecturer's feedback). The questions designed for these interviews are grounded in the data (Appendix Five). The purpose was to confirm my hypotheses by asking the elite interviewee for his subjective responses.

3.4.3.2 *The process of using focused elite interviews and stimulated recall*

A major problem with interviewing elites is their accessibility. They are busy people with demanding time constraints. Marshall and Rossman (1995) say that the researcher is often obliged to "adapt to the wishes and predilections of the person interviewed". For this reason we agreed that some of the 'interviews' could be conducted via electronic mail. Those using the video-tapes for stimulated-recall required us to meet face to face.

The initial interview was face-to-face and non-directive. The lecturer gave me a lot of background information about himself and the reasons for his style of pedagogy. However, categories of research tools (interviews in this case) often merge, and can be combined in the same research 'event' (McDonough 1997:182). So after the initial

interview, several directive emails followed verifying specific details (Appendix Six). I had previously analysed the transcripts of the presentations together with the feedback by the lecturer and had identified and categorised four main themes:

- poor organisational skills and lack of balance in apportioning importance
- inappropriate Discourse
- shallow reflection on theological material
- lack of personal involvement in the experience

Stimulated recall was used during the second elite interview in which I asked the lecturer specific questions concerning videotaped episodes. This was done by my selecting pertinent episodes illustrating the four themes (or criteria) for discussion with the interviewee (Appendix Five).

3.4.3.3 Limitations of the elite interview

Due to the nature of the topic and the time constraints of the lecturer involved, it was more practical to use email where possible. In fact, there are advantages to this as the lecturer was able to think his responses through carefully and to express them clearly. This was appreciated by both of us.

The subjective nature of this tool is a very real limitation, which makes it rather difficult to replicate the research. Because I started off with a non-directive interview the lecturer was free to give me a lot of detail. I think his personality makes his form of pedagogy unique. In addition, people suffering from AIDS have to be treated sensitively and individually. The students, as prospective counsellors, also have their own personalities. In other words, no two modules, even though they follow the same outline, will ever be the same. This human element is a limitation of case studies generally.

B Focus Group Interviews

3.4.3.4 Purpose of the focus group interviews

A focus group allows one to focus on areas of special interest, which have arisen from the data already gathered. Only four students were available for interviewing by the time I had transcribed the videotapes satisfactorily. The purpose of the interview was to ascertain their perceptions of what the lecturer had said in his feedback during the

selected episodes and how they could have applied his input to their work. This enabled me to triangulate the interview data with the questionnaires and the observations to assess the similarities and differences between the opinions of the lecturer and of the students.

3.4.3.5 Process of using the focus group interview as a research tool

After the stimulated-recall interview with the lecturer I met the group of four students. These students were interviewed together, using the same semi-structured questions and the same videotaped excerpts as I had used for the lecturer, based on the same four themes (3.4.3.2).

3.4.3.6 Limitations of the focus group interview as a research tool

A focus group interview requires very careful facilitation and is open to misinterpretation. Because a great deal is said in the discussions, one can easily be led away from the main issue into numerous other issues when analysing. It is important to keep focused and uninvolved in the content matter to be aware of the responses to the data. I was fortunate that all students participated equally and there was no domination by any one of them.

3.5 Analysis of the Data

3.5.1 Introduction

According to Johnson (1992:90): "the general approach to data analysis in a case study is to examine the data for meaningful themes, issues or variables, to discover how these are patterned, and to attempt to explain the patterns." In this research, the aim, identified by the questionnaire (Phase 1), was to investigate the lecturer-feedback through observation (Phase 2) and to triangulate the data through interviews (Phase 3). Patterns revealed in the feedback showing various academic problems were discussed and clarified in the interviews.

Analysis, according to Miles and Huberman (1994:10), consists of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

"Data reduction entails selecting, simplifying and organising the data in order to make it possible to draw and verify some final conclusions. Data display is the way one compresses the information into a form (such as diagrams, tables,

matrices, extended texts, etc) from which conclusions can be drawn.

Conclusion drawing and verification involve making decisions about what things mean by noting patterns and explanations and then checking them out by such means of clarification (e.g. triangulation) as are possible" (10).

My analysis involved recognising patterns in the feedback and categorising them. Appendix Two is a reduced transcript of selected excerpts referring to the four major themes identified from the video-recorded feedback. The transcript is not in chronological order but has been organised into those four categories. This has been compressed into a single table in order to display the overall patterns on a single page (4.1.2, Fig 2). Finally, I have attempted to verify and triangulate the conclusions I have drawn through interviews with both the lecturer and the focus group of four students. The conclusions I have drawn from this analysis are described in detail in Chapter Four.

3.5.2 Analysis of Phase One - Questionnaires Used as Tools of Research

Both questionnaires (one for the students and one for the lecturers) had a wider purpose than that for which I eventually used them in this research. They were ultimately used only to contextualise my data. Once I had begun the analysis, the focus of my research turned to one particular case study rather than to the broad overview I had initially planned. All the data from the questionnaires were processed, but are not all included in the Appendix. The insights gained through the questionnaires acted more as a catalyst for the change of direction, so that my intense analysis was on the observations and interviews. Although it was interesting to have the background information about the lecturers (Question 1-4), this did not affect my final analysis. Question 5 on Academic Discourse was extremely ambiguous and most lecturers abandoned it, so I did likewise. Questions 6 and 7 asked for too much detail, which seemed to overwhelm the respondents. I eventually focused only on the comments concerning how they helped the students, which were detailed and insightful. A summary of this is in Appendix One. The responses to Question One will be considered in relation to the data from the observations and interviews.

In the students' questionnaire I focused on the patterns and themes that emerged in their attitudes and their understanding of proficiency in academic English. I

particularly concentrated on the use of speaking and writing (Appendix Two). The responses to these questions will be considered in relation to the data from the observations and interviews.

3.5.3 Analysis of Phase Two - Direct Observations Used as Tools of Research

With regard to analysing the data from my observations, the essential element in ethnography emphasises patterns of thought and behaviour (Fetterman 1989). Both cultures - the academic world and the hortatory world - use genres showing a very different understanding of how to communicate a message. Many students preach in their place of work and tend to use a hortatory style when giving information. This seems to be their 'default' genre - but it is not acceptable for academic presentations.

Firstly, I looked carefully at the academic requirements given to the students prior to their placements (Appendix Four). Then I began my analysis of each presentation by deciding, in each case, whether these requirements had been met.

Secondly, the lecturer and peers had given immediate feedback after each presentation. As the process unfolded and each student took a turn at the lectern, patterns of the lecturer's expectations and the students' shortfalls began to emerge. Because these had been video-recorded, I was able to transcribe what had been said so that I could categorise and identify themes. I could analyse the comments made and the frequency and regularity with which they were made (Appendix Three). These categories were then used to formulate questions for the final stage of analysis, interviewing both the lecturer and the students.

3.5.4 Analysis of Phase Three - Interviews - Elite and Focus Group

I was able to refer to exactly what the lecturer had said - on the video-recording - and to ask what he had meant by what he had said, and how he hoped the students would apply the suggestions. Secondly, in the focus group interview, the students were asked what they thought the lecturer had meant and what he had intended them to implement. In this way I was able to collect a variety of interpretations of the same episode. This formed part of the triangulation of my findings.

The questions asked of the lecturer and of the four students in the focus group were the same, with only slight changes (Appendix Five). In both cases the interviewees were asked firstly what was being said by the lecturer in each episode that they were asked to observe on the video-recording. Secondly, they were asked what they understood was required of the student.

3.5.5 Interpretation of All the Data Collected via Various Methods

My interpretation of the data thus gained is provided in Chapter Four. Blaxter et al (1996) suggest that interpretation involves arriving at an assessment of what all the combined data mean. The interpretation leads to discussion about how this relates to other relevant research on similar matters. "Interpretation is the process by which you put your own meaning on the data you have collected and analyzed, and compare that meaning with those advanced by others" (197).

In Chapter Four I shall assess the data that I have gathered and describe the four criteria that emerged as repeated patterning. I shall first give my interpretation of what I believe the lecturer said he required. Secondly, I shall compare this with what the students understood him to require.

Chapter Four - Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out to systematically describe the findings from the research: it begins with an analysis of the questionnaires, moves on to consider the classroom observations, and ends with interviews with the lecturer and with a focus group of four students.

4.1.1 Contextualisation of the Case Study

At the beginning of the research cycle, two questionnaires were administered - one to the committee of fourteen theology lecturers involved with postgraduate teaching, and the other to a group of students studying in the Honours/Masters Block Release programme. The purpose was to ascertain the opinions of both these groups concerning language needs. Only the information from these questionnaires pertaining to the valuing of the oracy skills was ultimately used in this case study as my colleague was focusing on the literacy skills (Chapter Three).

4.1.1.1 Lecturer-Questionnaire: Taking responsibility for student performance

The overall aim of the lecturer-questionnaire was to investigate the views of the lecturers who lecture the Honours/Masters students in Theology. Firstly, I wished to understand the language proficiency of students who study in English when it is not their mother tongue. Secondly, I wished to improve the process of learning through the medium of English.

Information was used from Question One (investigating the lecturers' own language backgrounds) and Question Seven (investigating the lecturers' opinions about the use of both oracy and literacy skills and the need for scaffolding the writing process of second language English speakers). The first question required background information. Five of the fourteen respondents were not English mother tongue speakers. It was interesting to observe that their responses throughout the questionnaire tended to be somewhat more sympathetic towards non-English mother tongue speakers than towards English speakers. They were therefore more aware of learner needs and more conscious of the need to scaffold students' learning process. The lecturer I ultimately selected for my case study is Belgian and speaks and writes

several languages, including English, fluently. He expressed a deep interest in language usage and an awareness of multilingualism in the teaching/learning process. He showed much insight into the students' needs.

The focus of my research was based on Question 1f. I aimed to discover whether lecturers believe it is their responsibility to assist or scaffold students towards a more critical literacy, and, if so, how this should be done. Seven respondents (50%) seemed to imply that by the time students reached postgraduate studies, critical and reflexive thinking should already have been developed. The other seven (50%) indicated that they felt that they were responsible for providing some sort of scaffolding. Only four of the lecturers gave specific examples of how they try to help students with their written work:

- by giving explicit reading guidance (L1)
- by allowing extended time (L2)
- by careful editing when marking (L3)
- by demanding initial reflection delivered as an oral presentation before submission of written work. (L4)

The first three methods described did not involve the oracy skills, but the innovation by L4 seemed to fit the focus of my research. I therefore observed one of his modules as a case study. He believes oral discussion and group reflection can aid the writing process, especially for second or foreign language English speakers. In my interview he mentioned that he had lectured in several French universities. It was there that he first saw the value of seminar-discussion before writing and submitting one's final paper (Appendix Six).

4.1.1.2 *Student-Questionnaire: Language Requirements at University*

The aim of the student-questionnaire was to discover whether the students felt disadvantaged in their studies by being non-mother tongue speakers of English. The questionnaire asked what they saw as their strengths and their weaknesses in terms of using language. The majority felt that it was to their advantage that they spoke more than one language. There is much literature suggesting this (Luckett, in Heugh, Siegrühn & Plüddemann: 1995).

English Second Language (ESL) speakers are those who grow up speaking their mother tongue but hearing English spoken in their environment. On the other hand, English Foreign Language (EFL) speakers learn English without being exposed to it as a second language in the environment. All the students classified themselves as ESL speakers rather than EFL speakers of English. They come from places where English is used in their environment (Appendix Two). They wrote that they have sufficient proficiency to cope with their studies. It is interesting that most of them said this, despite many problems in their English communication - even in answering the questionnaires.

Some examples

- S4 Yes, after all these years I do think and reason in english and therefore easy to put up an academic writing in english without much difficult...*
- S7 Yes I do feel competent but my English need to be improved academically*
- S13 Yes I do. I believe I can explain myself easier*
- S14 No! Because I know only few about English.*

The majority also classified themselves as able to write critically in terms of Macken-Horarik's three-tiered model (Appendix Two). They perceived themselves as having a higher proficiency level than they demonstrated. There was a mismatch between their perceived ability to show criticality and what was evident in their presentations.

4.1.2 The Module Investigated in the Case Study

Honours/Masters students who study through the Block Release system in theology are required to complete 3 modules and a research project (3.2.2). The module I investigated was entitled 'Church and AIDS' and is described in the Handbook (2003:25):

"The module will provide students with an understanding of the impact of HIV/AIDS on Africa, and on South Africa in particular. It will enable them to form their own theological response to the issue, and to develop possible models for what churches can do in the face of the pandemic. The module will include a 15-hour placement in an AIDS-related organisation."

The students were given a handout describing the six components of the course:

1	Reading reactions
2	Introduction to Aids ministry
3	Field work
4	Debriefing and evaluation workshops
5	Submission of essay
6	Take-home Exam

Fig 1: Components of the theology module: Church and AIDS

I was able to attend the contact sessions of the course. These were the introductory lectures (Part 2) and the workshop sessions (Part 4). These sections lasted for one week each (one block) with 3 hours' contact time each day. The students did the remaining work on their own.

My interest was in the 'uptake' (Allwright: 1988) of the feedback provided by the lecturer on the students' oral presentations in the debriefing and evaluation workshops (Part 4). I evaluated this 'uptake' by holding focus group interviews with the students a year after the course was completed. Recycling the feedback could have been construed as an intervention had I interviewed them and shown them the recordings immediately after their presentations. I wanted to retain my role as observer and theirs as 'uptakers' without intervention. I could then ascertain how much they had internalised after a year.

For guidance with assessment, the students were given the following outline of the structure of the report, describing the criteria that should be used. The elaboration in brackets was given to me by the lecturer during his interview - not to the students:

Background information (give the facts of history of the organisation)	20%
Day by day history (describe sequentially what happened)	20%
Theological reflection(critically express a faith perspective in situation)	20%
Lessons for the church (suggest practical or pastoral solutions)	20%
Personal feedback (name emotions - in order to create distance)	20%

Fig 2: Mark allocation for the report in the module: Church and AIDS

The assignment was carefully constructed. The first two sections required straightforward description. The third section required that students take a critical theological stance. This led to a practical pastoral discussion and finally to a personal self-reflection. This and the critical theological reflection were the most demanding.

4.2 Themes Emerging from the Observations and Triangulated with Interviews

The data gathered from observing the students giving their presentations and receiving feedback from their peers and from the lecturer have been systematically tabulated. Several themes emerged when analysing the transcripts of the video-recordings. These four broad categories of responses by the lecturer have been established from my observations:

- *lack of organisation* - time was not allocated appropriately and too much was spent on the introduction leaving not enough time for the reflections
- *lack of appropriate genre* - the students tended to use hortatory rather than analytical exposition
- *lack of personal involvement* - the students lacked depth and connection to their clients and were therefore not able to reflect deeply
- *lack of depth of theological reflection* - the students offered solutions too easily without probing their understanding or relating their experience to their knowledge

Data tabulated below show how many students received feedback (positive or negative) that mentioned these four categories. If, however, the students did not receive a comment it does not necessarily mean they were meeting the criteria:

Student	time allocation good/bad	genre: hortatory/ analytical	personal reflection involved/ detached	theological understanding shallow/ depth
1	X	X		X
2		X	X	X
3	✓	X	✓	✓
4	X	X	X	
7	X	X	X	X
8		X	✓	
9	X	X	X	X

Fig 3: Lecturer's feedback given to students after their oral presentations

4.2.1 Lack of Organisation of Presentation (Oral and Written)

Prior to listening to the presentations, the lecturer had read the first drafts of the student reports, and he had these in front of him. Because he had given the students the opportunity to present their work orally first, they could improve their drafts before submitting their final report. Students, particularly those who were uncertain of their own theological stance, were often not able to balance the sections in their papers according to the stipulated criteria (Fig 2, page 49). They tended to read every word of the written report, drawing out the two early sections (Background Information and Day by day History).

The lecturer felt that his most valuable input would be in the Theological reflection, the Pastoral recommendations and the Personal feedback. The students were limited to a twenty-minute delivery, yet many did not allocate the time satisfactorily to the five sections of the report. The lecturer felt he could have given more constructive feedback on the report if they had spent much less time on the first two sections and allowed sufficient time for the three most crucial sections.

Describing, firstly, the background of a particular Organisation and, secondly, the daily events the students experienced (sections 1 and 2) is straightforward. He expected them to allocate the bulk of the presentation time to a discussion of the more difficult and more demanding issues that affected them personally (sections 3 to 5). He would then have been better able to scaffold them in order for them to reach the critical theological level required in the final report.

Below are some of the lecturer's comments regarding organisational issues. This is the only time where he interrupted speakers rather than waited until the end of their talks.

Lecturer and S1 and S2 - Line 6, Section 1, Appendix 3

Sorry to interrupt you. What you are talking about now is what everybody knows already, so try to shorten this section. Its very important to get on to the rest. That's really all. Just take one or two minutes on the introduction.

....

Thank you both. You've only given us your introduction. You've spoken for half an hour now. You've not even kept to the main point ... um ... so you ... you ... so I would suggest that you speak about five minutes each, concentrating on what is really the topic here. Try to cover what's most important - the theological and pastoral issues.

In the stimulated recall interview I probed this issue of time allocation further. The lecturer explained that students are tempted to waste a lot of time on the initial two sections because it is easy to give just the facts. They find it more difficult to express the faith theologically (section 3 of the report). The lecturer stressed that the theological reflection is the most important section, as it shows whether the students have been able to 'theologise' or not. He defined 'theologise' as "see the gospel/ or Word of God/ or Faith in a given social situation". The lecturer agreed that he uses 'theologise' and 'theorise' virtually interchangeably. He said theologising could be defined as "to theorise the faith".

S7 (see below) had not constructed the report at all well as either an oral presentation or as a written report. He had a laboriously long introduction, a very short section on theological reflection and pastoral action, and had not included any personal response. By having this pointed out (see below), the student still had the opportunity and the time to re-organise his final report. He could reconstruct it to include all required aspects and to give more emphasis and space to what was important.

Lecturer and S7 - Line 25, Section 1, Appendix 3

Don't spend too much time on describing the Organisation because that's easy. You don't need a group of 15 people to listen and give feedback, but what is very important is the personal things. Your reflection and unfortunately your draft is very, very ... uummm ... very short and you have ignored ... you forgot to put your personal remarks ... completely

I asked in the stimulated recall interview about this problem of not completing sections (Fig 2). The lecturer pointed out that the assignment attempted to help the students develop reflexive skills, while requiring some basic descriptive information as well. There needed to be a balance, although greater theoretical weight was attached to the theological reflection.

4.2.2 Lack of the Appropriate Genre

Most of the students in the case study came from a preaching background. Instead of using the Discourse of Academics, they wrote and delivered their presentation using hortatory exposition as they would in church. Below is an example of what the lecturer said to two students who shared a placement:

Lecturer and S1 and S2 - Line 9, Section 2, Appendix 3

It was a good placement but an insufficient report. The placement was interesting, rich, and you learned from it. But the way you have done the written presentation ... there are things you could improve. I will try to explain ... uh ... how. I think, both of you have a tendency to preach. And that's a problem because an academic essay is not a sermon. It's a different genre. Preaching is good, but not here. And the ... the ... what I would advise you is, both in the theological part and the pastoral part, and also the personal reflection, try to really focus on the experience of the placement.

The preaching style is an inappropriate and a common problem with people familiar with the Preacher Discourse. People resort to what is habitual when they find themselves in a situation where the mode is familiar despite the context being very different. This is known as 'crucial similarity' (Wode: 1981). The students were asked to deliver an academic presentation but sometimes fell back on their preaching delivery style. It was used by these two students and reinforced by overdramatic body language, in particular, the use of hands and voices. They used expressions such as 'Lo and behold'; and they asked and answered rhetorical questions throughout. All these characteristics belong to the hortatory style rather than the analytical exposition required in the Discourse for Academics. S1 and S2 were rather bashful when watching the video-recording and said they realised the importance of appropriate genre.

A second problem of transferral from the Preacher Discourse to the Academic is the quoting of scripture. S4, who wrote very briefly in his reflection section, had in fact not done any real reflection, but had only quoted scripture passages. This, too, is inappropriate in the Academic Discourse, and was commented on as follows:

Lecturer and S4 - Line 57, Section 2, Appendix 3

and I refer to what we discussed yesterday with S2 and S1. There's a difference between a sermon and an academic dissertation in theology. So what you are saying ... I've got it here ... all you have are er ... five Biblical quotations. But that's not what we're asking here.

When asked about these two non-academic approaches (hortatory persuasion and scriptural quotation) in the stimulated recall interview, the lecturer reiterated that these are 'merely the wrong way of doing theology.' There is a place for them, but theologising requires application of one's faith and knowledge in order to abstract and analyse particular issues. Theologising is expressing oneself critically and reflexively.

Macken-Horarik (1996) argues that students develop a specialist domain where they are able to use their particular technical skills, in this case preaching. However, in order to be academically acceptable, their language needs to reach the third domain - the critical and reflexive domain. One of the advantages of presenting a report orally before submitting the final written report was evident in the comments about two of the presentations. Both were given by women who articulated well, but who, according to the lecturer, had written 'flat' drafts.

Lecturer and S8 - Line 76, Section 2, Appendix 3

I think this a good presentation. ... you have fulfilled the task in the sense that you said a lot about yourself, you tried to analyse your feelings, as you went ... I think that needs to be ... to be said, so when you write the written presentation make sure it is as rich as the verbal presentation ... because sometimes (pointing to S3: "It's the same for you, huh?") sometimes ... uh ... people are more eloquent when they speak than when they write.

What he had said to S3 was, Line 19, Section 2, Appendix 3

I found your presentation actually excellent, very concrete, very profound, and very topical. You really answered the question. Now my comment is that ... um ... when I ... I look at your written report it is good, but not as good as your oral presentation. You need to find a way of being incisive. You are very striking and very modest in what you say. So my recommendation is you try to ... you try to remember what you said and find a way of writing in that same incisive way.

This of course is the difficulty with speech - it is very difficult to remember exactly what one has said. As the binary parameters between speaking and writing, such as Foley's (1997) show, speech is fragmented/unplanned/interactive and dynamic. This is difficult to capture once it has occurred. However, if during the discussion, true reflection is taking place at a deep level, lasting transformation is also taking place within the student's theology (Slonimsky and Shalem 2006).

During the feedback, S3 did not seem to be aware that the way in which she had spoken was any different to what she had written. In order to explain this 'flatness', the lecturer said that he was not able to recognise one particular point that she had made about her theological growth in her written paper:

Lecturer and S3 - Line 28, Section 2, Appendix 3

Lecturer: What you said about life after death, I didn't find ...

S3: But it's there ...

Lecturer: Yes, I found it, but not the way you just said it!

In other words, her writing had lacked the sense of involvement that is possible in speech (Fig 1, page 10). When she spoke about this in the focus group interview she said that she still finds it more difficult to write than to speak. Perhaps this is natural. She said she enjoys the fact that speaking is somewhat unlimited and feels that she has the freedom to say as much as she needs to. She said that in writing she does not 'touch' as much - she feels she is much more limited.

However, despite a 'flat' first draft, the lecturer commented that she had reached a point of theologising whereas most other students had not. In his interview with me he elaborated: she had shown far more engagement when speaking than when she wrote and her theological reflection was evident in her speaking. He hoped that, by having verbalised her engagement with the process, she would be able to write those reflections more incisively and critically.

4.2.3 Beyond Organisation and Genre - A Model of Parallel Development

Before describing the next two feedback categories identified in the data I develop a model useful for understanding the lecturer's criteria (Fig 4, page 54). His pedagogic intention was to move the students from where they were as preachers, to a place where they could be theologically reflexive. The lecturer feedback showed how he was striving to move the students from a place where they lacked both the general requirements of Academic Community of Practice/Discourse as well as the specific requirements of the 'Applied Theologian'.

I have created the following developmental model showing the parallel movement towards criticality required in both theological and academic development. The feedback given by the lecturer focused on both these aspects although his primary concern was their theological development.

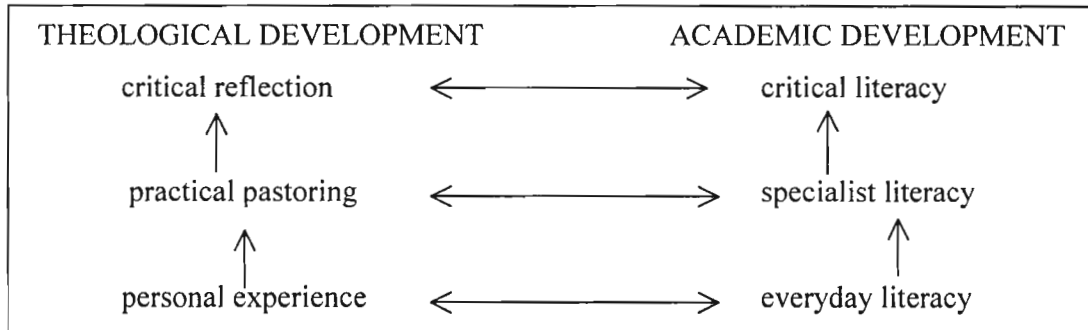


Fig 4: Link between professional development expected by the lecturer in the theology department and literacy development expected in the Academic Discourse

The lecturer scaffolded the stages of the report in such a way that he seems to have paralleled Macken-Horarik's (1996) model in which she suggests that students move through three stages as they strive for membership of the Academic Discourse community. The lecturer, too, identifies three levels at which he expects the students to function.

Macken-Horarik (1996) names the highest level of academic development *critical literacy*. The lecturer's goal for theological development is the achievement of critical reflection. She describes the stage before this as *specialist literacy*, which involves using the technical language of a particular discipline. This seems to match the level where the lecturer calls for practical, pastoral recommendations. Her first level, which she names *everyday literacy* requires a basic ability to use functional language. The personal, emotional level of involvement with the experience of the placement required by the lecturer could possibly fit at this level.

4.2.4 Lack of Personal Involvement

This is the third category I established from the lecturer's feedback that repeatedly occurred in the data of his feedback. The students were required to show how the placement, together with their reflection on it, had developed them as priests or pastors. Furthermore they were required to show whether the module had furthered their growth and personal faith development in terms of their practice. They had to

show the depth of their understanding by 'expressing the faith' or by academic theologising. However, frequently the students' reports lacked depth and an expression of their connection and involvement with their clients. Without the ability to reflect consciously on experience, one is unlikely to be able to express oneself with criticality and detachment.

4.2.4.1 *Lack of personal attachment will prevent development*

One of the main criteria of academic style is an ability to be detached and formal. Ironically, a strong criticism from the lecturer indicating the opposite was that the students were too detached from their experiences. The lecturer does not feel he is contradicting any of the demands for academic distance. On the contrary, he believes that only by acknowledging one's feelings, is one able to get the necessary distance from them in order to write in a critical and detached manner. Here are two comments:

Lecturer and S2 - Line 5, Section 3, Appendix 3

You speak about how emotionally you reacted and yet you speak as if you are far away. As if you're not even involved. It's impossible not to be.

....

Umm ... Lastly, on the ... on the personal reflections, ... uhhh ... especially S2. S2 you have a tendency not to ... to ... uhhh ... involve yourself. You ... uhhhh ... You carried on with what the Church should do, should do, should do. You didn't say how you, S2, ... uhhh ... reacted to your situation with this woman who wouldn't speak? What ... what ... how ... how will this change your practice as a minister? Umm ... you ... you're just too cautious. It's much easier to say what the Church should do. You're on the right track but you put too much distance ... uhhh that's a normal thing. I don't blame you. Everybody's tempted to do it.

He explained in the stimulated recall interviews that unless one can name one's emotions and experiences, it is not possible to write reflexively. He spoke at length about the value of 'naming'. In other words, to name feelings, to acknowledge them, to give them substance, enables one to separate oneself from them. Naming enables one to be abstract - as required in any philosophical study. Without reflection, without naming the emotions experienced during the placement, the students would be unable to theologise (to theorise about theology). They would not reach the level of detached abstraction required by post-graduates. He equated the ability to theologise, to reflect or to name, with using critical and reflexive language.

The four students in the Focus Group said that the lecturer's encouragement that they should name their feelings had been helpful both in their work and in being able to write more clearly.

4.2.4.2 *Lack of analysis of feelings will prevent development*

The lecturer highlighted the issue of feelings when tears were mentioned. He encouraged the students to analyse their feelings more deeply so that they could verbalise their experience clearly. S6 had described his tears to try to express the extent of his feelings, but he had not named feelings and therefore could not relate them in any depth to his faith. He was encouraged to recognise what was happening to him emotionally, so that he could understand himself better. The lecturer explained his belief that awareness of one's feelings is a starting point for reflexive activity:

Lecturer and S6 - Line 74, Section 3, Appendix 3

You mention being in tears, if I remember, which is a strong feeling, a strong reaction and this reaction, once again, is legitimate. (Looking around at the class) But our task here is to try to see why, why did he react so strongly? (Looking back to S6.) Uuuumm ... er ... I ... I just ... I'm trying ... why is it that that disease is so devastating? Because there are other situations of grief, of disease, not perceived to be as devastating. And what I feel is that ... I just want to highlight the fact that you have expressed very strong feelings in this case, which I think are ... uh ... certainly for a large part, compassion, feeling for others. I think you were certainly directly concerned yourself, as well. You could not have strong feelings if you, yourself, were totally isolated. You ... you've been touched yourself by that idea somehow, and I just want to invite you - not now but when you do your final draft - to try to go deeper and see what exactly did you feel so strongly? Why? What it means? Just think ... I think that's the purpose of this exercise: to go deeper into things, because as I said before, when we're aware of our feelings, we know ... uh ... how to recognise them. In a way we become stronger.

He repeatedly emphasised the need to 'go deeper' in order to develop more understanding, and become more reflexive. A second episode that the lecturer analysed in depth for the students was the experience of bathing patients. He showed them how, because there is so much intimacy in bathing the sick, they needed to think deeply about what it involved for them:

Lecturer and S4 - Line 30, Section 3, Appendix 3

Now I want to make a comment on bathing patients. Because clearly you were ... it was an experience for you. Let me analyse what happened. Uh ... I think when you bath a patient, it's intimate. ... You don't normally bath people you don't know. But in a situation of sickness you do. Now when you bath people you touch them, you

touch their skin, you touch their body. So it's a situation where you have a totally different kind of relationship with people. So that's probably why you were awkward. To look, and to touch somebody, it's not the same. Um ... now in AIDS, being a disease of the body, it's actually very meaningful to bath someone. So there's a difference between talking to people and ... and ... and bathing them. It ... uh ... invites us to re-consider the relationship between the mind and the body. You know, the Western tradition, you separate mind and body. Which I think is a mistake. In African culture, you unite the two. And I think that's healthier - to see the two together. But AIDS invites us to SEE the body. You can't say, let's not look at the body. So when we bath, when we eat, we ... we treat the person, the body is the person. You see what I mean. So just to highlight ... think about it what happened when you bath these people. I think it's probably one of the most ... um ... important moments of your placement. It's very profound.

In our stimulated-recall interview he explained why he had analysed this bathing episode in detail. The student who spoke about bathing an AIDS sufferer had been aware that it was a deeply moving experience, but he had not been able to verbalise the reasons. The lecturer believed that if the student was able to analyse what happened to him, he would be enabled to name the emotions. To name is to reflect. To reflect is to theologise. To theologise is to theorise. It is not easy to arrive at abstractions - it is a process. He believes one needs to be guided through that process until one develops the skill.

All that the student knew to start with was that the bathing had involved very strong feelings. The lecturer pointed out that physical touch of the body is intimate and therefore powerful. One is far more knowledgeable of someone when the whole body has been involved. The link between body and mind is abstract and yet in African culture less so. Talking to someone, or just looking at someone involves far less than touching them. AIDS is a disease that involves the body and the mind. You cannot treat the one without the other. This wholeness of being is an abstract, but profound concept.

When asked in the focus group interview to reflect on this discussion of self-involvement and one's development of criticality, every student wanted to comment. S1 said that for him, touch showed acceptance of a patient and a level of involvement. When asked how the discussion had affected his final writing, he said that Jesus was an example when He washed feet, touched lepers and other sick people. He did not seem fully able to separate theological reflection from pastoral actions (whether of Jesus, or of those who seek to emulate Him). He was still quoting doctrine rather than

applying his faith. In fact, he did not answer the question. Looking at his final submission, there is little evidence of his development in this area. He added a little more to his introduction, but he was still quoting scripture:

The argument of this essay is that there are gaps the church needs to fill in relationship to HIV/AIDS. The church has to take the lead, instead of the secular organisation, because the church is the light and salt of the earth. (Matt 5:13-15) (Appendix 10)

S3 showed a greater awareness of the Discourse of Academics. She revealed a deeper understanding and explained that the intimacy of bathing a patient would give her a greater compassion. Firstly she would be able to express it in practical ways as pastor (here acting in the second stage of theological development). Secondly, it would also give her an ability to interpret the meaning of love and compassion to a disease-ridden country (third stage). In other words, she seemed to understand the need for both stages to be integrated.

4.2.4.3 Lack of integration of feelings will prevent development

All academic work requires a high degree of integration. Throughout his feedback the lecturer illustrated how it is not possible to produce any integrated piece without being involved with, and aware of, one's feelings. He used an example of a student who did not verbalise how his placement had affected him, although his tone of voice made it evident that it had. The lecturer drew the student more deeply into reflecting on his experience so that he could integrate all that he had learned more fully. He said to S4:

Lecturer and S4, Line 48, Section 2, Appendix 3

But it looks like, the way you say full-blown AIDS with so much intensity, that you've been struck. It was quite an experience for you. And that's ... that's what we can expect because AIDS is striking. So I ... I ... I ... would invite you to try to ... not to say too quickly "Yes I've got the answer. Of course God is there for people who die." and so on ... and He's resurrected and so ... You've got some good answers to explain things but I think some catastrophes like this, tragedies like AIDS in a way ... um ... challenge our spiritual responses.

The lecturer helped the student to recognise the intensity of his engagement with his experience. In the stimulated-recall interview he said that he was encouraging the student to relate that experience, in all its intensity, to his faith. In other words, he needed to ask himself why he still believes and how he integrates his belief with his

understanding of the AIDS situation. It is only by integrating the whole process that he will develop the ability to be critical. The lecturer wanted the student to have faith in his own faith, to take risks and to allow his thinking to be challenged. In order to become more critical, he needed to integrate his faith with the newly-raised questions from his placement.

The lecturer said that the course has a deliberate component where people are required to look at themselves within the AIDS situation. It is a course with a strong practical element. The placement in a hospice or institution is incorporated so that students are required to reflect on real experience and what it does to their faith. They are required to show an ability to 'speak the faith into that social situation'. The lecturer believes that that is the definition of Theology.

One of the students (S2) said in the focus group interview that he understood this advice about getting more personally involved. He said for his final report he spent more time reflecting directly on the feelings he had experienced during the placement (Appendix Seven). However, it was interesting to note that this student spoke of a 'balance' between theological work/personal emotions and pastoral practice, rather than integration.

I believe S2 still did not fully understand integration. He agreed that there were different areas that needed to be integrated. He kept them separate: the practical role of the pastor and the professional role of the theologian. He accepted that they were different and necessary but he wanted a balance rather than integration. The lecturer, on the other hand, is able to move with ease between all the domains. He integrates the emotional, the practical, and the reflexive, and allows each to inform and develop the others with increasing insight. This is the ultimate goal but perhaps S2's recognition of the domains was the beginning of the academic maturity required for true integration.

4.2.5 Lack of Depth of Theological Reflection

When one can integrate feelings, service to fellows, and intellectual understanding, one is more likely to be able to be critical. However, without sufficient probing of

these areas, the students often offered solutions too easily, only quoting scripture or doctrine.

4.2.5.1 *Reflection results in integration*

The lecturer encouraged the students not to be too shallow, or to move on to other ideas too quickly. He said that if there do not appear to be clear answers or straightforward solutions, it is important to reflect further. This is where one can develop one's critical approach. It is a matter of integrating many different aspects of one's experience: understanding and knowledge, together with emotions and experiences. The lecturer insists that reflection on personal experience must go together with one's theoretical reflections. In his words: "They are inseparable". He said to a student:

Lecturer and S4 - Line 63, Section 4, Appendix 3

Just to say, don't say too quickly "I've got the answer." I know your profession is a priest or pastor, and you're even paid for it but ... um ... I ... I ... I think theological reflection needs to accept that maybe we don't have all the answers, or maybe we need a new type of answer. Somebody has said before and ... maybe you should remember ... has said maybe God is not there to give us an explanation of death, but to be with us. In other words try to integrate the different parts of your experience. The experience of solidarity, support and strength, helplessness, questions, ... uh ... Theological reflection is all of that together. Not only one and then the other. So don't ... don't be devastated in this situation and then you've got the right sermon to give for this other situation. It's a question of integrating and that is difficult. That's why AIDS is a challenge to the church - but I think it's a good challenge.

AIDS is a challenge to the church and also a challenge to theology. It cannot be ignored, therefore deep reflection is required. There are no easy answers. This integrating of ideas, feelings, and experiences is vital to the development of both the individual and the discipline itself.

A further challenge illustrating the need for reflection and integration was picked up by the lecturer when a student raised the issue of the secular. He asked what is appropriate when ministering in a state institution as opposed to a specifically Christian one. The lecturer encouraged the student to look closely at this familiar issue of state and religion. He suggested further reflection on the part they both played, or could play, in the AIDS pandemic. This aspect of connecting and

integrating ideas is a key factor in academic writing and is not an easy skill to acquire. The lecturer encouraged him to spend time and not to lose sight of the challenge.

Lecturer and S6 - Line 60, Section 3, Appendix 3

Now, you've been doing your placement in a state institution and that's extremely valuable. I'm delighted that you have, and are starting to think about what it means. You say, and I was very happy and would like to affirm that, that "I cannot impose ... er ... faith on people". It's very key that. It's true, you cannot. It would be inappropriate not to see the difference between a state clinic and ... a ... a ... Catholic or ... or ... or Methodist or whatever (interjection) Lutheran ... so I suggest you try to pull together all your ideas on this issue of AIDS and religion and state institution because that's a ... very rich part of your presentation. Don't ignore it too quickly - it's precious; it's good.

The lecturer said in the stimulated-recall interview that anything that causes some discomfort is good to analyse. To help students integrate different aspects of their work, he suggests they ask themselves the reason for their discomfort. If they can name it, they are abstracting the issue and can therefore have more criticality. Realisation that the issue of state versus church is a very real religious theme would enable them to deal with it far more abstractly.

The students did not have much to say on this point of abstractions in the stimulated-recall interview. They understood the value of naming feelings, but to deal with the abstract concept of church and state in relation to feelings seemed to be an idea they had not yet internalised.

Similarly, another of the religious themes the lecturer named as a difficult one for reflection, was the value of life. This is a spiritual or theological issue that always needs to be addressed when facing a fatal disease such as AIDS. He picked up a student's reference to the value of life and suggested again that he take the idea further. His probing is a powerful means of encouraging growth in the students. If they face the difficult questions and move into the third reflexive level they will be able to do more than simply communicate what happened. They may begin to understand their faith better and to integrate their theological stance into the 'macro' picture.

Lecturer and S6 - Line 88, Section 4, Appendix 3

Why is life so precious? That's ... that's a typical Christian theme - the value of life. Now in situations of despair someone says "I'll kill myself." And many people will kill themselves, and others, through being promiscuous when they know they are HIV positive.. we know that. So this issue is ... so a ... a theological theme is the value of life as God-given. So just a suggestion to go deeper - what you say is good but you could go even deeper.

The lecturer said that when questions are difficult one is required to think about them deeply and not to ignore them. He spoke of how easy it is to find short cuts, especially by quoting pieces of scripture or doctrine.

4.2.5.2 Reflection results in appropriation and independence

An example of a lack of reflecting was evident when one student during the discussion after his presentation, dismissed the use of condoms dogmatically: "They should be faithful" (Appendix Seven). The student had not reflected on what this really means, nor had he seen the need to appropriate what one has read. He did not deal with the problem sufficiently. Quoting doctrine as a solution, without reflecting carefully on the people involved in the real-life situation is not conducive to developing an academic theological stance. No critical reflexive ability is evident. To dismiss difficulties rather than to reflect on them lacks the rigour of academic demands. The lecturer explained that the use of scripture without one's own voice shows a lack of knowledge about what is required in an academic report:

Lecturer and S7 - Line 117, Section 4, Appendix 3

It's very easy to give a ... give a Biblical reference. OK, take your Bible, you see, that's the answer. I can go home now. I ... if I was lying half dead, in extreme poverty, I don't know what I would do. So, it's not enough to give five Biblical references. You need to go a bit further. And I think this judging AIDS as part of your course on theology, it's a degree in theology and in theology, you theologise. In other words you articulate the faith in a different context. The context here is AIDS, and poverty, and gender and so on.

Biblical quoting belongs to the realm of the secondary or specialist domain, where the Preacher Discourse is found. In the Academic Discourse, these quotations must be explored and expanded. As isolated doctrine, Biblical quotes are not sufficient. S1 said in the focus group interview after watching the video-recording that he realised he needed to go beyond dogma. Another of the students (S8) voiced dissatisfaction with her previous faith, and with answers she felt could not be sufficient for suffering

people. The lecturer commended this dissatisfaction as it showed a willingness to engage with, and articulate, a more critical, reflexive way of thinking. He encouraged the student to acknowledge the challenges (Appendix Three).

In the Discourse of Academics, one requires a level of independent thinking that involves challenging what has been said before. In the following excerpt, the lecturer points out how the student simply quotes some AIDS counsellors as if they cannot be wrong. The lecturer encouraged the student to reflect carefully on what these 'experts' said and to take a 'critical stance'. He should not allow himself to be influenced by their words or just to accept them without thinking through exactly what they were saying. Out of this reflection comes appropriation - making the knowledge one's own. (Slonimsky & Shalem: 2006) Simply repeating what the counsellors said, verbatim, showed a lack of appropriation and of independence.

Lecturer and S2 - Line 26, Section 4, Appendix 3

We should not see the language of the counsellors, of the priests automatically as the truth. They are themselves influenced by ... media, by ... perceptions. Nobody has a sort of pure, pure situation. And what you've done, you ... you've repeated statements made by the counsellors. Um ...so maybe our task is to take a critical distance and not just to repeat but to think about their words. I know it's difficult - because we ourselves are influenced by all sorts of things by propaganda and media too. We ... we ourselves struggle to think independently. That's ... that's where ... uhhh ... what we do here is important. It is to try to go deeper into things.

The lecturer commented about the lack of independent thinking by the two students who were on a placement together. S2 did not think about the comments made by the counsellors in an independent manner but merely repeated them verbatim in his report. The lecturer commented that their reports could have been written without even doing the placement (Appendix 5). In other words, they were not processing the doctrine. Quoting doctrine is never sufficient in the Discourse of Academics although it is perfectly acceptable in the Discourse of Preachers. The skill of appropriation of what one reads, is completely different to that of quoting blindly. Appropriation brings about a change in the reader rather than a blind acceptance of dogma. It brings about change at a deep personal level.

4.2.5.3 *Reflection results in transformation*

The lecturer believes that a depth of reflection and an integration of all that it entails will produce a transformed theology. Theological reflection involves finding

ourselves changed in some way and being able to articulate this. The lecturer commented to a student whom he felt did not understand the meaning of theological reflection:

Lecturer and S7 - Line 145, Section 4, Appendix 3

It's a challenge. I don't know if anybody has a comment on that because I thought that S3 did it very nicely yesterday by saying ... um ... what was it again ... uh... life after death. She said I don't think I can speak of life after death in the same way. I mean ... should I speak of life after death? The problem is life now. (points to S3) You said something like that. That's what I call theological reflection. You see, because of that experience of death ... and life ... a very, very, very physical experience, she says, 'OK I still believe in life after death (confirms with S3) but I can't speak about it the same way as before'. It's like, I cannot just say "OK you've got life after death" to that woman. She ... she was dying. And how can you speak like that? That's the sort of thing I expect from everybody. It's a ... it's a theological reflection which is articulated with the people, faces, the experiences, encounters, and it's ... it's difficult. That's why I think this course is rightly an Honours course. It is an advanced course in theology. The first, second and even third year you learn the ropes ... you know the stuff; you know; you know how to read your Bible ... but a master is actually producing theology.

As a result of the lecturer's comments to S3, she added almost half a page to her Theological reflections that had originally taken only four lines. (Appendix 8)

First draft: S3

People like Zanele who have little children desire to live long so they may be able to bring their children up. However, since most of the HIV/ AIDS sufferers are too poor to afford healthy food, it is more likely that their wish to live long will not be fulfilled even though they have access to HIV/AIDS drugs. Therefore my faith was challenged.

Final draft: S3

The above thus explains the opportunity HIV/AIDS is creating for the Church to speak to the sufferers about the hope for prolonged life through the antiretroviral drugs, eating nutritious food and exercising, or even the hope for life after death and the whole question of eternal life.

However, since most of the HIV/AIDS sufferers are too poor to afford healthy food, it is more likely that their wish to live long will not be fulfilled even though they have access to HIV/AIDS drugs. The realization of the above hit me as I spent time with Zanele and, it made me rethink my theology of life after death.

Zanele already understands about life after death. However, her greatest need for the moment is for her life to be prolonged so she may be able to look after her children. I thus asked myself "how can I speak about life after death when what she needs is life now?" The incident thus helped me to be more sensitive when speaking about life after death to the dying. I can say the incident has changed me in a way, for I cannot speak about life after death in the same way.

Although I still believe in the Christian teaching on life after death or everlasting life, it is my opinion that the teaching about everlasting life need not be used as a means of escaping from the reality that people need to be helped to be able to live now.

The above thus leads me to strongly believe that if we are to win in the struggle against HIV/AIDS, efforts to alleviate poverty need to be taken seriously. Therefore I suggest that while Churches engage in giving spiritual help to HIV sufferers, they should also engage more in development programmes to alleviate poverty (Appendix Eight).

This transformation that the lecturer describes is evident in paragraphs 4 and 5 despite her language not being altogether sophisticated. She speaks of 'being hit' by a realisation. However, since she is developing criticality and distance, it will not be too great a step for her to develop a more formal vocabulary. She shows an ability to be theologically critical and is beginning to master (Gee 1996) the requirements of critical literacy (Macken-Horarik 1996).

The lecturer says theology is an applied discourse. In Macken-Horarik's terms it is a discipline where one functions at the third level. It is necessary to apply one's faith in a situation and to allow one's experience to transform one's understanding. There needs to be a shift in one's thinking and understanding, which is expressed in one's writing. One's writing will become transformed as a result.

Lecturer S7 - Line 131, Section 4, Appendix 3

You should take those cases, those examples of people you've met and heard, and reflect theologically on it. That's what I found was missing with S2 and S1 yesterday. It was theological reflection related to the placement, directly, because otherwise what's the point of a placement if the theological reflection was ready before in any case? What's the point? I think that's not theology, for me. That's ... that's a sermon ... Whatever ... It's ... it's something from the sky. So ... now, there are good things here ... I don't want to dismiss your placement and your report. Some good perceptions. Umm ... but you don't do the task which is to ... uh ... open your eyes, your ears. Be impressed by things and say, "How can I see my faith in the same way as before?" I'm not getting the sense that you've done that shift.

This issue of allowing oneself to shift, to be transformed, is essential for one to reach the third level of criticality. Of course this sort of reflection takes time and effort. It is easier just to quote others without applying one's understanding to one's experience and vice versa.

This aspect of how the church should deal with the whole dilemma of AIDS was crucial to the whole assignment. During our stimulated-recall interview, the lecturer explained his constructivist viewpoint. Knowledge is a construct and therefore there is no one truth. The rigour that is required at postgraduate level demands a high degree of self-understanding. He firmly believes that students can improve this through verbal interaction. The seminars are therefore designed to force direct, face-to-face responses to questions, which in turn develop the students' ability to be reflexive and critical.

Speech is dynamic (Halliday: 1989) and involved (Foley: 1997). The lecturer said that particularly in Africa with its tradition of orality, it is valuable to make use of the oracy skills as much as possible. He believes that this is particularly advisable when dealing with ESL speakers. S8 confirmed this in the Focus Group interview. She said that she knew she had difficulty with writing academically in English because it was not her mother tongue. She explained that by first being given the opportunity to speak freely, she felt better equipped to write her report.

The lecturer indicated that many academics, even first language English speakers, prefer to speak than to write. He said that there is a freedom in speaking that is not the same in writing. It seems that to express oneself orally first can be greatly beneficial. One can focus on expressing one's ideas freely until they are formulated. When writing, every word has to be carefully weighed, carefully controlled. This forces a high degree of accuracy and criticality. It is permanent and because it is captured it can be reflected on at any later stage. Words are tools and can be useful when one is informed and comfortable about using them. Transfer to writing is a skill that he believes takes time, practice and determination.

Speaking is spontaneous and allows freedom, but when one needs to articulate and formulate complex thoughts, writing has advantages. If one's theology needs to be transformed to be significant, one's articulation of that transformation will also be significantly changed.

4.3 Conclusion

I have no intention in this dissertation of 'proving' or 'disproving' whether this method of pedagogy is successful. My interest is in how much the students are affected by the lecturer's method. Macken-Horarik (1996) believes it is necessary to develop and use a critical reflexive ability to express oneself and one's insights at post-graduate level. The lecturer believes that to 'do' post-graduate theology is to express one's faith in a critical, reflexive manner and to apply one's beliefs practically to a given social situation.

The final point that I chose for discussion ties up these themes rather well. The lecturer had said to one of the students that it is necessary to be aware of one's role in different situations. In the stimulated-recall interview he said that as a pastor the focus should not be on theologising at all. It was far more important to be at the specialist level, reaching the people's needs and using the spiritual language with which they are comfortable and familiar. However, it is vital to be able to move out of this level and into the third in order to reflect on what was happening in that very role of pastor.

Lecturer and S7 - Line 129, Section 3, Appendix 3

So you need now to go back to your drawing board and ... and reflect on what has challenged you as a pastor and maybe the difficulty for an active pastor is that because you're confronted with these situations all the time ... you're sort of used to it. And you're always the pastor and ... and ... er ... the person ... is, like, ignored and we need to find a balance between function as the pastor ... I'm not a pastor, I teach, I'm a lecturer. I'm not a pastor, I'm a lecturer. And so everybody's got a function and ... or a nurse has a function; a social worker has a function. A pastor is like a social worker, but it's also a function. So I ... I ... I try ... we try to reconcile the function and the person. You see what I mean - and it's a challenge. It's a challenge, you see. It's not easy. That's why we need training in it.

The lecturer believes that theologians need training in their roles just as pastors do. Theologians need to reflect more deeply, to go beyond where they are. They need to question what they feel, and to get in touch with their feelings (Appendix Six). He believes that only when a person can name his emotions is he able to be critical. Only once he has been able to identify and name his emotions will he be able to distance himself from them sufficiently to write abstract ideas with clarity and criticality, as a true academic.

Boughey says that becoming an academic is a much more long-term process than we generally think it is. It involves role change at a level that is affective as well as cognitive (2000). She believes it is a life-long process where one is constantly moving through the different domains with a conscious awareness of doing so.

I asked the lecturer whether he was asking students to get in touch with their emotions on the first or personal level so that they could understand theology/theory. I thought perhaps he believed that by understanding this, the students would be better able to write it up in a formal detached style. He was clearly not thinking in terms of writing for writing's sake as I was. He replied that the emotions are 'the locus of theology', and that life and death matters involve emotions and they involve theology. He of course was teaching theology, which he sees as a critical language. He was interested in my suggestion that by naming and verbalising one's feelings audibly as a first step, one is simultaneously developing one's writing ability. His argument had only been that in naming one's feelings one is then able to detach, and so to theologise. Macken-Horarik (1996) believes students can be similarly taught to write in a detached critical manner rather than only in the everyday personal domain.

No single teaching programme in one short semester can necessarily turn a pastor in the second domain into a professional theologian using the third domain. Similarly, it would take time for students to learn to reflect and become critical academic writers. The change cannot happen suddenly. Students have to be helped to reach this way of thinking, and ultimately writing. A powerful means of doing this is using the oral skills. Boughey (2000) writes:

"linking propositions is easier in most kinds of speaking than in writing because there is another person to help make those links and to question those that that are not obvious. In contrast to speaking, writing is a lonely process requiring that the writer firstly make those links for herself and then make them explicit for her reader" (289).

Success as the ultimate goal in the Academic Discourse is reaching the final stage of critical writing. It therefore seems that the sort of discussion advocated by this lecturer is a useful means of bridging the gaps between the domains.

In the next, and final, chapter I shall conclude with my insights into the use of the oracy skills. Oral feedback, given in a theology module, seemed to scaffold mastery of critical, theological Academic Discourse. My insights include the model of parallel development that I have developed (Fig 4, page 54) and the value of the way in which the lecturer required an emotional response prior to writing a detached and formal report.

Chapter Five - Discussion and Conclusion

In this final chapter I draw together the findings from the case study (described in Chapter Four) and the theory I reviewed in order to create a framework for that case study (described in Chapter Two). Firstly, I summarise briefly how I selected this study. Secondly, I describe why I kept the focus on oracy skills without analysing the final written products. Thirdly, I discuss how the lecturer and the students understood the need for integration as a part of active critical appraisal. Fourthly, I discuss some recommendations for further study. I conclude with a final comment on the use of oracy skills in tertiary education.

5.1 Introduction

Initially I set out to investigate the use of the oracy skills (Speaking and Listening) in tertiary education because far more research has gone into the literacy skills. It was my intention to create a composite list of criteria defining in detail what aspects of Speaking and Listening a student requires to succeed in a tertiary institution such as this university. I was working in tandem with a colleague who was creating a similar list of the criteria for the academic literacy skills.

Very soon, as can happen in an ethnographic type of study, I decided to change my direction. I discovered, through the questionnaire, one particular postgraduate module being offered in the Theology department where the oracy skills played a larger part than in any of the other current modules. This drew me to a case study of the pedagogy of this module.

5.2 Purpose of the focus on oracy

My purpose was to explore an oral-based pedagogy but not to prescribe a 'best method'. I was interested in a module where good use is made of the oracy skills with definite reasons for doing so. I wanted to assess whether the lecturer's goal was achieved in using oral methods in order to direct and encourage good academic thinking (and, with it, good writing). Furthermore, I wanted to determine whether the students understood the lecturer's goal and felt that it had been reached. I did not set out to measure the final product of the students but to document the process that one

particular lecturer moved them through. This process involved the oracy skills, with which theology students are particularly familiar. Immediately this raises two conflicting pedagogical thoughts:

- 1) Learning is a process of moving from the known to the unknown. The lecturer aimed to move the students from the Preacher Discourse, using the aspects of appropriate formal speech known to them (Fig 3, page 13) on to appropriate and critical theology. He assumed this would also promote the formal writing required in the Academic Discourse.
- 2) However, it could be argued that when a new mode is too 'crucially similar' (Wode: 1981) to the known mode, there is the danger that students will fall back to the old or 'default' mode. In other words, asking students for an oral performance in the Academic Discourse might trigger the genres of the Discourse of the Preacher. There, hortatory oral performance is the norm.

I do not see this as a real conflict since this can be pointed out immediately on the oral feedback and used to scaffold the students one step at a time. It is important to make use of student strengths in order to help them meet the requirements for Academic Discourse.

A positive view of the process was expressed both by the lecturer and by one of the students in the focus group interview in answer to the same interview question: whether the students were able to put what was discussed into practice. The answer from both parties was: "Everybody passed, didn't they?" When probed about this rather glib response both the lecturer and the students in the focus group felt that this module had helped them to become more academic and more theological in their approach (Appendix Six and Seven).

The lecturer insisted that there is nothing new about his method - it is the tried and tested European system of academic seminars where students are required to prepare a paper and present it orally, after which the audience, in his words: 'fires questions, forcing further reflection and criticality' (Appendix Six).

The lecturer did not assign a mark to the oral work. For my purposes, I would have liked to have a measurable 'before and after' mark allocation in place. In other words, to see what assessment the students were given prior to the feedback or 'firing of questions' and then the assessment on the submission of the final written report. However, firstly, any improvement in the allocated mark need not necessarily and simplistically be accredited purely to the feedback. Secondly, the lecturer deliberately chose not to allocate marks for the presentation so that the students were free to experiment with their subject without the pressure of assessment (Appendix Six).

I therefore focused beyond the aim of measuring visible change and elected instead to try to understand through interviews what the lecturer had attempted to do and whether his students were aware of and understood his intentions. In the interview, I asked the lecturer to explain why he uses the 'seminar-discussion' method. He answered that what is crucial to his use of this method is his understanding of theology. Theology is - he believes - a critical language, and 'a way in which one speaks one's faith'. It has a great deal to do with the use of words but it must be applied to the everyday life of the people of today, as expressed in the Dominican faith. He enjoys language and was a journalist for many years. Therefore he believes that he is well equipped to 'translate' between the Everyday, the Specialist and the Critical domains of Macken-Horarik (1996). He believes that it is essential to have a sense of integration of the three domains, so that one can move between them with ease (Appendix Six).

5.3 **Need for integration**

In Chapter Four I described my findings in detail. The bulk of the chapter dealt with the requirements for academic writing, repeatedly stipulated by the lecturer in his feedback to the students. These were:

- *good organisation*
- *appropriate genre*
- *personal involvement*
 - acknowledgement of emotions
 - analysis of feelings
 - integration of emotions, experience and understanding
- *theological reflection*
 - conscious integration
 - appropriation and independence
 - transformation

The students indicated their understanding of the need for these criteria and ultimately for an integration of them all. They made the following comments during the final focus group interview (Appendix Seven).

- S1 If we separate our experiences from our studies or our studies from our sermons then things go unchallenged, unchanged ...*
- S2 Our faith and our studies are holistic - they cannot be separated*
- S3 It is through reflecting on our faith as we've done in this course that we can find solutions in the world*
- S8 We have to be fully attached to life before we can make a difference*

This integration, it would seem, happens through reflection. It is only by reflecting that we can relate our present experience to our understanding and therefore reach a point of criticality. It is only by naming our emotions that we can find some distance from them. In fact, what is un-reflected would be evident in a final lack of criticality in someone's work. The lecturer seemed to be saying (Appendix Six):

Analysis =	to reflect =	to name =	to theologise =	to theorise
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Fig 1: The lecturer's definition of analysis

The lecturer always begins with the need for self-reflection in order to end with a mastery of critical reflection, or appraisal. He moves the students from reflection on personal experience into a place of critical appraisal of their understandings of that experience. In a similar way, Macken-Horarik (1996) uses the idea of moving through three domains in order to produce critical reflexive writing (Fig 2, page 3). This movement through to the higher levels of criticality can and should be scaffolded for students, but it needs to be said that many students were successful simply as a

result of their own maturity. Certainly explicit scaffolding can help, but reflection and appraisal can also be life skills learned through experience.

A question was raised in the focus group interview about the emotional intensity of the programme. S1 said that it showed how powerful the placement as an experience had been and how it had overwhelmed many of the students. S8 continued that emotions have to influence critical writing so that students go through personal transformation. She felt that a change or a shift is required in order to create critical thinkers and ultimately to bring about change in social situations.

Perhaps transformation, if it were easy to measure, would best reveal the success of the module. This would need to be visible in the student's personal theology, the student's control over the Academic Discourse and ideally, the student bringing about a change in the society.

5.4 Personal Critique and Recommendations for Further Research

This research has deliberately kept to investigating only how the oracy skills are used in pedagogy. However, if I had seen the final written reports I could have had an opportunity to further ascertain the success of the module. A recommendation is therefore to repeat the process but to include an examination of the final written products for evidence of the progress that both the lecturer and the students in my study believe takes place. These findings could enhance the findings of this research: that using the oracy skills increases the involvement of the students and therefore furthers their understanding and betters their criticality.

Secondly, my questionnaires had many limitations (3.4.1.4) and needed to have been better piloted. Fortunately they gave me sufficient data as I kept my focus on the discipline of theology only. I could have written the questionnaires to question all disciplines about their views. The questionnaires could have asked for the criteria for Academic Discourse in specific professions and for ways that the discipline was

attempting to scaffold their students into it. It would be worthwhile to investigate whether the method in this case study could be used to scaffold students into the professional level of any discipline. It could investigate whether this would simultaneously lead to developing the critical level of writing that is required in the Academic Discourse of that discipline.

Finally, this research focused specifically on EFL/ ESL speakers. However, much of it applies equally to mother tongue speakers. Further research into the use of the seminar-discussion method of pedagogy in multilingual universities is recommended. This could be used both as an alternative to giving written student feedback and as a means to make greater use of the oracy skills. This would be useful, particularly amongst people who have a powerful oral culture, or who live and study in a multicultural environment.

5.5 **Concluding comments**

This research began, to determine whether greater use could be made of the oracy skills in tertiary pedagogy. I explored a single module and recorded the lecturer's oral input / feedback in detail. My findings confirm many of the criteria established for academic writing (Chapter Two). An interesting aspect of socialisation (Duff, 2003) is that not only do 'experts' teach novices the values, ideologies and traditions of the community, but novices should 'teach' their mentors, their communicative needs i.e. socialization is bi-directional. Once students learn to communicate and think through challenges critically, it is only a small step towards writing critically.

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Appendices

1. Lecturer-Questionnaire - only the questions used and the responses to them
2. Student-Questionnaire
3. Excerpts from transcripts of video-recordings
4. Handout describing the module, 'Church and AIDS'
5. Stimulated-recall Interview Questions
6. Summary of Lecturer Interviews and Emails
7. Summary of Focus Group Interview
8. Excerpts from the students' final written reports

Appendix One

Questionnaire for Theology Staff

Purposes:

- to inform the material being developed for the Theology Block Release Language Workshops
- as a confirmation check providing triangulation for data being collected for two MA dissertations.

Introduction:

Some of the terminology and concepts in this questionnaire are specific to the discipline of Applied Linguistics. These are explained below and may be a useful context for some of the questions:

1. It has been suggested by Macken-Horarik that there are **three different levels of literacy** as shown in the adapted table below:

Everyday / Functional Literacy	Specialized / Technical Literacy	Reflexive / Critical Literacy
Common sense / Content knowledge of language	Discipline knowledge/ language of formal education	Critical knowledge/dialect language to reflect on meaning
Used in community relationships(shared knowledge)	Used in expert roles to create formal and social distance	Used to investigate through academic/ professional/ logical discussion
Conversation/private prayer /language in action/commentary	theological text/public prayer/ sermons	Interpretive, argumentative language to metacommunicate
Oral Tradition	Academic mainstream	Academic postgraduates

2. **Genre** is a conventional way of using language to communicate, for a specific social purpose, in a particular context; for example, explaining, arguing, persuading, describing, instructing, narrating. Each of these purposes determines not only choice of content, but also choice of structure and language.
3. **Discourse Analysis** is used to identify structure and language required for a genre. In the case of Academic Discourse i.e. the writing required at a University; the discourse is objective, tentative, accurate and formal.

QUESTIONNAIRE BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE

1 Please reflect on yourself in terms of using English for academic purposes:

- a) How long have you been teaching on the Honours/Masters course?
- b) On average, how many Honours/Masters Modules have you taught each year?
- c) You teach in English - is this your home language? YES / NO
- d) When did you learn English? mother tongue / primary school / high school / undergrad / postgrad
- e) To what extent has 'Academic Discourse' been difficult for you personally? How have you made the move from 'Everyday Literacy' to 'Specialised Discourse' to 'Critical Literacy'?
- f) If you draw on these personal experiences to help students with their 'Academic Discourse', explain how you do this.

Summary of responses to Question 1 (a-f) of Lecturer-Questionnaire

- a) How long have you been teaching on the Honours/Masters course?
- | | | |
|----------------|---|-----------------------|
| 10 respondents | : | more than 4 years |
| 3 respondents | : | between 2 and 4 years |
| 1 respondent | : | less than 2 years |
- b) On average, how many Honours/Masters Modules have you taught each year?
- | | | |
|---------------|---|-------------|
| 6 respondents | : | one module |
| 8 respondents | : | two modules |
- c) You teach in English - is this your Home Language?
- | | | |
|---------------|---|-----|
| 9 respondents | : | yes |
| 5 respondents | : | no |
- d) When did you learn English?
- | | | |
|---------------|---|----------------|
| 8 respondents | : | mother tongue |
| 3 respondents | : | primary school |
| 1 respondent | : | high school |
| 1 respondent | : | self-taught |
| 1 respondent | : | blank |
| 0 respondents | : | undergrad |
| 0 respondents | : | postgrad |
- e) To what extent has 'Academic Discourse' been difficult for you personally? How have you made the move from 'Everyday Literacy' to 'Specialized Discourse' to 'Critical Literacy'?
- | | | |
|---------------|---|-----------|
| 4 respondents | : | easy |
| 3 respondents | : | difficult |
| 7 respondents | : | blank |

f) If you draw on these personal experiences to help students with their 'Academic Discourse', explain how you do this.

7 respondents	:	Yes
3 respondents	:	No
7 respondents	:	Blank
1 respondents	:	Don't know

Below are the suggestions given by four lecturers, which were practical:

give students time and explicit direction
give reading guidance and clear marking/correcting
correct grammar - but not literacies
scaffold using the oracy skills -

The other three lecturers who said Yes, offered very broad comments:

challenge the students
guide the students
use personal examples

Appendix Two

Questionnaire for Theology Honours/Masters Students

Purposes:

- to inform the material being developed for the Theology Block Release Language Workshops
- as a confirmation check providing triangulation for data being collected for two MA dissertations.

Introduction:

Some of the terminology and concepts in this questionnaire are specific to the discipline of Applied Linguistics; these are explained below and may be a useful context for some of the questions.

1. It has been suggested by Macken-Horarik that there are three different levels of literacy as shown in the adapted table below:

Everyday / Functional Literacy	Specialized / Reproductive Literacy	Reflexive / Critical Literacy
Common sense / Content knowledge of language	Discipline knowledge/language of formal education	Critical knowledge/dialect language to reflect on meaning
Used in community relationships(shared knowledge)	Used in expert roles to create formal and social distance	Used to investigate through academic/professional/ logical discussion
Conversation/sermon/ language in action/commentary	Written/read (spoken/listened to lesser degree) text	Interpretive, argumentative language to metacommunicate
Oral Tradition	Academic mainstream	Academic postgraduates

2. **Genre** is a conventional way of using language to communicate, for a specific social purpose, in a particular context; for example, explaining, arguing, persuading, describing, instructing, narrating. Each of these purposes determines not only choice of content, but also choice of structure and language.
3. **Academic Discourse** is the type of writing required at a University and is objective, tentative, accurate and formal.
4. **EFL** is English that has been learnt in a place where English is not actually spoken.
ESL is when English is spoken (and therefore heard by the learner) in that place.

Please note:

There are no correct answers to these questions. What is needed is your opinion.

This questionnaire is confidential.

The instructions before each question will explain whether you answer with a tick or choose a number or letter on a rating scale. Where possible, we would welcome a full explanation of your reasons for your choice.

Thank you for your views and ideas.

- 1a. Age: less than 20 ____; 21-30 ____; 31-40 ____; 41-50 ____; over 50 ____
- 1b. Nationality _____
2. What is your mother tongue? _____
3. Most postgraduates arrive with different levels of what is labeled 'Specialised Discourse'. One of the assumptions of our research is that Critical Literacy is required at postgraduate level. The postgraduate theology students need to be shifted from 'Specialised Literacy' to 'Critical Literacy'.
4. At what age did you start using English? _____
5. Would you say you learnt English as EFL or ESL? _____
Explain _____

6. Are you assessed orally at all? _____
7. Do you think this sort of assessment is valuable/necessary? _____
8. Explain: _____

9. Do you feel competent using English for academic purposes? Explain:

10. Why did you choose to study in a South African, English university?

11. In your professional context, what language(s) will you / do you use?

12. Why do you think you need to speak English? Please tick ✓ whichever one, two or more sentences apply to you personally.

- a) it is an international language ()
- b) it is needed for a good job ()
- c) to have English-speaking friends ()
- d) to understand English culture and literature ()
- e) it is needed in your intended field of work ()

Other (Explain) _____

13. Number the following language skills in order of importance to you and explain why:

- Speaking _____

- Listening _____

- Reading _____

- Writing _____

14. What are your strongest language skills? _____

15. Why do you think so? _____

16. What have you found / do you find most difficult about the English language?

Summary of responses to Student-Questionnaire

- 1a. Age: 31-40 : 4 respondents 41-50 : 6 respondents over 50 : 3 respondents
- 1b. Nationality:
SA: 5 respondents Zambia: 4 respondents Nigeria: 1 respondent Tanzania: 1 respondent
Zim: 1 respondent Namibia: 1 respondent Blank: 1 respondent
2. What is your mother tongue?
English: 2 respondents Afrikaans: 1 respondent Xhosa: 3 respondents
Mambwe: 1 respondent Nyakyusa: 1 respondent Oshiwambo: 1 respondent
Soli: 1 respondent Igbo: 1 respondent Shona: 1 respondent
Bemba: 1 respondent Blank: 1 respondent
3. Most postgraduates arrive with different levels of what is labeled 'Specialised Discourse'. One of the assumptions of our research is that Critical Literacy is required at postgraduate level. The postgraduate theology students need to be shifted from 'Specialised Literacy' to 'Critical Literacy'.
- a) In what level would you classify yourself?
Specialised : 6 respondents
Critical : 6 respondents
In process : 2 respondents
- b) Explain
2 respondents' answers showed an awareness of critical literacy. The 12 others showed some level of misunderstanding.
4. At what age did you start using English?
Mother tongue : 2 respondents
Between 5 and 6 years old : 5 respondents
7 - 10 years old : 5 respondents
over 10 years old : 2 respondents
5. Would you say you learnt English as EFL or ESL?
ESL : 10 respondents
EFL : 2 respondents: (both said they only learned English at school)
Not sure : 2 respondents
6. Are you assessed orally at all?
No : 6 respondents
Yes : 6 respondents
Sometimes : 1 respondent
Not clear : 1 respondent
7. Do you think oral assessment is valuable/necessary?
No : 2 respondents
Yes : 12 respondents

Their explanations are in full on the next page - the first two respondents are those who said No.

8. Explain
No tests done orally at the university
One needs to consult academic resources in order to be assessed academically.
Makes the lecturer to know more about my level of understanding
There should be various methods of assessment to give a clear picture of the situation
To improve communication skills
Blank
So that everybody can voice his / her feelings
To find out the level of the person is on speaking and listening
It is important to be able to express my views, the assessment help me as a student to see my weakness, and make improvement.
Sometimes one may fail to express him / herself in writing but do well by speaking
As ministers we do a lot of speaking, both formally and informally. We need to be better prepared for this task.
It gives confidence and helps one to learn from their mistakes.
Helps you to understand your perceptions on different topics
Because many people get good points which is not written. Someone can speak, while you are listening.

9. Do you feel competent using English for academic purposes? Explain:

Yes : 12 respondents
 No : 2 respondents

10. Why did you choose to study in a South African, English university?

11. In your professional context, what language (s) will you / do you use?

English : 14 respondents Oshiwambo : 1 respondent
 Zulu : 1 respondent Xhosa : 1 respondent

12. Why do you think you need to speak English? Please tick ✓ whichever one, two or more sentences apply to you personally.

It is an international language : 14 respondents
 It is needed for a good job : 5 respondents
 To have English-speaking friends : 3 respondents
 To understand English culture and literature : 5 respondents
 It is needed in your intended field of work : 12 respondents

Appendix Three

Excerpts from transcripts of video-recordings

Section One: Lack of Organisation

Transcript selections relating to organisation and allocation of the different sections required in the report

5 *Lecturer and S2 and S1:*

Sorry to interrupt you. What you are talking about now is what everybody knows already, so try to shorten this section. Its very important to get on to the rest. That's really all. Just take one or two minutes on the introduction.

10

Thank you both. You've only given us your introduction. You've spoken for half an hour now. You've not even kept to the main point ... um ... so you ... you ... so I would suggest that you speak about five minutes each, concentrating on what is really the topic here. Try to cover what's most important - the theological and pastoral issues. ... You speak about how emotionally you reacted and yet you speak as if you are far away. As if you're not even involved. It's impossible not to be. So I ... I ... I would like to focus on the theological reflection and then focus on the personal feedback. You each speak in turn. Not more than five minutes each.

20

Lecturer and S7:

Sorry ... before you start. The theological reflection is one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten lines. It should be the other way around. It should be ten lines on presentation of organisation, and three pages of theological reflection. You understand ... you ... you've got the wrong proportions. Don't spend too much time on describing the Organisation because that's easy. You don't need a group of 15 people to listen and give feedback, but what is very important is the personal things. Your reflection and unfortunately your draft is very, very ... uummm ... very short and you have ignored ... you forgot to put your personal remarks ... completely, so the theological part is ten lines and the last part is just forgotten. You see, this draft as it is, if you submit it like that you will fail, because its not got all the parts. Try to correct the one you do present eventually.

25

30

Lecturer and S10:

Try and not to spend too much time on this introduction. You need to get to your theological reflection.

35

....

40 Listen to me: go straight to the real point of your presentation. You have already spent 30 minutes on things that everybody knows. That's not what 's important. So try to ... maybe you should get rid of your paper and just talk ... Don't read, because if you read we don't hear you.

45

Try to ... really try to think what you want to say that is important. You've already spoken a long time and I ... I really am concerned because we're short of time and you read, read as if you're not conscious about time. Try ... try to talk to us, don't read, talk. And explain one thing your placement means to you ... but if you just read, read, read ... maybe you should close this, leave it aside and ... and talk to us about your placement. I know you've got a ... done a good job. To ... to do a verbal report is not to read a ... a written report. It's a different exercise.

55

Its ... its ... unfortunate that your presentation ... the interesting part you rushed ... it you took ages to get to the interesting part but anyway ... uhh ... that's ... those things happen. Um ... but when you revise ... um ... I think its important to remember that.

60

Section Two: Lack of Appropriate Genre

Lecturer and S2:

5 Don't read, because if you read ...

Lecturer and S1 and S2:

I would like to respond to your presentation purposely that you improve the final draft. It was a good placement but an insufficient report. The placement you described was interesting, rich, and you learnt from it. But the way you have done the written presentation there are things you could improve. I will try to explain ... uh ... how. I think, both of you have a tendency to preach. And that's a problem because an academic essay is not a sermon. It's a different genre. Preaching is good, but not here. And the ... the ... what I would advise you is, both in the theological part and pastoral part, personal reflection, try to really focus on the experience of the placement.

15

Lecturer and S3:

I found your presentation actually excellent, very concrete, very profound, and very topical. You really answered the question. Now my comment is that ... um ... when I ... I look at your written report it is good, but not as good as your oral presentation. You need to find a way of being incisive. You are very striking and very modest in what you say. So my recommendation is you try to ... you try to remember what you said and find a way of writing in that same incisive way.

25

Lecturer and S3:

L: What you said about life after death, I didn't find ...

30

S3: but it's there

L: Yes, I found it, but not the way you just said it!

35

And I think what you said about labolo - was very powerful ... what you said. So its ... its a bit flat when you write it but when you say it, its powerful. Its often the case ... many people find it easier to talk than to write. But you must understand that this is good ... a good essay, but it could be even better if you find a way of ... er ...
40 finding this compassion, this strength that you had in your presentation.

Lecturer and S4:

Thank you for everything. It was interesting. Uhh ... it was very short. It was also very lively. We can see you are a preacher.
45

....

But it looks like, the way you say full-blown AIDS with so much intensity, that you've been struck. It was quite an experience for you. And that's ... that's what we can expect because AIDS is striking. So I ... I ... I ... would invite you to try to ... not to say too quickly "Yes I've got the answer. Of course God is there for people who die." and so on ... and He's resurrected and so ... You've got some good answers to explain things but I think some catastrophes like this, tragedies like AIDS in a way ... um ... challenge our spiritual responses.
50
55

Lecturer and S7:

... and I refer to what we discussed yesterday with S2 and S1. There's a difference between a sermon and an academic dissertation in theology. So what you are saying ... I've got it here ... all you have are ... er ... five Biblical quotations. That's the theological reflecton. If ... let's say it's about how to preach OK? Then you put in five Biblical references ... but that's not what we're asking here. You can't just say, "Come unto me you who are heavy loaded and I will give you rest." Now if I am extremely poor I'm a poor woman, or poor man, for that matter, but ... er ... the father of my children has abandoned me; uhhh ... I don't even know where my children are ... I want to see my children, I can't ... uhhh ... my neighbours do not visit me because they say I am a witch. And then the Pastor says "Come to me ..." quoting Jesus "... All you who are heavy loaded and I will give you rest." Where's the rest? I'm still ... I'm still sick. My neighbours are still horrible. So how does that help me? What is the hope? What is the hope? So your task, in the essay, is to show where's the hope? Even if there's no hope then you will say so. But just to say "OK I will give you the Biblical reference and that's fine. You can read the Bible just like me ... then you say you say "Now you've got hope." You understand what I mean? That's all you are doing.
60
65
70

75 *Lecturer and S8:*

I think this a good presentation. Actually ... erum ... you ... you have fulfilled the task in the sense that you have said a lot about yourself, you tried to analyse your feelings, as you went ... So when you write, the ... the written presentation is as rich as the verbal presentation ... because sometime (*pointing to S3: "It's the same for you, huh?"*) sometimes ... uh ... people are more eloquent when they speak than when they write.
80

Lecturer and S10:

85 Listen to me: go straight to the main ... so try to ... maybe you should get rid of
the paper and ... talk and not read, because if you read ...

Section Three: Lack of Involvement

Lecturer and S2:

5 You speak about how emotionally you reacted and yet you speak as if you are far
away. As if you're not even involved. It's impossible not to be. So I ... I ... I
would like to focus on the theological reflection and then focus on the personal
feedback.

10

Umm ... Lastly, on the ... on the personal reflections, ... uhhh ... especially S2.
S2 you have a tendency not to ... to ... uhhh ... involve yourself. You ... uhhhh
... You carried on with what the Church should do, should do, should do. You didn't
15 say how you, S2, ... uhhh ... reacted to your situation with this woman who
wouldn't speak? What ... what ... how ... how will this change your practise as a
minister. Umm ... you ... you're just too cautious. It's much easier to say what the
Church should do. You're on the right track but you put too much distance ... uhhh
that's a normal thing. I don't blame you. Everybody's tempted to do it. We want this
20 course to have a component where people are looking at themselves in the AIDS
situation. That's what a placement is about.

Lecturer and S3:

25 What you said ... its very powerful what you said ... so its ... its a bit flat when
you write it but when you say it, its powerful and its often the case when you ...
many people find it easier to talk than to write, but you must understand that this is
good ... a good essay, but it could be even better if you find a way of ... er ...
finding this compassion, this strength that you had in your presentation.

30 *Lecturer and S4:*

Now I want to make a comment on bathing patients. Because clearly you were ... it
was an experience for you. Let me analyse what happened. Uh ... I think when you
bath a patient, firstly it's intimate. Because normally you bath ... yourself of course
35 or close family or children, your parents, you don't bath normally people you don't
know. But in a situation of sickness you do. Now when you bath people you touch
them, you touch their skin, you touch their body. So it's a situation where you have a
totally different kind of relationship with people. So that's probably why you were
awkward. Because to look, and to touch somebody, it's not the same. Um ... now in
AIDS, being a disease of the body, its actually very meaningful to bath someone. So
40 there's a difference between talking to people and ... and ... and bathing them. So
it's ... it's an aspect that fills our head about AIDS. It ... uh ... invites us to re-
consider the relationship between the mind and the body. You know, the western
tradition, you separate mind and body. Which I think is a mistake. In African culture,
you unite the two. And I think that's healthier - to see the two together. But AIDS
45 invites us to SEE the body. You can't say, let's not look at the body. The body's what

we think, ... our soul, our spirits ... no, the body's part of it. So when we bath, when we eat, we ... we treat the person, the body is the person. You see what I mean. So just to highlight ... think about it what happened when you bath these people. I think it's probably one of the most ... um ... important moments of your placement. It's very profound.

....

When you say, "I was confused and numb", take that seriously. Don't run over it too quickly. Its important to acknowledge that you're confused and numb. And your answer to his question (*indicating another person in the room*) about ... um ... people who were dying daily. You say "Yeah, ja, I know ... but I mean ... we ... we know ... (*laughs*) well, there's something confusing about AIDS - you need to take it into account.

60

Lecturer and S6:

Now, you've been doing your placement in a state institution and that's extremely valuable. I'm delighted that you have, and are starting to think about what it means. You say, and I was very happy and would like to affirm that, that "I cannot impose ...er ... faith on people". It's very key that. It's true, you cannot. It would be inappropriate not to see the difference between a state clinic and ... a ... a ... Catholic or ... or ... or Methodist or whatever (*interjection*) Lutheran ... so I suggest you try to pull together all your ideas on this issue of AIDS and religion and state institution because that's a ... very rich part of your presentation. Don't ignore it too quickly - its precious; its good.

70

....

You mention being in tears, if I remember, which is a strong feeling, a strong reaction and this reaction, once again, is legitimate. (*Looking around at the class*) But our task here is to try to see why, why did he react so strongly? (*Looking back to S6*) Uuummm ... er ... I ... I just ... I'm trying ... why is it that that disease is so devastating? Because there are other situations of grief, of disease, not perceived to be as devastating. And what I feel is that ... I just want to highlight the fact that you have expressed very strong feelings in this case, which I think are ... uh ... certainly for a large part, compassion, feeling for others. I think you were certainly directly concerned yourself, as well. You could not have strong feelings if you, yourself were totally isolated. You ... you've been touched yourself by that idea somehow, and I just want to invite you - not now but when you do your final draft - to try to go deeper and see what exactly did you feel so strongly? Why? What it means? What you tried to do now. Just think ... I think that's the purpose of this exercise: to go deeper into things, because as I said before, when we're aware of our feelings, we know ... uh ... how to recognise them. In a way we become stronger. And this was a counselling situation. ... Certainly ... um ... imagine you want to do counselling in, sort of, a more regular way, you will have to be able to handle your feelings ... um ... on a regular basis.

90

Lecturer and S7:

Um ... what I noticed is that you don't describe people. You don't talk of people.
95 The other presentations yesterday and the day before, like Northdale ... Nongoma, various places in Zambia, there were examples of people who were in tears because they couldn't face the situation (*background noise in classroom*) or ... it won't come to my mind but we had lots of concrete examples ... each one (*interjection from someone in class*) Richmond too. You don't give an example. You ... you ...
100 yes, you speak of the poverty and so on but you didn't say "I went to see a woman, she was 23 years old, she had two children, she was desperate because her boyfriend had gone. "You don't ... you don't ... describe your visits concretely like that. You should do it. You should go back to your notes, or back to your memory and ... and try to describe your visit.

105

....

L: And lastly, you haven't said anything about yourself. How ... er ... er ... did you suffer? Did you ... did you ... you ... you ... did you react to that? Or did
110 you just ... or maybe as a Pastor you should go with things? You know? I don't know. I don't see anything. That's what's missing in this report.

115

S7: Ja, in fact I was so shocked that's why I asked why ... why they are so dirty. And why those home-based carers have to do it.

L: Ja, but you used the word "I was amazed" about the children. That's a starting point. But to be amazed, that's an emotion. It's a personal reaction. To be amazed, to be afraid, to be ashamed, to be guilty, to be angry.

120 It's quite important when you do AIDS ministry to recognise those feelings - in yourself and in the other. When you're afraid you know it; when you're angry you know it; I didn't see much of that in your presentation; that you're reflecting or aware "How do I feel?" See? Because it ... its ... because you've got a right to your feelings. It's fine to be afraid, angry, ashamed, whatever. Errr ... it happens to all of
125 us. It's a common thing. We are human beings, we're not angels. Angels don't have those feelings but we have. And ... and ... but a requirement of this course is to reflect on it.

130 So you need now to go back to your drawing board and ... and reflect on what has challenged you as a pastor and maybe the difficulty for an acting pastor is that because you're confronted with these situations all the time ... you're sort of used to it. And you're always the pastor and ... and ... er ... the person ... is, like, ignored and we need to find a balance between function as the pastor ... I'm not a pastor, I teach, I'm a lecturer. I'm not a pastor, I'm a lecturer. And so everybody's got
135 a function and ... or a nurse is a function; a social worker is a function. A pastor is like a social worker, but it's also a function. So I ... I ... I try ... we try to reconcile the function and the person. You see what I mean - and it's a challenge. It's a challenge, you see. It's not easy. That's why we need training in it.

140

145

Lecturer and S8:

Lastly I would like to commend you on your concept of family life. I ... I've said this yesterday. Too few church people are interested in family problems ... marriage. But in fact, maybe because you are a woman, probably, and its very good, its very important to understand how devastating to have broken families. And children are future adults which mean the future adults are going to carry all their lives, as adults, a broken family. And the misbehaviour because of that. and I ... I ... I think its important ... I want to confirm what you say about family issues.

155 *Lecturer and S9:*

What I understand you to say is that if a counsellor has existential doubts about his ... his faith ... that sort of thing and he's not comfortable in the church then I agree with you. That ... that is ... that is ... makes sense. But what I'm trying to say is that questions about God are part of the spiritual journey. And are sometimes a sign of growth, not of problems and when you are in a situation like death, its better to be honest ... than to be over-confident. I don't know.

You don't have to agree with me by the way. This is my position, so I don't want to impose my views, but I want to say what I say because this is a forum for you ... to think through, discuss ...

....

So it may help you to go a bit deeper in your understanding of this very existentialist situation. I ... I mean ... its striking ... I agree. It's a highlight of your placement. I can see you've been moved.

Lecturer and S10:

L: Your last part ... on personal feedback was a conclusion. Its not personal feedback. You ... you didn't explain how you responded to this placement and I know, because I know you ... you have been dealing with Esther House for ... ?

S10: This is my 2nd year.

180 L: Your 2nd year. OK. But it would be interesting to ... you ... you tried to reflect. And the first placement you did was actually quite powerful what you did. The way you expressed yourself had a lot of impact. Now you don't say ... actually you don't say anything about yourself here. You said about ... your personal feedback is just your ideas ... um ... interesting ideas. But it would be interesting to see how being close to those children, those projects, those workers, how you as a person have continued to move. If you've been overwhelmed, if you've been strengthened, if you've been ... are you angry, are you ... confused? I don't see much of that and certainly in your oral presentation you didn't express that. And ... uh ... the challenge is to be aware of those feelings and use them to be a better minister. I don't think that part went well.

190

195 I know for a fact that you have taken this placement very seriously. I can see. So that's not the issue. You have taken it seriously. But it would help you to reflect on what happened to you after this. How you've changed. If you had new resolutions for you ministry. And how you coped with your feelings.

Section Four: Lack of Theological Reflection

Lecturer and S2:

5 OK, you sort of closed the door on condoms. You basically used a stock of ... er ... arguments and tried to fight against condoms and you didn't respond to the main issue, given, in ... in ... the world as it is, given the fact that, for many people condoms is the only way to save lives. We know it's a bad way. We know it doesn't work 100%. It works maybe 80%. In that situation, which is an unfortunate situation.
10 What do we do? So, by focussing on the fact that five, ten, fifteen, maximum 20% of the condoms don't function. Um ... you, you, you sort of ... uhhh ... take the easy route. It's ... its ... it's a quick way, its a short-cut. You don't answer the question. Given the fact that many people are not faithful and will never be. So it doesn't help to say that the condoms are not 100% reliable. Actually usually 95% - so that's not a
15 strong argument. And when you say they should be faithful, we know they will never be faithful. Have you ever worked with young people? Do you know that in this country, I did research in this country. Among the poor ... er ... less than 5% of people are married ... in South Africa. Less than 5%. The middle class can get married but the poor don't. So why do you say they should be faithful when it's
20 impossible to get married? Can ... can you just dismiss condoms? That's ... that's the issue. It seems to me the way you spoke, you didn't take into account all the aspects of the problem. But you say, "They should be faithful."

25
We should not see the language of the counsellors, of the priests automatically as the truth. They are themselves influenced by ... media, by ... perceptions. Nobody has a sort of pure, pure situation. And what you've done, you ... you've repeated statements made by the counsellors. Um ...so maybe our task is to take a critical
30 distance and not just to repeat but to think about their words. I know it's difficult - because we ourselves are influenced by all sorts of things by propaganda and media too. We ... we ourselves struggle to think independently. That's ... that's where ... uhhh ... what we do here is important. It is to try to go deeper into things.

35
For instance that fact that this woman didn't greet you. That's something which has something to do with theology. What does the Church think about and what is your
40 own reaction? Then the issue of this other person who refused to take the test so many times? And this meeting of counsellors, and so on. There are many interesting

encounters in your placement. Your theological reflection should be built around it. I have a bit ... an impression that your two theological representations could have been done ... , could have been written before the placement. Just ... just like general things that are always true. I didn't read much to link them with the placement.

Um ... S1, the purpose is to do theological reflection ON that placement, on each and every aspect of it. You can even choose one or two that are significant and leave the rest. So in other words this is not integrated - which is the purpose.

Lecturer and S3:

I would like to add ... um ... this is exactly ... er ... what is meant by theological reflection. So I ... I would like for you to follow this is an example of good theological reflection. It's a situation where we can reflect and say, I don't think I can speak of life after death in the same way as I did before. (*aside to S3*) Is that what you are saying? (*back to the class*) And ... and ... which ... which means that this AIDS is actually transforming your theology (*to S3*). It helps you to think through ... a ... a traditional Christian mystery, which is life after death. So ... uh ... really, I hope you try to follow that example of what we ... we ... have had from S3.

Lecturer and S4:

Just to say, don't say too quickly "I've got the answer." I know your profession is a priest or pastor, and you're even paid for it but ... um ... I ... I ... I think theological reflection needs to accept that maybe we don't have all the answers, or maybe we need a new type of answer. Somebody has said before and ... maybe you should remember ... has said maybe God is not there to give us an explanation of death, but to be with us. In other words try to integrate the different parts of your experience. The experience of solidarity, support and strength, helplessness, questions ... uh ... theological reflection is all of that together. Not only one and then the other. So don't ... don't be devastated in this situation and then you've got the right sermon to give for this other situation. It's a question of integrating and that is difficult. That's why AIDS is a challenge to the church - but I think it's a good challenge. It's like the Second World War which helped some people go through an experience and to give birth to a new type of Christianity which is deeper, more relevant. True, I would say. So I think that's ... that's ... that's what it's about. So don't forget to link up your personal reflection in the situation. It goes together, its inseparable.

Lecturer and S6:

That was good you understand better and ... now maybe expand on ... um (long pause) I ... I think ... you remember I made the same comment for ... for S3 when you do your theological part and the pastoral part, it would be good to start from concrete ... er ... examples. And you, you ... I was struck by this woman who said, "I shall kill myself." and then you ... you said "Yes." Why is it that you should not kill yourself and then you speak of hope. That is correct. So, maybe that's where the theological reflection is ... is useful. Um ... why do we need to invoke heaven in terms of circumstances like that. What ... what makes us ... why is life so precious? That's ... that's a typical Christian theme - the value of life. Now in

90 situations of despair someone says "I'll kill myself." And many people will kill themselves, and others, through being promiscuous when they know they are HIV positive.. we know that. So this issue is so a ... a theological theme is the value of life as God-given. So just a suggestion to go deeper - what you say is good but you could go even deeper.

95

Lecturer and S7:

I refer to what we discussed yesterday with S2 and S1. There's a difference between a sermon and an academic dissertation in theology. So what you are saying ... I've got it here ... the ten lines I was talking about, actually its one, two, three, four, five ...
100 er ... five Biblical quotations. That's the theological reflection. If ... let's say you want to preach OK? Then you put in five Biblical references. But that's not what we're asking here. Don't just say, "Come unto me you who are heavy loaded and I will give you rest." Now if I am extremely poor ... I'm a poor woman, (or poor man, for that matter) but ... er ... the father of my children has abandoned me;
105 uhhh ... I don't even know where my children are, I want to see my children, I can't ... uhhh ... my neighbours do not visit me because they say I am a witch. And then the pastor say "Come to me ..." quoting Jesus "... All you who are heavy loaded and I will give you rest." Where's the rest? I'm still ... I'm still sick. My neighbours are still horrible. So how does that help me? What is the hope? What is the hope?
110 So your task, in the essay, is to show where's the hope. Even if there's no hope then you will say so. But just to say, "OK I will give you the Biblical reference and you'll be fine. You can read the Bible just like me." ... I think ... you say, "Now you've got hope." You understand what I mean? That's what you're doing.

115

It's very easy to give a ... give a Biblical reference. OK, take your Bible, you see, that's the answer. I can go home now. I ... if I was lying half dead, in extreme poverty, I don't know what I would do. So, it's not enough to give five Biblical
120 references. You need to go a bit further. And I think this judging AIDS as part of your course on theology, it's a degree in theology and in theology, you theologise. In other words you articulate the faith in a different context. The context here is AIDS, and poverty, and gender and so on. Actually, by the way, you ... you say hygiene and poverty. That's true, that's correct. Imagine someone who comes from the moon
125 and sees you referring to your Bible and he's somebody who's never heard in his life of Jesus. He'll say what is this guy doing? What's ... how does this relate to this old man who is very sick or ... so that's why I would like to get you to go deeper.

130

Now, that's only half of the story. The second half of your story you should take those cases, those examples of people you've met and heard, and reflect theologically on it. That's what I found was missing with S2 and S1 yesterday. It was theological reflection related to the placement, directly, because otherwise what's the point of a
135 placement if the theological reflection was ready before in any case? What's the point? I think that's not theology, for me. That's ... that's a sermon ... Whatever ... It's ... it's something from the sky. So ... now, there are good things here ... I

don't want to dismiss your placement and your report. Some good perceptions. Umm ... but you don't do the task which is to ... uh ... open your eyes, your ears. Be
140 impressed by things and say, "How can I see my faith in the same way as before?"
I'm not getting the sense that you've done that shift.

....

145 It's a challenge. I don't know if anybody has a comment on that because I thought
that S3 did it very nicely yesterday by saying ... um ... what was it again ... uhhh
... life after death. She said I don't think I can speak of life after death in the same
way. I mean ... should I speak of life after death? The problem is life now. (*points*
150 *to S3*) You said something like that. That's what I call theological reflection. You
see, because of that experience of death ... and life ... a very, very, very physical
experience, she says, 'OK I still believe in life after death (*confirms with S3*) but I
can't speak about it the same way as before'. It's like, I cannot just say "OK you've got
life after death" to that woman. She ... she was dying. And how can you speak like
that? That's the sort of thing I expect from everybody. It's a ... it's a theological
155 reflection which is articulated with the people, faces, the experiences, encounters, and
it's ... it's difficult. That's why I think this course is rightly an Honours course. It is
an advanced course in theology. The first, second and even third year you learn the
ropes ... you know the stuff; you know; you know how to read your Bible ... but a
master is actually producing theology.

160

Lecturer and S8:

Your faith is there, OK. Can say, I don't understand but I still believe that God knows
what He's doing, or She's doing. So that ... that's ... not a satisfactory answer, but
it's a way of articulating a response. So I fully understand that you're not satisfied
165 because it is not satisfactory. But sometimes it's better to be honest rather than
pretend and start a long explanation which at the end of the day is not satisfactory.
So, this being said, I would encourage you to go further and continue to think. Maybe
to put more emphasis on the suffering of Jesus Christ. I'm surprised that very few of
you have spoken about the suffering of Jesus Christ. Christianity is a religion where
170 suffering is at the centre. Maybe there's something to draw from that.

Lecturer and S10:

Um ... I ... I think maybe ... uhhh ... something where you could go a bit
further. You ... you ... you gave the example of this little Kwanda and I think one
175 or two other children. Maybe ... I don't see much to link up between this and the
theological reflection. What does the story of Kwanda tell you ... about God, Jesus,
the Church and all those things? I ... I don't know. I just leave that with you, give
you time to think about it - to ... ahhh ... I made the same comment exactly ...
uummm ... yesterday. and uhhh ... S8 ... er ... did that quite nicely this
180 morning. To relate ... to ... to bring a theological reflection on an incident in the
placement itself is to ... to integrate really. To ... to ... uhh ... You did ... you
did to a certain point but you could do more.

Appendix Four

Handout describing the Module, 'Church and AIDS'

CHURCH AND AIDS

Honours and Masters module

Second Semester 2004

(open to church workers and HIV/AIDS activists)

Purpose of the Module

The module will expose the learners to the world of HIV/AIDS and help them to assess the possible responses of the churches to the crisis

On completion of this module learners should be able to:

- have a basic understanding of the medical, social, economic and cultural aspects of HIV/AIDS in South Africa
- articulate a theological response to the crisis caused by HIV/AIDS
- have been exposed to one organisation working with persons living with HIV/AIDS and reflect on this experience

Course Outline

Part One Reading reactions

Recommended length: between 1000 and 1500 words (3-5 pages)

(i) Alan Whiteside and Clem Sunter, *Aids. The Challenge for South Africa*. Cape Town, Human & Rousseau / Tafelberg, 2000, pp. 1-25

Questions:

- How do the bio-medical aspects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic affect the cultural representations of the disease?
- Discuss the authors' statement that the HIV hypothesis is believed to be correct.
- From a bio-medical point of view, is HIV/AIDS an African disease?

Due date: Friday 6 August 2004

(ii) P. Denis, "Aids and Sexuality in South Africa", *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, March 2003, pp. 63-78.

Questions:

- Explain why HIV/AIDS is particularly virulent in Southern Africa.
- Explain the difference between exposure to HIV and transmission of HIV
- Discuss the author's statement that the Southern Catholic bishops' recent statement is unjust and dangerous.

Due date: Friday 13 August 2004

(iii) Tessa Marcus, *Living and Dying with AIDS*, Pietermaritzburg, CINDI, 1999, pp. 6-26

Questions:

- Why is there so much stigma around HIV/AIDS?
- Describe the impact of HIV/AIDS on the life circumstances of ordinary people.
- Does your experience of HIV/AIDS coincide with the author's field observations?

Due date: Friday 20 August 2004

(iv) Ronald Nicolson, *AIDS. A Christian Response*, Pietermaritzburg, Cluster Publications, 1995, pp. 18-42.

Questions:

- What does the author understand by "theology of AIDS"?
- What makes some people believe that AIDS is a divine punishment. Discuss this statement.
- Discuss the author's views on AIDS and homosexuality.

Due date: Friday 27 August 2004

Part Two Introduction to Aids ministry

Contents: medical and anthropological aspects of AIDS. Towards a theology of AIDS. Ethical debates. The role of the Church. This section also includes field visits and presentations by guest speakers.

Co-ordinator: Prof Philippe Denis

Dates: 6-10 September 2004

Monday 6 September	Meeting a person living with HIV/AIDS (with Rev Benson Okyere-Manu, ECAP)
Tuesday 7 September	Pastoral Counselling and HIV/AIDS (with Dr Edwina Ward, SRT)

Wednesday 8 September	The socio-economic aspects of AIDS (with Prof P Denis, SRT)
Thursday 9 September	Medical aspects of AIDS (with Dr Paul Kocheleff, Grey's Hospital)
Friday 10 September	Theological and pastoral aspects of AIDS (with Prof P. Denis, SRT)

Venue: University of KwaZulu-Natal, New Arts Building.

Task: critical report on each field visit and each presentation by a guest speaker (2 pages each).

Due date: Friday 17 September 2004

Part Three Field work

Date: September - October 2004

Task: The student will spend at least fifteen hours in an AIDS-related environment. They will chose a church, a NGO or a CBO involved in the field of HIV/AIDS in consultation with the lecturers. During their placement they will take part in life of the centre, report to a supervisor chosen in consultation with the lecturer and write a report on their placement. This report will describe the activities of the centre and highlight the theological and pastoral issues raised during the placement.

Part Four Debriefing and Evaluation Workshop

This section will give the students the opportunity to present a verbal report on their placement. They will be asked to formulate and articulate all the critical issues encountered during the course of their placement. This verbal report and the ensuing discussion will form the base of the essay.

Co-ordinator: Deleted for purpose of confidentiality

Dates: 11-15 October 2004

Venue: School of Religion and Theology

Part Five Submission of the essay

Structure of essay	Background to the organization [20%] Day by day history of the placement [20%] Theological reflection [20%] Lessons for the church [20%] Personal feedback [20%]
--------------------	--

Length: 12-15 typewritten pages (Masters); 10-12 pages (Honours).
Space: 1.5

Due date: draft: 9 October 2004
final: 29 October 2004

Part Six Exam

Type of exam: Take-home exam (by hand or by e-mail)

Date: to be determined

Requirement: Only the students who have submitted their essays will be allowed to write their exam.

Queries: Deleted for purpose of confidentiality

Attendance Students are required to attend at least 80% of the classes. This requirement will not be waived even for legitimate reasons such as illness or family bereavement.

Guidelines for reading, reactions, essays and exams

a) Strictly respect the due dates. The lecturer will subtract 2% of the mark per day of delay. Essays submitted more than two weeks after the due date will not be marked.

b) Reading reactions and essays can be submitted by hand, by fax (27 33 260 58 58) or by e-mail (denis@ukzn.ac.za)

c) On the front page of your reading reactions and essays, kindly include the following information:

- Name and surname
- Student number
- Degree (Honours or Masters)
- E-mail address
- Phone number (for South African students only)
- Type of document (e.g. Reading Reaction 1, Reading Reaction 2, Report of Field Visit, Essay, Exam, etc)
- Date of expedition
- Type of transmission (by hand/by fax/by e-mail)

Mark structure:

- reading reactions and reports (30%)
- oral presentation (10%)
- essay (30%)
- take-home exam (30%)

Appendix Five

Stimulated-Recall Interview Questions

A. General Questions (before meeting to watch the videos)

Lecturer's Criteria (given before and/or then made known through the feedback)

- 1 What criteria do you use when you evaluate a written report such as this one that followed a practical placement in an AIDS centre?
- 2
 - a) Do you think feedback from the lecturer after a first draft is helpful?
 - b) Why?
 - c) Do you think written or oral feedback is more useful?
 - d) Why do you say so?
- 3 Do you require students to be critically reflexive in their report?

Discourse

- 4 It seems 'preaching' is a 'default' for theology students. Why is this genre not acceptable in an academic environment, either spoken or written?
- 5 Is the 'preaching default' the only one that 'gets in the way' of producing an acceptable academic genre? Are there others? What do you think they might be?

Theory

- 6 What do you understand as the role of theory in a course as practical as this?
- 7 How are the students required to refer to it in their reports?
- 8 Why are the students 'pushed' to get in touch with their feelings for an academic report? [This is my greatest interest!]
- 9 Is the main goal to help the students to become better academics or better pastors and priests? Explain.

B. Questions for each Episode (to say how you construe what you see and hear i.e. your own interpretation)

- 1 What do you understand is happening here?
- 2 What is being said?
- 3 What exactly do you want the student to DO with what you've just said?
- 4 Do you think this was helpful for the student? Why?
- 5 Do you think it was understood - and carried out in the final draft - by the student?

Appendix Six

Summary of Lecturer Interviews and Emails

Initial interview with the lecturer

The first interview with the lecturer was held at his home. He believes that by working at the frontiers of society as an activist, he is able to live his philosophy of linking both faith and works. My interest in him and his work evolved because I elected to observe his Honours/Masters module in theology for the simple reason that his was the only one that explicitly required the students to use their skills of Listening and Speaking before producing their final written assessments. This time-consuming yet valuable innovation seemed to me to offer rich 'scaffolding' which had the potential to improve and develop academic writing skills in his students.

His main purpose in his teaching is to enable people to make the link between theory and practice. As a social actor, he believes that theory is not enough - it must be integrated with practice. He works constantly at the interface between sociology and theology, believing firmly that there has to be space for church intervention in society.

His basic method in all his teaching - not just this particular module - is as follows:

- Teach - students listen/exchange
- Fieldwork - students apply their knowledge
- Presentations - students speak of their experience
- Feedback - students listen/exchange
- Assess - students write the final product

These scaffolded steps seem to me a practical and valuable teaching innovation. Firstly in terms of students learning to apply knowledge in order to become active members of society - not merely 'theologians'; and secondly in terms of developing both the skills of academic expression of ideas and of learning to reflect and think critically. Because of these additional steps one would expect a far better final written product. This method is particularly useful in a multilingual university such as ours where English is the only medium used for assessment but is not the first language of

the majority of students. Secondly a lot of students have not come from stringent academic backgrounds and tend to use a hortatory rather than a critical style of genre.

Answers to first email requesting elaboration on phrases the lecturer had used:

a) I don't care about your English.

I mean I want to understand YOU. I do not want to write well for the sake of writing well. The English language has not intrinsic value. But it needs to be spoken and written well if one wants to communicate effectively. Bad English means failed communication. Students in theology, in particular, should be able to communicate their message effectively.

b) A good academic should be able to speak.

I guess I meant that it is impossible to do academic work without excellent verbal (and writing) skills. It is not enough to have bright ideas: it is also necessary to express them.

Answers to a second email requesting some thoughts on some excerpts of the transcripts of the video-recordings:

Researcher's request:

I would like some comments on the feedback you gave to the students. I'm looking at how you move them from their style of writing to the critical, reflective style that's required at postgraduate level.

So perhaps you could think around:

WHAT is it you're wanting them to achieve?

HOW can you or they do this?

WHY do you say the things you said?

My biggest question is around the area of personal involvement. You require them to get deeply, personally involved and yet academic writing has to be formal, detached, impersonal and so on. I'm very intrigued to investigate this in depth.

Lecturer's answer:

I have read a good part of the transcript. It helps me to plunge myself in the atmosphere of this session.

What I tried to do is to help the students to recognise their feelings (e.g. sadness, awkwardness, numbness, etc), to accept them (hence my attempts to validate these feelings during the session) and to reflect on them. What did it mean for themselves as a person to be in this situation? What did it mean for them as theological students, possibly future ministers, to experience these feelings and to express them verbally and in writing? Have these feelings something to do with the fact that they are theologians and/or pastoral agents?

You probably saw that I encouraged them to articulate their experience. I wanted a 'thick' description of this experience, as opposed to what I call 'flat'. To describe the beautiful work of these NGOs was not enough. My vision was, I think, to help the students to see the coherence between emotions, critical thinking and what I would call a pastoral sense, a certain way of being a person of faith in the context of AIDS. One of the students expressed his 'awkwardness' after having bathed an HIV/AIDS patient. This is a good example: I helped to understand why he felt awkward, why his action was nevertheless extremely meaningful and what it meant in terms of theology and culture.

Summary of lecturer's comments in answer to the questions in the stimulated-recall interview

1. What criteria are used to evaluate a written report such as this one that followed a practical placement in an AIDS centre?

The lecturer and had the same answer as the student: "Everybody passed, didn't they?" Both the lecturer and the students in the focus group felt that this module had helped them all to become more academic and more theological in their approach.

2.
 - a) Do you think feedback from the lecturer after a first draft is helpful?
 - b) Why?
 - c) Do you think written or oral feedback is more useful?
 - d) Why do you say so?

The lecturer said that particularly in Africa with its tradition of orality, it is valuable to make use of the oracy skills as much as possible. He believes that this is particularly advisable when dealing with ESL speakers.

The lecturer elaborated on his comment about a 'flat' first draft. He said this student had reached a point of theologising whereas most other students had not. She had shown far more engagement when speaking than when she wrote and her theological reflection was evident in her speaking. He hoped that, by having verbalised her engagement with the process, she would be able to write those reflections more incisively and critically.

The lecturer indicated that many academics, even first language English speakers, prefer to speak than to write. He said that there is a freedom in speaking that is not the same in writing. It seems that to express oneself orally first can be greatly beneficial. One can focus on expressing one's ideas freely until they are formulated. When writing, every word has to be carefully weighed, carefully controlled. This forces a high degree of accuracy and criticality. It is permanent and because it is captured it can be reflected on at any later stage. Words are tools and can be useful when one is informed and comfortable about using them. Transfer to writing is a skill that he believes takes time, practice and determination.

The lecturer said that anything that causes some discomfort is good to analyse. To help students integrate different aspects of their work, he suggests they ask themselves the reason for their discomfort. If they can name it, they are abstracting the issue and can therefore have more criticality. Realisation that the issue of state versus church, is a very real religious theme would enable them to deal with it far more abstractly.

3. Are students required to be critically reflexive in their report?

The lecturer highlighted the issue of feelings when tears were mentioned. He encouraged the students to analyse their feelings more deeply so that they could verbalise their experience clearly. S6 had described his tears to try to express the extent of his feelings, but he had not named feelings and therefore could not relate them in any depth to his faith. He was encouraged to recognise what was happening to him emotionally, so that he could understand himself better. The lecturer explained his belief that awareness of one's feelings is a starting point for reflexive activity:

The lecturer commented that S3 had reached a point of theologising whereas most other students had not. In his interview with me he elaborated: she had shown far more engagement when speaking than when she wrote and her theological reflection was evident in her speaking. He hoped that, by having verbalised her engagement with the process, she would be able to write those reflections more incisively and critically.

4. It seems 'preaching' is a 'default' for theology students. Why is this genre not acceptable in an academic environment, either spoken or written?

The lecturer reiterated that these are 'merely the wrong way of doing theology.' There is a place for them, but theologising requires application of one's faith and knowledge in order to abstract and analyse particular issues. Theologising is expressing oneself critically and reflexively.

5. Is it important to watch the timing of your presentation?

The lecturer had to comment to almost every student about time after (or during) the presentation. I probed this issue of time allocation further. The lecturer explained that students are tempted to waste a lot of time on the initial two sections because it is easy to give just the facts. They find it more difficult to express the faith theologically (section 3 of the report). The lecturer stressed that the theological reflection is the

most important section, as it shows whether the students have been able to 'theologise' or not. He defined 'theologise' as "see the gospel/ or Word of God/ or Faith in a given social situation". The lecturer agreed that he uses 'theologise' and 'theorise' virtually interchangeably. He said theologising could be defined as "to theorise the faith".

I asked about the problem of not completing all the sections required in the report. The lecturer pointed out that the assignment attempted to help the students develop reflexive skills, while requiring some basic descriptive information as well. There needed to be a balance, although greater theoretical weight was attached to the theological reflection.

6. What do you understand as the role of theory in a course as practical as this?

As isolated doctrine, Biblical quotes are not sufficient.

The lecturer commended a student for her dissatisfaction with her previous answers as it showed a willingness to engage with, and articulate, a more critical, reflexive way of thinking. He encouraged the student to acknowledge the challenges.

7. How are the students required to refer to theory in their reports?

The lecturer commented about the lack of independent thinking by the two students who were on a placement together. S2 did not think about the comments made by the counsellors in an independent manner but merely repeated them verbatim in his report. The lecturer had commented on the video-recording that their reports could have been written without even doing the placement. In other words, they were not processing the doctrine. Quoting doctrine is never sufficient in the Discourse of Academics although it is perfectly acceptable in the Discourse of Preachers. The skill of appropriation of what one reads, is completely different to that of quoting blindly.

A further challenge illustrating the need for reflection and integration was picked up by the lecturer when a student raised the issue of the secular. He asked what is appropriate when ministering in a state institution as opposed to a specifically

Christian one. The lecturer encouraged the student to look closely at this familiar issue of state and religion. He suggested further reflection on the part they both played, or could play, in the AIDS pandemic. This aspect of connecting and integrating ideas is a key factor in academic writing and is not an easy skill to acquire. The lecturer encouraged him to spend time and not to lose sight of the challenge.

8. Why are the students 'pushed' to get in touch with their feelings for an academic report? [This is my greatest interest!]

The lecturer pointed out that physical touch of the body is intimate and therefore powerful. One is far more knowledgeable of someone when the whole body has been involved. The link between body and mind is abstract and yet in African culture less so. Talking to someone, or just looking at someone involves far less than touching them. AIDS is a disease that involves the body and the mind. You cannot treat the one without the other. This wholeness of being is an abstract, but profound concept. It needs to be engaged with so that one can name feelings and express one's critical thoughts.

The lecturer highlighted the issue of feelings when tears were mentioned. He encouraged the students to analyse their feelings more deeply so that they could verbalise their experience clearly. S6 had described his tears to try to express the extent of his feelings, but he had not named feelings and therefore could not relate them in any depth to his faith. After watching the video-recording, the lecturer said he was encouraging the student to recognise what was happening to him emotionally, so that he could understand himself better. The lecturer explained his belief that awareness of one's feelings is a starting point for reflexive activity:

9. Is the main goal is to help the students to become better academics or better pastors and priests? Explain.

The lecturer explained that unless one can name one's emotions and experiences, it is not possible to write reflexively. He spoke at length about the value of 'naming'. In other words, to name feelings, to acknowledge them, to give them substance, enables

one to separate oneself from them. Naming enables one to be abstract - as required in any philosophical study. Without reflection, without naming the emotions experienced during the placement, the students would be unable to theologise (to theorise about theology). They would not reach the level of detached abstraction required by postgraduates. He equated the ability to theologise, to reflect or to name, with using critical and reflexive language.

The lecturer helped the student to recognise the intensity of his engagement with his experience. He said to me that he was encouraging the student to relate that experience, in all its intensity, to his faith. In other words, he needed to ask himself why he still believes and how he integrates his belief with his understanding of the AIDS situation. It is only by integrating the whole process that he will develop the ability to be critical. The lecturer wanted the student to have faith in his own faith, to take risks and to allow his thinking to be challenged. In order to become more critical, he needed to integrate his faith with the newly-raised questions from his placement.

Appendix Seven

Summary of Focus Group Interview

Four students were available to join the focus group I established to triangulate my findings from the transcribed video-recorded observations. I took notes during the focus group interviews, which are summarised below.

1 What criteria are used to evaluate a written report such as this one that followed a practical placement in an AIDS centre?

S1 said: "Everybody passed, didn't they?" He felt this module had helped them all to become more academic and more theological in their approach

- 2 a) Do you think feedback from the lecturer after a first draft is helpful?
 b) Why?
 c) Do you think written or oral feedback is more useful?
 d) Why do you say so?

S8 said that she knew she had difficulty with writing academically in English because it was not her mother tongue. She explained that by first being given the opportunity to speak freely, she felt better equipped to write her report. She said that she still finds it more difficult to write than to speak. She said she enjoys the fact that speaking is somewhat unlimited and feels that she has the freedom to say as much as she needs to. She said that in writing she does not 'touch' as much - she feels she is much more limited.

3 Are students required to be critically reflexive in their report?

S1 said that the academic or theological side involved the big issues e.g. sin; grief and other abstract concepts. He said the church needs to be reinterpreting these issues all the time (e.g. What is Sin?). He said that on a personal level he needs to think how he can respond to or change the situation and what he can offer. S3 said that critical theological reflection is an understanding of perceptions and views whereas the pastoral level is about how to care for people around you. She said personal reflection

is gaining new meaning through reflection on old faith. She believes one can integrate these because knowledge is transforming.

When asked to reflect on self-involvement and one's development of criticality, every student wanted to comment. S1 said that for him touch showed acceptance of a patient and a level of involvement. When asked how the discussion had affected his final writing, he said that Jesus was an example when He washed feet and touched lepers and other sick people. He did not seem fully able to separate theological reflection from pastoral actions (whether of Jesus, or of those who seek to emulate Him). He was still quoting doctrine rather than applying his faith. In fact, he did not answer the question.

4 It seems 'preaching' is a 'default' for theology students. Why is this genre not acceptable in an academic environment, either spoken or written?

S1 and S2 were rather bashful when watching the video-recording and said they realised the importance of appropriate genre. They had used a lot of gestures and phrases like "Lo and Behold!"

5 Is it important to watch the timing of your presentation?

None of the students seemed to realise just how important this sort of planning is although the lecturer had repeated it many times.

6 What do you understand as the role of theory in a course as practical as this?

S1 said after watching the video-recording that he realised he needed to go beyond dogma. Another of the students (S8) voiced dissatisfaction with her previous faith, and with answers she felt could not be sufficient for suffering people.

7 How are the students required to refer to theory in their reports?

The students did not have much to say on this point of abstract thinking/writing in the stimulated - recall interview. They understood the value of naming feelings, but to deal with the abstract concept of church and state in relation to feelings seemed to be an idea they had not yet internalised. S3, who seems to be the most aware, said she was beginning to realise the importance of it.

8 Why are the students 'pushed' to get in touch with their feelings for an academic report? [This is my greatest interest!]

S2 said that he understood this advice about getting more personally involved. He said for his final report he spent more time reflecting directly on the feelings he had experienced during the placement. However, it was interesting to note that this student spoke of a 'balance' between theological work/personal emotions and pastoral practice, rather than integration.

9 Is the main goal is to help the students to become better academics or better pastors and priests? Explain.

S1 If we separate our experiences from our studies or our studies from our sermons then things go unchallenged, unchanged ...

S2 Our faith and our studies are holistic - they cannot be separated

S3 It is through reflecting on our faith as we've done in this course that we can find solutions in the world

S8 We have to be fully attached to life before we can make a difference

A question was raised in the interview about the emotional intensity of the programme. S1 said that it showed how powerful the placement as an experience had been and how it had overwhelmed many of the students. S3 continued that emotions have to influence critical writing so that students go through personal transformation. She felt that a change or a shift is required in order to create critical thinkers and ultimately to bring about change in social situations.

Appendix Eight

Excerpts from students' final written reports

S3 (Page 14 of student's final report)

The above thus explains the opportunity HIV/AIDS is creating for the Church to speak to the sufferers about the hope for prolonged life through the antiretroviral drugs, eating nutritious food and exercising, or even the hope for life after death and the whole question of eternal life.

However, since most of the HIV/AIDS sufferers are too poor to afford healthy food, it is more likely that their wish to live long will not be fulfilled even though they have access to HIV/AIDS drugs. The realization of the above hit me as I spent time with Zanele and, it made me rethink my theology of life after death.

Zanele already understands about life after death. However, her greatest need for the moment is for her life to be prolonged so she may be able to look after her children. I thus asked myself "How can I speak about life after death when what she needs is life now?" The incident thus helped me to be more sensitive when speaking about life after death to the dying. I can say the incident has changed me in a way, for I cannot speak about life after death in the same way.

Although I still believe in the Christian teaching on life after death or everlasting life, it is my opinion that the teaching about everlasting life need not be used as a means of escaping from the reality that people need to be helped to be able to live now.

The above thus leads me to strongly believe that if we are to win in the struggle against HIV/AIDS, efforts to alleviate poverty need to be taken seriously. Therefore I suggest that while Churches engage in giving spiritual help to HIV sufferers, they should also engage more in development programmes to alleviate poverty.

Besides, it is my opinion that it is necessary that people like Zanele be helped to live long. Otherwise it would be impossible for their children to have access to basic human needs or even to learn values.

1. Introduction

On Monday 20th of September, 2004, I was placed at the Northdale hospital counselling unit as a requirement for the fulfilment of a honours degree in theology and development, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal under the Church and AIDS module. To produce a structured report, this paper intends to give a background of HIV/AIDS counselling unit at Northdale hospital and the routine activities. This will be followed by definition of terms, and phrases to ease the understanding of the paper. My daily encounters with the activities at Northdale counselling unit will be recorded as well. This will lead to a religious or theological reflection. The argument of this essay is that there are gaps the church need to fill in relationship to HIV/AIDS. The church has to take a lead instead of the secular organization, because the church is the light and salt of the earth (Matt.5:13-15). The church needs to integrate medical care with spiritual care. Lastly, the paper will conclude with a personal feedback and then give recommendations or way forward.

2. Background

Northdale hospital Pietermaritzburg is a level one District government hospital, which started in October 1974. This hospital has several departments, which include the HIV/AIDS Counselling Unit. The HIV/AIDS counselling unit was started in 1998 with three trained counsellors, but at present has fourteen counsellors. It was the government initiative as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the Nation. The government is using it to encouraging people to come forward to be tested for HIV. It believes that if many of us get tested, even though we may not be sick, this will help to lessen the amount of stigma associated with the HIV test. Also, if we find out at earlier stage, that we are infected with HIV, we can: learn more about the virus, look after our health so that we stay healthy as possible, get information and counselling around on how to live positively with the virus, find out about prophylactic drugs, access nevirapine, get emotional support and make sure that we don't infect anyone else.¹ Nobody should claim to be negative until he/she is tested and result declared so. It is a preparation of one's mind.

¹ *Voluntary HIV counseling and testing* pamphlet by KwaZulu-Natal Provincial VCT committee, p.1, 2.